# CHRONICLE OF THE FAMILY.

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## CONTENTS.



## EDITORIAL.

From the financial statement which appears below it is seen that the number of subscribers has increased from thirty-eight last year to forty-two this year, and that we have a balance of £17 2s. 5d. to carry forward to next year's account.

We expressed the hope, last year, that we might be able to reduce the subscription from 15s. to 12s., provided the number of subscribers increased to fifty. However, in spite of having forty-nine names on the list, we are unable to make the hoped for reduction until the seven outstanding subscriptions have been paid, and we get at least one new subscriber. We should then have an income of £30 a year, and although it would not cover our annual expenditure, we could meet the extra expense by utilising the balance which has slowly accrued from the payment of arrea subscriptions and the sale of extra copies. It is hoped, therefore, that the amounts still owing will be paid as soon as possible, and in addition the subscription for 1918 due on January 1st.

## Financial Statement for 1917.

*Expenditure.*

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Paper, stamps, etc. .. .. .. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Printing (April) .. .. .. | 9 | 6 | 0 |
| Printing (August) .. .. .. | 8 | 12 | 0 |
| Printing (December) .. .. .. | 8 | 19 | 0 |
| Balance .. .. .. .. | 17 | 2 | 5 |
| | £44 | 19 | 5 |

*Receipts.*

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Balance in hand (Dec., 1916) .. | 6 | 11 | 3 |
| Subscriptions for 1917 .. .. | 31 | 11 | 6 |
| Subscriptions in advance (1918) .. | | 15 | 0 |
| Arrear subscriptions paid .. .. | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Extra copies .. .. .. .. | 1 | 16 | 8 |
| | £44 | 19 | 5 |

## GENERAL NEWS.

On Sept. 1st Effie's second little daughter, Cynthia, was born at Beaufort Villa, Kenilworth. Willie Blenkins had very kindly lent her his house for two months, while he spent that time at Hermanus.

For the last month of their visit Effie and the children were back again at Kalk Bay with her father, and were later joined by Elliot, who came to take them home at the end of November.

Our best wishes to Ursula Bisset on her engagement to Advocate R. H. Gregorowski, of Pretoria, which was announced early in September.

John Molteno was taken ill while stationed at Roberts Heights, and was unable to return to East Africa with his regiment. He subsequently received his discharge, and is once more at home, having taken up temporary work in Cape Town.

Our congratulations to Dr. Murray on his well-deserved promotion from Captain to Lieut.-Colonel.

Ronald Beard, after about two months in France, had a very narrow escape in being blown up by the explosion of an ammunition dump near Ypres, early in July. He received one or two slight face wounds, and his right arm was badly smashed at the elbow. However, we are relieved to hear that he is getting on well now, for his face is completely healed and his arm is setting well. He was sent first to Boulogne and then to Manchester, where Margaret and Islay spent two days visiting him. They found him very cheerful, and looking forward eagerly to a convalescence in London. The following are extracts from some of his letters:—

"As you haven't had the pleasure (?) of reading a left-hand scrawl of mine, here goes! I bumped into something bigger than I want to meet again. Two thousand rounds of 4.1 Howitzer ammunition is not exactly a small explosion—being seen at a distance of six miles on the flat country around Ypres. The dump disobeyed orders, and went up before I was able to get clear. I suppose I am one of the very few who have been within a dozen yards of a dump that size and have been able to tell the tale.

"It was my turn at the guns, so I went off mounted with the Captain. I took the jobs down carefully, and started my work about ten that evening, as we couldn't work in daylight. Having worked till the shelling became too heavy—about 2.30 a.m.—I turned the men into the dugouts, and told them they could go to bed. I went off to my house, inside of which had been built an extremely strong dugout, as house walls are no good against shells. About 11 o'clock next morning I woke up to find the shells falling like hailstones all around—so told the men to keep to their dugouts until they stopped. Having had my 'brekka,' I lay down to read till there was a chance of going out and looking at the damage. Well, the next thing was Fritz had set a big dump of ammunition on fire just opposite our dugouts. The sergeant and I immediately told the men to run for it. and trust to luck in some ditch. We then decided to run also, but luck said no, and just as I reached the entrance of my dugout the dump went up. I turned like a flash to the left to protect my face and eyes, so exposing my right side. I was blown into the dugout through the brick wall, which went with me, and then blown out again—landing in the same spot I started from—on all fours. What happened then is almost a blank. All I remember was shouting to my sergeant and servant, who were inside the dugout and unhurt, to run for it, and together we three went flying down the road, fearing a second dump which was near by. Having done a couple of hundred yards in world's record, we slowed down, and I felt myself going in circles. My sergeant and servant then did the rest, carrying me into a dugout near by, and did me up

as well as they could. Then I remember a doctor saying 'Swallow this,' and I did. It eased the pain (morphia), but the trouble was no ambulance could be got anywhere near as the shelling was too bad. As soon as the shelling stopped—about 9 o'clock—they carried my stretcher down to the ambulance, half a mile away. I was then taken to the casualty clearing station, only a mile from our wagon line, and as my servant was with me he went off to report to the Captain who was in charge. A few minutes later the Captain arrived, and had a chat. From there I was sent to the base hospital at Boulogne, where I remained about twelve days."

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Barkly Molteno is now in command of the 2nd Cruiser Squadron, directly under the Commander-in-Chief.

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Ernest Anderson was over on leave early in August, and spent a few days at Glen Lyon, where he enjoyed some grouse shooting, and also shot a stag. Previous to getting his leave he had been for some time in the trenches on and off. Everyone enjoyed seeing him, and he was looking particularly well. Later news tells of a very enjoyable time spent in Paris with Willie, who was on his way from Tunis to England. Those who saw the latter in London speak of him as looking in excellent health and spirits, and we are looking forward to seeing him shortly at the Cape.

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The following is an extract from a letter from George Murray:—

October 25th, 1917.

"I came back from hospital shortly before our Battery was withdrawn from the battle up north and sent to this part of the line. We are not far from the actual battle front and come in for some of the effects of it but, on the whole, things are not too bad.

Our Battery is in an area from which the Germans have been driven back, so naturally we are uncomfortable. The ground is completely torn up by our bombardment and thoroughly water-logged. We live in scattered pill-boxes that have escaped being blown in. They are all most uncomfortable places because they are only about 4 ft. high inside (on the average). However, they are wonderfully strong, so they have their merits.

I am very well again and in quite good form to go through the winter. This will be the third one out here and I can see it will easily be the most uncomfortable.

There have been many changes in the Battery since I have been with it. I have been in it the longest of any of the officers, in fact the next man to me has only been out just a year, the remainder have been with us only a few months."

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Vyvyan Watson, Gwen's fiance, after a short preliminary training at Winchester, has been sent to Oxford for his technical course. He is living in Exeter, the oldest college in Oxford. He will probably be gazetted in October, after which he begins flying.

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Helen Bisset spent April and May working on the land at Glen Lyon with Margaret, and then returned to London, where she continued her singing lessons, and took up a short course of cooking. She returned to Scotland with Aunt Bessie, and has been staying alternately at Glengowlandie and Glen Lyon. It is quite uncertain when she will return to the Cape.

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Jervis is still hoping to get into the Army, and if passed medically fit he and Islay will go to Bushey, where Jervis will undergo his training. It was with great regret that they left their home, Glengowlandie, in October, to come to London for the medical board.

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Percy Molteno returned to London in the middle of October, but Bessie, Margaret and Helen plan remaining at Glen Lyon till after Christmas.

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Last mail brought the news of the marriage of George Moodie to the Hon. Rhoda Astley,

daughter of the Dowager Lady Hastings, which took place in October. Early in the year he received his promotion to Lieut.-Colonel, and is on the staff in the Machine Gun Corps stationed in Egypt. His marriage was hurriedly arranged to take place during his leave of a fortnight spent in England, and Lord Derby lent his house to the newly-married couple.

By the same mail we hear that Minna Moodie has left for France, to be in charge of one of the huts in which the Women's Auxiliary Corps are quartered. The management is under the Y.W.C.A.

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Extract from a letter of Clarissa Newcomen:—

Southampton, September 28th, 1917.

"We are still here but Brab is expecting his orders any time now—whether he will go straight overseas or join his reserve battalion we do not yet know.

