CHRONICLE OF THE FAMILY.

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EDITORIAL.

The Editor regrets that this number of the "Chronicle" is so late in appearing.

She also feels obliged to appeal again for more general support from the Family in the matter of contributions. If only we could get a news letter from each of those who are in distant parts the interest of the "Chronicle" would be greatly increased and the labour of the Editor very much lessened.

It is hoped that this appeal will not be in vain, and that news letters and articles for the next number will reach the Editor before the middle of July, and that intending contributors will not wait until personally requested to do so, as up to the present this has involved a large correspondence on the part of the Editor.

A CORRECTION.

Kenah has drawn our attention to, and asked us to correct, a misprint and wrong punctuation in a letter of his in the last number of the "Chronicle"—page 56—which would make it appear that the Germans had shelled their stretcher cases, which he describes as a "serious misrepresentation." The paragraph in question should read as follows:—". . . dropping bombs and firing with machine guns. The cases on stretchers, at relay points, lying there waiting their turn, etc."

GENERAL NEWS.

The following are extracts from Ken Beard's letter, written on the voyage to England:—

"R.M.S. Balmoral Castle,
Nov. 18th, 1917.

"We have had a lovely time so far. On Wednesday evening we ran out into the Bay, and lay there all night. Next morning there was plenty of noise, from five onwards, so at

six I climbed out and went on deck, and saw the H.M.S. Kent come out of dock, where she had been lying during the night. She strolled ahead, and we followed—leaving at 6.30. It was a pity that the mountain was covered by cloud, and also that it was rainy, but we managed to see most of the coast. It was quite calm, only a swell running, so everybody was on deck, and I don't think many have gone down yet."

Later:

"There are nearly twelve ships in our little party and one very formidable escort, but we *do* crawl along. We used to do anything over three hundred a day, and now it's only two, yet some usually fall behind at night, to vary the monotony. The one redeeming feature about this, is the "Magician," a boat just astern of us; she simply can't regulate her speed, and when she is not straying alongside, to let off her steam, she is doing her best to ram our stern. She really gave us a fright the first day, before we were used to her. She switched up alongside quite close, for ten minutes or so, and was then told by our Captain politely to keep in line; I admit she tried her best to get in, before we could get out, and turned straight off her course to get into line —with the result that all on deck strolled aft, to see her take a slice off our rudder, but she misjudged somewhat, and fell astern —— She has earned the name of "Reckless Reggie"!

Later:

"Well! I am in London now, with every prospect of being run over, if Ron was not handy. But as to how we arrived here. The last two days on board were really exciting ones. It was weird to see our escorting destroyers emerge out of the mist and waltz around us in the approved style! Then, after reading a few messages from the Flagship, we managed to make out that we were to go full speed ahead—with a couple of dancers on our sides, and a monster ahead. Then talk of sparks! we could feel the old bus shaking all over. That night there was some friction in the stokehold; they worked so hard that they forgot the speed limit, and sent her ahead to see if she could stand it; and luckily she did, too."

Congratulations to Carol Molteno on getting a First-class in the School Higher Examination.

Willie Anderson arrived at the Cape, from England, in January, and is staying with his father at Quarter Deck, Kalk Bay.

John Molteno was accepted for the Flying Corps, and left home on January 23rd for Durban, en route for Egypt, where the recruits are to undergo their training. The following are extracts from his letters:—

"Bombay, 9-2-18.

"We arrived here yesterday, and are going up the coast by rail to-morrow.

"We had quite a pleasant voyage in spite of being rather crowded, and also having the decks in darkness at nights.

"Bombay is a tremendous town, and has some very fine old buildings and splendid docks. It is very hot here, and we all had to buy helmets. Curiously, the nights are very cold. Most things are cheaper here than at home. It is very strange to see the Indians driving about in cars and carriages. I saw comparatively few white people. I was glad to get on land again and have a walk! I should not care to live here, there are too many Indians, and they are an awfully dirty lot.

"I don't think the climate of the Cape can be beaten. This place looks quite scorched up, and the buildings all look old and as if they needed painting, and that is due to the hot sun. . . . . ."

"Decolati, 14-2-18.

"We only had one day at Bombay, and then left for this place by train—about four hours' journey. There was not much to be seen on the way, but we passed through no less than twelve tunnels in an hour! The train service is very good, the trains go up to 60 miles an hour, and the coaches are very comfortable.

"This is rather a barren sort of place, and we are about a mile from the town, which is a kind of Indian bazaar. The bazaars are all horribly dirty places.

"Our mess is not as good as it might be. It is run by an Indian caterer; the food is very poor, and also not sufficient.

"We went to a concert last night, which was very good. They are very fashionable up here, and start all entertainments at 9.15."

"22-2-18.

"We have moved our quarters since I last wrote, and are now in some new hospital buildings. Yesterday a number of us were innoculated for enteric.

"On Tuesday Deighton and I and two others went to Nasik, which is a Holy City, about nine miles from here. There are only Indians there, and there are quite a number of temples, which are very old. The holy river runs through the centre of the city, and you see hundreds of Indians bathing. It is really a filthy place. You see the Indians bathing and washing their clothes in the same water that they drink! There were gods at every street corner and sacred cattle that are allowed to go where they like! It was really quite interesting; but the Indian towns are the dirtiest places that one could imagine, and very thickly populated. It was awful the way the people begged for money. They ran behind our cab for quite a long way. I think we shall all be glad to get to Egypt, as there is nothing to do here except play cricket, and the weather is too hot for that sort of thing. We go down to the bazaar every afternoon. You can buy nearly every thing you require at the Indian shops. They generally ask you three times too much for everything, and you have to beat them down. Some things are quite cheap. I am having a pair of boots made to measure, and they were 10 rupees—that is 13s. 4d., which is very cheap if they are any good!"

Much interest is felt in the engagement of Eileen Crowe to Captain Cecil Southey, C.G.A., both of whom have our warm congratulations.

We only wish East Griqualand, which is attracting so many from this part, were not so far away.

The following is an extract from Gordon's letter:—

"Dec. 21st, 1917.

"We went down to see Effie as soon as they had got home, and found her just recovered from the effects of the long journey from Cape Town and a bad cold. Sheila and baby had also had colds, but had quite got over them, and were looking very well. We had a very wet drive to them, and it rained the whole time we were there, so that the river came down, and we had quite an undertaking, on our way back, to get our cart over. We fastened some empty drums and paraffin tins to the wheels and pole, and then tried to float it across. However the cart just disappeared at once, but some boys, on the opposite bank, hauled it through by a long wire that we had fastened to the pole. Evelyn and the children got across in the box.

"We are expecting all Effie's party to spend Christmas with us, and I hope they will manage to get here comfortably. We shall have Wilfrid and his wife and little girl with us, too.

"We are building a new 'rondaval' just off the verandah, next our bedroom. The old one is rather far for ladies, and also inconvenient in wet weather. We shall use it as a schoolroom and extra spare room."

At the Western Province Agricultural Society's Show, held at the end of February, Kathleen Murray obtained a first prize for the two best South African bred Berkshire sows, and a first prize for the best three pounds of bees' wax.

Lucy Molteno sailed for America on March 4th, and expects to spend six months or a year there with her relatives.

Harold Anderson and his family motored up in their own car from their farm to Kalk Bay, where they spent March and part of April with Uncle **Tom.**

Jarvis Murray has been promoted to the rank of Captain, and was awarded the Military Cross after the fighting in November in connection with the capture of Tafel.

The following is an extract from a letter from his old friend Major Parson, D.S.O., describing their meeting, in which neither recognized the other:—

"Since leaving Massakesi we have marched 300 miles, and our total for the campaign is getting enormous now.

"I have been kicking myself ever since I got your letter saying Jarvis Murray was in the K.A.R. On the road from Saume to Tunduru the 1/4 K.A.R. were under us, and the O.C. told me that he had an officer who knew the road well. We went to the hospital, and found there a bearded officer (very grey beard, too), and he was introduced as Murray. I never for a moment dreamt that it was Jarvis, though his face, in spite of the beard, was familiar. He had a rotten go of fever on him, so I did not worry him for much information. I did not see him again until he reached Tunduru, and then only for a few minutes, and he had shaved off the beard. His face and voice haunted me, and I told people I was certain I had met him before. He never recognised me. When I got your letter I was two days out from Tunduru, and then, of course, knew that it was Jarvis I'd seen. I immediately wrote him a note and told him what asses we were. I hope to see him when the crowd come up here, which will not be long now, and then we will be able to have a long talk."

Extract from a letter from Islay:—

"10, Cleve Road,
Hampstead, N.W.C.,
Jan. 20, 1918.

"As you see we have settled down once more—in Hampstead this time. The house is quite a pleasant place, nicely furnished, light and sunny, and has a garden behind, which will be delightful in the summer months.

"It is no light work moving in these days. You can't get anyone to do anything for you, and you have almost to go down on your knees in order to persuade the tradespeople to take you as a new customer. In fact, I've not yet got a butcher, though one place has kindly consented to supply me whenever they can spare anything—which isn't often, however, as they are continually closing up through lack of supplies. Since the rationing of sugar, everything has gone well in that quarter, and now, thank heaven, they are going to do the same with butter and margarine. So far we've been lucky, as we've generally had from ½ lb. to ¼ lb. of one or the other a week. It doesn't sound much, does it? but with great care one can just manage on it.

"Well, I mustn't get started on the food question, though it's practically the only thing one can think or talk of, nowadays. Really everything is scarce, and what isn't scarce is *so* expensive that I really can't imagine how the poor people manage at all. As soon as the Government fixes prices—for instance, rabbits were formerly anything from 3/6 upwards each, and are now only 2/0—the commodity entirely disappears, and I'm dreading the order fixing fish prices, as at present there is plenty of fish if you care to pay for it, and one can easily live on it more or less.

"Another great difficulty is getting servants. I've a quaint little cook, who treats me as a sort of friend, has told me her entire life history, and reads "books by good authors as a means of improving her mind." House parlourmaids seem as extinct as the Dodo, but presumably I shall discover one all in good time.

"Our arrival here was heralded by a run of the coldest weather I have ever experienced. Of course, the pipes froze, and when the thaw set in one burst above cook's bedroom, and we had a lively half hour in the middle of the night tearing about collecting jugs, baths,

basins, etc., of every description to catch the drips. Jervis climbed up into the roof, and managed to stuff up the hole, and finally we retired to bed shivering with cold, and were lulled to sleep by the sound of "drip, drip," in every conceivable key. For four days we could get no plumber, which, of course, meant no kitchen fire (fortunately we have a gas stove!) and only a dribble of cold water downstairs. At the end of that time we were grimy with the smuts of London, but mercifully the plumber came, with terrible stories of water falls, ceilings fallen in, and other horrors which had occurred in other people's houses. He had worked from early morning until twelve at night five days running in order to deal with all the burst and frozen pipes of the district. Helen spent a fortnight here to help us settle in, but she has now returned to Palace Court, and she and Margaret are working hard at their singing and piano lessons. As you know, Aunt Bessie has gone off to Llandrindod, and I'm sure she will benefit very much by the change. I had a letter from Ernest a few days ago, in which he says that he is second on the list for leave. He was in the trenches about Christmas time, but doesn't mention what he's doing just at present—only is thankful for the frost, which at least keeps them out of the appalling mud in which everything and everyone was positively wallowing.

"Clarissa and Brab have left Yorkshire, as he has been chosen for a staff job from amongst several hundred others. They are now at Colchester, where he is on a staff course. Vincent and Eileen are at Yarmouth, I believe. The former seems to like the life on a submarine, though his descriptions sound too appalling for words to my prejudiced mind.

Ronald and Ken have been here several times. The latter is up at Clare at present, but I've not heard how he's liking it. Ronald's arm is progressing slowly, and is now out of the sling. He is leaving his present hospital shortly, but has to continue treatment daily, and will either go to a convalescent home or else "live out" on his own somewhere.

"Uncle Barkly's ship is being refitted, so he's down on leave now. We caught a fleeting glimpse of Aunt Ethel and him the other evening, and they both looked so well and tremendously happy. I hear Viola is perfectly beautiful, but I've never yet seen her myself.

"Jervis is getting on very well at the Defence of the Realm Losses Commission. The work isn't wildly exciting, but at any rate it is really necessary.

"My days at present are full up with housework and getting everything settled, so that I never have time to touch the piano or do more than read the papers. However, once I get a maid we'll be alright, and in the meantime the work is exceedingly good for me."

