

Your book brings back to my mind one thing after another that I hope may be of interest to you

Early in 1916, When I should have much liked to go to Cairo, I was given a week's leave to Port Said instead. An extremely dull place to spend a week. The De Lesseps statue was the finest thing there, and we hired a boat and rowed round the port to some extent. A French warship, whose name was I think "President Loubet," had arrived, and like the Russian "Packet of Woodbines" the French ship also had five funnels. But they were differently arranged. If you consider funnels number 1, 3, and 5 to be fixed at uniform spacing, then number 2 was fairly close to number 1, and number 4 was equally close to number 5. I think that number three would be used to bring in a supply of fresh air, to balance the discharge of flue gases from the other four funnels. I know nothing about the President whose name was thus honoured, but you may know far more than nothing about him, and possibly may have heard something of the ship.

When my wife and I and our two children went to England in 1930 on the Strathaird, we noted at once that she had three funnels, a feature intended to appeal to those who thought that the more funnels a ship had, the faster she could go. Actually the front one was the only real one. Number two was a ventilating shaft, and number three went to deck level only, and provided space for storing deck chairs. Strathaird had power enough for higher speeds than she used, for she had to keep in step with slower ships on the same run. Later, the second and third funnels were removed. I expect that the French warship design was a good one for the time when it was built, but Strathaird had turboelectric drive, and oil fuel, and a steam pressure of 600 lb per square inch, which was much higher than had been used on those earlier ships, giving greater economy.

In a Port Said shop

I saw the inflated skin of a dugong, also called ~~sea-cattle~~ by some other names, including "mermaid." They were not the beautiful creatures of legends, but rather ugly compared with humans. I think they were supposed to be protected, but Arab fishermen ~~men~~ were said to like having a live one on board, as it gave warning of bad weather, by its cries. Someone who had seen a live one on exhibit in Johannesburg heard its piteous crying, he thought for its mate. But Johannesburg is high above sea level and possibly the low barometer makes the dugong unhappy, and likewise a low barometer might be a storm warning for an Arab fishing boat.

(3x) — At Port Said, Corporal Riddell and I thought that we might get our photographs taken by a local professional. He asked how many copies we wanted, and then wrote the figure 6 on a card and put it on the floor, so that it would be visible in the photograph. He then took one exposure. I asked if he were not going to give a second one, but he explained that he was such a good photographer that he did not need to make more than one. I think the result was about as good as you would expect in such circumstances. It could have been worse.

Mr. Liddle's The name reminds me of a verse that was known to my uncle, in the days of long ago, when schoolboys learned Greek. I hope that I have the names in the right order, but at least there is a 50-50 chance of it. Anyway the critics of those distant days considered that the merits of a certain lexicon were not equally distributed. Hence the verse, which appealed at once to schoolboys;
Two men wrote a lexicon, Liddle and Scott.

Some parts were right and some were not.

Now come, all ye wise men, and solve me this riddle,
Why the right parts wrote Scott, and the wrong parts wrote Liddle

There was another incident, at one of the Cambridge colleges, which my uncle was at when studying for his M.A. degree. One student seemed to have his own idea about the correct sound of Greek words and eventually the Professor asked him,

"Where did you learn your Greek?"

"At Athens, sir" came the reply. Not so surprising when one remembers that the Professor would be teaching classical greek, ~~whi~~ which I should think might be far removed from modern colloquial greek as 'Middle English' or even Anglo Saxon is from present day good English.

On this subject of languages, I noticed your reference to Moascar. some miles west of Ismailia. I had reached the conclusion that the word Moascar was Arabic for a camp. or perhaps a military camp Hence Moascar Ismailia, and some miles away, Moascar Tel el Kabia, or was it Khabir? I am not sure of these spellings.

Compared with your knowledge of French, my own is next to ~~nothing~~ ^{nothing},

But page 1(a) seems to fit in next?

