

Our 100 Mile Hike

It doesn't sound very inviting does it? But we started off with some peculiar feelings. All along the line you could hear "About three days will do it," "Its crazy," and different expressions, according to the spirits of the men. The first day was the worst, that is to say that we did not know exactly what was going to happen, but when things loosened up why the boys just took to the road like veterans. Pirbright I think was in the vicinity of our first bivouac and you would not think that the boys had been marching all day by the way they patronized different institutions in that locality. Up early in the morning we were soon off on the tramp again, everybody looking as though they were going to a picnic instead of about sixteen miles of hard road to cover. If our Brigadier had ordered the weather he could not have had it nicer, for the mornings were simply all that could be wanted to put the boys in the best of spirits. Leaving our first rest our esteemed culinary expert, Jap Sprung, was trying to enquire the way to a certain burg when his wheel became a little balky and the lady was so nice that Jap just "fell" for her. Nothing more exciting occurred on the road and on Sunday noon we arrived at Daggersfield Park. Of course I might say that the transport section clung to the dear old adage "The longest way round is the shortest way home." Sergt. Porter met his old S. M., who is living in a very comfortable and convenient place, and I suppose they went over old times. I just forget the name of the sign, but anyway it would look good to anybody on a hot day. Right after dinner the boys set out to find the nearest town. I think this is the first rule of a bivouac provided you are not "Out of Bounds." They found Odiham, Fleet and I think another little town somewhere around, and all seemed very well pleased at the find as we were to stay until Tuesday morning. Monday

was a holiday, of course you know a soldier's holiday consists of an inspection and a few other details that are not too bad when you get used to them, but they take getting used to. I have heard it said that Chippy Chapman was the most popular chap in camp but I don't think it emphasized to such an extent as on this trip, and I think Monday was his great day. Odiham looked like nothing compared with Chippy's little stand. Two of the boys thought they would like to be back on the old job for a while and set off to help a farmer. This was about eleven o'clock and of course he was glad of their help and they worked well until noon when the farmer told them to go and get dinner and refreshments. I think the farmer is still looking for them. I think it was a revelation to the inhabitants of Odiham when the boys marched through next morning. A brigade may not sound a lot, but when you stand and watch them pass why it is different. For step and all-round appearance give me the 160th, not because I am at all prejudiced but for straight candid facts. I stood on the road in Odiham and watched them all go through and you would never think that our boys had been sleeping at the "Star Hotel" for the past four nights. Great credit to them I say, and our band, much as it is criticised by "some," is the only one that can get the right tune in the right place and they sure had it there. The march from Odiham was great and we had dinner just outside Alton. I think I voice the sentiments of the whole crowd when I say that Alton was as nice a little place as we went through, and a bivouac there would have been a big success. It being market day everyone was out to welcome us and I am sure we did not want for popularity anywhere. This was about our hardest day right through to Oakhanger, and it was sure hot. I don't think many of the boys went out that night, of course the water waggon had to go for a little route march on its own to Bordon, and there was some mighty straffing done in that section.