George Murray was promoted to the rank of Captain in November last.

Barkly Molteno is now in command of H.M.S. "Bellerophen."

Percy and Bessie wrote last mail from Llandrindod Wells, where they were on a visit to May and Freddie. Bessie planned remaining with them two or three months for treatment at the Baths under Freddie's care.

May writes in a recent letter:—

"Things are rapidly getting worse, and housekeeping becomes very difficult. Butchers' shops have to be closed the whole of Mondays and Wednesdays, and the allowance of meat is now only 1 lb. a head per week, including bone and bacon! Some things it has been quite impossible to get. In London and the big towns it is really serious. At Palace Court now they can have only one hot meal a day, and only in the dining room can they have a fire—nowhere else. Many houses are being searched, and people heavily fined for having more than is necessary for immediate use. Being without sugar seems quite a small thing now. Fish is not regulated, and fortunately we can get that here, though, of course, it is expensive. I am afraid the poor people in the cities are really starving already. At present we are much better off here than in most places. It is not easy to make satisfactory vegetable dishes without butter or milk or some kind of fat."

"Feb. 18th, 1918.

"Last week an order came out saying that anyone possessing any superfluous stores was to hand them over to the local Food Controller, and that anyone found with more food than enough for three weeks would probably be punished by imprisonment, without option of a fine! I always have a little reserve of things, and, not long ago, had got in my fresh supply. I am a very careful housekeeper, and I felt disgusted at having to get rid of these things, especially as we were to be given only half-price for them. I made a list of what I could keep, and the rest I divided between Freddie's hospitals and one or two other needy cases. Since then I see in the new regulations that no one is allowed to give presents of food to others, nor may people take food from one establishment of their own to another. Meat tickets are out this week—1 lb. per head a week, including bone. I think the shortage of fats is the most difficult, as one cannot make things nice without butter or fat."

An event which claims our deepest sympathy is the tragic death of Charles Parker's wife, through poisoning, a couple of months after their marriage. It appears that, in the dark, she by mistake swallowed some carbolic acid instead of medicine. A radio message was at once sent to her husband who was at sea, but, although he hurried back, he was too late to see her alive.

Harold Murray is in Palestine now, and was in Egypt a year and a half. He is a Major and on the Staff. He was wounded in the knee at the first battle of Gaza, and was in hospital at Alexandria.

When George was over in England in December, it was decided that his and Margaret's wedding should take place during his next leave, due about April or May. It was, therefore, a surprise when we got a cable saying the marriage was fixed for Feb. 23rd. From subsequent letters we learnt he was being sent to England for a course in gunnery. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. R. C. Gillie, assisted by the Rev. Athol Gordon, at the Marleybone Presbyterian Church, London.

The cabled news of the birth of Islay and Jervis's son on March 23rd was received here with great joy. Our heartiest congratulations to the happy parents and grandparents!

Vincent Molteno is now in a "K" submarine, with headquarters at Harwich, where Eileen is living.

Clarissa and Brab have been living at Colchester, where the latter took a staff course. Their latest letters are dated from London, previous to his being sent North. He was not certain as to his future movements.

Clare Molteno, Monica and Audrey left Bracknell in March, and have taken a flat in London. Their new address is 34, Upper Montague Street, Montagu Square, W. Monica has received a billet at the Admiralty, and Audrey is going to Queen's College, which is not far from where they live.

The following are extracts from Betty Molteno's letters:—

"London, Feb. 6th, 1918.

"It is a long time since I have written to you—even now I can't do much. A stream of such intense life is flowing through me that even a word on paper is a tremendous effort—partly, I suppose, because it must be so inadequate to express the tremendous emotion these times evoke. I can't even write about George and Margaret—their love story is intertwined with these times of overwhelming emotion. I can't tell you about it—even on paper. Now for the surface:—

"Morel is released from prison, and is recruiting in Devonshire, where his wife is with him. I don't know whether, also, his sweet young daughter, who left such a deep impression on my mind as I watched her at his trial

—a lovely flower of humanity, and evidently devoted to her father. I hope some public welcome of him will some time take place. Another terrific air raid experienced under singularly dramatic conditions. Through Olive, I got an opportunity of being at the dinner at the Lyceum Club to celebrate women obtaining the franchise. Mrs. Montefiore, in the chair—Olive and I her guests. Ere the meal was quite concluded, the, now well-known, sounds of gun-firing began. Mrs. Montefiore rose to announce that a warning had been received earlier, and that anyone who preferred to leave could now do so. Only one lady left. The speeches were made to the accompaniment of booming guns, and, at intervals, a new form of rapid quick-firing volleys. Again and again speakers drew attention to the awful sounds and their terrible significance—to the awakening of women, which must ultimately make these orgies of bloodshed impossible. Olive, I believe, received an ovation—her presence was evidently very precious, very moving allusions to her printed work were made. At 11 o'clock she and I left, and walked back to Manchester Place. As I was undressing, the guns re-opened their bombardment. I returned to Olive, and remained there till 1.30 p.m., when the "all clear" bugles began to sound.

"Terrible destruction was done at Covent Garden—a part I know well. I have not had the heart to go there. Hundreds of people could have found shelter in underground vaults—how many did, I don't expect is known. John Bull's printing works suffered badly. The roof of one of the underground shelters crashed in from the weight of falling debris—fire broke out—the water pipes burst, and the poor people, who had taken refuge, were at the mercy of both elements as well as crushed under the debris. Surely mankind must have its eyes opened by these awful occurrences, and cease to destroy itself.

"In spite of the overwhelmingly black moments, a deep joy, at times, fills me, and then I feel sure that humanity is entering upon a new phase of development—that forces of Light and Love will ultimately overcome those of Darkness and Destruction. Death is naught—Life is All.

"I hope you see the "Nation" regularly. It has done, and is doing, magnificent work. Some of the articles must be written with the life-blood of the writers."

The only news from the Karoo is that Wallace has let Kamfer's Kraal to Mr. J. U. Wilmot—youngest son of Count Wilmot, of Wynberg. He has a charming wife and dear little baby boy of two, and Wallace and Lil look forward to having such nice neighbours. It somewhat mitigates the sadness of leaving Kamfer's Kraal to know that it will be in good hands. Mr. Wilmot takes over in April 1st. (It will be interesting for the family to note how the arrangement works, and whether it is Mr. Wilmot or Wallace who proves the April Fool—!! but possibly the choice of such a day for a start merely shows a lack of humour in the contracting parties!)

The Karoo surpassed itself last year in its splendid rainfall—but this season it seems to have relapsed to the old conditions. Except for an inch of rain on January 1st, and a few very local showers, no rain has fallen, and the best months for rain have passed, which means that the veld is very dry for the lambing. However, rains may still be hoped for.

Wallace has obtained over 500 bags of wheat at Kamfer's Kraal, and is now threshing his wheat at Mimosa Grove. (We hear that Harold's crop is over 1,000 bags.) The alterations to the Nelspoort house are nearly finished, and the Great Trek takes place early in April.

Later.

Since writing the above, splendid rains have fallen in the Karoo and all over the Cape Province. Beaufort West had the unheard of rainfall of over 9 inches. There was great danger of the dam breaking, and most of the unfortunate inhabitants camped out in the Gaol! the English Church, and the Railway Station, which stand on high ground. The

rainfall was not nearly so great on the surrounding farms, and there was only 2.12 at Kamfer's Kraal and 2.65 at Nelspoort. Part of Bleak House, Charlie's farm, called Plat Doorns, is a swamp, being practically submerged. The loss of stock was also remarkably slight, Wallace only losing 40 sheep and 20 lambs. It is splendid to have had such good rains just as things were getting critical again.

With the South African Field Ambulance in France.

Extracts from Kenah's Letters.

Alice Holt,
Nr. Farnham,
Surrey.
November 18th, 1917.

"After a long spell in a very heavy bout of fighting, we came out to a peaceful part of the line and on November 7th I managed to get my leave and luckily, just came in for new regulations making it 14 days instead of 10 days. Hilda met me in London and told me her father was very weak indeed, so we could make no arrangements about the children until I had been down here.

I found poor Mr. Robertson just slowly sinking away, I scarcely think he could have recognised me but I thought a faint glimmer passed over his face when I came in. He died peacefully the next day.

The funeral took place on November 13th, as the difficulties of time and distance did not otherwise allow of his friends coming down. On the 13th his brother-in-law and all his old friends came down, including Uncle Percy and Jervis, and joined the family party at a quiet funeral in the very remote and peaceful churchyard of Brinstead, not far from Mainwaring's farm."

Hilda writes: "The churchyard, with the lovely view all round it, is a really perfect resting place and everywhere were masses of flowers. Stevenson, the gardener, is a most perfect arranger of flowers and he had made the grave look beautiful."

November 25th, 1917.

"I have had such a number of letters of yours lately I feel enormously in arrears on my side. Your letters give such a full account of all that you are doing and all that is going on that I feel I can picture it perfectly. I am now back in France after my leave. Unfortunately it was spoiled in some respects by the feverish attack I got, but in many ways it did not matter so much as naturally we welcomed a quiet time, and to be in a comfortable house and able to enjoy hot baths and all that sort of thing made it quite pleasant. After Mr. Robertson's funeral we collected the children and spent five or six delightful quiet days, which I enjoyed to the full. It was splendid to see the children all looking so well. On the Sunday we celebrated the united birthdays of Lorna and Rhona; they each had a cake with the traditional candles and they both had a nice little batch of presents. The day before I had to leave for France we all went to London together, via Guildford, where we dropped old Stewart. Then in London we lunched at Selfridges and afterwards took Lorna to her train. In the evening Colonel Pringle met us and we dined at Palace Court with Uncle Percy and Jervis and Islay. The next morning Hilda and I had time to do some final shopping before we drove together to Charing Cross, where I caught my train, whilst Hilda went to Waterloo for hers. Col. Pringle was to leave for the Cape to-day and will if possible look you up, but I told him he must not be discouraged if he does not find you at the cottage as you might be at Elgin, and you would arrange to meet him on his return journey if he missed you on arrival. What with the busy time I had before my departure on leave and not feeling fit when I was on leave, I have not yet been able to write any account of our last great battle, which was perhaps, in fact I am sure, the most trying ex-

perience we have ever had, and that is saying a good deal, as our division has taken its place in everyone of the great battles since the beginning of 1915.

It is late now but I hope by making a start now, to be able to go on and finish later.

After our last battle on September 20th our division went out of the line for a short time, which seemed all the shorter in that we never stayed anywhere for any length of time. However, on October 8th (I think it was), we had orders to move for the line again. I am giving you some of the preliminaries as they will shew what has to be endured before you even reach the fighting line, where you want to arrive with all your energy intact if possible. We struck our camp during the morning of the 8th in a soaking drizzle, and entrained at 4 p.m. in cattle trucks (as far as the men were concerned). We only had a few miles to go but it took us till 6 the next morning. We then marched to a camping area, where we pitched our sodden tents on bare muddy ground, where others had done the same thing for the last 3 years. During the day the officers visited the area on ahead, to get an idea of where we had to go. The next morning we had to pack up and be off again to reach our various "Battle posts". The Hq. Section went went to a point to form an Advanced Dressing Station, while the bearers who were under my orders, had to march a distance of about 14 miles up towards the front line. The distance, though considerable, was not so much the trouble, as the congestion on the roads and the bad surface. All the way it was a matter of marching for a bit and then having long waits for the congestion to ease off. The further we went the worse matters became. At about 4.30 after passing over a track which was simply a sea of mud which concealed numberless shell holes and bad patches in the road, we reached the "Pill Box", which was to be my post. Just about 150 yards ahead; or less, there was a bridge over a stream, and a fork in the road; and on this point the Germans were keeping up a steady fire of big shells. The road had dwindled to a mere track and in endeavouring to turn the wagon containing our equipment, one of the horses fell into the ditch at the side of the road almost submerged in thin slush. To make matters worse he got one of his legs wedged under a rough sort of log bridge, and it took us nearly half an hour's work to get him out. It was just about dark by the time this was done and our equipment stores and water cans piled in a heap by the roadside. Then the bearers were divided into parties and went off to man the various posts on ahead. On these occasions everything you want has to be carried up. Rations, dressings, fuel, stores and water. Not long after the bearers got away a shell landed close to our pile of equipment, riddling many of our water cans and destroying some stretchers. The "Pill Box" I was to make use of was smothered both inside and out in debris of all kinds and did not afford shelter for more than about 12 wounded in all. The previous occupants had done nothing to improve matters, having merely sheltered there for 24 hours at a stretch and then cleared out. The party we were relieving had got orders not to leave till next morning with the result that there wasn't room for us all to crowd in to the very cramped space, and all the time wounded were coming in, and had to be got away. The result was, therefore, that there was no rest for anyone after the previous tiring days. The next morning, when the other party left, I hoped to get time to clear the debris from the front of the doors and make the place more accessible and clean the inside, and we were just starting this when the shelling became very intense, and casualties began to stream in, so that we had to work hard to keep clear of wounded. This went on more or less all day, and in fact it was 3 a.m. before the last case was got away. At 5.25 a.m. our attacking barrage started, and soon we were hard at work with the wounded, and unable to do more to make things comfortable. It rained during the night and next day, and it would be impossible to describe the conditions under which we toiled for the

next few days. The country was flat and marshy and utterly sodden. It was torn to pieces by shelling, and becoming more and more so every minute. The poor stretcher bearers had simply to struggle over indescribable morasses, taking hours to gain a few hundred yards. The journey of a wounded man from the first line to my post, a distance of about 3,000 yards, took on an average about 6 to 8 hours, and then it took many more hours to get from me to the A.D.S., where the headquarter section was. However, in 36 hours, by the use of 450 bearers working without rest, and sodden from head to foot in mud and slime, we managed to clear our line of the results of the battle.

