



TALKABOUT

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WAGGA TEACHERS' COLLEGE.

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A DIFFERENT PLACE . . .

The smaller part of the Second Year men have been away (the Heavens preserve me) in a military establishment, obscure and overwhelming. Many changes have taken place in their absence, or perhaps before it. They were not here to witness the changes themselves, but doubtless will receive first-hand reports from their bosom acquaintances.

These changes have been just as startling in their implications as in themselves. They could be harbingers of a glorious new age in Tertiary Education; or they could not. Things were slightly different last year. This is a different place to last year's haven.

The main emphasis this year seems to be on the students' working—in lecture hours, I mean. Not the least important this year, in change, is the lecturer's attitude towards his lecture time. It would seem that a certain theory of child education is to be taken from its sphere, that of Primary Education, and tried on this level. The theory is that the child no more needs a teacher than a teacher needs a child. Once the child is established in his little groove, the teacher may sit down—metaphorically. Or, more extreme still, the child both finds the subject matter of the lesson, and teaches it to the remaining class. Once the children have been started working on the subjects, they can be left alone. If this theory were applied to this institution, the result would be shown in a series of seminars, assignments. It has been shown. Of course, the proper motivation is essential for such an undertaking. We have seen some pretty good examples of motivation of late.

I for one would not be prepared to take notes on a fellow-student's lecture. Are seminars of any value, coming as they do from fellow-students? I think not. The seminars were of little value, anyway. If the lecturer himself got to work and prepared and delivered the lecture, one would feel secure—lectures from one's room-mate are of little value . . . are they authentic? Yes or no, they are open to the strongest doubts.

In view of the fact that lectures have become yet a little more extended—a mere hour—I think that the lecturer really should do the work in preference to letting a student do it. As it is cer-

tain subjects are hopelessly out of proportion to their importance or their value to either student or child. Two hours is much too much time to devote to an insignificant subject. A five o'clock lecture is of no avail. It brings nothing to the student because he is too tired, after a day's lectures, to listen.

If Option were restored to its previous status, and clubs restored to its correct status, and Craft brought down from the clouds to its correct status, we might approach a balance of work.

What with 30 hours' lectures (compare with University hours), eight hours Study Time, and eight hours' Quiet Time, spread such as it is, one really has little time to grow up in.

When the four o'clock lecture finishes, one has one whole hour to oneself. After the evening meal, one finds a total of a half-hour, then perhaps another half-hour at nine. Total, two hours a day in theory.

Still one can always go to sleep, as I shall shortly. The only trouble is that it begins all over again, the next day.

THE HOUSE SYSTEM

On Tuesday the twenty-second of April we saw the fruition of many weeks' planning. The new house system has been accepted happily by almost every student in the College. Tuesday proved that the work of the Physical Education lecturers, the Sports Union and all others concerned showed remarkable results. All houses were evidently most enthusiastic, judging by the number of people who last year had not participated in any sport, and who this year were inveigled into playing one or other of the selected games. If the first sports afternoon were any indication, then we may expect a full and enjoyable year of sporting activities.

EDITORIAL

Editorial hats are thrown high in the air.

Why? For the first time in College history, Talkabout has made a profit. The staff feel very grateful.

What next? your co-operation has been shown by your willingness to buy the paper. Yet no criticism came forward. The staff had hoped that some criticism was surely forthcoming.

Did you really appreciate that poem, or did you think it was drivel? Of what value was the review—and would you like to see another?

Did you passively condemn some articles—will you write something better?

We know it isn't usual for students to take things sitting down—we had hoped that Talkabout would not be received with indifference.

After this the staff can imagine the many who will begin scratching quills diligently upon their Quarto paper.

ROSS McDONALD.

ELECTIONS

At the first Social Union meeting of the year, these officers were elected:

President, Charles Ferris; Vice-President, Roy Parker; Secretary, Cynthia Hague; Assistant Secretary, Judy Patterson; Treasurer, Luke Livissianos; Assistant Treasurer, Alison Bogg.

Dance Club: Cynthia Hague, Charles Ferris, Audrey Plant, Harry Bunton, Eric Draper.

