

The Bivouac.

FIRST the early reveille,

Then staggering down to stables with blankets and equipment,

Dropping something every few feet and stopping to swear at it.
Hurrah! We're at the stables.

Phew! Throw down these damned things into the picquet stall.

And now for loading my saddle,

Rolling my blanket neatly in straw and cinders and sand

And across the stall

A driver swearing to himself softly and earnestly

Long limber oaths and short snappy ones

Aimed at the horse, the Captain, the Colonel and the Army.

"Hey you! look at your horse

He's stepped on my mess-tin."

The rat-tailed, flat-footed, raw-boned rhinoceros.

Then back for breakfast,

Burnt porridge and cocoa with no sugar in it,

And beans—My God! I almost forgot them.

A wash! A shave! and down again to the stables.

Chaos!! Inferno!!

Everybody re-detailed and no one has a complete outfit

And the Sergeant yapping instructions

For the tenth time—each different.

And the lead-driver, who has lost his feed-bag,

Calls on the gods to avenge him,

While the wheel-driver doubles back to his hut

For a bandolier. The fool!