(see p. 2)

Recollections by

ARTHUR LUSH

but reading off the french subtitles from films at the camp cinema was useful practice in reading french, as reading had to be fluent and with no trace of hesitation. Sub titles were of course simple. I remember ' Au Travail ' appearing on the screen, and someone near me saying Travel before I could say "Too work." Some time in February, our stay in Egypt came to an end, and we were to leave for France next day. The Khamsens were just starting their forty days of hot blast, and I rashly went for a swim in Lake Timsah, forgetting that with Ismailia at that end of the lake the water was certain to be polluted. I am not a good swimmer, but there were a good lot of bathers already on a sandbank where the depth seemed to be less than four feet, so I swam out, having a rest by floating on my back, half way, and later returning in the same way. That night I slept in a strong draught. Next day we went to Alexandria, and on to a troopship bound for France. S Not long after leaving, my temperature went up, to about 103 or possibly 105, and I was put in a hospital cabin, and after reach reaching Marseilles, sent to the Australian Field Hospital, and forbidden to get out of bed. I do not remember how long I spent in that hospital, but I do remember one youngster who was already at some mobile convalescent stage. He found where he could get over the hospital fence and thus have a short cut into the village outside. There he ' fell in love ' to some extent with the daughter of a local baker. As she had no English, and he no French, the way of exchange of ideas was by short notes, brought to me to translate. The bakers family seems to have been a hospitable one, but one attempted account, possibly of adventures of a brother in the French army, brought only a memory of the words "Fil de fer" and presumably no amount of repetition or of gesture put the story across..

After a time, the youngster was given notice that he was to leave hospital the next day, and go to rejoin his unit. There was some attempt at explanation, but unsuccessful, for there was not time for the girls promise of undying affection to be brought back for translation. After vain attempts to understand, the young man made a stupid guess that it probably meant that as he was going away, all would be over between them. Just to show that he was not heartbroken by this imagined rebuff, he found another girl in the village, and walked down the street, arm in a arm with her. Later, of course, he had her letter translated, but too late for any reply.

When I was convalescent, I learned a little more French from a woman who used to visit the hospital with her daughter and give a little instruction in French, useful because it had been 1907 when I had scraped through that French exam paper for Engineering entrance, and now in France it was 1916. But reading French newspapers was easy enough. They would have to be easily read to suit the range of possible readers. One day I heard an indignant man expressing his displeasure in some local language whose very existence I had not heard of, but it may perhaps have been some relation to the Breton language, which is about the same as the old language of Cornwall. In Egypt, I had been interested to note the place names, rather similar, in French and in Arabic, except that the Arabic spelling was the more concise "Sakara" and "Saquarah", for instance.

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Egypt also offered the two versions, Asyut and Assiout, for ~~arabi~~ Arabic and French versions of the same name. In France, the New Zealanders found that the sign writers had made a poor job of spelling local names, and so French should obviously be meant to be Franko. That final Q was always a mystery to them. Hazebr Hazebroucq was made into Hazebrouck, a variation which I expect died out after the troops left France, probably taking it with them. Having got some 'bug', probably from a bathe in Lake Timsah, just before leaving for Alexandria and France, and sleeping in a draught because of the beginning of the khamseens, I developed a high temperature soon after leaving port, and finished the trip to Marseilles in the ship's hospital, and was then taken to the Aust. military hospital, put to bed, and forbidden to get out of it for some time. It was more pleasant when I was allowed to get up, but naturally there were others at a much more advanced stage of recovery. One such youngster had found that by getting over a hospital wall or fence, he had a convenient short cut into the adjacent village. He found the baker there and his wife and family evidently kind and hospitable folk, and thought that he had fallen in love with the baker's daughter. But as she had no English, and he had no French, Their conversations had to be condensed into short notes, brought to me for translation. I do not think the young man can have been highly intelligent, for he told me they had been telling him some story about fil de fer, and I can imagine that in spite of eloquent gesticulation and repetition, the fil de fer had got him completely entangled, and so I suppose an account of some wartime adventure of a son or other relative never got any further., and the notes remained brief. Then came the time when he had been told that he was to leave hospital next day, to rejoin his unit. His statement was brief, and the girl wrote a kindly message, with promise of long continued devotion. But there was no time for this to be brought back for translation, and his guesses were the reverse of the message. He guessed that it meant that as he was going away, all was over between them. So to show that he didn't care, he picked up another girl from somewhere and walked down the street arm in arm with her, before coming back with the actual message, whose writer must have been rather surprised to see the farewell walk. I do not suppose that he attempted any further reply to the kindly girl. I was fortunate, at Anzac, to get some interesting jobs, starting with making bombs out of empty tins to contain a dry guncotton primer packed in place with wet guncotton, and with a detonater inserted in the dry primer, fitted with a short length of fuse, which of course required a match to light it. But as forbits of metal to act as bomb fragments, the best we could find were small gutter bolts with nuts, made into a sort of 'necklace' tied round the bomb. The C.R.E. said they were 'charming bombs' and you may have used some of them. At Quinns Post, the sergent major in charge of a small party of sappers hoped to reclaim, if possible, a short trench which I think you had traversed at night, into attacks, but the S.M. had a vain idea, as it proved, for daylight use, So he said, 'I want two volunteers to go into that front trench, Smith, you'll be one, and MacGuire, you'll be the other! So in they went, and soon were back, one of them wounded. but I think not very badly. The idea of breaking through the wood covering over Turkish trenches called for something larger than

