

Private & Confidential



7a 21/-

Chiswick Empire

27 Nov. 1916

" MY SUPERIOR OFFICER "

(A Sunday morning scene when " one of the boys " came home)

by

Michael Morton

.....

The following verse should appear on the front page of the programme.

" Might of the roaring boiler,
Force of the engine's thrust,
Strength of the sweating toiler,
Greatly in these we trust,
But back of them stands the Schemer,
The Thinker who drives things through,
Back of the job - the Dreamer,
Who's making the dream come true ".

Add MS 66149 H.

I Victoria Square
Grosvenor Place, S.W.

No.	584 ✓
LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S OFFICE.	
Name of Play.	<i>My Superior Officer.</i>
Theatre	<i>Empire Theatre, Chiswick.</i>
Date of Licence	<i>Nov 18, 1916.</i>

If we could secure an actor for Dick who has been out
and wounded and who is capable of playing the
part - I think it might be a valuable asset.



LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S OFFICE,
ST JAMES'S PALACE, S.W.

17th Nov. '16.

"MY SUPERIOR OFFICER" by M. Norton, 1 act,
for production Chiswick Empire, 27th Nov. '16.

A spirited little didactic sketch, preaching the need for doing something more for the country than seeking highly paid Government work at munitions; and also pointing out the mischievous folly of saying that "we have got the Germans beat." The sermon is preached by a wounded Tommy who returns home to his father, mother, brothers, and friends, to find that they are taking what he holds to be a wrong view of their personal responsibilities - though it is, he admits, the view taken by himself before he learned in the trenches what war really means. A vigorous and useful piece of work.

Recommended for License.

(Sgd) Ernest A. Bendall.

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LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S OFFICE,
ST JAMES'S PALACE, S.W.

17th Nov 16

"My Superior Officer" by Mr. Weston, 1st ed for publication
Christmas Empire: 27th Nov 16.

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paid Government ^{with} st munitions; and also pointing out the
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beat". The sermon is preached by a wounded Tommy
who returns home to his father, mother, brothers, & friends,
to find that they are taking what he holds to be a wrong
view of their personal responsibility - Right it is, he
admits, the view taken by himself before he landed in
the trenches that was really wrong. A vigorous & useful
piece of work.

Recommended for License

Ernest A. Bushall

142
Comptroller
19/11/16

PEOPLE IN THE PLAY.

Father age fifty eight.
Mother " fifty five.
Dick " twenty eight.
Billy " sixteen.
Baby " nine,
Jenny " twenty.
Jim " forty one.
Old Tom " fifty six.
Four little girls

@@@@@@@@@@@@

SCENE.

The living room in a ~~entire~~ workman's cottage, anywhere in Great Britain. A door at back C. leading to kitchen - R. at back door leading to street - doors R. and L. *a bright fire L. 11.*
 At rise of curtain a number of children with hands joined are circling round the room, singing a parody of the nursery rhyme - "Sing a Song of Sixpence".

" Sing a song of Zepplins,
 A little bit awry;
 One and twenty Germans
 Dropped from the sky.

When the Zep descended,
 The Huns began to sing,
 But 'Deutschland uber Alles'
 Did'nt seem the thing.

The Zep was in the farm-yard, "
 Sitting on its tail,
 An Essex Special met the crew
 And popped them into gaol.

(They break up, laughing merrily)

1st girl My father saw the Zep come down.

2nd girl So did mine.

3rd girl My father's a Special Constable.

Baby I got a wounded brother - he's comin' 'ome today.

(the last little girl standing silently by, does'nt say anything, they all turn to her speaking together)

Omnes What 'ave you got?

4th girl (sullenly) Nothin'!

Baby You 'ave'nt done nothin' to fight the Germans.

1st girl Aah, go on - yer a German! (with cries of) German! German!
~~xxxxxxx~~ (they advance threateningly on her - she rushes out persued by them - the mother enters from room L. she has on a skirt but no blouse, her neck and arms are bare - her hair in disorder - she was evidently interrupted in her dressind)

Mother (calling) Baby! (Baby stops at door and turns back - looking fearfully at her mother) Did'nt I tell yer to watch and see that mutton did'nt burn?

Baby I did! It ain't burnin'!

