

THE O.P.P.

Jack



Vol 1. No 3.

Witley Camp.

June, 1917.



On the River Wey.

Fat-ima—"What does it mean here by ballast, George?"
George—"Aw, let's talk of somethin' else."

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EDITORIAL.

We have had many inquiries as to what "O-Pip" stands for. To the artillerymen it is an everyday expression but we can easily imagine the confused mind of the layman.

"O-Pip" simply means the observation post where the battery commander assembles with part of his headquarters party, reputed to be the brains of the battery, hence the mule in the design, and makes observations and directs the fire of his battery. "O.P." is the proper abbreviation for observation post, but in semaphore signalling the pronunciation of letters is changed in order to eliminate any possibility of error "P" is always designated as "pip" to distinguish it from "c" and other similar sounding letters.

Some exceptionally nice things have been said about the "O-Pip" and when we first read them we blushed. Newspaper criticisms have been voluminous, whether genuine or not. One young lady became so enraptured in the paper that she immediately sat down and wrote a neat little poem to the editor, which we unfortunately have not space for in this issue. She wrote under the nom-de-plume of "Maxine." We wish we knew her right name and address. Here's hoping.

As all mails between this country and Germany have been held up, we have not heard from the Kaiser, but all the other crowned heads of Europe have placed their orders for this issue. If the Huns do not cease bombing London, we will be forced to make reprisals ourselves. We will make some real nasty comments about Porky Hindenburg and his clan of pram-wreckers, and then we will enlist the sympathy of the R.F.C., load a couple of machines with "O-Pips" and attached a lemon to each. After the road-hogs read what we have to say about them they'll feel so thoroughly downcast, dejected and disgusted that they will want to suck a lemon and die. That's what we are sending the lemons for. We are very accomodating to our customers!

Here are a few quotations from different papers.

"The Surrey Times," Guildford:—"It is bright and breezy."

"The Herald," Halifax: "The publication bristles with humorous remarks concerning the men. The 'O-pip' has an extensive staff and is one of the publications in which the boys overseas take delight in."

"The Gleaner," Fredericton: "The O-Pip" has made its bow to the world of trench publications. It is a pithy little journal. It is full

of timely anecdotes and is replete with what is known to the journalist as 'human interest.' There is humor aplenty, with just a touch here and there of pathos. The sheet is well balanced."

"The Times," Victoria, B.C. "Something was bound to happen when the 58th Battery failed to get across to France within certain time-limits. 'O-Pip,' the official organ of the battery is the 'something.' It is a splendid army paper and we wish it every success under the editorship of a former member of our editorial staff."

H.A.W.



Gunners vs. Drivers.



Way back in the old stone age days the boys in the artillery quarrelled about their respective duties. We recall how the drivers with their mastodons, hauled the huge boulders into action and the gunners pushed the projectiles over the cliffs upon their friends below. After action they returned to their dug-outs and the long-haired, goat-skinned gunners and drivers would sit before a roaring fire and argue as to who did the most work.

And so today we find our gunners and drivers arguing over the same question as their primitive ancestors and still they are no nearer to a solution. In order to try and remedy the old sore the heads of this battery hit on an excellent plan. For one week the gunners had to take over the duties of the drivers and the drivers became gunners.

But still the argument continued. The drivers claimed that the gunners' duties were nothing and a similar claim came from the other side.

"Listen here," argued one of the former drivers, "I was on cook house today and never had such a cinch in my life. Good grub and only worked two hours."

"Well, you just wait, guy, until you get a fatigue in the morning, another one in the afternoon and then a guard thrown in at night and then see how you'll like things," retorted the gunner.

"But just wait until you're out in a real old rain storm and you come in with your harness all mud and rust and then for the next two days you have to scrub and rub and spoil your hands by gettin' them all smothered in oil and grease," shot back the driver.

"Off that stuff," loudly replied the gunner. "You guys think you're at some pink tea, forget that you're in the army and there's a war on. All you fellows do is a picquet once every two weeks and a stableman about as often. Pretty soft, I guess."

And so on they rave, the language flows freely and abounds in expletives. They will talk until the canteen closes and then run on until the effect of the lubricant has vanished.

