

The Western Scot

Vol. I.

BORDON CAMP, HANTS, MAY 3rd, 1916

No. 29

TWO DAYS IN LONDON.

Can you imagine anyone being "fed-up" after only two days in London, especially a blooming Canadian who had never seen it before? Yet such a one exists, right in our midst, too, in a manner of writing. Now, it would be quite comprehensible if a visitor to London returned before his leave had expired with the excuse that he had spent so much weight—say ten or fifteen pounds—as to be unable to carry on further in a manner befitting an officer and a Canadian; or did he proffer the excuse that he had been four times to the Empire and twice to the Alhambra without having seen either show, one might understand that his discouragement had moved him to rush back to camp. But that anyone could actually, without other reason than that of complete ennui, exchange the life of dear, dark old Lunnon for a spot so totally devoid of excitement, so utterly lacking in snap and ginger, as Bordon Camp, passes understanding, and leaves us gasping like a too-athletic sockeye that has flipped itself clear up on the bank. There are other good and valid reasons for returning—or being returned—from London—such, for instance, as that of a Tommy from one of our sister batts. (if it is permissible to refer to a sister as a "batt."). His pass had been altered at his own orderly-room, but as the alteration was not initialled he failed to satisfy the curiosity of a London Red-cap, and thereupon was landed fuming home in charge of an escort. It quite spoiled the evening he had arranged with an awfully nice girl he had met along the Strand; but, of course, this is war, and war is—(no you don't, Padre; I haven't a penny left!).

One of the main features one notices during a brief stay in London is the darkness. Up to the present no one has been clever or enterprising enough to capitalize the darkness and charge extra for it, although it offers an excellent opportunity—there is so much of it. Take, for instance, a foggy day—and they are not infrequent—followed by a regular London Zep-proof night, and you have a quantity of darkness (if darkness is quantitative) that should appeal to the London capitalist. And when practically everything else comes extra, why not the darkness? It is one of life's little perplexities!

Of course one *does* pay extra for the darkness indirectly, in many ways. But comment in this respect would be worse than useless as advice. One *must* learn by sad experience!

Another noteworthy feature of London streets is the system of taxi-cabs. Eightpence the mile, with a half-crown an hour for waits, is the tariff, and it seems little enough when one considers the nervous energy expended by the chauffeur. Of course the passenger expends more or less nervous energy as well, but then it is merely entertainment with him, while with the driver it is business. No self-respecting chauffeur would think of driving sedately down the Strand following the regular progress of the ruck of traffic. Not he! Being a direct descendant of Jehu, he needs must drive furiously. Now he takes the bow off a Liverpool Street 'bus; again he shaves the shore of an "island" and disconcerts a brother chauffeur by cutting suddenly and unexpectedly in front of him. He is in a playful mood, as witness the joyful prank he introduces to one of the chic new lady 'bus conductors when he whirls full-tilt at her, only to check his flight in the nick of time as his steaming radiator spurts hot water on the "Is It Safe?" sign on the taffrail of

the 'bus. Seldom does an accident occur, a fact which is chargeable in equal parts to the chauffeur's skill and the protection of a benign Providence; but oft-times a "near thing" evokes caustic comment from both worthies engaged, and on such occasions the "langwidge"—oh! Clarice!!

It would be improper to omit, in even a casual review of a trip to London, reference to the charming manner in which the women of London welcome and entertain soldiers. The writer, during two days in the city, saw numbers of our gallant Jocks in the streets and life-saving stations, and always accompanied by charming members of the fair sex (although it is only fair to say they were not all fair, but included a sprinkling of delectable and sprightly brunettes). In fact it was quite amazing that so many of our men found sisters and cousins in the city. When the leave-list was made out prior to the departure from camp of the first fifty per cent. it appeared to me that the majority were bound for outlandish places such as Aberdeen, Glasgow, Killaloo, Pittenweem, Whitehaven, etc., and now to see them all in dear old Lunnon, and all so happy in the bosoms (so to speak) of their relatives was quite affecting, I do assure you. And what was my further and greater consternation when I beheld such anomalies as a Jock with a name like McClintock cherishing a sister from Brussels!

And that reminds me to mention with warm appreciation the special ministrations of our dear delightful refugee visitors. It was indeed pleasurable to meet quite casually a fragile lily from France, or a stormy little petrel from Belgium, and discuss with her the short-comings and long-goings of the humannerly Hun. Such sympathy as she would display, and with what tenderness would she pity one's loneliness. After all, are we not brothers—I mean sisters—or, rather, brothers and sisters, in exile? But, ah me, they are wonderful feminines!

