

20th May 1913 – Royal Military College - Duntroon

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Ragging at Duntroon.
NEWCOMERS' INITIATION.
TAR, YELLOW OCHRE, AND ICE
WATER.
RESISTERS "STUNK OUT" OF
BATHROOM.

It would be interesting to know whether the ordeal of initiation to which several new students at Duntroon Military College have been subjected by their fellows has been carried out with the knowledge and consent of the Minister for Defence. Recently a batch of new students were subjected to the ordeal, which has been described in detail by both those who carried it out and those who suffered. At eight p.m. all the cadets paraded on the terrace, and the new men on the left and right of their respective half-companies. The order was given them, " Left turn, quick march ! " and they were escorted to the

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Obituary.
MRS. MARY McNAMARA.

Died on 15th May, at the residence of her son, Mr. Michael McNamara, Waterloo Flat, Murrumbidgee, of this district, at Duntroon, in the 65th year of Mrs. Mary McNamara, widow of Mr. Michael McNamara, one of the old-time soldiers in the neighbourhood of Murrumbidgee. She died at the residence of her son, and had been 12 years married. She was a native of the County of Clare, Ireland, and arrived in Australia in the year 1841. The children born of the marriage of the deceased were—Thos. and Wm. McNamara, of Murrumbidgee; Mrs. Joan, Queensland; Mrs. Jane, Eastern Prov. N.S.W.; Mrs. Martha, Queensland. She passed away at the residence of her son, Mr. Michael McNamara, at Black Flat, near Murrumbidgee. It was not so much her age that caused all the interest of her notice. She suffered from an internal complaint some time before her death, and that was the immediate cause of death. Dr. Blackall was her medical attendant all through. The funeral took place at Murrumbidgee on Saturday last, in the Roman Catholic portion of the general cemetery there. The Rev. Father Conaghan officiating. It was one of the largest funeral corteges ever witnessed in that locality, as more than 50 vehicles with their mourning companies following. The coffin in which the deceased rested was the workmanship of Mr. Harry Leavitt, who had the contract

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Recently a batch of new students were subjected to the ordeal, which has been described in detail by both those who carried it out and those who suffered. At eight p.m. all the cadets paraded on the terrace, and the new men on the left and right of their respective half-companies. The order was given them, " Left turn, quick march ! " and they were escorted to the bath-room.

When they reached the door they suspected that they were to be made the victims of a practical joke, and endeavoured to escape, but were hustled in and the doors locked. Each of the prisoners was then called out in turn and led to the front of the E block, which was brilliantly illuminated with a special installation of electric light.

A hollow square was formed, with two tables in the centre and a bath beside them. **The human sacrifice was frog-marched stark naked** by two stalwart seniors to the centre of the square, where at a burlesque court-martial he was found guilty of being a new-comer, and sentence duly passed on him. He was forced first to sing a song on bended knees. Some of the victims provided rag-time melodies, but one took his revenge by trilling a solo from the " Gotterdamering " in a lusty baritone. He was then made to go through a number of military evolutions with a toy gun, and dance the turkey trot.

But the climax was the most popular part of the business.

A mixture of tar and treacle was painted on him from head to foot, and well rubbed into his hair, after which a bag of flour was emptied over him, and a weird burlesque of baptism was performed with a repulsively odorous compound of permanganate of potash, assofoetida, and tincture of valerian.

The unfortunate was then placed on a block of ice and squirted with the stream from a two-inch fire hose.

Finally he was plunged three times into the bath filled with icy water and yellow ochre.

Some of the newcomers, scenting trouble, fastened the bathroom door, so the leader of the ragging party directed the fire hose through the open skylight, and saturated them. As they still refused to capitulate, a quantity of the evil smelling mixture used to anoint the more docile was thrown into the room, and had the effect of forcing them to surrender.

For their rebellious attitude additional penalties were inflicted.

According to correspondence received from some of the students who took a pride in the escapade, it was **carried out with the full knowledge and tacit acquiescence of several of the officers**, one of whom is alleged to have said that " he wished he could have seen it without his presence being known."

Another observed laughingly that similar ordeals at Sandhurst (England) are much more severe, and that students often have a leg or arm broken.

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