TH E RIO GRANDE RATTLER

First Ne w York Cavalry Model Camp, McAllen, Texas

CAVALRYMEN HAVE MANY ADVENTURES

IN FOUR MONTHS ON THE BORDER

Life not all Beer and Skittles, Says Squadron
First Cavalry has Humorous Experiences
What the Boys Have Learned

A PICTURE OF CAMP LIFE ON HORSEBACK

TH E CAVALR Y STOEY.

When Major General Frederick Fun-
ston sat in the rear seat of his automo-
bile on Jennings Field, McAllen, Octo-
ber 16th and watched the First N. Y.
Cavalry.trot by him in column of pla-
toons it is doubtful if* he noticed that
history was- being made. It is doubtful
indeed if'h e noticed anything but a
cloud of dust and a growing tendency
to hay fever. The review, however,
marked a period in the development
of a new regimental spirit in the New
York Cavalry which has been growing
steadily since June 19th; the spirit of
regimental rather than of troop unity.

No one ever thinks of the 7th, 69th
or 74th' Infantry regiments in terms of
their companies for the reason that in
their home stations they are fortunate
enough to be able to dril l and grow
together under one roof. A regiment
•of Cavalry, however, is of necessity
split up among a number of cities
through the state with the result that
each troop stands out as a separate
•and distinct organization with individ-
ual aims and traditions applicable only
to itself.

Seventeen weeks ago the name of
"the tegiment was a symbol, principally
used on military documents, saddle
blankets and troop guidons. To the men
•of the upstate troops at least the names
•of the staff officers had little meaning
i f known at all. General orders came
from a mysterious source much as the
news of the Associated Press comes to
the average newspaper reader. Each
troop 'felt fomplete in itself and com-
petent to work out its own salvation
without reference to the whole. When
the order for mobilization came it is
doubtful i f 20 per cent of the men
eould have told in what squadron their
troop belonged and who the other
troops were who made i t up.

Today after 16 weeks in the field a
change is apparent. For the first time
individual troops are beginning to feel
their subordination to the interests of
the squadron and the subordination of
the squadron to the welfare of the regi-
ment. When asked to what outfit we
belong we are beginning to give the
regiment rather than the letter of our
troop.

When the Call Came.

Just 121 days ago, or exactly one
third of a year, the orders for the mo-
bilization of the New York National
Guard were received by the different
units of the Division, Monday night
June 19th. Intimation that these orders
were coming was given out by the
newspapers the night before. Eight
days elapsed from the time the orders
were received until the entire regiment
was assembled at Van Cortland Park
New York City. Troops B, C. D, and

. H arrived on the 28th having been
first sent to Camp Whitman.
- It took 23 days from the time the
mobilization orders were received to set
the Firs t Regiment, travel stained and
stiff kneed, down at McAllen. At Van
Cortland Park there were numerous de-
lays for horses, equipment, physical ex-
aminations and a dozen smaller techni-
calities which kept the troops chafing
within sound of the rumble of the
Broadway ' ' El' ' for almost ten days.

A and L were the first troops to be
ordered out of their armories. They
said an official good bye to Brooklyn
on Thursday morning June 22nd. On
the 24th. they were joined by Troops
'E'J C and K of Brooklyn and F of
Staten Island.

vTroops B of Albany,
D of Syracuse, G of TJtica and H of
Rochester left their home stations on
the 24th but lost Kcvernl days by wan-
dering homeless through the field,-;
Bookman before they were finally head-
ed toward Yonkers. They arrived at
Van Cortland Park June 28tb, two
days before the first squadron pulled
out for the south. Troop M left Avon
on;the -4th proceeding directly to New
York and Troop. I of Buffalo followed
over the same route two days later.
A t that time the general knowledge

. of southern Texas was on a par with
that of Thibet. Our information gain-
ed through the daily papers was prin-
cipally furnished by women who hud
gone through the country on a sleeping
ear at night and reporters .wbq looked
the place up on the.-map and whose
chief impression of it. was- that it was
pink.

How We Struck McAllen.

