

Extracts from Letter from Lieut. H.E.
Wells (London Staff), dated
17th March, 1918.

"I suppose one seldom thinks of Egypt without thinking of heat and palms and dates and camels, etc., but at the moment of writing the air is quite chilly, a high wind is blowing, carrying some rain with it, and tents are poor resisters of wind, and consequently we are not too comfortable. True, there is sand, and one realizes it the more because of the wind. I am quite sure I would rather face rain than sand. We are situate in what was open desert, with only a little green along the Canal itself about a mile away, and so the camp is open to whatever weather may be about.

"Our journey out was crowded with strange experiences and wonderful sights, and so far the train journey through France and Italy has been the most interesting part of my visit to the East. We were eight days in the train, and travelled through some of the most wonderful parts of those countries. The train skirted Paris and travelled south-east and down the valley of the Rhone, and entered Italy via Monaco, from which you will understand that we passed through the garden of France, and saw some of that wonderful country open to those who have plenty of the world's goods. My greatest trouble was that we were confined to the railway and unable to explore the hundred and one interesting places we passed through. Even when we stopped (as we frequently did) for over an hour, nobody was allowed to leave the stations, and even the buffets on the stations were out of bounds (officially). Another disappointment was that we travelled down the East coast of Italy and not via Rome and Naples. I had looked forward to at least a glimpse of these places but did not get it.

"The journey across from Italy to Alexandria was full of excitement, but we never met any real trouble, it was just alarms. We were out for four days and three nights, and enjoyed reasonably good weather all the time. On one of each of the nights, certain people had to sleep on deck (which was quite agreeable) as a safety precaution. The whole of the voyage we had to have our lifebelts within easy reach: sleep with them under our heads, and for certain parts of the day had to wear them. We were all allotted our places, either in boats or on rafts, and at least twice a day we had to stand to our posts. I was in charge of a raft with five besides myself, and although we had decided what to do in the event of anything happening, I am not sure that we should all have arrived on the raft when in the water.

"My first impression of the country was how very dirty the people and places are, and this feeling has been more or less confirmed. Of course, in large places such as Alexandria and Port Said, there are points which are very fine, but the native quarters, which to us are the more picturesque and interesting, is nothing but dirt and rubbish, one wonders how people can live in it.

"On the whole the troops were well received on the journey, but I have yet to confirm some of the pictures published at home of English troops being loaded with gifts and received with flags; rather, prices seem to have a distinct tendency to mount whenever we wished to purchase anything."

Makes the Supreme Sacrifice.



Rifleman Richard Newberry (London Staff) of the Queen's Westminster Rifles, was killed on March 28th, 1918, before Arras. Mr. Newberry's connection with the Company dates back to 1903. He was at first attached to the Counting House, but later was put in charge of the Spares Order and Invoicing Department. He joined the Colors in March, 1917, and within three months was in France. He was married and leaves a widow and young son.
