

PROGRESS AND PURPOSE:

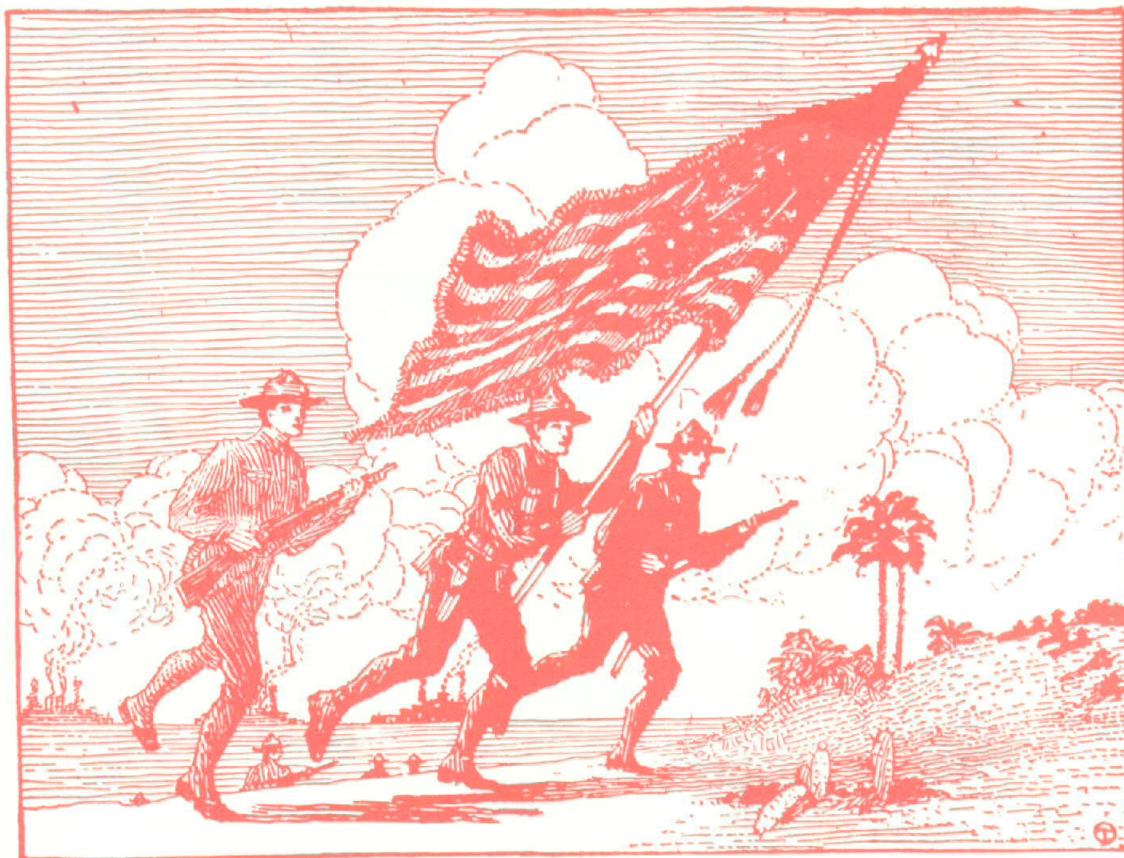
A DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY OF THE U. S. MARINE CORPS

1900-1970



HISTORY AND MUSEUMS DIVISION
HEADQUARTERS, U. S. MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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A recruiting poster of era just before World War I which typifies the appeal of the Marine Corps. The illustration, artist unknown, has been used on the cover of this history.

Progress and Purpose:
A Developmental History
Of The
United States Marine Corps
1900-1970

By

Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth J. Clifford, USMCR



HISTORY AND MUSEUMS DIVISION
HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
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FOREWORD

In this work the fighting record of the U.S. Marine Corps is not discussed but rather the inventiveness of those Marines who pioneered the amphibious role that would be played by the Corps in the 20th century.

Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth J. Clifford, the author, has been active in the Marine Corps Reserve for many years and served on active duty as an infantry platoon leader in Korea. More recently he has taken leave from his civilian pursuits of teaching social and political history at St. John's University in Jamaica, New York, to serve two years at the Historical Division of Headquarters Marine Corps and a year in Vietnam as an assistant to the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, III Marine Amphibious Force. He has a PhD in American studies from the University of London and is completing a book analyzing British and American amphibious (combined) operations, 1920-1945.

This work is dedicated to the proposition that Marines, past, present, and future, are experts in their craft, namely, amphibious warfare. However, amphibious warfare is a complex subject and this book does not pretend to be the last and definitive work on 20th century development of amphibious doctrine, tactics, equipment, and techniques. It should be considered an exploratory work, one that invites further research and study. Comments on the text, including citation of errors of both omission and commission, are solicited.



E. H. SIMMONS

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Reviewed and approved:
1 March 1973.

PREFACE

Marine Corps contributions to the development of doctrine, tactics, and techniques of amphibious warfare have been cited in various Marine Corps histories for at least the past 70 years. It was the idea of Lieutenant General James M. Masters, Sr., then Commandant of Marine Corps Schools, 1966–1968, to restate these contributions and to cite some other contributions such as the doctrine of vertical envelopment and the use of helicopters in land warfare. My idea was to tell the story of these contributions without using a chronology of Marine “firsts.”

The book is generally divided into decades giving the status of the Marine Corps during the particular decade, coupled with a brief introduction into the political and economic climate of the times. This was of course important because it is those economic and political factors that directly affected the military situation.

In researching for the story, three unique things became apparent. The first was that in 1932, the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico chose to study a case history in disaster from World War I, the Gallipoli-Dardanelles Campaign of 1915–16. Rear Admiral L.E.H. Maund, Royal Navy, might have given the answer for Marine Corps Schools if it had been asked of them—Why study Gallipoli? Admiral Maund said of Gallipoli, “It had imagination, it had the promise of great strategic gains; while the reasons for its failure could easily be discerned and had to do with lack of technique, material and belief in this form of warfare—shortcomings that could all be overcome.” It is the “shortcomings” that Marine planners had overcome by the commencement of World War II. The second unique accomplishment that surfaced was that Marine Corps Schools had the first written doctrine on landing operations before it had suitable landing boats to carry out the doctrine. In like fashion, within 15 years after the “Tentative Landing Operations Manual” was published, the Marine Corps Schools had the first written doctrine on helicopter operations before actually possessing a helicopter.

As a by-product of researching this book, I discovered and used quite extensively the General Board Records of the United States Navy which apparently had seen little previous use by Marine researchers. My profound thanks go to Dr. Dean C. Allard, Head of the Navy Operational Archives Branch, Naval Historical Division and Mrs. Kathleen Lloyd who made these records available to me. My major source of information came from Breckinridge Library, Marine Corps Educational Center at Quantico. Mr. Dave Brown and Mrs. Lyvia Garsys of the library helped me through the maze of files there. The Historical Amphibious File at the library is a gold mine for amphibious warfare researchers and the cooperation of all personnel there is outstanding. The people at the libraries of the Office of the Chief of Military History of the Army and of the Navy Department were most helpful noting particularly Mr. W. Bart Greenwood and Mrs. Rita Halle of the Navy Library. Getting closer to home, Mrs. Clara Miller and Mrs. Frances Rubright of the History and Museums Division Library and Archives were exceptionally helpful. Sergeant Michael L. Gardiner and Lance Corporal Isaac C. Moon, Jr., both had a hand in typing various versions of the manuscript, but the lion's share of work on the final manuscript was done by Miss Kay P. Sue. The index was compiled and prepared for publication by Miss Cynthia J. Nash. The maps and sketches were prepared by Sergeants Kenneth W. White and Jerry L. Jakes. I am particularly indebted to Mr. Henry I. Shaw, Jr., Chief Historian of the History and Museums Division at Headquarters Marine Corps and Professor William H. Russell of the United States Naval Academy. I doubt if Winston Churchill could have gotten his works past their critical eyes without their strong recommendation and comments. In any event—they were right in all instances.

Historical accuracy is my responsibility alone and the very few unsolicited grains of personal

opinion are mine also. A debt of gratitude goes to those officers who read my drafts and gave me the benefit of their knowledge and invaluable experience. Unless otherwise noted, all illustrations are official Department of Defense (Marine Corps) photographs.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this book to the Amphibious Warfare Presentation Team killed in the performance of their duty to their country and to their Corps in a plane crash in January 1968. In the final analysis, the members of the Presentation Team represented all Marines, past, present, and future. They were about their duty, telling the story of what the Marine Corps/Navy Team does best—conduct amphibious operations. As long as there are oceans and littoral areas of the world, there will always be a need to know the workings that makeup the amphibious operation.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kenneth J. Clifford". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

KENNETH J. CLIFFORD

Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND—1900—1920—COMING OF AGE

Mark Sullivan describes America on the first day of the new century thus:

The American of 1900, reading his paper on Monday morning, New Year's Day, or the Sunday paper of the day before, or almost any paper during the year, observed, with some uneasiness, that the head-lines continued to occupy themselves, as they had for a considerable time, with the Philippines, Cuba, Porto Rico, Guam, Aguinaldo, the Igorrotes; words which three years before had no more meaning to him than to stir old memories of something he had seen in his schoolboy biographies—you couldn't be confident how to pronounce the names . . . If the American, reading the papers of New Year's Day, 1900, was more than commonly reflective over the serious aspects of the news, it was only partly because the sporting page and the comic strip had not yet arrived to overbalance the American newspaper on the side of the merely diverting. It was due also to the presence in the newspapers of that day and in the sermons of the day before, of a spirit of solemnity, occasioned by the coming of a new year and, as some said, a new century.¹

The United States population at the start of this new century had an estimated 76,094,000 persons of whom there were nearly 39 million males.² Out of this then-vast population came the little known U.S. Marine Corps of 5,240 men and 174 officers including the Brigadier General (later Major General) Commandant Charles Heywood.

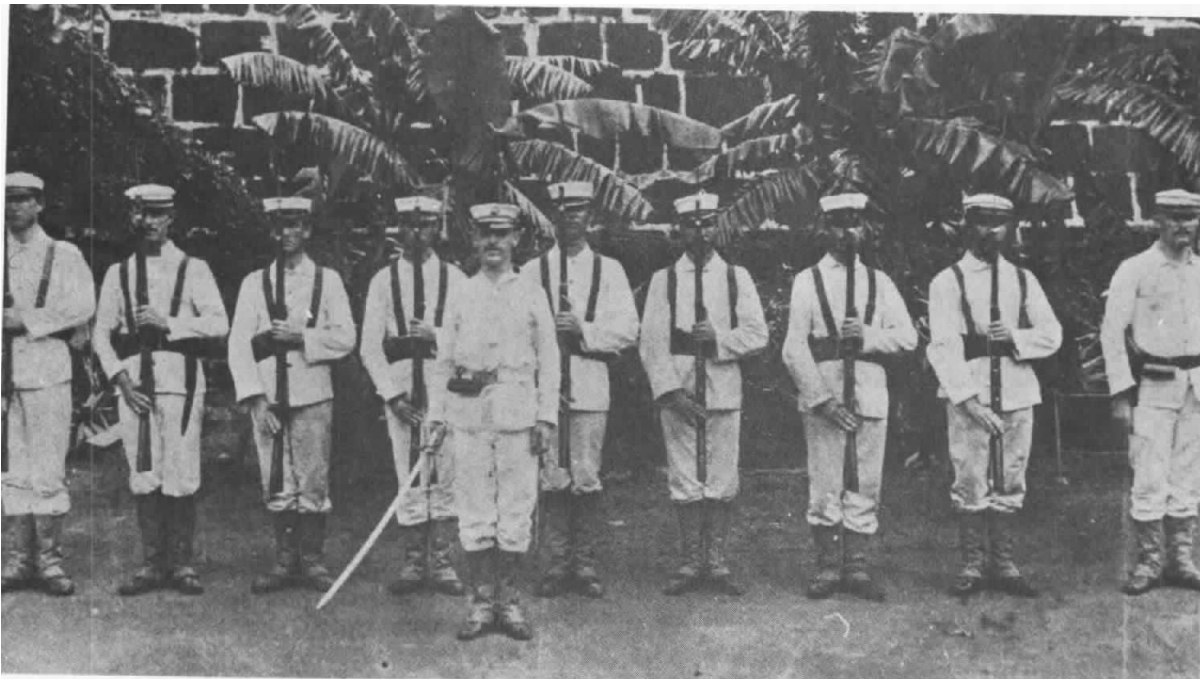
There was little difference, in the minds of the general public, between the Marine Corps and the Navy. The recent Spanish-American War had been a "Naval War" and the subsequent events of occupation and the Philippine insurrection were an Army show. There were no Marine national heroes, such as the Navy's "Hero of Manila Bay," Admiral George Dewey, or the Army's "Rough Rider," Teddy Roosevelt. The only group of people who perhaps knew the difference between an officer of Marines and an officer of the Navy line was the Washington social crowd. When it came to proper representation at the White House, the Navy didn't hesitate to make clear that



Major General Charles Heywood, 9th Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, 30 June 1891 to 2 October 1903. (USMC Photo #302066).

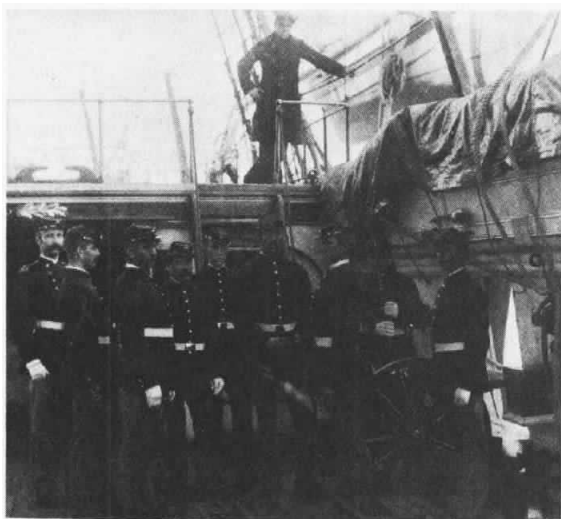
the Marines did not represent the Navy. The Marines were quite separate.

During the early years of the McKinley Administration, Colonel Theodore A. Bingham, an Army Engineer, had the position of Commissioner of Public Buildings and Grounds and acted as a kind of major-domo of the White House. Colonel Bingham had to select the President's two military aides, traditionally representing the two branches of the service. There had been no objection to the first assistant, an able army artillery officer. The fatal error was the choice of the Navy representative, Captain Charles L. McCawley. Captain McCawley was an admirable young man, witty



Lieutenant Dion Williams and a detachment from the USS Baltimore saluting Admiral Dewey on his visit to the Navy Yard, Cavite, Philippine Islands on 13 June 1898. (USMC Photo #4831).

and well-bred. The trouble was that he did not belong to the Navy proper. He was a captain of Marines.³ Navy circles buzzed with the news that officers of the line had been passed over at the Executive Mansion. The Navy Department was boiling with resentment. To allay the fears of some of the Navy officials,

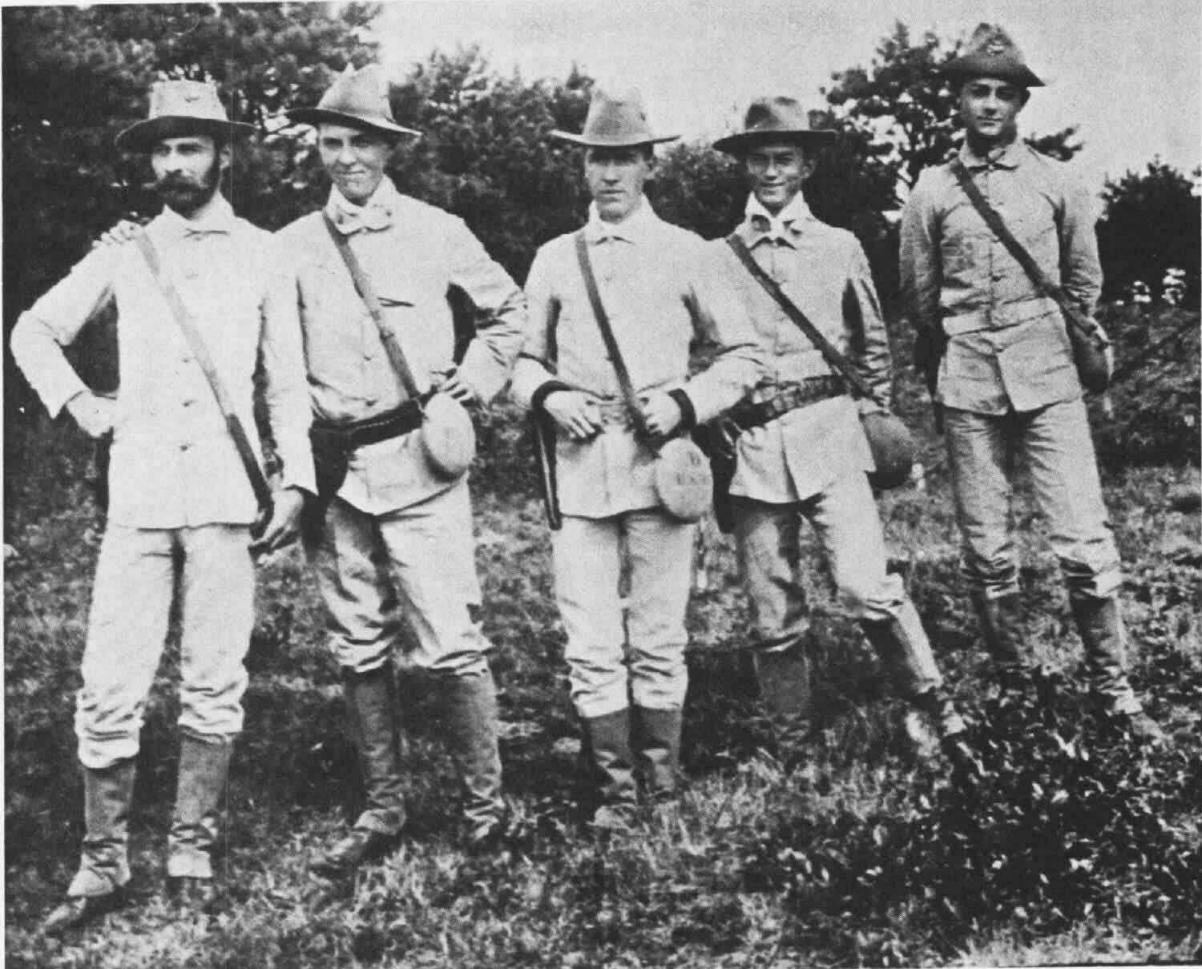


Marine gun crew on board the USS Alliance in 1888. (USMC Photo #515255).

