

LarkHill Camp

Songs & Poetry



Down in Our Larkhill Camp

To be sung to the tune of "Back Home in Tennessee"

I'm so lonely, oh, so lonely,
 In our Larkhill Camp
Not worth a penny stamp
 I'm worse off than a tramp.
Father, Mother, Sister, Brother,
 All are waiting me
I'm getting thinner, miss my dinner
 And my Sunday's tea.

CHORUS

Down in our Larkhill Camp,
 That's where we get the cramp;
Through sleeping in the damp,
 We're not allowed a lamp,
All we can hear there each day,
 Is left, right, all the way;
Sergeants calling, lance jacks bawling
 Get out on parade.
We go to bed at night
 You ought to see the sight,
The earwigs on the floor's
 All night are forming fours.
If we're in bed in the morning
 You will hear the sergeant yawning,
Show a leg there, show a leg there,
 Way down in our Larkhill Camp.

(From a postcard)



LarkHill Camp Poetry

There's an isolated, desolated spot I'd like to mention,
Where all you hear is "Stand at Ease," "Slope Arms," "Quick March," "Attention."
It's miles away from anywhere, by Gad, it is a rum'un,
A chap lived there for fifty years and never saw a woman.

There are lots of little huts, all dotted here and there.
For those who have to live inside, I've offered many a prayer.
Inside the huts there's RATS as big as any nanny goat,
Last night a soldier saw one trying on his overcoat.

It's sludge up to the eyebrows, you get it in your ears,
But into it you've got to go, without a sign of fear,
And when you've had a bath of sludge you just set to and groom,
And get cleaned up for next parade, or else, it's "Orderly Room."

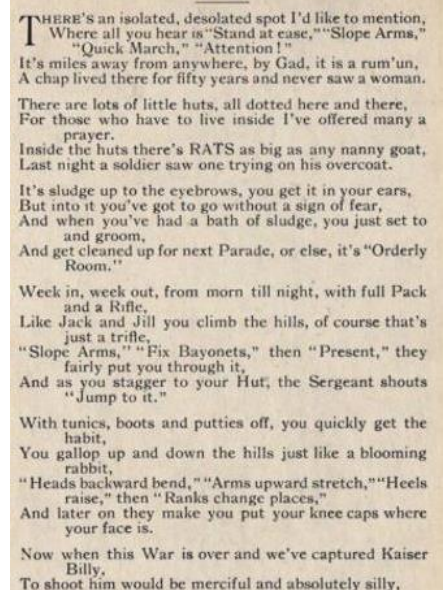
Week in, week out, from morn till night, with full pack and a rifle, Like Jack and Jill you climb the hills, of course
that's just a trifle,
"Slope Arms." "Fix Bayonets," then "Present," they fairly put you through it,
And as you stagger to your hut, the Sergeant shouts "Jump to it."

With tunics, boots and putties off, you quickly get the habit,
You gallop up and down the hills just like a blooming rabbit.
"Heads backward bend," "Arms upward stretch," "Heels raise,"
then "Ranks changes places,"
And later on they make you put your kneecaps where your face is.

Now when this War is over and we've captured Kaiser Billy,
To shoot him would be merciful and absolutely silly.
Just send him down to LARKHILL, there among the rats and clay,
And I'll bet he won't be long before he droops and fades away.

BUT WE'RE NOT DOWNHEARTED YET.

(World War 1 postcard)



