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# How I Won the War

By Charles Wood

THE RHINE, GERMANY 1945

Third Troop, Fourth Musketeers.

Come on, come on.

Move yourselves.

Third Troop, Fourth Musketeers.

Come on, come on.

Come on.

Third Troop, Fourth Musketeers.

(shot)

Inflating parties forward.

(releases air valve)

Embark!

Follow me.

Paddles out.

Prepare to paddle.

Paddle.

(gun cocks)

Yes, during the war,

I was a Musketeer myself.

We had one young John Thomas

ostensibly commanding.

More myself was the backbone, of course.

Of a dark night,

many of our officers... (clicks)

...by some of their own men. You had to.

- (cash till rings)

- Yes, I will, squire.

Yeah, that's right, you was there.

After breakfasting in Paddington,

we was transferred to the Second Army

for Rhine and Other Rivers.

Ours was an infantry role though many

of us could swim only loosely, if at all.

- It was a complete cock-up.

- 144177 Musketeer Brazier S.

No, no, how I won the war.

The memoirs

of Lieutenant Ernest Goodbody.

("Auf Wiedersehen, Sweetheart")

Auf Wiedersehen

Auf Wiedersehen

We'll meet again, sweetheart

This lovely day

Has flown away

The time has come  
To part  
(screams)  
We'll kiss again  
Like this again  
Don't let the teardrops start  
With love that's true  
I'll wait for you  
Auf Wiedersehen, sweetheart  
I'll tell you nothing  
but my name, rank and number.  
My number is 131313.  
Lieutenant of Musket Ernest Goodbody.  
It all started in 1939.  
I suppose it did for you too.  
But then first things first.  
War is without doubt  
the noblest of games.  
Finer, I think, Corporal of Musket.  
Corporal of Musket Transom,  
my troop sergeant and a good all-rounder.  
Stay there. You, Juniper,  
you're perfect where you are. Very square.  
Musketeer Juniper, a joy to have  
on any team, one of the original BEFs.  
What they really thought of me,  
I shall never know.  
- I thought he was bleeding rubbish.  
- I thought he was a bleeding tart.  
Can I have you right out there  
in the country, Gripweed?  
Musketeer Gripweed, without whom these  
memoirs would never have been written.  
My faithful batman.  
May I rub your ball, sir?  
It gives me pleasure.  
- Musketeer Drogue, I die in North Africa.  
- Please.  
We're gonna hang out the washing  
on the Siegfried Line  
I rallied to the flag in October 1939  
and was immediately selected  
as officer potential.  
Every word of this film is written

in pencil in my own handwriting.  
I owe my introduction to the art of war  
to my instructors at No.212 OCTU.  
In particular,  
1431 Lieutenant Colonel Grapple,  
later to be known as Grapple  
of the Bedoo, who impressed me no end.  
I took care to talk as far back  
in the mouth as possible,  
being a grammar school lad...  
which made no difference.  
I've always been treated  
by the army as top drawer.  
- (affected laughter)  
- What did you say?  
(laughs) Sir...  
Never underrate the wily Pathan.  
We are going onto the wily Pathan  
and the use of anti-gas carpet.  
- Ya... Ya...  
- The Pathan lives in India.  
India is a hot, strange country,  
full of wily Pathans up to wily things.  
Which is why I always wear spurs,  
even in cold weather.  
My advice is to keep your rifle strapped  
to a suitable portion of your body.  
A leg is good. Otherwise,  
the wily Pathan will strip himself naked,  
grease himself all over,  
slippery as an eel,  
make off with your rifle,  
which is a crime. Any questions?  
- Or can we take gas?  
- Has the Pathan gone over to Hitler, sir?  
- Grammar school boy?  
- Sir.  
No, he has not.  
Too wily for that, the wily Pathan.  
Then shall we be fighting him  
in this war, sir?  
Of course, the British army  
has always fought the wily Pathan.  
Stripped naked under the tent brailings

like a snake, he is.

- Why?

- Why what?

We want to get on to gas.

It may save your life one day.

Why has the British army

always fought the wily Pathan?

He's just like you, a damn troublemaker.

What's your name?

How did you get into OCTU

not knowing your history?

God help your men.

They'll be torn apart by the wily Pathan.

See your dugouts.

Stand by your dugouts. Stand to. Dig in.

To beat the Hun, dig in then break

through with sword and lance. I think.

Do your best, eh? That's good...

- Body, sir. This is.

- That's very good, Body.

- It is rather wet inside, sir.

- I know it is.

That smell. That smell.

Light the little candle, eh?

This is where the war will be fought.

War of movement, my bum.

Sit down, Body.

Thank you, sir.

You're going to be an officer, young Body.

- I wonder if you know what that means.

- I think so, sir.

- What does it mean, Body?

- It means my mother will be pleased, sir.

I worry about your men, Body.

That's what being an officer means.

You know... I think you know

how England is fixed at the moment.

It's not a question of money, sir.

I'll serve for nothing.

Tell me about yourself...

What I hope I'm saying about England

is that we have no submachine guns,

no rimless cartridges, percussion

grenades, field artillery, no tanks much,

no anti-tanks ever,  
no dive bombers, no bombs,  
and we invented shrapnel.  
Knew him well... His son.  
I can't, I fear, I can't march properly  
on my own as an officer in the public eye.  
Isn't that sickening  
when that happens to a chap?  
Couldn't your drill instructor  
do something?  
A quick jab up the crutch.  
With a broom?  
"They're Coming."  
"They're Coming" by EC Grapple MC VD.  
And scar.  
"They're Coming."  
They're coming from the shires  
Coming from the byres  
They're coming from the cities and towns  
They're coming from the factories  
They're coming from the farms...  
- You married?  
- No, I play the harmonica.  
I'm coming after you civil reservists  
to see if you can remember about rifles  
and thumbs down the seams  
of your slacks,  
into your pink civvy thoughts  
with my big black boots,  
bearing a big, black, knobbly stick.  
So take a hold of yourselves. Stand still.  
- Face your front.  
- I am.  
Squad, 'shun!  
- Down them rifles.  
- Rifles!  
- Splinter.  
- Slope arms.  
Two, three, across...  
- Hands...  
- Down!  
(Transom) Throw them rifles.  
- Will advance.  
- Front, Clapper.

- Splinter.  
- By the right, quick march.  
Left, right, left, right, left...  
(Grapple) Coming dressed in overalls...  
- Retire. About.  
- Coming with umbrellas...  
- Coming bringing gifts...  
- Turn!  
Stand still. Those two men, about.  
Don't speak to me like that.  
I'm a married man.  
About turn.  
By the right, quick march.  
What's this? Halt.  
Stand still. Never, ever  
have I seen such a sight.  
- Am I hurting you?  
- No.  
I should be. I'm standing on your hair.  
- Who said that?  
- Is this North Africa?  
- Catterick.  
- Marching like idiots.  
- Never...  
- In all my life!  
It really is only a question of getting  
the right leg to respond to my brain.  
Move to the right in threes.  
- Wait for it.  
- Where are you going? Still.  
- It's no good to me.  
- My finger. There's a splinter.  
- Right in threes. Right turn.  
- Would you go sick?  
- I want to fight.  
- That's the spirit.  
- Who's the one in the flat hat?  
- Baden-Powell.  
Fall in, you.  
On the command, move. Move.  
Don't look at him, look at me.  
If you look at him,  
I'll give you to him.  
You can be put into his hands.