After a week's experiment the boys reverted to their old positions. Whatever their views were we noticed that one and all were glad to take up their former togs and none wished to exchange places. For after all a gunner's a gunner and a driver's a driver. They are both valuable men.

A Popular O.C.



MAJOR W. M. J. MARTIN.

The 58th Battery is fortunate in having as its O.C. an officer with such a wide experience in the artillery. Since 1901 he has been identified with the army and has had posts both in England and abroad.

Born in Dumbartonshire, Scotland, Major Martin received a commission in the D.E.O. Edinburgh Artillery Militia in March, 1901. The following year he transferred to the Imperial Force, and from then until 1908 was on home service at Leith Fort, Woolwich, Shoeburyness and Sheerness. He was stationed at Gibraltar in 1908-09. One year later he took an ordnance course at Woolwich, and in 1911 and 1912 was with the Woolwich Heavy Battery.

In December, 1912, Major Martin went to Canada as one of several Imperial Officers loaned to the Canadian Government. He was senior Ordnance Officer of M.D. No. 11, Esquimaux, until May, 1916, when he took command of the 62nd Battery, recruited in Victoria.

In Petewawa, Major Martin acted as C.O. of the 15th Brigade, while Lieut.-Col. A. T. Ogilvie was Camp Commandant. At the present time he is again acting C.O. of the Brigade.

During the general re-organization late last January, Major Martin was given command of the 58th Battery.

Besides being an Artillery Officer of long standing, he is an expert horseman and a splendid sportsman. He is very popular with his Battery and respected throughout the Brigade.

Like all of us he is keen to see France.



Quo Fas et Gloria Ducunt.

It is a source of congratulation to us all to know that the 58th Battery had some of its boys in the glorious fighting at Vimy Ridge. We learn that the draft which went from this battery to the 82nd Battery had a great deal to do with the strafing of the Huns on that historic occasion. In such an action it was scarcely possible that the fighting lads would escape unscathed, but we are glad to announce that none were seriously injured.

The following four sustained slight injuries :—

Corpl. H. M. Mathews.

Gunner H. M. Kelly.

Gunner A. W. Bull.

Gunner A. E. Wilcox.

Corpl. Mathews is one of the original 58th boys, and was in charge of a howitzer when an aeroplane passed overhead, flying quite low. A bomb struck a short distance from the gun-pit and the corporal was smothered in mud and considerably knocked about. He was taken back to the lines, and at the dressing station it was discovered that a piece of the bomb had embedded itself in his shoulder. He is now again in action, and no wonder there's a hot time on the Canadian front.

Gunner Kelly came from Victoria, B. C. with the 62nd Battery, and was transferred to this battery early in the year. Writing of his injury, Kelly says :—

"I had a narrow escape from a shell which landed quite close to me. It wounded our corporal so badly that he died on his way down the line, and three more infantry fellows who were in dug-outs a little ahead of our "pistols." I got a piece in my thigh, and it sent me down the line for over two weeks. It just hit me in the pocket and smashed my knife to pieces and cut a piece out of a penny. Had my pocket been empty I would have had a peach of a blighty."

An unfortunate accident occurred last month when a six-horse team became unmanageable and piled up badly. Wheel-driver A. C. Bell was thrown and severely cut about the head, and bruised about the shoulders and arms. He was taken to Bramshott Hospital and we learn that he has been placed in Class D, which means that he will not return to the Battery. We are sorry to lose him for he was a conscientious and very capable driver.

Things we would like to know.

Who invented that English phrase: "Stop dis tawkin' "?

If we can't have a motor car stand in our own lines, instead of having to walk to the Infantry lines?

Who was the optimist in the mess-room who said: "My, that smells tasty"?

And the pessimist who replied: "Huh! You mean it tastes smelly, don't you"?

What section commander said: "Come, now, a little smarter. You haven't had such a heavy breakfast that you can't move faster than that"?

Who invented the twisted whitewash for going around corners?

What are they trying to make our huts look like with so much whitewash?

Who said "chicken houses?" No, sir! we've the wrong birds.

When are the Yankees going to finish this war?

Who was the gunner who spent his birthday in the clink and received the following telegram from his mother: "Many happy returns of the day"?