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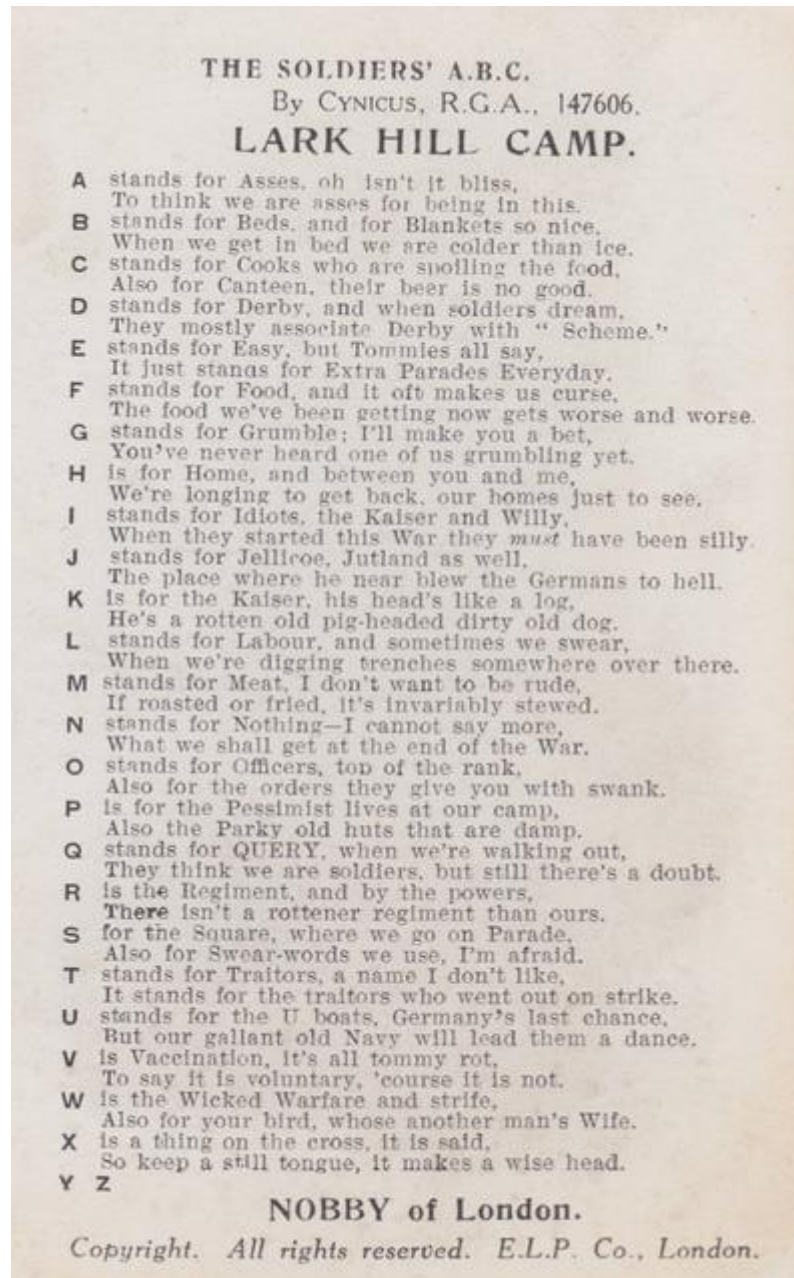
The Soldiers' A.B.C.

By Cynicus R.G.A., 147606

Lark Hill Camp

A	Stands for Asses, oh isn't it bliss, To think we are asses for being in this
B	Stands for Beds, and for Blankets so nice, When we get in bed we are colder than ice.
C	Stands for Cooks who are spoiling the food, Also for Canteen, their beer is no good.
D	Stands for Derby, and when soldiers dream, They mostly associate Derby with "Scheme".
E	Stands for Easy, but Tommies all say, It just stands for Extra Parades Everyday.
F	Stands for Food, and oft it makes us curse, The food we've been getting now gets worse and worse.
G	Stands for Grumble; I'll make you a bet, You've never heard one of us grumbling yet.
H	Is for Home, and between you and me, We're longing to get back, our homes just to see.
I	Stands for Idiots, the Kaiser and Willy, When they started this War they <i>must</i> have been silly.
J	Stands for Jellicoe, Jutland as well, The place where he near blew the Germans to hell.
K	Is for the Kaiser, his head's like a log, He's a rotten old pig-headed dirty old dog.
L	Stands for Labour, and sometime we swear, When we're digging trenches somewhere over there.
M	Stands for Meat, I don't want to be rude. If roasted or fried, it's invariably stewed.
N	Stands for Nothing- I cannot say more, What we shall get at the end of the War.
O	Stands for Officers, top of the rank, Also for the orders they give you with swank.
P	Is fir the Pessimist lives at our camp, Also the Parky old huts that are damp.
Q	Stands for QUERY, when we're walking out, They think we are soldiers, but still there's a doubt.
R	Is the Regiment, and by the powers, There isn't a rottener regiment than ours.
S	For the Square, where we go on Parade, Also for Swear-words we use, I'm afraid.
T	Stands for Traitors, a name I don't like, It stands for the traitors who went out on strike.
U	Stands for the U boats, Germany's last chance, But our gallant old Navy will lead them a dance.
V	Is Vaccination, it's all tommy rot, To say it is voluntary, 'course it is not.
W	Is the Wicked Warfare and strife, Also for your bird, whose another man's Wife.

