



Compton Chamberlayne

HUNGRY TROOPS AT MANOEUVRES

SOLDIERS WITHOUT FOOD

During the manoeuvres this week in Wiltshire, the 1st Royal Scots, who are attached to the 10th Infantry Brigade of the Red Army, took up an isolated position on the extreme right of the defending line on Compton Down, and, the transport failing to reach them, the men were without food for nearly two days.

They had their last meal at Damerham, about ten miles in the rear, at five o'clock on Monday morning, and it was past noon on Tuesday before rations could be issued to them. During the night some of the outlying pickets left their posts and invaded the village of Compton Chamberlayne. They knocked up the villagers, and asked for food, but there was little obtainable, and the men soon afterwards were chased by a patrol of the Blue enemy.

The transport of the Red defenders got hopelessly mixed up in the narrow roads at Broadchalke, and for a distance of four miles the roadway was blocked the whole night through. The troops could not get their supplies, and lay down to sleep on empty stomachs.

The civilian drivers of the hired transport were in the same plight as the soldiers, but to satisfy their hunger they completely cleared out a patch of turnips in a field adjoining the road, and picked every apple in the village. Fencing was pulled down and gates unhinged to make fires for the troops in the public streets. The villagers got no sleep the whole night through.

A raid was made by about two thousand soldiers on the village public-house, where beer was dispensed in buckets, basins, and even jam jars. Men who managed to get inside were forced to remain there, and this confusion continued until every drop of beer was sold.

Farmers are complaining that their men have caught the "red fever" and have gone to see the soldiers. Harvest operations are practically suspended.

A farmer at Fovant told a reporter that at breakfast time on Wednesday morning he found that all his hands, twelve in number, had left work, and had left their horses in the stables. "My wheat is only half carried," he said. "This has been going on for the last week, since the troops have reached the district. My risk is great, and I can claim no compensation."

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