

"Yes sir, been in the saddle all my life," spake the junior from the only bank at Tangayubbera Creek.

"Right! report here next Tuesday."

Passing another aspirant in the doorway the candidate for military honors makes his exit, indulging in the fond hope that he will not be called upon to justify his equestrian boast. Horses are his horror.

Bright and early on Tuesday, arrayed in breeches and puttees of the citizen forces he humps his gladstone bag from the Tempe Station and passing through the front gate (he little realises how little need he will have for the front gate later on) he runs the gauntlet of the dungareed figures congregated outside the bell tents reading the Daily Telegraph, or idly watching the mess orderly applying the dust of the earth to a greasy dixie. The portmanteau contains a full civilian outfit, spare boots, shirts collars, and we even knew one recruit to bring boot trees.

"Marmalade! Marmalade! You'll miss your mother," You'll be sorry" broke from all sides of the camp. The recruit is yet to realise that this is pleasantry from his future comrades. The term arose through the frequency of marmalade in the jam ration, and was an appellation which would be applied to the new troop until he became familiar with the ways and methods of a soldier. To marmalade this banter was of no consequence. The echo of the cheers at his send off still rang in his ears, he had visions before him of hundreds of friend and several girls; on his wrist was the new watch, in his pocket a gold mounted fountain pen, and a small camera hung from a gilt lined money belt. He longed to be a hero, to bear the burden and heat of the day at footslogging and standing gun-drill, and to pass the night walking up and down the office verandah as a full blown sentry, to drink to the full the cup of the common soldier, to become as hard as nails and as bronzed as a potato, and to live on bully beef and biscuits right through the campaign.

Having been sworn in to serve the King for the duration of the war and four months thereafter, marmalade was handed over to the Quarter Master Sergeant. The Q.M.S. ranks next in importance to the cook, and it is one of his duties to see that recruits are supplied with great coat one, boots field service one, dungarees two, shirts two, drawers two etc. The khaki uniform would not be supplied for some weeks on account of the current demand for this form of clothing. Of course if he happened to be engaged to the sister of the Q.M.S. or sufficiently financial to become his friend, the difficulties in obtaining the uniform were immediately overcome.

Marmalade is a keen, and when the trumpet sounds the "Quarter of an hour to get ready" he prepares to fall in. "Don't fall in cobber, you will get enough of that later on" is the advice of his tent mates. "Your name is not on the roll, and as long as you are not caught in the lines you will be O.K. If the Orderly Sergeant comes along tell him you are on cook's fatigue." Then ensues an argument among the occupants of the tent as to who will go on parade. "You fall in and answer for me Bill, you can pinch off again at smoko." "No good to me," Lorry "knows my voice." Lorry is the Sergeant Major. It is ultimately arranged that one or two out of the eight or ten occupants of the tent fall in on parade and answer for the lot. At about 3.p.m. the cards are put away, and the tent is a scene of activity. Boots, leggings and spurs are polished, clean fresh uniforms donned, leather whips pulled from underneath blankets, and before 4 O'Clock, a string of khaki pushes aside the palings, and makes its way down to the railway station en route for the city. Marmalade is along, and profiting from his first lesson in swinging the lead, he soon follows the example of his comrades, and spends the evening relating his experiences to his home folk, making light of his hardships but nevertheless shrewdly insinuating that he has a lot to put up with. He returns to camp armed with sox, balaclava cap, handkerchiefs, cake etc and arrives in plenty of time to answer tattoo for himself and tent mates. Spreading his waterproof sheet and blankets on the small space in front of his gladstone bag, he blows up his air cushion, puts his candle out and proceeds in his operations to get to sleep by endeavouring to burrow a hole in the ground with his hip. At various hours during the night the other occupants of the tent arrive loudly relating the evening's experiences. They soon thoroughly rouse the new soldier by piling blankets on his prostrate form, dumping gladstone bags on his ribs, forcing from him an occasional grunt. Much more confusion ensues before the "beds" are made up, and much dust rises as water proof sheets are spread. Boots and sox are carefully laid under Marmalade's nose, breeches, tunic and underclothes thrown over his feet. At length the tumult and the shouting dies, sounds of regular breathing, the steady tramp of the sentry on the western gate (or his hoarse whisper 'alright hop over') the whistle and puffing of the train as it leaves Arncliffe Station, and the occasional "Whoo" of the horse picquet are all that reach the new gunner's ears during the stillness of the night."