"During that time none of us got much in the way of a rest. One often thought at times, if only those who talk so glibly about the war and the fighting, and going on indefinitely, could actually see what it means, they would feel very differently. Twenty-four hours on such an occasion, spent in the forefront of the battle by some of these people from both sides, would help their conferences a lot. It would take one far too long to describe even a fragment of all I saw in the 14 days we spent in that place; and, in fact, much of it is too horrible to think of.

"The Germans were making a desperate stand, and using more artillery than I have yet seen, and pouring over far more shells than they usually do.

"The shells at first were fired from a moderate range, but as we drove them back, the range lengthened. They fired salvos mostly, that is, the guns fired in four's together. You could hear them go off, and then the hum of the approaching shells ending in a swooping scream followed by the most tremendous explosions. Fortunately for us our pill boxes were made of strong re-inforced concrete, and, though they were hit on several occasions, they resisted well. The shelling was kept up so vigorously that it was very difficult to do much to improve our station. No sooner did we get to work outside than the shelling would drive us in again. By exercising vigilance in this way, we were fortunate in only having two of our party wounded. The most anxious time was when the ambulance wagons arrived and had to be loaded, as then it was a case of risking the ambulance or the patients, and so we had to hurry up no matter what was happening. Many times we had close shaves from shells pitching within a few yards of us on these occasions, without hitting anyone. I was fortunate in having some very nice capable officers working with me. A young padre, who had served for 18 months as a soldier, was very useful. I put all the cooking arrangements in his hands, and by rigging up a sort of cookhouse in the lee of one of our pill-boxes, he managed to keep up a good supply of hot soup and tea. Then I had a carpenter who worked all the time at making bunks, so that by the time I left we could get nearly 40 wounded under shelter, instead of only 9 or 10 as at first. The doors of the pill-boxes (which, of course, had been built by Germans) faced the enemy, and therefore looked towards where the shells came from, so after a time I gradually managed to build sandbag walls to protect them from the fire. The very day this wall reached completion a shell burst in the road and carried a lot of them away, but saved us from the fragments that would have come in. In all, I spent 14 days up there, and during that time more than half my party had to be replaced, having succumbed to wounds, gas and exhaustion. It was most inspiring to see the grit and determination with which our men worked, never giving in until I had to send them away as being incapable of doing any more. When at last our orders for relief came our trials were not quite over. We marched out to a camp, where the tents were pitched on soft marshy ground. It was pouring with rain and beginning to blow. We turned in with nothing but sodden blankets to cover us, and during the night the wind increased and blew all the tents down. Then we had to hang about the whole of the next day, entraining late in the evening, and eventually

reaching the next halting place at about 2 a.m., with orders to be ready to start again in busses at 6 a.m. Then followed a tedious drive, followed by an 8 mile march, until we reached our final destination, so that one might say that this battle meant 21 days with never a chance of a decent sleep and very hard work all the time. One of these days I shall be able to tell you incidents during those days which would take too long to write now.

"I was very glad to see a letter from Jarvis while I was on leave. It was one he wrote to May. His account was most interesting, and reminded me of my time in S.W.A., though the country sounded much pleasanter in E.A.

"Well, this letter has been written with many interruptions, as we have moved to another village since I began it yesterday."

"Dec. 22nd.

"We are now in the midst of a very severe spell of frost and snow, and living in corrugated iron huts, which is chilly and draughty work. All the villages in the district are flattened out. The Huns are beginning to give us a lively time with bombs. All this evening they have been dropping them about on various camps in the neighbourhood. You can hear the great "Gothas" coming along; and then they usually drop off three or four, at a time, with a tremendous crash. It is wonderful how the airmen manage to stick out, flying in this freezing weather.

"The R.A.M.C. is now being heavily recruited by Yank doctors—quite a nice lot of young fellows, who, however, have yet to show what they are worth.

"I wonder if I told you of my meeting with one of the Yank Commission on Splints. I showed him a splint which I designed for fracture of the upper limb, and he was delighted, and said it was just what they had been hunting for. On the other hand, I had tried, without avail last year to get it made one of the universal patterns for the Army, and it is only now that it is being extensively used. The Yanks have now published their official book on surgical appliances for the American Army, and my suggestion is designated there as "Murray's Splint."

"Feb. 18th, 1918.

"Recently we have had a visit from Gen. Smuts. I started to tell him who I was, but he said "I know quite well, your father is a great friend of mine. I was instrumental in seeing he had a suitable rank as soon as I found his services had been accepted."

"I had an interesting chat with Gen. Smuts, and was able to get him to promise help in putting some of our S.A.M.C. arrangements on a sounder footing. He told me Bourne would be visiting us later. The day before yesterday the latter turned up at Brigade Headquarters, and sent for me, as S.M.O., S.A. Brigade, for an interview, which was most interesting. He also spoke most openly to Gen. Dawson (our Brigadier) and myself on a number of points upon which one had been able only to surmise. His visit was with the object of seeing and hearing things, on the spot, and then approaching the War Office with a view to helping us to get what we want.

"Since the first spell of severe weather there has been a great change, and almost spring-like conditions have prevailed. This winter we have been living mostly in re-conquered territory, which has meant a camping life. However, we have all kept very fit."

Extracts from George's Letters.

"Nov. 20th, 1917.

"We arrived up here the day before yesterday, and at present are in temporary wagon lines, a good long way back. Yesterday Symons (the Major) went up with one section, and to-day Marks (2nd Lieut.) has taken up the other two sections (a battery consists of three sections, right, left and centre, each section consists of two guns). We have not had to take any guns up, as they are already in position. I remain down here with Youngs (2nd Lieut.) and we shall form the next relief, to go up when the others have had enough.

"Kille (2nd Lieut.) has gone up to do O.P., and it comes to our battery's turn every other day.

"Probably I won't be able to take my turn as I am doing Captain's work; but it depends how we get on. Apparently our battery, for once in a way, has got the pick of the positions; though that is not saying much.

"Yesterday I rode round to see the road up. It was so interesting seeing all the old places I know so well (i.e., N.E. of Ypres) now far behind the lines. By some mistake it hasn't rained for several days, so we and our horses are still on dry land and quite happy.

"Needless to say, we are simply out in an open field, with no accommodation of any sort beyond a few tents we brought from the last camp. It is rather a lot to expect us to have to live in the open at this time of year; perhaps we shall find some huts in our next camp. Leave would be going splendidly if it wasn't for the fact that officers can't be spared. It is a pity we should come up here just as vacancies became plentiful. Our mess only consists of a tarpaulin over some poles!"

"Nov. 22nd, 1917.

"Times are very busy, with heaps and heaps to do. I spent all yesterday riding about from place to place making arrangements about various things. Being in a new area, it is not easy to find out just where all supply and ammunition points are located. I visited Symons at the position, also Brigade Headquarters, four different ammunition dumps, R.E. dumps, camouflage dump, Divisional Artillery Headquarters, besides handing over four guns to our battery and fetching two others from another battery.

"The battery position is quite indescribable! We are particularly lucky in having two excellent pill-boxes. Symons was in good form, but very dirty and unshaved!

"I go up to relieve him on Saturday morning. We are arranging four day reliefs, which will be a better plan than a shorter period. It gives one more time on end at the wagon lines, and, as the position is not too bad, it is quite possible to carry on up there.

"To-day I was very busy all morning with ammunition. I didn't go up to the position, but showed the men where to get the ammunition, etc. Just as I was coming back the General passed in his car. He pulled up and gave me a lift to his headquarters.

"When we got there he let me have the car to take me right on down to the W. L.: wasn't it good of him? He told me that he will put me in orders to be a Captain to the Battery, which is very nice."

23rd Nov.

"News came down last night that Symons had been wounded. It is only very slight, and he may not be away more than a few weeks. I am going to take charge this morning."

Nov. 24th.

"All goes well. I came up yesterday morning, and relieved Marks, who went down to the W. L. Youngs was at the O.P., and returned at tea time. There are two O.P.'s, which the Brigade has to man day and night. One is only a few hundred yards from here, and the other about a mile further on. You can see nothing of the Germans from them, and they are really nothing more than relay stations for passing back S.O.S. It is rather foolish to require an officer to be at each, but as they have a pill-box to live in it is not so bad. Naturally being O.C., I don't descend to such things as O.P. duty! but sit securely in my pill-box when there is anything going on. It is quite a good place, 10 ft. long by 6 ft. wide, about 4 ft. high in the centre, the roof being arched. There is at least 4 ft. of cement all over, and it is fairly dry, so we are well off. It is rather a popular place for passers-by to take refuge in, and as many as twenty-five have squeezed in. I believe we could dig it out till we could stand up in it, because the floor has evidently been made by our people. However, very nasty smells start if you try to move things, so we shall let well alone!

"Our men have got a good big place on the same lines, besides another small one, so we are exceptionally lucky.

"Apparently Symons had a very narrow escape. He was outside the pill-box when a 5.9 landed less than three yards away. He only received a cut in the face and a few tiny bits in the chest. It is not known how long he will be away.

"We are arranging four day reliefs for the men, as they have good dugouts. Marks and Youngs will take week and week about up here, while Kille will stay at W. L., and come up every four days to do O.P. I live here until we get another sub. or until I get bored, when I will go to the W.L.!

"P.S.—Orders are just in, and amongst them I am promoted to Captain."

"Jan. 6th, 1918.

"We have been steadily on the go since early on the 2nd, and it has been a great struggle every day, except the 4th, when we had a day's rest. Our first day's journey was only 15 miles, and on moderately good roads. Next day we had 20 miles to go, over fearfully slippery roads. Quite a number of battalions failed to reach their destination, and had to camp by the road side.

"It was practically a repetition of the 1916 trek. We were lucky, and managed to get in in fairly good time. That night we had a nice comfortable billet. The following day we rested, and on the 5th we marched to the entraining station. Things had been so badly delayed that we were kept waiting from 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. before we could get into the station. By 5.30 our train moved out. It was not a very long journey, and we reached our destination by 3 a.m. the next morning. However, there was the usual delay, and we only started detraining at 8 a.m. It was fearfully cold in the train. I'm sure there must have been dozens of degrees of frost. By 10 a.m. we were on the line of march again, and we finally reached here at 3.30 p.m. absolutely dead beat. It is a tremendous struggle getting all the horses and vehicles in and out of a train. The roads, too, are so icy that marching was terribly hard and slow.

"Our camp is a wretched place in a most bare and desolate piece of country miles and miles from anywhere. We are told we are likely to be here for a fortnight before going up into the line. It is a shame bringing us to such a miserable spot for our rest. The village hasn't got a house that is not ruined by shell fire, and there are only about a dozen inhabitants left."

"Jan. 8th.

"Marks is going on leave, so I am getting him to post this for me. We are a mile away from Bray just across the Somme. We are in the country where the French had their big camps for the Somme battles. We expect to go up into line near St. Quentin. It is *very* quiet there. Leave is going strong. Marks has only been out just three months since his last leave, so I am living in great hopes! It is horribly cold again. The rain that started yesterday turned to snow, and there was the usual frost during the night. The whole of the river is frozen over. We moved camp to-day, a few miles, to a rather better spot. The last one was too impossible in every way."