When the 1st squadron, composed of
F, A, L, and K broke camp on June
30th no one had any idea where they
were going. Bumor had them stationed
at almost every point on the Border be-
tween Eagle Pass and Brownsville and
oven intimated that they might be set
down on tho southern fide of the .
Grande. Jul y lBt the 2nd squadron,
made up of Troops C, G, H, and M, en-
trained at Yonkers while the remain-
ing four troops looked out over the

barren camp with visions of a summei
at Camp Whitman and wondered what
they had done to deserve it at alb They
followed, however, B, D, E, and I, on
the 8th a»d 6th of July.
The 1st squadron arrived in McAUen
on Jul y 6th and sat down to wait under
a broiling sun while an army of thorn-
proof Mexicans reduced a cactus bed
into a camp site. The 2nd squadron
arrived on July 7th and the 3rd on Jul y
12th. -

Squadron A lived the proverbial life
of Riley for a week, holding house par-
ties anil carnivals at Van Cortland
Park, until orders were received for
their cutrniitment. The Squadron set-
tled down in McAllen in Jul y 13th and
promptly erected home-made horse shel-
ters and>a club house,"with the result
that their camp is homelike and com-
fortable, although now somewhat se-
cluded.

Many of the troopers did not know
that McAllen was to be their summer
home unti l the train pulled up- at the
station. McAllen was about the only
town along the southern Border which
no one had ever heard of and which
had not been selected for us as a possi-
ble resting place by the newspapesr.
Most of the troops believed that they
were going to Brownsville. As a result
tons of mail were diverted through the
latter elty before reaching camp.
The Embarrassments of Being a Hero.
During these first two weeks of mo-
bilisation we enjoyed an individual
and collective position in the public
gaze hitherto enjoyed exclusively by
college football stars and heavy weight
champions. Our departure from our
home stations would have been an in-
spiration to anyone given to the writ-
ing of sentimental patriotic songs. At
Van Cortland the public eye stil l fol-
lowed us. It followed us so closely,
indeed, that getting into clean under-
wear with anything approaching mod-
esty was a matter requiring as •much
agility as dressing in an upper berth.
It was a relief to pull out of Yonkers
with its idly curious who came out to
see us in the same way they would have
come out to see a boatload of short
tailed apes fresh from Africa, its lim-
ousines and Fords and mile-a-minute
orderlies, its indigestible picnic bas-
kets, distant relatives and general air
of a three ring circus and Harvard-
Yale boat race combined.

Some left in luxury, others in day
coaches but in spite of the inconveni-
ences the trip down was filled with ex-
periences which wil l be remembered
when the discomforts, relative to those
of a sardine, wil l be forgotten. Troop
trains had not yet ceased to W a nov-
elty. Al l along the line we were met
by curious, enthusiastic crowds whose
sentiments were summed up in the mes-
sage of an old Arkansas farmer who
stood beside the track waving his hat
and tugging enthusiastically at bis .al-
falfa. "Ge t Villy " he shouted and was
gone.
Freeh from the green links of upper
New York City we arrived not on the
Border with the Bio Grande and Mex
ico lying unconquered and majestic at
our feet, but at a muddy little frontier
town lying i n the midst of great open
spaces where, as some classic wit has
remarked, one can see further and less
than in any other place in the world.
Our first real thril l came in swim-
ming in the big irrigation ditch, which
served as an antidote for the heat dur-
ing the rare moments when oine troop
wasn't using it to wash hor es. Some
bold, dare-devils also washed their
clothes in this, which resembled the
color and constituency of lukewarm
army coffee. Later, we used buckets
and a hose, untl the transition to our
new camp brought the privileges of
same temperamental shower baths,
which may be used discreetly on cer-
tain days and during, certain hours.
Getting "Acclimated."

Those who were lucky enough to
stand the first few interior guard
mounts had enough theoretical adven-
ture to last them the rest of their liven.
It was the general feeling that a bandit
rnid was not only a possibility but a
thing to be expected. We feel foolish
now when we remember how we walk-
ed posts number 5 and 6 down by tho
Irrigation canal, abandoning the mili-
tary manner occasionally'to -wheel
round . This was done to prevent the
possibility of nn attack from the rear.
And when an occasional muskrnt slid
into the canal on our left we enjoyed
sensations common only to those who
have received visits from dead grand-
parents.