Secretary of the Navy John D. Long got the President's consent to augment the detail of aides with a naval officer. The grave crisis of Washington society was resolved and the Navy's feelings were saved.

Willis J. Abbot has written a history of the Marine Corps entitled *Soldiers of the Sea*, published in 1918. In the foreword of the book, it was noted that "until now one could search the public libraries almost in vain for works pertaining to the U.S. Marine Corps, as such, and Mr. Abbot has rendered a notable service."⁴ The fact is that this statement was not technically correct. There was in existence a second edition (1903) of Major Richard S. Collum's *History of the United States Marine Corps*. Though it was not a runaway best seller, it did provide, for those interested, the story of the Marine Corps.

The Marines did get some notoriety of sorts when the former Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt, in his last year as President in 1908 caused the removal of Marines from naval vessels. Efforts to remove Marines from ships had been made by a group of naval officers from 1890-94, led by the Marine Corps antagonist, Captain William F. Fullam, USN. These early efforts were rejected

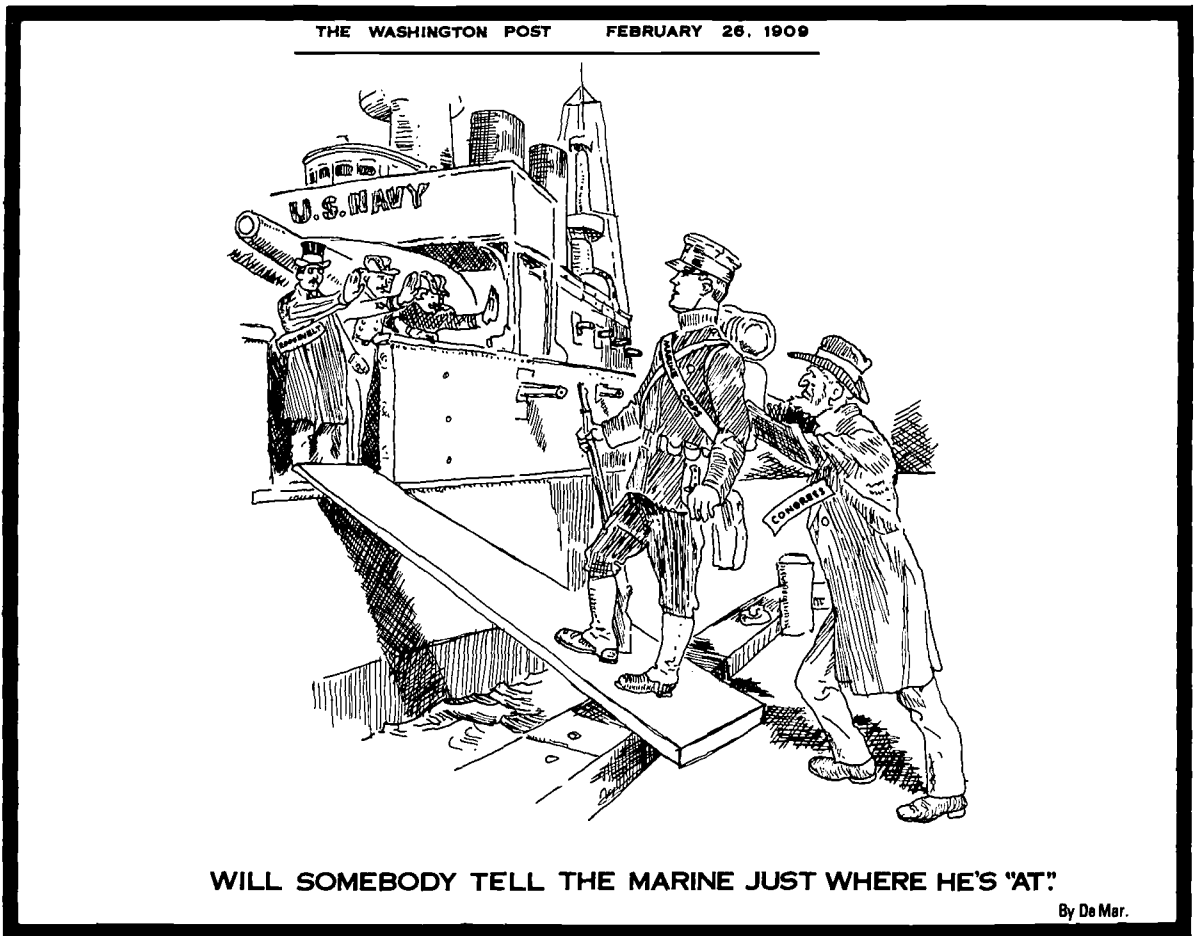


Group of officers, 1st Battalion of Marines (Huntington's), Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H. (Seavey's Island), in September 1898. Left to right: Lieutenants Lewis C. Lucas; Clarence L. A. Ingate; Melville J. Shaw; Newt H. Hall; and George C. Reid. (USMC Photo #515616).

by the Secretary of the Navy but were again brought up in 1908. This time the pleas fell on the sympathetic ears of the President who issued an Executive Order which defined the duties of the U.S. Marine Corps and specifically left out duty on board naval vessels.⁵ Not only were the Marines withdrawn from ships, but, to rub it in, the *Washington Post*, in a feature article, declared that the Army was to get the Marines by transfer to the Army infantry. The newspaper stated:

Mr. Roosevelt had not only reached this conclusion, but has taken preliminary steps toward the practical development of the plan. He already has conferred with officers of the general staff, and also with General Leonard Wood, who is known to be close to him in military matters. General Wood and the members of the general staff are formulating a scheme outlining the Presidential ideas.⁶

The Navy Department countered this rumor by submitting a detailed statement to the House Naval Affairs Committee. It was made clear that "It is of the utmost importance that the Marine Corps remain absolutely under the control of the Navy Department and all war plans thus far laid down provide for the close cooperation of the Marine Corps with the Navy, afloat and ashore."⁷ The President of the General Board, Admiral Dewey, in a letter to the House Naval Affairs Committee, reiterated the importance of Marines within the Department of the Navy because of the need for an expeditionary force to assist the fleet in seizing and holding advanced bases. His high regard for Marines stemmed back to his Manila Bay victory when he asserted: "If there had been 5,000 Marines under my command



Sketched reproduction of a cartoon dealing with the Marines on Navy ships controversy. (Taken from USMC Photo #528702).

at Manila Bay, the city would have surrendered to me on May 1, 1898, and could have been properly garrisoned. The Filipinos would have received us with open arms, and there would have been no insurrection.”⁸

It is interesting to note that this friend of the Marine Corps, Admiral Dewey, was in favor of the President’s Executive Order 969, but for different reasons; none were sinister. He said that “while the marines will no longer form parts of the crews of the ships, the navy is to have the services of this fine corps for the important and necessary duties laid down in that order.”⁹ Outwardly, it would appear that it was a family fight between the Navy and the Marine Corps. But of course it was not. It became quite political because it involved the actions of the President of the United States and his use of the Executive Order. The ramifications of the use of this

order not only affected the Navy and Marine Corps but touched on prerogatives of Congress.

The right to issue such an order without special provision of law was assumed on the ground that the President as Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy could dispose of the naval forces according to his judgment. In a vote two months later, the Senate would dispel this view.

The controversy thus became a matter of principle involving Presidential powers vis-a-vis Congressional prerogatives. Some strong Congressional leaders upheld the President on the basis of separation of powers. Among the Senate luminaries supporting the President were William E. Borah, Robert M. LaFollette, and Henry Cabot Lodge.

The newspapers had to reorient the people who followed the controversy from November

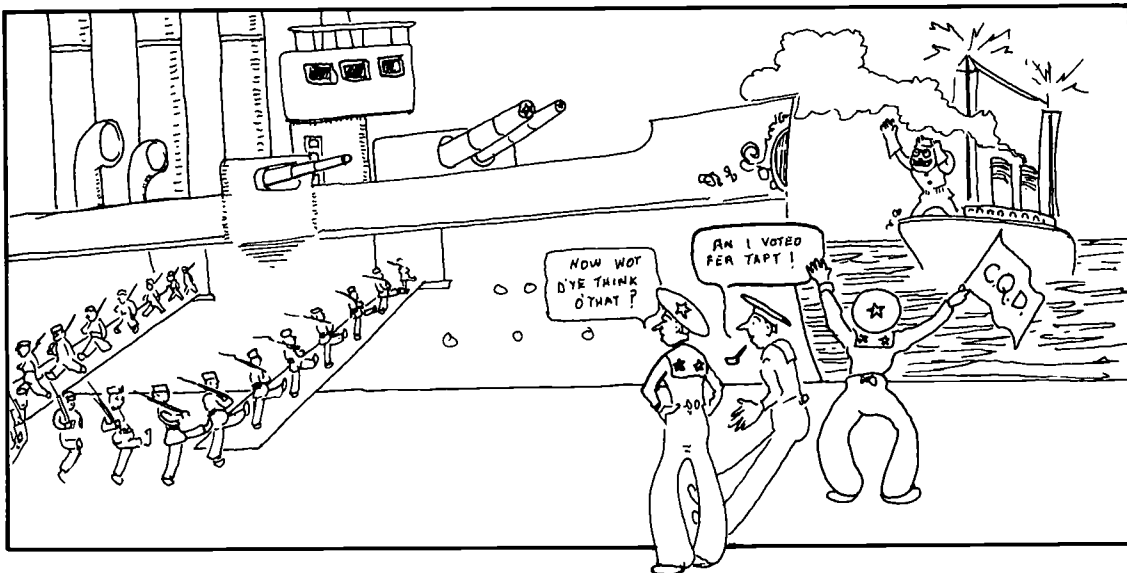
1908 to March 1909. They had to identify exactly what Marines were and what they did. The public was learning, in popular newspaper fashion, that the Marines had been involved in the "Naval War" with Spain, that Marines served on most naval vessels, including the *Maine*, and thus participated in all the naval battles of the war. They learned that Marines were with Dewey at Manila Bay and Sampson at Santiago. They learned that in addition to Teddy Roosevelt's "Rough Riders," there were Marines in Cuba who fought the Spaniards to capture Guantanamo Bay. They further learned that in addition to the U.S. Army in the Philippines and its occupation force, the Marines had, at the end of 1901, over 2,000 men in the Philippines. They became aware that Marines fought alongside of the Army against the insurrectionists. The

public was reminded of Marines like Major Littleton W. T. Waller and places like Samar.

The intricate matter of restoring Marines to naval vessels was resolved in March 1909. Senator Eugene C. Hale, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, tacked on to the Naval Appropriations Bill a proviso that eight percent of the enlisted men on board battleships be Marines.¹⁰ Notwithstanding the spirited defense of the President's action, the Senate, by a vote of 51 to 12, adopted the amendment restoring the Marine Corps to the ships of the Navy. Those voting in the negative were all Republicans and members of the President's party, the majority party.¹¹ In the waning hours of his administration, in fact the day before he left office, President Roosevelt struck his colors, but only halfway. On 3 March 1909, he issued orders restoring the

THE DAILY EVENING TELEGRAPH - PHILADELPHIA, TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 1909

TEDDY HEARS BY WIRELESS - By ART N. EDROP.



TAFT PUTS MARINES BACK ON THE QUARTER DECK

Sketched reproduction of a cartoon dealing with the return of Marines to Navy ships. (Taken from USMC Photo #528701).

Marines to ships, but placing them under the orders of the captains of the vessels on which they were to serve.* The technicality was that under the old order of things Marines had had specific duties. One of these was to maintain certain guns of the secondary battery. Now the President's order placing them under the direction of the ship's captain made it possible to assign the Marines any sort of duty on board ship and conceivably remove them from all guns.

The General Board of the Navy could envision difficulties arising out of this portion of the order and consequently recommended to the new Secretary of the Navy, George L. von Meyer, and the new President, William Howard Taft, that it be changed. So it was that on 26 March 1909, three weeks after Mr. Roosevelt had left office and sailed to Africa for a lion hunt, President Taft issued a memorandum from the White House:

Upon the recommendation of the General Board it was decided at the Cabinet meeting today that the amendments to the regulations adopted on 3 March in regard to the Marines should be revoked and the old regulations should be restored.¹³

The Marine Corps and friends of the Marine Corps on the Naval Appropriations Committee had won out. Benjamin Standish Baker, a popular correspondent for the *Boston Transcript*, had written:

. . . it is common to hear officers both of the army and of the line of the navy admit that when it comes to being in constant and effective touch with members of Congress, and thus securing desired legislation and favors, the Marine Corps is easily leader.¹³

The point is that the controversy in 1908 was a blessing in disguise for the Marine Corps if not Theodore Roosevelt. If the action of the President diminished for the time being the duties of the Marine Corps by taking Marines off naval vessels, the resulting publicity reminded the American public, including the Congress, that there was such an organization called the Marine Corps which definitely shared the tasks of defense of the United States with the Army and Navy.

*It should be recalled that inauguration day for the incoming President of the United States was 4 March and that not until the 20th Amendment was ratified in 1933 was it changed to 20 January.

The Nature of the General Board

"And doth not a meeting like this make amends"
Thomas Moore (*Irish Melodies*)

. . . A general board has been made, of which the Admiral is president, and the function of which is to consider questions relating to the efficient preparation of the fleet in case of war and for the naval defense of the coast.

Thus the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. John D. Long, reported to the President in his annual report in November 1900. This routine mention of the General Board could not possibly indicate the great ramifications that this board would have on the defense structure of the nation, Navy, and Marine Corps in the succeeding four decades. There was no question that the need for this type of board existed, the question was what role it should take—advisory or executive in nature.

Prior to the Spanish American War, the United States had no central advisory authority for determining naval policy. During the war, the Secretary of Navy appointed a Naval War Board, sometimes called the Strategy Board, to collect military information, prepare strategic plans, and generally advise him on strategy, policy, and the conduct of the war. The most distinguished member of this board was Rear Admiral Alfred T. Mahan. With the close of the war, the War Board quietly went out of existence. The success with which this rudimentary general staff functioned tended to crystallize sentiment within the Navy for the establishment of a more permanent organization of comparable character. The fact that after the war the Navy's increased responsibilities extended to opposite sides of the globe made careful planning by a body similar to a naval general staff an urgent necessity.

One of the most progressive officers in the Navy, Captain Henry C. Taylor, urged the Secretary of the Navy to approve a type of general staff for the efficiency of the Navy. Among Taylor's more influential supporters was Admiral Stephen B. Luce, the elder statesman of the Navy, who was then living in retirement at Newport, Rhode Island.¹⁴ In addition, Taylor had the support of the current hero, Admiral George Dewey, who was a strong supporter of some sort of central authority. Dewey argued that "we had been making our appropriations without a proper regard for their expenditures to the definite end of developing a fighting force as an efficient

whole; we had been building ships without regard to homogeneity. . . .”¹⁵ Perhaps it was the times and the fear of a Prussian-type general staff that had emerged in the Kaiser’s Germany that frightened people. There were misgivings in Congress and elsewhere by those who feared that a full-fledged general staff, with powers of command, would usurp the authority of the civilian secretary. As a compromise, Secretary Long established the General Board of the Navy with no executive functions but merely with an advisory capacity.

A major factor in the immediate acceptance of the board on the part of the rank and file of the Navy and its prestige with the public at large was the presidency of George Dewey, Admiral of the Navy. His place in naval history was already won; his character was above reproach; his professional attainments were of the highest.¹⁶ The other members of the board were the President of the Naval War College, the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, and the Chief of the Office of Naval Intelligence. Others were ordered to serve with the body as their assistance was desired.¹⁷

On 29 March 1900, Colonel George C. Reid, USMC, Adjutant and Inspector of the Marine Corps, was appointed by the Secretary of Navy as a member of the board.¹⁸ Thus the Marine Corps initially had a member on the General Board. As its first order of business, Secretary Long ordered the new board to consider campaign plans for different war situations in the Philippines and their vicinity. As it turned out the main peacetime function of the board would be that of making recommendations for the annual shipbuilding program. Along this line, a board member, Admiral Henry C. Taylor, defined the board’s function: “Not to say what force we should have but to prepare for war whatever force Congress should give us.”¹⁹ The General Board of the Navy, while an advisory body to the Secretary of Navy, became in reality the spokesman for him. During the first 20 years of this century there were four administrations and eight Secretaries of the Navy. With the exceptions of George von Meyer (1909–13) and Josephus Daniels (1913–21), the Navy’s Secretaries served on the average of two years. It would be quite understandable that the Secretary of the Navy would rely quite heavily on the General Board. The board was made up of the most distinguished and, hopefully,

the most intelligent officers of the Navy. Until his death in 1914, the President of the Board was Admiral Dewey. The great experience and continuity of the officers of the board would be hard to ignore, if one were inclined to do so. However, most Secretaries of the Navy were pleasant people who were politically rewarded and who wanted to do a good job, quietly. They certainly did not want to overshadow their Commander in Chief. In any event, Presidents such as Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson would be somewhat of a challenge to overshadow.

The General Board, therefore, studied a problem, had hearings, and then submitted its report to the Secretary of the Navy with recommendations. Rarely, if ever, during this period, did the Secretary of the Navy fail to approve the General Board recommendations. With the very nature of the structure of the Navy Department and the evolution of the powers of the General Board, it became apparent that the Marine Corps could do very little on its own without the approval of the General Board. Considering the times, there may not have been anything inherently wrong with the situation.