It strikes one as strange that leave to London is referred to in days. Lieutenant So-and-So is granted two or three days' leave to proceed to London for the purpose of taking tea with his grandmother. And, does Lieutenant So-and-So turn those days to advantage hastening about from Gog and Magog to Gin and Beer, disentangling the Abbey from the Tower and rectifying his mistakes, if life-long, belief that there are lions and clowns in Piccadilly Circus? Far be it from such! Recumbent in a deep lounge chair he spends his days in slumbrous rest. But his nights—ma foi!—those nuits! And in that one bright temporal oasis from 12 to 2.30 pip-emma, his sole and only toast is: "Here's happy days; the nights are *always* pleasant!" Yet the orderly-room *will* refer to his visit as so many days' leave for the purpose of—but what's the use?

Behold the worthy Scoutmaster and One Other industriously "seeing the lions." As they descend Tower Hill and enter the Stockade Gate a fearsome individual in khaki, who looks as if he ought to be a field-marshal, but turns out to be only a sentry of the Guard, springs so smartly to "attention!" that our heroes are all but over-awed and consider seriously the advisability of turning back while the turning is good. Curiosity anent the Bloody Tower overwhelms other considerations, however, and they press onward and inward. Seventeen salutes take them safely past Middle Tower, and they seek shelter in the ample arms of a Beef-eater. But,

The Western Scot

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY IN THE INTERESTS OF
THE 67th BATT., "WESTERN SCOTS," OF CANADA, C.E.F.

(By kind permission of Lt.-Col. Lorne Ross, C.O.)

Office of Publication: Orderly Room. Single Copies: each 2d.

C. L. ARMSTRONG, Lieut., Editor
A. A. GRAY, Lieut., Business Manager

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3rd, 1916

SOWING AND REAPING.

Surely it has become impressed on the minds of all of us ere now that our future as "The Western Scots" depends in a very large measure upon the impression we create. Up to the present we have had little or no opportunity to demonstrate our training and our ability to assimilate new ideas, owing to the wide dispersion of men and officers on courses and leave; but by our conduct as individuals, and by our smartness and discipline generally, we may do much to convince those with whom the decision lies that we are worthy of special consideration.

A copy of a notorious Victorian weekly has come to hand, in which appears an article in a style characteristic of the paper and of the spirit of its editor. This article is one that might serve to impress readers unacquainted with the paper's habits and inconsequence in a manner unfavourable to "The Western Scots"; but those who know the editor of old will apply the rule of "cherchez le nègre." However, it is especially despicable, even for a print as despicable generally as the one that published it, inasmuch as it is an underhand attack in our absence.

TWO DAYS IN LONDON

(Continued from page 1)

alas! he too salutes! Eventually, having figured the Regalia into whiskies-and-sodas and taken some unnecessary exercise along Raleigh's Walk, to say nothing of speculating on the usefulness of ancient bills and halberds in trench warfare, see them emerge on Tower Green to inspect the paved site of the private scaffold where Anne Boleyn and Lady Jane Grey and others were executed. From the corner of an eye they observe another awe-inspiring sentry pacing his beat in a smart and soldier-like manner, and they give him a wide berth. But, alas; becoming too familiar with their surroundings, they forget his presence and approach too near his path. "Biff! Bang!! Bing!!!" Both jump at least a foot and, all a-quiver with fear, turn jaundiced eyes in the direction of the sound. There he stands, rigid as a statue, at the "Salute." The Scoutmaster returns it in an apologetic manner, and our two heroes hasten through the portcullis to a taxi and safety.

It is the witching hour of 10 p.m., and the scene is the promenade of the Empire. A subaltern of ours has engaged two dapper Belgian officers in conversation. They speak English with the same fluency with which he speaks French, and the conversation is interesting in the extreme. The Belgians advance the information that they are bound for

the Congo, and our subaltern, not to be outdone in international courtesy, vouchsafes that as for him, he is going to Maxim's. Our Allies observe that he is Scottish, and the chap from ours qualifies the classification with "Canadien." Then the fun begins in real earnest. For the Belgian side it is politely but firmly premised that one cannot be Scottish and Canadien at one and the same time. For ours it is set forth that not only is such possible, but even common. In fact it is even possible, says he of ours, to have Italian Scottish and Serbian Scottish, such as we have in our International Platoon. This goes over the heads of the Belgians, however, and they dig in and prepare to repeat the Liège resistance on the ground that one may be Scots or Canadien as one selects; but both together at the same time?—non, non, my old; eet is to keed! Back and forth the battle rages, hampered only by the almost total inability of one side to comprehend the other. Ours wins, at last, on the arrival of local reserves in the form ("some" form, too) of a belle fille who savvies both lingoos, and who explains that our chap has a Scottish père and a Canadien mère. Exeunt all hands to that salon which native Empiricals designate, and fondly imagine, an "American Bar."

ECHOES FROM HOME.

Lieutenant-Colonel Forsythe, of the 50th Gordon Highlanders of Canada, has returned from Ottawa, and reports that he expects shortly to be authorized to raise the Highlanders to full strength for overseas service.

Official notice of the transfer of the office of D.O.C. of M.D. No. 11 from Colonel A. T. Ogilvie to Colonel J. Duff Stuart was contained in the District Orders of March 31st last.