On posts 1, 2 and 3 we felt of the
loaded clips in our belt whenever
a • horse was heard approaching
from the south., or we broke the
monotony of the long night watch-
es by taking quick sights at-th e

By the light of a lantern in
wind-flapped tent or the big army
Y. M. C. A.,thousands of letters
have been written to the folks
back home.
But the whole story of the cav-
alry encampment has not been
told.
• No one but a Kipling or an*
Irvin Cobb, in fact, could tell
the story with the writing facil-
ities that camp life affords. But
Edward Streeter of Buffalo, a
Trriter of remarkable keennesj
and humor, has told here some
of the experiences which have
been common to all.
Friends of the First Cavalry
and Squadron A, New York, wil l
find in this a human interest pic-
ture of cavalry camp life. Tho
boys back home wil l feel the
swing of the cavalry .pirit as
they read of • adventures which
they themselves have missed, in
the dusty, drenching, • digging
days in Texas. The Editor.

dreary monotone unti l we staggered
from our tents with spirits drooping
but hair erect.
Then down to the picket lines where
the horses jumped around like starving
sailors until we attempted to put on
the nose-bags when they repaid our
kindness by attempting to sandbag as
with them.

Wo wil l remember the early morning
cxereue of tho. first few weeks when

ing across the front of his bat a pair HORS E NEED S PLENTY -
of dust proof goggles guaranteed proof OF PA3CFE3JNG against any ultra violet rays which
might be encountered. Arid * in our Squ&dron, A Correspondent Compares pockets at all times, a Boy Scout knife! Life to Infantry—But We Choose capable of anything from manicuring
to the erection of a two-story bouse, a
•jimmy pipe, a pound of xobaeeo, a hur-
ricane match lighter, writing paper,
waterproof envelopes, a fountain pen,
field diary, a bandanna, a water

the Horses, Thank You

the road to Hidalgo was ful l of mystery proof match box and a compar-
and the cbapparal on either side, blue Little by little those articles have In the early morning mist, Mill of pos-l found their way'into corners until to-sibilities and the road full of holes. day it has been discovered that a pack-We wil l remember watering in the) age of cigarettes and a box of matches troughs by the irrigation canal, built forms a field outfit capable of meeting after the model of a dug-out canoe! any emergency.
floating in a sea of mud, the aides of j Most of all We wil l remember the which wore built so close together that, rumors and Thursday, official rumor to get a good drink, a horse must have | day. We owe much to that tireless band had a beak rather than a nose. The: who are constantly acquiring inside in - horsa in these cases always selected a I formation regarding thcr issue of can-spot where 7 or 8 other horses were ton flannel underwear for the trip jammed together over three inches o&j north, or news of a flock of empty water and plunged in regardless.
Twenty yards from a watering trough
without a bridle one becomes a passen-
ger.

One week ago a special article re-
garding Squadron A for this Cavalry
number was promised by the "breezy
correspondent"—God save the mark!
—of that organization. By that same
token, too mack bareback riding and a
surfeit of inspections, his wind has gone
back on him. What can be par that
the First Cavalry won't covert The
Infantry wil l tel l you, "Prett y soft!
pret-ty soft-''—not knowing what a
pampered brute the horse is in the. army
These are ancient, time-worn arguments.
When the Infantry gets into camp, its
brief day is over,—then comes rest and
a certain amount of care for d bit of
equipment which some carry On their
backs. But when the Cavalry pitch
their little tents, there is no playing
house until the horse is played with.
There is a great deal of paraphernalia
at which, fortunately, the horse cannot

top of the regimental quartermas-
ters head as it projected into the moon-
light under the side of his tent. Look-
ing at the dark hedge of corn stalks
bordering the field across the road our
chances apeared to be reduced to a
minimum.
The hike to Sterling Y. Ranch, L a
Gloria and Young's Ranch, made by
squadrons during the first half of Au-
gust, forms the big break in our camp
life since arriving at McAllen. On this
ride we scraped an acquaintance with
ranches and ranchers, rangers, chap-,
paral and bandit stories which gave us until the last horse has finished drink-weeks of material for letters home.1