X	Is a thing on the cross, it is said, So keep a still tongue, it makes a wise head.
Y Z	



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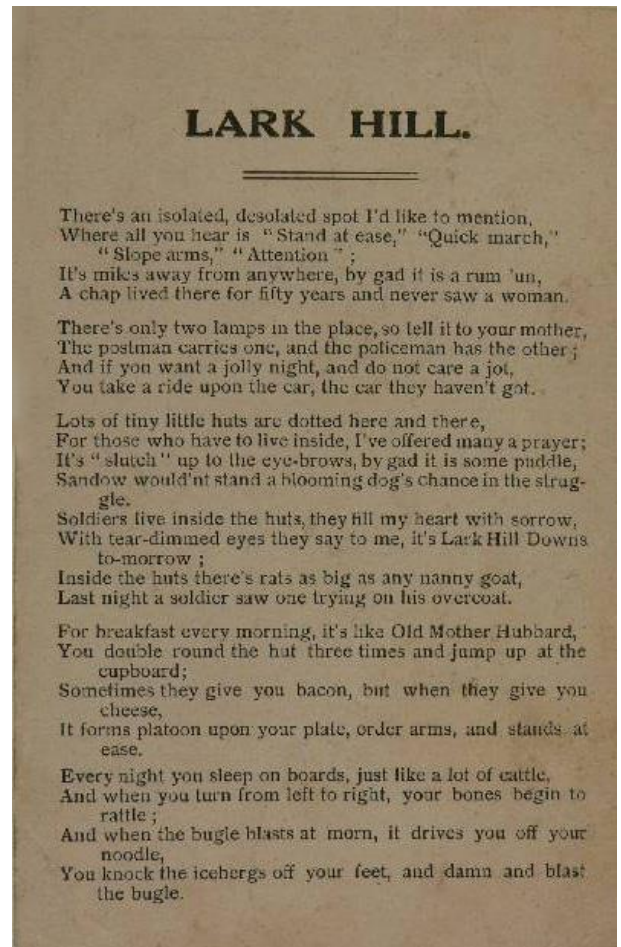
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"Slope Arms," "Attention";
It's miles away from anywhere, by Gad, it is a rum'un,
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There's only two lamps in the place, so tell it to your mother,
The postman carries one, and the policeman has the other,
And if you want a jolly night, and do not care a jot,
You take a ride upon the car, the car they haven't got.

Lots of tiny little huts are dotted here and there,
For those who have to live inside, I've offered many a prayer;
It's "slutch" up to the eye-brows, by gad it is some puddle,
Sandow wound'nt stand in a blooming dog's chance in the struggle.
Soldiers live inside the huts, they fill my heart with sorrow,
With tear-dimmed eyes they say to me, it's Lark Hill Downs
to-morrow;
Inside the huts there's rats as big as any nanny goat,
Last night a soldier saw one trying on his overcoat.

For breakfast every morning, it's like Old Mother Hubbard,
You double round the hut three times and jump up at the
cupboard;
Sometimes they give you bacon, but when they give you
cheese,
It forms platoon upon your plate, order arms, and stands at
ease.

Every night you sleep on boards, just like a lot of cattle,
And when you turn from left to right, your bones begin to
rattle;
And when the bugle blasts at morn, it drives you off your
noodle,
You knock the icebergs off your feet, and damn and blast
the bugle.



Thirsty First Regiment

By Nobby of London

Larkhill Camp

Dear

Just a line to tell you I've joined the
Thirsty First and am waiting to go to
Germany, where the lager beer comes from.
Fighting is awfully dry work, I often long for
a pint, but the only pints about there are the
Bayonet Pints we give to the Germans.

When you read that the **British Army**
put up a '**Stout**' resistance, don't think that
we've had a **Guinness** lunch, no such luck
we don't even get a **Bass** there, or a **Johnny**
Walker, or a **Black and White**, but the
Germans are getting black and white.

Instead of spending the evenings with you
on the benches in the Park,
I'll be laying in the trenches potting Germans
after dark,
I wish that you were there to see your
Soldier Boy,
As he'll neatly stick his bayonet in a **German**
Saveloy,
P'haps I'll be made Sargeant when the war
has run its length,
Then I'll come back and if you'll have me,
we'll be married "on the strength".

