



# *Military Matters Boer War*

## **Return of the Wilts Volunteer Active Service Company**

Late on Sunday evening the transport *Tagus* arrived at Southampton with the volunteer service corps of the Wiltshire Regiment on board. They were under the command of Lieut. Kendle, at Wilton, the only officer left on the field at the finish and their return journey had been keenly followed from point to point.

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### **At Sarum on Monday**

It became known throughout the city on Sunday evening that the men of the Wilts Volunteer Active Service Company would pass through Salisbury on the following morning, which turned out to be a beautifully bright and warm – a contrast to the weather experienced last January twelve-month, when our local warriors left for South Africa – and by 10.30 quite a large gathering of citizens had assembled in the vicinity of the Railway station. Admittance to the platform was restricted to friends of the returning soldiers and to those on business bent, but as is usual on these occasions, although a vigilant eye is kept on intending intruders, the platform by some means was crowded ere the train arrived.

It was shortly before eleven o'clock that the ex-mayor (in the unavoidable absence of the Mayor) led the Aldermen and Councillors of the city on to the platform, robed in their scarlet gowns and three cornered hats of black and gold, preceded by the mace bearers and followed in the rear by the beadles in their quaint costumes of the city's colours – blue and yellow. A few minutes waiting and the train rushed in and was greeted with a cheer. For the next few minutes all was bustle and animation: relatives and friends were straining their eyes to catch a glimpse of their particular Tommy. Lieut. Kendle was the first hero we noticed. He was looking exceedingly well and fit. Further up the platform stood Sergt. Dawes and Le-Corpl. Hart (the latter by the way, has received his "stripe" since he left England). Each was surrounded by a group of admirers warmly gripping their hands and uttering words of hearty welcome. Private Sturgess too had a thoroughly good reception; his general well-being was enquired after by a large number of friends and acquaintances.

Then there were Pvts. C. E. Hibberd and F. R. Coram who also came in for their share of hearty congratulations. Pvts. C. King and E. Ranger arrived last week on board the *Orotava*. Of the Salisbury men who went out Sergt. Harding and Pvt. W. B. Adlam have unfortunately died, Bugler A. Horne, Pvts. H. Sadler, H. Weeks, S. A. Wort, and W. G. Short have been invalided home and since discharged, while Pvt. A. Scott has been invalided and is awaiting his official release.

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### **On Tuesday**

The Proceedings on Tuesday when the Sarum men really returned home were of a more enthusiastic character. The train arrived shortly after one o'clock, the dinner hour for most Sarum people and it was only natural that there was a huge concourse in the vicinity of the railway station. Fisherton street was

densely filled, in fact. The train was somewhat overdue, owing to stopping at Wilton to drop off the Wilton men, and there was a rather smaller attendance of people on the platform, due, perhaps, to the rigorous performance of duty by the police and the railway staff, and the fact that the procession was bound to pass through Fisherton. A good muster of Volunteers lined the platform and the train ran into the station to the strains of the Wilts regimental march ("The fly is on the turnips") by the band of the 1st Wilts.

The returned warriors – twelve in number – were formed up at the head of the procession and marched immediately after the band, which struck up the "Cock of the North." Flags floated from nearly every house on the way to the Market House, and the windows of pretty well all the business houses en route were filled with eager sightseers. Fisherton street was thronged and the procession moved at a brisk pace without incident, until the Market House was reached. Here there was a tremendous crush, a consequence of it being Market day. A move was made to the Orderly room where refreshments were provided after which the men returned to their homes from which they have been so long absent.

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