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LUST IN THE DUST

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CHAPTER ONE

GRUESOME GORE

A sleek Vanguard roared down the asphalt avenue, its driver fighting grimly to maintain control over the wheel. It screamed to a stop amid a cloud of dust, and two dark figures jumped out, and, leaving the doors swinging, hurried to the gates in the long, dark wall nearby. The man was clutching a roll-book in one hand and a sheaf of leave-cards in another. His shadow, elongated by the fitful light of the moon, moved eerily across the wall. The obviously female figure, clothed in a dark robe, held in one hand a revolver, and in the other a tuning fork and modulator scale. Both figures oozed quietly through the iron gates. Once on the other side, they halted and padlocked the massive gates.

They halted and set in motion the radar machine, and checked through the ammunition on the machine guns, speaking not a word the while, and working in absolute darkness.

Then the sinister two straightened up—they were crooked—and looked at each other. Breathing through her diaphragm, the woman spoke:

"Before we switch on th' searchlight, Lax, we'll hafta think about tonight." She sucked in on her cigarette.

"Oke, Chorale, baby. Bang your piano an' start shootin'."

In dulcet tones, the woman said:

"Yeah big boy. Men are all the same. However," she puffed on her cigarette, "we ain't here to talk about—uh—that."

"Get on with it, sugar."

"Oke. Dis is d' goods. At six-thirty, lights out. Seven-thirty patrol. The warders leave open a door on purpose. The mugs in the men's lodge will wait till midnight to make sure that no one knows about the open door, the fools! The dolls will do the same. We'll let 'em get to the gate an' then gun 'em down."

"You show a great grasp of the problem, my dear. A blinding light strikes me as I look at you."

"Don't be a mug. I just switched the searchlight on."

"I am a fool."

A scream rang through the evening air. Such a scream! A scream straight from the soul to the soul. Its like will never be heard again. The scream rang out again. A shadow detached itself from the dark wall and began to run across the grey, dismal lawn. Chorale calmly lifted her revolver. She pointed the trigger. A shot rang out. The running figure faltered, and then collapsed. Chorale strode across to the quivering heap of flesh and kicked it with her foot.

"You goon! If you'd stayed there another five minutes I'd never have seen you."

"Please, please, Miss Curdle! In humanity's name I beseech you! Don't do it! Promise me before you die that you won't! I . . . O! I die . . .! Oop!!!

She died. Chorale kicked her with her foot.

"The stupid fool!"

Lax leaned up close to her and muttered:

"There must be someone else here! She'd never come out alone! You know what these dolls are! Frustrated!"

Chorale nodded grimly.

"Oke! Walk across to the gate as though you suspect nothing. When you get to the machine gun, turn it onto that clump of bushes near the gates. That'll get rid of any insects. Tha swine! They must have heard everything." Together with the man, she walked across to the machine gun.

Lax jumped forward. He swung the gun around. He pointed the gun at the bushes. Then he sent a spray of lead into the bushes.

The sharp rat-tat-tat! of the gun mingled with a scream of mortal terror as a figure staggered out of the bushes, holding onto the many punctures in him, from where he was leaking profusely.

Lax sent another burst into him, just for luck, and then the two conspirators walked slowly to their rooms.

Midnight.

All is quiet, save the sound from the high-tension wires around the fence. A light shows faintly in a far-off building.

Miles away, a dog barks.

Someone walks along the path to the house on the left of the gates.

A prisoner tosses on his bed.

Another light appears, and another.

A door slams.

A cough carries from the cells on the night air.

Within the city, a clock strikes twelve.

The guards at the gate tense themselves and ready their machine guns. Their hand grenades are close by them. In her quarters, Chorale puts her hand out towards the button controlling the hooter system. She is ready. Lax finishes loading his gun. He is ready. They are ready. All is ready.

Again in the distance, the dog howls.

In the cells, a light goes on. And another, and another, and another. Shadows move in lights. Figures move across drawn blinds. Then all the light is gone and the place is in darkness. Chorale draws in her breath sharply—too sharply—on a C Flat note. Lax is relaxed. All is quite still and hushed.

There is a low murmur from the cells. The murmur swells into a roar, dies down for a moment, then breaks out again.

The dog howls again.

The lights burst forth again and the cells seem a mass of white heat. Now the doors burst open and people pour out, heading across the lawns, to the gates and freedom. Crowds of people are running across the lawns, now, around corners, through windows, doors and bursting holes in iron plates in an effort to reach freedom. Then the searchlight blazes forth, and the whole fantastic scene is bathed in an unearthly brilliance.