Jan. 9th.

"I'm afraid my letters have been very sketchy, but it's because we have been having a sketchy life. This is the first time since the 1st that we have spent two nights in the same place; and most days we had to get up very early indeed. It would have been quite pleasant in summer time, but during this cold weather it has been very much the reverse.

"We are in a large semi-derelict camp, which would hold a complete Brigade if it was in proper repair. As it is, we can only just find sufficient place. We ourselves live in a large bare hut. It was full of draughts, because it was built up of small sections which don't fit properly. There is no floor or stove, so last night was bitterly cold. However, to-day we were busy improving it; stopping up cracks with straw and sacking, and making partitions. Luckily there is any amount of

material which can be got by pulling down the more delapidated buildings in the neighbourhood. Our fire consists of an open brazier at present, which fills the place with clouds of smoke and makes your eyes smart horribly.

Before long we hope to make ourselves nice and comfortable, but then, of course, it will just be time to move on again. I must say I do *not* like this endless cold weather. It is very nice when you can get away from it if you want to—into a nice warm house; but to be practically speaking out in it all the time, is too much. I simply live in my large coat. Fortunately I am quite warm at night, which makes a lot of difference.

"To-day has been particularly cold, but the wind changed at 7 p.m., and now it is pouring with rain and sleet. Needless to say, this hut has developed many leaks, and one of them on to my bed! If the thaw really sets in it won't be so bad, but if it freezes again, like it did last time, the country will be in a terribly slippery state.

"The General is coming round to-morrow morning to inspect the battery, so we shall have a busy time preparing for him."

Jan. 11th.

"The cold—or rather the frosty weather—has gone at last. It has been raining most of the day, and the ground will be completely thawed before long. On the whole, I am glad, because it was wretched before.

"Our hut is becoming quite comfortable. Symons and I live in one part, which is divided off and fitted up with a nice wide combined table and shelf. Another part is boarded off, and forms the mess. The rest of it is a sort of carpenter's shop and battery office. We spend most of our spare time sawing up logs for the fire, though I doubt if the result is worth the trouble, as the whole place becomes filled with smoke, as it is only an open oil drum with a few holes knocked in it. They are making a few attempts to improve our rest. A motor bus leaves here every third day, and takes officers into ——, about twenty-five miles due west. Personally I think it is hardly worth the trouble. You have to get up very early, and the journey takes two and a half hours, and when you get there there is nothing to do. However, I expect I shall go in one day just for something to do."

MARGARET'S AND GEORGE'S WEDDING.

Elizabeth Margaret Molteno to George Anthony Murray, Feb. 23rd, 1918.

The following account of the wedding is chiefly composed of extracts from May's letter:—

Monday, Feb. 25th.

"The Tuesday before we left Llandrindod to come up for the wedding, Aunt Bessie had a letter from Margaret saying Ernest had arrived on leave, and was thinking of paying us a visit, also that it was practically certain that George would now be coming over for his course early in March, and the wedding would be on March 9th. Next day came another letter saying George was arriving yesterday, and the wedding would be on Saturday, so we started making arrangements.

"Ernest arrived early on Friday morning, and we all left this together on Monday, the 18th. We had such a comfortable journey up, only having to change at Shrewsbury, where Ernest and I had a little walk in the town, which has some interesting and quaint old buildings.

"Our train was due at Paddington at 9 o'clock, and was it not most fortunate that it was punctual, for before we reached Paddington a gun went off. The train immediately stopped, and a guard came along with a lantern and turned out all lights; for the gun was the signal that a raid was coming. We crept into the station in absolute darkness. Fortunately the bus, which Aunt Bessie had ordered, was standing just opposite our carriage. We all got in, and then there was a

little delay finding our luggage in the dark. At last we got off, and the driver put the horse to a gallop. By that time all traffic had been stopped, and it was the most curious feeling driving through absolutely silent and empty streets. I saw a solitary cat sitting in the road. Only when we passed the Tube stations there were long queues of people waiting to go down for shelter. As we got out at Palace Court, the second warning went. Uncle Percy was at the door, and we had to hurry straight down to the basement, where we all packed into a tiny pantry which is very well situated in the centre. There we had some cocoa, which had been prepared for us.

"Very soon the firing began, but it was not so much of a raid as the two previous nights. It was near 12 o'clock when the signal went that all was safe again. Poor Margaret and Helen had been up the two previous nights, and they were very tired.

"George had arrived the day before, but had had to go on to Shoeburyness. Unfortunately Ernest had to return to France the very morning of the wedding.

"George arrived in time for dinner on Friday evening, and Aunt Bessie got a room for him at the Coburg Hotel.

"Saturday was such a lovely day, quite warm and sunny. Margaret's friend, Miss Wolton, arrived from Cambridge about 11 o'clock. She and Helen were the bridesmaids, and we were all so sorry that Kathleen, the chief bridesmaid, could not be there. At about a quarter to twelve we had sandwiches and coffee in the dining-room, Margaret most happy pouring out the coffee. We then all went to change. Macdonald, of course, dressed Margaret. Nearly all the Parklands staff had come up for the day, including Everitt, who attended to the carriages which were provided to bring all the guests from the Church.

"At a quarter-past one, Aunt Bessie, Victor, Miss Cowan and I started for the Church, as our carriage was to return for the bride. It was very nice getting there before any of the people arrived. It was a nice big Church, and beautifully decorated with tall palms, banks of daffodills, mimosa, and here and there lovely tall white lilies.

"We did not yet know whether Kenah had arrived from France. He and I were to represent the parents of the bridegroom. We were so glad, therefore, when we saw him arrive with Hilda and Ethel.

"Not long before the bride came in, George and his three faithful friends, the Horsleys and Trubshawe, arrived. Oswald Horsley, who had got special leave from the Front for the wedding, was the best man. Of course, George was in uniform. He did look so nice, his manner so calm and dignified, yet one could see how he was feeling it all.

"Then the Wedding March struck up as Uncle Percy and Margaret walked up the aisle —Margaret looking quite lovely in her beautiful wedding dress, which became her perfectly, of cream satin and chiffon, trimmed with antique Point de Milan lace. The train, which hung from the shoulders, was of cream brocaded crêpe de soie, with ruchings of blush pink ninon and a trail of orange blossom. She wore a necklace of three rows of pearls, the gift of her mother, and carried a bouquet of white lilies.

Behind followed Helen and Miss Wolton, both fair and so pretty, in turquoise blue silk dresses, embroidered with dragon flies in gold thread. They wore pretty picture hats in black crinoline, with tulle crowns and wheat ear mounts, and carried bouquets of daffodils. Each wore a pearl brooch, the gift of the bridegroom.

"Mr. Athol Gordon assisted Mr. Gillie, the minister of the Church, and the marriage service was quite the nicest I have ever heard. The bride and bridegroom had a good deal more to say than in the English Church service.

The Psalm, beginning "Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another," was part of one they constantly sang at Bedales and they had the same chant. Margaret chose the verses. The hymns were "O Perfect Love," and the second one, "Now thank we all

our God," was chosen from the Bedales hymn-book. The address was so particularly good that I have asked Mr. Gillie for a copy to send you. Uncle Percy took me into the vestry and Kenah, Aunt Bessie. As the pridal party walked down the aisle the bride could not have looked more lovely, both she and George radiant with smiles.

"The guests were received at the house by Aunt Bessie and Uncle Percy. The former wore a most becoming dress of pearl grey charmeuse and crêpe georgette, embroidered in steel and blue silk, and trimmed with antique Point d'Alençon lace. The black lace picture hat was trimmed with grey ostrich feathers, and she carried a bouquet of pale pink carnations. After the guests had all been received, photographs were taken at the porch, and then we all went into the dining-room for refreshments.

"The flowers were lovely—pale pink carnations, with long stems, arranged with asparagus ferns. There were vases of freizias and lilies of the valley, and a pot of white heather looked lovely on a piece of dark oak furniture. The table had soft pale pink ribbon, to match the carnations, fastened diagonally across, with a soft bow at the side. In spite of there being no decorated cakes, it all looked most attractive. Barbellion had provided most dainty little fruit jellies in paper cups, and they were delicious. Then there were all kinds of candied fruits and delicious sandwiches in silver dishes, and dates, with nuts, etc. There was no champagne, just tea and coffee. The wedding cake, of course, could have no almond paste or icing on it. The almond tree at Palace Court was in bloom, and we had some lovely sprays of that and of some other fruit blossom in the drawing-room, in a lovely old copper bowl, which was one of the presents. Then there were vases of tall arum lilies which had been sent up from Parklands, and on the mantelpiece, above where the bridal party stood, were anemonies and asparagus fern with daffodils in the smal windows at the side.

"The presents were beautiful. Uncle Percy gave such an exquisite diamond pendant, and Aunt Bessie one of pearls and diamonds. A case of lovely coffee cups, in silver holders, was sent to George by a young fellow in his regiment named Miller, who was very badly wounded, and is still very ill, and on the morning of the wedding his mother sent a box of lovely white camelias. Ernest's was a beautiful present—two Queen Anne silver sauce boats with handles on each side. The Horsleys gave a dessert service of Worcester china over a hundred years old. I wish I had time to tell you more.

"Sir Matthew Wallace made such a nice speech, it was quite unexpected, but I was so glad that George rose so splendidly to the occasion, and everyone was delighted with his reply.

"About four o'clock Margaret went up to change into her going away dress, which was very pretty—grey Tricoline and charmeuse, embroidered in fine steel beads and blue and heather coloured threads. The hat was tinsel brocade and heather coloured satin.

"She really did make such a lovely bride—both of them looked lovely. It was so nice seeing so many people we knew and relations. Aunt Clare was there with her family, including Clarissa and Brab, who both looked so happy. Mr. and Mrs. Gulland were there, but he looked so changed and ill that I scarcely knew him. Lady Mirilees and Celia had come up all the way from Bournemouth. Mrs. Wisely was bright as ever. Olive Schreiner was there, and, of course, Miss Bingle.

"In the evening Aunt Betty and Miss Greene came in, and the latter brought such a sweet little picture by her sister, of an old inn yard at Cambridge.

"The two best men fetched the bridesmaids, at six o'clock, to dine with Margaret and George at the Savoy, after which they went to a theatre, and then to supper at the Trocadero!

"Margaret and George stayed that night at Brown's Hotel in Dover Street, and, was it not nice, they came and had lunch the next day at Palace Court, leaving at once after for

Shoeburyness. I wish you could have seen the two beamingly happy faces, looking out of the taxi, as they drove away. "

The following is an extract from Betty's letter:—

"Though heart and head are too full for words, yet this morning I hope I shall be able to write a few words about "the wedding," which already seems in the distance. How shall I tell you about the wonderful event! Perhaps going very flatly and straightly into the outside is the only possible way—though I feel as if the Unseen Loved Ones were powerfully with us—those who so dearly loved, whilst in this earth life.

"How make for you the picture, as it appeared to me! Alice arrived about 12 o'clock —looking very nicely and appropriately garbed in a dark green dress (made specially for the occasion), and black hat—her face shining with love and sympathy.

"May had been much concerned about my appearance, but not a thing did I buy—not a moment could I spare for the purpose, yet I am sure May could not have been wholly disappointed—anyway Alice and Olive decided I could pass! Olive, too, had nothing new to put on, but she, like Alice, had the light of love and sympathy shining in her face. We lunched together in Olive's sitting-room—then set out together for Mr. Gillie's church. The day seemed specially made for the occasion—so bright, sweet and early spring-like the feel of it. As we approached the church, motors and vehicles were seen that must have already deposited their freight, and we began to fear we were late. As we reached the entrance, there was Percy handing out Margaret from a motor. I walked in close behind him and the bride—very sweet, young, natural, loveable she looked. The dress was so sweet—soft—just right—a long train, but still the effect so simple—not distracting from the sweet girlish figure that stepped so erect, so resolutely, to take the marriage vows.

"George was already waiting for her, and there stood the two darlings, who, in a certain sense, are also my children. I could see little but those two, standing side by side—at last to be united outwardly as they had already so long been united inwardly. Each repeated the marriage vows clearly and audibly, and finally came Mr. Gillie's singularly beautiful and appropriate address—the best I have ever listened to—so fitting for those two special young people.

"Young Horsley looked such a fine man—a striking figure, to make one proud of the Bedalians, as well as of the young men of our day. What I felt so refreshing was the absence of self-consciousness on the part of the principal actors. The immense world tragedy had swept away small things. The lovers had passed through waters so deep that the ceremony became symbolic of vaster issues than are generally realized at a wedding.