The Marine Corps did not suffer in any way under this arrangement. On the contrary, the General Board in most matters consulted the Commandant when considering advanced base deployments, increases in personnel strength, and the like. The board, however, did make its own decisions after hearing what the Commandant had to say. It was a unilateral decision—the General Board’s. The board was quite vigilant in matters that would endanger the loss of the Marine Corps to the Army and was always favorably disposed to increasing the Marine Corps when this could be justified. So it was, in the early years, that the all-powerful General Board through the person of the Secretary of the Navy made decisions on deployment, organization, training, strength, and location of facilities. It was fortunate that the Marine Corps had a sympathetic General Board of the Navy in the early years of this century. The only way the board’s decisions could be overridden was by the necessity of assigning Marines in emergency expeditionary service. A crisis in Cuba or Haiti, etc., predisposed that the Marine Corps would be needed. It was the President and Secretary of State who made the decisions, the board simply and will-



Marines of the Advanced Base Brigade demonstrate the operation of the Colt machine gun at Philadelphia in October 1913. (USMC Photo #517216).

ingly assented. The Marine Corps was ordered and the Marine Corps responded. In these decisions the role of the General Board was minimal.

Advanced Base Force—The Reason for Existence*

If one were interested in ascertaining what specifically are the responsibilities of the Marine Corps today, a reading of the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, would give the answers. To use terms such as "responsibilities," "missions," and "roles" when discussing the Marine Corps 70 years ago would be incorrect. The designation of elements of the Marine Corps as the Advanced Base Force came about not in order to assign a "responsibility" or a "mission" to the Corps, but rather to solve a controversy within the Navy Department. The controversy was over the question of to whom should the assault mission be assigned,

*There is inconsistency in the correspondence of the General Board, Secretary of Navy, and the CMC relative to the use of the term *Advanced* or *Advance* as it pertains to Bases, Forces, and the like. It is intended that *Advanced* be used throughout this text.

and it would last four years.** On the one side, some naval officers wanted to keep the Navy line in exclusive control of landing operations. Other naval officers simply believed that seamen were too busy for landing parties, that they must concentrate on working the ship and its guns. They could not be spared for landing operations. The controversy focused attention on the landing force issue and thoughtful men concluded that the Marine Corps could fill the bill. By the time of the Spanish-American War those thoughtful men were vindicated when, in the battle for Guantanamo in Cuba, a Marine battalion under Marine command had seized the advanced base that conferred victory. The Guantanamo precedent of successfully seizing advanced bases was strengthened by similar experience in the Philippines and China.²⁰ A precedent of great value to the Marine Corps was made and the evolutionary assignment of the "assault mission" fell to the Marine Corps. After bases were secured, the Marine Corps would still be needed in defense and development of these bases. Its authority for this mission came from the General Board immediately after it was organized, April 1900.

At the first meeting of the General Board, Colonel George C. Reid, member of the board, was requested to:

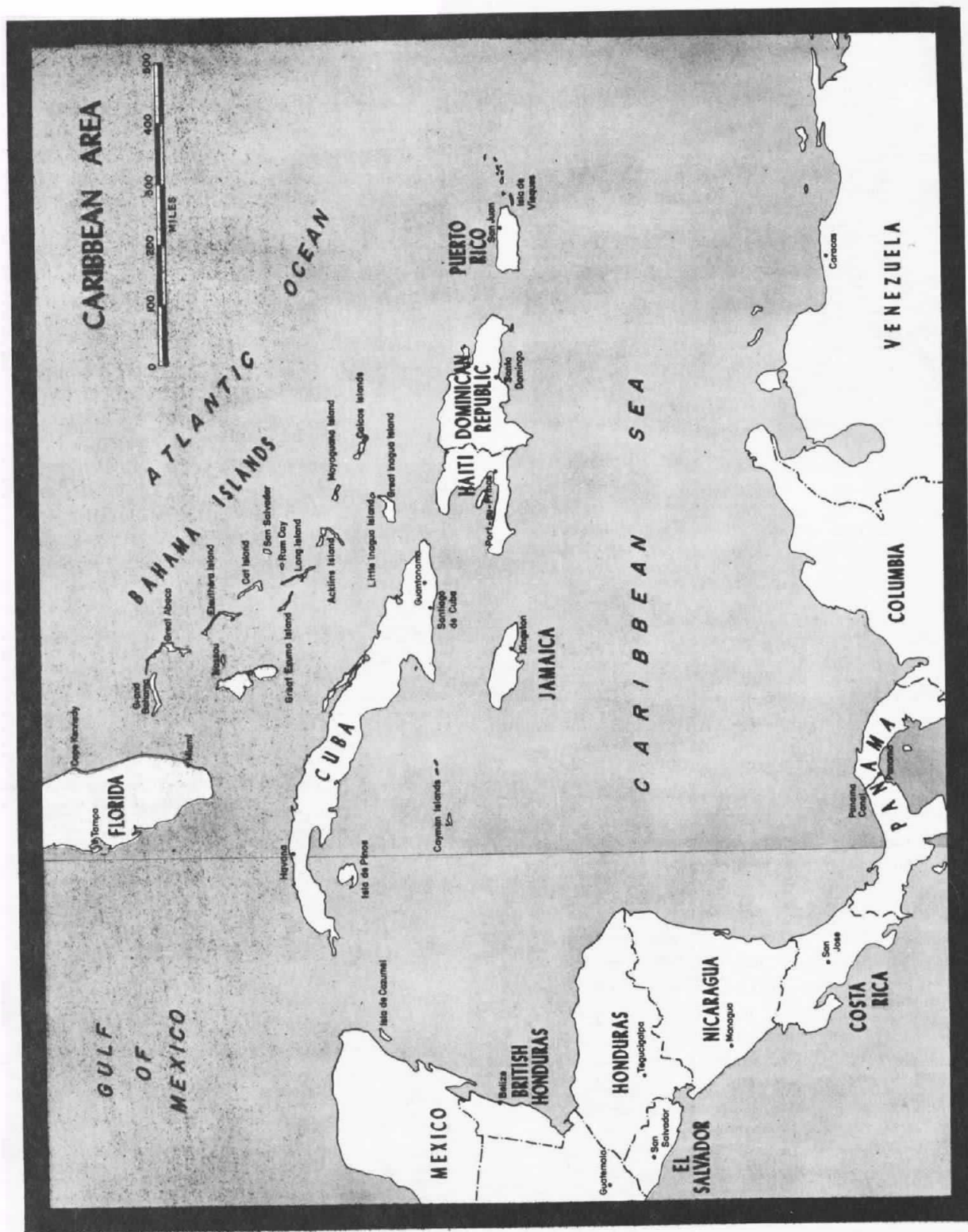
... put before it the number and organization of a force of Marines sufficient to hold each of three positions at Culebra in the West Indies, Samana (in Santo Domingo), and Guantanamo in Cuba; composition of this force as to infantry and artillery to maintain a position against cruisers or naval brigades landing to attack it.²¹

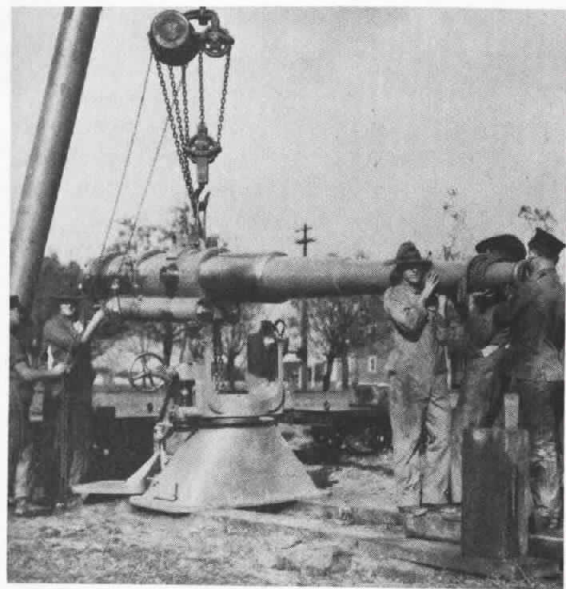
In addition, the General Board recommended to the Secretary of Navy that:

... two transports of capacity sufficient to carry 500 marines each with 2 months' commissary and Quartermaster stores etc. be made ready in the event of a naval campaign in Asiatic waters and that they be moved to an advance base near the scene of hostilities.²²

The General Board specifically recommended that the Marines would be "best adapted and most available for immediate and sudden call "for use in defending any advanced base.²³ The Army's role was considered at this time, but:

**Professor William Russell covers this controversy eminently well in "The Genesis of FMF Doctrine: 1789-1899," Part I, April 1951, Part II, May 1951, Part III, June 1951, and Part IV, July 1951 in the *Marine Corps Gazette* v. 35, nos., 4, 5, 6. and 7.





Marines of the Advanced Base Brigade practice assembling pedestal-mounted naval guns at Philadelphia in October 1913. (USMC Photo #516704).

... in the opinion of the General Board the requirements of the naval establishment of the United States include a military organization of sufficient strength in numbers and efficiency, to enable the Navy to meet all demands upon it for services within its own sphere of operations, without dependence upon the cooperation of the Army for troops and military supplies, for such a force of the Army may not always be available.²⁴

With the "who" completed, the "how" and "where" phase of the advanced base situation got underway. The General Board requested the Secretary of Navy to direct the Brigadier General Commandant to organize immediately four companies of 104 enlisted men each, and "have provided for such battalion and stored at Philadelphia, ready for instant use, a complete equipment for expeditionary field service for such force."²⁵ The General Board further recommended that officers and enlisted men of this battalion be thoroughly trained and instructed in the following areas:

- (a) The construction of field fortifications, gun emplacements, gun platforms and magazines;
- (b) The transportation of guns of less than 8-inch caliber from ship to point of emplacement and the mounting of same;
- (c) The construction and operating of field telegraph and telephone lines, signal, searchlight and range-finder stations;
- (d) The planting of mines, countermining and the operating of torpedos for harbor defense.

The board also recommended that the companies composing such a battalion be kept organized and maintained at their full strength, ready, in all respects, for immediate service.²⁶

The request by the General Board to the Secretary of the Navy to direct the Marine Corps to organize, train, and equip a unit to accomplish a specific task was a first of its kind. Colonel Reid, as member of the General Board and the Brigadier General Commandant, Charles Heywood, set about forming a fixed defense battalion to fulfill the requirements set by the Secretary of Navy. To build up the battalion of four companies of approximately 104 men per company, Marines were transferred from Seavey's Island (Portsmouth, New Hampshire), League Island (Philadelphia Navy Yard), and Port Royal, South Carolina (Parris Island, South Carolina) to the battalion. The battalion was physically located in two places, Newport, Rhode Island, and Annapolis, Maryland. Instruction in the subjects outlined above began at these two posts by July 1902.

Before the sites of Newport and Annapolis were chosen for this advanced base schooling, the Commandant was requested to comment on the best site for such instruction. He said that:

... of all the stations, Port Royal was the best station for such instruction as it is nearly surrounded by water—and being removed from the pernicious influences of a large city, in consequence of which the men will be more apt to be interested in this work ...²⁷

Future Marine Corps "boots," at what was later to become Parris Island Recruit Depot, would partly agree with the Commandant that it was indeed "removed from the pernicious influences of a large city." Instruction in advanced base work was continued until September 1902 when the battalion, under the command of Colonel Percival C. Pope, was assembled at Norfolk, Virginia. In October, another company, under the command of Captain Smedley D. Butler, joined the battalion increasing its total strength to 19 officers and 522 enlisted men.²⁸ The battalion sailed for Culebra in November on board the USS *Prairie* where practical application was demonstrated in developing a plan for the defense of that island. The Marines participated in extensive advanced base exercises with the fleet until January 1903. It was generally agreed that Marines had done a good job in defending Culebra. The next year, 1904, similar work in

the defense of Grande Island in Subic Bay, Philippines, was accomplished.²⁹

While there was no need to convince naval officials, the Russo-Japanese War furnished further evidence of the value of advanced bases, particularly the Japanese naval advanced base established in the Elliot Islands.* The occupation of the Elliot Islands was of inestimable value to Japan in operations against the Russians.

The question of possible and probable advanced base sites was under constant review by the General Board. All the war plans made by the General Board required advanced bases in addition to the permanent base, Guantanamo in the Caribbean and the advanced base, Grande Island, in the Philippines. The Marine Corps dictum, "it depends on the situation," was all too true in planning for advanced bases. The General Board felt that the precise location, defense, and time of occupation would depend upon the circumstances of the particular campaign. International "flaps" did tend to narrow speculation as to the site of possible future campaigns.

American relations with Japan in 1906 and 1907 became strained when the San Francisco School Board decided to segregate Asians from other students and designated a special "Oriental Public School" for all Chinese, Japanese,

*The Elliot Island Group is located in the Gulf of Korea of the Yellow Sea, approximately 60 miles north-east of Dairen and Port Arthur.

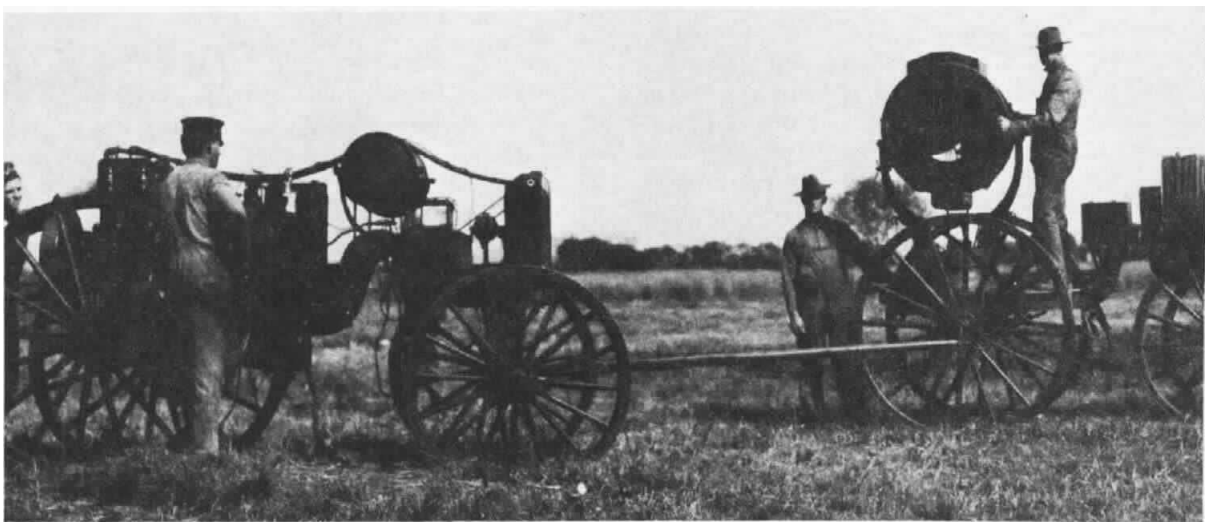
and Korean students. Flushed with victories over Russia, "the Japanese people were deeply incensed by such measures. Their press responded immediately to the school board's action with protests that ranged from rage to hurt incredulity."³⁰ President Theodore Roosevelt, in February 1907, called San Francisco's entire school board, headed by:

... a bassoon-playing mayor under indictment for graft, to come to the White House. The President finally broke the deadlock, but not until he waved his Big Stick and bared his big teeth. The Californians were persuaded to repeal the offensive school order and to accept what came to be known as 'the Gentlemen's Agreement.' This secret understanding was worked out, during 1907-08, by an exchange of diplomatic notes between Washington and Tokyo. The Japanese, on their part, agreed to stop the flow of coolies to the mainland of the United States by refusing to issue passports. The Californians, their fears largely allayed, henceforth slept easier.³¹

It is interesting to note that during the period of the American and Japanese war scare, the American Naval Attaché in Berlin reported to the Navy Department:

... German opinion would undoubtedly favor the United States in a Japanese-American conflict. But he added the discomfiting bit of intelligence that the British and German admiralities agreed Japan would probably win.³²

In spite of the talk of war, the Navy, through its spokesman Admiral Dewey, President of the General Board, stated "that he did not expect serious trouble with Japan for a very long



Marines of the Advanced Base Brigade work with mobile searchlights in Philadelphia in October 1913. (USMC Photo #516701).



STAFF AND CLASS, SCHOOL OF APPLICATION, ANNAPOLIS, MD., 1906.

Officers of the Staff, seated left to right: First Lieutenant W. G. Fay, Captain D. P. Hall, Captain J. H. Russell, Major F. J. Moses, Captain George C. Thorpe, Captain Harold C. Reisinger. Officers of the class, standing left to right: Second Lieutenants W. W. Buckley, Julian P. Wilcox, Benjamin B. Gossett, H. B. Pratt, Bennet Puryear, Jr., Robert L. Denig, Logan Tucker, Henry S. Greene, Randolph Coyle, C. F. B. Price, William C. Wise, Jr., Charles S. McReynolds.

Many future senior officers of the Marine Corps, including the 16th Commandant, John H. Russell, Jr., are included in this portrait, (USMC Photo #514699).

time.”³³ Some other members of the General Board believed there was, in the realm of possibility, a chance of future hostilities with Japan. Consequently, in January 1907, the Army and Navy decided to undertake joint studies along those lines for a possible war with Japan. The studies were inaugurated at the suggestion of Major General J. Franklin Bell, the Army Chief of Staff.

On a lower level, Marines were ordered to commence extensive construction of temporary defenses at Olongapo in the Philippines. Twenty 6-inch, four 4.7-inch, four 4-inch, and sixteen 6-pounder guns were mounted in 10 weeks. “The work amounted to the temporary defense of a permanent base for which permanent fortifications had not been provided.”³⁴ The situation at Olongapo resulted in some confusion as to the character and

purpose of a naval advanced base. The Philippine construction brought up the question of the cooperation of the Army in such work.³⁵ During the protracted consideration of the matter in 1908 and 1909, the strength of the Marine Corps was materially increased by Congress “so that there was a sufficient force of Marines to meet the probable demands of the Navy in this respect, and the cooperation of the Army received no further considerations.”³⁶

In 1907 and again in 1909, the General Board urgently presented to the Navy Department the need for consolidating equipment with regard to advanced bases. The Secretary of Navy approved the board recommendations that the materiel on the Atlantic coast be assembled at Philadelphia and that for the advanced base outfits in the Pacific be assembled at Olongapo.³⁷ The Commandant of

the Marine Corps (CMC)* was given the responsibility for the custody and care of all advanced base material. In addition, he was to "take the necessary steps to instruct the officers and men under your command in the use of this material."³⁸

On 18 April 1910, Major General Commandant George F. Elliott submitted to the Secretary of Navy a copy of the proposed course of instruction for an advanced base school to be established at New London, Connecticut. While it was to be primarily an officers' school, 40 enlisted men were assigned to the first class of instruction which began in July 1910. In addition to the advanced base school, two Marine officers were assigned to the Army School for Submarine Defenses at Fort Monroe, Virginia. This was necessary because the Navy had planned to use Army mines, pending the acceptance of a new naval mine. In addition, two other Marine officers were detailed to attend the Army Signal School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, "in order that they may acquire a complete knowledge of wireless telegraphy and the construction and operation of field telegraph and telephone lines."³⁹

In a memorandum to the prospective officer students of the Advanced Base School, the Commandant declared:

The establishment of a school for the purpose of instructing and training marine officers along certain well-defined lines of work, pertaining to the attack and defense of advanced bases, presupposes a good working knowledge of the elementary professional subjects and is in the nature of a post-graduate course.