I am still working in the office, and we have been very busy, as such numbers of Americans are passing through. They seem very fine men —of course they are their picked troops. They are very well equipped—all except their boots —which seem to us very light for the winter. They are awfully anxious to have a go at the Germans. They told us that they came over from America—about a dozen ships all behind one another—flying their flags—without escort of any kind, except their own guns—and they met no one, and were awfully disappointed as they hoped for a scrap!"

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Ken Beard sailed for England by the "Balmoral Castle" on the 14th November. He is going to Clare College, Cambridge, where he means to read for the first part of the Little go, and at the same time get his training in the O.T.C.

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On November 22nd a cable was received from Jarvis Murray saying: "Quite fit, 20th November." This was explained later by a cable which came on December 4th from the Acting-Governor at Nairobi, stating "Captain Jarvis Murray, of the 1st Bat. 4th K.A.R. slightly wounded, Nov. 16th. Nguruma-higa." We conclude that he was wounded in the action described in the following extracts from the *Cape Times*:—

November 26th, 1917.

"In an action near Nandebe, thirty-eight miles S.S.W. of Leivale, on Nov. 16th, our small forces were opposed by enemy troops in considerably superior numbers, and put up a most gallant fight, inflicting on the enemy losses greater than they themselves sustained, and capturing five German Europeans and thirty-nine Askaris." December 4th, 1917.

"On Nov. 6th, the German Western force, under Col. Tafel—then about Mgangira, and menaced by the constant advance of Col. Fair's and Col. Hawthorn's columns of Gen. Northey's force—made suddenly southwards through Kituiha and Depate."

"On Nov. 15th and 16th this strong German column was engaged by a small column of the 1st Battalion of the 4th K.A.R., under Col. Shorthose, which, after a long advance from Fort Johnston, at the southern end of Lake Nyasa, had crossed the Rovuma from south to north, passing through Tunduru Tomadero and Leiwale."

A further cable received on Dec. 17th states that Jarvis is now convalescent at Tunduru.

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The news from the Karóo is splendid, and is quite inspiriting after the succession of moans that reached us during the three years' drought. It has been a bumper season for the Nelspoort formers, the rainfall at Kamfer's Kraal up to the end of November being 13½ inches, with more at Mimosa Grove and Nelspoort, and about the same at Bleak House.

Kamfer's Kraal is looking its very best, the veld is fast recovering from the dry seasons, and Wallace has put in a great deal of wheat both at Kamfer's Kraal and Mimosa Grove; the former lands are really a beautiful sight, the wheat has grown luxuriantly and evenly, and promises a splendid crop. There has been a record increase, the stock seemed to realise that it was up to them to make good for the ravages of the drought, and everything has lambed, calved or foaled that possibly could!

The annual Ram Sales in Beaufort West, early in September, were a pleasant contrast this year to last, the village being full of farmers in the most riotous spirits, eagerly discussing their splendid wool clips and the numbers of bags of wheat they expect to reap—an extraordinary change from September, 1916, when a few gloomy farmers gathered at the street corners dismally comparing notes as to their imminent insolvency.

This year the speculators clamouring for wool were nearly as numerous as the locusts, and discussion raged around the Government scheme for buying the South African wool clip. The Nelspoort farmers all got a very good price for their wool, and, although it was not the top price, were very well satisfied.

The only hardship has been the swarms of locusts which attacked the Karoo in October, everything depended on destroying them before they reached the flying stage, and the battle raged for nearly two months. At Kamfer's Kraal alone over 200 swarms were destroyed, but they seemed to have as many reserves as the Huns. The farmers are reaping with desperate haste, at present (the end of November), fearing the arrival of flying swarms.

There are to be changes at Nelspoort next year. Mr. George Jackson is retiring, and Wallace is taking over the management of Nelspoort, Kamfer's Kraal is advertised for sale as the Nelspoort house is not large enough for Wallace's numerous family a good deal of building will have to be done there, and it is probable that the trek will not take place for some months.

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A short memoir of Ian Bisset has been compiled in the form of a booklet which is being issued for private circulation. Copies may be obtained from Rev. E. W. Lasbrey, The Rectory, Wynberg, price 1/2 post free.

Mr. Maskew Miller is very kindly presenting a large number of these booklets to the officers of the Kenilworth Troop of Boy Scouts so that all of Ian's old comrades in the Troop and those under him as Scouts as well as new members, may receive copies.

## Extracts from Letters of Betty Molteno.

48, Tavistock Square,
Saturday, July 7, 1917.

"Just a little instant word to tell you that a terrific air raid (judging by sound) has taken place before 11.30. I heard gunfire about an hour before, but did not mention it to Olive, thinking they might be our own guns. Then came rapid, quick explosions quite near; then the air reverberated with the rapid firing of heavy guns. We looked out from the windows on both sides of the house. Then from a room above Olive's sitting-room we saw an aeroplane in a murky sky, apparently surrounded by mist. Then came four aeroplanes—that I saw; Olive and Mrs. Smith said they saw eight. They passed in the direction of Shepherd's Bush, in the midst of terrific firing—I suppose from our guns. Then the firing stilled down, and finally ceased. We set about telephoning to Palace Court—to find the whole party were at Parklands. Next a call on the telephone, replied to by an elderly gentleman very shaky and excited, who told me he was near Liverpool Street Station when it was bombed in the last air raid, and that he thought he would go to Buxton. The call proved to be for Mrs. Smith, from a relative living near T——, to let her know that all was well with them, that a large number of aeroplanes—between thirty and fifty—had passed over Hammersmith, but, as far as he knew, no damage in his neighbourhood.

Olive then went out, walking with me as far as my bus, which I was taking for Tavistock Square. While talking to someone on the bus I was carried on to King's Cross, and saw a hole in the pavement by St. Pancras—shrapnel probably. Was told a bomb had fallen at St. Pancras Station, killing some people. The bus came from Putney, where a large number of planes were seen—again about thirty. A shop-girl on the bus said they had gone to the roof before being summoned to take refuge in the cellars, and she saw a large number of aeroplanes. Someone counted twenty-five, but she was sure there were very many more."

Sunday, July 9th.

"To go on with yesterday. After lunch I took a bus to the Monument. No signs of the destruction of the air raid until I reached Leadenhall Street. Here at the point where the damage was done a cordon was drawn by the police, and only those who had business to do were allowed to pass. A much bigger damage apparently than what you and I saw after the June 13th raid at Fenchurch Street —a much larger block of buildings involved. The pavement was glittering with fine glass from the numbers of pulverized window panes, but details of the damage done were not observable, as the crowds of spectators were incessantly moved on by the police. And thronged the city was. There were many young women in bright dresses, but the general note was one of sorrow and apprehension, and the people I contacted with, men and women alike, were awestruck and still shaken by the awful reverberations and sounds of the morning. For this time all London had experienced the sensation of guns firing on the battlefields of France. Two young women remarked that they now knew what their poor husbands were experiencing in France. A policeman was stationed at the entrance to the old church in Lombard Street, that we noticed on the way to the Standard Bank. Some people were allowed to enter, others not. I enquired of the policeman. He said only parishioners could enter. I asked what damage was done. A shell had fallen on the roof, but outside no damage was apparent. At the corner of the Mansion House another cordon was drawn, and the great crowds were again kept moving by the police. Another shell had fallen near the wall, and had torn a great hole in the pavement. Not far off a woman was talking in a loud voice, and attracting a crowd. She was either mad or drunk. A policeman moved her on. When he left her the poor soul turned again, and, gazing into the sky, continued her denunciation in a loud voice. She seemed a foreigner, as her English was not very comprehensible. The next incident was the stopping of a motor-car by a policeman, and the word "Spies!" went up from the crowd. The three men on the back seat were evidently foreigners, but one could not be sure of what nationality. The policeman made the driver of the car turn down a side street. I was nearing Cheapside, where I found all traffic stopped. I suppose all wheeled traffic was diverted, for on reaching the neighbourhood of the Post Office one found Cheapside closed by a cordon. Again the police were asking the crowd to move on, but the crowds had more space. They thronged St. Paul's Churchyard, and multitudes stood gazing at the Post Office, which had been in flames during the morning, for a bomb had fallen on the roof. The topmost story had broken windows, though little other damage was apparent, but one knew that the awful sounds of the morning must have dealt death here.