Mother 'Ow do yer know - playin' in 'ere?

Baby 'Cos I left the oven door open.

Mother (shreiking) Left the oven door open?

Baby 'Ow could I watch ^{it} with the oven door shut? (mother gives her a sounding smack)

Mother Get in there, and shut it yer fool! (Baby is sent flying into the kitchen - mother calling) Father! Father! (opens kitchen door) Where's yer father?

Baby (comes to door - sniffing) Don't know - I'm watchin' the mutton - can't watch everybody! (mother slams the door, and puts her hand to her head - Jenny enters with a bunch of ~~fix~~ flowers)

Mother Oh, its you Jinny! I thought yer'd gone out for the day.

Jinny I ain't been out five minutes - its the first sunday I've 'ad off from them munitions for months - I only just woke up a little while ago - I could 'ave slept all day! What was it yer was wantin'?

Mother I'm fair beat out with 'em all - there's Dick comin' 'ome by 'alf past twelve - and Baby yonder not got her Sunday clo's on yet - nor me dressed neither - and the dinner to get ready -

Jinny Don't you worry Aunt - I'll tend to things for yer - there's lots o' time yet before Dick can get 'ere - by the time 'e does, I'll 'ave everythin' ready - you'll see!

Mother Them's lovely roses yer've got there! Did Jim give 'em to yer Jinny?

Jinny (contemptuously) Jim? I bought 'em myself! Dick always liked roses! (Jinny arranging flowers in vase on table)

Mother Ah, I know - its the roses in yer cheeks 'e likes.

Jinny (with a shake of her head) No!

Mother Yer need'nt be ahsamed of it!

Jinny I ain't! I wish I was sure of it. The boys are so changed when they come back.

Mother Ain't enough to make devils of 'em? Look at the 'ard time our Dick's 'ad! Three months in the 'ospital!

Jinny And I'll be bound 'e's sorry to leave it!

Mother Sorry? To leave the 'ospital?

Jinny The boys get very fond of their nurses!

Mother So, thats whats worryin' yer?

Jinny No it ain't - but I wish now I'd nursed instead of doin' munitions!

Mother With all the money yer bringin' in Jinny?

Jinny I'm glad its been a 'elp to yer.

Mother 'Elp? It saved us sellin' up the 'ome when Dick went away - we none of us earned nothin' then but 'im!

little girl (enters) My mother wants to know if your Dick's come 'ome yet?

Mother No yet! (girl goes) Dear, oh dear! I got to make myself tidy - the neighbours'll all be comin in to see Dick.

Jinny Off yer go - I'll be 'ere!

Mother My man ought to be 'ere - I can't think where ~~he~~ 'e's got to!

Jinny I saw 'im runnin' to the station.

Mother The station? Already? The old man's gone clean daft - 'e'll sit down at that station for hours just lookin' up the line for the train that brings Dick 'ome - 'e thinks somethin' o' that boy, I can tell yer! (she exits into room - calls out) Jinny!

Jinny Yes Aunt?

Mother Give an eye to that mutton

Jinny All right!

Mother And tell Baby she's to come 'ere to me, and 'ave 'er 'air done, and 'er Sunday frock on!

(comotion heard outside - father's voice and Billy's raised in angry dispute - Baby runs in clapping her hands gleefully)

Baby Billy's catchin' it! My word 'e's catchin' it!

At a few low spoken quick words from Jinny, Baby exits door L. to have her hair done etc - as the door opens from street, and Billy is thrown in by his father who follows him in, and drops in the chair panting for breath, as if exhausted in the struggle with Billy - who is a big over grown boy, heavily

built, and might easily pass for nineteen - he stands looking at his father defiantly - (he is dressed as a Boy Scout)

I'll learn yer - goin' off to enlist.

I ain't goin' to be a Boy Scout no longer! Is them boy's arms? Is them boy's legs?

If they was twice their size it would'n't make yer a day older then sixteen year. (Mother comes in fastening her blouse -

Whatever's all this to do?

Billy 'ere goin' to enlist!

(shrinking) Enlist? A boy like you?

I got the muscle to lick any man.

It'll be a woman what'll lick you my lad! Come 'ere!

(shrinking away) I ain't done nothin' mother!

