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Hon. Adam. Hamilton's Message

It gives me great pleasure to accept your invitation to extend to the officers and men of your Regiment, through "The Observation Post," the Season's Greetings.

For all of you, may it be a happy Christmas, spent among your people, and a brighter New Year in which the seal will be put on Victory.

I compliment your Regiment on the initiative and pride in unit, which has produced and maintained "The Observation Post." It is easy to find difficulties; it is easy to criticise, but constructive contribution to the esprit de corps of a Regiment, such as your paper, is worthy of high appreciation.

From the dark days of Dunkirk until the present, those who have said "It can't be done," have been consistently wrong. On the basis of pride in self, and pride in unit, on team work and comradeship, the foundations of victory have been laid by our fighting men in the field. "It can and will be done," are the watchwords of that task.

You, with me, I know have the same thrill of pride at the record of the New Zealand Division in Egypt. Particularly must you thrill at the record of our Artillery men; their work has been magnificently inspiring; Rommel has tasted their metal to his confusion. The part that our men played in successive hours of

crisis, was only possible because of the team work and training built on pride in their units.

So to your Regiment in the New Year I wish happy days of training and organisation, so that if and when the time comes for you to play your part, as other units have played theirs before, the result will be another page added to the magnificent record of our fighting men.

We all know in our hearts that the cause is worth it all. To your paper also, I wish a successful New Year.

ADAM HAMILTON.



Hon. Adam Hamilton.

A Christmas Story

A ROMAN HOLIDAY.

AN ARTILLERY TIT-BIT.

(By W. T.M.)

Once upon a time approaching Christmas in the year xx12 there was a famous General named Charlow, who felt that his valiant army was becoming stale, so, forsooth he sacked one portion thereof upon another section. This did he unbeknown to the second section.

The first section, for the sake of clarity we will call "The Curlews" because they were commanded by a tried and valued officer named Curlew (so named because of his ability to see all things like the bird of that name).

The second party we will call "The Burtinkers" because of their commander, a man much tried in the art of war.

The Curlews were well encamped at a place named Toko and were sleeping and rejoicing because they were well away from the main army and the lynx eye of General Charlow. Suddenly they were attacked by the Burtinkers. Some of the occurrences are worthy of narration.

A party of Burtinkers under the command of Centurian Georgius Secundus attacked a well fortified "O Pip" in the care of Markus Primus (so named to avoid confusing him with another apostle of the same name, Markus Secundus).

Unfortunately Centurian Georgius Secundus was very impetuous and of a mighty valour and in the heat of battle raced ahead of his glorious band, to capture the stronghold. He was easily captured as he entered the fort and the same fate befell his men who entered almost one by one and much out of breath from trying to keep up with their beloved leader.

Now the historian grieves to have to report that Markus Primus was asleep in his bivvy, (being a little fella he needed a lot of sleep). Now, Georgius Secundus had two very wise sub-officers, Beady and an apostle in embryo named Matthew. These two wised up their leader to the fact that Markus was asleep, and so with much stealth and low cunning they not only retrieved their own bows and arrows but those of Markus and escaped. When Markus realised the dirt cast upon him, he emulated the action of the Saxon King Alfred and burned his scones.

Being now much elated and in great glee they decided to attack the Headquarters of Colonel Curlew. Snooping and crawling they approached a varlet on guard. Standing up and approaching boldly, Georgius demanded of the sentry:

"Give unto me the password."

The sentry being just a mere soldier with no ambition or grey matter replied:

"Hokitoki."

"Thanks," quoth Georgius, "now thou art my prisoner."

Now this password had magic in it and was often used after a cry of Me hi hi hi.

Armed with the magic password this party was able to capture sentry after sentry. Unfortunately the historian was not able to follow up this story as the mighty General Charlow had created a diversion. Being a keen and cunning General, he at his evening meal, surrounded by his generals, centurians and slaves, suddenly smote his brow and exclaimed:

"Ha! Ha! Now will we, with our reputation of the eternal triangle, make this battle a three to one gamble. Hee thee Colonel Sniftus (so known because of the red hirsute appearance of his upper lip) and limber up one of your mighty weapons and procure from that worthy fellow Wills' son some powder and shot. We will surprise 'em."

Away they went and to make the game more sporting they dispensed with their slaves and manned the piece with officers.

Arriving at the scene of battle, the officers manhandled the ponderous weapon nigh unto the H.Q. of Colonel Curlew and with much giggling and mirth it was eventually worked into position. However, the noise of girlish laughter attracted the attention of Colonel Curlew's sentries. With much presence of mind the quick witted General Charlow fell into a mighty rushing torrent. His language turned the air blue so that the sentries were not able to locate the correct position until after the ballista had been loaded, rammed, flint set and fired.

It is regrettable that the only damage inflicted was to the local peasantry (who had a son on H.Q.), who quickly burrowed under the rushes on the floor until activity had ceased.

The following day saw many stormy arguments somewhat on these lines, "You bizzard, that's my bow and arrow you've got." However, peace was quickly restored by General Charlow and they all lived unhappily ever after.

DEPENDS

Father: Hullo! Where's Alfred gone to?

Mother: If the ice is as thick as he thinks it is, he's gone skating, but if it is as thin as I think it is, he's gone bathing.

The Padre's Column

CHRISTMAS.

In a few more days we will be celebrating Christmas. Nearly 2000 years ago a Babe was born in the little Eastern town of Bethlehem. His Mother was a humble village lass who had made no claims to fame. The doors of the inn were closed to her in her hour of need, and only in a stable could shelter be found wherein to bring forth her child. His first cradle was a manger. Dumb animals were his first associates. Yet now, nearly twenty centuries later, the people of the world keep festival. Why?

We are told that shepherds watching their flocks by night, were startled by a strange incident. They saw a light shining in their midst, and they were afraid! Then a voice said, "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." It seemed that a great choir was singing "Glory to God in the Highest, and on Earth, peace, goodwill toward men." Thus was the great news first given to humble men—news that a Saviour had come as a tiny, helpless babe. His was no ordinary life. In Him, God was showing Himself to the World. Never before had the divine and the earthly met in such complete and wondrous form. Heaven's greatest glory had touched the Earth!

Through all the years that have been and gone, the coming of the Christ Child has stirred the hearts of men. The Christmas season breathes anew each year its spirit of hope and loveliness. Year by year the angel song is repeated and we hear again "the good

tidings of great joy." Tidings of peace on earth and goodwill toward men.

Strange isn't it that such a message should sound in our ears above the noisy clash of war? All about us are the evidences of conflict and of strife. There is little of peace and goodwill, much of battle and of hatreds, but still we keep this festival; not as one which present events have stripped of all its meaning, but as one so charged with radiant hope that its harmony rings out above the discords of our day.

True, a bloody tyranny has taken hold of men and nations. But, equally true, and of greater significance for the world, Mary's Child was born!

Eight centuries before the stable at Bethlehem gave its kindly shelter to a Mother and her Babe, a great Hebrew leader declared, "Behold, a Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel," or "God with us." It came to pass that night in Bethlehem. God Himself came into our midst and took his dwelling place among mankind—and holds it still! Let us never forget, least of all at Christmas time, that in spite of the bitterness and fury of men, God is with us—with all His people.

He who chose the simple beauty of a baby's birth to unfold the splendour of His power, sends forth His Heralds of the peace that yet shall be. He calls us from the roar and clash of strife to rest our eyes upon a manger crib—upon a Babe Whose very tenderness is mightier than all the tools of war, Whose love shall break the powers of Mars.

"Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born this day, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord."

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