It was now near four o'clock. I went into the thronged Cathedral, and remained for the evening service, where prayers were offered up for those who had passed into the Beyond during the morning's raid, for all the sufferers and bereaved relatives, and thanksgiving that the Cathedral had been spared. Some of the worshippers remained kneeling after the conclusion of the service."

London, Sept. 20th, 1917.

I was at Morrel's trial—a splendid looking man. I had a long, long look at his profile as he sat in the dock and when he rose to receive his sentence. A high privilege it was to be present at what was a sacred gathering—so heart and soul concentrated was the circle of lovers. These met to surround their champion with love and reverence. Tense and breathless was the atmosphere, as at a solemn religious service—absolute concentration of heart and soul on that splendid representative figure in the docks. His Latin blood was very apparent to me. A large and powerfully built man, yet not in the least heavy—rather an exquisitely sensitive human instrument—and his bearing was so fine, such a lovely soul one could see was shining there—using himself to

the utmost to express—to make clear—the light that was in him. He seemed to move in a higher plane of being.

I can only tell you what I see, what I feel as to the splendid influences at work. I see, in certain directions, a marvellous purification, of the soul of England, going on. A people splendid, a seed of God, is emerging from this fiery furnace of intolerable suffering, from this vast agony that so many of us dare not try to measure least life in this flesh become impossible. The spirit of Christ is at work in this nation. I see it, I feel it in many men and women. Literally death is surmounted. They feel their wings. They feel the splendour of God. The burning bush, but not consumed, is lighting their path.

## With the S.A. Field Ambulance in France.

July 25th.

"Since I wrote last I have been spending a fairly humdrum existence keeping this place going. Now it is being closed, and very soon I shall be back with the ambulance. Just fancy it is five months since I was with them last. They have been within touch all the time, but of course we had different work. It is quite sad to be breaking up this camp, as I had at last got it very nice with grass and flower beds covering all the waste patches. This is a very good gardening country, the constant rain and the more liberal allowance of water all this summer have made things grow in a most satisfactory manner. The sad part is that I am going just before all the things come into bloom, and I am very much afraid that, when we leave, the camp, or what remains of it, will only be used by passersby who won't worry about keeping it nice. A few days ago I had a visit from the Surgeon-General at G.H.Q., who is the chief of the Expeditionary Force as far as medical things go, and he seemed very much pleased with what had been done."

Aug. 1917.

"Since I wrote to you last I have wound up the big camp I formed for the XVII. Corps and have rejoined the ambulance. We are now in a part of the country from which the Germans retreated early this year. It is such a curious change, from the wonderfully closely cultivated regions we have come from. One reads in history of country having been "laid waste" in war, but I dont think it can ever have been done with such horribly systematic thoroughness, as the Germans have done here. One can understand the destruction in the battle field areas but this was beyond where there was any intense fighting and represents the purely wanton destruction to prevent our getting anything out of the country.

All cultivation was disallowed, all trees were cut down including even young fruit trees. All the houses have been pulled or blown down, and the churches blown up and the family vaults in the churchyards opened and ransacked for anything of value. The country now is just rolling plains covered with grass and weeds. The more one goes about the more evidences one sees of the minute detail gone into in destruction. I actually saw a grindstone yesterday, of the type usually seen in farmyards, which they had taken the trouble to chip all round with a hammer so as to make it useless. The country is now as bare as the Karroo and the only thing to break the monotony are a few gnarled trees around the sites of the ruined villages and large camps dotted about behind the wire. We are all working hard to make ourselves as secure as possible against the weather, which is already showing signs of breaking up.

I had an excursion over one of the nearest parts of a great battle field and there in addition to the same wastage seen everywhere the ground has been thrown into the wildest turmoil by the storms of huge shells pounded over it. It is quite beyond description. Everywhere is a litter of all sorts and conditions of weapons, ammunition, tools, timber, wire and dotted everywhere are little crosses here singly

and there in groups, sometimes two or three or half-a-dozen and again in patches running on to hundreds. The inscriptions have been made in as many different ways as the crosses themselves and large numbers simply have "unknown German, French of British soldier" as the case may be. The crosses are anything from a couple of splinters of wood tied together with telephone wire to quite elaborate things made by their friends. Sometimes just a steel helmet on a stick marks the spot where some poor fellow has been flung into a shell hole and covered with a little earth.

How all this turmoil, which extends for miles and miles, will be dealt with will be in itself a huge problem as the earth is sown with unexploded projectiles which are horribly dangerous to handle as they go off in the most mysterious manner, when disturbed. It has been suggested I believe to forest it all as being the last way to eventually reclaim the ground. As far as we are concerned it is far easier to fix up camps here than where one was mixed up with the people trying to live their ordinary life. There is no haggling about sites, or the damage done by thoughtless soldiers, and all the wrong incidental on billetting. The Germans are now strongly entrenched in prepared positions and it is reported by our airmen are busy laying waste the country behind them evidently with the intention that nothing but utterly wasted territory will be handed back to France, and as much inevitable damage is to be done as possible.

Well now I must be off to bed as I am very sleepy after being all day superintending and working at various jobs in addition to seeing the sick, and riding hither and thither to see various people about getting materials, etc."

Sept. 9th, 1917.

"Since I wrote you last we have remained with part of the re-captured territory, and I think most of us have liked being here as much as any part we have been in. Somehow the great stretches of country, covered with nothing but rough growth, have rather a homelike look. From the appearance of the growth I think the Germans must have prohibited cultivation during last summer, and at the same time begun a systematic destruction of the villages. A few days ago I visited a large village not far from here, which must have been a very fine one at one time, and of considerable size. Although all the houses had been entirely destroyed, the orchards had been spared, and the trees were laden with apples, pears and plums. They were not yet ripe, but quite big enough for stewing, so we sent a party over next day to gather fruit, and the men have been sevelling in stewed apples and pears, which is a great treat out here. I think all of us would be quite glad to settle down here for the winter, and build ourselves huts that would be comfortable for the bad weather.

The collection of races being brought to France for various works in connection with the war is reaching a wonderful pitch. To enumerate a few I have seen personally, there are—From South Africa, coloured and native men; from North Africa, Egyptians, Arabs, Moors, and the usual mixtures. From West Africa—natives from all along the coast, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and Congo. In fact there is no region of Africa unrepresented. Then the Canadians and Americans have brought over negroes and Red Indians. There are also Indians, Chinese, and in fact an assortment of all the Eastern races. The longer the war goes on, the greater becomes the mixture, so that one may say with truth that the whole world has its representatives now ranged on one side or the other.

On this point we have long had the upper hand and are able to push the enemy back at any desired point, but it does not lead to anything very much beyond enormous casualties to both sides. How worthless and insane the whole thing seems!"

September 30th, 1917.

"Since I wrote last our Division has once again taken part in another great battle, where and when you will long since have seen

in the papers. The censoring regulations do not permit of our mentioning places even though they have already been allowed in the press. We had been for some time past, having a more or less quiet time holding the line in part of the reconquered territory. On arriving in our new area we received our orders as to the part we were to play in the impending battle. We were to attack a ridge that had already withstood six attempts, and everyone who had been in the line for any length of time was exceedingly gloomy about the prospects. As I was to be in command of our bearers and look after our Brigade on this occasion, I went early one morning with Capt. Laurie to study the routes by which we should be able to get the wounded away. We had to go under cover of dark and early morning mist as the ground was low lying and marshy and no trenches existed in consequence. It was a curious experience walking up in the dark with no light but the flares from the various signals and the flashes from the guns. I must confess our first glimpses of the ground over which the attack was to take place, seemed in every way to come up to and even surpass the gloomy descriptions we had already had. The ground was of deep rich soil, in which the water level was so high that all the shell holes were filled with water and evil-smelling slime. New ones would remain empty at first, but slowly fill up in the course of a day or two. So long had fighting been going on in this area, that the face of the earth was blasted and upheaved beyond description. Here and there amidst this sea of chaos there shewed up small shapeless cairns like rocks in a stormy sea, scattered without purpose. These were the remains of formidable concrete blockhouses, which afforded the only sort of shelter for any living thing. There was no herbage, no tree nor any living thing, just blasted and blackened soil, mud and slime. Along our route there were only two havens of refuge; one consisted of a small concrete blockhouse into which could be packed at most about 20 men. It was like an "igloo" the doorway being about 2½ feet high and 2 feet wide. In the lee of this had been added a splinter proof shelter where a case might hastily be dressed, but which when casualties were at all numerous, was quite useless. Ahead of this and only about 500 yards from the front line was another larger blockhouse where Battln. Hq. and another aid post were to be. In this place perhaps 20 wounded could be sheltered at a pinch, but here again with anything like a large number there was nothing for it but to dress them in the open. About 1000 yards or more behind the first mentioned refuge there was a decanville track, along which it was hoped we could have trolleys drawn by motor engines to convey away the walking wounded. On our return we had a few more day's grace wherein to make our plans.

