

**BULL-DOG DRUMMOND:  
THE ADVENTURES OF A  
DEMOBILISED OFFICER  
WHO FOUND PEACE DULL**

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**Bull-Dog Drummond: The Adventures of a Demobilised Officer Who Found Peace Dull** by  
Cyril McNeile

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# BULL-DOG DRUMMOND

THE ADVENTURES OF A DEMOBILISED  
OFFICER WHO FOUND PEACE DULL

BY  
"SAPPER"  
(CYRIL McNEILE)

HODDER AND STOUGHTON  
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## PROLOGUE

IN the month of December 1918, and on the very day that a British Cavalry Division marched into Cologne, with flags flying and bands playing as the conquerors of a beaten nation, the manager of the Hôtel Nationale in Berne received a letter. Its contents appeared to puzzle him somewhat, for having read it twice he rang the bell on his desk to summon his secretary. Almost immediately the door opened, and a young French girl came into the room.

"Monsieur rang?" She stood in front of the manager's desk, awaiting instructions.

"Have we ever had staying in the hotel a man called le Comte de Guy?" He leaned back in his chair and looked at her through his pince-nez.

The secretary thought for a moment and then shook her head.

"Not as far as I can remember," she said.

"Do we know anything about him? Has he ever fed here, or taken a private room?"

Again the secretary shook her head.

"Not that I know of."

The manager handed her the letter, and waited in silence until she had read it.

"It seems on the face of it a peculiar request from an unknown man," he remarked as she laid it down. "A dinner of four covers; no expense to be spared. Wines specified and if not in hotel to be obtained. A



private room at half-past seven sharp. Guests to ask for room X."

The secretary nodded in agreement.

"It can hardly be a hoax," she remarked after a short silence.

"No." The manager tapped his teeth with his pen thoughtfully. "But if by any chance it was, it would prove an expensive one for us. I wish I could think who this Comte de Guy is."

"He sounds like a Frenchman," she answered. Then after a pause: "I suppose you'll have to take it seriously?"

"I must." He took off his pince-nez and laid them on the desk in front of him. "Would you send the *maitre d'hôtel* to me at once?"

Whatever may have been the manager's misgivings, they were certainly not shared by the head waiter as he left the office after receiving his instructions. War and short rations had not been conducive to any particularly lucrative business in his sphere; and the whole sound of the proposed entertainment seemed to him to contain considerable promise. Moreover, he was a man who loved his work, and a free hand over preparing a dinner was a joy in itself. Undoubtedly he personally would meet the three guests and the mysterious Comte de Guy; he personally would see that they had nothing to complain of in the matter of the service at dinner. . . .

And so at about twenty minutes past seven the *maitre d'hôtel* was hovering round the hall-porter, the manager was hovering round the *maitre d'hôtel*, and the secretary was hovering round both. At five-and-twenty minutes past the first guest arrived. . . .

He was a peculiar-looking man, in a big fur coat, reminding one irresistibly of a cod-fish.

"I wish to be taken to Room X." The French secretary stiffened involuntarily as the *maître d'hôtel* stepped obsequiously forward. Cosmopolitan as the hotel was, even now she could never hear German spoken without an inward shudder of disgust.

"A Boche," she murmured in disgust to the manager as the first arrival disappeared through the swing doors at the end of the lounge. It is to be regretted that that worthy man was more occupied in shaking himself by the hand, at the proof that the letter was *bona fide*, than in any meditation on the guest's nationality.

Almost immediately afterwards the second and third members of the party arrived. They did not come together, and what seemed peculiar to the manager was that they were evidently strangers to one another.

The leading one—a tall gaunt man with a ragged beard and a pair of piercing eyes—asked in a nasal and by no means an inaudible tone for Room X. As he spoke a little fat man who was standing just behind him started perceptibly, and shot a bird-like glance at the speaker.

Then in execrable French he too asked for Room X.

"He's not French," said the secretary excitedly to the manager as the ill-assorted pair were led out of the lounge by the head waiter. "That last one was another Boche."

The manager thoughtfully twirled his pince-nez between his fingers.

"Two Germans and an American." He looked a

little apprehensive. "Let us hope the dinner will appease everybody. Otherwise——"

But whatever fears he might have entertained with regard to the furniture in Room X, they were not destined to be uttered. Even as he spoke the door again swung open, and a man with a thick white scarf around his neck, so pulled up as almost completely to cover his face, came in. A soft hat was pulled down well over his ears, and all that the manager could swear to as regards the newcomer's appearance was a pair of deep-set, steel-grey eyes which seemed to bore through him.

"You got my letter this morning?"

"M'sieur le Comte de Guy?" The manager bowed deferentially and rubbed his hands together. "Everything is ready, and your three guests have arrived."

"Good. I will go to the room at once."

The *maître d'hôtel* stepped forward to relieve him of his coat, but the Count waved him away.

"I will remove it later," he remarked shortly. "Take me to the room."

As he followed his guide his eyes swept round the lounge. Save for two or three elderly women of doubtful nationality, and a man in the American Red Cross, the place was deserted; and as he passed through the swing doors he turned to the head waiter.

"Business good?" he asked.

No—business decidedly was not good. The waiter was voluble. Business had never been so poor in the memory of man. . . . But it was to be hoped that the dinner would be to Monsieur le Comte's liking. . . . He personally had superintended it. . . . Also the wines.

"If everything is to my satisfaction you will not