

**REMINISCENCES OF  
A GRENADIER,  
1914-1919**

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Reminiscences of a Grenadier, 1914-1919 by E. R. M Fryer

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**E. R. M FRYER**

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1914-1919**



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UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

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TO THE  
AMERICAN

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# REMINISCENCES OF A GRENADIER

## CHAPTER I

### THE EARLY DAYS

EVERYONE knows how the War started; if they don't, it is through their own idleness, as books on the subject are legion; I do not propose, therefore, to do more than tell how it started for me and for many more harmless civilians at that time employed in peaceful occupations.

The London Season had just come to its allotted end, a season perhaps more magnificent than any of its forerunners. Everyone had given themselves up to amusement; this, indeed, seemed to be the sole object of existence. Whether people had any foreboding of the misery that was to descend on the world I know not, but I remember often feeling that something vague was going to happen, and that the season of 1914 was going to be the last of its kind.

## Reminiscences of a Grenadier

Well, as the last-joined schoolboy knows, the War for us started on August 4th, we being forced to declare war on Germany, it taking effect from midnight of that date.

I shall not easily forget the scene outside Buckingham Palace that night; the Palace was surrounded by cheering, enthusiastic crowds, all shouting themselves hoarse and singing patriotic songs—in fact, doing all the things the phlegmatic Englishman is supposed never to do.

Next day I went to the City as usual, but was put to work on the new Government War Risks scheme, the insuring of ships at more reasonable rates than the insurance companies were able to give. That day and the next I spent answering questions for shippers and ship-owners of all nationalities, and precious boring it was too!

Whether it was boredom or patriotism which drove me into the Army I don't know, but next day, the 7th, I set off on a tour of the Territorial Regiments in London to try and get someone to take me in. The Inns of Court wouldn't look at anyone who hadn't previously been a soldier of