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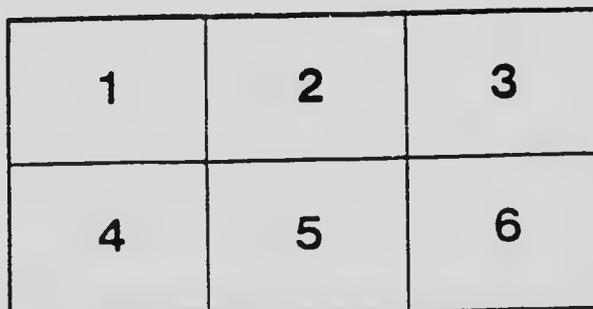
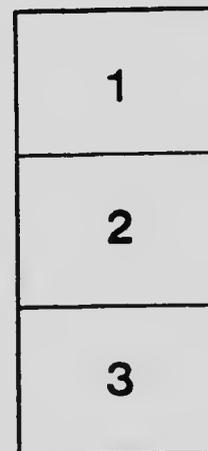
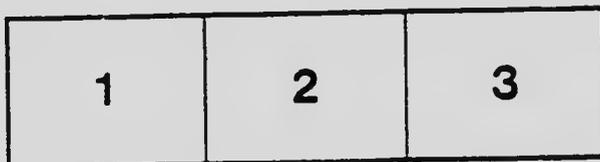
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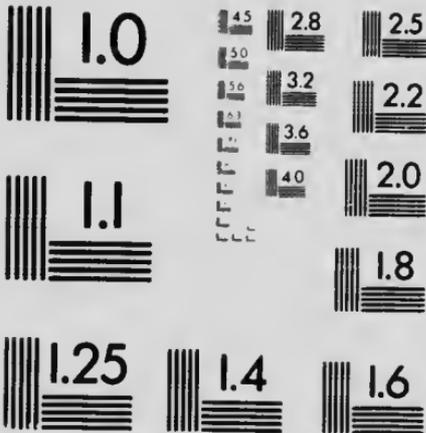
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BUDDY'S BLIGHTY