Shadows play in great piles across the lawns and on the walls. Guards move their guns to face the crowd pouring across the lawns to the small army at the gate. Chorale presses the button, and

a high-pitched, moaning wall breaks out and echoes around the walls and fills the hearts of the escapees with terror, and panic. The wave falters, then leaders scream loud orders, and the wave comes together again, and streams towards the gates.

Now a sharp new sound breaks out, theme of despair. Rat-tat-tat-tat! drums out the beat to the sound of screams and howls and the soft plunk! of bullets making contact, figures drop softly onto lawns and pathways. The sounds continue. The wave breaks and what is left flows back towards the cells. Yet still the Rat-tat-tat continues. And the howl of the siren continues over all the screams and moans.

Then the remains of the prisoners are in their rooms, sobbing and howling, crouched by their beds.

And the searchlight blazes on, and the guards crouch yet behind their guns, and the hooter howls on. Then the lights go off, and the guns stop talking; and Chorale takes her finger from the button, and the horrible wall stops.

In the cells the leaders of the outbreak are being hunted down ruthlessly, relentlessly. The hunt is on! The prisoners are interrogated swiftly and surely, and the field is narrowed down to one hundred people within one hour. The others were too stupid, anyhow.

Meanwhile, Chorale and her friend are in the former's office, celebrating their victory. They are drinking black coffee. They are extremely excited.

"Now I must go to see how they are going with the questioning and the treatment," he says, and goes.

He leaves the room and shortly after another figure enters. She is Topaz, sinister offside of the wicked Chorale. She slides up to the last-named and speaks in an ingratiating, sinister whisper, digging Chorale in the ribs in a friendly fashion, with a needle she happens to be carrying.

"Get out!" says the delightful Miss Curdle, "you smell of those clods! I've been told you've been talking to them! Get!"

"But listen! You must be . . .!"

"I am not! Get!" Topaz gets.

Then complete confusion breaks out.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

"TALKABOUT"

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**A FAREWELL TO
FEMININITY**
BY A WOMAN WHO KNOWS

Down through the ages, it has happened—ever since Eve played the shy coquette with the aid of a fig-leaf, to our modern times where perhaps the only change is the replacement of false eyelashes for the famed leaf. Therefore, since Adam took the first fatal bite, history has witnessed the endless procession of men who, like their great forefather, have fallen, helpless victims to womanly wiles.

Although the implements of the trade have gradually become more perfected, more complicated and more bewildering to the male eye, the basic method of attack has been the same. What stout male heart can resist a soft, flower-like face, all unsightly eruptions subtly hidden, (Max Factor Masks), and two ruby-red lips—drawn up by Ponds (Bitter Blood No. 3)?

But now it has happened—overnight demure, fluttery, be-frilled, begriddled, sweet, young things have been transformed into close-fisted, pushing, battling types—strangely reminiscent of Marjorie Main.

Yes. The tradition of the centuries has been turned upside down by a small, tactless oversight of the Education Department. This molehill-into-a-mountain situation can be attributed to the lack of those be-trousered, granite-chinned, steely-eyed, muscular types politely referred to as men.

It took place quite suddenly. Last year we were normal (as the saying goes) and this year—well! We're just not normal at all. In fact, what could be more abnormal than to see a young maid, be-decked with all the doodahs that usually accompany the female sex, fighting with the light of battle in her dovelike eyes, for some weedy individual of the opposite sex. In the manner of some war-bitten general, she stands, and having been beaten to her conquest, one can almost hear her dentals smashing as she mutters, "I shall return!"

At least, last year the men asked the women for the dances. This year, the women grab the men, in a feat which usually involves a tug-o-war with your best friend (formerly), the condition of the person in the question, or I should say middle, being ignored till the victory is decided.

Unless you engage in these preliminary exercises and unless you are quick off the mark, you are doomed to join the band of Forgotten Ones who drape the walls, giving the necessary support to the none too rusty Gym. wall.

This sudden change of principle on the girls' part has affected the men too—for the worse. Aware of their limited numbers, they have with a rare insight, comprehended that they are suddenly very important in the life of the College and of the girls. Consequently, heads have been swollen, backs have been straightened and pale eyes look up or down (as required), with lordly design, upon the masses (of women). They

don't even bother to have their hair cut now.

To relieve the sickening sight of dresses and other female frilldillery, some helpful types have taken to wearing jeans—but not very successfully. From the great Milton himself, in his famed "Paradise Lost," we find these words of wisdom, which explain why these well-meant ventures failed:

"Jeans are not for you intended,
Unless you are diminuended."

