

THE CONVOY CALL

Published at Salonika by Permission of Lt. E. C. HART O.C.
No. 5 Canadian General Hospital

(BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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Price 1 Penny

October 26 1916

Volume 1, No. 3

EDITORIAL

The Editor extends his compliments to the readers of this paper and begs to announce that he is glad to be with the boys again although Salonika, as an abiding place, leaves one or two little things to be desired.

Having resuscitated the Regimental paper we have changed its name, by request. This is in response to a general feeling that the name «Blister» was a sort of hoodoo. A Blister, so we are told, has a tendency to burst, which it did. We hope that the difficulty in this respect will be overcome by the adoption of the name «Convoy Call». «Blisters may come and blisters may go, but the Convoy Call goes on for—duration.» If you don't believe it ask any of those who handle the stretchers.

This paper would not be complete without mention of the alterations that have been made and the work that has been done in the past couple of months. The accommodation of the hospital has been increased to 1700 beds and all but one or two of the tent wards have been replaced by huts. All this has necessitated much work, especially as it has been done at a time when the accommodation was taxed to the utmost with severe cases. Moreover it was done during the heat of a Salonika summer, under weather conditions trying to the extreme; conditions that strain the nerves and sapped the stren-

gth until it was an effort to accomplish the smallest necessities. What, then, must have been the labor involved in practically remodelling the establishment while housing and caring for 1700 sick and wounded? All honor is due the officers, nursing sisters and men who stood up under the strain and "carried on" without flinching.

"Impressions on returning to Salonika" is the title of a large volume which the editor is preparing for the edification of those who have never enjoyed that delightful experience.

"When ordered to stand ready for departure from Malta", he says in part, "we did not know where we were going. We were full of hope and rumours. It was published in the Orders of the Day previous that we were to embark on the s. s. — bound for Salonika. But that did not fool us for long. "spies!" a war-worn old "swotty" suggested in a voice charged with significance. That settled it. It was only a blind after all. Nevertheless, with the cold gray dawn of the eventful day, suspicions and unrest returned, and it was with rather woebegone faces that we paraded for medical inspection prior to marching off. One chap was in a terribly bad way. The M. O. slackened pace and shot the question at him, "How do you feel?" Unfortunately the

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"LOOKING BACK"

A SERIAL RETROSPECT—CINEMA RIGHTS RESERVED

The last day of July! To us, who realise that this day marks the anniversary of our mobilisation, what memories come crowding up, each demanding perpetuation in the archives of the Unit. The end of our first year of service (*E pluribus unum*. Heaven forbid!)

It's a far cry from Macaulay Plains to Mikra Point, but one's mind travels back with lightning speed and recalls hundreds of incidents, humorous and otherwise, which are worthy of mention. Those "happy days," when we were all so very new; the dreaded inoculations which seemed never to be at an end — and who will forget the tragic collapse of Sw-n-y reposing his 220 pounds of sunshine in the arms of the comparatively diminutive M. O.? — those dusty route marches to the Gorge, with Sergeant Moss (of Dibgate platoon drill fame) and the versatile Buckley vying with one another in making the welkin ring with bugle chorus; the squad and stretcher drill, interesting until we had mastered it; our laborious rehearsals of ceremonial parade, with the Nursing Sisters ably represented by Corporal Sh-till-w-d, when we "cha-hunned" and saluted till we were black in the face; followed by the whirlwind inspection by General Lessard an event which fell flat, it was so quickly over. We were disappointed as we had looked forward so keenly to the inevitable debacle when one of those weird orders would be given ("Number Five General Hospital will advance in column: right *wheel!*")

But our lot was an easy one—an ideal camp site, abundant water, a bathing beach within a stone's throw, passes plentiful, and the guard tent doing a poor trade in lodgers, weekend leave to Vancouver, and the inner man catered to in proper style. The

memories of those chicken dinners are still with us.

However, all good things must come to an end and our orders to "inspan and rrek" came before we had tired of our Bohemian life.

