

THE LIFE OF A MARINE.

Thought possibly some people who read The Press and Banner may be interested to know something of the life of the "Devil Dogs", or the U. S. Marine; and as I am an Abbeville boy, I think the only in the Marine Corps from Abbeville, I will try and tell something interesting about our life.

To make the story interesting, I will have to begin with our first landing on Paris Island. We reached Port Royal about nine o'clock and were hustled into boats which carried us out to the Island, which is about two miles distant. On the Dock we were all 'looked over' by a doctor to see if we had any symptoms of the Flu. Our next stop was the Quarantine Station, or Applicant's Camp, as it is known here. Then we had our first "Marine Corps Chow" (Chow is breakfast, dinner or supper, but this time it happened to be supper). That night we were issued blankets and linen—no pillows at all. Next someone began giving our first orders. We were divided into squads and put in bunk houses for the night.

Next morning, being our first morning on the Island, we thought we would be allowed to remain in bed until time for 'chow,' but our pleasant reflections were suddenly broken up when we heard "All you birds who came in last night and yesterday, outside for roll call—on the double." The idea of being told to fall out for roll call was not so bad in itself, but being invited out at five-thirty your first morning is very unpleasant indeed.

We had 'chow' that morning a little late, we should have had it at six-thirty and didn't have it until six forty-five. That's not much late, but in the Marine Corps you have to be on time with everything.

That day we were issued our uniforms. I thought they were giving me a double supply, but I did just what anybody else would have done. I kept all they gave me. It turned out that it all belonged to me in the end. After getting our clothes, we

had to have everything stamped with our names. When you begin that you have an ordinary day's job before you, but we had to stamp ours in less than half an hour. In the afternoon we were given the examination that so many applicants fail to pass. The "Regular Marine Corps" examination. About two thirds of the outfit passed. A few failed however. That night we had for chow what makes the marine corps famous, "beans, onions, pickles and beets." The next few days we were kept under a strict quarantine, and during those few days I thought they would work us to death, but to think of it, we had very, very little to do to what we have to do now.

On November 6th we were formed into a company and the companies formed into a battalion. The next day we 'sroved off' from the quarantine station and went to one of the training camps—a good country seven miles down the Island—with only one stop. At this camp we were treated more like human beings. We also received better chow and also drilled eight hours a day. Every other day we were given police duty.

When we were in this training camp we did everything from being put on "spud detail" to work half the night unloading a barge of wood. We stayed in this camp for fifteen days and from there we went to the Main Training camp where the company is located at the present time.

About this time we were told the armistice had been signed and the war was over. We were all awfully glad the fighting was over, but you can believe me, we were some sore bunch of boys that we did not get over to give a hand in "teaching the Kaiser."

Instantly after our arrival at the Main Training Camp we were told we would have to shoot on the rifle range the next week, as our company was being rushed through for some reason or other, and our company was the happiest bunch of men on the Island at that time. We were not only glad to shoot on the range, but it was our opinion that we were rushed through for some reason or

other, and most likely so we could be sent some place for police work.

The first week on the range was devoted to "snapping in" or we just aimed at the targets and squeezed the trigger on a blank shell, or rather no shell at all. The next week proved very much more interesting, as we shot at the targets now. After having shot for two days practicing, I was unlucky enough to be near a gun which exploded and it was just my luck to get hit. A piece of the rifle got me on the arm breaking it in two places; another piece hit me in the head putting me out for a few minutes. Well then I thought my chances for shooting with the company were mighty slim, so I just went out and watched them shoot. Three days before the company shot for record I took my arm out of the sling, and the day they shot I shot too. Our company made the highest record ever shot on this range, and one boy made the highest record ever shot by a boot. In our company we had twenty expert riflemen, twenty-one sharpshooters and twenty-three marksmen. I myself qualified as a sharpshooter, missing expert by three points. Only two men in the company failed to qualify.