In order to obtain the best results, the instruction in such a course must be both theoretical and practical, systematic and progressive. The military subjects covered in the defense of a base are many; and, while theoretical instruction in these subjects is essential, the training or practical work is none the less important. The subjects are so varied and their scope so comprehensive that it is considered a year should, if possible, be devoted to the course.

In general terms, the defense of an advanced base may be divided into

- (1) The Gun Defense
- (2) The Mobile Defense
- (3) The Mine Defense
- (4) General Governing Considerations⁴⁰

The Commandant envisioned the Gun Defense instruction to include naval ordnance; gunnery; explosives and projectiles; fortifications, as relating to defense of the guns; and

*Commandant of the Marine Corps has been used throughout the text for uniformity, but the more common title prior to World War II was Major General Commandant.

communications. Instruction in Mobile Defense was to encompass construction of more or less permanent field fortifications, obstacles and demolitions, map reading, and field artillery. The Commandant made note that when studying field artillery, consideration would be given to "the development and use of this arm in connection with infantry and for both direct and indirect fire."⁴¹ It is easy to look back and put labels on things. But in the meaning of the quotation above, the Commandant's instruction in a sense paved the way for the concept of combined arms within the Marine Corps. In studying Mine Defense, all types of mines, torpedoes, and obstructions were to be considered. In examining General Considerations, the Commandant recommended a study of the organization, supply, and movement of Marines assigned to advanced base work be made. He believed that other considerations involved the study of bases, their necessity and use, and historical studies that would be useful and applicable to advanced base work and the making and use of war plans. The textbook material, where applicable, was supplied by the Navy and Army. As an example, the Navy's Bureau of Ordnance supplied the book *High Explosives and Mines* and the Army donated *Field Artillery Drill Regulations*. The Marine Corps' Major Dion Williams contributed an original booklet *Instructions for the Reconnaissance of Bays, Harbors And Adjacent Country*.^{*} Practical work formed a large part of the course involving assembling and dismounting of guns, construction of field works, and the like. The location of the school at New London was not entirely suitable and the next year, 1911, the school was removed to Philadelphia.⁴² The school was successful although interrupted during the subsequent years by calls to expeditionary service in Nicaragua, Cuba, and Mexico. The Commandant had responsibility for maintenance, readiness, and training of the Advanced Base Force. Likewise, the General Board had the responsibility for continual study of the feasibility of advanced base locations and the make up of advanced base outfits.

Late in 1909, as the General Board began serious consideration of the advanced base

^{*}First published in 1905 by direction of the President of the Naval War College. A second revised edition was published in 1917 by the Government Printing Office under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy. Copy at Historical Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps.



Marines preparing to embark at Philadelphia for duty in Nicaragua, August 1912. (USMC Photo #516235).

problem, three men, destined to play an important part in the evolution of the Advanced Base Force, had written papers, several weeks apart, that were ultimately forwarded to the General Board, all dealing with advanced bases. Major Dion Williams, who as early as June 1902 had written an article about the defense of naval stations⁴³ while assigned to the Office of Naval Intelligence, submitted a report dated 2 November 1909: "Report on Men, Material & Drills Required for Establishing a Naval Advance Base."⁴⁴ Commander William L. Rodgers, USN, then the Naval War College representative at the Army War College, submitted a report dated 20 November 1909, entitled "Advanced Bases."⁴⁵ Major John H. Russell, a student at the Naval War College, submitted a study, "General Principles Governing the Selection and Establishment of Advanced Bases and the Composition of an Advanced Base Outfit," and an additional concurrent report, "Additional Notes on Field Work Construction for Advanced Bases."⁴⁶ Perhaps writing ability had nothing to do with it, but in any event, this Major Russell later became the 16th Commandant of the Marine Corps. Also about the same time, Lieutenant Colonel Eli K. Cole, after installing the advanced base material at Subic Bay in the Philippines, was ordered to the

Army War College. While there he wrote a study entitled, "Outfit Necessary for Seizure and Fortifications of Positions by a Small Expeditionary Force."⁴⁷

If the Marine and Navy contributions were not enough, in the January-February 1911 issue of the *Journal of United States Artillery* was an article by a "Colonel Martin—an Ex-Confederate Officer" entitled "The Selection and Defense of Naval Bases."⁴⁸ This article was brought to the attention of Admiral Dewey, President of the General Board. Admiral Dewey wanted to know the true identity of "Colonel Martin" and wrote to the editor of the *Journal* accordingly. The Manager and Editor of the *Journal*, Major T. W. Winston, replied to the Admiral that the author of the article was Captain R. E. Wyllie, Coast Artillery Corps, presently stationed at Fort Hancock, N.J.⁴⁹ Major Winston explained that Wyllie's assumption of the *nom-de-plume* was merely to get an impersonal discussion of the merits of the arguments which he advanced. Major Winston was elated to know that someone on the General Board read the *Journal* and offered to send a copy of the *Journal* regularly with "our compliments." Two days later, the Secretary of the General Board wrote to say that he would be glad to be added to the mailing list. It would seem that there was a pat-on-the-back for Captain Wyllie of the Army, but not so. Admiral Dewey forwarded the article to the Secretary of the Navy and said that:

... in the opinion of the General Board, this article is very ably written, and sets forth the writer's conception of the subject in an exceedingly clear and pleasant style. The views expressed by "Col Martin" are not at all novel, however, and have often been expressed by naval officers in the discussions by the general board and the Naval War College.⁵⁰

Captain Wyllie would probably have agreed in the dictum—you win some and lose some!

To round out the articles on the subject of the various aspects of advanced bases, Major Henry C. Davis, wrote an article "Advance Base Training" for the March 1911 issue of the *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*. Lieutenant Colonel L. C. Lucas, wrote a report for the General Board entitled "Artillery Armament of Advanced Base Regiment," dated about 1 July 1913. Captain H. A. Knapp, USN, delivered a lecture and paper on the "International Law in its Relation to Advance Bases" to the Naval War College on 29 May 1915. It

would seem that there was enough written on the subject of advanced bases at the time but there were many questions still unanswered. The very basic question was "What number of men is sufficient for the defense of an advanced base?" Of the Marine writers, Lieutenant Colonel Cole and Major Russell agreed that a regiment would be needed for the proper defense of a base. Major Russell suggested that each company of the total 12 companies should have 150 men each, giving the three-battalion regiment 1,800 men. Major Williams' report differed somewhat as he envisioned a proper defense based on two regiments of 1,300 Marines each, assembled at the site of the advanced base outfit. With this accomplished, the "force would be drilled in all of the operations of establishing a base from the preparatory stage of map reading to the actual firing of the guns at target practice with towing targets."⁵¹ It would be several years before the General Board would decide what would be the proper defense force. It would come closest to Major Williams' ideas.

The next item to be considered was the terms in general use concerning advanced base forces. In 1911, the Navy issued a general order which defined the temporary character of the naval advanced base, and this definition along with other terms were incorporated in the Navy Regulations in 1913. The Marine Corps understood these definitions, as interpreted by Major General Commandant George Barnett, as follows:

Advanced Bases may be divided into two general classes—permanent and temporary. The permanent advanced base is ordinarily defended by permanent fortifications and covers an extensive repair plant. By 1914, an example of this type of advanced base was Pearl Harbor. The temporary advanced base is not ordinarily fortified until after the declaration of war, but in view of the length of time available the defense installed must, at the start at any rate, be of temporary nature. Again, in 1914, examples of this type of advanced base were Olongapo and Guam. The temporary nature of an advanced base involves three main elements: first, the best defense necessary to meet an attack by gunfire from the sea; second, the use of mines and minefield guns, that would prevent the approach of hostile craft in the vicinity of the train which the base is covering; third, proper defense against attacks by forces landing beyond the range of the fixed defense guns, that attack the train from the land side.

It should be noted at this point, that the use of the term "train" refers to "fleet train." During the decade preceding 1914, the con-

cept had developed of an organized fleet train consisting of auxiliaries, colliers, tankers, repair ships, water-distilling ships, supply ships, destroyer tenders, and the like needed to service and supply a combat fleet at sea, independent of a fixed shore base.

In a prophetic note on things to come, the Major General Commandant stated that "in view of the recent developments in aeronautics, adequate defenses against attacks by dirigibles or aeroplanes must be considered."⁵²

General Barnett believed that the forces assigned to the defense could be divided into two parts: the fixed defense regiment, which installed and manned the guns and mines, and the mobile regiment which opposed landings beyond the range of the fixed defense guns:

In case the enemy has once landed, retain them at such distance from the base, that the base itself could not be reached by gun fire. In addition to the fixed defense and infantry forces there must of necessity be searchlight detachments, an engineer company, signal company and field artillery.⁵³

Advanced Base Force Comes of Age

As previously mentioned, the question of the actual size of the Advanced Base Force was settled temporarily in 1913. The General Board recommended to the Secretary of Navy who agreed, that there be a fixed defense regiment of 1,250 men assembled on the East Coast at Philadelphia and another at Mare Island on the West Coast. The Advanced Base equipment on Olongapo would be redistributed to Guam and Mare Island. The board also recommended that:

... two mobile defense regiments about 1,250 men each, may be required in war to reinforce the fixed defense regiments, one on each coast—such organizations in peace are desirable but not strictly necessary.⁵⁴

In 1914, the recommendations of the General Board regarding strength of fixed and mobile defense regiments were reaffirmed by the Secretary of Navy. "The recommendations of the General Board concerning the size of the advanced base regiments are approved for the present."⁵⁵ The Major General Commandant agreed to the advanced base site locations. He said:

... both stations are centrally located in regard to other posts of the Marine Corps, transportation facilities are satisfactory and supplies can be obtained in a minimum of time, and both are near Marine Corps Depots.⁵⁶

That the General Board had faith in the Marine Corps is reflected in a letter to the Secretary of Navy which stated that:

... judging from the excellent work of the Marine Corps under all conditions with which it has been confronted for many years in the past it is reasonable to believe that, with a proper outfit, it will be able to make good whatever circumstance require the establishment of an advance base.⁵⁷

The next logical step in the evolution of the Advanced Base Force was to test the equipment and men to determine whether this organization required any changes. The General Board requested and the Secretary of Navy directed that exercises be held in connection with the Atlantic Fleet during the winter of 1913-14. More Marines became available in the summer of 1913 with the return of expeditionary forces from Cuba.⁵⁸ In addition, the Advanced Base School was reopened at Philadelphia and the 1st Regiment (Fixed Defense) was stationed there for training. The regiment consisted of one battery of 5-inch rapid fire .40 caliber guns; one battery of 3-

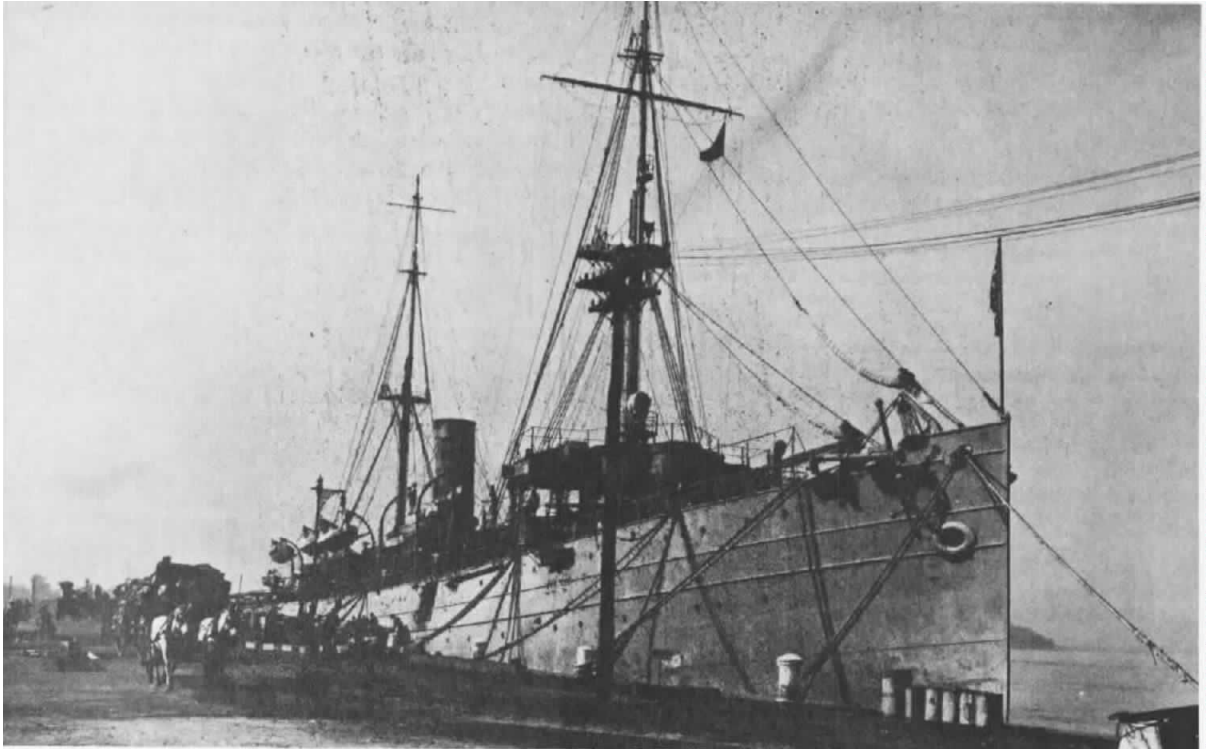
inch rapid fire guns; one battery of 3-inch landing guns; two U.S. Army experimental 4.7-inch heavy field guns; one mine battery with 60 mines; one signal company; one engineer company with the necessary equipment, together with eight automatic rifles and four I-pounders.⁵⁹

A young captain of Marines described the stepped-up training taking place at the time:

A new scheme of things was under way in the Marine Corps. A regiment had been designated as an Advance Base Force. It was being trained to occupy a base in advance of the arrival of the fleet.

I found that the easy days in Philadelphia were over. With drills and 4 hours a day schooling, we didn't get out of the Yard until 4:30 in the afternoon. Then we had to study at night. . . .

We had six companies. One was a field artillery, one had four 5-inch naval guns, one had four 3-inch naval guns, one was engineers and machine guns, one was mines and one was signals. I was put in command of the Sixth Company, to handle the 3-inch naval guns. . . . Hours every day in the Yard we had to haul those 3-inch naval guns around. We had to build a portable railroad. We had to dig pits. We had to build gun



Supplies are brought alongside the USS Prairie, frequent Marine troopship, loading at Philadelphia in 1913. (USMC Photo #516234).

platforms. We had to mount the guns. And then, when we had it all done, we had to tear the whole business down and do it all over again. That kept up until the first of January, 1914.⁶⁰

The Atlantic Fleet exercises in January 1914 were to become the first thoroughly planned advanced base problem whereby the Marine Corps would try out the advanced base materials. It became especially important that it be successful, as far as Marine Corps participation was concerned, if not for any other reason but to counteract a report given by the Aide-for-Inspections. In March 1910, the Secretary of Navy had charged the Marine Corps to prepare for the care and custody of advanced base material and to give instruction in the use of this equipment. In addition, he advised that the Naval Division of Inspections would be charged with its inspection.⁶¹ It is with this wedge that the Marine Corps nemesis, Captain William F. Fullam, USN, reappeared on the scene. As Aide-for-Inspections, Captain Fullam was all too happy to give out the news of his findings upon his inspection and report concerning the advanced base outfit, personnel, and instruction at Philadelphia in 1913. His report was forwarded to the General Board by the then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, on 2 May 1913.

Captain Fullam reported that the advanced base outfit and its operations were a failure. He said no actual work was done except for minor work at Culebra and Subic Bay and that "from the point of real efficiency for war purposes, it may be said that practically nothing has been accomplished during the past 13 years. . . ." ⁶² Captain Fullam stated that the Naval War College and the Advanced Base School handled the problems of advanced bases academically with a few officers receiving elementary as distinguished from practical instruction. In "painful contrast," he pointed out, the Italians had completely and promptly established an advanced base outfit in Sicily in October 1911 in 48 hours. This, he said, was an example of what could be done and ought to be done in advanced base operations. He later admitted that he purposely refrained from inviting special attention to the fact that the Italian force was apparently composed of naval officers and sailors! Captain Fullam blamed what he called the "past failures" on the material, personnel, instruction, and lack of transports. He attrib-



Rear Admiral William F. Fullam, vigorous opponent of the use of Marines for sea duty. (USN Photo #19-N-3646).

uted these past failures to the Marine Corps and categorically stated that it was the fault of Marine Corps organization. Never at a loss for words, Captain Fullam not only inspected the problems but solved them. He believed the Marine Corps should have been broken into permanent battalions to serve under their own colors. After reorganizing the Marine Corps, Captain Fullam introduced in a disguised form the argument that the Marines should be removed from naval vessels:

It is plain that the work assigned to Marines on board battleships and cruising vessels of the Navy gives them no training or experience whatever with mines, torpedoes, and other practical work, but this employment simply scatters them in such manner that an effective and properly instructed organization is impracticable. This fact is emphasized because it has been, and will continue to be, the one most serious obstacle to that organization and instruction which would make the Marine Corps most effective in time of war, and which would at the same time secure homogeneity in our man-of-war crews and recognize that the bluejackets are in every way fitted for, and that they should be instructed in, every military duty on board ship.⁶³

Major General Commandant William P. Biddle answered the charges of Captain Fullam in detail. Perhaps the most poignant reply from the CMC was that pertaining to the organization of the Marine Corps. He said:

. . . the subject of a proper organization of the Marine Corps has received the careful study of



Major General William P. Biddle, 11th Commandant of the Marine Corps, 3 February 1911 to 24 February 1914. (USMC Photo #308435).