A classic example of this appalling situation is the College dance. On these momentous occasions there is an atmosphere somewhat similar to that of a bargain day at a nylon counter. Only, on this occasion the much sought after articles are not nylons, though they do come in all shades, shapes and sizes.

Thus, instead of practising seductive flutterings of eyelashes designed to effectively affect the male hearts around the place, we now witness the gay young things practising determinedly with three ends in view—the dance, the athletic carnival, their deadliest rivals. The latest reports say that Kirby and Harris are certs for the '56 Olympic Games.

With a sigh for the good old days, when "wimmen was wimmen" we bid a sad farewell to the subtle manoeuvres known as feminine wiles, which marked our predecessors' methods.

However, the one consoling feature of our "Run and Grab" campaign is the untold good it will do for the Women's Boxing and Athletic Association. At this stage my epistle must end. I see Ipal Francic Frussoes is about to start practice. And so, Adieu . . .

—WUNHOO KNOSE.

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SHEIK OF THE WEEK

Those of you who are not yet acquainted with him, meet Reg Burns. I think he must, too. Ask every girl in College, they should all know. He reminds me, for some reason or the other, of a great and noble historical personage . . . Wolfe . . . could be the name, I suppose, but where is the sheep's clothing? However, there are definitely other resemblances to Wolfe. He is skilled in obtaining strategic positions—diligent practice has undoubtedly brought this about. Is also skilled in that art necessary to leaders of the Wolfe variety—manoeuvring of arms—particularly his own. As becomes great leaders he is persistent in attack, and only after blatant resistance does he retreat. But not for long. Our hero seizes every opportunity, to say nothing of what else, and "grapples them to him with arms of steel." Watch him in the barn-dance, next Saturday night. His technique leaves nothing to be desired, it also leaves him nothing.

You might eventually conquer someone, Reg, if you follow Wolfe's lead. Sneak up on her in the dead of night—take her completely by surprise. She won't know you, anyway.

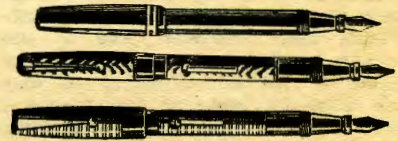
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CHRONICLES OF WAGGA WAGGA

Chapter One

1. And when they had returned unto their resting place in the Land of Many Crows, after their sojourn in far-off places, the Tribe did sit in Council and decide to initiate the newcomers into the ways and rites of their Tribe. And this was done. But when the new folk did find that they had been tricked, they were exceedingly wrathful, and the hills did echo their cries and howls as they remembered their long hours of thought on complex subjects and their excruciating hours of useless exertion. So they did challenge the Elder Tribe to battle.

2. And the new folk did appear in shining armour, and did look brave indeed. And the smoke of their conflict mingled with the dust of the ground and rose to heaven. And the hills and valleys were exalted and did resound with the echoes of the new folk as they were trampled in the dust by their Elders. And they were overcome. And the victors bore them to the sacred Fish of Gold, and did feed them to those mammals.

3. And then the most sagacious of the sagacious did set the new folk at work with instructions in the art of teaching the young, most illustrious and noble of professions, and one on which the sun never sets. And the rest of the tribe, the elders, were set to work on an experiment in integrating.

4. And one said unto them: "Lads, hearken unto me, if I may have thine attention for one moment. Now lads, thou knowest the score; since I am not as cabbage-looking as my green face would suggest, I shall tell ye what ye may do. And he did and they did it. And all were content.

5. And it came to pass in the Land of Many Crows that a time came when all were satiated, having drunk well of the fount of wisdom, and learned much concerning their profession. And it was decreed by the most sagacious of the sagacious that all should go at once and teach the young at that minute if not sooner. But one fell ill and could not answer that call.

6. And one there was in the village who loaned his most crazy chariots to transport the tribe to their destinations, for which kind act he was rewarded more than amply. And all of the tribe went to face their classes.

7. And others did supply venison and other provisions that the Tribe might live awhile yet. And many were the shamelessly thumping hearts among the new folk, and white faces and trembling hands, which could not hold neither chalk nor cane. And some were content.