*And Other Verses
From The Trenches*



By JACK TURNER



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Buddy's Blighty

AND OTHER
VERSES FROM
THE TRENCHES



By JACK TURNER

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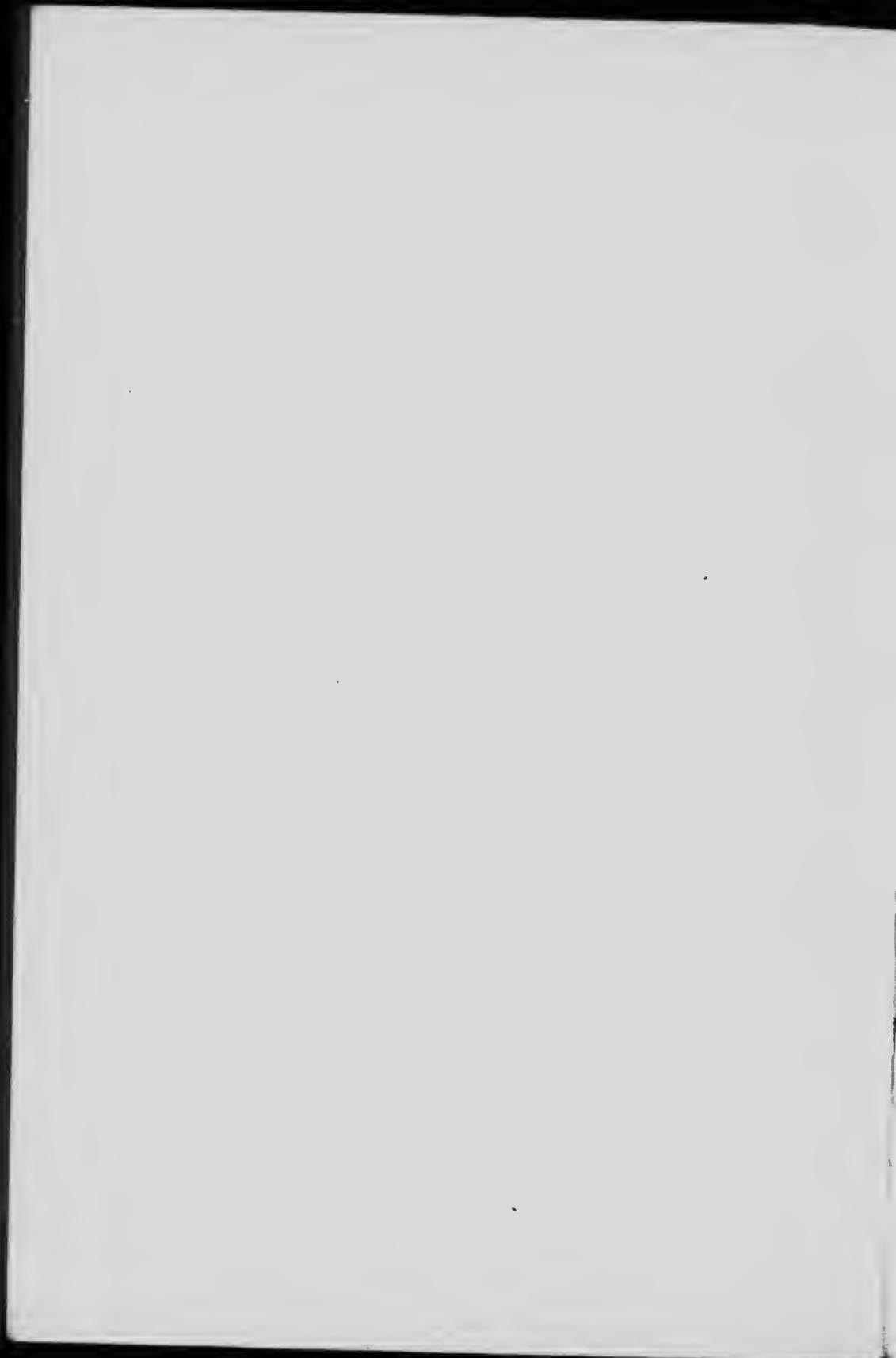
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To the Boys.

J. T.



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BY

JACK TURNER

THE RAG-TIME ARMY.

They call us the Rag-time Army, and maybe they named
us right,
Our drill may be kind of ragged—but say, have you seen
us fight?

For drilling is only drilling, but fighting's a good man's
game,

And a scrap with the Rag-time Army has never been voted
tame.

We're a kind of a hybrid outfit—we're soldiers and civies,
too—

Just civies dressed up in khaki, determined to see things
thro'

'Til the Kaiser is trimmed to a finish and Fritz has
jumped the ring;

 Tho' we may not scrap by the book of rules

 And at fancy drilling we're plain damned fools,

We can put up a fine performance when it comes to the
real thing.

Considering us as soldiers, we're only an empty bluff,
We look like a bunch of dummies when we get on the
"Slope Arms" stuff;

Our dressing is something awful—our "fours" run from
two to six,

We can't even change direction without an infernal mix.
But our shooting is not so rotten and we know what a
bomb is for,

They say we're not bad with the bayonet, tho' our drill
is so awful poor,

And Fritz doesn't love the Canucks, and I think that's
the safest test;

 We drag on the march like a flock of sheep

 Our discipline makes all the Brass Hats weep,

But the sloppy old Rag-time Army goes "over the top"
with the best.

We're Doctors, and Farmers, and Lawyers, and Cow-boys
and City Clerks,
The Office-Boy is a Sergeant, and the fellow that owned
the works
Is a beautiful big buck private, who jumps at the Sergeant's
word,
And the boss of a ranch takes orders from the fellow that
tended herd.
We're Bankers, and Brokers, and Butchers, we're Confi-
dence-men, and Cooks,
We're the fellows that dig the ditches, we're the fellows
that keep the books,
We're the men of the Pick and Shovel, we're the men of
the brush and pen;
From the shovel-stiff to the Millionaire,
If you're looking for them, you'll find them here—
In the ranks of the Rag-time Army they count, one and
all, as men.