You can spend your life with such as him.

- Oh...

- Brain, brawn and guile...

They're coming dressed in overalls

Coming dressed in tweed...

To the front, salute.

- As you were.

- Hit them rifles.

You won't break them.

To the front, salute!

Of skin and guts and fortitude

Of brain and brawn and guile

And what is more,

they're yours, young man

See you do well by them.

(piano flourish)

(sparse applause)

(Goodbody) I'll never forget the moment

I was appointed to my first command.

No...

- Oh...

- Him!

Squad, 'shun.

- We're all going to die.

- I'm gonna die in North Africa.

Come, now, be fair.

Not all of us, Corporal of Musket.

- There will be survivors.

- (machine gun)

Many of us, even, will survive training.

It's personal. Can I speak to you

on a personal matter?

Personal? Keep your rear down.

It's her, sir. She's getting stuffed the

jacksy off her by the man from the Pru.

Jacksy?

That is posterior, that is.

Some spy says he gets his hoggins

every Monday, regular as dick,

along with the 18d funeral policy.

- Hoggins?

- Is it right, sir?

- Is he intimate?

- He's no friend of mine, sir.



I ask you, in all conscience,  
is it right that a serviceman is forced  
to carnal knowledge for the insurance?  
No, no, decidedly not.  
I'll do anything you advise, sir.  
Well, Clapper, is your good lady wife  
a willing partner to this hoggins?  
No, sir. It's this damn war.  
It's got her excited.  
And him, he's suave.  
- Go on.  
- Not in my silk stockings!  
Here, you've brought  
your child's gas mask.  
Oh, no, not in front  
of your child's gas mask.  
Well, Clapper, lapse the policy.  
It's yours, isn't it?  
Good. Then lapse it. You don't need  
a funeral policy in the army.  
You get the last post.  
My word.  
Then the insurance will not call  
on a Monday for his hoggins.  
My life. What you've saved  
is my life and my honey pot.  
Do you mind if I gives  
a jump of admiration here, sir?  
Dirty bleeder. He'll have to entertain  
somewhere else to obtain satisfaction.  
Hold on, I'll rescue you, Clapper.  
We didn't all die.  
I often didn't feel well.  
But I put a brave face on it  
and we were soon sent to Egypt,  
it seemed at the time,  
where I volunteered myself. Didn't we all?  
What the bloody hell are you doing here?  
I'm here, sir, at your convenience.  
Ernest.  
I know the names of all my men, sir.  
Come over here.  
Your eyes are bright.  
- My knees are brown, sir.

- Nice, I've got brown knees.  
You'd like to get away from here,  
Ernest, wouldn't you? See some action.

- My sole ambition, sir.

- I know.

Ernest, I want you to take your troop of musketeers and go and do this job for me. If you do it well, you need never hang around on street corners again. You can go away and do stirring things. Would you like that?

Oh, sir.

Sir, I'd give my right arm and leg. It's not you, sir. I'm not bored with you. I love you. In a strict metaphorical way of speaking, as it were. I'd give them my arm and leg. Damn sporting of you, sir. The lads will be chuffed.

- (gulps)

- I gulped.

I used to gulp like a fish every time a general touched me. One time, when I was a subaltern... Nice eyes.

We are exchanging bubblegum cards. We are staff officers.

- Have you got Dunkirk?

- Toby's got Dunkirk.

There's a lot of Dunkirk about. Ghastly colours.

- I do a bit of Sunday painting myself.

- I want School Bombing.

- We know what you want, Toby.

- I want School Bombing.

- (laughter)

- Not much doubt about morale here, eh? It's funny when the killing starts. Some of them don't like it. That's where you come in. I want you to set up an advanced area cricket pitch. Did you think you can do that? Can you read a map?

239451 or thereabouts, near an oasis.  
Get some grass if you can.  
Doesn't matter if you can't.  
I want it first class,  
and I want it in September.  
That means you have three days from  
the time you land behind enemy lines.  
It's got to be a good pitch because  
a very important bod is going to see it.  
- How much is she?  
- Does she take bully beef?  
He's going to come up out  
of the torment of the noblest of games  
and hear the sharp click  
of leather on willow.  
Ah, with his weary soldier boys.  
That'll show them, bring their tails up.  
Show this very important bod just how  
high the British soldier can get his tail.  
Yes, I want it first class and in three days.  
That doesn't give you much time.  
I want you to go all out.  
Will you go all out for me?  
Just remember my standing orders.  
Usual thing.  
Let no man surrender  
if he is wounded and can fight.  
- Need I say more?  
- No, sir.  
And thank you, sir, for your faith.  
I'll do what I can to tire her out, sir,  
so these young soldiers don't get hurt.  
Hey, hey, hey. It's a dangerous job  
and it's an important job.  
The next three days  
are not going to be a picnic.  
I want you to come to me not only as  
a troop leader - and it is a good troop -  
but also as a friend.  
Should you have any doubts, problems,  
do not hesitate to come to me.  
I want you to feel you can come to me  
for help as you would your own father.  
Hello, Dad, Mum's been looking

all over the shop for you.

Back! Mines!

Reverse engines!

(yells)

Hard astern.

To me, sir! Troop!

Good job I saw that. Good job, eh?

Very heavily mined, you'll find, I'm sure.

We're best out of here.

To me.

Rally to me, Third Troop.

If it is humanly possible.

I shouldn't be left on my own.

I can't win a war on my own.

I'm rather too young.

I feel I'm folding up like a telescope.

I hold the DSO. I do hold the DSO, after all.

- Commando?

- No.

On your feet.

(speaks German)

Come inside.

You are Number 1331490?

Lieutenant Ernest Goodbody

of His Majesty's Brigade of Musketeers.

Huh? Educated

at Wellington and Marlborough.

Before the war, a solicitor in the firm

of Nicholas, Collins & Osgood.

- Am I right?

- No. Sir.

The name is right,

but all the rest is wrong.

Oh, well, just a guess.

We are not all supermen.

(whistles)

Home is favourite. You wouldn't want us  
making a nuisance of ourselves out there.

- Use your initiative.

- I ain't got none.

- Come on. Off, Pongo.

- Matelot! Whose bloody side are you on?

It's a great gamble for a great stake  
and I pray to God that it comes off.