Mr. H. B. Jackson, well known to all Victorians as the manager of the Empress Hotel, has been appointed manager of the Royal Alexandra Hotel, Winnipeg.

It will be of interest to Soccerites to learn that the British Columbia Football Association have allowed the Victoria West team to take the place of the Western Scots in the final game for the McBride Shield, emblematic of the championship of the Province. We learn that the St. Andrew's XI., of Vancouver, are the winners of the Mainland Series, and while we regret that our departure prevented us from opposing them, yet we wish the Wests every success.

Up till April 2nd our late quarters at the Willows were standing empty. Captain Ritchie, C.R.E., will decide whether the 88th or the 11th C.M.R. occupy them.

At a concert at the Y.M.C.A. in the Willows on March 30th Mr. W. H. Wilkerson gave on his gramophone a record of the 67th send-off from Vancouver.

The "Colonist," in a recent issue, published practically the whole of the train edition of the "Western Scot."

The recent world's hockey championship series between the Canadiens and Portland was very disappointing from a monetary standpoint. The Canadiens emerged victorious, but their players only received \$238 each, while the Portland players, as losers, received \$207 each.

The 11th C.M.R. are conducting a recruiting campaign to bring their regiment to full infantry strength. Tents have been erected at various points in Victoria as recruiting centres.

DIED.

At the Isolation Hospital, Aldershot, on Wednesday, the 26th April, 1916, of pneumonia, No. 103271 Private A. R. Phillips, No. 2 Company, 67th Battalion, Western Scots of Canada. R.I.P.

INCONSEQUENTIAL ITEMS.

Our very good friends and fellow Colonials, the South African Scottish, provided a splendid programme of field sports on Easter Monday. Certainly they have some fine examples of manhood in their ranks, and the cheery good-fellowship with which the day's events were contested was most impressive. We are proud to be alongside our brother Scotties. Here's luck to 'em!

Has anyone been able to analyze and interpret that cheer of the Scottish Africans? It sounds like a storm at sea. Someone told us that it was an excellent imitation of the night-cry of the Springbok, but we regard that merely as a topping wheeze. Let's rehearse the midnight meow of our own dear cougar and scare ourselves to death.

Colonel Ross, who was indisposed last week, has quite recovered, and spent a few days in London on battalion business.

If anyone doubts that our officers are a church-going, charitable, temperate lot, he need but apply to the Padre, who will show him a small fortune in pennies collected from us for the purpose of providing cigarettes for sick Jocks. The Padre exacts a penny for every swear-word uttered in his presence!

Really, Padre, some of the words in your list should be rated at half-price. It hardly seems fair to charge the same for a puny, ailing little cuss-word like "——!" as for a good round Cavalier oath such as "——!!!!"

Early in the week the First Leave Lot began to straggle back to camp. Oh, what a difference just a few days made! You wouldn't have credited that a five days' trip could have pulled them down so. Some had actually lost pounds!

Did anyone else notice an "officah" at the field sports whose knees stood constantly at attention while his feet were at ease?

THE PIPE BAUN'.

Wullie was very much afraid that he would require an interpreter when he got home to his native Aberdeen, on account of the English accent he imagined he had acquired during his stay in Canada. His fears, however, proved groundless. In fact we are informed that a lady, while talking to Wullie in the market-place of the northern city, declined to believe that, with an accent such as he had, he came from Canada. She even went the length of suggesting that "he came aff the fairm the nicht afore to jine the sodgers!"

What kind of reputation have "thae pipers" given the battalion in Aberdeen? The men who went on second leave assure us that they heard a small girl shout to her mother: "Mither! Mither! bring in the hen's meat. Here's some Western Scots comin'!"

What a week for Aberdeen! Thae pipers, Sergeant Stronach and Pioneer Sergeant Smith, all in the city at one time!

PEEL HOUSE.

A large number of our men who had no friends in the country went to London during their leave. Peel House had been recommended to them as a most excellent place for overseas soldiers to go. One and all came back with glowing accounts of the excellent treatment they received from Mrs. Grahame-Murray and her patriotic band of workers. The men were conducted in parties all over the city, and the guides have since taken the trouble to arrange Sunday picnics. The men have requested us to acknowledge, through the columns of the "Scot," their gratitude for the trouble the ladies are taking on their behalf.

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CAMP RUMOURS.

When we left the Willows we fondly imagined that we had left all rumours behind us. Far from this being the case, the manufacturers have been busier than ever. It would take a lifetime for us to travel to all the places that rumour has had us going during the last week. Meanwhile, however—we just stay where we are.

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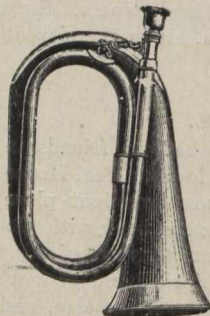
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