

THE RIO GRANDE RATTLER

Published Weekly at Odd Places in Texas.
By the
New York Division, United States Army
with the authority of
Major General John F. O'Bryan
Colonel Harry H. Bandholtz
Chief of Staff

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1916

THE COMBAT FIRING AT LA GLORIA

No doubt the combat firing going on at La Gloria is the most interesting work the Division has engaged in since its arrival on the Border. A few comments on the character of the training, what is sought to be accomplished, and some of the errors to be avoided, should prove timely and interesting.

As the Division Commander has frequently told us, the New York Infantry is the New York Division—the rest are the accessories. If the Division is "licked" it means that the infantry has been defeated. If the infantry is "licked" it means that the New York Division has been defeated, no matter what local successes the auxiliary arms may have had.

After three years of educational effort the team spirit of the New York Division is such that the auxiliary arms now take more pride in their proper role than they ever did in their former misguided independence of ideals and of effort.

All Hail, the Infantry—The Queen of Battle.
All the New York Division respect the hiking, sweating, non-drinking, non-swearing, straight-shooting infantry.

Why is the Infantry so important? Because of the completeness of its human side. The field artillery relies in large measure upon the effectiveness of its guns—man's invention; the cavalry upon its horses—a lower order of animal; the other auxiliaries upon their special devices—all the creation of man. The infantry relies above all upon its men—God's creations. So in the infantry we must have stout hearts, tireless legs, patience, clear eyes, unflinching determination, individual and collective expertness of combat technique, and discipline, discipline, and more discipline. In the auxiliary arms the men serve their devices. In the infantry the rifle and the bayonet serve the men.

At La Gloria the infantry is participating in exercises which demonstrate to the men the dominating importance of the human element in fire effectiveness. They are schooled in the thought that the individual training in the use of the rifle is but the kindergarten of fire control. That the fire unit becomes formidable only when its powers of destruction can be readily controlled,—that is, shifted in direction, increased or decreased in volume, concentrated or expanded in distribution, opened or suspended with rapidity.

On the rifle range the soldier has a known target and a known range. In combat firing as in combat itself these factors are unknown. The effectiveness of fire in combat is not dependent upon "holding" and "squeeze," but upon reconnaissance and recognition of the target, choice of the target, initiative in opening fire, strength of the firing line in relation to the support, kind of fire to be employed, method of advance, utilization of the ground and security of the advance.

To illustrate the importance of these considerations compared with mere expertness of hitting a bull's-eye at known ranges, let the reader assume two companies of one hundred men each. One company is comprised of eighty expert riflemen, ten ordinary shots and ten wholly inexperienced shots. The other is composed of eighty ordinary shots, ten expert riflemen and ten wholly inexperienced men. They enter combat and each attempts to gain fire superiority over the enemy in its assigned front.

Each company commander estimates the range to be 1050 yards. In reality it is 1000 yards. The companies are firing with the same rapidity of fire. Owing to the nature of the foreground it is impossible to spot the shots. After five minutes of firing each company has expended 2500 rounds of ammunition. Now consider the results.

In the company of experts the hits are practically nil, while in the company composed of ordinary shots a substantial number of hits have been made. This will become clear when it is considered that the experts set their sights accurately at 1050 yards, held steadily, and hence their shots struck at that range. But this was 50 yards beyond the enemy. The ordinary shots did not set their sights so accurately, did not hold so steadily and hence sprayed a zone perhaps one hundred yards short and one hundred yards over the indicated range of 1050 yards. The "shorts" would have consequently beaten the area covered by the enemy, and so have been effective. As a matter of fact, in the company with the eighty experts, the only hits would have been made by the ten ordinary shots.

At La Gloria, practical demonstrations are being given daily of the superior influence of fire control, fire distribution and fire rapidity, in determining fire effectiveness over mere target range expertness.

The work is in charge of Major George F. Chandler, Brigade Adjutant, First Brigade, who is fully familiar with the Division Commander's views on the methods of conducting combat firing, and who is providing a course of unusual interest to the troops.

A working knowledge of Spanish wont help in translating the calls of a subway guard.

"One million men between sunrise and sunset!" But oh, the dreadful night to follow when armed with pitchforks and rakes they seek to protect their camp against the machine guns of an enemy whose motto was "Preparedness First!"