ing- The other horses, under the i

Pullmans reported travelling '-south. Or
the headquarters orderly who makes
such a hit with the staff that they pour
all the secrets of the regiment and
Having churned Bp the m-.d from their .personal lives Into his eonfiden-1 successfully protest. Then there is feed-
the bottom of the trough a few times i tial ear. J ing, sometimes a long and tedious pro-with his lower Hp the horse decides | Colonel DeBevoise recently expressed] cesj when on the march,—and groom-that the staff Is not what it is cracked his viewu on the .matter of rumors in a I ing, promiscons, but thorough, and up to be and decides to find out what I way which sums op the situation. anally a few valuable and fatigued is up back on the picket line.
Captain Andrews In his Basic Course J
for Cavalry defines a horse as an egre- [
gioiis n:--s and Captain Andrews knew I
horses. When * a horse once decidesI
that he is misisng something there is 1
no human agency whieh, armed only i
with a halter, can prevent him from j
proceeding to the scene. He pries him-1
self lose from the horses around the 1
trough in about the same way he np-1
proa die, I in npltc of our efforts to wait [

We also learnt theu-eful art of dispens-
ing hospitality at a profit. • On this
trip we rode from McAllen to Sterling
Ranch, a distance of IS miles, on the
first day. The pup tents were pitched
in a field facing the Sterling home.
The second day was spent in maneuvers
round L a Gloria, which has the dis-
tinction of having more bandit stories
eoneeted with It than any ranch in
the vicinity.
On the third day camp was moved to
Young's Ranch, twenty miles north,
where the much rumored concrete
swimming tank dwindled into an over-
grown horse trough. The following
two days.were spent in covering the
the 40 miles back to McAllen.
Shortly after our return the troops
went over to the vest pocket range be-
low Jennlng's Field for target prac-
tice. Incidentally most of'them burnt
their mess kits to cinders in an at-
tempt to fry a lunch.

Hurricanes and Horse Shows.
A first class hurricane with trim-
mings was served on Friday, August
17th and after ripping up half of the
canvas in the New York Division left
us as suddenly as i t had cdhic, as free
from inspection clothes as a new born
babe. Then for the first time the 1st
Cavalry realized that n low camp can
have its advantages, for while the tent-
age of the 7th, 12th and 71st disap-
peared in sections in the direction of
Mission, our tents stood pat, although
after the manner of. a captive balloon
determined to run amuck.

On Labor Day the Albany Troop
made us al l homesick with a Labor Day
parade somewhat different from the
average run of Labor Day parades seen
in the North. This immediately was
construed into a rumor that we were
going home. It was about the time
that the 71st was packing for its long
hike North and It was the general im-
pression that this was the beginning
of the end.
With the regularity of an automatic
fog horn cheers would start at the
upper end of the regiment to be passed
along from troop to troop until the glad
news of nothing was borne across the
swamp to the Artillery, who pa;ti">
it along to the infantry until the in-
habitants of McAllen wondered what
it wan all about. These • were great
days for tho feed-tent loungers.
On September 10th we moved from
the old camp to the uew with the feel-
ing that it was waned labor for we
were moving in only to move right out
again. It was nlmost with regret thnt
we left the scene of our efforts of
those first two months which had been
con verted from an unsanitary mudhole
into a comfortable homo.
After our arrival at the now camp
the change- brought on an epidemic of
the wanderlust and furloughs varying
in length from 5 to 30 days were in de-
mand. Most of the shorter ones were
eaten at Corpus Chrlsti.
On Saturday, September 30th, a
Frontier Day was held at McAllen, at-
tended by Major General Funston who
reviewed the entire New York Division
the next day. A week later the 1st
Cavalry Horse Show was held behind
the Y. M. C. A., n fact which has ap-
parently had no moral, influence on
the horses. '<
Picket-Line Troubles

In the future, when McAllen and the
Border exist for us only when three or
four are gathered round a table, the de-
tails wil l have become dim and the
high lights wil l have merged them-
selves Into a composite of the whole.
We wil l then remember the mornings
when, with- the bugle playing pay day,
we groped feverishly through tho-gloom
for a pair of trousers, anybody's trous-
ers &a long as they had a pair of legs.
And the sleepless corporals stood out-
side' saying .'Al l but," line up " in a

pression that something is going to be
slipped over, leave the trough half
thirsty rather than report absent i f
anything edible is going to be unveiled.
''Ride that horse!'*
You are painfully consciou. that yon
are ridiug it, having been seated direct-
ly on its spine for 15 minutes. You wish
to heaven you were not— -but what's
the use.

