

"FORM FOURS"  
(A Volunteer's Nightmare)

If you're Volunteer Artist or Athlete, or if you  
defend the Home,  
You sacrifice "Ease" for "Attention", and march  
like a metronome;  
But of all elementary movements you learn in your  
Volunteer Corps  
The one that is really perplexing is known as the  
Forming of Fours.

Imagine us numbered off from the right -- the  
Sergeant faces the squad,  
And says that the odd files do not move -- I  
never seem to be odd!  
And then his instructions run like this (very  
simple in black and white) --  
"A pace to the rear with the left foot, and one  
to the right with the right."

Of course if you don't think deeply, you do it  
without a hitch;  
You have only to know your right and left, and  
remember which is which;  
But as soon as you try to be careful, you get in  
the deuce of a plight,  
With "a pace to the right with the left foot,  
and one to the rear with the right!"

In my dreams the Sergeant, the Kaiser, and  
Kipling mix my feet,  
Saying "East is left, and Right is Might, and  
never the twain shall meet!"  
In my nightmare squad all files are odd, and their  
Fours are horribly queer,  
With "a pace to the left with the front foot, and  
one to the right with the rear!"