



# **IN THE RANKS OF THE C.I.V.**

**ERSKINE CHILDERS**

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# IN THE RANKS OF THE C.I.V.

A NARRATIVE AND DIARY OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH  
THE C.I.V. BATTERY (HONOURABLE ARTILLERY COMPANY) IN  
SOUTH AFRICA

BY  
ERSKINE CHILDERS

1900

In The Ranks Of The C.I.V. By Erskine Childers.  
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could always rely upon. There are many episodes, some of which will remain a lasting memory to me. One in particular I might refer to, when, two days after leaving Lindley, two companies of Munster Fusiliers came unexpectedly under heavy rifle-fire at short range; your guns coming smartly into action, dispersed the enemy with a few well-directed shrapnel. It was one of the smartest pieces of work I have ever seen. On another occasion, outside Bethlehem (I forget the name of the place),<sup>6</sup> when in a rear-guard action with De Wet, you advanced under a heavy cross-fire of shrapnel, when you rendered splendid service, and saved Roberts' Horse by silencing two guns and smashing a third. On that day not a single life was lost on our side. On still another occasion, outside Bethlehem, under heavy shell-fire from five guns in a strong position, the steadiness with which your guns were served would have done credit to the finest troops in the Empire. There are other incidents that I might mention, but these three occur to me specially at the moment. You are returning home, to receive a hearty welcome, which you undoubtedly deserve, and I hope you will sometimes think of me, as I certainly shall of you; and now you can tell your friends what I think of you. I wish you a safe and pleasant voyage. Good-bye."

We shall also tell them what we thought of him. There was not a man of us but liked, admired, and trusted him—as I know did his whole brigade. And that he trusted us, is an honour we shall not forget.

It was good to be going home again; but I think every one felt half sorry that we were not to share in finishing the work before his brigade. The whole C.I.V. regiment was being sent home together; but the Infantry, of course, had done the bulk of their work when we began ours. It was curious that this was the first occasion on which the three arms of the C.I.V., Infantry, Mounted Infantry, and Artillery, had been united under one command.

We spent the next two days in preparations for departure, in sorting of harness, sifting and packing of kit, and great burnings of discarded rubbish.

On the first of October, Williams and I walked into Pretoria to do some business, and try and pick up some curios. We had an exhausting conflict

<sup>6</sup> Bultfontein.

