Nero fiddled while Rome burned and unless we watch out the Big Drive westward will find us crocheting and playing the phonograph.

The President's Letter To Gov. Whitman

Shadow Lawn, Long Branch, N. J., October 9th, 1916.

My Dear Governor Whitman: I have received your letter of September 20 and have taken up with the Secretary of War the situation as it affects the presence of New York troops on the Border. From the beginning of the difficulty which necessitated the call for the militia, I have been deeply sensitive of the inconvenience caused to the members of these citizen military organizations because of their separation from their families and from their ordinary business engagements and pursuits.

In order to minimize these sacrifices the War Department is sending to the border from time to time militia which, have not participated in the service there, and as each fresh contingent goes to the border, General Funston selects for return to their home stations and mustering out of such units as in his judgment, can best be spared. This policy will distribute this duty over as wide an area as possible and make its burden fall as equally as is practicable upon the organized militia forces. It has already resulted in the return of a number of New York organizations.

The Fourteenth and Seventy-first infantry and the first brigade headquarters are at present in their state armories preparing to muster out.

The Third infantry in the state mobilization camp is going to muster out, the Second Infantry is preparing en route from the border to the state mobilization camp, also for mustering out.

The First Ambulance Company and the First Regiment of Field Artillery, have been designated to return from the border to their state mobilization camps for muster out and the First Aero Company was not sent to the border, but mustered out at Mineola, N. Y.

Thus a substantial number of New York contingents either have been, or are in course of being released from the federal service at this time and as other forces are sent to the border, it may be well that General Funston will find it possible to afford our New York militia even further relief.

Emergency Still Exists.

The emergency which led to the call of the militia was, as defined in my call of June 18, the possibility of aggression from Mexico, and the protection of our frontier. This emergency still unhappily exists and I am advised by the military authorities that the withdrawal of the militia at any time from the date of its original call up to, and including the present, would in all human likelihood have been followed by fresh aggressions from Mexico upon the lives and the property of the people of the United States. The militia have therefore been used and are being used to repel invasion and are rendering services of the highest quality and most urgently needed character for their country.

It would, of course, be impossible to set a date at which the release of the remaining New York units can with certainty be accomplished. I am happy, however, to believe that conditions in Northern Mexico are improving and that in the near future we will be able to do even more than what has been done to relieve the embarrassments under which these organized militia regiments have necessarily suffered.

I share your admiration, my dear governor, for the spirit in which these men have served and are serving their country and would be very sorry to have it supposed that their retention on the border is for any mere purpose of completion of their military training or any less commanding purpose than the preservation of our frontier from aggression.

Very truly yours,
(Signed) WOODROW WILSON.

"GUTS"

(Note.—So many favorable comments have been made concerning the article in the issue of The Rattler of September 6, entitled "Are You There?" that we reprint it, under the above caption.—Editor.)

The thing of all things that has carried more individuals to success and more hosts to victory is that quality known vulgarly, but expressively as "guts." It is not mere enthusiasm, nor courage, nor persistence, nor valor, nor bravery. It partakes of all these things but it differs in some respects from all of them. It is the quality that took the ten thousand Greek mercenaries, hundreds of miles through a strange and hostile country and made them sing and beat their shields as they fought and conquered a five fold enemy at the gates of Babylon. The intangible something that works sharply, the distinction between men and mere human organisms, between kickers and backbiters and soldiers.

To the man with "guts" the transition from a pen to a pick is an incident; from a bed to a "dobe bunk" an adventure; from a walk on the avenue to a hike in the cactus, a pleasure; from a tea cart to a mess tin, a picnic. This life here breeds "guts" and red blood! Smile—and take hold as if you were here forever! "Guts"—is a consumption that never failed man nor organization of men.

CINDERS.

Close perusal of the roster of the Medical Department at the Camp Hospital reveals the fascinating fact that Wilfred W. Anger, Marion O. Graves, Richard Stark, and George J. Wardwell are on the staff.

"We hold this truth to be self evident. All men are (not) created free and equal."

Some go to Texas with the Guard, some prefer Plattsburg and others attend war movies on 14th Street and smoke Meccas in the 2nd balcony.

