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ORGANIZING MILITARY POLICE

Lt. Col. McLean Establishes High Record of Efficiency

MAJOR BUTTON NOW IN COMMAND

Under the efficient command of the Lt. Col. Robert McLean of the 7th N. Y. Inf., the Military Police Force of McAllen, Pharr and Mission, have proven their ability in policing these three towns. When we take into consideration the number of men mobilized in these three towns and the amount of police allotted to each to keep law and order, it is beyond one's imagination to realize how so few men can control the actions of the soldiers coming and going into each town from their various camps.



Lt. Col. Robert McLean

Naturally the police force was made up of picked men from each unit of the division, not only for their physical ability, but their neatness, good judgment, and courteous treatment. At first the force worked under great difficulties, not alone in keeping the men in order and requiring them to live under certain rules and regulations, but as to the trouble in sleeping and mess quarters. The force at McAllen soon overcame these obstacles by building their own mess and cook shack, which by the way is one of the best erected in the Division. When cooks were detailed to the Military Police it was a signal for great rejoicing, as the men at times had to eat and pay for their own food at the restaurants.

Lieut. Edward C. O. Thomas, Co. D, 71st Inf., has handled the situation at McAllen in a very commendable manner. This is by far the largest encampment of the division. During the early part of his administration, the Mexican village was shut off to all enlisted men after 7:30 p. m., owing to the fact that a great many of the men were not accustomed to the habits of the Mexicans, but after having mingled with them for a few days, during the daytime, the village was opened to the men at all times, with very little trouble to the police force.

The greatest amount of trouble to the Military Police is the order which forbids the enlisted men from entering a place where liquors are sold. Men of the force were stationed at every saloon, of which there are about eight in McAllen, to enforce this order. True to the traits of the soldier, they found the back entrances very convenient, and at times the Military Police made raids on the places delivering liquor to the men in the rear. All these raids were very effective, and this practice has practically stopped. As to the moral conduct of the men in these three towns, nothing can be said, as it is perfect. Mayor Archer and all other tradesmen in McAllen have time and again remarked about the efficient way the police has handled the thousands of men who visit the town during the night and day.

Thirty days having expired, Lieut. Col. McLean has been relieved from command of the police force by Major J. Scott Button of the 2nd N. Y. Inf., who undoubtedly will continue the efficient work of his predecessor.

William Jennings Bryan, late Secretary of State, Presidential Candidate, Colonel of Volunteers and aspirant for the noble peace prize, has a residence here in "the valley," but the report that all these doves flying around are peace doves turned loose by the Chattanooga spell binder is not true, as they are Mexican doves and know nothing whatever about peace.

FIELD SERVICE EFFICIENCY

War Correspondent Compares Personal Service With Present Observations

BIG PROGRESS MADE SINCE 1898

(By Isaac Russell)
Staff Correspondent, The Evening Mail, N. Y., attached to the New York Division, First Field Army.

Standing on the bank of the Twelfth Infantry's main channel canal, while its first flood water was pouring through, a soldier of the Twelfth, tired of digging, delivered himself thus:

"What's the use of fooling around here? That's what I want to know. I enlisted to shove through to Mexico. If we're ever going there why aren't we on our way. That's me."

Now it just happens that when Admiral Dewey finished firing at the Spanish forts in Manila bay the first thing he did was to cable for soldiers to make up a landing force.

He got them. Those soldiers "went right through." They never stopped to pick up fern and get everything together. They sailed away from San Francisco in as brief a period after mustering in as the Twelfth Infantry and Seventh and Seventy-first took to come down to McAllen.

So far, so good. But the horrors of that trip still make some of those that were in it look upon this camp here as a marvel of perfection by comparison. Here it was travel ration on the trains for only four or five days before the field ration began coming out of the cook shacks in Hidalgo county. And then even there were cook cars.

The outfits that shipped to help Dewey seized the first steamships handy. They were freight boats, not passenger boats, in many cases. The travel ration of uncooked canned beef and hard tack, with canned tomatoes, didn't last on that trip for a few days. It lasted all the way over the Pacific. It lasted for forty days.

The cook outfit on one of those ships was just big enough for seventeen men, the freighter's crew. It took care of 700 men on their way to help Dewey.

Once in the hot Philippines they began to cook up the rations brought along. They were rations caught on their way to an Alaska garrison, and were the hottest of heat producing foods.

Those soldiers, in a climate just as fierce as that at McAllen, Pharr and Mission, never dreamed, even, of O. D. stuff, and khaki stuff had yet to be thought of. They went in the thickest and most closely woven army blue. Prickly heat infested whole brigades I have seen only a small amount of it here.

I watched the conical tents and the pyramidal tents stack up against the morning sun. I remembered that part of every gun section in the artillery battery I was in, had to sleep out all through the campaign against Manila. We started out short on tents and never did catch up.

An old campaigner came along the same canal bank of the twelfth. He talked of the price paid for speed made beyond the point of taking needful things.

"It's God's mercy," he said, "they didn't have to rush right through."

He marvelled at the things present here to make a campaign a success that were lacking in the earlier rushes, and he marvelled at the great machine being built up—the divisional machine of infantry and cavalry, artillery, engineers and signal, truck trains, ambulance trains, mounted messengers and motor cycle men, all being worked into shape to supplement each other, support each other and make an efficiency, in the end, much greater than the personal efficiency, in which each soldier now feels a just pride. It is a wonderful privilege for a newspaper writer to stand by and see this machine of men, munitions and transports grow into being.

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By Dreher