The evening before the attack our party of 3 officers and 80 bearers went up to take our posts: one party under Capt. Laurie went up right away to the most forward post, whilst the remainder of us put in a few hours sleep in the cellars of some ruined houses. At 4.40 a.m. however we pushed on again, it was a weird experience, the night was clear—after some rain—but dark. There was a continuous stream of troops and transport moving towards the front. From all sorts of points of vantage our heavies were pounding away whilst the enemy was replying fairly briskly. Progress was slow and at 5.40, when we were about halfway, the barrage from the field guns, for the attack, burst forth. There were nearly twice as many of these as there had been in our previous battle in the spring, and the din was tremendous. It was just beginning to lighten and as the dawn grew brighter we could begin to see the shells bursting more clearly. Every now and then one would pitch into some defensive structure, and up would go a huge cloud of earth, bricks, timber and iron, or whatever else had been used.

It was not until about 6.40 that the first of the walking wounded began to appear and the first of the German prisoners. At this time I had taken up my post at the decanville track

to superintend the entrainment of the 'walkers' and redress those requiring it and deal with local casualties of which there were not a few. I found the train was being run by a section of South African railway men, who were delighted to find themselves working with us. They were very good in bringing back a petrol can of tea on each train. The second train was just getting away about 9 a.m., when the track was blown up in front of it by a shell. However in about an hour it was repaired again and after that a couple of trolleys came up regularly nearly every hour.

In the meantime I had also been arranging for the inspanning of German prisoners as stretcher bearers. A lot of them were quite young lads of 18 and 19 and worked well all day. We also managed to get our Ford ambulance cars going to the 1st refuge, which helped a lot. To this point cases could only be carried and so torn up had the ground become that we realised nothing could be done during the night in the forward area. So when the dusk came reliefs for the tired stretcher bearers had to be arranged and fresh parties who would clear the new positions at dawn. In the meantime all had gone well. The objectives had been captured all along and everyone, including the wounded, were in high spirits. Men came down badly wounded but quite oblivious to their condition, in the elation of success and success in the face of what looked so impossible. Early next morning (21st) all our bearers were hard at work and kept hard at it until by about 4 p.m. we had the good news from the R.M.O.'s that the lines were clear. It was during the afternoon, while I was inspecting another part of the line that Capt. Laurie was brought back wounded in the thigh. He had gone up after mid-day to the line to satisfy himself as to all the wounded being clear, when he was hit by a sniper. Fortunately his wound has not proved to be serious and he writes very cheerfully. That night the Germans shelled us very heavily, but fortunately all the wounded being gone, the men were able to take shelter. That night I went to the forward aid post, now of course some distance behind the line, as we had advanced about 1000 yards. I had only just got there when the Germans began another counter-attack and soon shells were bursting thick all round. Then our barrage started and for about an hour or more it was like being in a wild storm, everything that could shoot seemed to be going all out. There was just a roar of everything from machine-guns to heavies, and soon we heard that the attack had been smothered. In fact there seemed no other possibility, such was the torrent of metal poured over. The 23rd proved what by comparison was almost a calm and we coped easily with all the wounded as they occurred. Finally after another night like the previous ones my orders to return and my "relief" came and by about 11 a.m. I was back in our Headquarters.

Throughout those days there were many exciting moments, and much of intense interest, and all the time the horrible side.

Planes fought overhead, and I saw two of ours collide at a great height and both fall to the ground. The German planes were very active and seemed to work with far better organisation than ours. They came in great droves at regular times and cleared everything before them, dropping bombs on selected points, and firing with machine-guns on the cases on stretchers at the relay points, lying there waiting their turn, while the M.Os. dressed them and the shells were plunging all round. I still cannot cease to marvel at the troops.

At times we had perhaps fifty or more good fortune we had in never getting a shell into one of these collections. The shells fell on the place before and after on many occasions but fortunately never at the time we were most congested. The whole attack was wonderfully planned and accurately carried out and our casualties were not high considering all things.

Since then we have come far out of the line and are resting at a quaint old farm-house, with glorious weather to make it thoroughly restful after the rush and bustle of the battle."

## Extracts from Letters of Miss Nan Mitchell.

*Miss Mitchell is doing Canteen Work in France*

September 15th, 1917.

"I wrote you once before of going, M— and I, to a little evacuated village where they wanted us to establish a laundry. Negotiations have somewhat trailed on about it, but we had to get some more definite knowledge if we were really to get it done, and they sent us permissions to come there again. We got one for Miss E. and Miss C. (Marjorie's friend), who had just arrived, and we started in the former's motor.

"If you want a really exhilarating ride, start for the front, four ladies, alone in a motor (one of them driving), with a red cross on its side, and a little American flag pasted on its shield glass. A chauffeur or a uniformed man about would have spoilt it all, but as it was we created the greatest sensation. We passed along lines of convoys, tired men packed in camions, marching on foot, and as we swept by every face broke, first into a look of open-mouthed astonishment, then into radiant smiles. They waved their arms, and shouted "C'est bien, ca," "c'est chic." Some took to dancing, right in the ranks, to express their pleasure, and one quick-witted one shouted, as he waved us, greetings, "Maintenant la France est sauvee."

"I decided a perfectly good course was, right there, simply to run around the front in a motor, and make the French soldier laugh, for laughing is certainly good for one.

"We had to stop often to ask our road, and at one point a motor full of officers, who took a keen interest in us, sent us a long detour around, because they all agreed the shorter road was too dangerous. Later, coming home on it, we understood why.

"We arrived at our destination about two o'clock, determined to secrete the fact that we had not lunched (we had most stupidly brought nothing with us), for we knew it would make trouble. Our business was primarily with a kind of Commissariat-General, and from such a person, who is a Frenchman, you simply cannot hide the fact that you have not lunched. The officer into whose hands we first fell whisked us back to the next village in order to lunch royally. At his 'popot' we ate the tenderest beafsteak, and marvels of young green peas, such as we can never get here, or in Paris. They said they grew them in their own back yards. Between courses we did our laundry business, and after lunch went to look at the building where it might be installed. ——— lies near a spot that we all hear and think of so much, and we longed to go there. Mrs. C., more temerious than M. or I, asked if we might, and the General was most genial, and seemed to think there was no difficulty in going round that way.

"I must say that we ended lunch by drinking in champagne a rather terrifying toast the French insisted on, 'To victory brought by their new Allies,' and on our part 'To the glorious French Army,' and then all had our pictures taken in the back garden, holding gas masks and helmets the need of which, they said, was no mere pretence.

"The General gave us tea at his mess later, and there two such unusually nice ambulance boys turned up. One said such a tea party was the last thing he ever expected to see at——

"The General and several officers went first in their motor to show us the other way home, and we followed. It was they who took us to an open ridge, where we looked down on what thrilled us beyond words. The sky was black on one side, and in it the perfect arc of a rainbow, the arc of hope, one end of it almost resting on the towers of the town, that in some marvellous way still stand. It was almost hidden from us, the towers were all we could see, but they stood, strong and grim. One only felt their tale of suffering, could not

see it for the distance. On the other side of them we saw the firing. The German guns were hidden by a hill, we only saw the puffs of smoke, which, rising from near the ground, float off towards the French lines, but from the French guns we saw their every flash, and once we heard a shell whistle through the air. One always heard of shells whistling, and it is certainly a sound apart. We could scarcely bear to drag ourselves away, but had to get back before too late.