Olive, Alice and I drove with Mr. Athol Gordon and others to Palace Court, and were soon in the dear room (so full of memories of many kinds), now blooming with exquisite flowers—a bower of beauty—filled with the friends who came to the house. Percy and Bessie received the guests as they entered, while the bride and bridegroom were receiving at the other end. I could see little beside those dear ones, and they remained so natural, unaffected and apparently only concerned to make their guests happy. I didn't succeed in getting to them, and got no word until the wedding cake had been cut in the dining-room, when the sweet Margaret herself came and offered me some—a large slice of the delicious cake I did have. Later I found myself beside dear George, but Sir Matthew Wallace was preparing to make his speech, and George went to stand beside Margaret. A few very heartfelt warm words were said by Sir Matthew, and then dear George succeeded in making a singularly natural appropriate speech, which transported us into the heart of the world tragedy which, for a brief while, he had stepped out of, to feel himself lost in an overwhelming ocean of Love

—taking him out of France into this world of complete love and trust.

Margaret disappeared to change into her charming grey travelling dress and soon the two dear figures ran down the steps, in a shower of flower-petals, past the many loved ones, lining the way to their vehicle and off they went—George leaning well out of the window, waving good-bye until out of sight. Bessie looked strikingly handsome in her very beautiful, grey dress and hat—splendidly she and Percy played their part—spreading loving kindness in all directions. It was the most beautiful wedding, from some points of view, that I have been at—comparing with the sweetness and graciousness, naturalness of Effie's and Elliot's marriage—so as to make the two weddings companion pictures in my store of precious memories. Such true love marriages are renewals of Life and Joy and Hope for the Future."

FARMING IN EAST GRIQUALAND

East Griqualand is very much cut off, and differs considerably geographically and climatically from the other districts of the Cape Colony. It adjoins S.E. Basutoland and Natal, and falls much more naturally into the latter province, with which we are linked up by rail. All our produce and business goes to Natal, and we get all our requirements—such as groceries, farm implements, etc., from the Natal merchants. This is so much the case that there is a good deal of agitation to have E. G. tacked on to the Province of Natal.

The mean altitude of the district is considerably over 5,000 ft.; in fact, it must be nearer 6,000 ft., which means that the winters are very cold. We have an annual rainfall of 30 inches, which falls almost entirely in the summer months, December and January being the very wet months. During these months we have thunder storms almost every afternoon, which generally pass off towards sunset, leaving the nights clear and cool.

The farms are all very small in comparison to the average size in other parts. 3,000 acres is a full-sized farm, and many are even smaller. My own is 2,000 acres.

The class of farming carried on is always "mixed" farming, the principal branches being cattle and sheep. Of late years the agricultural side is being more and more developed, but the growing of crops is always looked upon as a side line.

Stock farming is quite a different matter in these parts, in that all stock has to be "fed" during the winter. By "fed" we mean that they must get something besides the natural grass. Our grass gets dried up by the frost to such an extent as to be almost worthless during the severest of the winter months, which are July and August. Hardy stock can just about eke out an existence, but on farms that are well stocked practically everything must be "fed." This "feeding" may mean only grazing in the old mealie lands, which is really as much as the majority of the stock ever gets, but animals such as milk cows and slaughter stock must get a good ration of hay, roots or green food. By "green feed" we refer to cereal crops such as oats and wheat, put in about February or March so as to make a good growth before the winter. Such crops are grazed off during the winter, and in the spring when the stock is taken off they make fresh growth, and yield quite a fair harvest.

The staple crop of the district is the mealie. We live to a great extent on it, our boys live almost entirely on it, and our stock eat it in all forms—dry stalk and grain, mealie hay, ensilage, and ground cob and grain. If our mealie crop were to fail, we should indeed be in a bad way. The mealie has numerous pests to contend with, but as a general rule it never fails us altogether.

The old dry grass is burnt off towards the end of August. One often sees articles written on the iniquities of grass burning, and I always wish that one of the writers who feels so strongly on the subject would take up farming in E. G. and demonstrate practically how

to farm on the non-burning principle. However, it is too deep and too lengthy a subject to start on lightly. In normal seasons the new green grass begins to appear about September 1st, after which date it is a land of plenty. Unfortunately, although we have such a big rainfall, it is not always well distributed, and it sometimes happens that we have a dry autumn and winter, and there is not sufficient moisture to start the young grass, or to keep it going when it has started. This is a very unpleasant experience as one has usually used up all, or nearly all, the "feed" during the winter, and it is a time when we don't think much of E. G. as a farming country.

The country is well grassed, and the grass is of fair quality. While it is young and succulent both sheep and cattle fatten well on it, but it is apt to get rank and coarse later on in the season. It seems to be impossible to stock heavily enough to keep the grass uniformly short. When the rainy season is at its height the grass will grow up tall and rank in a fortnight, and after that the stock just eat out the sweeter patches. It is a country in which parasites abound, more especially in sheep, and as soon as you over stock, the farms become unhealthy and the stock unthrifty. As a general rule, a 3,000 acre farm carries about 1,500 sheep and 250 head of cattle.

One of the greatest assets we have in these parts is a good supply of cheap labour. Personally I have always had as many boys as I needed, and found them quite satisfactory. We pay a boy from 12s. to 15s. a month, and give him nothing but mealie meal and skim milk, on which they seem to thrive well. Of course, the greater portion of East Griqualand is still occupied by natives, who live in their various locations under their own chiefs and headmen. As a rule the young men come out to work on the mines or farms for a year or so at a time, but they always go back again to their kraals periodically. East Griqualand many years ago took up the cheese-making industry, and has persevered with it in spite of many sets back. To-day the industry has assumed large proportions, and circulates tens of thousands of pounds annually among the farmers. Indeed the production of cheese has risen so rapidly that we are to-day producing more cheese than the Union can consume. There are over twenty cheese factories scattered throughout the district, and each must produce from a quarter to half a ton of cheese a day. Besides cheese, the district produces large quantities of beef, mutton, wool and grain.

The chief virtue of the district from a farmer's point is the great variety of farming that can be carried on. Some farmers specialize in sheep some in cattle, some in horses, and some in agriculture—but most do something in all these branches, and the old adage of "more than one string to your bow" seems to work out successfully.

THE FIGHT OFF HELIGOLAND.

Extracts from Lieut. Thomas' letter.

"I suppose you have heard about a scrap in the Heligoland Bight—well, that was us! We returned safely after two hours' solid, angry scrapping, got damaged a little bit, but nothing very, very much, and not really serious, but I regret to say we had five killed, two died afterwards and thirteen severely wounded.

"We commenced our firing at 7.45 a.m. Saturday, November 17th, and ceased firing at 10 a.m. We were leading ship, and got rather an exciting time, shells dropping all round us, and *very* close, but, however, here we are. It was quite a good show, we went over the mine fields and inside their defended waters for a distance of thirty miles, sighting the land in the distance and we would have continued had we not come up against their battleships, four Kaiser class and one of their latest, probably the "Bayeru." They fired at us, but the

salvo dropped exactly astern of us in our wake as we turned.

There were 6 light cruisers (2 Strasbourg and Graudeuz class, 2 Stettin and 2 Pilaus), 8 submarines, about a dozen destroyers, and 2 mine sweepers. They all made off at full speed with us in full chase, and they continually kept a smoke screen going, which made it rather difficult for us: even their battleships turned and made a running scrap of it. We do not know the exact extent of the damage done to them, but we think it is—disabled one cruiser (she dropped astern and disappeared), sunk 1 cruiser, 4 submarines, 2 mine sweepers, and probably a destroyer or two. We took 18 Hun prisoners. The range from us and their leading ships was 14,000 yards (7 miles), and the various other craft 6,000 and 7,000 yards; we didn't lose any ships. One shell burst on our signal bridge, and wiped out 5 signalmen. It was rather sad because one fellow had got his wife to come to Charlestown, and she was to arrive that very morning; awful for her. I have been to see our wounded, and they are all going on very well; several of them will not come back to sea; they are minus legs, arms and feet, but they are all very cheerful. The ship's company behaved magnificently, and were really splendid. I regret to say the ship astern of us got one hit, which wounded the Captain, Navigator and Torpedo Officer. The Captain died 8 hours later, but the other two are going on very well.

"We buried our dead at sea the evening after the action. It was a rather fine, pitch black night. We had just one electric cluster of lamps, as we were still in enemy waters, and we sang "On the Resurrection Morning."

"Did I tell you that we lost our bugler? He was only fourteen years old. His father was drowned in the "Hogue" at the commencement of war. The Admiral had his bugle mounted with an inscription on it. The bugler's station is on the upper bridge, and he had just gone below when the shell came in there and burst. He was awfully knocked about, but died instantly. We have a pet dog which he used to take great interest in, and the dog used to follow him about everywhere, and after action it seemed to miss him, and roamed about looking for him; it was rather sad.

"We've been doing a lot of sea-time lately, and have had it very rough. By the way, I suppose you have seen about the Skagger Rack stunt. You may be interested in following us over the North Sea—in the Skagger Rack round the Skaw and into the Cattegat, down the Cattegat as far as the Sound and Great Belt Channel, and out again.

"It was quite a good effort. We came upon them just as the dawn was breaking. They were taken absolutely by surprise. They hadn't long left Kiel, and by the map you will see we were not so very, very far from Kiel ourselves.

"We sunk an armed merchant vessel, which was a raider, and ten mine sweepers. Altogether it was quite a good effort, and very exciting."

THE EAST AFRICAN CAMPAIGN.

Extracts from Lenox's letters:—

"Gitega,
Oct. 26th, 1917.

"We have reached our journey's end for the present, and are now five days' march from the north end of Lake Tanganyika. We travelled in all about 450 miles, and had a good trip. I had only one rather nasty attack of fever, which lasted four days, but I am feeling quite well now. We are in high, cold, mountainous country. Parts of the country we passed through were pretty bad and difficult to find our way. In one part we passed through perfectly level swampy country for seven days—thick forest the whole way, so that we could see nothing.

"The last hundred miles were very mountainous some of it thick forest. The natives

were very bad in parts of the forest. We had difficulty in getting food for our boys. They cleared at sight of us, and shouted from hill to hill, giving warning. On one occasion they shot poisoned arrows at us. We had to go and raid their huts to get food.

"The local porters I got from the Belgians were very bad, and kept running away, leaving their loads on the roads. Eventually we had to rope them all neck to neck, and put strong guards over them at night. They were absolutely out of control, and would not hesitate to shoot one if we were alone.

"Some of this mountainous country has the most magnificent scenery. This is, of course, all Belgian administration. The soil is very rich, and grows anything. They say there are one and a half millions of cattle in this district (Urundi) and another two millions in Ruanda. You can buy these for a few rupees each. They are very large, and look something like a South Devon, red in colour, no hump, and with enormous horns—about 6 to 7 ft. long. They are the largest cattle I have ever seen. You can take Urundi, Ruanda and Kivu, in the Belgian Congo, and you have the wealth of Central Africa.

"People are already taking up land, and, with the Cape to Cairo Railway and the Tabora—Ruanda (which was under construction before the war), it should prove a good investment.

The Belgians rave about Kivu and Ruanda. Its a cold, healthy part. The price of land in Kivu is about ½d. an acre, and 1 fr. a sqr. yd. for the building site.

"The native troops here, which are all from the Congo, are a fine looking lot of men and physically are far superior to our B.E.A. natives. They make fine soldiers. The natives are terrified of them, and, although the Belgian officers are very severe with them, they are hard to keep in order.

"We are getting a lot of rain now, which continues till April. I think I shall be moving on in a few days. I am waiting for a Belgian officer to join me.

"There is a lot of spirulum and cerebo-spinal meningitis here. They are awful diseases, and one would have to quit the country. Ticks and flies convey the disease, and the natives are the medium of catching all these plagues, but as long as one avoids all old camping grounds and old buildings, I don't think one picks up these things easily.

"I had a letter from Jarvis some time ago. He is now with Northey, and they have been having some fighting, but most of the hard fighting is on the other front. Van de Venter seems to be pushing hard, and I think if he can't finish it no one will.

"Everything that can be done is being done for the care of the porters now, and that department has improved wonderfully. The rations they get are very good, but, of course, during the advance they will not always be able to get what they are entitled to, and will have to suffer like everyone else. The losses through sickness will always be there, but, as I have said, things are far better organised now, and they are better cared for.