We heard in the far, faint distance the sound of a world
at war
And we jumped our jobs and came crowding to the call of
the Cannon's roar;
From city, and town, and homestead, from cabin, and
camp, and mine,
From the wash of the warm Pacific and the ice of the Arctic
line.
And battle to us meant nothing, and war was a thing
unknown,
But, somewhere, deep in our being, far deeper than blood
or bone,
Spoke the voice of the old gray Mother, Who rules from
Her Island Throne,
"In a world of war will my sons abide,
"In peace, or fight at the Mother's side?
"Answer, Blood of the Mother's Blood, and Bone of the
Mother's Bone."

Then the little old Rag-time Army rose up at the Mother's
call,
And the little old Rag-time Army has learned how to fight,
and fall,
And the little old Rag-time Army is doing its little bit,
And the Huns know the Rag-time Army, and they're not
very fond of it.
There are little white crosses marking the beds where the
Canucks lie—
(For drilling is only drilling—can drill teach a man to die?)
But, when we come to the finish, to the close of the Hun's
great "Day"
 When we've smashed the Hun on the Western Line,
 When our shells are screaming across the Rhine,
You'll find the old Rag-time Army at work in its own
old way.

THE AEROPLANE.

There's a speck afloat in the distant sky,
It wheels and whirls like a hawk a-wing,
In the blue, arched vault, where the bright birds fly,
And 'round it, forming a fairy ring,
The white puffs blossom, the white puffs bloom
Like magic flowers; then fade away,
As the snow that falls in the winter's gloom
Fades in the sun of a summer day.

There's death and doom in that soaring speck
Yes, doom and death are a-floating there,
For the great guns swing to the call and beck
Of the men who traverse the upper air,
And that soaring speck is the great gun's eyes,
(For the great guns, left to themselves, are blind,)
So the plane that scours the empty skies,
Is brain and eyes of the guns behind.

The white puffs blossom and bloom and grow,
And death lies hid in their fleecy hearts,
Wheeling, whirling, now high, now low,
With the wild birds' wiles and the air-man's arts,
The plane 'scapes death by a scanty yard,
For the lesser guns, they are out to blind,
(And they're shooting steady and strong and hard)
The eyes of the mightier guns behind.

There's a man aloft in the soaring plane,
And his word is law to the guns below
That boom and batter to clear the lane—
The lane where the gleaming bayonets go.

The great guns swing to his lightest word,
The shells scream out at his slightest sign,
And death's controlled by a man-made bird,
And a bird-like man, o'er the German line.

Strong steel muscles and silken wings,
Screws and wires and wooden rods,
High-strung engine that purrs and sings,
And men a-wing on the wind, like gods—
And the heart of all is the heart of him,
Who dares the deserts of air alone,
And—God-like—poised on the ether's rim,
Guides death's grim hand from his lofty throne.

BUDDY'S BLIGHTY.

Buddy Baldwin, Broncho-Buster, used to ride the range a heap,

He looked at things in terms of cows, and always held that sheep—

And sheep-men, too—were vermin, that they counted mighty low

And, compared with cows and cow-men, why, they didn't even show.

(This has no bearing on my tale—I only tell it 'cos

It gives you some idea of the kind of guy Bud was.)

Cow-man first, last and all the time—Bud's Bible was the book

Where breeds and brands were registered, and Buddy always took

The view that walking is no way of covering the ground, And riding is the only way to navigate around.

If you want to picture Buddy, bear in mind these little things—

Imagine him as built of wire and highly tempered springs—

With the little, deep-carved wrinkles 'round the corners of his eyes

That are brands of open country and unbounded space and skies—

Six feet high, brown as an Injun—leaner than the law allows,

And his deepest int'rests poker, brands, range, cayuses and cows.