8. And it came to pass that the leaders said unto the subsidiary leaders a secret. And the others pondered and at length came before the tribe and declared that the Tribe of Many Crows must from henceforth tie around their necks pieces of linen and of flax that the townspeople might see them and say "These are Honourable People." And one there was who forgot to wear

this ornament, and was thereupon made to shift heavy weights from one place to another. And one other did come late to the starting position of his chariot, and it went without him. He was thereupon made to dig in the huge gardens for a length of time. And the oracle answered: "It is the clothes that make the man," and all were content.

9. Howsoever, the new folk now being full and meritorious members of the tribe, the most sagacious of the sagacious did call them all together, and did say to the assembled congregation:

10. "Notice thou that ye do not play with pigskin and soft ball as though ye knew full well the use of them. Thou wilt notice that ye do not throw spears in jest as thou ought to do. Therefore we, your superiors, have rearranged your totemic clans in such a fashion that all will now play sport and chase the pigskin. Everyone, be he five or fifty, be he live or dead, be he male or female, be he old or young—yea, all shall play sport."

11. And all did cheer with one accord, though they knew not why. But one did mutter in a dark mutter to himself: "Yea, though thou ownest the world, and condemnest me, though thou kickest me and beatest me and floggest me, and thou are vested with the gift of prophecy, yea, thou shalt be as a breeze before me; thou though ownest all things and bow down before none, I will not play football."

12. But none did hear him, so that all were content in the care of the most sagacious. But the prince was not studying, and the spirit was neither willing nor blithe. But before all those things should come mention of the Feast of the left-overs.

—YE OLDE SOOTHESAYER.

(Here Endeth this Chapter)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir, I think the management of the local theatre should be ashamed of themselves, their theatres, and the pictures they present.

They themselves have no taste.

This is shown by the decorations in their theatres, such as they are. They're horrible.

The motion pictures they show are, on the whole, worthless. I make exception for such valuable pictures as "Sir Galahad Rides Again," "The Man in the Flying Saucer," "Guns in Old Monterey," and of course, the priceless, the Saturday afternoon serials. These are gems of the highest water. They're very watery.

I have never seen more perfect acting than that given by Ene Gauty in the wonderful drama "Villians Foiled Again," by R.O.K.Y. Studios, and produced by Nathaniel Moneyspin, producer of such dramas as "Easy Time Lady," "The Fear in the Bathroom" and "The Millions Munch."

But the standard of acting is not always equal to that in the last-named pictures. The standard of acting in "Omelette" by the obscure Elizabethan

Bille Wigglestick, was so poor that I left half-way through the screening. Pictures such as these should be kept from the screen.

I should like in the future to see more American musical comedies. These are a good, clean, wholesome entertainment, recommended for young and old alike. There are of course (this holds good for forms of art) some who do not like this form of entertainment. To them I would say that not all of us are civilised. Those people will grow up some day, I hope.

In conclusion, let me say again that I am hoping to see more of the American films this year, and fewer of the useless English type.

Yours in all honesty,
"DISGRUNTLED."

Dear Sir, There is a vile pestilence that recently come amongst us, and now plaguing and haunting our lives at all times. The disease is an obscure notion to most medical men, since it is, thank Heavens, but rarely found and even less often able to be diagnosed, owing to its disguised front.

The disease is spread by suggestion. Suggestion takes place where many come together for a specific purpose. Therefore, as you can quite plainly see, this institution is an ideal breeding ground for this disease, malignant and evil as it is.

Students are beginning to show signs of the disease already and these signs should be known to all, to enable rapid cure.

The student seems disinterested and bored in lectures and probably is. He yawns and sits in sunlit places to keep the chill from his heart. He will work, under the influence of the disease, only spasmodically, in fits and starts through the year.

The only cure for this disease is for the lecturer, who spread the disease, to give a serious of lectures, solid and appreciable.

The name of this dread disease is Seminaritis.

Yours truly and in spirit,
DEMOSTHENES PESTALOZZI.

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FOOTBALL

Once again the football season has arrived. Some vigorous activity has been seen around the College so far. With training Thursday and Tuesday, House game on Tuesday and the Competition matches on Saturday it should not take long for the footballers to get into condition. Some of the first years will find it hard to adapt themselves to the Rugby Union rules, but the College students last year had the same problem facing them when the College changed from League to Union at the beginning of the season. This year, our coach, Mr. Donnison has been joined by another ardent soul, that is, Mr. Pearson. The latter has not been graced with the stentorian voice of Mr. Donnison, but some sort of compensation is made by stripping and joining with the boys at practice. We are very fortunate to have two such coaches who are willing to give up their time for the football teams. When there are two coaches such as these, their enthusiasm will surely inspire the teams.