"The officers gathered us some flowers, pointed us the straight road home, and left us. It was a road full of interest to us. We passed a long line of artillery transports, the postillions riding the big strong horses, and all of it rattling along the hard road. We tried to pass it, but it suddenly began to rattle more loudly than ever and quicken its pace. It even doubled up on itself in its efforts to get on fast, and it paid—strange fact—absolutely no attention to us, squeezed onto the side of the road. About this point I looked behind, and saw a puff of smoke rising from the ground a little to one side. If a road is being shelled, and one is on it, one does not pay attention even to strange ladies in a motor car. As soon as the line straightened out, and left us room to pass, we spun past it, not loath to move on ourselves.

"A little further on we were held up by the usual sentry. He asked to see our papers. As he handed them back he said apologetically, 'c'est si rare.' We asked him the name of the town we were in, a reap of ruins. He replied 'ce n'est pas un bon place de rester, passez aussi vite que possible.' He had the sternest face I have ever seen on a French soldier. It had a tense drawn look, that made everything light and cheerful seem suddenly out of place, and we realised he was staying right there, for him there was no passing as quickly as possible, and we went on, very subdued and sober.

Later.

"We stopped on our way at an interesting place, where the women are doing carpentering for the army. The Colonel is much interested in them, and doing nice social things for them. The extraordinary thing was to see them work, driving in nails like lightning. A certain kind of trench box they make, and their speed is so much greater than the men's, that when two of the latter make 20, two of the former make 54. They had, besides the skill, such intensity and interest in their work, it was wonderful.

"Yesterday the Colonel took us all on a rare expedition. We had his motor, Miss E. and the boy scouts were in another, and we went to see the battlefield of the Marne, the chateau first which the tired French troops, after losing, because they were too few, stormed and took again. Then we took a wide circle, and came to the field where the great pitched battle that saved France was fought, and, oh, what an impressive sight. It is a breezy grass swept ridge, but such a ridge I have never seen in my life before. All over it, as far as one's eye can reach, are tall black crosses rising from square enclosed graves. No regularity, no placing of them, but just as though where a heap of dead had fallen they had been buried, and the cross been raised.

"As we reached the summit, and all stood still, awestuck, the Colonel, generally so round and fat and jolly, started to speak. His voice almost chocked with tears. I wish I could repeat his every word. They were so touching in their simple French expression, but the idea of them was this. We had come to France, to work for men we believed were worthy. They were, and the same men who fought on the field of sacrifice were still, after three years, in the trenches. Do for them what we could."

## EAST AFRICAN CAMPAIGN.

*Extracts from Jarvis's Letters.*

Songea,
G.E.A.,
Via Nyasaland.

"I have been unable to write anything except a couple of very short letters, as we have been out of touch with everything until now, and it is doubtful if those two last letters will reach you. Our column has done very well so far, and has been constantly in touch with the enemy, whom we have gradually driven north.

The first occasion when our column got heavily engaged was about ten days from the south end of Lake Nyasa, going north through Portuguese territory. I happened to be in charge of the advance guard that day, and most of the fighting fell to my two platoons. On the first shot being fired, I extended at once, and kept advancing with a gradual movement to the left, to outflank the enemy, while another platoon of our company, with an officer in charge, came slowly right ahead. The Germans evidently intended to hold us up on a hill overlooking the track we were on, but my two platoons, by working to the flanks, made them retire very quickly. We finally drove them over the ridge, the last few shots being fired at about 20 yards. All this fighting was in thick forest, at very close range. Even when we reached the top of the ridge one looked down on unbroken forest.

I had about 60 men with me, and at one stage of the fighting a German was in our firing line, and conversed, for a minute or two, with one of my Askaris. The latter thought he was one of the South Africans attached to us, but when he started to make off he got suspicious, and fired, but missed him in the trees.

My company has done quite well, and has been in all the fighting we have had up to the present. Since leaving the south end of Lake Nyasa we have travelled through unbroken forest except for clearings, cultivated by natives. We are now back again in G.E.A. Our present position we captured after quite an exciting day, when I was again in charge of the advance guard. Our C.O. has led the column exceptionally well, and it is due to him that our losses have been small.

I can't give any description yet of the fighting round here, as it is too soon. It is quite healthy country here."

Songea,
Via Nyasaland,
October 14th, 1917.

Our column is still moving about, and I believe the General of this area is very much pleased with our work. The country is very uniform in vegetation, and we are still in continuous forest.

Just where we are at present there are plenty of elephants, and I had a good look at one standing in a river about 150 yards off.

I don't think, at present, it is worth while sending me up anything as "comforts," for they never reach their destination. I had a letter from some forwarding officer on the coast saying he had advice of a parcel for me, but could not find it, and he had received another with only the cover.

If it is possible, when this campaign finishes, I will run down to Cape Town before going back to B.E.A., as I would have to go down as far as Chinde, or perhaps Beira, to catch a boat for B.E.A."

*Extracts from Lenox's Letters.*

Aug 8th, 1917.

"We probably get to Dar-es-Salaam to-morrow afternoon, but may not disembark till the next morning. Its been a wonderfully calm voyage, and I have been very comfortable. All ports being closed at night makes it very warm, but I generally open mine as soon as I put the light out, and with the electric fan going, it keeps fairly cool.

Some of the officers going to the K.A.R. seem very nice. I am afraid a lot of the

younger ones won't last. I think our native troops need a rather older, harder class of man.

I have been doing a lot of reading on board. I shall always be glad of any reading matter you can send me."

**9th.**

Back in Dar-es-Salaam.

"I am not certain yet where I am to go, but I think Tanganyika. A good deal of fighting and a lot of casualties, but things are going fairly well I think from what I hear. A lot of letters here for me, quite a number from you, but very old. One from Uncle Percy 16 months old !"

Dar-es-Salaam.

"I expect to leave in two days, and go first to Tabora, then into the Mwanza area, and on through to Ruanda, which lies between the north end of Tanganyika and Uganda. I shall be working amongst the Belgians, and shall be interested to see more of them and their methods.

My first work will be to find a cattle route between the Mwanza area and Ruanda—a distance of about 400 miles. This will be through Tetse fly country. No route is at present known, and report says its impossible. I have got to find some way through, and will have a lot of travelling and twisting about. If no road can be found it will be impossible to get any cattle out of Ruanda, which is the most thickly stocked part of East Africa.

The whole of the country has become depleted of oxen, and we don't know where to look now. I suppose we shall have to eat the cows next.

I think the native porters are faring a lot better now, and the deaths have very much decreased."

Mwanza,
Sept. 11th, 1917.

"You will see that I am back again in my old place. I am here only to see another officer of ours and arrange a few matters before setting off on my long journey toward North Tanganyika. I came across country from Tabora in motor car. It was an excellent road, and we did the first 130 miles in eight hours, and the next day the remaining 85 in 4½ hours.

They are still chasing Germans about here, and I saw quite a number of Belgian troops. They don't leave much behind after they have passed through the country.

Their native soldiers are composed chiefly of Manyema and Bangalla tribes, both of which are canibals. They tell some weird stories about them, and they are the terror of the country. I believe they make excellent soldiers—about the best material obtainable. They say the Bangalla tribe have a strange system of punishment in their own country in the Congo. They never fine an offender in the same way as other tribes do, i.e., having to pay so many head of cattle, etc., but they cut off a hand or arm, foot, toe, ear, nose, etc., just according to the crime.

The whole country has got very dry since I left, it does not take long to change from one vast swamp to a desert. The trip I am going on should be very interesting.

I am awfully fed up. I bought a nice wrist watch in Durban, and the other day it fell off and was lost. I got rather badly bitten by Tetse fly, and my wrist got very swollen, and that must have caused it. It is most annoying, as I wanted it for this trip to time the distances. It had luminous hands, so that I could see it at night. These Tetse are awful brutes, and seem very poisonous in the dry weather. I have never seen insects that can bite as they do, and they swarm like bees in parts. Although they are fairly large, they settle very quietly on one, and when one feels the sting their job is finished and they are withdrawing their fangs, which are saw-edged —hence the sting.

I have had my hair cut clean off, and my head looks like an ostrich egg. Its the only thing to do in this climate and on job like this.

I see Uncle Percy asked a question in the House about the large mortality amongst the

native carriers. The figures I gave you were correct, but since the rains have stopped, and with better organisation and good feeding, the losses have been reduced tremendously, and they are also not recruiting from the tribes which died so much.

I think the native will be more glad than we when this war is over, for they have had to bear the brunt of a war which is not theirs. Of course, these native armies which have been taught the power of military training have now got to realise their ability as fighters, and that must be a bad influence for the future.