The P.U. Os. (Poor Unattached Officers) arrived, a motley crew—also the Nursing Sisters with their quaint uniforms (Salvation-Army-hussar-improved pattern). Our chief joy, in those latter days, was to loll outstretched on the hot, burnt grass and gaze in admiration on the evolutions of the "unattached" being put through their paces (literally) in the intricacies of squad-drill under the firm guidance of the S.M.

We—platoonists of the first order—could afford to smile tolerantly at the tyros' efforts.

And don't forget the panorama photograph with its "we about-to die-salute-thee" air on the girlish faces of so many of our Sisters; a tragic picture truly. But our good-bye concert was a sock-dollager and no mistake. A perfect evening, all our friends about us, eats and drinks in plenty, everything lovely. And again the stalwart Robert is to the fore—"The King, carry on with the King!" A delightful "judy-spree."

Every day now brings our departure nearer, and at last the fateful day arrives. The morning of August 21st. found our camp looking for all the world like a Brobdignagian anthill, the tents having been struck the night before.

Our friends from the Fort believed in literally speeding the parting guest, and our woodpile, home-made furniture and in fact anything laid down for a moment was lost to sight to memory dear, before you could say "knife."

The "Fall-in" sounds and we are off. We are met at the foot of Johnston street by the 5th Regt. band and our's is some triumphal process, cinema'd, shouted, sobbed and sung, we turned into Govern-

ment street, met the Sisters at the Drill Hall, and were given God-speed by the largest crowd that ever overweighed the C.P.R. wharf. No time is lost at the dock and we march on board the "Princess Mary" and hurriedly scramble to some point of vantage whence we carry on a conversation with our friends (neither hearing them nor being heard, the noise is so deafening) during the half hour before the whistle. Sharp on time at 10.30 the order is given to cast off. Shall we ever forget that send-off? The largest crowd which ever squeezed on the dock, bands playing, a splendid day, whistles and syrens shrieking bon-voyage, and our smart little escort, a speedy naval power boat from Esquimalt, which cut across our bows like a porpoise at play. The same enthusiastic reception at Vancouver, though here a sober, more restrained good-bye. We entrain at once and pull out on the trans-continental part of our overseas journey. Luckily no one is left behind.

(To be continued)

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

The past few months have seen quite a few changes in the personnel of No 5. Sickness and leave account for the departure to other climes of some 14 Officers, 19 Nursing Sisters, 5 Sergeants, 14 Corporals and 7 Men. This does not include the men who have been away and have returned.

The following summary gives the present whereabouts of the departed ones as accurately as we have been able to locate them: Captain Bonnell has resumed practice in Fernie B.C; Major Proctor has been lecturing on The War in B. C. and, we understand, is to be O. C. of the Convalescent Hospital for returned soldiers; Captain McKee—it is said he has

returned to England on duty again; Captain Boucher—practising again in Vancouver; Lieut Col. McTavish—left recently for England; Major Patterson—last heard of in England; Captain Lewin—on duty again at Shorncliffe Military Hospital; Captain Lindsay—at the Perkins-Bull Hospital for Convalescent Canadian Officers, Putney Heath, London, S. W.; Captain Winch—with his family in Vancouver; Captain Lionais—when last heard of was recuperating in the Maine Woods; Captain Nicholson—Vancouver; Major Munro—Vancouver; Captain Watson—England; Captain Day—England, awaiting transfer to France; Lieut. Morrisson—on leave in England. Nursing Sisters Birkett, Smith, Stevenson, McLennan, Brennan and Bruce are on sick leave in England. Those on duty in other hospitals are as follows: N.S. Playford, Folkestone; Tripp and Blott, Buxton; Campbell, Bushy Park; Alexander, France, No 2 Stationary; Boyes, Taplow; Newmeyer, Moore Barracks, and Keppel, Ramsgate. N. S. 's Thomas, Brenton and Fraser are also on leave. N. S. Milligan has been married in England and it is said that N. S. Cobbe, who is in Canada, is contemplating the same step. Of the N.C.O.'s and men Sergt. Thompson, Cpl. Bamber, Mitcheson, Bates and Oldfield are still in Malta as far as is known. Bates has taken a staff job there. Sgt. Metcalfe is back at Uxbridge and S. Sgt. Jones, Cpl. Ely and Ptes. Ritchie, Smith and Hatch are at the Shorncliffe Training Depot. Sgt. Taylor is in Vancouver drilling the 18th F. A. Cpl. Winslow is somewhere in England. The whereabouts of the others is shrouded in mystery.