Soap Suds and Spanish Lessons.
You .wil l remember washday. That
•uovnblo feast always deferred until
the mouth of the fumigator is reached
Most of us wil l never pass a loundry
again without the impulse to drop in,
buy out the proprietor, and send him
to a sanitarium for the rest of his days,
which must neccssurily be short.
The mobilization for washday is of
itself a good day's fatigue. When the
clothes have been collected for treat-
ment (usually directly from the per-
son), the missing sock removed from
someone else's revolver, a tub of water
gathered, soap stolen and a wash board
borrowed you are ready to apply for a
furlough.
Then after the manner of the women
of the Nile, the garment Is buttered
with Fels-Naptha and battered about
until the last button has deserted. It
is then plunged into a tub of clean
water and held up for inspection in the
pitiless light of the sun. Here the
system breaks down. It is plain that
in some way the article under torture
has received the command ' ' as you
were." .

A t this point washing becomes an
intellectual process: employing the high-
er powers of reasoning, thus: ' ' The
damn thing is washed. I washed it my-
self. I f It looks as If it had been
dragged up and down the picket line
it is not my fault. By al l the laws of
nature it is clean. I wil l wear it for
such.*'
Then came that great American in-
stitution, the • Mexican laundry, per-
forming incredible feats of black art.
Give them a couple of suits of under-
wear, a pair of socks, it handkerchief
and a towel and they wil l return it
tran formed into a pair of khaki trous-
ers originally worn by Ex President
Taft, a shirt suitable for a rag doll,
half a dozen striped dish cloths and a
union suit which has been disloyal to
its union and worked overtime.

By contact with the local banditti
who perform these miracles we have
picked up a knowledge of Spanish which
should create an opening in the export-
ing business upon our return; We can
say "Bluenose Dies " and "Grnssyass "
in a free, and easy conversational tone
which surprises the natives. Conversa-
tions ou the subject of washing are
usually carried on in the 'following
manner with the assistance of the in-
dex finger:—
" Here—ropas—when wil l you get it
back?—-Back—Back here—hell—ropas
ropas munyano—(what the devil is day
after tomorrow?)—duo munyano—num-
ber on bag—numero on castllo—Bee—
numero dix—look von aamn fool you're
not listening—ropas, C'atil—Oh, lake
the thing and get out of here." Thoro
is nothing like living right with a peo-
ple in order to learn their language, -'
A Chance for Reminiscences.

In the future whenever we see a plate
of ham and eggs.we wil l feel like shak-
ing hands with it and enquiring about
everything down on the Border. How
is Joe's place? Has Sherry's opened
up n branch' lunch room in McAllen?
Is the' price of armadillo basbets up or
down ? i
We wil l remember the days in Van
Cortland Park when most of us carried
so much field equipment in our pockets
that we looked like animated bags of
potatoes set off by orange silk scarfs
hurled carelessly across, the Adam'h ap-
ple. No one ever thought of going into
New York in these days with out wear-

1st CAVALR Y HORS E SHOW. OCT. 7th, 8t h AN D 9t h

Straight From the Colonel.

' ' Every man should feel' ' he said
"tha t just as soon as 1 receive any
orders or information regarding the re-
turn of the First Cavalry it wil l be
officially announced. There is nothing
being held back at headquarters. The
men wil] get any news just as soon as
we get it. "

Colonel DeBevoise stated that he ap-
preciated the importance to many of
the men of learning the date of recall
as soon as possible in order to make ad-
justments in their businesses. "I n
spite of this " he said "th e men must
realize the impo ibility of predicting
any date of returning at this time. I
know nothing about it any more than
the men in the ranks, nor do the officers
above me in the entire New York or
Southern Division. The matter is al l
In the hands of the Administration and
depends on day-to-day developments.
I can Fay that there jure no orders bare
for the First Cavalry' nor have I any
intimation of any which are coming.

"I n the meanwhile it io the duty of
every man to conduct himself like a
soldier, as he has in the past, by living
from day to day and not trying to pry
into the future. To do so only breed
discontent, is fruitless, and leads to
inefficiency in man and organization.
"Those who claim that they came
down with the regiment to fight and
not to do indefinite manual labor on
the Border do not do credit to their, in -
telligence. To have crossed the Border
with an expeditionary force io Jul y
would have been to leave a path of
wreckage and disgrace.