The main charge was therefore a one pound slab of wet guncotton, fixed to a piece of wood faintly resembling a tennis racquet in ~~sh~~ shape. It was tragic that no instructions had been prearranged for safety if one of these contraptions fell back from the slope which it ought to have cleared. Of course, it should have been arranged that the thrower would have a clear get-away round a corner, but ~~in~~ in one case, our sergeant Nairn made an attempt to pick up the bomb to throw it clear. But there was not time for this and he was killed. I am sorry to say. I was interested to hear from your book that some wood covering over Turkish trenches had been set on fire, though one does not know whether bombs or shells gave this result.

Shrapnel Gully
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My next job was to make a road from Shrapnel Gully over the ~~sp~~ spur and down to the Australian camping area on the northern side. No specifications were given, but when asked what I wanted for the job, I asked at once for one of our men who had been a fellow student at the School of Engineering. The next thing was to find the best place for the road to cross the saddle, and this was soon decided, for when I went onto the saddle, a little too much towards the seaward end of it, some distant sniper opened fire. Fortunately he was a bad shot, but I moved towards the main ridge and found what seemed a safe place. Then an approach was needed, a sort of Zigzag, the hairpin bend being extended a bit to make space for handling guns if ever required. Great numbers of men were made available, with picks and shovels, and the major part of the work was done in 48 hours, continuously. I was on the job almost all the time, finding it so interesting that I could not stay away. One thing I did not think of, but it was added later, That was camouflage ~~net~~ netting, to conceal the cut through the top of the spur, I had ~~never~~ never seen any of this, but fortunately some was available, and was put in place, and I never heard of any further trouble on that road. The C.R.E. was so pleased that I was advanced from Sapper to Second corporal, a rank which I held until after going to France. I realise now that I could have got a commission much earlier, if I had been in the least pushing in the matter, but I had plenty to do as it was, and I think you will understand.

My next job was at Popes Post, where somebody had started a tunnel intended to be parallel to the front line, but without a compass, had got badly out of line. The tunnel then had to make a new start with a considerable bend in it. This tunnel provided a useful drip of clear cold water, apparently without contamination, a real asset.

From there we went to Rhodendron Ridge or Spur, I am not quite clear about that geography, and after a little, had a trip to Lemnos for two or three weeks 'rest cure'.

Our small ship did not start at once, and I found an obliging fireman by the ship's boiler. He swept a place clean for me on the foot plate, gave me a bucketful of clean hot water, and left me to enjoy a most welcome hot bath, before the boiler. He himself was evidently going off duty, and so I was left alone to have a memorable and most enjoyable bath. You will easily imagine how welcome it was. Next morning, at Lemnos, we got a boat to take us out to a ship where we could buy stores, and got quantities of Quaker Rolled Oats

and a lot of tinned milk, and no doubt other less important things

The arrival of our engineer company at Shrapnel Gully seems to have led the enemy into some expressions of disapproval. Some of these failed to explode. Most of them were, I think, 75 mm shells, either shrapnel or high explosive. They had brass nose caps with some Arabic engraving whose meaning was unknown to me. But, finding unexploded specimens of each, I unscrewed the tip of each, filled the space with water, and after a couple of days, unloaded the explosive and replaced the tip of the cap. I did not see any shrapnel pellets, but think they may have been in a central core which I had viewed with suspicion. These two empty shells are ~~now~~ now in the Auckland War Memorial Museum. ~~Were later given to the Auckland War Memorial Museum.~~ What I should have liked to send was too big and heavy. The Turks had some mortar bombs which looked as if they may have been old enough to have been exhibits in one of their museums. They were apparently about a foot in diameter, and made of cast iron, about an inch thick. The core used in casting had left a rough hole, and the core had then been replaced by black powder, held inside by a rough plug of wood, which also held a short fuse in place. These bombs were intended to explode shortly after landing, if we may judge by what happened, for there was always just enough time for men to get out of harm's way. One bomb failed to explode, and apparently the fuse had not been lit. Presumably these bombs were fired from some primitive sort of mortar, most likely fired by another fuse to ignite a charge of black powder, too, and possibly some Turk had lit the wrong fuse first in his natural anxiety to avoid being 'hoist with his own petard.' I was sorry that there was no means of sending the unloaded bomb to the Auckland Museum also, but for all I know, it may still lie where it fell, by the end of Shrapnel Gully near Anzac Cove.