What about that vote on the Prohibition referendum?

SPORTS OF ALL SORTS

LEAGUE FOOTBALL

There has been talk of the organization of a Football League for the Season about to commence and it would be good business from every point of view if such a league were inaugurated. If only the three Canadian Hospitals entered, a keenly contested series would surely ensue and other entries might be obtained. Now is the time to get to work on the matter if anything is to be done. The writer knows for an absolute fact that No 1 Stationary is very keen for a League Series and he has also been creditably informed that the No 1 Boys can turn out a cracking good team. No 5 did wonderfully well last season, but they will have to look to their laurels.

PRACTICE GAME

An interesting football match (not from the spectators' point of view) was played Sunday afternoon October 7 th. between A. & B. Teams of No 5.

The game started with the wind in favour of "A" Team, which showed their forwards up to good advantage. Unfortunately "Big Bill" (at full back) was gassed early in the game, it is thought from too much previous training! Georgü Scottü was "off" from the start and despite numerous changes of position really never got on to his game. "B"

team from a splendid corner by Jeff Baker scored per Carpenter Turner a really good goal.

In the second half, the wind being in favour of "B" team they did well in many respects, but they could not get their first cl forward line working in proper combination. Unfortunately they were handicapped by one of their full backs, who was too talkative. Consequently "Little Mac" scored a brilliant goal. In the latter part of this half the game was played entirely on one "Wing" (not Daddy), leaving the other wing completely "Straffed."

Despite the poor showing made by the two teams, it is thought that an enthusiastic manager would find good material for a first class team, and that with a fair amount of training (not Canteen) No 5 can still hold its unbroken record, in spite of P. U. O. and minor ailments. We have got the goods and they only need showing.

A RETROSPECT

Well, when all is said and done little old No 5 put in quite a lively summer, that is most of us who took part in, or were interested in, the various sporting activities in which we were able to indulge.

Some took a chance at lacrosse, others baseball, a limited number at tennis, and most of us at swimming, though quite a bunch stuck around the shower baths for the last named sport.

Considerable difficulty was experienced in getting competit

from outside units but that didn't hold us back, for nearly every week a game of lacrosse or baseball was arranged between Officers and Men and some keen old contests took place and some splendid material was developed. At lacrosse we took on No. 1 Canadians and trimmed a good bunch of sports in a match that interested hundreds of patients, many of whom hadn't seen our national game before.

The same unit entertained our baseball boys and the 5 men slipped it to them again. They were splendid hosts and surely know how to set up a feed. Quite late in the season the Officers of the Twentieth Stationary Hospital (English) challenged our Officers to a game of Lacrosse, but as the time drew near they withdrew.

On the anniversary of leaving Victoria, an afternoon of aquatic sports was arranged and "some" time was had. It is a wonder where all the swimmers and divers sprang from, for there were scores taking part and competition was very keen. They say that a pig doesn't take kindly to the water and that while swimming it will cut its throat, but that boy "Piggy Pottinger" belied his name for he is a fish in the water and cleaned up the classic events in great style.

If one looks into the matter carefully he will find that with very few exceptions those who were active in sport all spring and summer were blessed with good health and were more contented with conditions than they otherwise would have been.