- I like a game of cricket myself.  
- Don't you know there's a war on, jack?  
Oh, come on, don't give me that.  
The sea has always bred heroes.  
At the battle of Trafalgar, one of the  
French captains had both legs blown off.  
- And he directed his men to the end.  
- I'll see what I can do for you.  
- More than my job's worth.  
- Mount, come on. Juldi/ Drivers, start up!  
We do have some drivers, don't we?  
Well, who drove them on? I did.  
Clutch in, move gear, pedal down,  
clutch out, now all together.  
(all) Clutch in, move gear,  
pedal down, clutch out.  
Very good.  
Come on, come on. Give me some speed.  
Put that brake on.  
Clutch. Don't get too near the man in front.  
It's working.  
It this absolutely North Africa?  
Because I'd like you  
to have my best boots.  
I don't want your best boots.  
Gear in. Accelerator down. Best boots(!)  
No, they're good lads.  
They'd follow you anywhere.  
Hark at them, gazing on me  
with their trusting little eyes.  
- Sir.  
- Shuftly.  
My feet's wet, sir. Sir, my feet's wet.  
- It's disgusting. They are manky.  
- Well, they're yours.  
- You gave them toys.  
- Yours.  
I haven't been able to command respect  
since before the war.  
Right, stop! Stop!  
Stop!  
Then they're Mr Goodbody's,  
who we seem to have mislaid.  
We'll do our best to find him. I'm gonna

shoot the bleeder, dropping me in it.  
Out, Gripweed. Handbrake on.  
Come here.  
- Is your feet, Gripweed, wet?  
- No.  
You're giving me lies.  
Goodbody will want to see your feet.  
- They dried.  
- Then you best get them wet again. Move!  
- At the double.  
- At the double.  
- Anybody else?  
- Left, right, left, right...  
- (horn)  
- Sarge!  
(horn blares)  
I'll teach you to try  
to put the blame on me.  
That was a nasty moment.  
Right, all together now.  
- Mr Goodbody, sir.  
- (all) Mr Goodbody, sir.  
(all) Mr Goodbody! Mr Goodbody, sir!  
Peter Nan Oboe...  
Peter Nan Oboe... Peter Nan Oboe...  
Netting call, net now.  
Seen any Musketeers  
swanning about, trooper?  
Come here.  
Come here.  
All stations, report my signal.  
Peter Nan Oboe... Peter Nan Oboe...  
Fourth Muskets, aren't you?  
Been expecting you.  
- Blue, white and two reds.  
- I'm green, green, green, sir.  
Oh, I know you are.  
Well, keep out of my way  
until the pitch is ready to play.  
Peter Nan Oboe...  
Hello, all stations, report my signal.  
- Where are they?  
- Who, sir?  
- The Bedoo, my wily Arabs.

- I've lost contact with my men too, sir.  
- Oh, brew, sir?  
- Treating them right? No!  
- They think the world of me.  
- They should be up here then.  
- No brew.  
- Bum on. On to Tripoli.

Uh...

- Come on.  
- I was wondering, sir, a lift.

Sir... I...

Bum on. Bum on.

- Oh, it's gonna hurt, Flo.  
- Damn, damn!

Get me another vehicle.

Come on, come on, come on.

- Ah!  
- I'll take one of yours. Come on, come on!  
- Come on, come on!  
- Where've you been?

Get out. Come on, come on.

Get out.

Looking after their feet, are you, boy?

See they get plenty of tea.

Curious thing, that, give the British soldier  
plenty of tea, and he'll die for you.

Of course, I'm a poet.

I expect things. I love the desert.

You took me for an ignorant old fire-eater.

No. I'm sleeping with the desert.

Not unusual. Pat a white rump in the  
desert and you'll startle an Englishman.

The Englishman loves the desert.

- You?

- I'm trying, sir.

Er, I play the piano. Not boasting.

Just a fact, that's all. Working class.

I think you should. Look after their feet,  
boy. They can't be trusted with their feet.

Feet and brew-ups and you'll find  
you can do anything with him.

Keep a tight rein on his habits.

Those of a pig, mostly.

But even a pig has his moment. Carries

the blue ribbon. Don't despise your men.  
They've given me a good life  
so don't despise them. Here.  
Share these out amongst them.

- Remember me, Grapple of the Bedoo.
- I won't bloody remember you.
- He used to be a fascist, sir.
- It takes all sorts.

Fascism is something you grow out of.  
I tried to change the world myself.  
Doesn't do. I wouldn't think anything  
of you if you hadn't been a fascist.  
Keep them at it  
so they don't have time for dirty things.  
Come on, young fella,  
you've only got three more days.  
No time for poetry.

(bugle)

- There goes a very gallant gentleman.
- Oh, I know, sir, like you, sir.

Thank you, sir,  
for not holding fascism against me.  
I was a great mate of Mosley's. I held his  
voice for him while he lost his meetings.  
Hey, hey, I'd just like to say a few words.  
Move, now.

I want to say how pleased I am...  
How pleased I was  
when I heard that I was going to lead you  
on this dangerous and important task.  
I've always thought that when the time  
came, we'd all get on splendidly together.  
Bravery, things like that.

(yells)

When I was told I was to be your troop  
leader, I had a little weep and a laugh.  
I do know we're all going  
to get on splendidly together.

- You play ball with me...
  - (men) And I'll play ball with you.
- (all) You do your bit and I'll do mine.  
We're all members of the same team,  
each playing our part  
in the fight for freedom and democracy.



Never surrender. Work hard. Train hard.

Play hard. And kill hard.

Don't take it too hard.

(Grapple) Look after your lads. They're no good to me if their feet aren't up to snuff.

It hurts, Flo.

It is impossible to tell all the touching and heroic stories of courage and patience...

- It hurts, Flo.

- Run them under the cold tap, love.

It is indeed a lovely sight.

Thank you, sir, it is my best part.

- Corporal of Musket!

- Can I put my shirt on now, sir?

Have you seen it?

It is indeed a lovely sight.

Corporal of Musket, look at it.

Will you be available for stag, sir?

If you will be taking your turn on guard,

I'd suggest first stag and me on last,

making sure you was fresh for command

on the off at the most likely times.

Pro tem, you can say no, I'll have you

down for mine being off at the first light.

Think we ought to green, green, green?

- Not unless you want bang, bang, bang.

- In the sky? Send up the Union Jack!

White and two reds...

That's very like the Colonel,

which reminds me...

If you do take a stag, sir, that's one hour

each, unless you keep the wireless open,

making the operator

unavailable for guard.

- That's me.

- Wireless silence, Corporal of Musket.

What have we got a wireless for, then?

We can't have wireless silence

without a wireless, can we, Spool?

Do come in, Corporal of Musket.

Of course I'll take my turn. That goes

without saying. Put me down for last stag.

- Gripweed.

- Sir?

Green, green, green.

Well, our officer calls me up and he says,

"Musketeer Gripweed..."

He was a tall chap.

Some would call him weedy. I did.

He said to me, and bear in mind we were

a few hundred miles behind enemy lines,

"Green, green, green" so I did.

(shots)

What...?

(speaks German)

Grn, grn, grn? Weg/

These were given to me

by a very gallant gentleman.

- I want to see all feet before we move.

- I think that was a mistake, sir.

Why, Corporal Dooley?

Have they been neglecting their feet?

- Have you?

- Get away from those vehicles.

(shouts)

(explosion)

Dooley, hitch that roller up.

- That's a relief.

- (all) That's a relief.

- Is this still North Africa?

- What?

Brew-up, sir?

You see why those lorries burnt so well

and exploded - nay, came apart -

that's petrol and lubricants,

which is very difficult to get in war.

- Not for the British army. Or doctors.

- Right.

All we're getting on with now is casualties.

Report me casualties.

Ammo, water, petrol remaining.

One, have we got enough to get

to the oasis - which we will - is a point?

Two days, Corporal of Musket.

Two, dip for remaining fuel,

Corporal Dooley.

What's this?

That's a coward, sir.

We were bound to have one.

You can tell by the sweat  
and the mess on his uniform.

- Not a pretty sight, is he, sir?

- He's taking all his clothes off.

Now, stop this. That.

- Will you take my horse, sir?

- (canned laughter)

Take no large notice, sir.

He is working what is known as ticket.

It keeps the lads amused.

Pick those bits up, Gripweed.

- Where's your tin hat, Juniper?

