

Section. Their efforts in the past have been always of the highest quality. We give this with due apologies to Robert Service.

A Ballad of the Aid-Post.

A bunch of the boys were whooping it up in the aid-post up the line,
The guy that handles the pills and dope was juggling a number nine,
Canada Bill was raising hell—had a bad cold in his head—
And beside the stove was a rummy cove, the cook that's known as "Red."

When out of the night, which was dark and wet, and into the candle glare,
There stumbled a soldier fresh from the line, dog dirty, and much worse for wear,
He looked like a man with one foot in the grave, and scarcely the strength of a louse,
Yet he asked for rum, and tried mighty hard to clean up the eats in the house.

Till at last a tin of Mackonockie's fell in the way of his weary gaze.
The Asperin King was mixing some dope for a guy with pains in his dome,
So the stranger stumbles across the room and makes himself at home.
He says, "tres bon," the pain is gone, he's recovered the use of his feet,
And he digs right in to that ration tin—My God! but that man could eat!

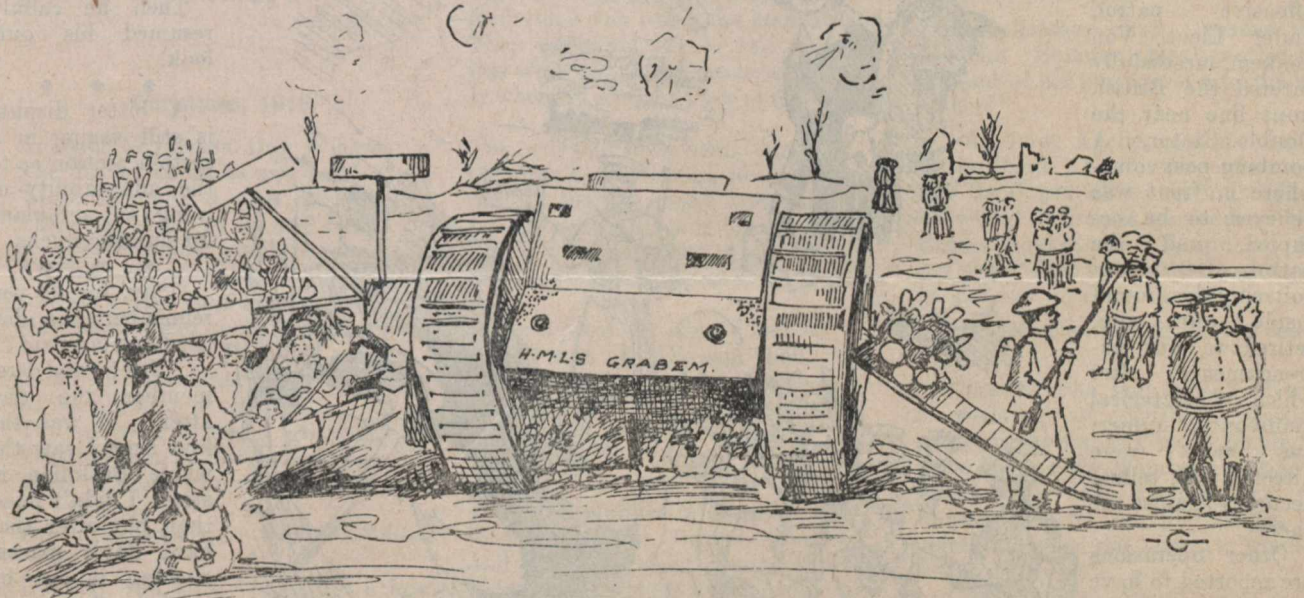
Were you ever down at the aid-post, when the sick parade is there?
They have pains in the head, and pains in the back, and pains nigh everywhere.

The M.O. looks with a piercing eye at a guy that's feeling bum,
And says, "Give him a dose of castor oil, and make him believe it's rum.
What he wants is no fatigue, and for work he is not keen,
The stuff he gets will make him hustle—soon wipe him off the scene."

Another guy comes slouching in, he looks quite worn and sad;

My God! there's another face to feed, some more hot drinks to make,
How in Hell can I get twelve rations, from a quarter of a pound of steak?
When will I get my morning sleep? who'll fill the water can?
I'm damned if I'll do all the work in the shack, for such a wolf-hungry clan."
"Quit your grouching, you ugly red-headed mutt—you're doped—take another pill;
This place is as cheerful as a morgue after dark," says the water-king, "Canada Bill."

"I came up here for to do my bit, to fill up the water cans,
You don't know you're living, you're full of prunes, you're a poor bunch of 'also-rans,'
"Back to cold-foot farm for yours, you lop-eared son of a gun."
Such was the line of talk they used, it would shock a parson's son,
And so they swore, and swore some more, until the air was full;



The new Reaper and Binder attachment to the Tanks (Patent pending).

There was none of us there could see anything wrong, though it looked as if his brains were nil,
But we gave him a chair, and he flopped himself down, alongside of Canada Bill.

There's men in our crush that hate just like hell, to handle a shovel and pick,
And such one was he, and he looked to me like a man who was bluffing it sick;
He tried, it was plain, to work up a pain, his feet he could hardly lift,
And a voice soon rang out, with a harsh jeering shout, "Good Lord, this is Canada's gift!"
Then I got to figuring out who he was, and if he had lost his head.
And I turned, and hawk-eyed, watching him, was the cook that's known as "Red."

His eyes went rubbering round the room, and he seemed in a kind of daze,

"What's your complaint this morning man, you're looking rather bad?"
"I'm feeling pretty tough, Sir," says he, "they're working us far too hard,
I'd like to have my name engraved on a nice field medical card,
I've got fourteen different ailments,—outside of that I'm feeling fine."
The M.O. says, "Let's see your tongue—give him a number nine."

Another limp figure soon follows him in, his face is a pinkish hue,
He's been out three weeks, and sorry he came; temperature: hundred and two.
"You're all right, my lad, just a touch of the grippe, a common condition, indeed;
Stay here for a day and keep yourself warm, a rest is all you need."
A curse is heard from the kitchen, a man falls out of bed,
It's the Dixie Kid that handles the hash, the cook that's known as "Red."

With a Ross they couldn't hit a barn, but they sure could shoot the bull.

Then the stranger turned, and his eyes they burned in a most peculiar way,
He had cleaned up all the eatables, and was getting ready to stay.
Then his lips went in with a kind of a grin, and he spoke and his voice was calm,
And "Boys," says he, "You don't know me, and none of you give a damn,
I'm working my ticket, I've enjoyed the feed; to make things more cheerful still,
Let's start up something—an argument—to hell with "Canada Bill."

Then I ducked my head, and the light went out, something went through the door,
Milk cans flew, and tea bags too, and someone flopped on the floor;
We picked him up at the end of the scrap, he looked as if he were dead,