The superiority of the ballot over the bullet will be exemplified on November 7th throughout the length, breadth and thickness (latter especially evident at times) of this unscrupulous land, including the Texas Border.

PERSONALS

Major James E. Schuyler, 7th Infantry, left McAllen, Wednesday, Oct. 11, for New York City on a thirty day leave of absence.

Major Schuyler, and Major George F. Chandler, Adjutant, 1st Brigade were relieved as members of the Examining Board for Officers of Infantry and Lt. Col. Reginald L. Foster, 12th Infantry and Captain Wade H. Hayes, 7th Infantry were appointed to succeed them on the board.

Major Cornelius Vanderbilt left Sunday for a 30-day furlough to New York. His position as Inspector of the N. Y. Division will be filled during his absence by Major Allan L. Reagan. Major Reagan qualified for this position through a period as acting Inspector back in New York last spring. During his stay in McAllen and until two weeks ago, Major Reagan fulfilled the many duties of Division Adjutant.

Advices received by Col. H. S. Sternberger, Division Quartermaster, bring the cheery news that Col. Thurston is improving steadily and reported in person at Headquarters in the Manhattan Municipal Building twice last week.

—And that Major J. Leslie Kincaid, heretofore and hereafter Judge Advocate, New York Division, has absented himself from hence by and with so-called official sanction and permission, said sanction and permission being contained in a leave of absence of the twenty day variety or species and that the destination of the aforesaid Judge Advocate is a distant clime where court-martials are unknown and uncared for. All this at McAllen on Sunday, the 15th of October, 1916.

Captain Herriek Curry and Major D. Smith of the French Foreign Legion and F. C. have returned to New York City after two years of fighting in Belgium. Both of these officers are planning to journey to Texas and connect themselves with one of the N. Y. regiments stationed here.

Major Franklin W. Ward, Assistant Chief of Staff, is expected to arrive in McAllen to-day. The Managing Editor of The Rattler is returning from a thirty day leave of absence. We will welcome him back to our midst and to the office of the Rattler, which has added four rattles to its tail since the Major left these parts.

Major Fred M. Waterbury, Editor of The Rattler, is living up to his reputation as expert sharpshooter and Captain of the Empire State Rifle Team at Jacksonville, Florida.

OUR HONOR ROLL

Yearly subscriptions in the order received:
Maj. Cornelius Vanderbilt, Div. Staff.
Maj. F. S. Corbett, Corps of Engineers.
Lieut. Leo F. Knust, 7th Infantry.
Capt. Edward P. Dillon, 69th Inf.
Colonel George Albert Wingate, 2nd Field Artillery.
Maj. George E. Roosevelt, 12th Inf.
Capt. Charles E. Fiske, 1st Cavalry.
Lieut. Hamilton H. Barnes, 1st Cav.
Major Scott Button, 2nd Infantry.
Lieut. Col. Henry S. Sternberger, Div. Q. M.
Capt. Guy Bates, Engineers.
Horatio J. Brewer, Spokane, Wash.
Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., Newport, R. I.

Lieut. Col. J. M. Wainwright, Insp. Gen. Dept. N. Y.
Capt. Prentice Strong, N. Y. City.
W. J. Comstock, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Lieut. Joseph A. Pitts, 2nd Infantry.
Sergt. Herbert T. Slings, Co. B, 7th.
Lieut. W. B. Lester, M. G. Troop, 1st Cavalry.
Homer G. Bell, Motor Truck Co. 35.
John G. Jansen, 1988 Broadway, New York.

Lieut. S. A. Stover, Troop L, 1st Cav.
Lieut. Col. Edward V. Howard, Asst. Adj. Gen., Albany, N. Y.
Commodore R. P. Forshaw, 2 Rector Street, New York.
James M. Heatherton, 700 Putnam Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.
Major Charles Elliot Warren, Aide-de-Camp to Gen. Daniel Appleton, N. G., N. Y.

Lieut. Col. R. L. Foster, 12th New York Infantry.
Capt. D. M. Hooker, Binghamton, New York.
W. F. Hutchinson, 120 Broadway, N. Y. City.
Col. Wm. J. Haan, C. A. C., U. S. A.
Col. Chauncey P. Williams, Div. Staff.
Capt. Charles Currie, 1st Cavalry.