I think it is a pity that any white men except as officers were used in this East African war, as they could not then have been able to compare their fighting ability with that of the white man.

Conditions have not been fair to the white man here, as both the climate and the native method of fighting have favoured the native. The well-trained native soldier has proved as good a fighter as anyone could imagine. Its strange how loyal he has been to the German when fighting a losing fight, and when he has no feeling of nationalism and there can be no gain."

Kakama, Sept. 26th, 1917.

"This is just a note, as there is a runner going through to-morrow. We are getting along on our journey, but still have, well over 200 miles to go, and with all the wandering about, to avoid the Tetse fly, I expect it will be, at least, 300. It should be most interesting, and later we go over some very high mountains. Here there is nothing but dry bush and grass. The whole country is pretty well devastated by the various armies passing through, and the natives bolt when they see us. Food is not plentiful in consequence. There has been a lot of fighting here between the Germans and the Belgians, and the poor native, who had no quarrel at all, came in for all the knocks from both sides. There are not many of them left, and one sees the remains of burnt villages and others which have been deserted.

Not far from here a big 4.1 inch gun lies, which was blown up by the retreating Germans.

There is a German gold mine on the hills just beyond here, but it has not been worked except for a couple of shafts sunk.

I have a very difficult piece of country to get through now, and it is full of Tetse, and that is what I have to avoid. I shall not get any letters until I get to the end of this trip, which won't be for a long time. I am keeping very fit, and have been doing a lot of walking. My half section is down with fever badly, which is annoying. I am alone at present, but am expecting a couple of my white N.C.O.'s in a day or two. One is down with fever about 10 miles back. This department is nearly all E.A.M.R., and the rest is divided between the K.A.R. and the Carrier Corps (Native Labour).

I found my lost watch again, which was very lucky—a native was wearing it.

I am writing this in my tent at night. Its being raining a bit, which seems to encourage the various insects to come out. I have a mosquito net over my bed, and the wonderful collection of creatures that crawl over it would delight any insect chap. I have never seen such awful looking things, and every now and then there is a "bump" on one's tent as something has fallen from the tree above, and it races over the top of the tent. The lizards I don't mind, they are quite friendly, and live inside my tent, catching flies and mosquitoes.

There is a French mission station not far from here, and I am going over to look them up. I wrote to them about some information I wanted, and got a long letter back in French. One word looked as if it might have something to do with vegetables, but I am going to find out."

## LETTERS FROM MESOPOTAMIA.

### CAPTAIN DONALD SANDEMAN.

"Some of "the Family" met Lil's brother, Donald Sandeman, when he was out here just before the war. The following extracts from his letters from Mesopotamia may be of some interest:—

March 3rd.

Here we are in jolly old Mesipot at last. We are now steaming up the Shalt-al-Arab towards Basra. The river here is three or four hundred yards broad, with date palms on both sides. Lots of duck about in the river. We are going up to "river-head," but no one knows what that means. Just seen a monitor with holes in her funnel, which has just returned from beyond Kut, had some scrapping there. . . . . .

March 9th.

Here we are steaming up the "Swannee River" in a small paddle steamer, with a barge tied on to each side. We passed Kurna yesterday morning, and it was exactly as I had pictured it from Neave's description of the fight there at the beginning of the war. From there onwards the country has been absolutely flat and bare with very occasional clumps of palm trees. There are Arab villages here and there on both banks of the river, collections of huts built of reeds. The Arabs are a skallywag crew, dirty, ragged blighters. They keep sheep most of them, which one sees grazing on the river bank, and grow a few crops . . . . . At dawn this morning we found ourselves passing the famous ——. It was most interesting seeing the place after all one has heard of it. The country beyond for miles seems to be nothing but a maze of trenches on both sides of the river. On the right bank was the famous liquorice factory, now consisting of nothing but one delapidated chimney and a few mud ruins in the midst of the trenches. We tied up for half an hour a few miles up the river at a spot where there had evidently been some fighting, as there were cartridges, mostly Turkish—shells and bombs lying about all over the place, and an Indian Labour Corps were employed in clearing up. One of them told me they had picked up 20,000 rounds yesterday.

March 11th.

Still slowly steaming up river. Extraordinary river this, the further you go up the wider it gets. This is our seventh day since leaving Basra, and for seven days we've seen practically no sign of vegetation, bare far-stretching plains on both sides. It reminds me of the Karoo a bit, except that there are no hills. I don't know what the grazing is like, but I believe the South African farmer would make something of this country.

April 12th.

I'm afraid you will find my letters very dull, no blood and thunder and nothing of interest, being stuck as we are on the line of communication. We are at one of the many posts on the banks of the "Swannee." Quite a pleasant life here, not too hot yet, and the nights are perfect. The men are pretty fit and quite cheery, they are well fed and have lots of work to do. We've been having some A1 small game shooting, black partridges and small grouse. We went out yesterday to stick jackals, and had some splendid runs, and killed two. Its grand sport, and you have to gallop like smoke to keep up with them. We've no lances, but use Turkish bayonets fixed into a stick. . . .

May 4th.

Two days ago we got orders to send off half the regiment to the "Holy City," to be followed by the rest of the regiment a week later. We didn't lose much time in packing up and stowing our companies on board, and off we went at dawn. We've had quite a good time at A——, but were jolly glad to get off and to know that we are shot of the L. of C. The country we are passing through now is a bit more interesting, and seems to be pretty thickly populated with Arabs. We have passed several villages, and the Arabs rush out and follow along the bank until someone throws a sack

or any old clothes overboard, when they nip into the water and swim after it. They use inflated skins for crossing the river here, just as the people do in India.

We passed the famous arch where Townsend fought his last battle during his advance early this morning. Above this there were a certain amount of crops and vegetation, which became thicker as we neared the "Holy City." Our final destination is from all accounts not a very cheery spot, and we shall probably spend most of our time digging in . . . . Some regiments are very short of officers after all this fighting. I know of one which has only one 2nd lieutenant left out of the lot, and we live in fear and trembling that they will take one or two of us and push us into other regiments.

May 8th.

We have at last arrived at our destination, and have joined our new Brigade. . . .

I went up to the city the evening before we left, and had a look at it—very quaint and most interesting. . . .

This is not at all a bad spot, but the flies are simply poisonous, which is not to be wondered at, as the Turks have been sitting here for 2½ years. The country is absolutely bare, but is undulating, which is a change from the flat plains further down. Across the river is a village and a big mosque with a gold dome which shows up for miles round. The Turks are said to be only 15 miles away. They had not done very much damage to the railway, some of the culverts had been blown up. One station was a tangled mass of ruins, and the one here is a good deal knocked about, but the other stations which were all fine, big, pucca buildings were intact. Its a very fine railway, but I don't think the Kaiser meant us to use it!

May 15th.

Nothing much has happened to us since last I wrote, except that our Brigade has moved camp two miles further up, and we are now camped on a particularly poisonous piece of ground 600 yards from the river. The dust is indescribable, and for the next five months one must be content to creep about in it together with the scorpions and dung beetles with which our dust heaps swarm. If I ever get forcibly pushed on to a staff billet, which God forbid, I hope I shan't be such an ass as to choose the worst spot in Asia for a Brigade to camp on. The Turks seem to have nipped off to Tekrit or thereabouts, and whether they are likely to come back again this summer remains to be seen. . . . . Well, no more now, as the fury of the daily dust storm is now abating somewhat I must scrape some of it off and go out.

May 31st.

We had a Brigade parade the other day, and marched with great pomp and circumstance through Samara town—in at one gate and out at the other. It is a very interesting old place, surrounded by a high wall and inhabited by a mixture of Arabs and quaint-looking dagoes, who look as if they had come out of the Bible.

June 6th.

Here I am in Baghdad in the throes of a Lewis gun class. There is a big flood from the Euphrates just outside Baghdad, and for three or four miles there is nothing to be seen west of the railway but a sea of water. Very jolly being down here, its so nice to get out of the awful dust of Samara. Those who are stationed here are living in great comfort. They have a very fine house for G. H. G., and one sees all the staff birds buzzing about in zipping little motor boats. The softest job to get in Baghdad is to be in charge of your regimental chump. Your work consists in sitting among stacks of bundles of cold weather clothing and hoping that someone else won't push you out of the job!