"You would have enjoyed a trip like this, and would have been immensely interested. When passing through the forests I came upon several native metal works. They get the iron out of the stone by heating in furnaces, which have a system of bellows made from the skins of animals. They then beat the iron into spear and arrow heads, also spades and other implements they may need.

"The last letters I had came six weeks ago. The post is very irregular, and letters take a long time to reach from Dar-es-Salaam. Sometimes they are sent overland and other times they go up Lake Tanganyika, and then across country.

"Please tell Dad the boots are quite a success. I got a pair of my favourite boots in Nairobi. They are the most comfortable I have ever worn, and are light. I walked most of the way on this trip, and did not suffer through my feet at all.

"Some of the Belgians understand Dutch quite well, but I find it a great disadvantage not being able to talk to them in their own language."

"Gitega, 25th Nov., 1917.

"I am not sending many cattle away from here now, only about 1,000 a month. From next month I hope it will be 4,000, but our negotiations with the Belgians are not yet complete. I am keeping very well, and this is a nice healthy part. Soon I expect to be near Lake Kivu, on the borders of the Belgian Congo, so you will see I have gone right across the country. About N.E. from here there is a big sleeping sickness area, but you needn't be alarmed, as I have no intention of going closer to it than is absolutely necessary. Its very strange hearing the Belgian native soldiers giving their orders in French. The natives here make a sort of blanket and clothing from the bark of a certain kind of tree. One could collect many curious and interesting things, but there would be no end to it, so one is afraid to start. I have my eye on a fine large native drum, which I would like to take back to the farm as a farm bell."

Dec. 10th, 1918.

"I am on the move once more—still going North. I am about 70 miles east of Lake Kivu, on the Belgian Congo border. We are having much rain. This is a high and very mountainous country, and the scenery is grand. The sunrise is generally a fine sight, with a sea of mist below us and just the mountain tops peeping out. It is a marvellously rich country, with hundreds of miles of beautiful soil and good grazing. Everything is in abundance, and you can't imagine how beautiful the native villages are.

The natives seem to cultivate very well, and plant lots of trees and hedges. From these trees they strip the bark and prepare it in some way to make clothing from it.

"Abundance of all kinds of grain, beans, peas, sweet potatoes, English potatoes and various other things are growing, so you see I could not live better anywhere. Its a wonderful country, and the cultivation endless. I have never seen anywhere so much nor such marvellous crops. I don't know what they do with it all. There are miles and miles of banana trees everywhere. Cattle you see in every direction; they are nearly all red, with enormous horns, and are very large. The cows are the biggest I've ever seen. They compare very favourably with imported cattle of the Shorthorn and South Devon type, and have no hump like other native breeds in this country. For these we are paying 12 frs. each, and when you have deducted the value of the hide, they have not cost much.

"Then they make various kinds of native beer, in some of which the chief ingredient is bananas and sometimes honey; it makes an excellent drink, just like cider.

"No country has ever impressed me like this as suited for mixed farming, especially agriculture.

"What a wonderful country to open up with a railway! The Germans had started to build one which was to link up with the Tabora line, but it would have been a great work, and cost much money and years to build.

"Central Africa fascinates me with its vast possibilities. If only a little of our capital, wasted in useless wars, could be put to developing these parts! Under present conditions its useless for Europeans, except for trading with the natives.

There are lots of small lakes everywhere, and some big rivers. Every valley has a stream, and swamps are numerous. Although it is high, there are lots of mosquitoes, but I think they are not the fever kind—probably there are so many because of the rain and the long green grass.

"I am soon to be travelling up the Kagera River, and they tell me there are hippo and crocodiles in it, which means we probably drop to a lower level, as these keep more in the warmer waters. They also tell me that the country east of the Kagera is full of game and many elephants. On the map I see its marked "game plentiful, but uninhabited." I am not

sure, but think it must be a sleeping-sickness area; when I get to Kigale, the next Belgian post, I shall find out."

"Dec. 15th.

"We have now come down to a much lower level, and have got amongst an endless number of small lakes and swamps. We travelled, all to-day, through one vast swamp—in places by native canoes, and, other parts, walking through slush. This is most peculiar, as large portions of this swamp are occupied and cultivated where the ground is just above water level, and it seems to yield the most beautiful crops of all kinds, including many acres of bananas. I have never seen anything like this before. I imagine the cultivation on the Nile must be somewhat similar. When the very heavy rains come, all this swamp country turns into a lake, and the natives then go and live in the hilly parts, only returning after the water has subsided.

There are a great many crocodiles and hippos in this water, and we sometimes have to fire shots into the water to clear the way for our porters.

These little native dug-out canoes are very rickety and generally lobsided and any sort of shape. One has to sit very quiet. They don't hold much, so that it takes a long time to get our establishment across these rivers.

"I saw a missionary yesterday, and he told me there is no sleeping sickness about here. The mosquitoes are very bad, and don't give one much rest. There is a large insect one gets in these swamps which I have not seen before, and he *can* bite; ordinary thin clothes are no protection."

"Dec. 16th.

"To-day we crossed the Kagera River, which is very large, and runs several hundreds of miles—finally emptying itself into Victoria Nyanza, north of Bukoba. Later, when the heavy rains come, it must be several miles wide, but now it is only about 100 yards and very deep—the balance being swamp. We used canoes again in crossing, and the crocodiles were bad. I managed to shoot one large one—horrid thing! I would not like to chance swimming across or getting upset in the river."

"Dec. 17th.

"I arrived at Kigale to-day. It was, at one time, the headquarters of the German army. There are some nice houses and a fort. All the roofs are of red tiles—locally made. They seem to have the right clay, as they make them very well. There are about a dozen Belgian officers here. We get abundance of all kinds of vegetables, and roses seem to thrive. There is also a mission here."

"Kigale, Ruanda,
Jan. 3rd, 1918.

"The war here must be nearly over now. Von Lettow has got away, with some of his force, into Portuguese East Africa, but he can't last very long—being continually pushed. This country, they say, is now clear of the enemy. Van de Venter has done very well—better than anyone else; people away from here can't realize what a difficult undertaking it has been. He is the right type of man—a man who can't rest for a moment—who considers no one, keeps going the whole time, and does not think of obstacles. I suppose Von Lettow is the most admired man of all.

"I have no news from Jarvis, but he, most likely, was with Northey, and in the force which drove Tafel to his final capture.

"I am still purchasing cattle, and suppose I shall continue to do so till the majority of the troops are out of the country. Our establishment is now being reduced, but, when I shall be relieved, I can't say. We will probably be put on indefinite leave, without pay—to be called up later, if necessary. Under these circumstances, it would be better to get some military work of some kind. If anything fairly good is offered me, in this country, I may take it, otherwise I think I will join some unit overseas — probably Mesopotamia — machine guns or artillery.

"I went after hippo, the other day, on the Kagera River. We had great fun, and chased the hippo in native canoes. Their passage under water is marked by a line of bubbles on

the surface. They travel very fast when they know they are being chased. Every now and then they come to the surface for air, making a tremendous snorting noise. At times it becomes very exciting when they get close and dive beneath the canoe.

"The natives were very quick in managing the canoe. At times the hippo just goes to the bottom, and then one waits until he makes a new start. We got only snap shots, as they did not show much of their head for longer than was necessary, and, with an unsteady canoe, the shooting could not be too accurate. We killed one, and another kept us going till dark, and then got away in the rushes. We got a great deal of fat from the one we killed.

"All the way back, the hippo were very numerous, at night, and kept splashing and snorting in the water. We saw ever so many crocks lying on the banks, and I took some snaps and also shot some. I hate the sight of them, lying in the water watching one with just two eyes showing, they look like a small piece of stick floating.

"I envy the beautiful weather you must be having at the Cape now. I wonder if you will be going down to Millar's Point during these coming months. I just wish I was.

"This has been the fourth Christmas we have spent in the field, and the end seems no nearer. One really knows so little, but it seems that if anyone mentions the discussion of peace terms, he is shouted down. Its all very hopeless, and our military position does not seem to improve. It seems as if war can go on for ever if we adopt the cry of the destruction of Germany. I think the people who cry the loudest are those furthest from the actual scene of war, and who have not suffered through it—perhaps even gained.

"I would not care to see peace on any terms but one that would be equal and fair to all, and which would not keep up a bitter hatred, but rather create a better feeling.

"The farmers in S. Africa must be having a very prosperous time. In B.E. Africa big crops of maize are being reaped—some farmers getting 12,000 sacks."

"Kigale,
Jan. 19th, 1918.

"Things are awfully slack with me now. The rest of my unit are all away with cattle, and I am quite alone. I get no letters here and no news. I can't follow at all what is happening in Europe—one day they tell us the Russians have made peace—and the next—that they haven't. That the Japanese and Chinese are attacking the Russians—Then—that England and her Allies have agreed to consider proposals of peace—next that England says that she and America will carry on the war alone, if the Allies conclude peace. Its all a "mix-up."

"Here, they tell us, the war is over, yet they can't catch Von Lettow.

"We had a great game the other day, crossing 900 cattle, on the Kagera River. Its very broad, with horrid muddy banks, and the first lot of cattle got washed down and nearly drowned—some of them must have been in the water over an hour. We had to follow them down the river in canoes, and, after much difficulty, succeeded in rescuing them all. The next we had to catch separately, and tie to canoes, and so get across. You can imagine what a job it was. It took us nearly seven days. Every now and then one would break loose, and go sailing down with the current, then we would have to go after it in canoes and get it out. I was very glad when they all got over and we did not lose one.

"The night I got back, a thief entered my tent and stole some of my money, my watch, all my keys and some of my precious clothes. I only thank him for leaving my boots. I never dreamed of such a thing happening. I heard something in my tent, and thought it was a dog, and shouted at it in a sleepy way. I think if I hadn't, he might have taken my tin trunk in which I had about £100 of Gov. money. Now I have had to break all my locks and sleep with the money in my bed. I have never had anything like this happen before. I think I am too near the mission station here. The raw native never does that kind of thing—its the native we are uplifting and giving a new

religion and trying to teach European ways—forcing things on him instead of allowing him to evolve naturally.

"Around here there are a number of French missions. I expect they do do some good, but what amuses me is to see all their converts wearing a string of beads and a cross—a rosary, I think. I am sure every native here will be a convert if you give him that.

"I haven't seen any Family Chronicle since I got back to this country, and have no news of Jarvis since Sept. He was with Northey in this last drive.

"None of the Belgians at this post know English well—some know just a little, but they manage to understand when I write to them.

"I wish I knew French. Sometimes I meet Belgians with whom I can get on quite well in Dutch They always object to speak in Swahili —I suppose because it is a native language, and they do not speak it very well, mixing in all kinds of words from Congo languages and French. Lots of our native soldiers speak French, and also a number of local natives, owing to the influence of the French missions.

"The Major here has his wife with him and a very nice little daughter of about ten.

"All farmers must be doing well in South Africa. Pigs and bacon are becoming a great industry in B.E.A. I see a Mr. Hollins has purchased a farm, about 30 miles from Nairobi, for some Sisal Co. in which he is interested. He paid £13,000 for it, which works out at something over £5 an acre. Great things are being done with Sisal and flax now, and large prices are being paid for that class of land."

"Kigale,
Feb. 4th, 1918.

"Dear Gordon,—

"I am still in the Ruanda country, but expect to be moving nearer the railway shortly. The rains have started, and swamps and rivers are making our work difficult, and unless we get our cattle nearer the railway we shall be cut off.

"I believe all troops are leaving this country, and East Africans, with the K.A.R., are to finish it off. Belgian troops are concentrating here. News is bad from the Abyssinian border, and I believe we have had heavy casualties. . . . . I have had only one mail since arriving back from S. Africa, and that came the other day. I never see a paper nor get any war news, and the only people I have anything to do with are Belgians. My own men are nearly always away. Things have been pretty slow, but now I shall be busy for some time.

"I notice slaughter cattle are fetching very high prices in S. Africa. I think for several years after the war prices of meat and wool are going to rule high. In B.E.A. the price is steadily going up, and I am sorry to have had to sell any cattle, as, with the opening up of the country, oxen are going to be unobtainable. I know better than most people what numbers of oxen remain among the natives. There are certain tribes that keep oxen, but most keep only bulls. No one, outside this job, has any conception as to the numbers of cattle taken from the natives. They have been stripped everywhere, and are full of money. They won't want to sell when the war is over.