Now, Buddy, he was range-boss for the Diamond Curly O,

(Down beside the Rio waters, where the spiky cactus grow)

It chanced the Diamond Curly O sold quite a good-sized bunch

Of horses to an English mob, then Buddy took a hunch,

And signed to act as valet to those horses on the boat,
(Tho' the thought of so much water pretty nearly got his
goat).

When he got his high heels planted good and firm on Eng-
lish ground,

He thought he'd step across to France and have a look
around,

So he blew his roll in London, in a gorgeous jamboree,
And then settled down to soldier with the Canuck Infantee.

Now, I first ran into Buddy in an Hospital in Kent,
Where a bunch of Army Doctor-guys had sent me to repent
Of the foolishness of stopping German shrapnel with my
head—

There I found old Buddy Baldwin holding down the near-
est bed.

Well, I told him all my sorrows and he told me all his woes
(And what was lies and what was truth, I guess, God only
knows),

And Bud told me all about his trip to Blighty from the line
(He was sure a fluent liar and he made it listen fine),

Tho' I'm much inclined to doubt it, maybe one per cent is
true,

But it sounded quite convincing, so I'll hand it out to you.

“ We was jammed up in the Salient, and she was some
swell hole,

“ With the trenches all as shallow as a tin-horn gamblers
soul—

“ An' the mud as deep as blazes, an' the Huns a-raisin'
Hell—

“ I'd seen some rotten holes before, but that one rung the
bell.

“ Oh, she sure was good and lively—in a quiet kind of way,

“ With the guns a-poundin', poundin', poundin', poundin',
night and day;

“ Then some chesty Hun Commander thought he'd start
a little fuss

“ Just to boost his reputation—and he started in on us.
“ Yep, he thought he'd rise the Canucks, just to boost his name a bit—
“ Did he help his reputation?—there was nothing left of it
“ When that little game was finished and we reckoned up the score,
“ I don't think he'll go a-gunnin' for the Canucks any more.”

“ Me? I cashed in kind o' early-like, and this is how it come—
“ 'Twas the second merry evenin', and they sure was shellin' some—
“ The air was full of concentrated Hell and flyin' steel,
“ An' the way things kept a-moyin' kind o' made a fellow feel
“ Pretty sure he'd go to Heaven by the high explosive route
“ For old Fritz was workin' everything that could be made to shoot.
“ Well, I just had got to feelin' that I didn't give a damn
“ How blamed soon they quit their foolin', when there came an awful slam,
“ An' a dozen locoed earthquakes, an' a lunatic typhoon
“ Was a-messin' up the quiet of that pleasant afternoon.

“ The old earth bucked like a broncho and jumped up to touch the sun,
“ Then she split into a million stars, an' I was ridin' one;
“ An' a nine-point-two came rampin' up, a-pawin' up the ground
“ With a Broncho-Buster, chapped and spurred, a-ridin' him around,
“ An' he says to me,—‘Say, Buddy, 'spose we go out on the prowl,
“ Let's go an' see the elephant and listen to the owl,’
“ So I clumb up there behind him, on his lopin' nine-point-two,

"An' we rambled thro' a mesa where the cactus all was
 blue,
 "'Til his broncho started buckin' an' he piled me good an'
 high,
 "An' I met a gallowampus bird a-roostin' in the sky."

"He had fourteen wings an' seven eyes an' whiskers on his
 ears,
 " An' he chased me all around the range for seven thousand
 years,
 "'Til I ran into a gopher hole and met a grizzly bear
 " A-chattin' with a rattle-snake, beneath a prickly pear.
 " That there unconverted insect was a-smokin' a cigar,
 " An' I says—"Say, Mr. Rattler, can you tell me where
 we are?"
 " 'Sure', says he, 'as sure as shootin,' but before he got
 half done
 " I see a bunch of timber wolves a-comin' on the run.
 " 'An,' says he to me,—'We know you, 'taint' no use for
 you to speak,
 " 'You're the guy that rode for Sage Bush Sam, on Little
 Chulu Creek',
 " Then he winked at me most knowin', an' he wagged his
 bushy tail,
 "An' he turned himself clean inside out an' trotted up the
 trail.