- Losing by neglect, sir.

If I catch you without it again,

I'll ram it down your throat.

Losing one mess tin.

- Did you have your name on it?

- Scratched on.

- Pull these men together.

- Scratched on?

- Scored it.

- You disfigured government property?

Six days Royal Warrant.

March him off, Musket Major. Two men.

You ought to camouflage up, sir,  
or get the scrim up if you're stopping.

Us in our vest are exposed  
to all manner of nastiness.

I'm going to explode, but I won't.

I think the roller, don't you?

- Bayonet. Where's your bayonet?

- Must have left it sticking in the enemy.

- Where's your spur?

- Left it in the horse.

- Two men.

- (canned laughter continues)

- There, on the end of my finger.

- Finger?

- Musketeer Juniper, where's your finger?

- Left it up the Khyber Pass.

Self-inflicted injury.

March him off, Musket Major. Wait for it!

Two men.

I'm going away. I'm going  
to walk a few paces backwards.  
And I'm going to take a bearing,  
out of earshot.  
I am... right now.  
Me. And when I get back,  
I want that man in there out of there...  
where I command from,  
with all his clothes on.  
And I want the roller  
limbered up for moving.  
With all his clothes on.  
PDQ.  
- That's a relief.  
- That's a relief.  
Excuse me, sir. Sorry, sir.  
That's a relief.  
Two men.  
Mount!  
- It's for your own good, lad.  
- Let me out.  
Let me out.  
- Will you put this on?  
- No. Bloody let me out.  
I wish I had 20 like you, Corporal Dooley.  
Do you think you ought to go sick?  
Driver, advance.  
(theme from "Lawrence Of Arabia")  
Get your cable out, Gripweed.  
Get this half-track back.  
Droque, records  
for the regimental magazine.  
Right reverse. Come on.  
Back, back, back, back. Right!  
Come on, hitch it on.  
Cable attached, Gripweed?  
Right, forward.  
Sorry, the gears look all alike.  
Smile, please.  
- That's a relief.  
- That's a relief.  
Dig the officer out.  
(theme from "Lawrence Of Arabia")  
- Brew-up, sir?

- I think so, yes.

Can you read a map, Corporal of Musket?

This is the Via Balbia.

Now, there is where...

There... we get our petrol from.

- We take it from a German petrol dump.

- Very good, sir.

That man, stand still.

- Clapper.

- Me?

You're improperly dressed.

- Best boots in for repair, sir?

- Do your button up, lad. You're idle.

- Oh, ta.

- Entertaining the troops.

My wife - large girl - works in a caff.

Biggest chips in the business.

There have been

too many unwounded prisoners taken.

Don't let it happen again.

Cut your throats next time.

Talking of throats, my wife. I took her  
to the station to see the engines shunt.

Christmas, lovely girl, do you know  
what she had in her stocking?

Legs, all the way up.

- He's mad.

- No, he's not, sir.

Working his ticket. It's inevitable.

You, when you find yourself surrounded  
by the enemy with no hope of survival,  
you must organise yourself

into a defensive locality and hold out.

I will.

By doing so, you will add enormously  
to the enemy's difficulties.

I'd like to add to the enormous enemy...

I've never been a bother.

You will also save yourself spending  
the rest of the war years in the bag.

I mean, the box. Prisoner-of-war camp.

Sitting there, going... (repeated ticks)

Let us go into the ring

in this, our first round,

with the light of battle in our eyes and  
the strength of the righteous in our hearts.

- He's not mad.

- Yes, he is, sir.

Keep the first three rows for the officers.

- Sir. Tea, sir? Thank you, sir, tea, sir.

- (Juniper) Take my wife.

You, the commanding officer! You look  
as if you're suffering from bottle fatigue.

- The man's mad, eh?

- No, he's not, sir.

Working his ticket.

Put him somewhere, he might cop one.

- I want to fight.

- Good lad.

Is that a linear belt? It's very nice.

Yes, well. Put some clothes on  
and we'll see, eh?

Ah! This damn sand.

When will it ever end?

You see, the thing about fighting  
a desert war is that it is a clean war.  
Without brutality. Clean-limbed, without  
dishonourable actions on either side.

Number 18, concerning the weather.

What wretched, filthy, glorious,  
disappointing weather we are having.

And there are no civilians in the desert.

Except me. I'm a civilian.

But what am I then?

Well, try as I may, I can't see you  
queuing for a number eight bus,  
jingling your fourpence.

That's because I'm German.

(speaking German)

I think you are a civilian.

Yes, certainly I am.

Don't be put off by the clothes we wear.

We only wear these for fighting in.

I expect I've grown out  
of my Harris tweeds by now.

Putting it that way, I think we all are.

Yes, I think underneath  
we are all blameless.

- Hey, Franz, you are a civilian.

- A civilian?

"Thank Christ for that" he said,  
laying down his rifle and going home,  
so helping to perpetuate the dangerous  
myth that soldiers don't like war.

Which they do.

It's a strange thought to think that this will  
be the last world war fought by civilians.

I find it strange.

It'll make a nice change  
to stick a bayonet into a chap  
rather than a rotten old sandbag.

You'll be all right, lad.

I'm not going. Let him nick his own petrol.

I've got a young wife.

(all mutter)

- Now, see, lads, there's more to it, eh?

- (discontent increases)

There's lots of satisfaction  
to be had out of the anticipation.

There's lots of fun and letting off steam.

It's not all death.

There's lots of fun to be had  
out of other things as well.

Now, come on, let's take a look at you.

- (clamour)

- Hang on a minute.

Can't let you down  
with dirty nails, can we?

Right. Crews front. Get fell in.

(shouting)

- Don't say or tell them anything.

- My wife is young.

If you say anything, whisper,  
so they won't know.

- Happy, shed a tear, entertained.

- I haven't got a wife yet. I've never done it.

I'll stick my bayonet up the jacksy of  
the first who talks loud of love and wives  
and children - I've got children.

I play the piano.

I'm not fighting this war for them.

Now, then, first one to look wonky

will get my boot up his dirtbox.  
I die now in North Africa.  
I've been crying, telling you.  
Don't ask, don't threaten,  
don't plead, keep it shut.  
- I'm not a thief.  
- Now, then, you're all clean for gangrene.  
Don't loose me down. If we should be  
stonked, get away from the vehicles.  
I want to see you back here,  
clean, bright and spent.  
Keep it wrapped, don't do anything I  
wouldn't. There's transport if you want it.  
If you're picked up,  
tell them you're a Guardsman.  
Hands out of your pockets.  
Top hats will not be worn.  
No fish and chips in uniform.  
Parade... Parade, turn.  
- Parade ready for your inspection, sir.  
- Thank you, Corporal of Musket.  
- Musketeer Drogue, isn't it?  
- I'd like you to have my blessing.  
Don't worry too much. Very good turnout.  
There's been marvellous advances  
in surgery, thanks to war.  
- Well done, Musketeer Drogue. Black up.  
- (quacks)  
You can't make me fight.  
No, but we can put you where your  
decision might prove fatal. Pieces of jam.  
Right, mount.  
I don't know your name  
but I'd like you to have my camera.  
Orders, information enemy, nil.  
Information own troops. We are...  
(all) Third Troop of the Fourth Muskets  
acting in an independent role as infantry,  
lorried behind the enemy lines  
with sports equipment.  
(Goodbody) Intention.  
(all) We shall, under cover of darkness,  
occupy a position  
overlooking the enemy encampment.