"Today after three months of hard
labor the troops have put themselves
into physical condition which makes
them ready for anything. They have
Required a training which it would bo
impossible to get in any number of
state camps. Should they be recalled
the country wil l be the richer for hav-
ing thene thousands of trained men
ready to answer any call. "

souls for picket guard. . And dawn
brings the same schedule. Being mag-
nanimous to the Infantry, we should
say it practically balances,—but they
wil l never admit it.

We were asked for something dis-
tinctive about the Squadron, though
we imagined al l the New York Cavalry-
much of a sameness. It was pointed
out, complimentary-like, that we man-
aged to make ourselves pretty comfor-
table in the field. (Have you, by-the-
wsy, seen I Troop, from Buffalo. I f
are .live in Athens, they lol l in Sybaris.)
The club was mentioned,—blessed prog-
eny of Captain Youngs,—and the water
tower,—B Troop's contribution,—and
the palms and,—and.—things. But' the
club has neither billiard tables,—er—
grill-rooms nor bay windows. As for
the water-tower,-—well, we were really
badly in need of a prophet with a di-
vining rod.
But i f it.hasn't been al l skittles and
one per cent beer, neither has it been
al l picket line and kitchen detail, not
al l milk and honey, but not simply rice
and: tomatoes. There are some who,
when they do get home, may cry from
the housetops "Tur n out the guard" —
and, being asked why, wil l answer,
"General Debility." An d there are
those who wil l re-enlist on the chance
that they may see how Sbaryland (no
advt.) is coming along and hear the
coyotes cry i n the moonlight.
The Squadron, once a number of men
in New York wearing the same hat
band, and delicately perfumed with tan
bark, has turned out to be a very smal l
world indeed. That is a distinguishing
feature, if you must have it. How
small, one who has seen a Division pass
in review can realize. It raises such a
little dust. But there is unity, an in -
tegrity we could wish to preserve. It
tends a spirit to the dullest life and
gives more purpose to a rather indefi-
nite visit. A. F. J., Jr.

WHA T TO SE E AN D WHA T
TO BU T I N BROWNSVILL E

j Cavalrymen visiting Brownsville wil l
find a superior stock of saddles, bits,
spurs, riding crops and riding equip,
meiit at W. H. Clay's saddle store on*
Elizabeth Street, a block west of Mil -
1

ler'n Hotel. Mr. Clay is an artist iu
leather and is selling goods of al l kinds
to 2fc Y. men, also takiug orders for
raw-hide crops to' bp delivered later,
when that grade of leather is obtain-
able. Toll Mr. Clay you saw his ad-
! dress in The Rattler.
The new Brownsville Hardware Co.,
right at the railroad station, sells pig-
skin ''Reveille " puttees for S4.7G.
Mention The Rattler when you make
. t your purchase.
Colonel DeBevoise recently remarked p D. USper o runs a handsome clothing that no matter when or 'where the First j 3t«>rc on Elizabeth, street where soft Cavalry might be called in tho future, I leather boots of the waterproof variety
It will "never have to face inoro extreme j Mi l for $7.00 and $,
climatic conditions than it wi nt through i bought two pairs,
v Those who visit Brownsville on fur-
lough wil l find excellent accomodations
rnfortuuatelv ho official heat record ''. ^ «t ftiller' s Hotel, rates $2.50

was kept for the benefit of future ^'S'so^S stand in Miller' s Hotel
Doubting Thomases of the north. Dur- %t A splendid slock of Mexican , V % t ^-' i

l h c r m? m t e i r.°»|- and radian curios, blankets und'shawls,
ed from 100 to II;, degrees m the shade „ ri. asoiinbk. prices, - Ask tho

and often reached 125 in the sun. On , . bojlin n th e punie r if she .reads one occasion at least o thermometer ,_, „ . ,
was found with sufficient ambition to " ° -
climb to 135 in a tent. Short ther-
mometers had no chance mid only the LOST—Lady' s white rubber rain long rangy ones survived. Curiously [coat, trade marked "Hut*, New York. " enough the men were affected by 'this Left on train between McAllen and heat less than many have been by low- San Juan, Oct. 11. Liberal reward er temperatures during a New York} and no questions asked i f returned to summer. Major Frederie Humphreys, Division EDWAR D STREETER. | Headquarters, McAllen, Texas-