

It was the last leave for a long time to all, but a lucky few and the last altogether for a goodly number.

September 24th saw a move south and the place allocated for the 11th was Hurdcott Camp on Salisbury Plain. A lot of unkind things had been heard, via the cook-house, of Salisbury Plain, and it more than lived up to its reputation, although compared with what came later it was, of course, a paradise.

Once again meals were taken in huts. There were also two good pipe-stoves for heating and these were usually well patronised.

The Battalion was now a small cog in a very large machine known as the 31st Division. The training of a division was a slow business and with the "Pals" division it was a case of an army being born and created out of raw material with just a skeleton of regulars, and this accounted for the lengthy period of the stay in England. The 94th Brigade of which the 11th East Lancs. formed part was also made up of the 10th, 11th and 12th Battalions of the "York and Lancs".

There was the Bradford, Leeds, Sheffield and Barnsley "Pals" and like the "East Lancs" they were made up of men from all ranks of life. A good sprinkling of college students filled the ranks of the City Battalions, whilst the Barnsley fellows were largely miners. They were all a grand cheerful lot of chaps, good sportsmen and the whole brigade was a well balanced, keen and happy crowd.

A friendly rivalry was very much in evidence in sport and military efficiency and leg-pulling was the order of the day when they mingled.

Inter-Battalion football matches were occasions of intense excitement. The "East Lancs" were very proud of their team which contained chiefly "Z" Company men. Sergt. Major Shorrocks, the Battalion S.M. knew what was good for the troops. A soccer match to him meant the discarding of the cloak of discipline and it was good to see him twirling his moustaches in boyish excitement and to hear his deep grunts of approval when he was watching one of the many games that helped to pass away the moments of leisure.

The Battalion team was never beaten and the Divisional Cup still lies in state in Accrington to bear evidence of the great powers of the team.

The Band was worthy of the Battalion and was always worth its weight in gold. Chorley Town very gallantly contributed to the major portion of this and as the Bandsmen and Bandmaster were fully trained before they joined, the "East Lancs" counted themselves fortunate and always appreciated the merry tunes and stirring marches.

Salisbury Plain was big enough for battleships to roam about on and sometime s wet enough to take submarines. Brigade and Divisional work was now in full swing. Everywhere things were happening - it was like a busy bee-hive.

Early morning mug of tea and a biscuit was followed by a dose of physical drill in loose dress. Shaving and a general clean-up followed and everybody was then ready for a good breakfast. It did not matter much if it were cold for appetites were keen and there was work to do.