

# CHIN-WAG Newsletter

Villiers Park Educational Trust's commemoration of the First World War through extracts from the Old Etonian's and Eton Manor's CHIN-WAG Newsletter

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In March 1917 it seemed the weather was one of the battles facing troops on the frontline in France. Club members write home about bitterly cold conditions.

## A letter from Stan Vickers

The weather here is very cold now, but I expect it is about the same over in 'Blighty'. Yesterday was the coldest day France had had for years, and I don't doubt that at all, as everything you touch is frozen up. We bought a couple of eggs for breakfast yesterday morning and when we went to fry them they were frozen through, and we had to peel the shell off, just like an hard-boiled egg, before we could put them in the pan. We had a little fall of snow a week ago and it still lies on the ground.

I am now under canvas so you can guess I am having a fine time. We have a fire here, but when there are four of the boys around it the rest of us cannot see whether it is alight or out. We are having a very nice and easy time at present, and it would be quite a treat if it was not for the cold. There is a new Division up here with us and I am sorry for the fellows as they have just come out from 'Blighty' and are fairly upset with the cold. The French people I met, while on rest, nearly all think that the war will end in about four months, and I sincerely hope they are near right.

I remain, yours sincerely

Stan Vickers

## A letter from Sergt. Barnes

After so long in England it seems strange to write to you from here. It is just over a week since we have left. The voyage was very calm, and after a 32-hour journey in the train, and a route march at the end, we were finally settled after four days of rough time.

The weather here is very cold, in fact, the coldest I have ever known and one has to do a good deal of exercise to keep warm.

Our home at the time of writing is a very much battered farmyard, but by the time you get this I expect we shall be in a much more battered show.

Well, I must pack up now. I hope you can read this as there are fifteen sergeants in our part of the farm, and are at this moment kicking up a most unearthly row; still we are a merry crew.

Yours very sincerely

Sergt. Barnes

Please revisit [www.villierspark.org.uk](http://www.villierspark.org.uk) each month for the next edition of CHIN-WAG from a century ago.

The wedding of Lieut. Nettlefold and Miss Wagg

[Not pictured]



Having decided to see Lieut. Nettlefold and Miss Wagg married, Will and I started at 12.50 on top of the No.6 bus. Our excitement broke this bus down when we got to Riseholme Street; so making another start, we booked to Marble Arch, arriving at 1.50.

We started up Bryanston-place in grand style, which led to Bryanston-square and, passing Mr. Wagg's home, noticed the blinds were down. This made us wonder if we were going to a funeral instead of a wedding; but as we all know the West-End is very different to the East, we came to the conclusion it was the fashion up in that end of London.

A few minutes' walk brought us to St Mary's, Bryanston Church, at 2 o'clock. On entering we found just four persons seated. Mr. Wagg, being extra best man, was the next to enter. Mr. Nettlefold was the next to enter, looking decidedly uncomfortable; he said he felt awfully nervous and hoped we were not going to throw anything at him, then went on his way rejoicing down to the altar. By this time the church was very nearly full with guests.

Punctual at 2.30 came the beautiful bride leaning on the arm of a fine naval officer. It was a good thing there was only two of us club boys, or I am thinking more hearts would have been wounded or the bride would have been kidnapped. The two Miss Nettlefolds were the bridesmaids and looking very charming.

Altogether it was a splendid wedding. One and all the boys wish Mr. and Mrs. Nettlefold every happiness and the best of luck.