We will then attack  
and destroy the enemy for his petrol.  
I spy with my little eye  
something beginning with G.  
Method. Corporal Dooley, with one LMG,  
will move forward to high ground  
at 1.00 o'clock from my present position.  
(all) The rest of the troop,  
under my command,  
will crawl to a point - figures -  
100 yards in front of the objective  
where they will wait for the LMG  
to get into position.  
The signal for the LMG to open fire  
shall be green, green, green.  
The LMG shall cease firing  
when the main attack is mounted  
and is within - figures -  
50 yards of the objective.  
We will consolidate on the objective.  
We shall not take prisoners.  
If we pull together,  
with true British pluck and team spirit,  
we shall, with the help  
of the Almighty God of battles,  
win his just victory  
over the forces of evil.  
Good luck. I'm a little duck  
so let's get quacking into battle.  
- Come on.  
- Eh?  
Who's the Almighty God of battles?  
Jesus, is it?  
That's right. It will be. Jesus.  
Clapper, I'd like you to have my watch.  
(shouting in German)  
Command, forward!  
Come on! Come on!  
Forward!  
(Goodbody) Follow me!  
(speaking German)  
(shouting in German)  
Where are you going, lad?  
Why don't you make the best of it?

It can be fun. Some have  
the best of their life in the army.  
(screaming/canned laughter)  
A rout! A disgraceful rout.  
Get fell in. Let's see your bayonets.  
Have them out, have them out.  
Why are you laughing, Drogue?  
Wipe that smile off your face.  
Let's see 'em, at the end of your hype -  
not waving about  
like a hampton searching for a hand.  
What do we wear in our caps?  
Does it need cleaning, Juniper?  
- Yes, it does.  
- Look at them all, shining bright.  
Fancy me fighting filthy like that.  
An old chubby duster like me.  
Might have got gangrene from that.  
I'll have it out with my servant.  
Filthy! Get a tube, siphon petrol from  
the gin palace and fill up the half-track.  
- That's you out of mischief.  
- Look at them all, shining bright.  
- I want them stinking.  
- Corporal of Musket.  
Condensed milk.  
About all you're good for,  
sticking it in tins.  
Your badge represents the regiment  
and the regiment represents all of us.  
You, me, all of us here today.  
- A dirty badge is a disgrace.  
- They shouldn't be clean.  
Shining bright? Two days,  
for having a dirty bayonet.  
- They shouldn't be clean.  
- They should be sticky with blood.  
What did you return with?  
- I got some pretty things.  
- No, no.  
I want to see you coming back  
on the high port, grinning.  
With blood running down arms,  
dripping from elbows.

I don't care whose blood it is.  
Stick it in your mate.  
Let's have it used. I hate waste.  
See. See mine.  
It represents your father,  
mine, his before that.  
It represents battles  
fought and won years ago.  
Battles fought so that we could live  
as we wanted to,  
long before the Americans  
were even thought of.  
They didn't invent living, you know.  
It represents tradition, Musketeer.  
And I for one won't stand  
for a dirty tradition.  
Get the nonsense out of them.  
I tried to get you interested.  
You'll have to learn the hard way.  
Squad, 'shun!  
High port.  
At the throat, point in!  
Out! En garde. Shout it, Clapper.  
- In, out, en garde!  
- Let's hear from you.  
Can I see you  
for a moment, personal, sir?  
- What?  
- It's the butcher this time, sir.  
With his steak and his mutton.  
She'll do anything for extra.  
(soldiers) Left nipple, right groin/  
Left nipple, right groin/  
Is it now the butcher which is carrying out  
intimacy at your home address?  
- (all) In, out, en garde.  
- Is it right, sir?  
- Is it right a butcher should...  
- (all) Whip it out!  
- (all) Whip it in!  
...while her husband is away fighting?  
- (all) And wipe it.  
- At the throat, jab. Shout it, Clapper.  
At the throat, jab!

At the throat, jab! At the throat, jab!

- Kill him. Kill the bleeder.

- At the throat, Gripweed!

- How's this for openers?

- (engine)

Now, watch closely.

I am about to demonstrate the correct use of the identification triangle.

Oblique, middle and near east.

Oblique, yellow.

Each platoon, troop or tactical unit will detail one man

to carry the triangle at all times.

Now watch closely, Clapper, because in future you will be the triangle man.

But any one of you might be called upon to be conversant with the triangle.

So watch closely.

You won't get another chance.

It is tied under the chin, like so.

On the approach of a friendly aircraft, the bearer stands in a prominent position and displays the triangle thus.

- Where's the roller gone?

- (machine gun)

Gripweed, have you stolen the roller?

Where's that roller gone?

This is the last straw.

That is it. No one move from this spot.

There'll be no more leave, late-night passes until that roller is returned.

I get you all clean, fit, ready for fighting and what do you do?

There'll be no more privileges.

I'll stop this petty thieving.

And, Gripweed, what's more, who's had my Brylcreem?

- You?

- Never touch the stuff, I'm excused hair.

There! Italian recreation eyeties!

You can't put a bloody thing down.

There is a code, you know. Scavengers.

Sticks in my craw. I can take most things but stealing I draw the line at.

Here we are, fighting  
the most desperate war in history,  
and a few wop adventurers  
act the giddy goat.  
I've seen your sort fumigated.  
If a wop can be fumigated.  
To think they once handed out  
ice cream wafers.  
To think you once handed out  
cornets on a Sunday afternoon.  
Is there no damn decency left in you?  
No respect for the property of others?  
Play your ridiculous game but don't  
expect us to take any notice of you.  
Grown men in shorts! I'm pretty incensed.  
It's one of the most shocking things  
in the war.  
It's a shame the Italian nation  
has to be brought into disrepute  
by the lunatic actions  
of a pitiful few fascist pimps.  
And let that be a lesson to you!  
(engine cuts out)  
Well done! Oh, very well done!  
- (cheering)  
- Italia/  
The tide is turning.  
Our very first real victory.  
The beginning of the end for the Boche.  
I think the tide is turning. I do!  
You got him, Tranners! I do!  
- Wasn't he one of ours?  
- Here's one of mine.  
- Go on, get him.  
- Let that be a lesson to you.  
- Shoot your own officers.  
- You can't leave a thing lying around.  
There's nobody to be trusted in total war.  
Well done, though.  
Our first real victory. The writing  
on the wall. We're coming back, Adolf.  
The tide has turned.  
Come on, Gripweed. The army didn't  
bring you to admire the view.

