

AFTERNOON TEA

But all of it's beastly messy; let's talk of pleasanter things,
The skirts that the girls are wearing, ridiculous fluffy things,
So short that they show . . . Oh, hang it!
Well, if I must, I must:
We cleaned out the second trench line, bomb and bayonet thrust,
And on we went to the third one, quite calloused to crumping by now;
And some of our fellows who'd passed us were making a deuce of a row;
And my chaps, well, I just couldn't hold 'em;
(it's strange how it is with gore;
In some ways it's just like whiskey: if you taste it you must have more.)
Their eyes were like beacons of battle; by gad, sir! they couldn't be calmed,
So I headed 'em bang for the bomb-belt, racing like billy-be-damned.
Oh! it didn't take long to arrive there, those who arrived at all;
The machine-guns were certainly chronic, the shindy enough to appal.
Oh, yes, I omitted to tell you, I'd wounds on the chest and the head,
And my shirt was torn to a gun-rag, and my face blood-gummy and red.