

The Private

The Private is an animal of the biped species very much similar to an ordinary man, but with a much weaker intellect and usually a stronger back,

The bait used to catch this animal takes the form of a shilling, a few drinks and fair- but untrue promises. It is then lead skillfully by a gayly decorated, smoothtongued, individual - known as a recruiting sergeant; into a red-bricked building in which these animals are tamed and then confined.

The untamed Private, or as he is called by the tamed Privates, "The Rookie or Recruit" is then taken in hand by the trainer.

The qualifications necessary for this position are: - A fluent use of very forceable and lurid language, and a heart made of some substance such as - steel or flint.

It takes from one week to six months to break the spirit of these bipeds but before being handed over to the instructors they are effectually tamed. They are then taken charge of by the instructors or N. C. Os.

The N. C. Os. are usually very kind gentle and sympathetic creatures as they are required to have an unlimited stock of patience in order to Break these animals of weak intellect. The Private being of such weak intellect is not allowed to think for himself and is severely dealt with if it endeavours to do so, but is taught parrot fashion. It is taught mainly to carry things for its masters.

After becoming efficient in all its tricks, it is used in peace times - for exhibition purposes and in times of war - it takes the place of the pack mule, it being evidently the intention of the authorities of doing away with these gentle little quadrupeds. The Private is of great use on long marches for carrying amunition in bandoliers and also musical instruments for the use of its masters.

After further teaching it becomes of great use for the purpose of digging trenches and ditches especially at night time as it is found that these creatures work better during the hours of darkness than during daylight.

Very few of them have been able to escape, those which have been caught in the attempt have been made an example of for the benefit of the other Privates.

It is wonderful how attached they become to their masters whom they will follow anywhere, they have even been known to follow them into Estaminets probably for the purpose of protecting them from possible harm.

In time they become so tame that they are sometimes allowed perfect liberty for as long as an hour at a time, without even an N.C.O. in charge of them, but these occasions are very rare.

Perhaps it is unnecessary to finish this description with the information that I myself am a Private.

A. P. OWIT.

Promenade in no mans land, or human snakes in the garden of eden

A slight rustle, and where before was the unbroken tangle of coarse grass a face appeared. T'was a peculiar face - not to say a really ugly face - just an incomplete face. The eyes were there, very much so, in fact the seemed to be trying to be every where at once; a little above they eyes and a little below was there too, and that was all. The rest was not, and it was the rest which was not, which gave it that peculiar look. Suddenly the half-light broadened into brilliance as a Hun flare described its parabola and burst over the spot bringing every shadow into prominence. Looking at the place where the face had shown, it had disappeared. Quickly the flare died out as it had come. Once more the eyes showed and after a quick scrutiny subsided to the ground-level. While the figure of a man moved almost imperceptibly forward with a strange snaky motion propelled by the toes and elbows; the hands were busy holding things. This was the R. O. in case you do not recognise him. Following him with equal stealth, (Mc Queen was not there) came the other followers of UNCAS the MOBICAN. Sixty yards from the enemy parapet they disappeared in a shell hole to develop the night's work.

R. O. "Here A . . y tie a handkerchief around that white bandage its too confoundedly conspicuous."

B . . y "That isnt a bandage sir, that's a white feather he got in a letter today and he's afraid to let go of it."

A . . y (good humouredly) "I'll fairmay your bush if you dont shut up B . . y".

B . . y "Right Oh. Froggie, I was only pulling your leg to see if it was good eats."

R. O. "Now this is the third night we've waited for this post, and if they do not come out tonight I think we can conclude that they have given up the idea of patrolling on this front. We will go a little farther tonight and stick it as long as we can, camped behind their listening post near the outer wire. There is no need to tell you what to do."

A . . y "But Sorrh. Do we have to take them alive".

B . . y "Sure you mutt, then we wont have to bury them." They slither over the edge of the shell hole one by one and work toward the Hun listening post.

A . . n (just before leaving) "Why does the chief wear those handkerchiefs round his head?"

O . . m "I've heard tell as how he thinks he's disguised as a blade of grass".

A . . n "Faith and I didn't think he was as green as all that".

B . . y (consolingly) "Ah. well you're young yet".

The Hun post lay in a depression a short distance outside their wire and between the two the intruders grouped themselves for their long vigil, merging with the grass and bushes until almost indistinguishable. For two hours nothing happened at 10 p.m. a party came over the parapet but did not venture beyond the wire. By midnight the circulation of everyone was at a low ebb, and cramped muscles began to voice a protest.

A . . y shifted his position.

A . . n (whispering) "Phwats the matter with you man"

A . . y "My feet are about frozen."

A . . y "I always thought you ruffered from that complaint".

B . . n "Aw take a man your own size B . . y".

B . . y "Well he would be; leaving out his feet".

R. O. "Look here if you boys cant keep still we might as well go in. I dont think its any use wasting any more time out here, so off you get.

The journey was made quickly and served to warm them up. At the entanglement A . . n got caught and swore at the "Bob wire", with a one o'clock in the morning swear.

B . . y "Its not Bob wier I tell you its Barb wire Barb comes from the Latin word Barbara which means a girl. That's why Cupid used barbs on his arrows".

A . . y "Oh thinking about the girl who sent you the white feather are you?"

B . . y Subsided.

R. O. "Well I guess they are not having any, boys; this is nearly a month since we have seen anything of them outside of their wire."

Inside the parapet he meets M . . B.P

B. P. "Well you're a nice kind of an R. O. you are."

R. O. (stung) "Why, what has happened?"

B. P. "Oh nothing. Just that they bombed our listening post at the other end about an hour ago."

R. O. "Well I'm d d

P. S. D d stands for disgusted. It you dont believe count the dots

P. PS. O . . m does not stand for Ormrod nor conversley does B. P. stand Baden Powell.

The SHADOWS.

Gilbert the Filbert

He volunteered, was loudly cheered
By folks who love a hero,
He sailed to France to take a chance
In climates worse than zero.

He bravely stood the rain and mud
And passed the time in writing,
But what he wrote would get your goat
Its hardly worth reciting.

So what he wrote, we will not quote
Bar one or two pet phrases,
Like "I am well" and "War is h . . ."
And "Sleeping with the daisies".

As time passed by he gave a sigh
And said that war was jolly,
He thought of girls with pretty curls
Like Emily, Gert, and Dolly.