There's a job to be done  
and precious little time.  
You two check for damage.  
Juniper, put that petrol in the half-track.  
Empty your water bottles into the roller.  
We need the weight.  
Come on, Clapper, stop daydreaming.  
Tell the wife to drop the butcher and  
become a vegetarian. That's my advice.  
Thank you, sir. Thank you,  
you've saved my life again, sir.  
Then he won't be round  
tempting her with his buckshee mutton.  
Bloody waste of time. Soft git.  
I know it's a long way.  
I know it's not glamorous as a job.  
I know there are others doing jobs  
in this war that are more glamorous.  
But I had this promise.  
Some soldiers are going to come out of  
the din of battle and are going to thank us.  
If we can get our very small cricket pitch  
by first light tomorrow morning.  
Another 20 miles, that's all.  
If we can,  
they're going to look  
at our small patch of sanity  
and they're going to say it was worth it.  
They are, and then we...  
I have this promise.  
We can go and do stirring things.  
Bloody waste of...  
I'll stop this petty thieving.  
Petty thieving!  
Do you get much thievery,  
cowardice, things like that?  
No, no.  
Being in improper possession  
of a comrade's property.  
- Can't put a thing down.  
- No.  
On the whole, no thievery, no fibbing,  
no arguing with a superior officer,  
no treachery, no cowardice,

not much rape.  
I don't countenance rape.  
No letting down of the boys.  
They'll have to put all that back.  
Most of us are artists.  
Ah! He's very good.  
Ah, look, they're going  
to blow up your geraniums.  
Oh, dear.  
(theme from "Lawrence Of Arabia")  
That's a relief.  
What's so damned important  
about a damned cricket pitch?  
I said, more to show  
that though I was an officer,  
I could understand the feelings  
of ordinary chaps like them.  
- But it isn't just a cricket pitch, is it?  
- It is.  
I'll tell you for why. Because it's  
a silly bloody silly cricket pitch is why.  
On. We'll find the bloody oasis ourselves.  
(German spoken in distance)  
(first voice) I'm going to be  
in the second battle of Alamein.  
(second voice) I'm going to be  
in the second battle of Alamein.  
I'm excused Alamein... for my feet.  
I suppose some form of National  
Socialism is inevitable after the war.  
(voices overlap and distort)  
- I'm going to be in the second battle...  
- That's the ticket.  
- It is good news, isn't it?  
- Congratulations.  
I don't half envy you.  
What you'll be able to tell your children.  
Come on, kids, Dad is going to tell us  
about the second battle of Alamein again.  
This is today, and I'm still alive today.  
My name is Henry Bridgehouse.  
I'm still thinking of you all,  
and so are you, I fondly hopes, alive,  
and all the kiddies still at home,

to whom I send my very best.

Is that all right?

(whimpers)

Any chance of another battle?

It's high time.

You're a great man, a very great man,  
but you are impatient.

- I want a battle.

- That is the way to lose battles.

- I want a battle.

- I'll tell you the sort of man I am.

I am patient. At the second battle  
of Alamein, I shall be patient.

I shall start the battle... here.

And then I shall go to bed... there.

That is the sort of man I am.

Never fight battles when you're awake.

That is the way to lose battles.

Mines! Don't move.

(screams)

We've done it, lads! We've made it.

Oh, well, done, Third Troop.

They're very beautiful.

What can be done with them  
in this world after the war is over?

We're fighting against men  
inflicted with a terrible virus.

Do push-ups. Clapper, on your belly.

And it is a belly. I want you fit.

I want 500 guns,

300 tanks, 200 aeroplanes.

I'll tell you my plan.

I hatched it in the lavatory.

My plans are  
always hatched in lavatories.

Pull the bleeding chain, then.

- There's none in it.

- Spool, no. Have some pride, lad.

- I let it out.

- Who took the water?

Spool, I'm talking to you, lad.

I can shoot you.

A hole in your head.

You'll die with your silly name.



- I let it out so it would be lighter.  
- Shoot me, in my big toe.  
I can, you know, shoot you, and him.  
And you can, him.  
Put a round up him. All it needs.  
Come on, come on. Running on the spot.  
Begin! One, two, one, two...  
- Go on, Gripweed.  
- I can't, Tranny.  
Yes, you can. It's easy.  
It gets easier. That's the thing about it.  
The thing I hate more than anything else.  
I'm not going to be able  
to go home, you know.  
A lad I know saved a grenade at Dunkirk.  
Didn't drop it in the sandbag.  
Saved it, took it home  
and put in on his stomach,  
holding it between belly and thigh,  
and went to bed.  
Pin out, relaxed and died.  
It gets very easy.  
I can look at a man, dead, step over him  
ten times a day, going to the cookhouse.  
Not curious enough  
to turn him over and see his face.  
Front lying... down!  
I do blame them for that.  
This way, sir.  
I do blame them for that.  
I used to be put off my supper should  
I see a cat dead in the middle of the road.  
Or a bird, leave alone a man, though  
we didn't get much of that down our way.  
- So you can.  
- I won't, though.  
- That's different, won't.  
- This beats National Socialism, Gripweed!  
I am glad I won't.  
Don't move, sir, we're all in a minefield.  
It's a very simple plan.  
All my plans are simple plans.  
Look at Dieppe. That was simple.  
Wait until Arnhem.

That's going to be simple.

Gather your ammunition.

Leave your packs by the roller.

- And have them whipped?

- No, Gripweed is coming with us.

I'm simple. Gather round me.

Can you hear me at the back?

- Hi-de-hi!

- Ho-de-ho!

Has he sent you any water, has he?

That man. Corporal of Musket,  
stop that man making an ass of himself.

Get all 500 guns and fire them in the same  
place to blow the daylights out of them.

- Hold still, Spool.

- Fill your bottles from the roller.

- Give him a drink, Corporal of Musket.

- There's none in there.

- My God, the roller. Get it in the shade.

- I thought it would be lighter.

Come on, lad. We'll get some water when  
we capture the oasis. Lashings of water.

We'll send you chaps in

with 200 tanks going like bats out of hell.

You've seen enough now. Off you go,  
there's good chaps. Hold his head.

Just who could play a trick like that?

At the best, it's rank inefficiency.

- Me!

- Who took my man's water? I want water.

- How can my men fight without water?

- Me!

I did, I let the bloody water out  
to make it lighter.

Give the lad some room, will you?

Would you take that camera away?

There's a good fella.

Haven't you had enough?

Find a battle and film it.

- (Juniper) A good battle.

- Clear these cameramen away.

Haven't you insulted us enough? Your  
army is the best in the world. Get away.

It's all right. Don't let him bite this time.

- It's all over. Make a ring round him.

- No, let the bastards see.

No. The next of kin, think of them.

(Spool screams)

That happened to a son of mine.

He was left all through the war.

- They do, don't they?

- With his eardrum.

- It's the noise, I expect.

- Still, he's not dead like some.

- Well, you can forgive.

- Missing. Not dead. They didn't get him.

He'll turn up. Missing, he is.

(bugle)

Colonel! Colonel, any water?

Bum on, bum on, on to Tunis.

See to the roller... and Spool first.

Huzzah! It'll be all right now.

Huzzah! Good old Colonel Grapple.

He's a character that will see us through.

That's the thing about war.

It's a picnic if left to the right officers.

Men who understand our ways.

Treat us like human beings.

What we want is more humane killers.

Good old Colonel Grapple! See you on  
personal when you have a moment, sir?

(all) Achtung/

My God! No time for that now.

They must know we're here.

- Rounds per man?

- Three and a half, sir.

When you use that, fix bayonets and die.

Charge is the joke.

Fix bayonets and charge.

- We're all gonna die under funny names.

- Charge.

Good luck to you all. Tally-ho!

Boot the Hun right through to Tunis!

(repeatedly) Fire!

(bagpipes)

Now, bear in mind,

we had him on the run, Jerry.

We'd stood to all night, of course.

