

The Nervy Nine

There were eight with me at Valcartier,
 Nine of us all in a tent.
 I could tell you the name of ev'ry one;
 Of every single son of a gun.
 (And they've all gone somehow one by one
 Like the ten little nigger boys went.)
 But *you* wouldn't know Big Ben from Jim,
 Or "Shorty" from Sam, or "Red" from "Slim"
 And even Long Alec, you wouldn't know *him*,
 So my breath would be miss-spent.

There were nine of us camped at West Down South,
 And nine of us crossed to France;
 And we grew to savvy each other's gaits
 When all of a sudden we fouled the Fates,
 And the only one left of all my mates
 Is me by the grace of Chance.
 In one short week there were four went West,
 Four of the whitest, four of the best.
 Pushing up daisies with all of the rest
 That fell in the big advance.

Then Alec got his in a bomb attack
 And he'll never scrap again.
 He's over in Blighty merry and bright,
 Lucky, poor chap, it wasn't his right;
 We simply could *not* get him in that night,
 As he lay out there in the rain.
 Then "Red" bobs up and gets himself hit,
 And tough as he is, I was scared a bit;
 But we'll see him again when they pass him fit
 For the reinforcement train.

Then Ben and "Slim" went for officer's jobs,
 (How they love a Sam Browne belt!)
 Now I guess I could beat 'em both out of sight
 In holding my men in the thick of a fight;
 But I only just know how to read and write
 And I'm damned if I ever spelt.
 But Ben has dropped an "h" in his life,
 And I've seen him eat his peas with a knife,
 And the other guy, "Slim", has some kind of a wife,
 And *that's* where the pinch is felt!

And so I am left alone of the bunch.
 (They called us the Nervy Nine.)
 If I have my eye on an old Blighty now,
 Do you blame me boys, if I feel somehow
 A trifle fed up, and sick of the row
 And the fag of the firing line?
 Ah, if they could only come back again,
 The men that I knew on Salisbury Plain!
 But they won't, so I guess I must stand the strain
 Till the Germans give me mine.

—R.M.E.

Trench Nursery Rhymes

Private Horner, found in a corner,
 A box labelled S.R.D.
 But he said, — (yes, he did)
 When he lifted the lid,
 And found it contained M.&V.

Captain Muldoon has lost his platoon,
 And doesn't know where to find 'em;
 But leave 'em alone, and they'll come
 home,
 When the estaminets close behind 'em.

Private Horner, sat in a corner,
 Handling a Mills Grenade.
 With a silly old grin,
 He pulled out the pin —
 He was absent from next parade.

Popular Parodies

Air: "Bring back my Bonnie to me"

To the soldier there's only only one "Blighty",
 It lies just across the blue sea;
 It may neither be massive or mighty,
 But 'tis home and 'tis Blighty to me.

Refrain: Bring back, bring back.
 Oh bring back Blighty to me.

My diet of cheese, stew, and Bully;
 Ot Tickler's plum jam and weak tea,
 Assists me to realize fully
 The meaning of Blighty to me.

Last night as I lay in my dug-out.
 My corporal affectionately
 Tucked in my old blankets and kissed me.
 And oh, 'twas like Blighty to me.

How often I've longed for old Blighty,
 When unable to get a night's rest,
 For the "Itchy Cou" under my "nighty"
 A-holding parades on my chest.

At three on a wild wintry morning,
 When it's wet and so dark you can't see.
 As to Blighty in dreams I'm returning.
 Reveille sounds rotten to me.

Having mopped up the floor with my sergeant
 And "strafed" good and hard my O.C.,
 To hear the "Court" say, "Shot at Sunrise",
 Makes Blighty look distant to me.

When shells all round me are dropping,
 And chunks of cast iron go free,
 With machine guns and rifles a-popping,
 It looks like a Blighty for me.

Then roll on the day when to Blighty,
 We're speeding across the blue sea,
 Having strung up the Kaiser so tight he
 Will never more cut himself free.

—W.D.D.

The Twa Dogs
(Not Burns' Twa)

Lines written on the occasion of two dogs invading a barn,
 temporarily being used as a church through lack of a more
 suitable place, during church service.

Ye blastit curs, hae ye nae grace,
 Tae caper sae i' the sacred place;
 Dae ye nae ken the man o' God,
 Tae Heaven showin' us the road?
 Puir beasties, nae, your canine souls,
 Pant in skins as black as coals,
 Canna thole that this auld shed,
 Whaur likely ye were born an' bred,
 An' whaur ye chassit nimmle rats,
 Or supped, (I dinna think,) on Spratts,
 Is noo the temple o' the sodgers,
 An' ither purgatory dodgers.

And wad ye desecrate the legs
 O' him wha Heaven's blessing begs.
 Wha feels ye scrub agen his shanks,
 An' slyly kicks yer flittin' flanks.
 Ye'll slip—I'll wager mony dollars—
 Yon hauns ootstretched tae grup yer collars;
 The deil's within ye baith I trow,
 Ye gaur the padre mop his brow.

Ay, noo yer catchit, graceless pair,
 This nicht ye'll trouble us nae mair:
 The temple money-changer's late
 Is yours, ootside ye noo maun wait.

—W.D.D.