"Trading is going to be very paying, but unfortunately it is being thrown open now, and Indians and others who are not on military duty are reaping the harvest. I know two men who made £6,000 clear in six weeks. Its all trading with blankets and cattle. When the British entered G.E.A. the natives had not a yard of cloth—then we came and took their cattle, and forced the money on them—which they didn't want or know what to do with. The first people came in when trading was not allowed, but there are always a few who can, somehow, get permission, and they got any price they asked. I know of cattle purchased at the rate of an ox for a blanket costing 1s. 4d. But this is all passing now—or passed; once the Indian is let in to trade, prices soon drop to normal.

"I don't think we are going to get free of the military after this campaign. We come under as Imperial troops, and they are hunting everywhere for fit men, and no discharges given—there have been very strict orders. We will most likely go to Abyssinia or East. Its a never-ending job, and, in Europe, there seems not a glimmer of peace. I can see you chaps having to join yet!"

Extracts from Jarvis's letters:—

"Songea, via Nyasaland,
Nov. 28th, 1917.

"Have just received three most welcome letters from you, dated respectively June 23rd, Aug. 19th, and Oct. 14th, which had a most narrow escape of falling into the hands of the enemy. Out of two bags of mail, one was captured, and fortunately the one with these letters was not lost.

"Our battalion have had very heavy fighting during the last few days, which was why I sent you the cable, but the scene of the fighting has shifted again. I believe a mail is going out very shortly, so I must rather rush this letter. . . . . During our recent fighting I have met a Kenia farmer who is intelligence agent to the Belgians, and who has recently been at Kenia. He says the prospects there are more promising than ever. He has a trial area of four acres of wheat from which he has taken two crops, which have given very satisfactory yield.

"A military railway is quite likely to run out shortly. The Sisal farmers have offered to carry on the line another 15 miles. The telegraph is complete to Archer's Post—60 miles beyond us, and quite a lot of business apparently is being done through Kenia. Congratulate Dad very much from me on his becoming Lt.-Col. I have been promoted to Capt., and am a Coy. Commander as well."

"Tunduru, Songea,
via Nyasaland;
Dec. 9th, 1917.

"A post is going to-day, so I am taking the opportunity to write again. I had a slight touch of fever since writing last, but it only laid me up for about a week, and I am quite fit again. It is the first time I have been off duty since the campaign first started.

"Our Bat. had a great battle just before my last letter. The enemy had been operating in two distinct areas—one around Mahenge and the other in the Kilwa—Lindi area. Two of our Coys. were sent to occupy Liwale, which was an important Boma in the hands of the enemy. This we successfully accomplished, two days before a Belgian column from Kilwa arrived; when we were ordered to hand over the Boma to them whilst we retired to a position three days south of Liwale, where we were ordered to keep patrols out to watch any enemy movements. One of our patrols captured three Germans with very important despatches for the enemy coast forces, from which we gathered that the whole northern forces were coming past us. We sent a wireless at once to our C.O., who promised to come up with one company (all the troops he could spare) and a food convoy, as we were running very short of food. All our other columns were too far off to reach us. Our Major then sent half a company to a place sixteen miles N.-W. of us to watch which way the enemy would approach, whilst a platoon was despatched to catch a white German and some Askaris, reported to be passing N. of us. This platoon, instead of finding one German, ran into two companies, and had to retire to high ground, from which they reported back to camp. Our Major at once decided to attack, and moved out with everything we had, reaching the neighbourhood of the enemy at 4p.m., just in time to see them moving away, about three miles off. We knew the road they must take, and did a long march to cut them off, getting in position about 10 p.m. in pitch darkness, as there was no moon. I was in charge of the full company we had with us, and I put a platoon along the road by which the enemy was approaching. Early next morning a few shots were fired, and then the enemy began to attack in earnest.

"I sent a platoon to reinforce my first platoon, and then went down with a third

platoon and two machine guns. We soon found ourselves being enveloped by the enemy; my own platoon, on the left, had swung back and, in trying to avoid being outflanked, left a gap which allowed the enemy to cut off my two platoons from the camp. We afterwards found that we were being attacked by a column of 1,000 Askaris and 60 whites, our whole fighting force being only 15 fighting whites and about 220 Askaris. My two platoons numbered about 70 men.

"Our machine guns were very soon put out of action, being hit many times by bullets. I then ordered a retirement to camp, which was only weakly held by two machine guns and 80 Askaris. Fortunately I had two Lewis guns with me, and, after getting the machine guns into the middle of my line, I began a slow retirement. Then another misfortune occurred—my one Lewis gun sergeant had a jam, and had just taken the butt off to correct the jam when he was shot dead. My native corporal picked up the gun, but did not pick up the butt, which he only noticed was missing when we lay down to return enemy fire. He very pluckily ran back to look for it, but the enemy had already passed the place, and he was severely wounded in the leg, but got back to our line.

"I had now only one Lewis gun to reply to the enemy machine guns, and was having a wounded officer carried. Two of the men carrying him were shot dead, so, as the fire was getting very heavy from all sides, I had to leave him. Finally, with a good deal of difficulty, we got into camp, where we dug in, expecting the enemy every moment to rush us, but I think they had suffered pretty severely, and the fighting developed into independent firing, with occasional heavy bursts of machine gun and rifle firing, which lasted till about 11.30. At 1.30 p.m. we retired, without hindrance, to a fortified camp we had left the previous day.

"As I was retiring with rearguard, I heard firing behind me, which proved to be a small force of Belgians, who had come down from Liwale to help us. As the Germans were already gone, they were only able to exchange a few shots with the enemy rearguard.

"In the meantime, our Col. (Shorthose) had the same morning run into another German column. We found afterwards that the enemy had started off in three columns, but, hearing that we were in front, two columns had joined up—namely those which we attacked. The Colonel, with his one Company, found himself up against 600 Askaris and about 60 whites. He had great difficulty in fighting his way out, and was unable to save his convoy from falling into the hands of the enemy. However, our two actions held the enemy for sufficient time to allow troops to get between them and the Rovuma, and the whole of the two columns were captured.

"The enemy have suffered very heavily recently, and have now retired into Portuguese East, where I trust they will soon be captured, as they have little or no food.

"I do not expect to get back to B.E.A. for at least six weeks. I don't like the idea of your doing the voyage to B.E.A. just yet. I am very sorry to see that Nat Barry has been killed in the fighting with the coast forces.

"I met George Parson with Col. Murray's column which came to relieve us after this last fight. He is a Major, but we did not recognise one another until our columns had separated again. There is sure to be a great deal of congestion of traffic both on sea and land when this campaign ends, but I think our Batt. will be sent to Nairobi, as soon as possible, to refit and re-organize."

1/4 K.A.R.,
Nyasaland Field Force,
Zomba,
Jan. 27th, 1918.

"I have just received two most welcome letters from you, dated Oct. 2nd and Nov. 24th. Since last writing our Regiment has been on the march again—having done 250 miles—but we have had no fighting since the enemy crossed into Portuguese East Africa.

G.E.A. is free of the enemy, but the cam

paign is, by no means, over. The Portuguese are the most appalling cowards as a fighting lot, and it is entirely due to them that the enemy forces are still able to keep the field.

"For political reasons, I presume, we were not allowed to place troops in Portuguese territory, when the enemy were making for their border—the Portuguese declaring themselves quite capable of dealing with them if they attempted to cross the Rovuma. Since the enemy have actually crossed they have done nothing but hand over depot after depot of supplies to the Germans, and we have now all the trouble of getting down to another campaign, which means considerable delay before our dispositions are completed. February and March will probably be pretty wet months for operating, but as soon as we get down to moving again, I think we shall fairly quickly corner the enemy. Von Lettow, with 200 whites and 1,500 Askaris, are at large now.

I have been given an M.C. for the fighting in Nov. It was most unfortunate that I had to take over a company, who did not know me, a few days before the heavy fighting. They are Arabic-speaking men, while the Company I left were Swahili-speaking. The latter Company, I am glad to say, did very well the same day at another place. I had worked them up, practically myself, into the best bush fighting lot we had, and had been personally in the firing line with them in all the actions in which they were engaged. I was very sorry to leave them. I am now getting on very well with the new Company, who are a fine lot of men, and I should have been able to handle them much better if I had known them as I do now.

"I have had no recurrence of the slight attack of fever I had in Nov., and don't expect another. I am sure that one reason I don't get fever is that I never touch any liquor, and try, as far as possible, to keep my mind free from anxiety. My health has been as good, up to now, as ever in peace time, except for that attack of fever in Nov. I am the only officer left with the Batt. out of the original lot who left Fort Johnson in June with my old Company.

"I received safely the Aug. and Dec. copies of the Chronicle, which are always most interesting reading. I see that Uncle Barkly commands the 2nd Cruiser Squadron, which means, I suppose, that he will soon be promoted to Admiral.

"Some of the last Askari prisoners we have taken say that the reason the Askaris are still sticking to the Germans is that they are taking along the Askari wives, who are specially guarded, and, if any husband deserts, his wife is handed over to the porters. I do hope the Germans don't get an inch of territory given back to them in Africa, as the native would have a pretty rough time.

"They have always made their Askaris look upon themselves as a superior caste, with privileges above all other natives. For instance, on Sundays, they can get as drunk as they wish without punishment, and no native seems ever to win a case against an Askari. Up to the time the enemy crossed the Rovuma River, they had been retiring on to prepared bases, but, when we next start worrying them, they will have a hard time of it. I hope you and Kathleen will wait till this campaign is over before coming up to B.E.A., as I don't think I shall get away till then."

"Blantyre, Nyasaland,
Feb. 24th, 1918.

"We have moved again since my last letter, which was written from Mbamba Bay, a very pretty little port on Lake Nyassa. We had marched from Tunduru, a distance of 230 miles, and were detained three weeks while awaiting developments. The operations having now shifted south, we have just moved here after a trip down the lake to Fort Johnston. . . .

"I received your wire at Tunduru, after the fighting of Nov. 16th. I did not think I would have been mentioned as wounded, so did not say anything about it, as it was the merest scratch, and I thought you might think it worse than I made out. A bullet grazed my neck, just drawing blood, and one bruized my collar-bone, without doing any harm.

"I believe as soon as this campaign is over there will probably be three months' leave for

everyone, so that there will be an opportunity for me to get down to see you.

"Our quarters are in the old Government House grounds, and we hope to be a couple of weeks resting here. Blantyre is about 130 miles from Fort Johnston, so that from Mbamba Bay we have marched another 300 miles. The rains are expected to be over about the middle of next month, when I expect we shall start pushing on again.

"Zomba is the capital of Nyasaland, and the country between Zomba and Blantyre is very pretty, with quite a number of European farms scattered about.

"We are always kept pretty busy even when we are back from the firing line, as at present, as the men want constant instruction on what we have learnt, and, of course, drill for keeping up discipline. We have a very fine Battalion, and the men are in splendid form. Our camps are an example to other regiments for cleanliness and order."

EPISODES OF FARM LIFE.

Farm life is not always the peaceful, uneventful life it is supposed to be by those who live in towns; in fact, we have quite our full share of bustle and rush, anxieties and unexpected tragedies, though fortunately after a harrowing day of worry, and although thoroughly worn out, we often become weak with laughter as we recapitulate events which at the time we took most tragically.

We have had a good many misfortunes during the last year, resulting in the death of animals we valued, but even our attempts to rescue a cow which had stuck in the river on a dark, stormy winter's night in the icy cold, and during torrents of rain and a rapidly rising river, has its humorous side—Mathys, dripping wet, sobbing on the bank in despair; Miss Genequand, in her oil skins, hugging under her arm the other man's treasured yellow boots to keep them dry, and holding a feebly flickering lantern in each hand trying to throw a little light where it was needed!

One summer's evening, after having been working at the other end of the farm, I approached the house to find everything in great confusion, the two boys running around waving their arms wildly; Abram, the old man, with similar gestures, disappeared into the forage shed; Peggy, the younger sheep dog, suddenly began spinning round, and then fled indoors and under my bed.

When I got near, the explanation was evident, two wild swarms of bees located in the gum trees behind the stables had become infuriated, the result of some holes having been dug near by, and had issued in alarming numbers, stinging every living thing. We hurriedly donned veils, and ran to the rescue, but every moment the bees seemed to increase in numbers and ferocity. They were a swirling cloud round the stables, pigstyes, and fowl run, and the air was filled with their angry hum. The oxen, cows, horses, pigs and geese were all there, and pandemonium ensued. The calf, with its tail in the air, rushed about bellowing. The horses, clustered with bees, charged madly all over the place, among the bees and out again, orders and counter orders were screamed, while the boys, absolutely useless, danced on the outskirts of the fray, waving their arms.

