



Chaksata

July 16th/86

My dear Pippa

I think I wish honour
you with an epistle this week, as
you have been behaving well lately;
(if you have not you had better hand
this on to Peruel, who I am sure
never did evil).

The dulness of this place was
varied the other day by an exciting
circumstance. About a mile
and a half from our barracks
there is a hill on which are
encamped a lot of young soldiers

of various other regiments, who are mostly just out from home. The men of the different regiments are in separate little camps close together. The other night two of these lots started fighting each other & nearly all the men of the other regiments taking different sides a tremendous row ensued; bayonets, sticks, stones &c were freely used; one man fired off a cartridge from his rifle & a lot of others went & put out their rifles & undid their packages of ammunition but fortunately the row was subdued before they used them; it was stopped by the Piquet which consisted of men of the 60th, who were supposed to have behaved very well, until it came out that they said if there was a fight

next night they would have some of the fun too & join one side or the other. Several men were rather badly hurt & the sergeant of the Piquet who got separated from his men had to flee for his life pursued by infuriated men with drawn bayonets! There would probably have been more damage done if hadn't been for one of the 8th Hussars, quite a lad, who behaved splendidly; the cavalry have heavy swords & these were all in one tent where the Sergeants of the cavalry were sleeping; this youth heard some of the men say "let's go to the hussar's tent & take their swords"; he at once rushed to the tent, drew a sword & stood in the door; when the others arrived he shouted out that he would cut any man's head

of who tried to get into the tent; one of the Liverpool Reg^t, with a fixed bayonet, said he would soon clear him out of that & rushed at him, but the youth made a tremendous cut & slashed the man's cheek usefully off; the discomfited Liverpoolian rolled howling down the Khud & the rest of the men didn't think it good enough to try again & contented themselves with stoning the youth. The row was supposed to be the result of an old feud between the Liverpool Regiment & the 25th (N.O.B's) & the story ~~is~~ that it was begun by a drunken man of the Liverpool's going past the guard tent & shouting out to Sergeant that he wanted a cup of coffee, some toast & the blood of a N.O.B! We were rather



afraid that there would be a
 continuation of the fight next night,
 but by taking some pretty strong
 measures they were kept quiet &
 there has been no row since. Two
 of our men were supposed to have
 been there, but nothing particular
 has been discovered & as far as I
 can make out none of the ring-leaders
 have been captured. That is all
 the excitement.

as there is nothing else to tell I will
 just give you the Subalterns' nick-
 names, for future reference: Blackett,
 called the Doe on account of his resemblance
 to a female rabbit; Wilkinson, known as
 Fine Billy - vide "ask Mamma". Ralph
 Couper, called Vic, his christian name



is Victor; King Salter, K-S from the initials of his name; Fortescue called the Child on account of his beardless face & generally infantine appearance. Lodge called 'odge of the Rifles - his father was in a Dragoon regiment & was known as 'odge of the 'Saires. Strachey - called Richard. Lascelles or W.E. from his initials; Eccles known as Londoner, because when he was at Aldershot he never used to go to town; Ferguson called the young Laird being the son of a Scotch Laird, Mackenzie called the Prosper, I don't know why; Bursford known as Pongo on account of his resemblance to a monkey (his ears stand out from his head quite straight); Congreve called Smith because of his aristocratic bearing;

Majendie known as Jelly because he is so fat; the only one without a name is Gards-Buller who came sketch a short time ago that we haven't had time to christen him yet - Oh, I forgot Glentworth, called Jog or Jogglebury Crowdy from being a wheezy stumpy little man like his namesake in Soapy Sponge.

Pongo nearly killed himself the other day riding a rampaging pony which went over a khud with him; however he is recovering all right having broken no bones. Love to all the family - Fancy Williams with his head & chin shaved as an amateur detective!

Thine always the brother

Richard Starch

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