Don't be 'ard on Billy Aunt!

Is'n't it enough to make a saint 'ard? (to father) What's the good of yer - why don't yer keep 'im at 'ome?

I did my best mother, but 'e managed to give me the slip somehow. There's a draft goin' to the 'front' today, and I just ketched Mr Billy gettin' on the train with the men's kit - I pulled 'im out from under the bags in the van, just in time!

I'll bet yer'll be too late next time!

Don't you fool yerself lad - if yer do get away, I'll 'ave the law on yer - and back you'll come - yer've got to stick to your work - yer earnin' thirty shillin' a week - and we need that money.

No yer don't! Father makes three pound ten a week! I got all the badges I can get - eighteen of 'em - and I ain't goin' to be a Boy Scout no longer!
(the mother makes a dash at him - he exits quickly through door R. she shuts the door and locks it)

Thats where you'll stay my lad till yer go to work tomorrow mornin'!

Let 'im go Aunt!

Ain't we lost enough with Dick's 'joinin' up'? 'E could be earnin' five pound a week now, Dick could. (at this minute

she catches sight of Baby who has sneaked quietly in from door L, her hair tied up with ribbons and her 'sunday frock' on) And what are you doin' 'ere? Get in there and watch that mutton - (Baby hesitates) Clear off! (waving a hand towards the kitchen - Baby exits meekly) And put a clean pinny on! (she calls out)

dinner

Father

Ah well, we'll give Dick a good ^{any}'ow when 'e does come! (rubbing his hands and chuckling)

Mother

We will that - and with roses an' all! (she exits into kitchen -)

Jimmy

Yer know Uncle, yer'll never be able to keep Billy back - never in this world! (Baby sneaks very quietly from kitchen and closes the door carefully after her)

Father

No- yer right - one o' these days 'e'll manage to give us slip - and my word won't yer Aunt 'ave somethin' to say?

Baby

If Billy goes, I could make some money father, after school - won't yer let me?

Father

'Oo said I would'nt Baby? (she sits on his knee, and puts her arm round his neck)

Baby

Will I always be your baby? Sure?

Father

'O course yer little winkle - what are yer askin' that for?

Baby

Sally Parkes was the baby of her family - without tellin' a word they got 'a new baby - Sally said it was a dirty, mean ~~tr~~ trick to play on her. Father, yer won't play me a dirty, ~~max~~ mean trick like that will yer?

Father

I ain't got nothin' to say in this 'ouse - ask yer mother!

Baby

(calling out) Mother!

Father

Shut up! Yer mother's busy!

(Jim enters in his sunday clothes)

Jim

Mornin' Jinny! Gettin' somethin' good ready for dinner?

Jinny

I never saw anythin' like you Jim Arkwright - yer always ~~tht~~ thinkin' of what yer goin' to get!

~~Jim~~

~~xxxxxx Jim enters in his sunday clothes xxxxxxxx~~

~~Father~~

~~xxxxxx Father xxxxxxxx~~

Jim Yer wrong this time Jinny - I'm thinkin' of what you're goin' to get - and 'ere ~~is~~ it is, a bit of my own work.

(holding up a showy gilt chain)

Jinny (taking it) Oh! I couldn't wear that!

Jim Yer don't wear it - its a muff chain - all the girls 'ave 'em now - its the latest!

Jinny Thank yer Jim! Its lovely!

Jim Like it?

Jinny I should I did!

Jim Aye, they all do! (crossing to the father) Well, 'ow's the old man?

Father Kind o' nervy!

Jim Yer'll feel better when Dick gets 'ere.

Father Ain't yer workin' today?

Jim No! 'Ad a big week - joolry's boomin' - they can't get enough of it - I can afford to take my sunday off!

Jinny The munition~~s~~ boys is workin' Jim!

Jim Let 'em work!

Father We've took sunday off today 'count of Dick comin' 'ome!

Jim What's the good of sunday off - a feller can't even get a drink now when 'e wants!

Jinny And a good job too!

Jim T'aint the drink - its our rights I'm thinkin' of. They don't respect nobody these days - they water the whiskey - ~~we~~ weaken the beer - shorten the hours - what's left?

Old Tom (enters(Work and wages, yer old perisher!