Samara, July 23rd.

Still pretty hot, and a lot of Tommies are dying of heat stroke. I went up to another Brigade on Sunday with the Colonel to look up Col. Keily. He was very fit and full of good cheer, though three C.O.'s in his Brigade were on the point of blowing up from the heat,

and one had partially exploded. . . . It is ripping being back with the regiment, and I daily congratulate myself on having got shot of the staff. I like Mesipot; it suits me down to the ground, though some fellows hate it. I am now a comic major—don't laugh—as a temporary measure until such time as someone senior to me rolls up and pinches 2nd in command off me.

August 4th.

They tried doing "active operations" on the other river last month, but after two days of it they had to knock off on account of the heat, men were going mad with thirst. It can't be done in this weather.' '

## REMINISCENCES.

(Continued from No. 3, Vol. 2.)

At last the long voyage was ended and it was thrilling to see the white cliffs of England and feel we were nearing the wonderful world that had seemed like an unreachable dream of all perfection.

The first impression, at St. Katherine's Docks, was distinctly depressing but was redeemed by the interest of meeting our English grandmother and Aunt Nancy, who were there to meet us with the warmest welcome. London was a somewhat abrupt change for children who had led our roving and unconventional life and I think we felt cramped and disappointed in spite of much that was wonderful to us ....

.... For the first time we saw railways, large shops, parks and sights like the Zoological Gardens and Mme. Tussaud's.

The only touch of the warmth of home was centred around Grandmama, who lavished upon us almost passionate affection. Though between 60 and 70 years old, she was still beautiful with a quite youthful figure and carriage—I can still remember her lovely complexion, perfect teeth and soft, golden-brown hair. She used to tell us many stories of Papa when he was a boy and of his harum-scarum brother Frank, who must have been a lovable character.

Then we all went to visit Aunt Nancy in her home at Richmond, where her husband, Mr. Bingle, was Principal of the College. There we first met his niece, Miss Bingle, at that time a hard-worked and much-disciplined little student who awed us with her knowledge of Greek and Latin. She seemed to us to have little of the freedom to which we were accustomed but she was then, as she has always been since, the kindest and most unselfish of friends.

Dear Grandmama was very loth to part with us when we went to visit Papa's old Uncle Charles who was married to Mrs. Glass, an aunt of the well-known Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh, author of "Rab and his friends." They, with the two daughters of Mrs. Charles Molteno, lived at a place in the country called "Newton", I remember it was a pretty, bright home with a large garden. They were all very kind to us and made much of us and we corresponded for years afterwards.

Our headquarters were in Edinburgh and we were very happy there, and felt more at home than we had done in England. I have never seen Edinburgh since but I can quite well recall the old Castle of Holyrood, Arthur's Seat and Carlton Hill. Also I remember seeing Loch Leven Castle and Loch Lomond. Dear Aunt Betty filled all these places with romance for us through her fascinating stories about them. How we did love those walks and talks with her but alas that joy came to a sudden end, for her health began to give anxiety and the doctor, who was consulted, advised that she should at once return to her native climate. It was a great blow to us all when she was sent back home under the care of Dr. and Mrs. Ebden, old friends of Papa. They, like all who met her, fell under the spell of her charm and I often afterwards heard Dr. Ebden speak of her with almost reverent admiration.

It was while we were staying in Edinburgh that Percy was born. It was a Sunday and we

were all seated at our mid-day dinner when Dr. Brown came into the room and, in his kindly way, told us that we had another little brother.

With what joy we always welcomed these events and crept, with tense excitement, into the sacred room for our first glimpse of the little new-comer in Papa's arms while Mama, with a happy smile looked on. Her room was like Paradise to us during those days, though the house seemed cold and bare without her sunny presence.

The baby was scarcely a month old when we returned to England to meet Mr. and Mrs. de Jongh and Christina and Nancy, who had come over from the Cape, the latter was only 16 and had just left school, while Christina was about 19. To Christina specially it was a bitter disappointment that Aunt Betty had to return home just as they arrived and were looking forward to a delightful time together, for they had been friends from childhood.

The happy plan was made that we should all travel, in one party, on the Continent, but it was hard for Grandmama to have so soon to part with us again, especially as there was now the additional attraction of the baby. To console her, we left with her our little dog Punch, whom we had brought from the Cape and, from that time, he entered upon a life of luxury, such as he had never known before and became her treasured companion till his death.

The time I am telling of was over 50 years ago, and travelling on the Continent was, by no means, the common and easy experience it is now. Our large party with five children and two nurses used to astonish and puzzle all we met. The hotels were then much more distinctively national than they are now, and though that may not have made them so easy or comfortable for strangers, yet I think it made them more interesting.

In re-visiting since some of the places we stayed at I have been interested to recognise the same hotels still in existence, though probably enlarged. The Hotel de l'Europe in Brussels—the "Trois Rois" at Bâle—the Hotel de Hollande at Baden-Baden, and Beau Rivage at Ouchy, are some that I can remember. At the "Trois Rois" at Bâle Maria caught some kind of fever which made Papa and Mama very anxious and which hung about her for a long time so that she became very weak.

Mr. de Jongh, "Om Dirk" as Papa called him, was devotedly fond of her and, when we started on our train journeys, he always insisted upon carrying her himself, wrapped in a green plaid shawl. With the two nurses carrying the babies and all the rest following each with some share of luggage, we must have been rather a remarkable group of travellers and I scarcely wonder that there was about Papa, on these occasions, something of the old feeling of tension like when we started on our "treks" through the Karoo. Nothing ever ruffled Mama, who entered into her new experience with the keenest enjoyment.

Language was a great difficulty in those days, before English was so much spoken and the great stay of our party was Nancy who, having just left school, was expected to be able, at all times, to act as interpreter, while Papa and Mr. de Jongh looked on scarcely able to restrain their impatience to understand.

At Baden-Baden we made a long stay and much regret was experienced when our departure was announced. We were urged to remain to see a German Xmas, for which preparations were already being made, and, when it was realised that our plans could not be altered, we were sent away with many regrets and presents of bouquets of flowers and boxes of candied fruits.

It was at the Beau Rivage Hotel at Ouchy that we spent our Xmas and never have I forgotten the glorious view, from the tall windows, of the deep blue lake with the snow peaks beyond glistening against the dear blue sky. Here we revelled in our first experience of snow and ice.

Ouchy was then a very small country place with only a few scattered houses and gardens along the shore of the lake and the one big

hotel which had just been finished. Few people were staying there in the winter and our large party was very welcome. We also spent some time at Geneva and in Paris, where I remember that we complained of being sent too often to walk the open space round the Madeleine. Betty and I, eight and nine, were old enough to thoroughly enjoy this life of travel and adventure, as did our coloured nurse Meitje, who was always an object of curiosity —sometimes more than she liked—for coloured people were then much more uncommon than they are now. Often people stopped to ask where we came from and, many a time, the remark which followed our reply, was, "Oh, I thought only black people lived there." Few seemed to know anything about our then far-away corner of the world.

Amongst the very few relatives we met in England, were Col. Meehan, a cousin of Grandpapa's, and his most lovable and attractive daughter, who afterwards married a Captain Fawkes. Col. Meehen was a very handsome old gentleman, somewhat of a dandy. He was evidently very much interested in meeting all our large party and we thought his daughter a most charming lady. After his death we quite lost sight of her. I believe Col. Meehen's name was really MacMahm but through some mis-spelling in the documents of his commission it became corrupted into Meehan.

At the end of about 18 months we returned to the Cape—this time in the monthly mail steamer, the "Cambrian," with Capt. and Mrs. Baynton. The latter was a well-known lady of commanding personality, who held a sort of Court whenever she was on board and it was said that it was owing to the rôle she played that the rule was subsequently made forbidding captains' wives from travelling in their husbands' ships. However she always remained warmly attached to our family.

Before leaving England, Papa and Mama spent some time in shopping, for they bought all the furniture, plate, glass and china for the home we were to settle into, on our return, somewhere near Cape Town.