OUR REPUTATION

As one who has knocked about in Camps where were congregated the majority of the sick and wounded who have passed through Salonika, I would like to remark that the Canadians here at Salonika have reason be proud of the reputation they have earned. Everywhere on this front they are held in high esteem by the troops, who cannot say too much for the care and attention they received at the hands of the Canucks. Invariably the first question put to me would be "Are you from one of the Canadian Hospitals?" and, on replying in the affirmative, I would immediately get the "glad hand". "These Canadian Hospitals are all right" they would say, "I was in the 5 th., (or 4th. or 1st. as the case might be) and it certainly was cushy. They treated me fine, all of them, Doctors, Nurses, and Orderlies." This, too; from men who are not accustomed to wasting words in praise of anything; from men who are influenced by nothing but the purest appreciation.

MIXED EATS

A patient wrote home a long letter in praise of the treatment he received in No 5 Canadian General Hospital. He wrote a long list of the delicacies served out to the patients at each meal, not forgetting to add "Salt and Pepper." The orderly at work down the ward received a loud verbal order from the Nursing Sister at the other end, "Give so-and-so a "T" bandage and let him help himself" and the thankful patient added to the already long list of goodies. "I am just going to have a Tea bandage, Mother."

Still he has nothing on the patient who, thinking to steal a march on the orderly A. J., lifted and downed a big tablespoonful of green soap from a bowl in mistake for Calves Foot Jelly.

BETWEEN YOU AND I

"Fellows, what say we hire a boat and go for a row in the bay?"
Voice from the shadows—"Look out or you'll lose your seniority before you get back."

Well, I'll be gosh darned, no swearing in the Canteen!

Sister B 10 p.m. "Well, I've been on the go right up to this blessed minute, and all wounded cases." [This is a good one for the home papers.]

One can imagine the feelings of A.B.M.—when "at dead of night with the lantern dimly burning," after repeatedly asking a stretcher case his name, the patient suddenly disclosed a villainous, hairy face and shouted "Bull gar." A.B. has never been quite the same since.

A. and D. clerk coaxingly, "Initial, please," "Hytech," "Initial, please," "Hytech," "Oh, aitch for Henry," "No, Hytech for 'Arry."

The height of disappointment—
A clean shave and no inspection.

The height of nerve—to lie in bed after "lights out," too lazy to get up to put the light out, and then when the O.S. comes round to tell you all about it, to ask him

"Please sergeant, would you mind putting the light out?"

Talking about the reputation of the hospital a certain officer (not of this unit) is said to have his mail addressed "No 5 C. G. H. Salonica, Overlooking the Sea." Lovely, isn't it? After the war is over why not continue right on as a health resort?

That wash tub came just in time. Our clothes were really beginning to get a little dirty.

We quite agree with the a-j-t that the fire hose needs fixing. It is inconvenient, not to say uncomfortable, when the chemical spurts out from such unexpected places.

A LITTLE SERVICE, PLEASE

Scene: Sergeants' Mess. Present: Several visitors from neighboring camps. They were discussing certain military laws when suddenly there boomed through the marquee the gentle tones of a Caledonian visitor:

"Jones, ye've nae right to speak in the matter. Your regiment has hardly been in the service at awe. Ye've only been established for twa hunner year!"

Then the Staff of No 5 (who had been ventilating their opinions) began with one accord to crawl under the table.

It is rumored that after the taking of kit inventories is completed the Q. M. is going to issue kilts to the members of the A & D and Orderly Room Staffs.

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shock caused a temporary loss of voice and before the stricken one could stammer out the startling intelligence that he had suffered a complete breakdown overnight, the M. O. was rounding the last turn and showing a fine burst of speed down the home stretch. On the march our spirits rose. Also our hopes. The sun shone brightly and rumours flew merrily about.