ASK NOAH—HE KNOWS.

Even Noah would have his facetious moments. We do not refer to the first commodore of the Mt. Ararat Yacht Club, but to the author of that fanciful little pamphlet "The Unabridged Dictionary."

Although Mr. Webster, to our best knowledge, never served his time in the Guard, assimilate his learned remarks concerning a subject of momentous interest to the citizen soldier, *rumour, rû-mour (roo'-mer), n. (ME, rumour, OF, rumour, F, rumeur, L, rumor; cf. rumificare, rumitare, to rumor, Skr. ru to cry.)* 1. A prolonged, indistinct noise. OBS. . . . 4. A story current without any known authority for its truth;—in this sense often personified.
Rumor next, and Chance,
And Tumult, and Confusion, all embroiled.
John Milton.

And the lofty-browed author of this best seller defines "fatigue" thusly: "to weary with labor; to harass with toil; to exhaust the strength or endurance of; to tire."
In the selfsame handy volume we glean the following:
hike, v. t. To hike one's self; specif., to go with exertion or effort; to march laboriously.
Thus doth knowledge wave aloft her flaming torch.
Rome wasn't built in a day and New York City isn't either.

TRUE BLUE

By Frederick T. Cardoze, Author of "Tin"

Dedicated to the Soldiers of the New York Division who have died in Texas.

Camping and marching, that's all,
Not an order to charge or retreat,
Not a volley or cavalry skirmish,
Not a victory or a defeat.
That's how it stood on the Border
'Til a rookie accused them of fright.
He asked them what kind of a soldier
Preferred lying 'round, to a fight?

A chap with a deep, burning eye,
The kind that a fever has claimed,
Pale, over thin and run down
But possessed of a spirit untamed,
Got up from the cot where he lay
And crawled to the side of the fool
Who had measured both warfare and men
Not by the fact, but by rule.

"Fight? Yes we're fighting," said he,
"In the way that a man has to fight;
Longing for peace and for home
Is the foe that is pressing us tight.
It flanks us when night falls around
And entrenches when day has begun,
Day with its sun, dust and thirst,
Day with its thirst, dust and sun.

"It throttles the smiles in our hearts,
It tortures the light of our brain,
Yet never a cross or a marker of stone
Is set up for the hopes that are slain;
And never a mention or name
Is inscribed on the patriot's roll,
Yet never a murmur goes up from the ranks
Though deep are the scars on our soul.

Fight? Is it only with steel
That a soldier may honor his name;
Is the flash of the glittering sword
The latch to the portal of Fame?
No, damn it, no, if 'twere so
We who are forced here to dwell
Would never that threshold invade
But slip to the caldron of Hell!"

Then the rookie went back to his tent
Abashed at the words that were said,
Convinced that a man is a man
Who is willing, yet never has bled;
And the surgeon examined the chap
Who had spoken, and swore 'neath his breath
Then stood at attention and watched
As he answered the roll call of Death!

The Incinerator

HIS DIARY.

Saturday.—Gosh, it's hard to get up these mornings but it's harder not to when sergeants come running around and hollering. Had inspection again this morning. Forgot my identification tag. Major was very n ean about it. Said he'd have to guess what species I belonged to. Asked me how they'd know me if they picked me up dead on battlefield. Told him I didn't worry about that. Wouldn't know myself. Major said, "You're pretty fresh, aren't you?" and I said, "Yes, sir," and nothing more passed between us—then, Captain made me orderly to Major later on. Major looked me over and said, "You don't need a tag, I know you now," and I cleaned his boots and puttees most of the afternoon. All the boys went to town. Didn't care. Too hot to go anyway. Major asked me at four o'clock if I was still fresh and I said "no, sir," because I forgot one pair of boots. He let me off for the rest of the afternoon.

Got a letter from Mabel. She'd been out to Hunter's Island Inn with Jim in his new car. Said Jim was a wonderful dancer and a "perfect dear, so patriotic about Plattsburgh." Also said she was going to Army-Navy game with Jim as she didn't think I'd be home then and Jim likes military spectacles so much. Guess I'll start writing to Elsie again.