Father Right yer are Tom, and plenty of it.

Jim If the government would make it work, wages, and whiskey, and plenty of it, I'd say 'ear - 'ear!

Tom I got more to complain of then you Jim, for forty year I sat in the same corner at the " Pig and Whistle ", reg'lar - every sunday mornin' - where can I sit now? (*disgustedly*) 'ome! Instead o' small beer, I get small talk - its jaw - jaw - jaw !

Father The government ought to put restrictions on "jaw", too!

Jenny Asquith would'nt dare - 'e's got a 'ome too!

Tom We're all in the same box when it comes to 'ome - I've gone into munitions, and I'm makin' money, but bless yer, she ain't satisfied!

Father Aye, there's a lot o' things what is'nt right - in the old days we could g o to the pub - now - we got to take it at 'ome!

Jinny In the old days yer did'nt 'ave the ~~maney~~ brass to buy it by the bottle Uncle.

Father That's so Jinny!

Tom I'll take beer!

Father

There's nothin' cheaper 'n whiskey in this 'ouse.

Tom

I like a drop o' whiskey at night, but I do like my beer in a mornin'.

Father

Yer got to drink whiskey --

Tom

'Spose I'll 'ave to put up with it - ~~xxx~~ whiskey morn, noon, and night, and they 'spects a feller to 'ave 'is 'air on, on a monday mornin'.

Father

(pouring) Say when.

Tom

Whenever yer like! (pours out for Jim too)

Jim

And to think ~~as~~ them Germans are 'avin' to pay three shillin' a pound for horse flesh!

Tom

(taking his whiskey) By gum, I shouldn't like to 'ave to eat it!

Jim

I tell yer, them Germans 'as got somethin' to fight for!
(taking his whiskey) Thank yer - got any water Jinny?

Father

~~We use water to wash - not to drink!~~ Bring us some o' that soda water Jinny. (she goes for it)

Tom

We 'ave syphons too! (Jinny brings syphon) I'd rather 'ave water, but my old woman will 'ave syphons, cos they're classy!

Father

'Elp yerself! (Jim fills his glass, and passes the syphon over to Tom, who passes it to the father, who presses the spring with evident enjoyment)

Baby

Can't I 'ave a drink o' soda water?

Father

Bring yer glass. (Baby brings glass - and he fills it - Tom and the father sit talking aside)

Jim

(crossing to Jinny) What are yer sittin' so quiet for Jinny?

Jinny

I'm listenin' to the - jaw - jaw - jaw ! I wish Dick would come - perhaps we'll 'ave somethin' different for a change.

Jim

Yer need'nt be in such a hurry, 'e 'll come soon enough!

Jinny

It seems a long time when yer waitin'.

Jim

That's what I say. Jinny, I want to know just where I stand with you - I'm makin' the money - I can put yer in as good a 'ome as this!

Jinny

That's very temptin' Jim.

Jim

(eagerly) Yes!

Jinny

For some other girl!

Jim

I ain't goin' to be put off no longer!

Jinny

Yer needn't be in a hurry Jim - yer 'avein' a good time.

Jim

The time of my life! If yer get much older Jinny, yer won't be for every market.

Jinny

Baby'll be growin' up - she'll be young enough for yer.
(laughs)

Jim

Yer can laugh - but there's more unlikely things.

Baby

(comes up to Jinny) What are yer laughin' at Jinny?

Jinny

'Cos Jim said 'e might marry yer when yer grow up.

Baby

I wouldn't marry yer Jim Arkwright, not for nothin' in the world. (Jinny laughs louder)

Jim

(annoyed) Why?

Baby

Cos I'm goin' to marry a soldier - Jinny says they're the best men!

Jinny

Now, yer know just where yer stand.

Baby

(Baby jumps up and rushes to the door)

Jinny

There's a motor at the door. (she runs to door to open it)

Father

(with a glad cry) Dick!

Mother

(calling) Mother! Dick's come! (mother comes in from kitchen very flurried)

Jinny

The dinner ain't ready!

Father

(at door L.) Billy! Dick's come! (there is a crash on the door, and Billy has burst it open)

Billy

Yer've burst the lock!