" While I stood there, dumb and helpless—I was too
 darned 'mazed to think—
 " A pale pink moon came swimmin' thro' a sea of blue-
 black ink,
 " A-huntin' for a baby-wolf, branded X circle Y,
 " An' I felt so sorry for that moon I started in to cry,
 " The salt tears they kept fallin' 'til the flood reached to
 my chest,
 " Then I see a big black nigger in an armour-plated vest,
 " With two guns hangin' at his belt, come wadin' thro' the
 flood,

- " An' he says,—'I'm kind o' lost 'round here, now, could you tell me, Bud,
 " If steers is fifty on the hoof, an' whiskey two bits per,
 " 'How far would you allow it is to Coquahallus Spur?'
 " So I figured, an' I figured, but I couldn't make it right,
 " An' that coon, he started shrinkin' 'til he shrunk plumb out of sight.
- "But his guns they swelled an' bloated, like a cow-hide in the wet,
 " 'Til they grew to twelve inch Howitzers, all loaded up an' set
 " A-pointin' right square at me, an' I couldn't bat an eye,
 " Then a lizard, wearin' leather chaps, perambulated by,
 " He nods to me most friendly, an' then, 'Buddy, Boy,' says he,
 " 'I met a pal of yours last week, they call him Pat McGhee
 " 'An' he asked me, if I saw you, just to tell you he was well'—
 " Then he yanked the firin' lever, an' I gave an awful yell.
 " I didn't hear the gun go off—I didn't feel no jar,
 " But I felt myself a-fallin', faster than a shootin' star,
 " Thro' a million, million, million, million miles of fleecy clouds,
 " An' it seemed that there was people all around me there in crowds.
- " All a-whisperin' an' talkin,' Then I felt almighty sure
 " I'd be stoppin' pretty sudden if I fell a little more,
 " An' I felt a hundred different aches an' forty kinds of pain,
 " An' those people were a-talkin,' I could hear 'em good an' plain.
 " An' says one, 'Why, just look, Doctor, I believe he's comin' to',
 " An' another says—'Yes, so he is, I guess we'll pull him thro'.

“ Then I takes a look around me, an’ what *do* you think
I see?
“ Just three nurses an’ a doctor, stan.in’ lookin’ down at
me,
“ I had splints an’ pads, and bandages wherever they
would fit,
“ I was perforated proper, but I didn’t care a bit,
“ For I knew I’d said a long good-bye to bombs an’ shells
an’ mud
“ An’ was safe in bed in Blighty—an’ that’s good enough
for Bud.”

NOTE:—“Diamond Curly-O” brand, is the letter Q (called curly O)
inscribed in a diamond.

“Seeing the elephant and hearing the owl,” is the South-
Western term for going on a big time.

THE LUCKY DUG-OUT.

She ain't no Carlton or Ritz Hote .
She ain't no Ville de Luxe,
She's damp as blazes, an' leaks as well,
An' you don't have to look at her twice to tell
That her roof don't amount to shucks.

She ain't equipped with no spacious hall,
She don't much attract the eye at all,
She's seven short feet by five, that's all,
(She'll hold three men, if they're fairly small),
An' her roof's just three feet high.

She's built of sandbags, an' sticks, an' clay,
An' galvanized iron, too,
She's semi-detached, in a kind of way—
Fritz dropped a Sausage the other day
An' the dug-out next door—na poo.

She's low, and leaky, an' far from clean,
An' muddy, an' wet—what's more,
It's mighty wise to keep down your bean,
'Cause it's dimes to doughnuts that you'll be seen
If you loiter around the door.