It seems that the boys will still have to put up with aches and pains and broken bones to have one game of football a week.

The Union competition in Wagga is of a very high standard. There are seven teams playing, and last year the College was dealt with very fairly by the officials down town. The more often we play Union, the greater chance we have of defeating Armidale in the Intercollegiate. The Union match is, of course, the highlight of the Intercollegiate. All players are looking forward to an enjoyable and successful season in football.

INTER HOUSE SYSTEM

At house meetings last week representatives were elected for sports and activities. Some had the opinion that there were too many organisers and not enough people left to be organised: but as all second years know, a recurrence of the shambles that existed on Tuesday afternoons last year can be avoided through two forms of action.

The first of these is to organise a system that leaves no loop-holes. But this organising takes work and time, and those elected at the house meeting must be prepared to fit these new tasks into their already crowded College programme.

The second of the actions that will determine the success or failure of this new system is the 100% co-operation of the students. When we are teachers we will be expected to have a knowledge of various sports such as Union, Soccer, etc., and if we cannot enter a week-end competition here is an opportunity to gain practical knowledge of these sports.

Students really owe to themselves and their houses to play some sport on a Tuesday afternoon. The students showed their tremendous house spirit at the Swimming Carnival; well! here is a chance to show the College that yours is the house!

HINTS ON TENNIS

1. Always blame the racket if you mull a shot—swear at it profusely, this impresses the audience.

2. Don't worry about rules. They're too confusing.

3. When it's your opponent's turn to serve, hit the ball to the corner opposite to the one where he is.

4. When your opponent serves an Ace, call "Let!" This confuses the umpire and often gives you an extra chance.

5. Just as your opponent is about to serve run across to the other side of the court or tie up your shoe-lace. This will upset his service. Similarly, when your opponent is about to serve, observe the foregoing rule—it often makes him serve harder.

6. Annoy your opponent by continually asking the score. Trick him when he's doubtful.

7. Never hesitate to make all doubtful decisions your way. This is a match-winning factor.

8. Never fall to laugh at your opponents errors—this shows just how affable you are.

9. If your partner misses a smash, direct a fast service towards his left ear—this makes him concentrate.

10. Never be selfish. When a fast return is played to you, cry "Yours partner!"

11. At match point, always hit that sitter over the fence—it's fun to be unconventional.

12. Make it a habit to say always when losing that you have not practiced for some time, the court should be barred, it's too fast or too slow, the onlookers annoy you, the balls are dead, the umpire is rotten and your partner is having an off day.

— HERBIE.

A MILITANT COLLEGE

As the issue goes to print, the National Service Trainees who rightfully belong to Second Year will be returning. (This brings me to this point.)

I myself was too young to enter any of the services, but am expecting that I shall have to serve in some service. In my extreme dislike of the Army—a vulgar service in my estimation—I have applied to the Navy and Her Majesty's Air Force. My first suggestions to these services,

which applied respectively for the positions of First Lord of the Admiralty, and Marshall in the Air Force, were met as playful innuendoes.

Letters in reply to further suggestions curiously dismissed my patriotic advances with a reference to the bottom rung of the ladder.

Unless I may prove to the Army that my Lumbar Discus has slipped, and my gout really has got the better of me, I may number with the thousands who will lose their individuality at the hands of the Army barbers in the futile servitude under the barbarians wielding the whips of the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Labour Concentration respectively. Whilst I am used to getting up as the cook echoes his welcome to the new morn, in this place, I should not welcome such arising in a military establishment, since it would not conform to my consideration that a military camp should involve the feeling of a holiday tour camp, and not disagree with my delicate constitution, nor be in the least harmful to my enjoyment.

To the ends of receiving exemption on physical grounds, I have investigated ways of being discharged—Court Martial or what you will. I discovered that Court Martial means that the person concerned loses his rank, and has his decorations dramatically stripped from him. Of these two things I am not in the least afraid, because I do not think I shall ever attain any rank, nor ever receive any decorations.

I have discovered that nothing short of murder, will discharge me from the Army.

I should have contemplated suicide ere this, only this is such a messy end. Besides, there should be none here to mop up the blood, and I should to die amidst such a stench . . . besides, as the Swan of Avon has . . . " . . . the Almighty . . . against self-slaughter . . . "Ah! Shakespeare!