Why is it that a fellow after winning a pound or so in a poker game suddenly discovered that he has to write a letter home?

If this country imports any other commodity than hash?

Who was the officer caught in Chiddingfold after it had been placed out of bounds?

What excuse can we give for not writing home now that we have free postage?

Are you going farming after the war is over?

How much money will you have?

If all the deposed Rulers are to form a side-show for the Entente Circus?



This was his second appearance before the O.C. for overstaying his pass.


"What have you got to say for yourself this time?" demanded the O.C.

"Well, sir, the taxi didn't call until late, and I was a couple of hours late getting in," said the gunner with a voice that begged for leniency.


That won't do. You gave the same excuse last time," commented the O.C. "Remanded for the C.O."

Before the C.O., the gunner, when he was asked what he had to say, remarked:—"Sir, I gave the same excuse last time, and it won't work again."

"Two days F.P. No. 2," drawled the C.O.




For Honour and for Her.




Somewhere a woman, thrusting fear away,
 Faces the future bravely for your sake,
 Toils on from dawn till dark; from day to day
 Fights back her tears, nor heeds the bitter ache;
 She loves you, trusts you, breathes in prayer your name;
 Soil not her faith in you by sin or shame.

Somewhere a woman—mother, sweetheart, wife,
 Waits betwixt hopes and fears for your return,
 Her kiss, her words, will cheer you in the strife,
 When death itself confronts you, grim and stern;
 But let her image all your reverence claim
 When base temptations scorch you with their flame.

Somewhere a woman watches—thrilled with pride,
 Shrined in her heart, you share a place with none;
 She toils, she waits, she prays, till side by side
 You stand together when the battle's done.
 O keep for her dear sake a stainless name,
 Bring back to her a manhood free from shame!

It is Rumoured—



That on two successive days we did not have contradictory news from Russia.

That skirts will be shorter next spring.

And that we will be in England.

That the establishment of the batteries is to be increased by several traps and buggies.

That the men will be provided with bicycles now that the warm weather has arrived.

That the N.C.O.'s are giving a strawberry party to their men.

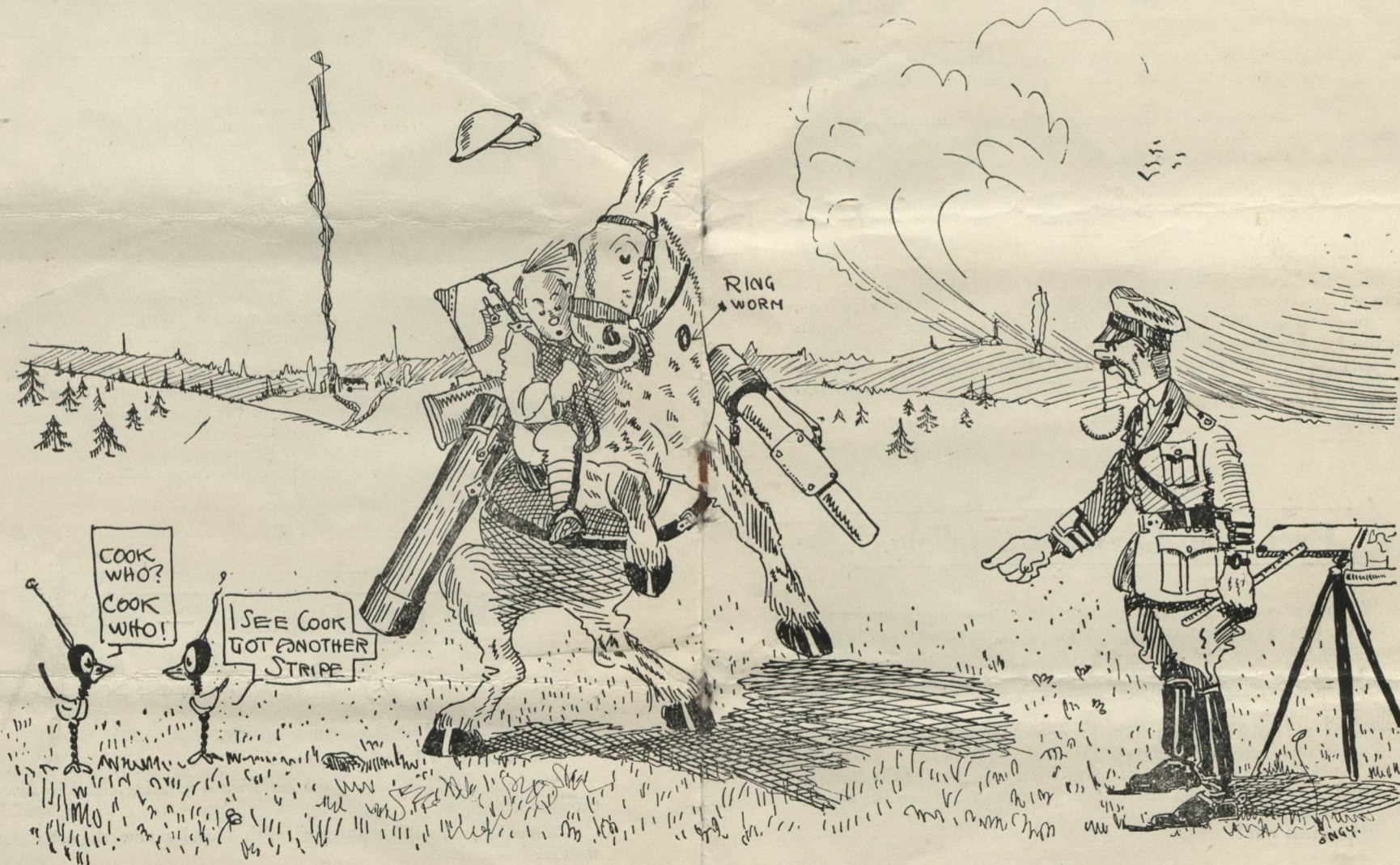
That we are to have flower gardens around the stables.