Well, after we had finished up on the range we were scheduled to catch it for at least eight weeks. As you see the Marine has to take fourteen weeks of training before he is a qualified Marine. We were drilled from seven in the morning until eleven, and again from one in the afternoon until four. You know for all time you have to work over twenty-four hours you are paid time and one half for it. Among the most interesting things we had to do were Swedish and Bayonet practice. Bayonet practice is very interesting if you take any interest in it, and if you don't take some interest in it, you are out of luck.

When you first go to the Bayonet Assault course you are just naturally scared speechless watching the coaches duelling with each other. You think the next instant you will see one drop over with a bayonet stuck through his ribs; but when you get

out there yourself duelling with someone, you lose all fear and go at it as if meant your life if you didn't do right. I suppose it may have caught you napping if the coaches didn't keeu you going all of the time. We had bayonet practice every afternoon after chow.

As for Swedish exercise, you would think they were trying to kill you instead of making a man of you at first. They start you out swinging your arms and you think they will swing them off if they don't stop, but still when you get through you are not tired at all. The most interesting thing on the Swedish Field is to play the games they have. Possibly you have seen children playing rooster fight. Well, the children play it the right way, but the Marines put some life into their rooster fights and its a fht sure enough before you end up. Another interesting thing about Swedish is the boxing and wrestling course they give you. Each and every member of the Marine Corps has to know how to box and wrestle the Marine way of doing it.

The drilling part of it would not interest you unless you could see a battalion, or possibly a Regimental parade. I'll admit that it is very pretty to look on as the boys in green pass in review, but let me tell you that it is not at all pleasant for the boys passing in review. It's very hard indeed to keep in perfect step with the music and when such a large amount of men pass with perfect step it is something to be wondered at. I have passed in reviews and I have watched reviews but I for my part, prefer to watch instead of being watched.

On January 11th I was transferred from my Company, the 418th, and put in the Clerical School Detachment, and am now looking to be sent to Washington for clerical work just any day.

If there is anything that you would like to know about the Marine Corps or the life of the Marine on Paris Island which I have not told I would be only too glad to answer any questions you may ask, and will

be only too happy to be of any service to my friends in Abbeville.

Of course, you all understand that this, the Marine Corps, is not a part of the Saturday Afternoon Tea Club, but a bunch of Uncle Sam's best fighting men, and many a man has died with the Anchor, World and Eagle on his hat in France.

Private Louis R. Lawson,
Clerical School Detachment,
Main Barracks, U. S. M. C.
Paris Island, S. C.

BAKER WANTS TO BUY NATIONAL ARMY CAMPS

Secretary of War Seeks Advice of Military Affairs Committee—Suggestion Not Being Received With Much Enthusiasm—Congress Wants Consideration

Washington, Jan. 31—Purchase by the war department of sites of existing army training camps would be prohibited without specific authority from congress under a resolution offered in the house today by Representative Anthony of Kansas, at the request of the members of the military committee.

The resolution was introduced after Secretary Baker and Assistant Secretary Crowell had appeared before the committee to urge acquisition of the sites of all National Army cantonments and two National Guard camps, Sevier, South Carolina, and Kearney, California. Mr. Baker told the committee he believed the department had authority to acquire sites, but that congress unquestionably could stop it from carrying out such a plan.

Many members of the committee apparently were opposed to the proposal as outlined by the war secretary, and when he had completed his statement, Representative Anthony offered his resolution. Members urged that the measure be introduced in the house, so that more formal consideration of it might be given by the committee as acting for congress. The committee decided to take up the resolution next Tuesday. The recommendations were made

without regard to future military policy, Secretary Baker explaining that he considered acquisition of the land solely as a business proposition.

Retention of the national camps, Mr. Baker said, was favored because of large investments made there. If later dismantled, more return can be assured the government both from the salvage of buildings and from the sale of the land. The National Guard camps, he said, did not involve the large expenditures, or possible later reimbursement from sale.

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