While we were at Rhodendron Ridge, a flight of wild geese flew overhead, and every machine gunner thought that if he could hit one it might make a welcome addition to army rations. The geese, however, flew fast and were away without any casualties.

An order was then sent round, forbidding such waste of ammunition. Probably the cost of that display must have been considerable, but no estimate was given.

Within a week, history repeated itself, and again the geese all escaped. As a matter of tact, the disregarded order was not repeated.

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How well it would have paid the army to have given us such supplies as important parts of our rations. We must have put on weight again while at Lemnis, and after our return to Gallipoli, the Army did increase our supply of condensed milk by giving us a dozen tins each. We could well have done with two or three tins weekly instead of one per week, as we had been getting. Before this, I had written to some N.Z. friends in London, and sent them some small amount of money, which seemed to get stretched out to remarkable lengths.

They were grateful as it gave them information about what to send to some other friends, I remember that besides condensed milk and rolled oats, it included chocolate, and dried fruit; looking back to Anzac days, I remember giving a dozen packets of cigarettes to Percy Williams, a law student previously. Also thank thanking my Mother for her parcel, which had something to eat in it; It seemed curious that almost all of the early parcels of those days contained things for which we had little or no use, it being assumed that the Army would provide everything we wanted in the way of food. Late in our Gallipoli days, our section was told that all our rations were to be pooled, as a cook had been appointed. This idea was not received with any enthusiasm, but the man appointed was one of our company, a young Samoan, and the result was so much better than our individual efforts that there were no complaints. That young man must have had a good pre-war training as a cook, I think.

The time when we were in the Rhododren Ridge area is rather indefinite in my mind, as to just where we were at different times, and when certain things happened, but sometimes some slight incident did have some consequent result to remember. One of these followed my finding a canvas sheet, a bit stronger than the usual ground sheet, and a bit larger and decidedly heavier to carry. I put it up as a sort of roof to my hole in the ground, or dugout. One of my friends, whom we all called Yorkie, for obvious reasons, had his 'dug out' next below mine. Then some Turk, just to show ill will, fired some shrapnel which must have been at random, as there was enough rhododendron to screen us from sight. One pellet hit Yorkie in the knee. He thought that we might have better mail service to N.Z. than he would have from a hospital ship, so would I write to his wife and explain that he was not badly hurt. This I did, and later had an answer, which told me that our friend had two sons at the war and three grandchildren in New Zealand. It was good to know that he was not so badly hurt as he might have been. Looking at my 'roof' I could see that a lead bullet had marked the canvas, to the edge of the hole where it had gone through, and I feel sure that that resistance from the slack canvas must have slowed down that pellet enough to have reduced its impact a lot, probably making the difference between a slight injury and a really serious one. Anyway, Yorkie duly recovered, and kept going, keen to be the equal of younger men, until eventually his age and a doctor found him out, and he was sent back to N.Z. By then, we were in different companies, and it was after the war was over that I heard the latter part of Yorkie's story, from a scene in France. A Guards officer had come to the Engineer company, and asked to see sapper Gaunt. It took a moment to remember who Sapper Gaunt must be, but he was duly located, and brought to see the visitor. Hullo, Father, said the officer. Hullo, son, replied Yorkie. As you know, you have to be someone to get a Commission in the Guards and obviously Yorkie must have seen to it that his sons had a first class education.

education,

and had seen to it that his sons had good starts in life. I had gathered ~~there~~ from a remark he had made on the troopship that he was in a good financial position. I had not known that his occupation had been that of an organ tuner. Evidently he had made a hobby of keeping himself as fit as the younger men. Eventually, age and a doctor had found out his secret, and he must have been returned to N.Z., no doubt still keen, if not as young as he would have liked.

Various little incidents come to mind in connection with Anzac. On one occasion, a tunnel was driven, with a view to mining the Turkish lines, and a charge was laid, carefully and with suitable fuse by a sapper who knew his job. After the explosion, some ~~British~~ British officer wanted to inspect the result, and ~~refused to believe~~ The officer refused to believe in danger due to fumes not having had time to disperse, went in, and was soon overcome. The man whose advice had been disregarded just managed to get him out, but two lives had been endangered without any need for such haste. Despatch carrying, northwards from Anzac, was another dangerous job, but it was considered that the danger was worth facing in view of the value of quick carrying of despatches. There was a longer and much slower route for men on foot, but that straight run along the beach was obviously by far the quickest. I think that the critical length was about a mile, or it may have been somewhat more, with that part in view of as many enemy snipers as had the opportunity.