Sunday.—Had a narrow escape this morning. Forgot it was Sunday and said I was too sick to get up at Reveille. Remembered it was Day of Rest just in time to get on the line.

Went to church this morning. Chaplain said we should love our enemies. Saw an awful nice looking Mexican girl down town. Chaplain may be right. Joe says the regiment's going home next week. General Funston says no more troops will be recalled now. Guess I'll believe Joe until next Sunday. Got a letter from Elsie before I could write her. She said Jim took her up to Tarrytown in his new car. Told her how they suffered at Plattsburgh but that a good soldier ought to die for his country if necessary. Hope he'll find it necessary soon. Sent Jim a postal of a bull fight and wrote on it he'd make a great torreador. Didn't write to Elsie after all.

Columbus Day passed unnoticed. "Do you know what to-day is?" we asked a guardsman. "Sure," he answered mournfully, "regimental detail and guard duty to-morrow."

Still if Christopher hadn't performed a parlor trick with a hen's egg we wouldn't be bothered now with presidential campaigns and the preparedness propaganda.

What would we do without Hyphens, Borders and Sharp Notes?

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS ON TEXAS GAME LAWS.

Male canteen keepers may be killed, only with a shot-gun, after Oct. 15th. Season for waiters of both sexes in McAllen will begin Oct. 20th. It is unlawful to kill more than 25 whites in one day or thirty Mexes. There is no closed season on soda-fountain clerks, Mexican boot-blacks, buglers or second lieutenants.

We're glad you're glad, Gladys.

WEEKLY HEALTH HINT.

Don't drink intoxicating liquors before or after 6 a. m. in McAllen, Miss. or Platts.

CANTEEN CONVERSATIONS.

"Lo, Joe. What'll yuh have?"
"Lo, Bill. Gimme bottla pop. Say, d'jer hear when we're goin' 'ome!"
"Tom says firsta November."
"Sat right!"
"Dunno. Y' never e'n tell. Might be here all winter."
"At's right. Got 'em all buffalood."
"Outta th' trenches by Christmas, hey!"

"Y' said it! Gosh, it'll seem good t' get back!"
"Well, I guess! Wotecha goin' do whenyuh get home, Joe?"
"Wotecha think? We'll have SOME time, hey!"
"You said it. SOME time is right."
"Hear we're goin' onna hike nex' week."
"Yeh, so I hear. Pretty tough."
"Bright. Maybe there's somepin' in this November dope."
"Maybe so. Y'never e'n tell. But no one knows. I'LL bettecha th' genral don't know."
"At's right. Pretty fierce 'bout Brooklyn, hey!"
"You said it!"

"We are friendly with every nation under heaven, and every nation desires to be friendly with us," Charlie Hughes stoutly declared before an audience of Kentucky mountaineers. Of course 150,000 men are encamped along the Southern Border for their own health and pleasure. The Justice will have his little joke.

As we take it Carranza is our best friend. Mexican delegates jovially slap the American commissioners on the back and set up another round at the Marlborough-Blenheim. Their officers review our troops. We're all good little fellows together, aren't we? But Villa still roams wild with several hundred half-starved bandits, some without guns, or ammunition, poor things. That, Oswald, is why a hundred thousand Guardsmen are mobilized along the Rio Grande. Ah, ha, said the Duck, laughing.

GUARDSMEN THOROUGHLY TRAINED BY BORDER DUTY.

—Headline.
But sometimes it's dangerous to over-train, Uncle.
"We have also been advised that 'the withdrawal of the militia at any time would in all human likelihood have been followed by fresh aggressions' from the merchants of the Magic Valley upon the purses of the country's protectors.

Paul was the complete letter writer of his day, we have it on "good" authority. But it's the gospel truth that we never remember seeing the Ephesian side of that voluminous correspondence. We can't even recall reading their White Book. But the honors go to Paul for a diplomatic victory.

Daniel's despatches to the lions would also make interesting reading.

A. the rumored fatalistic finale of October relentlessly approaches, we dolefully discover that "the emergency still unhappily exists" on the Border—and so do we.

What saith the handbills of the play-houses?

"In case of emergency, use all exits."
H. T. Y.