That the sensational game of croquet is to be introduced by the officers.

That the batteries have promised not to pilfer from one another.

That the office staffs are to do morning stables.

THE "O-PIP."



O.C. (in irate mood)—"Who told you to come here?"

Excited Signaller—"No one, sir, I was brang!"

Slowly and sadly they laid IT down.

The brigade lines were somewhat astounded the other night by the sombre notes of the Dead March. Everyone turned out to see what had gone wrong.

— Wending its way slowly down the path was a funeral procession arranged by the 66th Undertaking parlors. During the day some of the Hash had died and the undertakers were called upon to bury the dead.

The hearse consisted of the front of a piano supported by two sorrowful looking individuals. The corpse looked peaceful, from a distance, reposing on a nicely shined China plate. It was surrounded by flowers, testifying to the esteem in which it was held. The knife and fork, its fighting implements, were reversed. In rear followed the principal mourners, the ones who had been deprived of their rations. Everyone was humming the doleful march and several pans, beaten heartily by the cooks, produced the bass notes.

Owing to the parson taking a sudden cramp the burial did not take place and was postponed for a day. It was found necessary, however, to cremate the remains before that hour arrived.



Even the O's.C. are falling.

We have often heard of poor gunners and drivers and, occasionally, an N.C.O., falling by the wayside, but we hardly ever expected to learn of an officer becoming enwrapped in the charms of a young, coy maiden. We are sorry to relate that such has been the case, however.

One beautiful spring day a certain Battery—we refrain from mentioning the name—left Camp to bivouac at Petworth. But the Battery did not reach its destination, for on the way the O.C. in making his reconnaissance stumbled across a beautiful young lady.

What followed we are not in a position to state, but the Battery bivouaced close to where the meeting occurred, and the captain was in charge for the most of the time.

It's a great war!



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.—We wish the soldiers in Witley Camp to understand that we wash clothes only and not rags.

—Washerwomen's Union, Surrey.



"O-Pip" wishes to extend its thanks to Captain Jones, of the Y.M.C.A., for placing the paper on sale in No. 4 Hut.

You all know the orderly room sergeants, the fellows who pay no attention to "Reveille" or "Lights Out," who tell the O's.C. how to run their batteries, who have more swank than the quartermaster-sergeants and who wear a brass gun above their stripes, more highly polished than the regular No. 1's who have batmen.