I think the despatch carrier was Australian, and he had a good horse. A horse soon realises what is needed when he is galloping for his life, and this one certainly did. Neither whip nor spur is wanted, and the horse galloped like the wind. The despatch carrier was never hit, but he had one horse shot under him. It must have cost the Turks a lot of ammunition, but it did provide a fast and reliable service.

At that time when snow came, I was fortunate, during that cold weather, in having a succession of places requiring inspection daily, so that when I had got cold at one, the walk uphill ~~to~~ to the next one made me warm again. In this I was more fortunate than you, with limited space for exercise. May I thank you for recording our meeting on one of these occasions, in your book. As Mr Liddle, as far as I know, has failed to record this matter, I fear that it must be regarded by me as resembling one of those oversights made by his grandfather when writing that lexicon in co-operation with Mr Scott.

I had one more fortunate meeting, that time with an old College friend, Bill Burnett. As an engineering student, I had been a year ahead of him, and he had joined the Main Body of the N.Z. Forces when the war had broken out, and had been very seriously wounded at Cape Helles. He had expected to die there, but one or two men were found where the stretcher bearers would not go. They got him in, and he was taken to the hospital ship, and arrived in England still alive. His father and ~~mother~~ Mother and two sisters went to England to see him and to do war work there until the war was over. Bill recovered and was considered fit for duty, and sent out to the Dardanelles arena at the time when the evacuation had already been started, but to help to prevent this idea of evacuation reaching the enemy, a small detachments of

men were landed. Bill was among (7) these, was unaware of the dangers from snipers, and was killed.

At a village in the north of France, our meals were in a room of the house of the local schoolmaster. He and his wife were also acting as foster parents to some refugee children, whom we never saw, though we often heard them singing. I do not know what grant this schoolmaster was given to meet his expenses, but expect that it would be small. On one occasion, he had shot a hare, and offered it for our use for a little more than I should have expected, not knowing local prices. He spoke remarkably good English, considering that he was keeping school in a small village and probably had little if any opportunity to travel. But for once the French idiom asserted itself. Explaining about the hare, he said, 'I am hunter.'

The most pleasant stopping place that I remember was at Nielle lez Bleqan, though after these years I am uncertain of the spelling of the last word. You could find it on a map of Pas de Calais. I took it that lez probably meant on or near, but what natural feature was noted in the name still escapes me.

We had been employed in a very muddy area near Ypres, I think trying to help the water to drain away, when the Huns started to shell and so we moved back to a safer area nearer Ypres. Then a message came from Company Headquarters, to bring back the section. There we learned that we were to leave shortly, to erect some nissen huts at Nielles lez Bleqan. So after a meal, we got on to an army truck, and set out on a long drive, mostly along old Roman roads. Thus we went straight to Cassel, which had been an army headquarters during various wars, from Julius Caesar's days onwards. There our road twisted enough to get us up to the top of the hill, the only one for miles. Cassel has been called the 'Key to Flanders' and its crest is two keys and a sword, or two swords and a key between the

Then down the other side of the hill, into the night. Army trucks of those days were slow, but eventually we reached our destination and found one hut ready for us to sleep in. It was in the grounds of an old chateau. The morning showed us the most wonderful change from the mud of Ypres salient that you could wish to see. We were in a garden, on an area of good clear grass. A grassy hill rose beyond the end of the sloping garden, and it came as a further surprise to see a locomotive and train moving along the hillside, though the railway track was hidden from sight. The fine Chateau itself looked just right in its garden setting. We soon had the hut sites marked out, and were all ready to start, when I was asked if the section could have the rest of the time off, after the hut erection was completed. Those huts went up in record time, and later we were congratulated on having made such a prompt job!

The men folk of the chateau must have been away at the war, but I was given a comfortable bedroom, and soon made the acquaintance of other members, including one young lady who played the piano. Her cousin who could sing, both quite well. Once in war time rationing dinner, to which I was able to contribute, for in war time rationing takes no account of who you are nor where you live. Months later, I had occasion to go through the village, to regimental offices which had been set up in a building which was observed, with an office way to afternoon tea. This incident was observed, with an