

own shell cartridges. The shell had landed fairly on top of the spot where their gun had stood, where the empty cartridge cases had been flung in a heap from the breech. If they had been ten or twenty seconds later in getting clear, if they had taken a few seconds longer over the coming into action or limbering up, a few seconds more to the firing of their rounds, the whole gun and detachment . . .

Gunner Donovan leaned across to Mick and shouted loudly, but his remark was so apparently irrelevant that Mick failed to understand. A sudden skidding swerve as the team wheeled nearly jerked him off his seat, the crackling bursts of half a dozen light shells over the plain behind him distracted his attention for a moment further. Then he leaned in towards Donovan. "What was that?" he yelled. "What didjer say?"

Donovan repeated his remark: "Gawd—bless—old 'Cut-The-Time.'"