Mother

Yer think any lock could keep me away from Dick when 'e comes 'ome?
(the father sits quite overcome) (Billy rushes out)

What in the world's come to yer father? Get up and meet the boy.

(the father rises with difficulty) Jinny, you take yer roses.

What'll I do?

Shut up! (Dick's voice heard outside)

Mother!

(with a cry) Dick! (goes towards door - Billy comes in holding Dick's arm - and Baby who now has a German helmet on her head, pushes past then in great excitement - Dick is wearing the regulation blue suit and red tie of the wounded soldier, and his khaki over coat)

Hello mother! Here we are again!

(throwing her arms round him) My boy! My boy! (she is too over come for a moment to say anything else - he pats her on the back)

Cheer O, mother! Well father! (shakes hands with him) Yer lookin' like a two year old! And Jim and old Tom - I'm glad to see yer perishin' faces again.

'Ow's the parly voo?

Oh, I can mangey the oof's with the best of 'em! (Jinny ~~begin~~ begins to cry - he turns to her) And Jinny? 'Ere - what are yer cryin' for? I've come 'ome! Laugh Jinny! Laugh!

(laughs through her tears) It was yer comin 'ome so sudden like - we didn't expect yer till the twelve thirty train!

Miss Marjorie drove me over in her car.

Miss Marjorie?

She was my nurse!

You was right Jinny!

She's the sister of one of our boys - he's my best pal!

What? One o' them swells a Tommy?

There's many a swell who's a Tommy - and ain't they proud of it? This feller's job was spendin' ten thousand a year - I asked 'im when 'e 'joined up' what 'e was doin' with the Tommies - he said - "Oh, I just chucked my job, like you did!

Jim

Chucked it? Ten thousand a year! What for?

Dick

For mother and father - Jinny and Baby - and old Tom and his missis - and all such blighters as you Jim.

Jim

Me? 'Oo are yer gettin' at - I'm no shirker - I'm over military age!

Jinny

Just two months over the age Jim!

Dick

'Spose yer mother 'ad made it two months sooner Jim?

Jim

My mother never made a mistake - bless 'er 'eart!

Mother

And yer mean to say I did, 'cos I didn't ave Dick born over military age? I wouldn't 'ave done it if I could - my Dick's done 'is bit - and Billy's goin' to do 'is! I'm no shirker - ~~and if I thought it was goin' to take twenty years more to lick them Bosches~~ - I've given the country me best, and if takes twenty years more to lick them Bosches there's Jinny there to 'carry on' and furnish nippers for the British Army!

Father

Stick to it Mother!

Mother

And what's more, if they run short now, my old man goes too!

Father

Me mother?

Mother

Old Mason was over fifty! Didn't 'e go? Tell Jim about old Mason Dick, while I give a look at the dinner. (she exits into the kitchen)

Dick

Oh, old Mason was a grand joke - they wouldn't 'ave 'im at no price, and 'e wouldn't take 'no' for an answer - 'e shaved off the 'air on 'is face - 'e dyed the 'air on 'is 'ead, and swore 'e was thirty seven! 'E got in all right! the dye's wore off, and 'is 'air's greyer then ever, but 'e's got what 'e wanted - what ~~any~~ man wants - 'e's in the 'fight'!

Jim

'Oo are yer gettin' at?

Dick

Don't be down'earted old pal - yer lookin' grand - its worth comin' 'ome just to see you!

Jim

(brightening up) Put on nearly two stone since yer left.

Jinny

Jim's been livin' on the 'fat of the land'.

Tom

So 'ave all of us.

Dick

That's bad! Over feedin's worse then under feedin'. Over feedin' the German swine's what's brought this war on.

Billy

(coming forward) Dick, ain't I big enough for the army?

Father

You shut that, or get out!

Dick

All right Billy, we'll talk about the army afterwards.

Father

'Ave a drink Dick?

Dick

No thanks father.

Father

We got to drink yer health.

Dick

Well, its my 'ealth and your drink - go on - drink 'earty!

Jim

Yer used to Dick.

Dick

I could do my share - but when I 'joined up' I didn't get much chance, after a while I got out of the 'abit --- that saved my life!

Jim

No?