Her bathroom's a tin in the trench outside,
Her kitchen's a can of coke,
But the kitchen's closed, as, last time we tried,
To cook a lunch in the bright noontide,
Old Fritz threw things at the smoke.

The people living across the way,
Are an awful unfriendly lot—

They like, at the end of a perfect day,
To shove some shrapnel across the bay,
An' make it unholy hot.

But, rats to the leaks an' the mud an' the rain,
An' bother the dirt an' the wet—
Tho' Fritz may shell us with might an' main,
An'—Gol darn his eyes, here he comes again—
He hasnt' quite hit us yet.

An' let her leak in the good old way—
It don't worry us a bit—
Let Fritz keep pounding us night and day
We're cached away in a corner bay,
Where we're damnably hard to hit.

"YELLOW."

'Twas in Folkestone that they named him, in a crowded
bar one night,
When a fellow called him something that would make a
rabbit fight,
An' he took that red-raw fightin' word, that no man ought
to stand,
Just a-grinnin' kind of foolish—and, he never raised a
hand.

Then they re-baptized him "Yellow", 'cause he'd showed
a yellow streak,
Wider than the Western Ocean, longer than a long, wet
week;
It's a rotten brand to carry, but he didn't seem to care,
So the name stuck hard in England, while we did our
trainin' there.

An' he brought it out here with him, where he lived up to
it right—
Say, I've never thought to meet a guy so devil-rode with
fright—
He'd duck each ramblin' bullet that come near enough to
hear,
An' he'd pass the low spots runnin', like a crazy white-
tailed-deer.

When he heard a shell a-comin', why, he'd almost throw a
fit,
An' he'd turn 'bout two shades paler every time a 'Sau-
sage' lit;
Yep, he sure was some rip-snorter at the 'Death or Glory'
game,
'Yellow'—that was what we called him, an' he lived up to
his name.

Well, the word came down the ditches that 'twas time for
Fritz to hike,

An' that we were goin' over first to see what things were like?
Then the guns they got a-goin' an' most every kind of
shell

That a fellow ever dreamed about was givin' Fritz Hell.

We were waitin' in the trenches for the guns to clear the
way

An' old Yellow, he was standin' right beside me in the bay;
You could tell, just lookin' at him, that his nerves were
shot to scraps—

He was foolin' with his rifle—he kept pickin' at his straps,

With his fingers kind o' twitchy, an' his face all soaked
with sweat—

Judgin' by the way he acted, 'Twas a pretty healthy bet,
That his heart was sayin' "stick it," while his heels
yelled "run away"—

It's a mighty mean sensation, an' *I know*—I've felt that
way.

Then the whistle screamed "get over," an' the guns all
seemed to stop,

An' next minute we was swarmin', Hell for leather, 'cross
the top;

It was sure no bloomin' joy-ride, tho' the guns had done
their best,

(But, then, guns are only engines, it takes men to do the
rest.)

They'd made hay of Fritz's wire an' messed up his trench
a lot,

But they missed a few machine guns, an' they slipped it to
us hot,

Half way 'cross, old Yellow tumbled, an' he lay there like
a log,

An' a fellow, runnin' next him, yelled, "Get up, you yellow
dog."

"Call yourself a blasted Canuck, an' let Heinie get your goat"—

Then he went down, chokin' awful with a bullet in his throat.

But old Yellow got up runnin'—p'raps 'twas what that fellow said,

Or the way he stopped that bullet, started Yellow seein' red.

Well, we left a lot of fellows lyin' quiet in the dirt—

For, with Fritz's Maxims workin', someone's certain to get hurt—

But the Lord still loves the Irish, an' I hadn't got a scratch

When we mixed it up with Fritz in a bomb an' bayonet match.

We cleaned up the trenches proper, an' we settled down to stick,

But old Fritz's guns got goin' an' they nearly turned the trick,

With a big barrage behind us, so our second wave got stuck
An' it seemed, for some long minutes, we were sadly out of luck.