Marine officers of ability and experience and it is believed by me and by them that the present system of semipermanent companies, battalions and regiments is much better suited to the requirements of the Marine Corps than would be the system by which officers and men were attached permanently to one organization during their entire service.⁶⁴

The President of the General Board, in the person of Admiral Dewey, carefully examined all of the proposals and criticisms of Captain Fullam regarding the Marine Corps and the Advanced Base Force. He carefully read the replies to the criticism by Major General Biddle. Without exception, including the proposal to move the Advanced Base School from Philadelphia to Pensacola, Captain Fullam's proposals were logically and systematically disapproved by Admiral Dewey and the General Board. Admiral Dewey was particularly agitated with Fullam's attempt to resurrect the argument concerning removal of Marines from naval vessels. He said:

. . . the General Board does not believe that any actual economy will result from the removal of the Marines from the battleships and cruisers for, as the Marines now are stationed at the battery and its accessories, their places will have to be taken by an equal number of bluejackets. Their

commanding officer, being a division officer, will have to be replaced by a line officer. The General Board regrets the renewed agitation of the question of removal of Marines from ships of the Navy in which the strength of the Marine detachment is sufficient to demand the presence of a Marine officer, and it further believes that this action, if persisted in, may eventually cause the loss of the Marine Corps to the Navy and its absorption by the Army.⁶⁵

Captain Fullam should have been awarded a medal as the one most likely to wreck Navy-Marine Corps relations. In spite of the Fullams, or because of the Fullams, the Navy-Marine Corps relationship survived and out of it was forged the Navy-Marine Corps team of today.

It was with this background, the Marine Corps Advanced Base Force commenced the Atlantic Fleet Exercises in January 1914. It was going to defend thoroughly the advanced base against invasion. The theories on paper would now become the realities of a defense of an invasion. Though not realized at the time, the exercise was the forerunner of several phases of what are known now as amphibious operations. At no time was that term used during the period being discussed. The General Board specifically requested the Marine Corps to give practical instruction and application to such items as:

- (1) Stowing material on transports;
- (2) Landing material from the transport to the beach;
- (3) Transporting the material from the beach to the various sites;
- (4) Preparation of battery sites and mounting of the guns;
- (5) Establishment of fire control and observation points;
- (6) Planting of mines;
- (7) Defense of mine fields;
- (8) Establishment and use of searchlight stations;
- (9) Exercise with guns, including target practice;
- (10) Covering the site selected against attacks from the land, including transportation necessary for supply and handling of material.⁶⁶

The Marine Corps phase of the exercise got under way when, on 3 January 1914, the First Advanced Base Regiment, a fixed defense regiment commanded by Colonel Charles G. Long, sailed from the Philadelphia Navy Yard on the transport *Hancock*. The Second Advanced Base Regiment, a mobile regiment of 27 officers commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John A. Lejeune, sailed from Pensacola, Florida on the transport *Prairie*.⁶⁷ These two regiments be-

came the First Advanced Base Brigade under the command of Colonel George Barnett and arrived off Culebra on 10 January 1914. *

After the exercise Barnett, then Major General Commandant reported to the Secretary of Navy that:

... upon their arrival at Culebra the men, with the advance base material, landed—guns were mounted and proper disposition was made of the guns and material for the advance base defense against an attack by the fleet, who landed forces from the ships. In 6 days time the guns were all mounted and ready for firing and the island was declared in a state of war. From that time on affairs on shore were conducted as nearly as possible as they would have been in case of real war. Bombardments of the shore fortifications were made, operations were conducted for the discovery of mine fields and attempts made to drag for the mines. Searchlight tests were made, also tests for plotting from the plotting stations of the mine company. A night attack was made by a landing force from the fleet, which the umpires decided would have been unsuccessful in case of real war, under the conditions existing.⁶⁸

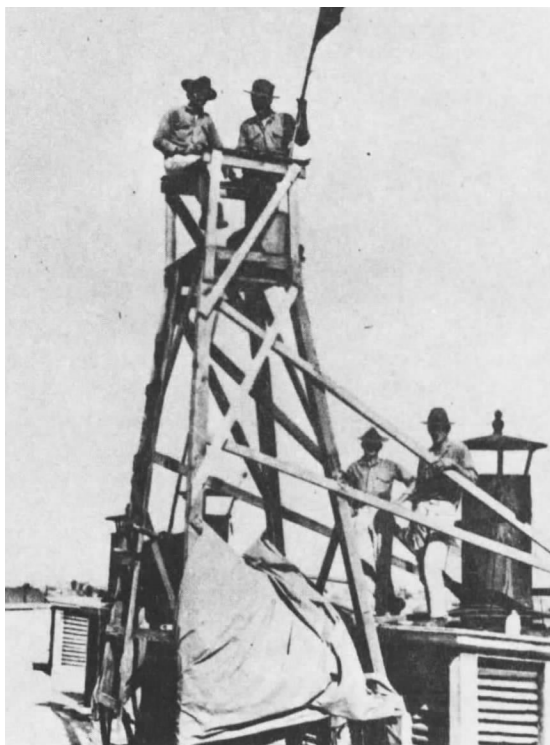
In an unofficial version of the exercise, Captain Frederic M. Wise recalled:

There was a peculiar situation on Culebra. It had no land-locked harbor where we were going to land, though at another part of the island you can go through a cut and find a land-locked harbor big enough to shelter the whole fleet. But at the spot where we landed, with a heavy wind blowing up every afternoon, all the material had to be landed mornings. In the afternoon the sea was too heavy. Lighters we had carried down on the *Hancock's* deck were swung overboard. Those heavy naval guns were hauled up from the holds, lowered aboard the lighters, and towed ashore by launches. They were skidded ashore, the portable railroad was constructed up to the gun positions high on the hills, gun-pits dug, platforms built, guns mounted. Inside several days, the Island of Culebra was fortified. Mine fields had been laid while we were getting our batteries into position. Telephone communications were established. An infantry regiment had arrived with us. They dug rifle pits. We were ready for the "enemy" fleet.

Ten days or 2 weeks after we had the island fortified, all the preliminaries were completed, umpires appointed, all the maneuvers started. The big ships of the fleet, which were supposed theoretically to have transports full of troops with them, slipped up under cover of the night, and sent landing parties of sailors and Marines ashore. They were to capture the batteries and clear the path for a big landing force. The umpires watched

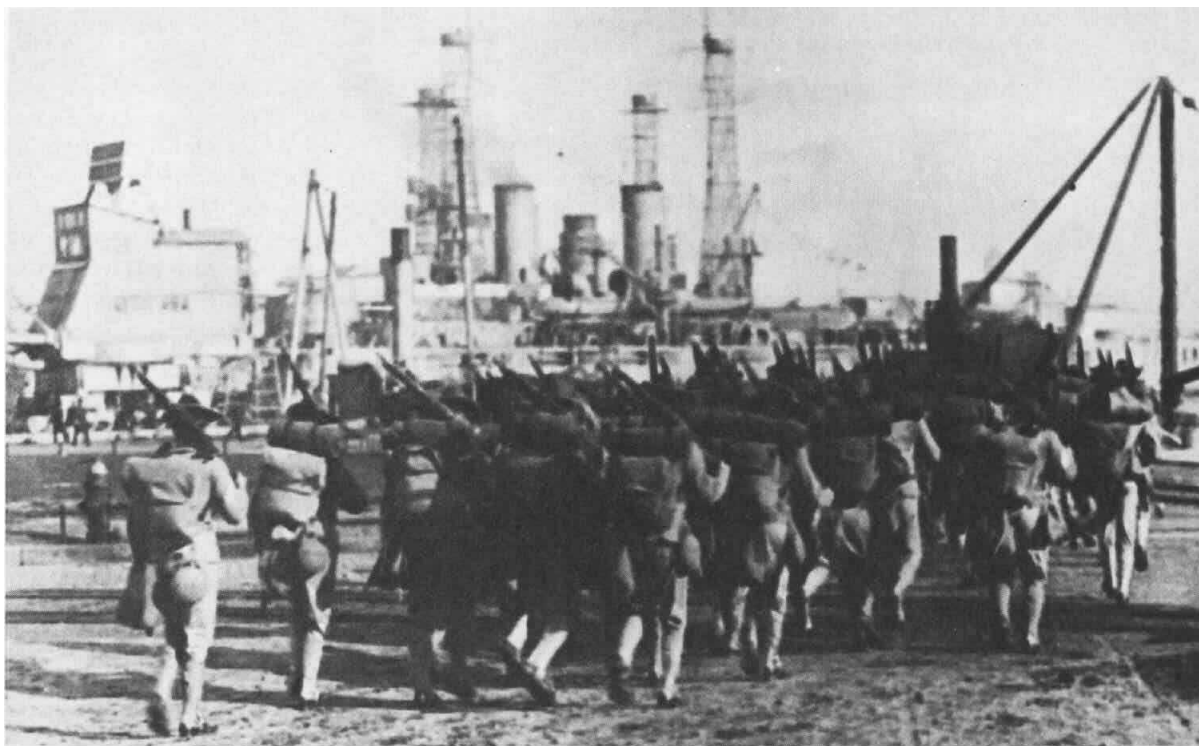
it all. It was one glorious "Fourth of July." Everybody was blazing away. And then the umpires solemnly announced that the Island of Culebra was impregnable, which I always thought was a damned lie.⁶⁹

On board the USS *Hancock* at Pensacola, Florida, the First Brigade Commander, Colonel Barnett, was transmitting the "Report on Maneuvers and Operations." In the last paragraph of his letter, Colonel Barnett said "I have this day turned over command of the Brigade to Lieutenant Colonel John A. Lejeune, and I feel that in so doing I am turning over to him a most efficient brigade."⁷⁰ In general, Colonel Barnett was praising the performance of the brigade—an efficient brigade. The brigade commander's analysis of the exercise had listed several minor failings but did state that "one of the most serious problems to be dealt with is the providing of proper transportation for supplies, guns and ammunition, etc., on shore, and it is believed that a reasonable amount of motor tractors must be provided."⁷¹ The Commander in



Signal tower manned by Marines at Vera Cruz, 1914. (USMC Photo #517450).

*Ten days after his return to Washington in February 1914, Colonel Barnett was appointed the 12th Commandant. He became the first graduate of the Naval Academy (Class of 1881) to become CMC, and the first CMC to be appointed to a 4-year term, in accordance with a law passed the previous year.



Marines leaving for Vera Cruz, 23 April 1914. (USMC Photo #H-276-3).



Horse-drawn 3-inch naval landing gun drill, Camp Elliott, Panama Canal Zone, 1913. (USMC Photo #521516).

Chief of the United States Atlantic Fleet, Rear Admiral Charles J. Badger, explained:

... the actual establishment of the Advanced Base at Culebra this winter, the joint exercises held with the fleet, and the gun and mine practices held have been of great benefit to the personnel of the Brigade. Unfortunately, the gun and mine practices were unavoidably hurried and the maximum benefit could not be derived therefrom. It is strongly recommended that frequent opportunity be given for extended Advance Base work of this kind. . . .⁷²

The now Major General Commandant and former brigade commander, George Barnett, replied:

... the experience gained in the exercise last winter, I have no doubt that the outfit as furnished can be standardized and cut down somewhat, as I fully appreciate the necessity of mobility which can only result where the outfit furnished is as small as possible, considering all the necessities of the portions in use.⁷³

Unquestionably much valuable experience and training was gained from the establishment of the advanced base at Culebra in January 1914. Many of the mooted questions as to the number of personnel and types of equipment were settled. Specifically settled was the size of the Advanced Base Force. Admiral Dewey wrote that the:

... General Board therefore considers that two Marine Regiments, one fixed defense and one mobile, of about 1,250 enlisted men each, regularly drilled in advanced base operations, is an adequate peace time provision to defend Culebra or any of the advanced base sites so far considered by the General Board. This number is well within the capacity of the peace complement of the Marine Corps to furnish, and of the Navy to transport.⁷⁴

The Secretary of Navy, Josephus Daniels, approved Admiral Dewey's and the General Board's recommendation two weeks later. The General Board had recommended that the advanced base exercises be held each year as a matter of routine training. History and events would interfere with the training until the winter of 1922. The expeditionary role of the Marine Corps was realized with the landing of Marines at Vera Cruz in Mexico in April 1914, Haiti in 1915, Santo Domingo in 1916, and France in 1917. The decade of the 1920s would see the resumption of advanced base training.

The Advanced Base Force, while not destined to be actively committed during World War I, was kept intact, numerically at least,

during the war. The potential use of the force in the Caribbean was always considered. The General Board felt that one of the immediate weaknesses was the poorly equipped bases in the Caribbean. The board felt:

... in a war with Germany the United States may at some stage in the conflict find Germany on the offensive with her fleet at large and in a position to operate in the Caribbean against the Virgin Islands, Porto Rico, Cuba and ultimately the Panama Canal. To meet this offensive the United States must have properly equipped bases in the Caribbean. . . .⁷⁵

Again time and events in other parts of the world would directly affect the happenings in the Caribbean. Events in Congress during the summer of 1916 would change the Marine Corps for the remainder of the decade, and indeed for the remainder of its history.

"The World Must Be Safe for Democracy"

Woodrow Wilson, War Message,
2 April 1917

The Naval Appropriation Bill which became law on 29 August 1916 ostensibly authorized the largest shipbuilding program ever undertaken by the United States up to that time. The Marine Corps personnel bill that was incorporated into the appropriation bill had increased the authorized number of enlisted men by 5,000, from about 8,000 to over 13,000, and the number of commissioned officers from 343 to 600.⁷⁶ It also permitted the Marine Corps to promote to brigadier general, Colonels Littleton W. T. Waller, Joseph H. Pendleton, Eli K. Cole, and John A. Lejeune. An active recruitment campaign was instituted for enlisted men, and numerous hours of examination for promotion of a great many officers and the appointment of many second lieutenants took place. Another aspect to be considered was the acquiring of new bases to train these hoped-for new personnel. In quick order, San Diego was chosen by the House Naval Affairs Committee as the site for the West Coast base. The city of San Diego had donated a large tract of land which was supplemented by the government purchase of additional tracts.

Quantico, Virginia, became the East Coast base. It had all the area for field exercises, and rifle and artillery ranges. The Commandant "did not want a base within the limits of an active navy yard as the industrial and other Navy requirements paramount there

would probably crowd out the Marine Corps activities."⁷⁷ Expansion of the Marine Corps became a fact. Over a period of approximately

two years, the Marine Corps expanded and demobilized in record breaking numbers. The following figures illustrate these fluctuations:

	<i>Commissioned and Warrant Officers</i>	<i>Enlisted Men</i>	<i>Total Marines</i>
U.S. Declared War 6 April 1917 -----	511	13,214	^a 13,725
30 June 1917 -----	776	26,973	^b 27,749
13 March 1918 -----	1,389	38,629	^c 40,018
30 June 1918 -----	1,503	51,316	^b 52,819
Armistice Day 11 November 1918 -----	1,474	70,489	^d 72,963
Maximum Strength Peaked 11 December 1918 -----	2,462	72,639	^d 75,101
30 June 1919 -----	2,270	46,564	^b 48,834
30 June 1920 -----	1,104	16,061	^b 17,165

^a Major Edwin N. McClellan, USMC, *The United States Marine Corps in the World War*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920).

^b U.S. Department of Commerce, *Historical Statistics of the United States—Colonial Times to 1957* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1960).

^c "Strength of the Navy, March 13, 1918," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, v. 43, no. 5 (May 1918), p. 936.

^d These figures include USMC reserve personnel and female reservists.

Guidance of all this expansion within the Marine Corps became the responsibility of the administrative staff departments and the Assistant to the Commandant, Brigadier General John A. Lejeune, and his small working group. They supervised a more than five-fold expansion of the Marine Corps. They dispatched two brigades to France, maintained an advanced base force of brigade size, provided expeditionary forces in the Caribbean, and fur-

nished security detachments and sea-going Marines for the Navy.⁷⁸ The best summary of the actions of Marines in World War I, is still McClellan's account. He observed that:

Within 1 year after the outbreak of war the Marine Corps placed about as many enlisted men in France as there were in the Marine Corps when war was declared . . . Approximately 30,000 Marines were sent overseas to join the American Expeditionary Forces and 1,600 for naval duty ashore . . . During the war a great many additional Ma-



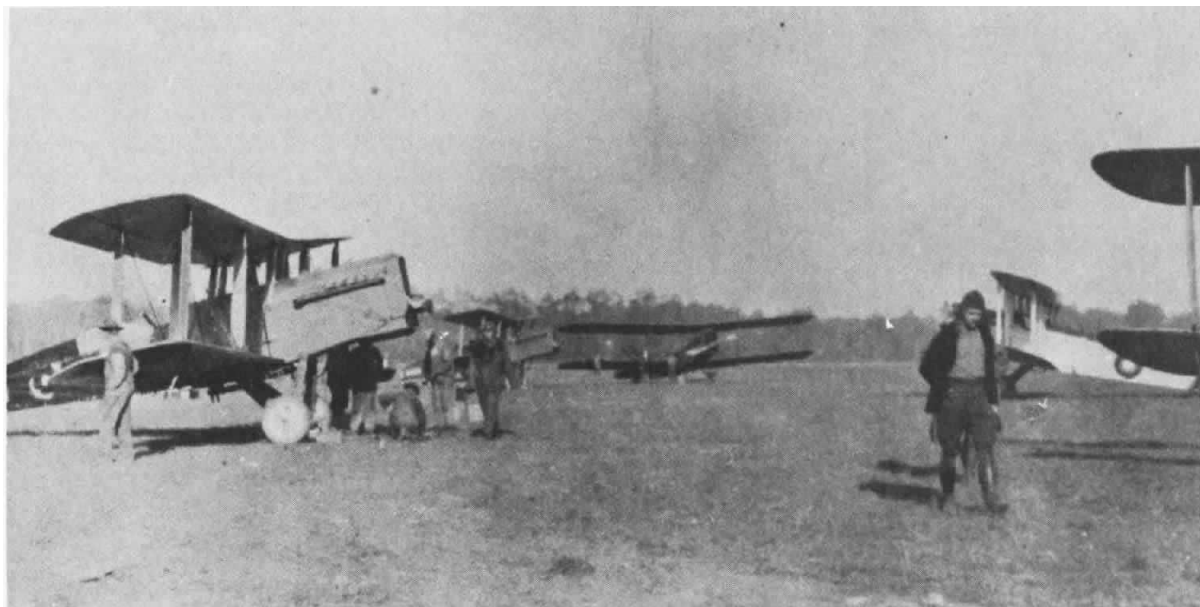
Machine gun instruction at Marine Officers' School, Quantico, during World War I. (USMC Photo #20447).

rine detachments were detailed to guard the radio stations, naval magazines, ammunition depots, warehouses, cable stations and other naval activities, and the detachments already established were largely augmented. . . . The Marine Corps, while maintaining the Fourth Brigade of Marines a total of 258 officers and 8,211 enlisted men, that fought in eight battle operations suffering approximately 12,000 casualties, placed and maintained the Fifth Brigade of Marines of the same strength in France; supplied the Commanding General of the Second Army Division, and many officers on his staff; furnished a considerable number of officers to command Army units of the Second and other divisions, and for staff and detached duty throughout the American Expeditionary Forces; participated in the naval aviation activities in France and in the Azores; and during the period of the war succeeded in performing in a highly satisfactory manner the naval duties required of it, including the maintenance of two brigades of prewar strength standing by to protect the Mexican oil fields, and as an advanced base force in Philadelphia; one in Cuba; one in Santo Domingo and one in Haiti; administered and officered the Haitian Gendarmerie and Guardia Nacional Dominicana; as well as providing efficient Marine detachments for numerous navy yards and naval stations in the United States; and in the Virgin Islands; Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; Pearl Harbor, Hawaiian Islands; Guam; Cavite and Olongapo, P.I.; Managua, Nicaragua; Peking, China; San Juan, P.R.; London, England; Cardiff, Wales; Paris, France; and the Azores; and supplied many officers and enlisted men for special and detached duty at home and abroad.