I must, with stern Stoicism, face my fate! Farewell O life, farewell, fond hopes. I go, in several weeks, without a hope.

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SHIVVER'S HUT

It was a curious little town, nestling at the foot of the hill. The tin roofs gleamed in the sun. The trees bowed and rustled as the slight breeze roved restlessly about. It was a lazy day and the sunshine spread over the rolling plains.

Old Dan McGuire leant against the gate-post, puffing at his pipe. It was a strange thing, thought Dan, as he gazed at the tiny shack set far up, in an isolated position on the hill.

The hill was a landmark. It sloped sharply up the town side, and then gently rolled down to the plain on the far side. It was bare, two trees stood together and bowed over the tiny old shack.

It was the shack that brought Dan into a ruminative frame of mind. The iron roof sloped to the front and had the appearance of just resting on the remainder of the erection. There was something definitely mysterious about it, and an air of gloom seemed to envelop the little shack. It seemed to hang as an evil smell, wafted on the breeze, stops and spreads its fearful and strong scent.

It was a queer place, a one-roomed hut with an excess of doors and lack of windows. The old wood had rotted here and there. The one window was broken and stuffed with newspaper—old clothes—anything; clogged with the refuse of other days.

The three doors were prominently placed along the front of the tiny, dilapidated shanty—broken, battered and boarded. They stood a monument to times gone by.

As he watched, Dan saw a wisp of smoke curl lazily from the broken chimney stack. What was it that seemed as though doom were impending? It wasn't the house Dan was sure of that. He was very emphatic about that, although it did look stark and evil. It was Bridget Muldoone herself.

The door opened, and the whole house rattled as Bridget, passing sent it shut with a vicious shove of her elbow. Bridget Muldoone never talked—she mumbled. Not just a low mumble of words, but some weird chant.

She was herself indescribably weird. The fierce small eyes burned like an evil flame, but shed no light on the yellow, leathery old face. The mouth was large, the lips thick and cracked. A few black stumps, always on display, showed where teeth should have been. Grey wisps of hair, matted with filth and grease, strayed from under the black shawl drawn so tightly around her and under her chin. She was always dressed entirely in black—always the same. Indeed, she seemed to possess no other clothes.

The burnt, chipped saucepan shook as the flame licked it. A horrible gluey mixture boiled and bubbled and the smell seemed to rise, then recoll, from the ceiling. "Ha-ha!" chuckled old Bridget as she came closer to the stove. She rubbed her yellow, papery hands together, and the nails on the long and skinny fingers seemed to dig into the very bones, as the flesh was scarce.

Suddenly the concoction boiled over.

The liquid slimy mass ran down the sides, caught in the chipped piece and made its way to the fire. It was at this moment that Bridget tripped on one of the jutting floorboards. Her head hit the stove. As she fell to the floor, the shawl flapped and then floated into the grey, gluey mess,

The flame rose higher. A greedy tongue licked viciously and furiously lapped the shawl. As the flame raced along the garments, devouring madly, Bridget made no movement. She was dead.

The flame ate through the clothing and licked the flesh caressingly. The papery skin hardened and roasted. A horrid stench arose—of some evil substance being burned. The flesh crackled, cooked and burnt. She was unrecognisable—just a pile of ashes in a strange holocaust.

Soon the fire was everywhere. Even as Dan was watching the whole place seemed to burst into flames. The flames consumed all, curling, swaying, like mad fiends in a ritual dance.

Dan rushed out from the gate, shouting "Fire! Fire! Fire!"

All took up the cry. Fire! Fire! There was a rush. Dan raced ahead, puffing, but age had the better of him.

It was too late. Even the trees glowed in the heat of the fire, the crowd stood back, and with bowed heads, acknowledged the inevitability of destruction.

C. WATKINS.

BALLAD OF WOGGERKOL

Across the rocky ridges, across the rocky plain,

Stout Clarence Snort the student,
Is coming back again.

His lecture-notes before him, his Prac-
book on his knee,

He's coming back to teach the kids

with a
Text on Integration.

He's Fraccing on an A+ mark,

And doing very nicely,

Your Clarence is a model stude,

And a wonder and a classic gem.

They called up the studes from every-
where—

That line is from a well-known air,

But Clarrie's not from anywhere,

He's from Sydney Town.

And the Sydney girls are neater,

And their Angel Boys are sweeter,

And they'll look so neat and virtuous

When the Second Years all go.

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