'Cos there wasn't many of us—just small bunches here an' there—

An' the heavy Hun trench-mortars were a-poundin' us for fair,

Then they started in to rush us, an' things sure were lookin' bad,

But we stopped 'em, good an' solid, tho' it took 'bout all we had.

'Twas a cinch we'd reach the finish of our merry morning's sport,

With our ammunition scanty an' our bombs almighty short;

With a "thin, red line" formation that was mostly gaps an' holes—

The time seemed right for startin' in to doctor up our souls.

Me an' Yellow were together in a badly-battered bay,
With the nearest fellows to us, maybe, twenty yards away;
When we saw the gray-green uniforms come toilin up once
more,
I can just remember thinkin' that we'd reached our limit,
sure,

When a chunk of shrapnel got me on the head, an' laid
me out,
'Fore I had a chance to figure what the fuss was all about;
'Twasn't very many minutes 'til I came to life again.
An' I saw old Yellow scrappin', like a dozen crazy men.

He'd no time to think of loadin', an' his bayonet was a
stub,
But the butt of his Lee Enfield made a mighty handy club,
I saw one big Hun do over with a caved-in skull, an' then—
The world went 'round in circles an' I went to sleep again.

That's the story, as I saw it—here's the rest, it's second
hand—
Our second wave got over just as Fritz broke down our
stand,
Cleaned up three lines with the bayonet in a very decent
style,
Then our other waves got busy and drove Fritz back 'most
a mile.

Well, they found me in a mud-hole with a badly damaged
dome,
(One inch lower would have sent me to my happy Heaven-
ly home),
An' they found old Yellow lyin' sprawled out on the
trenches's rim,
Grippin' hard a broken rifle, with a dozen holes in him.
Then they chucked me on a stretcher an' they sent me to
the rear
For the Red Cross men to play with—but, they buried
Yellow there.

This is just a simple story of a man who was my friend,
Who was nearly mad with terror, but who stuck it to the
end,
Any man may sport a medal, if he has a little luck,
But, my hat is off to Yellow, who was sick, an' scared,—
an' *stuck*.

"IT SOUNDS TO ME."

'Way West, where the prairies stretch far and free
'Til they fade in the sun's hot blaze,
Where the cow-boys follow the drifting herds,
thro' the land of the unmarked ways;
Where life's lived close to the edge of things,
and living is less complex
Than in lands controlled by the reckless hands
of what's known as the weaker sex;
Where chaps and Stetsons are evening dress
and collars and ties are banned,
Where auction bridge is a game unknown,
and there's just five cards in a hand;
Where wealth is reckoned in heads of stock,
and thousands of herds range free—
They've got an expression that's mighty good,
We'd use it, too, if we understood
What they mean by "it *sounds* to me".

Suppose you're down in the cattle lands
and you meet with a guy some night,
Who's full of the juice of the joyous grape—
plumb loaded with booze and fight.
You greet him first in a friendly way—
at least, if your're wise, you do—
Then, suppose he, lifting his voice in song,
unburdens his soul to you—
"I'm an old gray wolf from the poison plains,
where the coyotes lurk and prowl,
"I'm a hootin', shootin' son of a gun,
and this is my night to howl"
Don't say, "Forget it, you drunken boob,
you're too full of booze to see"—
That might mean shootin' and sudden death,
Don't get to talkin', just save your breath,
And murmur—"It *sounds* to me."

Or, our leading citizen, Deacon Jones,
we'll say, owes you fifty bucks,
That you lent him once on his empty word—
and his word don't amount to shucks—
Well, you've tried your best to collect that bill,
but the Deacon he won't kick thro',
Then, 'spose you run into a pal some night,
who discourses like this to you—
"As a model of virtue and honest worth,
old Jones is the real thing,
"His word's his bond, he's as true as steel
and as straight as a yard of string."
Your pal may think he's as right as rain,
no matter how wrong he be,
Don't tell the tale of your fifty bucks,
But just look weary, and murmur—"Shucks"
"P'raps so—but—it *sounds* to me."