I says to myself - goodbye "Blighty" -

Dick

When I got it 'in the neck' I thought I was 'done in'! The doctor said if I'd 'ad any liquor in my system I wouldn't 'ave 'ad an earthly. When I see that whiskey in yer 'and father, I'm wonderin' what chance you'll 'ave when they call the doctor in. (father looking up frightened, puts whiskey down)

Jim

Tell us about the trenches, and the fightin', and all the 'ole shootin' match.

Dick

If yer want to spend a 'appy day' go to the trenches - tea and stinks - 'ide and seek' with the rats - all the fun of the fair's'nin that show over there.

Jinny

Where do yer sleep?

Dick

Sleep? In the nice soft mud - the only way a soldier can get a decent bed, is to get a bullet in 'im.

Father

Lets 'ave a look at yer.

Dick

Oh, I'm all right father - soon be ready for another 'go' at 'em.

Jinny

Yer want to go again?

Dick

We won't talk about that now - (looking round) my, ain't it grand - new wall paper - new furniture - I'm just full of 'ome and all of yer - I want to 'ear about everythin' and everybody - and what yer all doin'!

Tom My business is ruined, and I'm makin' more money then ever!

Dick 'Ow's that?

Tom Munitions!

Jim Tom's doin' fine - and so am I!

Dick What, in munitions?

Jim No-o! Joolry -! All fake stuff, but it makes a great show, ~~but~~ there's no fake about the money I get!

Father Jim's makin' big money - 'e's makin' so much, 'e wants some one to spend it for 'im - so 'e's lookin' for a gal.

Dick (smiles) That's easy!

Jim No it is'nt! Girl's are makin' more money now - and they're gettin' a little more partic'lar.

Dick That's one in the eye for some feller!

Father We're all doin' somethin' Dick.

Dick You too father? Why yer said before I 'went away' nobody wanted yer - yer was too old! I told yer not to worry!

Father Munitions was'nt doin' much then Dick - I'm at it now, and yer mother too! (mother enters)

Mother I ain't got no patience with 'ousework now Dick - it don't pay! Billy's makin' thirty shillin' a week!

Tom All'on His Majesty's Service! - God bless 'im - and the German's are payin' three shillin' a pound for 'orse flesh! So our cat's got to put up with mutton!

Dick That sounds a bit of all right! I'm glad to see yer all doin' so well- yer've 'ad two years of grand times! Is that all?

Jim What more can yer ask?

Dick I'd like to know what yer've done for yer country.
Jim Worked - to keep "business goin' as usual"!

Dick Yer paid for yer work Jim - more'n yer ever got afore - and and I'm glad of it - but what I want to know is - what 'ave yer done for yer country!
Jim Worked my g uts out!

Dick And put on two stone doin' it

Jim 'Ere, 'oo are yer gettin' at? Me?

No - not partic'lar!

Per'aps its old Tom yer gettin' at?

Is it yer mother and father Dick?

I don't mean to be personal - I'm talkin' to the 'ole lot of yer - yer've all got so much to do, and yer so full of it. What's 'appenin' is passin' so quick yer don't realize it now, but the memory of what yer do, and what yer don't do will last as long as yer live - and yer children after yer - . The question I'm askin' yer ~~xxxxxx~~ now, will be asked yer then - 'what did yer do for yer country, yer'll never get away from it! It'll find yer in yer 'ome - it'll find yer in the works - it'll find yer at the pub - it'll foller yer to the Day of Judgement! What did yer do for yer country'?

Yer talkin' as though we was doin' noth in'!

I don't know what yer gettin' at Dick?

Just wait a minute mother, and yer'll see. I asked Jim the question 'cos the trade 'e's workin' so 'ard at, ain't no earthly use in this war, and 'cos 'e's a single man with no one to think of but 'imself I got to think of myself.

'E loves 'imself, does Jim!

I don't blame 'im, 'e don't know no better Jinny, afore I went out, I loved myaelf just as much as 'e did - when a feller works at a machine all day - week in - week out - all 'is life 'e gets to be part of that machune - thats all 'e knows - and all 'e thinks about -is 'is pay! - and if 'e don't get enough, 'e strikes! That was me afore I went out. One day, goin' to my machine, I come plum up ag'in a picture poster on the wall - one of our fellers, fightin' like Hell ag'in big odds for 'is life - and beckonin' to me to come over and 'elp 'im - blow me if my 'eart did'nt stop beatin' for a second - then I yelled out - "right o, 'mate" I'll be with yer as quick as I can get there" - and I 'joined up!