The only calm figure was that of Uncle James, seated quietly on the stoep reading his paper until the advent of a couple of stray bees decided his departure. Finally all the animals, and lastly the geese were safely shut into the vegetable garden with a boy to prevent their doing any damage. Then to our horror we found the fowls were being attacked, some were frantically trying to fly out of their runs or climb the wire netting, it was a sickening sight and dead and dying fowls lay all about.

We hurriedly opened the runs, caught those which were near by and put them in safety, a valuable Wyandotte cock was popped into the dairy with a few young pullets, and some

were lodged in the bathroom. When we came to a coop of broody hens all were almost dead, still clustered with bees, and their combs and face studded with stings. It was a ludicrous sight to see poor Miss Genequand, destraught with grief at the sufferings of her beloved liens, vainly endeavouring to end their misery as quickly as possible —they would not die. She and Miss Koch madly swung them round by their heads and tried various methods of wringing their necks, but without success, and they almost went into hysterics when the poor wretches staggered on to their feet and looked up at them with a dazed foolish air. At last Abram was found and, thankful not to be sent among the bees, he armed himself with a chopper and quickly dispatched the birds as we brought them to him.

It was a thoroughly exhausted and despondent party which met at supper late that evening and we hoped the trouble was all over. However, our illusions were shattered the next morning. The animals had all wandered back during the night and, as all seemed quiet, they were put in their styes and stables to be fed. One sow had a litter born in the early morning and not liking to disturb her, I left her where she was, and came down to breakfast. Not five minutes had passed when the boy rushed to give the alarm, the bees were issuing forth in clouds and hummed over the styes settling on the poor young mother and her little ones. They were just brown with bees, not room for a pin between them on the babies, and the poor mother rushed frantically round. I chased her away, and scraped the bees off by degrees with a broom, and in the meantime the other styes were opened and the pigs lept forth and bolted for the bushes, the stables were opened and the same performance of the previous evening was repeated. Miss Genequand bravely seized and ran off with one little pig getting terribly stung herself, so much so that she fainted several times. Abram took a sack and seized the rest, followed by bees, and in his terror he ran nearly to the village—no shouts would stop him. Miss Koch was a most valiant person and effected the most heroic rescues, getting badly stung also. The poor baby pigs, like pin-cushions studded with pins grunted feebly until they died. The commotion was just subsiding when a man turned up by chance and, hearing our story, volunteered to remove the bees, so after a long day's work, we succeeded in carrying off both swarms in triumph, lodged in new hives, and deposited them in the apiary.

Another episode attendant with difficulties and anxieties was the getting of the pigs to the show, I having rather rashly entered two young sows in the S.A. bred class, and decided to send five little ones to sell on the show grounds.

First of all, there was a great deal of running about to secure a man to make two crates for the sows. Finally, two wonderfully made crates were completed, which looked enormous, and were a tremendous weight.

Then came a heated debate with the station master and clerk to arrange for them to travel by night on account of the heat, which was only conceded by correspondence with the Assistant General Manager at Cape Town.

The next step was to secure a wagon, and, after a fruitless search in the village, Ted kindly lent his. Arrangements were next made with the Forest Department to lend three men to help lift the pigs on to the wagon, and at last our preparations were complete. The morning of the day they were to leave the sows, Blackthorne and Clover by name, received a splendid shampoo, and thoroughly enjoyed being scrubbed with soap and sprayed with disinfectant. Soon after three o'clock the men arrived, and we proceeded to crate the five little pigs, and then the two sows, and after some difficulty got them in. It was a critical moment and only with great effort that the crates were lifted unto the wagon, four in all. The horses were touched up (we only possess two), but, struggle and plunge as they might, the wagon would not budge. I was on the point of sending for two oxen to inspan as well, when, after a second effort and everyone pushing, it got started, and heaved slowly and perilously up the steep hill, the rest of us

walking behind, ready to save the crates from falling off, or to give the wagon a push should the horses stick.

I breathed a sigh of relief as we crested the hill, and I mounted the wagon beside Abram, while little Daniels hung on somewhere among the crates. We quickened our pace to a trot as we descended the hill to the station, the two dogs, Dinah and Peggy, tearing along in front, barking for all they were worth, and jumping up at the horses' noses, quite confident they were of the greatest use, and so to the deafening chorus of the dogs and the creaking and clattering of the heavily-loaded wagon, we heaved into the station, creating quite a stir among a large audience, including a number of workmen building the new house for the station master, farmers, wood contractors, etc. Just as I was trying to bow with dignity from my high perch to our local shopkeeper, who was loading wheat into a truck, I heard a crash behind me, and, as I looked round, I saw the large black head of Clover emerge through a broken plank. I shrieked to Daniels, and put both my arms over her head, then Daniels threw himself over the opening, while Abram brought the wagon to a standstill. I soon found a new plank, and, with both my pockets full of nails, a hammer, pliers and other tools, was ready for repairs.

It was a blazing hot afternoon, and, with open mouths, the pigs lay gasping in their small unshaded truck, with the sun beating on to them. Eventually we left them, after having given them some relief by throwing buckets of water over them, and filling their tins with liquid food.

As I trudged home in the hot sun along the dusty road, I wondered that I could have been so rash and foolish as to enter the pigs for the show.

REMINISCENCES.

(Continued from No. 3, Vol. 5.)

Those 18 months at Wheatfield are full of happy memories—the walk to school in the fresh early morning, past where the men were making the deep cutting where now the railway runs—the break in lessons at 11 o'clock, when we ate our lunch—never since has butter seemed so delicious as those firm golden pats made from Daisy's rich milk, by our clever black cook Clara—the low oak avenue leading from the main road to the Miss Hanbury's school, lined with pink monthly roses, which sometimes the older girls would gather in masses and make into wreaths for our hair and dresses—the trellissed walk, covered with roses and honeysuckle, leading to one of the sitting-rooms we mostly used at Wheatfield, where I used to love to dreamily breathe in the soft scents of the flowers and watch the bumble bees and birds busy amongst them, while the world melted away into fairyland. Sometimes we would wander down to the river below, and imagine ourselves in all sorts of adventures. The Rector of Mowbray Church was the Rev. Mr. Long, who was, at this time, carrying on his great case before the Privy Council against Bishop Gray, the first Bishop in South Africa, and all the congregation were strong partisans of Mr. Long. One of the churchwardens was Mr. Mann, whose wife was a daughter of Sir Thos. Maclear, the Astronomer Royal. I remember their pew, near ours, always well filled with their large party of children. The Syfrets, too, were all young children then living with their parents at Blumenthal.

At the "Hermitage," next Wheatfield, lived Mrs. Wools, with her three married daughters, one of them, Mrs. Sampson, with all her children. It is strange to think that many of these children are now grandparents! Along the Liesbeek Road was a pretty little place, called "Sans Souci," where old Capt. and Mrs. Sampson lived. But the friend whom Mamma

most often went to see was Mrs. Tennant, in her very neat, well-ordered little house just off the main road, in what is now called Leisbeek Road. She was an old lady of strong character, whose husband had been a partner in the firm of Thos. Watson & Tennant, and had had some business connections with Beaufort.

I used to listen with much interest to her talks with Mamma about the very early, difficult days at Beaufort, and especially when she spoke, always with deep feeling, about old Mr. Arthur Jackson's first wife—a beautiful, sensitive young girl, brought out from England and suddenly plunged into conditions for which she was wholly unfitted, and to which she succumbed at the birth of her first child—the present Arthur Jackson. Mrs. Tennant described how deeply Papa felt for her, and how he dashed off on that night, at break-neck pace, to Beaufort, to find a doctor—but it was too late. I always understood afterwards why he had such a specially tender feeling for her child. What tragedies lie sleeping in that vast mysterious Karoo, that looks so old and worn and gnarled in the struggles of centuries, that one gazes in silent wonder when, sometimes, in a happy season, it suddenly bursts into the fresh bloom of long-forgotten youth, and every mouldering bush is transformed into a blaze of colour. Can one doubt that those sleeping tragedies, too, only wait the call of the Eternal to share a like radiant transformation?

All this time Papa was looking out for a permanent home, and at last he got the offer of Claremont Place, and decided to purchase it from Mr. Logie. Mamma was at first not at all pleased with the contemplated change. Apart from the greater distance from Cape Town, she was not attracted by the old house, which seemed to her dark and depressing and too much shut in by trees, for she loved wide, open, breezy distances and all the light and sunshine possible, but gradually she became reconciled, as, under Uncle Bisset's direction and Papa's, old passages disappeared and gave place to the wide entrance hall and large windows, while light papers and paint made a cheerful change. The beautiful drawing-room was untouched, but the large bedroom was built to correspond with it at the other end, and a new stoep was laid. The quaint old house had two oval windows in front, one of which is now below the roof and over the window at the end of the drawing-room.

While the alterations were being made Papa used to enjoy spending whole days watching the workmen, and there we would find him, when we sometimes drove over in the afternoon, seated happily under the deep shade of the oaks, in his light summer coat, his hat off, and a pile of newspapers and a water cooler beside him. Old Mr. Logie, who also owned Greenfield House, had moved there with his wife and four grown-up daughters. We often found him with Papa; he was a dour old Scotchman, and took a sort of grim pleasure in showing us over the garden and grounds, and watching our delighted enthusiasm.

When at last we moved over to Claremont we found endless enjoyment in the beautiful old garden, full of interesting trees and shrubs, the vineyard and orchards with their wealth of fruit of every variety, and the woods and wild growth that surrounded them on every side, but Betty and I, then ten and eleven, thirsted for plenty of life and outlet, and we missed the companionship which school life had given us, for now we were obliged to have a governess, and one of the Miss Logies had offered to take that place. She was a conscientious gentle lady, whom we learnt in later years to appreciate, but we seemed then to belong to different worlds which could not assimilate, and we felt cramped and more dependent than ever upon every variety of book we could get hold of. In our afternoon walks sometimes Miss Logie would take us to see friends of hers in quiet old Wynberg—one of them was a dear old lady, Mrs. Blanckenberg, whose house is still called by her name. Nearly all Wynberg then belonged to two old Mr. Maynards, who would never sell any land—for which indeed there was no demand—and year after year saw no change of any kind.

Proteas and all sorts of wild shrubs and flowers grew in the open land on either side of the Main Road between Claremont and Wynberg, where were only two houses—which are still standing—Indian House and Donore—the latter was called the "Hermitage," and was seldom occupied, having the name of being haunted.

Sometimes we would wander over the flats towards the high white sand hills—about where now the Victoria Road runs, or down to a little farm house surrounded by fir trees, like a dark island in a sea of brown reed, amongst which grew lovely flowers. That was long before the advent of the Australian wattle and of roads and houses, which have altogether altered the character of the flats. In these walks there seemed everywhere to us a feeling of loneliness and longing for a fuller life, and we used to lose ourselves in endless imaginings of school-life adventure. We needed companions, but there were none in our immediate neighbourhood, nor did we easily make friends, so that the occasional children's parties gave more excitement than pleasure, for we always felt shy and strange.

Our greatest happiness was the interchange of visits with Somerset Road, and regularly, at least three times a week, Mamma would drive there, coming back with the carriage laden with parcels—for all we needed, even to groceries, had to be got in that way from Cape Town, the choice of shops even there, being then only very limited. How different at that time was the Main Road—along which a dusty omnibus would run, three or four times in the day, from Wynberg to Town, and as that was the only public conveyance, it can be understood that not many people lived in the suburbs, where there were mostly large estates, and the country was free and open on either side of the road. Even in the villages the little thatched cottages of the Malays and coloured people never seemed to intrude, but rather gave a picturesque touch. From Sir Thos. Maclear's house at Mowbray to the Toll Gate—where we stopped to pay our 10d.—I can only remember two houses. One was an inn, where the mail carts stopped, called "Rochester Castle." It stood bleak and desolate, battered by the full force of the south-easters, and just beyond was a line of single, sad fir trees, bent nearly double in their long and lonely struggle. The other was a large house on the opposite side of the road at Rhoodebloom, called Pickering's. Many a time as we struggled through the furious wind—perhaps dashing out of the carriage after a parcel or the coachman's hat careering towards the sea—would someone exclaim, "Never will anyone build here," and now Observatory, Salt River and Woodstock (then called Papendorp) cover all that part, and the wind no longer reigns supreme.