Out here where we copy the boring worm
and live like the festive mole,
Where our streets are trenches knee-deep in mud
and home is a sandbagged hole;
Sometimes—not often—you'll meet a guy,
whose vision is tinged with blue,
And he'll say—"The Huns made a drive at X
and they've pretty near broken thro';
"We've lost ten guns and a lot of men—
God knows where the thing will end.
"For the Huns are getting the upper hand"—
just tell him—"My cheerful friend,
"I love the sight of your beaming face,
and your bright sunny smile, but gee:
"Go somewhere else with your sad, sweet song,
"You may be right, but I think your're wrong,
"And, straight now—"it *sounds* to me'".

When the German press gets a-going good
and dreaming an inky dream,
Bragg big of the cowardly British fleet
that, according to him, 'twould seem,
Daren't show a nose in the open sea,
but skulks in its guarded holes,
While the German ships sweep the seven seas,
and cruise to the furthest poles,
In search of a foe that they fail to find,—
just figure it out this way;
Fritz says his navy is after ours,
and hunting it night and day,
But a German ship is a d——d rare bird
in the wash of the old North Sea;
Tho' German journalists rant and rave
Of a German fleet on the rolling wave,
it sounds—well, 'it *sounds* to me.'

When Fritz starts trying to get our goats,
by bragging of "Kultur's Might"
Of "Hammer blows" and of "breaking thro' "
and the "Triumphs of German Right,"
Why, let him rave, and amuse himself,
and it doesn't hurt us a bit,
For we've got a kind of a "Kultur", too,
tho' we don't make a brag of it—
And it doesn't stand for a conquered world
'neath the heel of a German's rule,
And it doesn't stand for a world imbrued,
with the doctrines of Kultur's school,
But a world unshadowed by dread of war,
for a world that is safe and free.
So, Fritz, old boy, you may rave and rant,
And brag and bluster—but win, you can't,
So, really—it *sounds* to me.'

ODE TO MACCONACHIE."

My weary spirit, like a storm-swept pine,
Is bowed beneath the weight of trouble's load,
Nor sun, nor moon, nor pitying star doth shine,
To ease the darkness of my cheerless road.
To all the woes that harass and appall,
That crush my heart and fill my soul with pain,
Is added one, more deep and dark than all—
We've got MacConachies for lunch again.

Here, where we've made our home, the rainfall's cold,
The mud is unbelievably deep,
The "Whizz-Bang" whizzes, as in days of old,
The crumping "Crump" disturbs our easeful sleep,
All these be minor ills—we've learned to laugh
At screaming shells, and cold, and driving rain,
But none among us can forbear to strafe,
When we must eat MacConachies again.

Friend Fritz's "Heavies" fill the air with noise,
And breach the parapet that was our pride,
"Rum Jars" and "Sausages", and kindred toys,
Fall thick around the dug-outs where we hide,
The snipers snipe ferociously and free,
The Maxims spray us with their iron rain—
We could stick these things with a grin, maybe,
But—we must eat MacConachies again.

Accursed can of thrice accursed food:
Oh, "M. & V." when shall we have release,
From thy meat, murphys, beans and carrots, stewed
And buried deep in hecatombs of grease?

Some men there are, 'tis said, who, with their teeth,
Dig deep their graves—I fear 'twill be my doom
To have inscribed upon my funeral wreath,
“With his can-opener he built his tomb.”

Oh, ye; whose caps are splashed with red and gold,
To whom the art of war is A.B.C.,
Let not our cry of anguish leave you cold,
But lend attentive ear unto our plea.
We'll gladly bear war's horrors—Number Nines,
Physical jerks, fatigues, and first F. P.,
“Whizz-Bangs and “Sausages”, grenades and mines
If only you will strafe MacConachie.