Aboardship we sought out a steward knowing that there we would get information. We did. We listened to the old story, whose popularity never fails. The ship was badly in need of an overhaul and it was quite on the cards that she would make this voyage to — a flip of the thumb indicated a general westward direction. That was splendid, and he said it in such a blase tone that we knew he couldn't be led astray by personal feelings. But we must needs make assurance doubly sure. We decided to consult the stars. North-east, we were told, was Salonica, south-east Alexandria and west France and Blighty. After some slight astronomical disputation, due to the determination of one silly landlubber to take his direction from Venus, we located the North Star, and a little calculation showed us that we were going South and a little East. Strange! We were evidently going to be dumped on the coast of Africa. We were bewildered, and our bewilderment was not lessened when, on ascending to the deck next morning before reveille to get the full benefit of the sunrise, we found this (the sunrise) occurring immediately on our starboard. Something was wrong. But quite possibly it was just a temporary deviation to avoid a submarine and cheering ourselves with this reflection we awaited the changing of the ship's course. It didn't change. Our hopes got lower and lower until, as we sailed through the old familiar nets at the har-

bour entrance, they hit rock bottom with a sickening thud. We were there back again at Salonika. There was no doubt about it; in fact there never had been, for all the time, deep in our inmost minds, we had known that we were returning thither. And having arrived we lost no time in agreeing that, after all, there were worse places.

ODE TO THE NORTH WIND

(Very much after Kingsley)

The South Wind steals o'er the
Canuck camp
And the Canuck's smile is bland
For the days are warm and the beer
is damp
And the Canuck swears this
happy land
Is a place to beat the band.
But oh, when the North East Wind
doth blow
Cold are the feet and nose.
Cold as the tip of a polar bear's tail
Cold as the Canteen "Home
made" ale
Cold as the look in the O.C.'s eye
When the day's offenders sidle by.
Cold as Charity — and that's
bleeding chilly
(But not half so cold as Karaisi
skilly)

All shivery shakery
Quivery quakery

There's a frost in the soup and sand
in the bakery
There are cracks in the huts and
the tents are—well,
If you ask me straight, I'd much
prefer—

(Editor's note: We had just time to chloroform the poet with a sand-bag to catch this edition going to Press. He is still delirious.)

CORRESPONDENCE

Why not Boxing?

To the Editor:

There has been expressed among some of the boys a hope that during the coming winter season some sort of organisation should be put forward to foster the boxing instinct and develop the art to a greater degree than is displayed at present. There is certainly much to be said in favour of such a suggestion. Have we not got several men who can "deliver the goods" already? And would it not be worth while to have a definite class, or classes, for those who are still in the first stages of the art. There is Jack Raftery, and Ed Chase. If they were willing to give a hand there is no reason why No. 5 should not become a boxing unit. The boxing Fifth!

It is true there have lately been some boxing displays in the Recreation Hut, but it would seem that what is wanted is for some committee to be formed and members to be enrolled in the classes; and at the end of the season there might be a boxing tournament. During the coming winter months the trouble will be to get sufficient exercise indoors. The weather will probably prohibit much outdoor sport, and it is admitted that there is no sport which gives so much exercise in so small compass as boxing.

It is to be hoped that before the next issue of the paper some attempt will be made to get to work on this suggestion, and that classes of this kind will be formed. Here is the opportunity for boxers and would-be boxers alike. Go to it.

J. J.

To the Editor:

In this your first issue let there be the airing of a suggestion. It may be one which will not find favour with all the members of the unit, but if there are any who do not agree with it, let them write to you and oppose it. I invite criticism.

My suggestion is that the Mess tent be moved from its present position, or else turned to meet the North wind at another angle, say sideways. When the wind blows in from the sea, and we all know it can blow great guns when it likes, the Mess tent is a place of terrors and disorganisation. It is hardly possible to enter it, in the first place, for the entrance has to be laced up to keep the dust out. My suggestion is that it should be moved to a more sheltered position — the Sergeants have shown some wisdom in this respect — or, if that is impossible, let it be placed at right angles to its present position, and the side facing the sea staked down firmly. If something is not done the cook will always have an excuse for the muddy tea and the sandy soup. And that is unthinkable.

I shall be glad to see other opinions on this suggestion.

DIOGENES

CONGRATULATIONS

The "Convoy Call" congratulates the following Members of the Unit on their recent promotion; Lieut Morrison; Sergeants Lyall, Russell and Stevenson; Corporals Jaggard, F, Hill, Thorpe and Murchie. Congratulations are also due S. M. Glass on his return and the welcome he received from the boys.