Well it was in the interest of the brigade that one of these gay living fellows should put in a week at the brigade offices. One was selected and told to report to the adjutant. He did so.

"So you have come over to help us out," remarked the adjutant.

"But I can't do it very well, because I have a two days' pass next week," announced the orderly room sergeant.

"Well I guess we can stop the war for the week then," mused the adjutant who thoroughly enjoyed the sergeant's displeasure.



Can anyone answer this ?



Owing to exigencies caused by the war it has been found necessary to curtail the activities of all horseflesh. When the ribs of our long-faced friends began to look like lattice work it was regarded as time to keep them out of harness as much as possible and secure the choicest pastures for them. This has been done.

But how about the human race? Of course the war has made our rations look like a poor man's breakfast and its marvellous how well we look on them. But what we wish to know is, why are our working hours increased when our rations are cut down? At one time "Reveille" was at 6 a.m., fairly respectable, then it slipped back to 5.30 a.m. and now it is 5 a.m., and they haven't found any pastures for us!

Good luck to the horseflesh. Get all you can. We'll suffer!

Is there any wonder the boys think of Home, however so humble, as a fairyland.



The Trench Mortar Batteries or Toc Emmas, as they are more commonly called, have been quite worried of late. Previously they were the most cheerful bunch in camp and quite enjoyed life, rising about seven in the morning and playing cards the remainder of the day. But the other day they had a sad awakening when marched back from a pleasant sojourn at Puttenham to groom our long-faced friends in the stables at the unearthly hour of 5 a.m. It has driven some to desperation, and one budding N.C.O. climbs the rafters after "lights out" looking for cuckoos.

How proud they must have been, but we--

Following that grand battle at Vimy Ridge during which so many gallant Canadians fell, rumor was rife in Camp that at last the Fifth Division was to move over to France to fill in the gaps. But in Canada the authorities actually sent the Division to the front, and the newspapers devoted much space and glaring headlines to the announcement. In a certain paper which has just reached us we read the following despatch, beneath a seven column heading:

"Ottawa, April 27.—The Fifth Canadian Division, which is in command of Major-General Garnet Hughes, son of the former minister of militia, has been moved from England to France to fill the gap caused by the battle of Arras."

How proud the folks at home must have felt when they realized that their youthful warriors were at last in France. Letters have arrived wishing us the best of luck and hoping that we will hurry up and finish the War. But—

Well, here we are! Carrying on with fatigues until we have converted "C.F.A." into the "Canadian Fatigue Artists." Our "active service" consists of white-washing everything from a black-head to our walking-out suits; grooming horses till their hair falls out; renovating tennis courts and establishing croquet courts; pulling up all the weeds that dare intrude in our lines; and once and awhile take a look at the guns and wagons just to recall what they look like.

On June 23rd it was exactly nine months since we staggered into Witley.

My! but they will be proud of us at home!!



Orderly officer, visiting mess-room. "Any Complaints?"

Driver. "Yes, sir! look at this!" and he exhibited a plateful of rice.

O.O. "Well, what's wrong with that."

Driver. "Why, there's a dozen and one maggots in it, sir."