World War I gave the Marine Corps experience in integrated staff work:

After a study of the British and French Army Staffs, as developed through 3 years of combat experience, the Commanding General, AEF, adopted a system patterned upon the French staff. . . . In turn the U.S. Army staff system became thoroughly familiar to Marines serving in the AEF. It was employed by the 4th and 5th Marine Brigades, as they were organized under AEF tables of organization. While brigades were the largest Marine units to serve in France, individual Marines learned the functioning of the staff at divisional level through assignments to Army units. A Marine General commanded the 2d Infantry Division, while other Marines served on its staff from time to time. That this staff system proved useful for Marine purposes is attested to by the fact that Marine Corps staff development in the postwar period was based on the staff of World War I.⁷⁹

Another aspect of Marine Corps experience from World War I was in the aviation field. The relatively new Marine Corps aviation component, on the day the United States declared war against the Central Powers, 6 April 1917, consisted of four officers and 30 men, all part of the complement of the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida.⁸⁰ By the end of the war, the total officer and enlisted strength exceeded 2,400. The Marine Corps selected and trained its own pilots and mechanics. They



Planes of the 1st Marine Aviation Force at La Fresne, France, in 1918; on the left are DH-9As of "A" Squadron, on the right is a DH-4B of "C" Squadron. (USMC Photo #529554).

flew just about all types of planes existing at the time, DeHaviland 4Bs, Curtiss JNs, etc. The 1st Marine Aeronautic Company, consisting of 13 officers and 133 enlisted men, deployed to Ponta Delgado, Azores, for anti-submarine patrol operations in January 1918. With 18 seaplanes, it was the first fully trained and equipped American aviation unit to go overseas in World War I.⁸¹

In July 1918, the First Aviation Force landed in France. While waiting for their DeHaviland DH-4Bs to arrive, the pilots did some moonlighting with the British and French. This Aviation Force consisted of Squadrons A, B, C, D, and Headquarters Company. It was organized to operate under the Navy as the Day Wing of the Northern Bombing Group in northern France. It operated in the Dunkirk area against German submarines and their bases at Ostend, Zeebrugge, and Bruges in Belgium. Incidents of Marine aviators destroying a troop train and dropping food to beleaguered French troops were commendable but isolated.

The war would not be won by Marine aviation or any other aviation. The war was a land-mass war—with great armies engaged, supported by artillery, and later tanks. Aviation, in its infancy, had to wait for another day. It was ironic that, through no fault of their own, Marine aviators did not fly support for

any Marine ground forces. It was Major Alfred A. Cunningham, the first Marine aviator and the fifth naval aviator, who commented that “the only excuse for aviation in any service is its usefulness in assisting the troops on the ground to successfully carry out their operations.”⁸² Other times and other wars would fully justify Marine aviation and what it could do in support of the Marines on the ground.



In France in 1918. Left to Right: Brigadier General Wendell C. Neville, commanding the 4th Brigade of Marines; Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt; and Major General John A. Lejeune, commanding the 2d Division. (USMC Photo #529042).

CHAPTER II

POSTWAR DISARMAMENT PERIOD

America's present need is not heroics but healing; not nostrums but normalcy; not revolution but restoration; . . . not surgery but serenity.

Senator Warren G. Harding, 1920

Normalcy, while difficult to define, was what the American people wanted. The decade of the twenties would usher in a new President, a new political party, and for the Marine Corps, a new Commandant. The American people rejected the League of Nations and the Democratic Party. They wanted to leave the problems that international relations brought and return to the "normalcy" promised by the Republicans in the presidential election of 1920. Warren G. Harding and his party won and, with this popular support, disowned the League of Nations. If the League was unpopular, disarmament was not. Senator William E. Borah of Idaho introduced in December 1920, a month after Harding's election, a resolution that was to become a joint congressional resolution, which favored a tripartite disarmament conference. By June 1921, it passed the Senate unanimously and the House by a vote of 332 to 4. Harding's Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes, made informal overtures to the governments of Britain, Japan, France, and Italy in a note of 8 July 1921. He later broadened this invitation to Belgium, China, Portugal, and the Netherlands. The agenda was also enlarged to include not only arms but problems of the Far East in general. Although a great Asiatic power, Russia was not invited to attend since the United States refused to recognize the existence of the Soviets. All but Japan promptly replied with polite enthusiasm. After a 2½-week delay, Japan acceded to the invitation to discuss naval disarmament. On 11 August 1921, Secretary Hughes issued formal invitations to the nine select powers. Three months later on 12 November 1921, the conference met in Washington with all the fanfare appropriate to the first international

Congress of this kind ever to be held in the Western Hemisphere:

Secretary Hughes, instead of mouthing the usual platitudes at the opening session, threw a verbal bombshell by suggesting that the nations limit their naval weapons and scrap existing ships. He proposed that the United States, Great Britain and Japan junk a total of 66 ships amounting to 1.87 million tons. Hughes stunned the audience with this audacious proposal; hushed silence greeted him while he read his proposals followed by wild applause at the conclusion of his address.¹

"In less than 15 minutes, he destroyed 66 ships with a total tonnage of 1,878,043—more, as one British reporter put it, 'than all the admirals of the world have sunk in a cycle of centuries.'" ² Summarized, Secretary Hughes proposed a 10 year "holiday" in capital ship construction;* scrapping specific ships which would result in a 5:5:3:1.7:1.7 ratio among the United States, Great Britain, Japan, Italy, and France.**

The dramatic announcement vastly shortened the time of negotiation and helped assure the acceptance of the American proposals. "The reactions of the press and pulpit all over the world were tremendously enthusiastic. If Hughes' address was intended as an oblique bid for worldwide popular support, it was outstandingly successful."³ The three great powers most concerned, the United States, Great Britain, and Japan, ultimately agreed to the ratio formula but with compromises by all. France and Italy had no problem agreeing to their ratios.

Considering the time, the United States was in the mood for massive cuts in the federal budget. "Senators Henry Cabot Lodge and Oscar W. Underwood bluntly informed

*As defined at Washington, a capital ship was a warship, not an aircraft carrier, exceeding 10,000 tons or carrying guns in excess of 8 inches in caliber.

**The ratio 5:5:3:1.7:1.7 referred to the total tonnage allowed in capital ships as 500,000; 500,000; 300,000; 175,000; and 175,000 tons.

Hughes that Congress, ever-conscious of the taxpayer, would not vote additional burdens in order to attain the costly and unnecessary honor of ruling the waves."⁴ Great Britain, with a badly strained economy, welcomed a holiday in building. By 15 December 1921, Japan consented to the Hughes ratio in spite of mass meetings in Tokyo and newspaper editorials supporting demands for greater tonnage. The alternative, for Japan as well as the other powers, was a ruinous naval race. Japan's reward for her consent to the ratio was the controversial nonfortification clause to be included in the treaty.

America agreed not to fortify her Pacific islands, excepting Hawaii. The United States particularly agreed not to fortify the Philippines, Guam, Wake, and the Aleutians. Great Britain agreed not to fortify Hong Kong, Borneo, the Solomons, and the Gilberts. Japan, in turn, agreed not to fortify Formosa or the former German possessions in the Pacific north of the equator, which had been mandated to her, notably the Marianas (less Guam) and the Carolines. It would be an understatement to say that the nonfortification clause was bitterly denounced by the Navy:

American naval authorities were shocked at the agreement to forego the development of adequately defended naval bases in Guam and the Philippines. To them it appeared that the United States was automatically foreswearing the possibility of successful fleet operations in Asiatic waters and in effect underwriting Japanese naval supremacy in the Far East. Subsequent history has of course largely substantiated this view.⁵

Professor Thomas A. Bailey, American historian and writer, asserted:

... as far as naval limitation was concerned, the non-fortification agreement was the crucial compromise. Japan accepted a small naval ratio, but obtained greater security. Britain and America consented to leave certain of their insular possessions inadequately protected, but retained greater tonnage in capital ships.⁶

In the context of the times:

... there was a well founded conviction on the part of the American delegation that it was bargaining away an empty right, one that Congress would probably either never exercise at all or else implement on too modest a scale to make any difference in event of war. After all, both Guam and the Philippines had already been American possessions for 23 years without anything much being done toward military and naval development. What real prospect was there of a change of American policy? On the other hand, there was good reason to think Japan would fortify her island possessions, in the absence of a treaty prohibition.⁷

The major achievements of the Washington conference were reflected in the adoption of three closely interrelated treaties. The United States, Great Britain, France, and Japan agreed in the Four-Power-Treaty to respect one another's rights in their insular possessions in the Pacific and to consult together should such rights be threatened. With the addition of Italy, these same nations concluded the Five-Power-Treaty with its naval ratio and nonfortification clause. "The public accepted the Five-Power-Treaty, not as a temporary naval arrangement at best, but as the final substitute for the irksome necessity of naval expansion."⁸ And finally, all those countries with interests in the Pacific joined in the Nine-Power-Treaty in which they undertook to respect the sovereignty and independence of China and to uphold the principles of the Open Door policy. This then was the climate, the climate of disarmament and hopeful peace, that the United States embarked on in the decade of the twenties.

In America and elsewhere, it is a generally accepted sociological certainty that wars, whether the world war variety or the undeclared Korean and Vietnam types, do affect society at all levels. The essence of war transforms, for good or bad, the social, political, economic, and military fabric of our nation. The twenties were no exception. Excluding the military, the bibliography of the "Roaring Twenties" or "Jazz Age" reflected one of the best documented decades of our history. The military bibliography is sparse. Suffice it to say the public became less and less interested in war and anything related to it. The Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover administrations pursued the policy of economy in the government. Obviously, this policy affected the military services. It curtailed the personnel strength, equipment, and general spending of the services. For this period, it would seem that the military was in a retrenchment phase. Possibly so, but it did channel the Services into making do with what they had and preparing for war with what they hoped to have. It gave time to study the lessons of the Great War and to experiment.

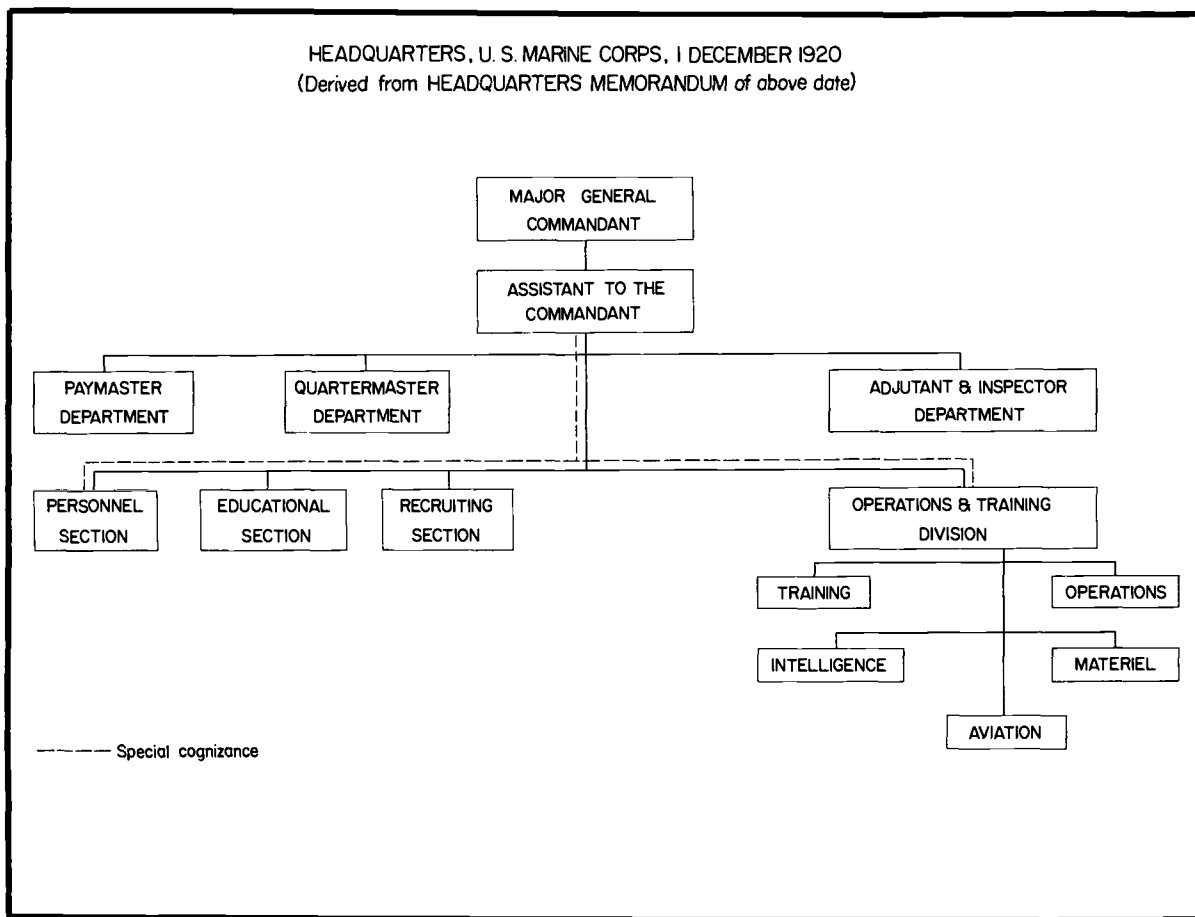
In a rather paradoxical situation, the lesson of World War I that the Navy and the Marine Corps chose to study was the greatest military failure of modern times—Gallipoli. For decades, Gallipoli would be the symbol of the absurdity of endeavoring to land troops

and supplies on a hostile shore. The Army would not give Gallipoli a second thought, primarily because it was in the business of land-mass warfare and not that of seizing a beach. The Marine Corps, from the late twenties up until World War II, would have as an integral part of its schools' curriculum a definitive study of Gallipoli and the how's and why's of its failures.

The Marine Corps would also experiment with its own internal reorganization, schools system, and equipment. This decade would become one of awareness. The most responsible people in the Marine Corps became cognizant of the fact that it could not continue to duplicate the Army, as it did in World War I. The Marines, however, by their experience in advanced base training and vast amount of expeditionary service could work out a mission that was, by its very nature, unique for the Marine Corps.

Evolution of a Staff

In June 1920, the last months of the Wilson Administration and Navy Secretary Josephus Daniels' tenure, Major General John A. Lejeune was appointed 13th Commandant of the Marine Corps. He was to have a rather rare distinction of serving three Presidents as Commandant and could have been appointed for a fourth term had he not chosen to retire in 1929. Many problems faced the new Commandant such as recruiting, officer promotions, and internal reorganization of Headquarters. In the area of recruitment, Congress and specifically the House of Representatives, authorized certain personnel strength for the Marine Corps. In fiscal year 1920, the authorized strength for officers and men was 27,400. The House of Representatives, however, only appropriated funds for 20,000 officers and men. Similarly, today's authorized strength of the

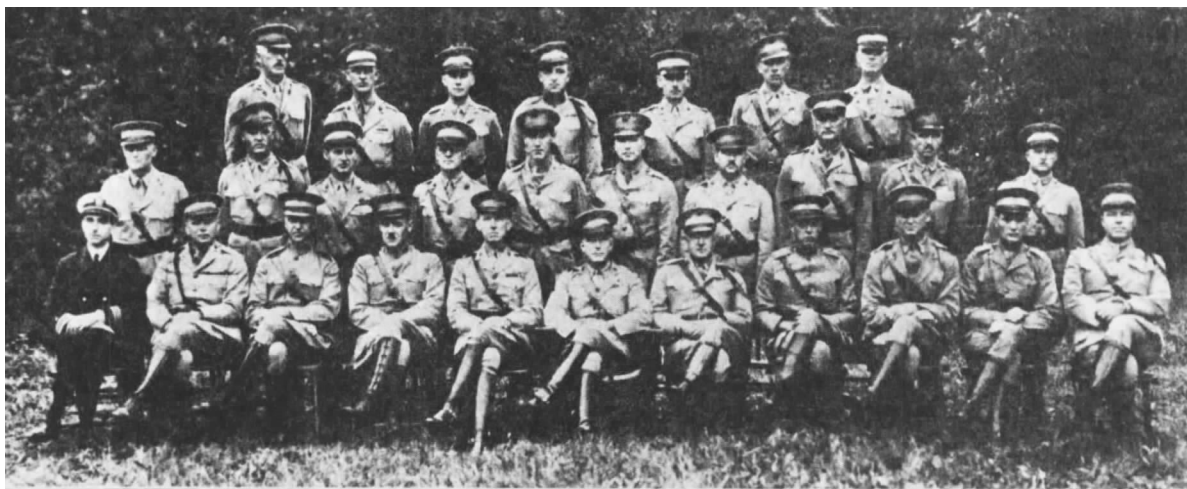


Marine Corps is 400,000 men as provided for by the National Security Act of 1947 as amended, but actually the appropriated funds for the personnel strength for fiscal year 1971 was 237,100 men.⁹ In any event, the recruitment drive in the early years of the decade was a success and the appropriated strength of the Marine Corps averaged about 20,000 men for the remainder of the twenties. The Commandant unsuccessfully asked Congress for legislation to change the method of officer promotions for most years of his tenure as Commandant. The system, with its inequities in the examinations adopted by the Marine Corps in 1892, did not keep pace with the Army and Navy systems of promotions of their officers. The Marine Corps would have to wait 9 or 10 more years before a "selection" method of officer promotion was authorized by Congress.