I'll never forget the day yer went lad!

It was a great day father - the crowd at the station, and the cheers when the train went out - Gawd, them cheers was ringin' in our ears all day - till we got aboard the trnsport - we was packed so close I could feel the feller's 'eart beatin' ag'in mine, but when the ship moved slow, and very quiet like away from the dock, the boys was quiet too, they did'nt want no sergeant to order 'eyes right' - all eyes was on the land we was leavin' - some wet got in my blinkers, and I could'nt

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see the shore - I rubbed 'em 'ard, but when I looked again, England was gone - 'idden in a mist! (slight pause) It seemed like all the life 'ad gone out of me. Comin' back on the ship, I was'nt standin' on my feet - I asked the nurse if she could see the land - 'just a little 'outline' she said - I begged 'er to let me look - but she said it would be riskin' my life to move - I didn't care - I wanted to see it so bad I got excited - so nurse put 'er arms under me and lifted up my 'ead, and I saw the land I thought I'd never see again - that's when I found out I loved my country better then myself, (all are very much moved - slight pause - then with a sigh of great satisfaction) England's ~~really~~ good enough to die for!

Yer never know the worth of what yer got, till yer lose it!

If yer killed out there, yer never see yer country again - yer buried in a strange land!

France ain't a strange land no longer Jim - thea's a little bit of Britain over there - where the boys are put to 'rest'!

And that "little bit of Britain" will be thought more of, then the 'ole of this blessed country put together!

Where ever a British soldier is 'restin'' - east or west - will be for us the beauty spots on this ugly earth!

I'm sorry lad yer don't think we're doin' our bit!

You are father! Why, without you munition workers to send us out the stuff - we'd be 'done in' to a man! But yer can do a bit more - we've got a long way to go, and if you fellers at 'ome don't put yer back's in it - we won't 'get there'!

'Oo says so?

Don't yer read the papers?

Read 'em? I'm blind with 'em!

Well, I'm tryin' to make yer see .

Ah, what are yer talkin' about - we got 'em beaten!

Get that out of yer 'ead - or that's the sort of thing what's goin' to beat us!

'Oo says so?

I say so! Yer fightin' with yer 'ands in yer pockets!

Oh, it is'nt work - its money yer thinkin' of?

You've 'it it mother!

Father

Did'nt I give up my saturday night to listen to fellers from the War Savin's Committee?

Tom

And me too!

Jim

I 'spose yer think I was'nt there?

Dick

Was yer? Good for you Jim! What did yer do father?

Father

Well, I'm thinkin' about it!

Dick

And you Tom?

Tom

The feller talked so long, when 'e came to the point I was asleep!

Dick

I'll bet you were wide awake Jim!

Jim

I was Dick! That feller got the cheek to say we ought to give up our money! Ain't we doin' our bit?

Dick

Don't yer think them fellers 'over ther' who's been stickin' in them perishin' trenches for months are doin' their bit?

Jim

Rather!

Dick

Well, one day the Colonel comes up to a lot of them blighters and 'e says to 'em - 'I want six men to volunteer to go out' - never mind what it was 'e wanted 'em to do - but it was sure death - did them fellers say 'we're doin' our bit? No, the 'ole bloomin' lot stepped forward!

Tom

What do yer want me to do? Lend the money the government pays me for my work? What for?

Dick

So they can go on payin' yer 'igh wages - if they 'ave to go outside and borrow it at 'igh interest, 'oos goin' to pay it? You - and Tom!

Jim

Not me! The government's got to pay

Dick

Yer fat'ead, I told yer over feedin' was bad for yer - the fat's gone to yer 'ead - yer gettin' soft on yer soft job!

Jim

What right 'ave you to call me to account?

Dick

Don't get shirty Jim - we're talkin' workin' man to workin' man. I've been lyin' in my bed for three months - my job's been thinkin' - nothin' but thinkin'! When you ain't workin' yer eatin' and drinkin' - yer ain't got no time for thinkin'!