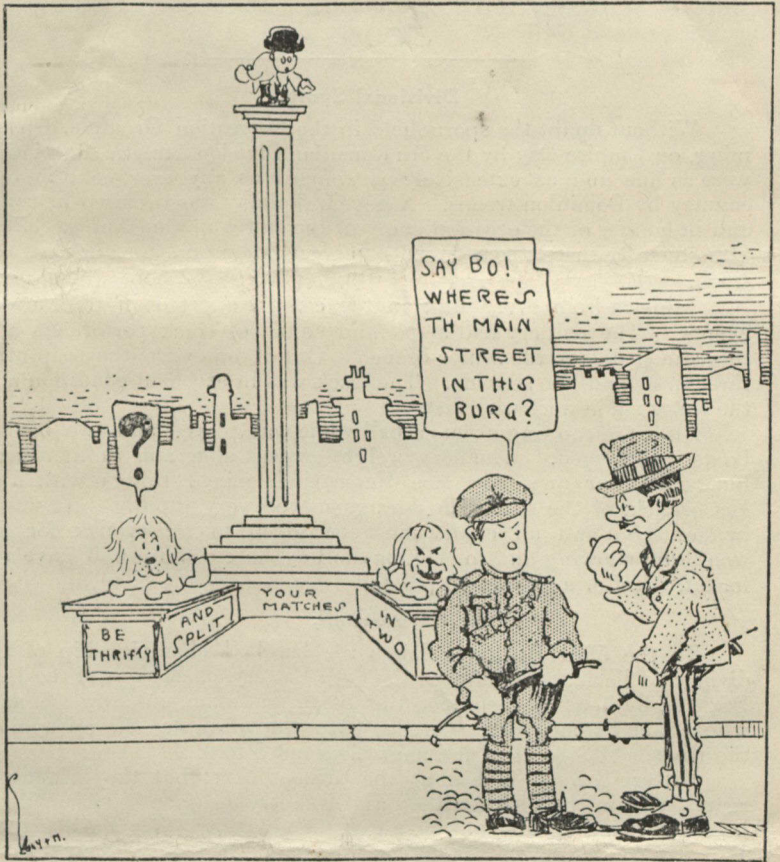
O.O. "Well, you can't blame that on the cook you know."

Driver. "I know that sir, but they might as well cook them properly."



It is surprising how things change. A few months ago one Englishman greeted another something like this: "Well, how are you, how's the missus and the kiddies?"

Now they greet one another something like this: "Well, John, how are your potatoes today?"



The Stable Girl.

After considerable deliberation, the Staff of the "O-Pip" has decided on the winners of "The Stable Girl" competition. Miss Alice E. Luff, of Milford, wins the first prize, and Miss Hilda M. Roberts, of Godalming, the second.

A large number of answers were received, and the young ladies—although we must confess it looked as if some male minds had been at work on the job—seemed to have a fair idea of the harness used in the artillery. Most of the competitors furnished fairly full and accurate answers and it was a case of deciding the winners on technical points.



Sports.



Divisional Sports.

Without doubt the sports held in the Recreation Grounds, Godalming, on Empire Day by the 5th Canadian Division Athletic Association were as fine and as extensively patronized as any ever held in this country by Dominion troops. A general holiday was declared in camp and in honour of the occasion many of the stores in Godalming closed, Consequently there was a crowd of several thousand surrounding the track.

Athletes from every unit in the camp competed in the various events. The artillery had a splendid squad of track performers and they did justice to the senior branch. Out of ten events they captured three firsts and five seconds. The track was in excellent condition and the times made were very fast.

After the running events a ball game was played and two boxing bouts were staged. The heavyweight go was slow and uninteresting but when our own boy Moe Herscovitch mixed things with Boy McCormick, of the Imperials, things moved very rapidly. It was a brilliant bout and all credit must be given to McCormick for his wonderful showing and to Moe for the way he stood up and gave tit-for-tat. McCormick won on points.

Baseball.

To the 53rd Battery belongs the baseball championship of the division. Their team defeated the 60th Battery, champions of the 14th Brigade, by 6 to 2, then met the 104th Battalion, infantry pennant winners, and won 9 to 2. On May 24th the 53rd stacked up against the Divisional Signallers and shut them out 5 to 0.

Battery baseball is dead at the present time, but the brigade is represented in the 14th Artillery and Infantry League. The artillery boys are travelling fine and have won the six games they have played. This battery is well represented on the team. It is quite likely that the 14th Brigade and 13th Brigade nines will clash as they are both leading their respective leagues. We lost out last time but hope to turn the tables this trip.

Football.

On Empire Day the soccer championship of the division was decided. The D.A.D. crack team met the 134th Battalion and the foot-sloggers won out by 2 goals to 1. It was a fair game and the infantry boys showed rather good form.

Tennis.

The Athletic Committee of the battery has found its way clear to purchase considerable tennis equipment and our officers have succeeded in securing a court. Mrs. Grey, of Holly Cottage, Milford, has very kindly placed her court at our disposal, and the kindness is greatly appreciated by the boys. Everyone is taking an interest in the sport and several cinder court flyers have been discovered.