In regards to internal reorganization of the Headquarters, it was apparent to the Commandant and to other thinking Marine officers that the Marine Corps could never return to the pre-World War I years of operation. In those years, the Commandant plus three or four of his aides could totally manage the operations of the Corps. It would be im-

possible for them to do so in the postwar Marine Corps. As a consequence, the Army staff system, familiar now to many senior Marine officers with World War I experience, was adopted. It must not be assumed that Marine Corps officers were totally without staff experience. On the contrary, valuable staff experience, while not the functional variety evolved in World War I, was gained by Marine officers serving with the Haitian Gendarmerie and the Guardia Nacional of the Dominican Republic. In addition, officers serving with the Advanced Base Force and with the fleet gained valuable staff experience. It is interesting to note that a look at the evolution of the Officer Fitness Report reflects the emphasis placed on command and staff assignments.

Prior to 1916, general comments were made on record cards and in correspondence concerning officer qualifications. From about October 1916, the Adjutant and Inspector's Division of Headquarters Marine Corps introduced into the administrative system Navy-Marine Corps (NMC) Form 652. This form was entitled "Report on the Fitness of Officers of the U.S. Marine Corps." The form would continually change in subsequent years to add or delete items deemed essential or nonessential



COMMANDING OFFICER AND STAFF, MARINE CORPS SCHOOLS, QUANTICO, VA., 1927-1928

Front Row (left to right): Lieutenant Commander E. W. Broadbent, U. S. Navy; Major R. S. Geiger, Major W. Thorne, Major J. W. C. Larsen, Lieutenant Colonel W. F. Upshur, Colonel R. H. Dunlap, Major R. L. Denig, Major H. H. Coley, Major C. J. M. Herle, Major J. E. Rockey, H. S. Eason. Center Row (left to right): Captain R. Arnett, Captain G. B. Erskine, Captain L. D. Hermle, Captain A. W. Nimmer, Captain K. B. Rockey, Captain L. H. Miller, Captain J. M. Arthur, Captain F. G. Patchon, Captain F. Herle, Captain C. O. Pollock, Captain G. B. Francis. Back Row (left to right): Chief Marine Gunner J. J. Mahoney, First Lieutenant S. E. Rüdderhof, Captain D. R. Nimmer, Captain J. E. Rockey, Captain G. B. Francis, First Lieutenant E. A. Pollock, Chief Quartermaster Clerk D. Eagan.

Many of the general officers who led the Marine Corps in World War II and the Korean War (Geiger, Denig, Larsen, Erskine, Herle, Rockey, Nimmer, Pollock) are included in this group. (USMC Photo #29442).

to the Marine Corps. In the initial NMC form, among the many items under "Professional Qualifications," there appeared "Advanced Base Work" and "Fleet Marine Officer." The latter item pertained to a senior Marine officer assigned to the fleet as a staff and liaison officer. In about April 1922, the NMC form was revised again and this time "Advanced Base Force" was deleted but "Force Marine Officer" was added. Force Marine Officer referred to duty with the Expeditionary Forces that was quite familiar to all Marine officers of the twenties. The form also reflected new billets stemming from World War I such as "gas officer," "machine-gun officer," and "Division Marine officer." In about October 1926, the fitness report was again updated to the form which would be used until about September 1935. It was essentially the same form but with the addition of specific questions as to the fitness of an officer to command an organization "appropriate to the next higher grade" such as platoon, company, battalion, regiment, brigade, or corresponding organization.

General Lejeune reorganized his Headquarters into a staff system which, in essence, is still in effect today. The Commandant, in a Marine Corps Order of 1 December 1920, reorganized the Headquarters staff as follows (see also Chart 1):

The Planning Section was expanded into the Division of Operations and Training, composed of Operations, Training, Materiel, Military Intelligence, and Aviation Sections . . . Although it was not organized according to the numbered system employed by major field commands, the Division of Operations and Training, nevertheless was divided into functional subdivisions, encompassing operations, intelligence, training, and logistics, such as were found in the field-type staff. There was no personnel section, however and the Aviation Section was an organization not found in the executive staff of major field commands. Staff organization for the control of aviation matters was complicated by the fact that the officer in charge of Marine Aviation served both the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Chief of Naval Operations. As first organized in 1919, the Marine Aviation Section was directly under the control of the Director of Naval Aviation in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. The duties of the Marine Aviation Section included supervision of recruiting, training, personnel, and logistical matters pertaining to aviation.

. . . By this organization, the Commandant also created the Personnel, Recruiting, and Educational Sections. Their function was to relieve the Commandant and his immediate aides of what had become an unmanageable burden of routine administration.¹⁰

In the field, the reorganization paralleling that of Headquarters took the form of a functionally organized executive staff, combined at the higher levels with a staff of technical experts. The executive staff, according to a Marine Corps definition, was "that body of assistants to the Commanding General of a Force or Independent Brigade of Marines which coordinates the work of the Administrative, Technical, and Supply Staffs, and of the Troops; and which composes and issues the detailed orders by which the decisions of the Commanding General are communicated." The tables of organization of 1922, which first provided for executive staffs in the Marine Corps, specified that an independent brigade rated a staff made up of B-1, personnel; B-2, intelligence; B-3 operations and training; and B-4, supply. A brigade which was part of a larger unit, however, used the World War I-type staff in which personnel and supply were combined. Infantry regiments, as part of a brigade, had a staff similar to that of an independent brigade except that the four numbered sections were designated R rather than B. Independent infantry regiments had these same staff positions as did independent infantry battalions, but without the numerical designations. Within a regiment, battalion staffs at first lacked a supply officer, but this deficiency was remedied by 1925. By 1936, however, the four section staff had been adopted for all ground units in the Marine Corps from battalion through brigade level.¹¹

Duties and Missions

In 1922, the Commandant wrote to the members of the General Board recommending to them that the strength of the Marine Corps should be determined by its peacetime duties and wartime missions. He was endeavoring to point out that:

. . . whereas the Conference on the Limitation of Armament has restricted the immediate material means (navies) for waging war on sea, there is no restriction on the size of the mobile forces which may be attached to, or be held in readiness for service with the Fleet.*¹²

*It would be pointed out that the Conference on the Limitation of Armament is synonymous with the Washington Disarmament Conference and the Naval Disarmament Conference. Subsequent American history books use the names interchangeably. As a result of the Conference, initially held in Washington, nine separate treaties were drafted and signed.

The Commandant set forth the Marine Corps duties and missions as follows:

. . . 2. The duties which the Marine Corps is required to perform in time of peace are as follows:

(a) As marine detachments on board the vessels of the Fleet in full commission.

(b) As guards for navy yards, naval stations, ammunition depots, naval prisons, etc., at home and abroad.

(c) As garrisons for Haiti, Santo Domingo, Virgin Islands, Guam, Peking, Managua, etc.

(d) As a mobile force in training for use on expeditionary duty abroad for the purpose of carrying out the foreign policy of our Government, or for emergency use at home.

(e) As detachments necessary for the recruiting service, for training recruits, and for administrative purposes.

3. The primary war mission of the Marine Corps is to supply a mobile force to accompany the Fleet for operations on shore in support of the Fleet: This force should be of such size, organization, armament and equipment as may be required by the plan of naval operations. Also it should be further utilized in conjunction with Army operations on shore, when the active naval operations reach such a stage as to permit its temporary detachment from the Navy.

4. (a) The secondary mission of the Marine Corps in time of war is to continue the performance of its peace time duties, as outlined in Paragraph 2, immediately above.¹³

As it turned out, the Marine Corps would not get the added men requested—that is from the appropriated figure of 21,000 to 27,400, the authorized figure. By the end of the fiscal year 1922, the Marine Corps would balance out to 21,233, losing 1,757 from the preceding year. The Navy would balance out to 100,211, losing 32,616 and the Army 148,763, losing 81,962.¹⁴ The importance of the CMC Memorandum in February 1922 was not the superficial request for added personnel for the Marine Corps, that would become a national pastime for succeeding Commandants, it was rather the terminology and basis for doctrine that would evolve from it.

In discussing a possible war in the Pacific, the Commandant alluded to the fact that between Honolulu and Manila, the United States had no developed naval base. In a war, such a base would be necessary. "The loss of Guam under this situation would be most serious and its recapture would be necessary to the conduct of successful naval operations in the Pacific." He pointed out that "the advantage of having immediately available a mobile Marine Corps force adequate to conduct offensive land operations against hostile Naval Bases is apparent." He recommended that there be adequate

personnel and material to "maintain in readiness in the United States on the Pacific Coast and on the Atlantic Coast, the nuclei of such Marine Corps organizations as may be necessary to guarantee success in war to any naval expedition requiring a mobile land force. . . ." ¹⁵ The recommendations of General Lejeune of February 1922, in a routine memorandum to the General Board, changed the tactical direction the Marine Corps would pursue in the succeeding decades. He envisioned a mobile force, a force in readiness, and a force capable of offensive operations. This force would not be seizing an undefended or uninhabited advanced naval base. On the contrary, "offensive land operations against hostile naval bases" would be the task facing the Marine Corps. In the final analysis, was this not the birth of the Fleet Marine Force as it is known today?

Maneuvers, Expeditions, Football, and Mail

The Quantico Marine Base having been greatly improved since its founding in 1917, became the home for the Advanced Base Force for the Atlantic Coast in 1920. By 1922, "the discontinuance of the use of the term Advanced Base Force as now applied to organizations of the Marine Corps" was recommended by the CMC.¹⁶ Finally in 1923, "the general term Marine Corps Expeditionary Forces shall be used to designate as a whole, those permanently or provisionally organized units of the Marine Corps which are available for overseas service with the Fleet."¹⁷ The old Advanced Base Force for the Atlantic Coast was accordingly changed to the East Coast Expeditionary Force. It was joined in 1925 by a West Coast counterpart. The West Coast Expeditionary Force became a reality with the addition of Marines from the 4th Marine Regiment recently returned from Santo Domingo.¹⁸ Marines not involved in expeditionary service in Honduras, Nicaragua, Haiti, Santo Domingo, Cuba, and China were involved in less dangerous but just as strenuous work called maneuvers:

The first of these maneuvers took place near the sites of the Battle of the Wilderness. A reinforced brigade with a considerable amount of heavy equipment, including 155 millimeter guns pulled by 10-ton tractors, marched to that area from Quantico. As part of its effort to obtain favorable publicity, President Harding was induced to attend the maneuvers. During the following summer (1922) similar field exercises, but on a larger scale, were

staged at Gettysburg with a small army of about 4,000 marines, armed with all manner of equipment left over from the World War. They even had a platoon of tanks. The Commandant of the Corps commented that the organization was a 'miniature army small but highly trained and powerfully armed.' President Harding again attended the maneuvers. A bid for publicity was made by the re-enactment of Pickett's famous charge in the Battle of Gettysburg. During the following year (1923) the Marines from Quantico went into the Shenandoah Valley for maneuvers. Together with the corps of cadets from the Virginia Military Institute, they re-enacted the Civil War battle of New Market, in which battle the cadets of that institution had formed part of the Confederate forces. The summer maneuvers of 1924 were held in the vicinity of Sharpsburg, Maryland, with more than 3,000 Marines from Quantico and ended with the spectacular reenactment of the Civil War battle of Antietam, carried out as a modern attack. This time the reinforced brigade returned through Washington where it was reviewed by President Coolidge.¹⁹

There was no question that the maneuvers were important. The Commandant felt that "these . . . maneuvers offered excellent opportunities in respect to troop and staff training and the testing of equipment and other material."²⁰ They also did no harm to the Marine Corps image with the American public. Aside from the summer maneuvers, the Marine was involved with guarding the mails, winning national rifle competitions, attempting but failing to build a 50,000-seat stadium at Quantico, sponsoring a nationally-known football team that after a good fight was beaten by the University of Michigan in 1923—26 to 6. The overwhelming importance of the decade for the Marine Corps, however, was the experience gained, along with the Navy, from the fleet exercises held during the winters of 1922 and 1923 and the spring of 1925.

Fleet Maneuvers—1922

If, as the CMC said, staff training and testing of equipment were important in the land maneuvers held during the 1920s, then the practical and valuable experience gained in the fleet maneuvers were of inestimable value to the Marine Corps. It is this same period of trial, error, and sometimes disaster, that company and field grade officers obtained the knowledge that would be the key to the successful operations of World War II. Most senior Marine commanders of the 40s, such as Holland M. Smith, Charles D. Barrett, Alexander A. Vandegrift, etc., were participants in the valuable fleet maneuvers of the 1920s. The

first such exercise took place from January to April 1922 when a Marine expeditionary detachment under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Richard M. Cutts participated in exercises held at Guantanamo Bay and at Culebra. These exercises were designed primarily to test the possibilities of landing the 155mm gun and accompanying 10-ton tractor from ship-to-shore in small boats. The 9th Company, 10th Marines, consisting of three officers and 135 men with one 155mm and two 75mm field guns, one 10-ton and three 5-ton tractors, was landed from the USS *Florida* at Guantanamo Bay. "During the period at Guantanamo, close attention was paid to the training of the gun's crews and special details, the hardening of the men, and testing out of all material, and communication."²¹

In March, the company was reembarked in the *Florida* and taken to Culebra. The 35th Company, consisting of three officers and 100 men, joined the force at Guantanamo and took part in the exercises at Culebra. Material was again moved by small boats from ship-to-shore at Culebra and three problems of attack and defense were worked out with the Control Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. Lieutenant Colonel Cutts commented that "it has been conclusively demonstrated that artillery up to and including 155mm guns and 10-ton tractors can be transported by battleships and landed in ship's boats."²²

Cutts, however, qualified his recommendation by pointing out that "all conditions must be exceedingly favorable to obtain a successful result at the land place; more favorable than can normally be expected." The favorable conditions referred to implied that there must normally be a calm sea and moderate surf. These ideal conditions that would be rarely found in operations such as this did not make the task impossible. Colonel Cutts recommended that a "lighter" be constructed for transporting heavy guns. "It should not be self-propelled owing to increased weight entailed, and the absolute necessity of grounding."²³

Four years later, Cutts would get to test a troop and artillery lighter, however, it was not self-propelled. In the summary of his report, Colonel Cutts noted that what must have been obvious to officers of the Marine Corps that "in attempting to weigh carefully the advantages and disadvantages of both the attack and defense of a base, by far the greater stress has

come on the defense . . . It is hoped . . . some method and material may be developed to solve the problem of the attack."²⁴ In assessing the exercises of 1922, the Commandant commented that "while the exercises of 1922 were defensive in their nature, they brought out the difficulties of attack in landing operations against hostile opposition and the further presumption that the Marine Corps should be preparing for offensive landing operations in addition to the defensive advanced base work."²⁵

Fleet Maneuvers—1923-1924

In the winter maneuvers of December 1923 through February 1924, the CMC assigned an expeditionary force of over 3,300 officers and men under the command of Brigadier General Eli K. Cole to Fleet Exercise No. IV. The fleet exercises under the command of Admiral Richard E. Coontz, Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, were conducted at Culebra and the Canal Zone. The force was divided approximately in half with 1,550 men with 6 155mm guns, 12 75mm guns, and 18 machine guns defending Culebra against attack. This force was known as Marine Corps Expeditionary Force (MCEF), Culebra, P.R. and under the command of Colonel Dion Williams. The defense force at Culebra included engineers, gas and signal troops, plus aviation, balloon service, and anti-aircraft units and a light tank platoon.²⁶



Brigadier General Eli K. Cole, USMC. (USMC Photo #520349)



Brigadier General Dion Williams, USMC. (USMC Photo #529182).

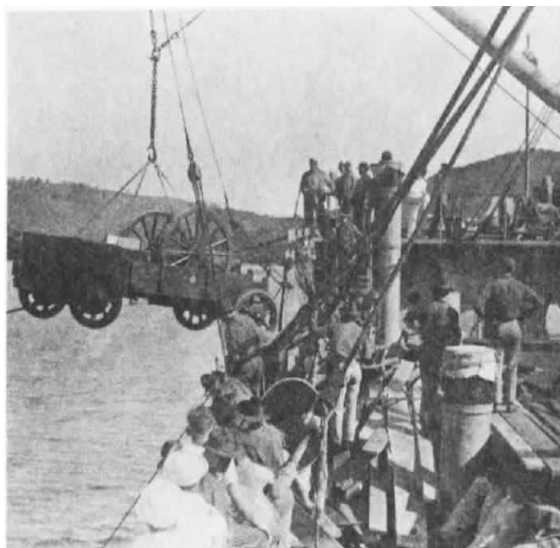
The remaining portion of the expeditionary forces, totalling 1,750 Marines, were known as MCEF, U.S. Fleet, and under the command of General Cole. It comprised a hostile landing force which effected landings in the Panama Canal Zone and at Culebra against Colonel Williams' men. The MCEF, U.S. Fleet comprised the 5th Marine Regiment, a headquarters company, radio service company, gas platoon, naval medical corps personnel, and four Army liaison officers. To say the results of the exercises were unsatisfactory would have to be the understatement of the decade. Landing on the wrong beach, boats being lost for a time, insufficient naval bombardment, transport poorly loaded, etc. were some of the criticisms of what went wrong.²⁷ It was expected that many things would not go right. What was important in the exercises of 1924 was the experience of a large-scale landing and the many recommendations to improve future landings.