Jim

Yer a bit strange - yer did'nt use to talk like this.

Dick

There ain't a man gone out to the 'front' 'oo'll ever come

back the same man - there's nothin' like death to clear up muddles - I've looked death in the face - and I see things just as they are!

We know 'ow things are!

No yer don't - when I 'went out' - the walls was covered with posters callin' on men to enlist in Kitchener's Army for "King and country" - Kitchener got 'is men - and when they couldnt 'nt get any more with kind words, conscription got 'em. I come back - and I see the enlistment posters covered up with new bills, askin' the men left behind to lend their money to their country - ! Kitchener was popular, was 'nt 'e?

Popular? 'E was worshipped - 'e was!

So say all of us.

Kitchener asked yer to give up yer lives, and yer worshipped 'im for it - McKenna asks yer to lend yer money - do yer do it? No! Yer worship yer money! What's money?

What's life without it?

Ask the boys 'over there'! there's fellers worth millions livin' in a 'ole in the ground, next to fellers not worth a copper - fightin' with 'em - dyin' with 'em! What's money to them fellers? Muck! The worst shirker in this war, is the money shirker!

Let the rich man pay the bills - 'e's got the brass!

You leave the rich man to McKenna - ~~'e knows what 'e's got, and 'e's gettin' it - and yer can bet yer boots 'e'll get more when 'e wants it - but 'e says the rich man's money ain't enough - 'e says the country needs the capital of labour too - just as much as the country needs their work. 'E don't ask yer to give it - 'e in big taxes like the rich man was to do - 'e asks yer to lend it !~~

'E's got to provide for a rainy day same as we 'ave Jim.

And there's more "rainy" days in this little Island then fine ones.

That's why every man's got to get under 'is own umbrella!

And they're gettin' "under" - millions of 'em!

McKenna don't get my money!

if yer'd only go out in the trenches, and see what yer pals are goin' through, yer'd take yer shirt off yer back, and give it to McKenna id 'e asked yer for it!

Jim
Dick
Ah, what's my few pounds count in the millions 'e wants?

What every man and woman 'as above their livin' does count - and count big! We're spendin' five millions a day - every bit of that five millions was a penny before it was a million - we've got five million men in khaki - every one of that ~~fix~~ five million was a feller lookin' after 'imself - a nobody, that did'nt count till 'e joind 'up, and made five millions of the best army in the world!

Billy
Father! Won't yer let me go Mother?

Dick
I don't understand it - some fellers give up their lives ~~xxxx~~ without a word - and other fellers will be damned before they'll lend their money! Every man 'oo's got money, no matter 'ow much or little, 'olds the life of 'is pals in 'is 'ands. This is a free country - every man - rich man and workman can spend 'is money just as 'e likes - its your money or our lives! If a feller chucks 'is money away, on things 'e don't need - there ain't no law to haul 'im up for it, but if things go wrong for want of that money - God 'elp ~~the man~~ ! 'oo wasted it!

Jim
Dick
~~I don't see it~~ - Every man for 'imself, I say!

That's the whiskey talkin' Jim - not you! I've never seen yer stand back when one of yer pals was in trouble - put me down for one day's pay says you - and every man jack of yer is the same.

Jim
Dick
The country ain't as 'ard up as that!

Yer fat 'eaded old 'blighter' if McKenna did'nt need it 'e ~~xx~~ would'nt ask for it. We've fought for the country - you've worked for it - but yer've got to lend yer money to keep it goin' - then, yer'll 'ave somethin' to say in the business of it.

Jim
Dick
We got somethin' to say now.

Jim, money talks louder then any labour member that ever got ~~up~~ up in the House of Commons!

Jim
Dick
Dick, yer a dreamer!

Am I? Well, you fellers can make my dream come true, if yer'll only save yer money while yer gettin' big pay - after the war labour will 'ave its own capital - think o' that! Yer'll 'ave capital and labour in yer own 'ands - yer'll be able to 'elp yer pals when they come back to a good job - and ask no favours from nobody! McKenna makes yer a sportin' offer - for fifteen and sixpence, in five years yer get a sovereign - ~~xxxx~~ instead of workin' for money, money'll be workin' for you - ~~xxxxxxwillxxxxxxcapitalxxxx~~