As we stood up, the bullets  
flew around us. Like rain it was.  
I well remember - and bear in mind,  
I was platoon sergeant -  
it therefore was behove of me  
to keep morale up -  
so I said, more as a laugh,  
cos it wasn't tense or below par...  
You very rarely are, at the start line.  
Take no notice of the Yanks. They haven't  
lived. And they was always bombing us.  
Now there's rarely any tenseness.  
It's the relaxation you notices.  
Little kips all along the start line,  
barring them as is already haywire.  
So... more to raise a laugh...  
Like shoelaces, seeing as they're tight.  
Not crippling you, not causing you to trip.  
There. (he laughs)  
Silly ha'porth! Crippled you. It's important  
to raise a laugh on the battlefield.  
And very humorous the laughs can be.  
Some humorous books being written.  
More for a laugh, I said "We should have  
us gas capes on. It is raining bullets."  
That was when we lost Charles Black  
from a raindrop.  
I said "We should have us umbrellas  
and gas capes, boys. Raining bullets."  
"We'll get wet, boys,  
if we're not careful, chums" I said.  
More for a laugh.  
(whistles "Colonel Bogey")  
Well, you see? Good.  
(speaks German)  
Wollen Sie trinken?  
(shouting in German)  
(groaning)  
Oh, my poor horses.  
Cavalry horses love the stir and the din,  
even the danger, of battle.  
The British cavalryman  
regards his horse as his friend.  
Those who have ponies,

children and horses of your own, at home,  
may like to know how well  
we look after our steeds.  
Sometimes we risk being shot at to put  
our wounded mounts out of their misery.  
(gunshot, man yelps)  
Eight, nine... How's your leg theory,  
Corporal of Musket?  
I'd like your opinion. What do you think?  
As a wicket, likely to vent spiteful  
by midday, I think.  
Er... Light roller.  
Bowlers don't expect miracles.  
As a pitch, it will teach you perseverance.  
21, 22...  
I want a batting crease  
four feet from here, Gripweed.  
Spool, put a stump in here.  
The light should be good.  
Keep the water off, I think.  
Don't want to have to contend  
with a sticky wicket.  
On a dead wicket, always bat first.  
Remember, Gripweed, medals are merely  
milestones on the road to final victory.  
- Congratulations.  
- Thank you.  
Thank you, sir.  
(yells)  
- Where've you been?  
- In enemy hands, sir.  
You told them nothing  
but name, rank and number?  
I don't know my name, rank and number.  
I remember the number of my first rifle.  
Don't try that.  
I can smell them, the ones who are not  
100 per cent for it. Try that one on me?  
Take those nasty Nazi clothes off  
and play cricket. Teach you team spirit.  
Not a wound on him.  
Show me a wound.  
You stink of surrender.  
Not a decent wound on you.

- I've been burned.  
- We've all been burned.  
Pads on! Play every ball on its merit.  
- I want to fight.  
- That man is malingering.  
I've a damn shrewd idea  
that you are trying to work your ticket.  
I say, you can't do that.  
He's a private soldier.  
He's a stinking coward.  
I've always wanted to hit a general.  
Fall in, two men, he hit the General.  
- Open the batting from the mountain end.  
- What's going on here?  
That boy is only 19. Here, hold this camel.  
Hit somebody your own rank, or near it.  
- Who are you?  
- Grapple MC. Grapple of the Bedoo.  
And another thing, I will not play cricket...  
- Come, now, none of us like war.  
- I do. I like war.  
I do not like cricket.  
- Did you have many humorous incidents?  
- Yes, we did.  
- Tell me about yours.  
- They're not funny, really.  
- Tell me. Are the British cruel?  
- Oh, yes.  
- We know what we're doing.  
- And we are.  
Do you know what we have done  
to millions of people?  
- I think you've killed them.  
- I don't know anything about it. Terrible.  
- Are you sorry about these people?  
- No, no, I am not.  
I thought about it and... no, I'm not.  
I'm not sorry about my men.  
- Did you have a lot of men?  
- Yes.  
- You did?  
- Yes, hundreds.  
Me too, and all with the same faces.  
They all looked the same to me.

You look after them, see their feet  
is clean, dry, powdered.

- They will not look after their feet.

- They began to kill me with worry.

More than that. More.

May I?

The thing about them  
was they would not respond.

There it was for them,  
a crusade against tyranny...

Oh, not you. Not you.

But if they knew the King.

My mother knew him well.

She used to send to his birthday.

And all the children, the princesses,  
they all got something,

even though

we were not that well off.

I wanted to do my best for him.

He knew

why he gave me his commission.

- You know what I mean?

- Ja.

I wanted to know them.

I wanted to know them very much.

I can talk to you.

I could talk to nobody else.

I haven't spoken to anyone else about  
the King and me for the whole of this...

And I. The King and I. You know?

- You'd like him.

- Thank you.

As I was saying, I haven't been  
able to speak to anyone else  
through the whole of this film.

You see, one day, after a not particularly  
arduous or expensive skirmish,  
they were all gathered round me...

I well remember...

the way an admirable man and a great  
soldier referred to expensive noises  
as he listened to a battle without emotion.

That is the way, isn't it?

- For our kind.

- You are a fascist!

Am I? But I don't particularly dislike Jews.

- I love them.

- Have you...? Are you cruel?

- Have you killed many Jews?

- Quite a lot.

- What do you say to that?

- Good Lord.

But then I try to find good in everybody.

(sparse applause)

Why choose me

as your defending officer?

You're the only one decently turned out.

- Halt. Face your front.

- Shut up.

This man is not fit to plead.

It is obvious to anyone

with a spark of humanity in them

that he should be treated with sympathy

and understanding and sent home.

- Shut up! You may not say anything.

- Defending officer, sir.

He's not an officer,

for all his voice and his linear belt.

Therefore, he may not make speeches.

He has no privileges in this court.

Choose anyone you like

but only officers can talk to me.

That makes it awkward.

He should have gone to grammar school.

- Got his Cert A, passed his commission,

- I came up from the ranks. I'm a general.

- This is a general court martial.

- For hitting me.

- Permission to speak.

- Shut up.

Speak up. Be respectful.

What is wrong with the army

is that there is not enough humanity in it.

Shut up! If it wasn't for the British army,

you wouldn't be here today.

Humanity!

We're going into Germany soon.

When we get to the home of the Hun,



take your pips off.

You're a very lucky chap.

You're fighting in a war which may well turn out to be a crusade. If I know the Hun. A good soldier but a bit frightful. With any luck, he's up to some revolting things. In case he isn't, better take your pips off. They will put a bullet through your neck for what you've made them do.

I don't think Jerry will disappoint us, so shut up!

I don't think I could do that. They're the nicest things that ever happened to me.

I think my lads are very fond of me.

Sir! Permission to fall out, sir?

We've been playing cricket in the hot sun for three hours.

We can't enjoy ourselves infinitum, or at least bowl underarm.

Play on is my advice to you unless you want to look at me in a court martial.

- Enjoy yourselves. It will be a long war.

- Play on!

You may not fall out until a very important bod sees you entertained and happy.

Tails up, I haven't brought you all this way to bowl underarm.

- It's just as hard for me as it is for you.

- You're a bastard.

I hope so, I hope I am a bastard.

- I'm not proud of it.

- Sit down, son.

I've looked after their feet as if they were my own, sir.

Excuse me, sir.

- What is all this?

- Advance cricket pitch.

Present and ready for your inspection, sir.

What rotten bowlers. Right, drive on.

It is bad. The lower-middle and working classes receiving the King's Commission?