Among the passengers on board the "Cambrian" were Mr. Joseph Barry and his three daughters, Letty, Annie and Kitty. Mr. Barry was an old Cape friend of Papa's, they used to spend hours over games of chess varied sometimes to whist but, in the latter case, a fresh hand was always a difficulty, and a very shy young man was resorted to. We did not wonder that he needed some persuasion when we sometimes listened to the fierce rating he would get from the three older experienced players who were in such deadly earnest.

At last we lay in Table Bay and watched a boat coming towards us with Grandpapa and Bazett in it. As we all rowed back with them to the jetty Grandpapa whispered that he had a secret to tell us and it was with mixed feelings of excitement and anxiety that we learnt that our beloved Aunt Betty was engaged to be married. We could scarcely restrain our impatience till the evening when we were to be introduced to our future Uncle Bisset.

Shortly after our arrival we took up our residence at Wheatfield, Mowbray, where we lived for 18 months, while Papa looked about for a place where we could settle into as a permanent home. Here Frank was born—a little, very fair-haired baby whom Papa called his "Witkop". We seemed there to be living quite in the country and, for the first time, revelled in the delight of flower gardens, green fields carpeted with spring flowers, and a cow called Daisy. Betty and I went every day to a school kept by three Miss Hankeys—Miss Elizabeth, Miss Mary and Miss Sarah. Miss Mary was our special teacher and we all loved her. She dressed most plainly, like an old picture, always in grey, with a very long waist and her hair curled high at the back of her head with three stiff curls on either side. No one ever had from her an impatient word or look but of Miss Sarah, the youngest sister, who taught us music, we stood greatly in awe, though I never remember her being, in any way, unkind.

Betty and I had had so few companions that it was a most interesting experience to

be amongst such a number of girls of all ages and it seemed to me as if nothing could be more delightful than our games of "French and English," during recess time. It was here that Mrs. Gamble, then Constance Brounger, and we first met. The grounds of their home adjoined our playground and she and her younger sister used to stand at the fence and watch our fun with rather wistful interest. It was not, however, till some years later, that we really became friends for, about that time Mr. Brounger having completed his railway engineering work here, returned, with his family, to England. On their voyage home illness broke out on the ship and their eldest son and younger daughter both died. They did not come back to the Cape till Constance and I were girls of nearly seventeen.

The next great event was Aunt Betty's wedding in the big Dutch Church in Adderley St., which was not then crowded round with buildings as it is now. Betty and I, with Bazett and Willie, felt very important, if somewhat nervous, at forming part of the bridal procession as it passed through the crowd at the door.

It was at that time that Margaret Blenkins, who was Aunt Betty's special companion and friend, became engaged to Mr. Christian Watermeyer. Soon after, her health began to cause anxiety and, in spite of the most anxious care, she became weaker and weaker. At last there was talk of the wonderful air of a place called Kalk Bay, then only a little known fishing hamlet and someone went down to investigate. I remember the amusement with which the place was described and the tiny thatched cottage which was all accommodation that could be got. It was under these sad circumstances that we first came into touch with Kalk Bak for nothing could help the dear invalid and she passed away on the very day that had been fixed for her marriage and before she had completed her 19th year. I can still recall the intensely sad feeling with which I watched her as she lay on her couch on the stoep or in the garden, so pale and listless and the desperate longing that she might recover.

It was during the time we lived at Mowbray that Aunt Sophia and Aunt Georgina, Grandpapa's only sisters, unexpectedly arrived from Hong Kong, to end their days at Somerset Rd. Ever since I could remember, we had had constant pleasant reminders of their existence in the shape of presents, by every opportunity that offered; no ship arrived from China without bringing Grandmama boxes of tea, of preserved ginger, chow-chow, and our favourite little preserved oranges—also cabinets, ornaments and all kinds of interesting and pretty things. Aunt Sophia's husband, Mr. Duce, had been Danish Consul for many years, at Hong Kong. On his death they decided to come to the Cape but as there was no way of letting Grandpapa know, it was a complete surprise when one day a cab drove up to the gate at Somerset Road and the two little old ladies stepped out and walked up the garden path to the door.

Aunt Sophia was a gentle, rather sad-looking lady, in delicate health, and she lived only about six months after their arrival. She had two sons, John and Edward, who once had spent some time at Somerset Road, on their way thither to a farm school in Europe. One of them was present at Mamma's wedding—John, the elder, was attracted back to the Cape some years later when I can just remember seeing him. In the course of years they ceased to correspond and so have been lost sight of. Aunt Georgina was exceptionally clever and well educated, a good musician, artist and linguist—she brought with her her harp and taught Aunt Emmie to play it. She was a great reader and critic and altogether a little formidable to some but she was a most intelligent and interesting companion and it was surprising how with tastes formed in such a different environment, she did manage to adapt herself to the simple life at the Cape and its rather foreign character. She warmly appreciated Grandmama's large-hearted, sincere and unselfish character, which

seemed to embrace and yet leave free all who came within its influence. Aunt Emmie was then a girl just entering her teens, keen to seize every educational opportunity, and to her Aunt Georgina's advent brought a whole world of new interest; they became devoted companions and friends though there always remained about Aunt Georgina a certain reserve—a kind of something remote from our experience.

What must have been to her a great compensation for the loss of old friends and interests was her enthusiastic appreciation of the beauties of Nature. She delighted in long exploring rambles in which Aunt Emmie and we loved to share her keen and understanding enjoyment. There her spirit seemed to breathe quite freely—she was young again.

It was wonderful how there seemed always to be room when needed, at Somerset Road, and when the two old aunts arrived they immediately fitted, quite naturally, with all their camphor wood chests and numerous belongings, into a room that seemed made for them, called the "Long Room". It always appeared to us a mysterious distant abode, though it opened just off the dining-hall.

Inexhaustible treasures seemed to be stored there and when we would be seized with a craze for "dressing-up" or making tableaux, Aunt Georgina would dazzle us with the wonderful satin dresses, jewellery, etc., which she would produce and in which we delighted to deck one another. On these occasions our Fairy Queen would always be Aunt Emmie—with her beautiful wavy, golden hair over her shoulders and her wonderful blue eyes, she appeared to us a vision of perfect beauty. She was our ideal too of all that was good beyond hope of our attainment and our inspiration in the path of knowledge, for we always tried to follow the books in which she was interested and so learnt to find them for ourselves at a time when they were not so plentiful or accessible as they are now.

Amongst the treasures the aunts brought with them from China, were some very beautiful things from the Palace at Pekin—carved ebony tables and chairs and a tall vase of most wonderful workmanship and colouring, said to be hundreds of years old. When the house at Somerset Road was broken up, this was sent by Aunt Georgina to an Antiquarian friend of hers in Denmark, who presented it to a museum at Copenhagen. In those days many things were lost through ignorance of their value. When I was a girl I remember once, as I was waiting in our carriage for Grandma, outside a shop in Cape Town, an old gentleman, Mr. Percy Vigors, came up to speak to me. The sale had not long before taken place of the house at Somerset Road and he told me that amongst some things sold from the loft there were two pictures which were discovered to be by some old Master and of very great value and that they had been sent over to Europe. These pictures must have been amongst the belongings of a brother of Grandpapa's, Capt. Jarvis of the Indian Army, who was himself an artist, and who died on his way from India to spend his leave at the Cape. In this connection there is a curious story Gradpapa himself told me. He had no idea that his brother contemplated coming out to the Cape and he had had no communication from him for a long time, but one day as he sat writing in his study, a sudden feeling came over him of his brother's presence in the room—so vivid as to be almost a vision. The sensation was so unexpected and so remarkable that he took up his pen and at once made a note of the day and the hour. Some time after a ship arrived from India and Grandpapa received a letter from the Captain informing him that that his brother had been a passenger and had died on the way. When he compared the date given he found it coincided exactly with the time noted in his book. Amongst his things were several interesting pictures and a beautiful miniature in ivory of his father as a young man in military uniform.

C. MURRAY.

## THE SEEKERS.

Lord, if in our searching we only see
But one great presentment of Truth and Thee.

Lord, if in our seeking we only find
The one special aspect that suits our mind.

Oh! then give us double the tolerant heart,
Not deeming our findings the only true part.

But longing more deeply Thy wisdom to know,
And wishing more clearly Thy love to forth show.

Make us ready and willing with humbleness sweet
Through the leadings of others to sit at Thy feet.

And learn with what wisdom Thou guidest each soul,
E'en though by a new path right on to its goal.

B.B., 1910.

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