Swimming.

The small pond at the northern extremity of the camp is the official "swimming 'ole" and when the opportunity offers, the men swarm to this secluded spot and play the game of "last man with his hat off." The cool waters feel very refreshing these warm days

In the recent swimming tournament held at Aldershot the C.F.A. had four representatives on the water polo team which represented the Aldershot command and defeated the R.N.A.S. for the championship by three to one.

Soft Ball.

A soft-ball league has been commenced and it is truly exciting. Of course this battery is represented in it and our boys brought home their first scalp the other night when they won by a score of 26 to 14 from the Divisional Signallers. The league promises to be a great success.



Camp News.




Lieut.-Col. A. T. Ogilvie, C.F.A., assumed the duties of C.R.A. 5th Canadian Division, on May 26th, vice Brigadier-General W. O. H. Dodds, C.M.G. having proceeded to Canada on leave. Major W. M. J. Martin, R.G.A. attached C.F.A., assumed the duties of Commanding Officer, 14th Brigade, C.F.A., vice Lieut.-Col. A. T. Ogilvie.


The activities in camp during the past month have been very limited, perhaps because it has been too hot to do much. The various batteries of the division have spent considerable time on bivouac. The 58th Battery together with the 60th Battery, camped at Little Frensham Pond and had a pleasant four days. The weather was ideal. Not only the men but the horses enjoyed the bathing facilities at Frensham, even though mud was quite prevalent in the water.

The Trench Mortar Battery camped on Cutmill Common for a couple of weeks and the Divisional Ammunition Column have been at Petworth for the last fortnight. The 13th Brigade like the 14th Brigade have been bivouacing all over the country. In the very near future the 14th Brigade anticipated a week's bivouac at Petworth.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, June 19th and 20th, Brigadier General R. F. Fox, Inspector-General of Royal Horse and Royal Field Artillery, inspected this Division. The 13th and 14th Brigades carried out detailed schemes on Frensham and Hankley Commons. The Brigade was inspected in tactical and technical reconnaissance, occupation of positions and wagon lines, section gun drill and communications. The Trench Mortar Batteries were inspected at section gun drill, signalling and at work on Trench Mortar Emplacements. At Petworth Camp, the Inspecting Officer inspected the D.A.C. on the March Past, at stables and anti-gas drill.



At Last a Hero.



Since it has not been our privilege to visit the front very few deeds of heroism have been entered in the log of the Battery. So when by chance one happens to hear of the bravery of a modest member of the Battery, or better still, by one of our dashing officers, we consider it worthy of mention; so please do not think us too boastful or childish. Let us speak of our new hero!

During the fine weather, not long ago, our hero trotted his lady-love down to the River Wey, hired a canoe and found the necessary advance money to deposit on it. Of course there is nothing unusual in that. We all do it and the Censor says nothing.

It was a beautiful night: the moon was shining, a nightingale was singing, and the world seemed at peace, and down that "mighty" water-way drifted a canoe, apparently empty. It was a love-ly night!

Then something happened. The young lady wanted to paddle, her reason for doing so we know not. Then something more happened. This prettily dressed damsel went headlong into the river and in a minute two shoes appeared and then a little bit of silk.

The stage was ready for our hero. He was as cool as a mulatto in July. Off came his coat, his hat. But it was not necessary for him to jump in. He reached his gasping friend and pulled her out. Even then our hero's presence of mind did not leave him, for he wrapped his lady-love up in his coat, stopped a passing motor car and disappeared. We have our suspicions as to who it was!

God bless the officers' mess!




Sub-Lieut., one of these pretty little boys with rosy cheeks and a baseball moustache and almost eighteen: "I sigh there! you didn't salute me when you passed."


Canadian. "No, sir."

Sub-Lieut. "How's that, then?"

Canadian. "Say, sonny, just write home to your Mother and tell her you've seen a real soldier."

Stop Press.



We have been informed over our "Greased Wire" by our special correspondent at the War Office that as a result of the recent inspection held by the Inspector-General the 14th Brigade is to undergo nine months more training in England, and that the 13th Brigade is to return to Canada.