These classes, unlike like the classes who led the army when I was a lad, never had their people to consider.

I liked it better when he was a comedian.  
He wasn't very funny but I liked it better.  
Jokes. Mind you, I'm working class.  
I had a grandfather who was a miner.  
Until he sold it.  
It's a very simple plan.  
All my plans are simple.  
You remember Dieppe? Arnhem will be  
as simple. A few parachutes, that's all.  
My heart's not in it any more.  
Oh, go away, I'm tired. I'm the only  
bleeding bowler in the Second Army.  
(artillery and machine guns)  
(bomb falls)  
- Sorry, old man.  
- It's all right, sir. I'm very grateful.  
- Stretcher bearer!  
- Jammy bastard.  
With the Second Army linking up, the men  
of the Airborne can afford to relax a little.  
(cackles)  
(shouts in Dutch)  
Out!  
Come on, come on!  
- Tot ziens/  
- Auf Wiedersehen/  
- Welkom, welkom.  
- Thanks.  
One, two...  
Don't look, don't look, don't look!  
Don't look... Don't look...  
Don't look.  
Don't look...  
Come on.  
Dooley, Spool, take the barn.  
Sergeant Transom with me.  
We are English.  
Nice place you've got.  
Right, you two, outside. Slit trench eight  
yards from this wall. Move yourselves.  
Do sit down.  
(announcer) Now, this is the job on which  
the soldier's life and the battle depends.  
As soon as the infantryman

reaches a new position,  
he starts to dig in with pick and spade.  
To begin with,  
cover is a hole in the ground,  
but as the enemy are rolled back  
by succeeding waves of troops,  
the men immediately behind  
start serious digging.  
The infantryman's home in battle  
is his slit trench.  
In a narrow five-foot hole,  
he lives, sleeps, eats, and rests.  
If the men are lucky, rations, great coats  
and mail are brought to them after dark.  
It's the missus again, of course.  
She's having it away with a Yank now.  
Hands across the sea,  
straight up her woollies.  
(shrieks with laughter)  
(clattering)  
- Stop it!  
- What are you laughing at?  
I can't say it. I can say nothing.  
I'd like to say what I feel,  
but I can only tell you what I see.  
The weather's not bad  
and I still write to you.  
The words look so young on paper  
and we are grown people.  
But I'll tell you. I do miss you.  
"Moonlight Cocktail" is now all the rage.  
...with an American soldier.  
They're all over here now.  
He thrust his great American hand  
into my dress  
and I felt the utility material  
of which it was made, parachute silk,  
tear asunder  
under the thrust of his passion.  
Fondest ever always,  
your own Mrs Clapper.  
Gripweed, Clapper, cover yourselves.  
They're coming from the right!  
Sergeant Transom, tank and infantry

coming from the right. This side.

Sergeant Transom! Get out.

Now, watch it.

Have a heart, eh?

(metal clanks)

Thieving git. Some bastard's

been prior, has he, Jock?

- One bastard stinks to high heaven.

- Are you a duration bloke?

- You wouldn't chuckle?

- Pack it in.

I'm a regular.

It's my soddin' career, liberating.

I knew this'd happen.

You knew it'd happen, didn't you?

(speaking German)

(German)

Thank you. Thank you for your help.

- Steady on, we're still on it, the bridge.

- It is a lovely bridge.

It is the only bridge

still intact across the Rhine.

- It won't be for long.

- If you had it, you could win the war.

- I think we're doing that anyhow.

- And I could retire sooner.

- You'd win.

- Yes.

- It's yours.

- No, I don't want to blow it up.

You've done all the work.

- No, please.

- Cheap.

How much do you want for it?

No, no, no.

As we mean to go on, after the war.

The war brings out the best

in some, you know?

Thank you, but as we mean to go on.

- \$25,000.

- Eisenhower would never pay.

Have it. Go on.

No. Those days are over.

There's no hope for you or your country

if you're going to let emotion rule.  
I tell you. And it's got me nowhere.  
To me, Sergeant Transom! To me!  
(gunfire continues)  
I should have shot that stupid  
little bleeder a long time ago.  
I always wanted to, as you know.  
You shoot one,  
you've got to shoot the lot.  
Before they takes their exams  
and are taught virtue and industry.  
Cor! Stone a little colonel, eh?  
- It's a fine bridge.  
- And it's worth about what? 17,000?  
You know what? You are right.  
I was beginning to forget  
what democracy means.  
- It's a wonderful bridge. 23,000.  
- That's better.  
- 18.  
- No, I am risking my life here.  
They are shooting people  
for not blowing up bridges.  
Well, we could build one for 23,000.  
Less. It's too far south for us, anyway.  
- I'd never get it past the accountants.  
- Dooley! To me!  
- My name is Dooley.  
- I am not going. I'm just not going.  
There's more to say.  
I've got more to say.  
- I'm not going without shouting.  
- My name is Spool.  
I was transferred from the Service Corps  
for a better chance of promotion.  
- I'd like to speak to you on personal, sir.  
- Transom!  
Here!  
I never said a word to you  
before I was dying... mate.  
(Drogue) I died in North Africa.  
I fought for three reasons.  
I can't remember what they were.  
The first reason gets you in, and the

reason when you're in is staying alive.  
I won't know the reason they find  
afterwards but it will be a very good one.  
I'm sure we'll be glad,  
and I'm not a thief, really.  
I never found anything worth keeping.  
Suddenly, my phone rang.  
We were eager to secure  
a Rhine river bridgehead  
but we despaired of taking a bridge intact.  
Suddenly, my phone rang.  
22,000, take it or leave it.  
In view of the personal danger  
to yourself, 19.  
Right, done.  
Fine bleeding hospital this is.  
Suddenly, my phone rang.  
It was Hodges calling from Spa.  
"Brad" he called.  
"Brad, we've gotten a bridge, a bridge."  
"You mean you've gotten one  
intact over the Rhine?"  
"Yep."  
"Hot dog" I said,  
"this'll bust them wide open."  
They're coming.  
Come on!  
It's ours, sir, it's ours!  
One minute! One minute!  
- Get out of the way, you idiot!  
- (yells)  
Get out of it!  
Bum on! Bum on!  
To Moscow!  
We've come a long way, chaps.  
Now we've come to the end of the road.  
Head up, Gripweed. Be proud.  
Show them who's won the war.  
Across the world, we've trod the stony  
path from defeat to final victory.  
And soon, the Great Umpire above  
will call close of play  
in this, the Second World War.  
Or as I prefer to call it...

the final test.

And I want to take this opportunity of letting you know how proud I have been to have commanded such a fine body of men.

Would have bounced anyway.

I haven't got 19d.

Transom, keep your feet up.

- What's he keep calling me that for?

- We're not out of the woods yet.

You haven't had a big part in this.

Ah, well. What you doing next?

- I hear there's this Vietnam thing coming.

- Yeah, I know that.

But I don't like working with that director much. Still, the money's good.

I'm glad you could get here.

I've been trying to contact all the members of Third Troop for years.

And, really, without success.

The strange thing is, I agree, there was a good reason for fighting the war.

I knew it. I felt really despicable.

We had to fight the war.

I couldn't, that's all. I just couldn't do it.

I had to leave it to chaps like you who hadn't really got a reason.

- I wanted to fight, honestly.

- I know you did.

But I won the war.

**ENHOH:**