If one transport was poorly loaded, the freighter USS *Sirius* was not. The assignment of a detachment of 25 Marines and one officer, the forerunner of a combat cargo officer, made cargo off-loading feasible. Colonel Williams reported "that the loading and unloading of the *Sirius* constituted one of the most valuable lessons of the maneuvers."²⁸ The 1924 exercises were significant in that they demonstrated great problems that were endemic in a ship-to-shore landing at the time. They also pro-

duced the beginning of serious experimentation with landing craft more suitable than the standard ships' boats. Two types of boats were tested, the first of which was a derivation of the British "beetle" boats first used by them at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli in August 1915. The CMC requested the CNO to have the one "fifty foot (50') motor lighter, (Beetle boat), now being built at Norfolk, Virginia, placed on board the USS *Henderson*"²⁹ for testing during the winter maneuvers. The *Henderson*, the transport *Chaumont*, and the *Sirius* were the other ships assigned to the MCEF.

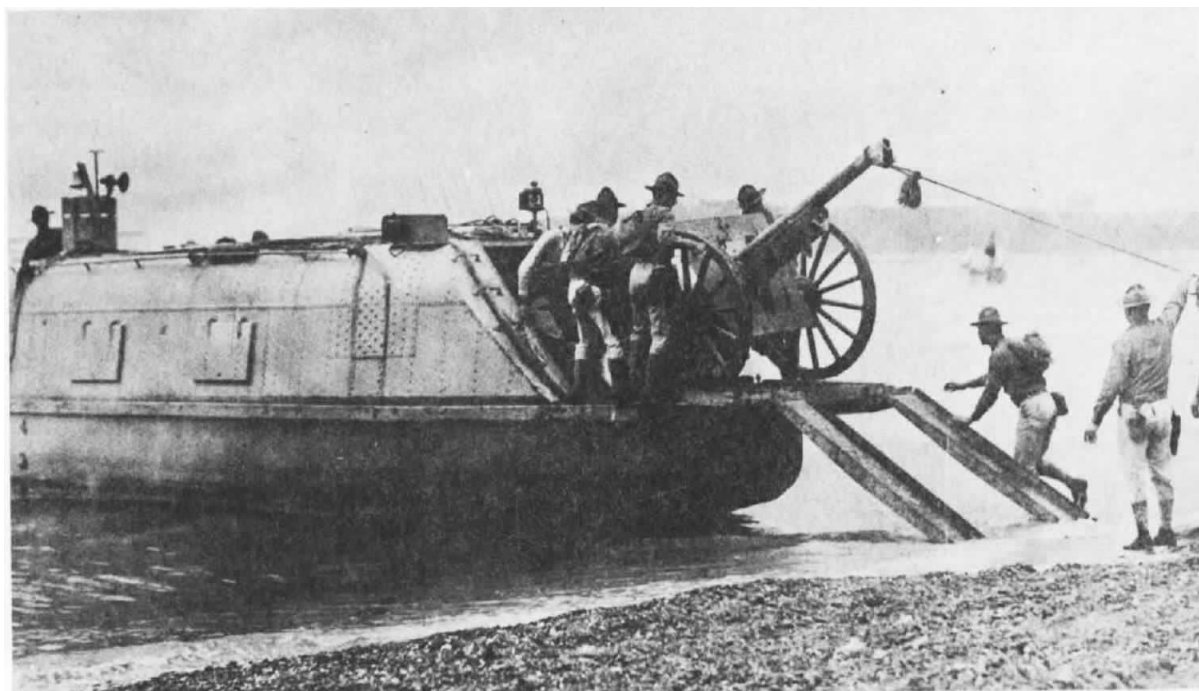
General Cole assessed the value of the "beetle boat," officially designated "Troop Barge A," as follows:

We had with us a so-called "Beetle" capable of carrying a 75mm gun and about 60 men, or 100 riflemen—this is a beginning, but the present design must be altered, if for no other reason than that its stowage on board ship reduces the motor sailers by two—i.e. one 50' and one 40', with landing capacity of 160 men. Some design must be arrived at whereby a transport can carry boats for at least 60 percent of the infantry force on board, with special provisions for artillery, transportation, supplies, etc. These boats should be seaworthy enough to allow them to go 20 miles under their own power, and if possible of a design to



Unloading equipment of the Marine Corps Expeditionary Force at Culebra, Puerto Rico, January 1924. (USMC Photo #516047).

permit their being towed by a minesweeper or a destroyer at reduced speed. A design which will give protection against machine gun fire and which provides for some machine gun fire from the boat is desirable.³⁰



Unloading a 75mm gun from a "Beetle" boat during fleet maneuvers at Culebra, Puerto Rico, in 1924. (USMC Photo #515227).

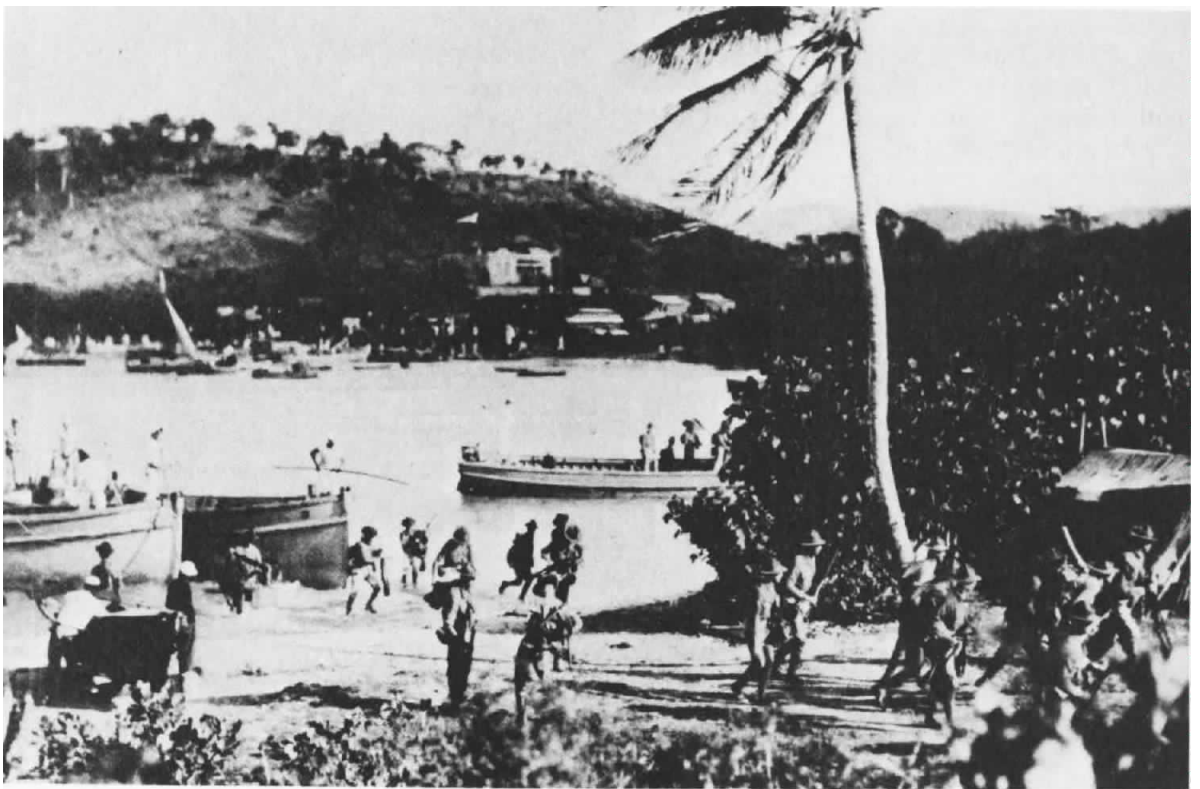


Christie amphibian tank, mounting a 75mm gun, is tested at the Culebra maneuvers in 1924. (USMC Photo #523115).

The other boat tested during the winter maneuvers of 1924 was the "Christie Tank." Unlike the "beetle boat," this test was scheduled to be a great surprise to Colonel Williams' forces defending Culebra. Its appearance was

attributed to Brigadier General Smedley D. Butler. He had been designated to command the MCEF but was replaced by Brigadier General Eli K. Cole on 14 December 1923.³¹ While Butler was still concerned with the exercise, he had corresponded with Walter Christie of the Sun Shipbuilding Company of Chester, Pennsylvania who had built an amphibious tank in 1922. After successful tests on the Hudson River in New York and later tests on the Potomac River, Christie asked the CMC to test his tank in the winter maneuvers of 1924. The CMC accepted his offer and the Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, Admiral Robert E. Coontz, gave authorization to the Commander, Scouting Fleet, Vice Admiral Newton A. McCully, to test the Christie Tank.³² General Butler asked Christie and Admiral McCully to keep the use of the tank a secret in order to surprise the defenders of Culebra.³³

The tests were conducted on the Christie tank but no mention of it surprising the defenders of Culebra was noted in the reports after the exercises were over. The CMC noted to the Secretary of the Navy that "two special



Men of the 5th Marine Regiment landing at Culebra, Puerto Rico, during fleet maneuvers, 1924. (USMC Photo #515293).

types of boats for landing operations were used experimentally with interesting, although not decisive results."³⁴ The Christie tank, while successful on rivers, proved unseaworthy. "Even though never perfected, it was the earliest forerunner of the amphibian tractor (LVT) which was to make such a remarkable record in World War II."³⁵

Aloha—Fleet Maneuvers—1925

In April 1925, joint Army and Navy exercises were held off the Hawaiian Islands. The number of Marines employed was a simulated 42,000-man landing force but in reality 1,500 took part. An important factor was an experiment with the landing force staff. The normal school activities in the Field Officers School at Quantico were suspended in March and the students and instructors all became members of the "Blue" MCEF (attacking force) of Exercise #3. The group was commanded by Colonel Robert M. Dunlap, Commanding Officer of Marine Corps Schools. "The exercises . . . were completely successful from the standpoint of the Marines. The plans worked to perfection and the landing was accomplished."³⁶ Colonel Dunlap and his staff participated in a Navy critique at the Marine Barracks, Pearl Harbor from 1 to 4 May. After his return to Quantico, another critique was held there on 1-5 June 1925 emphasizing Marine problems.³⁷ Recommendations in the critique ranged from proper tactical organization to discarding canvas leggings. They pointed out the need for experiments to develop a "boat suitable for landing the first waves ashore on a defended coast . . . capable of being carried on transports and capable of being turned out in quantity once war is determined upon. . . ."³⁸

If there was a single unchanging thread in all of the fleet exercises during the 1920s it was the constant recommendation that a "suitable boat" be developed to land the landing forces. Marine participation in fleet exercises was interrupted for the remainder of the decade due to renewed expeditionary commitments in Nicaragua, Haiti, and China and the bandits' return to robbing the mails at home. It would not be until 1932 that the Marine Corps would resume its participation in fleet maneuvers. However, the intervening years would bring more experimentation with landing lighters and see the development of a mission.

During July 1926, a detachment of Marines under the command of Major Maurice E. Shearer was ordered to Hampton Roads, Virginia to make tests of two 50-foot motor lighters, one for landing troops and the other for landing artillery. Both lighters were built by the Navy. The detachment was broken into two platoons, the infantry platoon from the 5th Regiment commanded by First Lieutenant Charles Connette and a section of 155mm artillery from the 10th Regiment commanded by First Lieutenant Melvin E. Fuller.³⁹ The Motor Troop Lighter was a development from a previous design generally known as the "beetle barge." It was a "special purpose" lighter to be used primarily for the landing of the first troop wave under fire. Smaller boats carrying about 100 men were envisioned to be used to carry the rest of the troops as soon as the beach had been cleared. The motor troop lighter being tested was 50-feet long and had about a 14-foot beam. It was propelled by two motors, and was armored against small arms fire. It had the capacity to carry machine guns or 37mm guns for offensive power. The designers had no special provisions for retraction of this boat from the beach but "if the landing is on a beach of such a nature as to permit withdrawal they may be used in landing of subsequent waves, if not, they afford protected dressing stations, or even machine gun nests."⁴⁰

Lieutenant Connette made three different tests of the capacity of the boat. He had loaded as many as 126 men with light marching packs but concluded that "it would not be practical to place so many men in the boat in any kind of rough sea." When tests were made in landing the boat, 100 men with heavy marching packs were loaded on board at the naval base in Norfolk:

The boat proceeded under her own power to Ocean View Beach, a distance of about four miles where landings were made through a very light surf. The boat was put up to the beach with her bow about three feet clear of the water. The landing from boat was made, clearing the boat in two minutes at first trial and about one and one half minutes at the second trial. Had the front hatch opening been larger the boat could have been unloaded in less than one minute. The boat left the beach very easily after being reloaded.⁴¹

The 50-foot lighter for landing artillery was designed primarily for a maximum effort of landing the 155mm gun and its tractor on any stretch of good beach in a moderate surf. However, a secondary purpose was considered in



Series "E" light tank of the 3d Brigade being loaded on board ship at Tientsin, China, in September 1928. (USMC Photo #528193).

using the lighter for landing troops, equipment, and ammunition, "thus securing distribution at beach head, and avoiding congestion at landings which are possible only for ships' boats."⁴² The lighter was not self-propelled and had to be towed by another boat:

It had to be beached stern-to and the gun or vehicle unloaded over a stern ramp. Retracting was easy but the single disadvantage was that the lighter could not be worked in and beached until the beach had been secured.⁴³

In 1927, the Joint Board of the Army and Navy* recognized the history, experience, and affinity for Marine Corps in landing operations and assigned as a general function the responsibility to "provide and maintain forces for land operations in support of the fleet for the initial seizure of advanced bases and for such limited auxiliary land operations as are essential to the prosecution of the naval campaign."⁴⁴ The report further established that "the Marines . . . because of the constant association with naval units will be given special training in the con-

*As a result of command experiences in the Spanish American War, which showed the need for a better U.S. military organization to handle preparation of joint war plans, the conduct of joint training, and control of joint operations, the Joint Army-Navy Board was established in 1903. This body was responsible for advising the civilian secretaries on major policies affecting the two armed services. It was superseded by the Joint Chiefs of Staff organization after May 1942.

duct of landing operations."⁴⁵ This was indeed a milestone in the restatement of the Marine Corps mission.

Marine Corps Schools

"Education has for its object the formation of character"

—Herbert Spencer

Formal military education of officers in the Marine Corps only goes back to 1891 when the School of Application was founded for newly commissioned officers. The initial location of the school was at the Marine Barracks in Washington but subsequently it moved to Annapolis, Port Royal, Norfolk, and finally to Quantico in April 1917. By 1920, and after going through several name changes, the school was known as the Marine Officers' School. By July 1922, it had three separate courses in session—the field officers course, the company officers course, and the basic course. For the first time, all courses or, as it evolved, all schools, were located at Quantico. The Basic School would subsequently be moved to Philadelphia in 1923 but would return to Quantico during World War II.

The curriculum of all of the schools at Quantico, commonly called Marine Corps Schools (MCS) during the 1920s, was naturally Army oriented. This orientation was by design, organized as such, because of the recent experiences in World War I. In addition, all texts, with the exception of Advanced Base writings, used by MCS were written by the Army. Army orientation continued throughout the education of Marine officers in that many senior Marine officers attended the Army War College or the Command and Staff College of the Army.

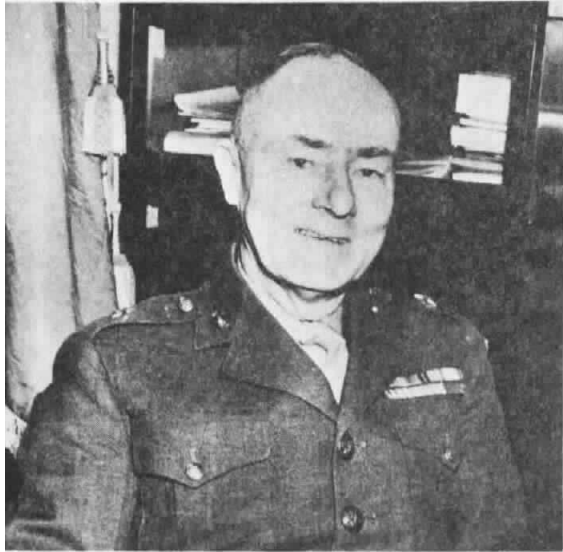
The Army's schools were excellent but by their nature patterned for the organization, training, equipment, and mission of the Army. The knowledge gained from the Army schools could only serve as good experience to the individual officer and perhaps give him new ideas as to how to improve his own organization, etc. The Marine-Army graduate returning to his battalion, regiment, or some staff duty, found an organization, different in number, equipment, and mission. Mission was the key. What was the mission of the Marine Corps? Marines in the past had had a great diversity of jobs. They had been part of a

land mass war, had seized and defended small islands, fought bandits abroad, had governed whole countries, and had guarded the mails. In addition, the new decade of the twenties brought the further improvement of the airplane, tank, and radio. How would these new developments be utilized in the spectrum of possible missions? How could a school prepare officers to meet the challenges of carrying out any of the above mentioned tasks? The answer came not by a single, simple order but by an evolutionary process. War plans, prepared under the Joint Board of the Army and Navy, provided the impetus of the evolutionary process that ultimately restated the landing operations mission that was the responsibility of the Marine Corps.

With this task in mind, the Marine Corps Schools would have to develop a course of study of their own. The traditional Army courses could not give them the answer, they were not geared for it. One such original work was the study of the technique of small wars. A vast amount of uncorrelated information had accumulated through the years, but no attempt had been made to consolidate it into a form which could be used in passing on this information to other officers. In 1922, Major Samuel M. Harrington, while a student of the Field Officers Course, undertook a comprehensive study of small wars. As a result, he prepared a definitive treatise entitled, "The Strategy and Tactics of Small Wars." * After Harrington left Quantico, Colonel Ben H. Fuller, Commanding Officer of MCS, requested Major Harrington to send him copies of his work on small wars "in order to build up a course strictly [patterned for] Marine Corps work. . . ." ⁴⁶

Colonel Fuller had Harrington's work incorporated into the school's curriculum. This publication presented certain principles of landing operations, the seizure of cities, and operations in the field, as they applied to small wars. It constituted the first consolidated analysis of small wars available for study. Since small wars continued to be an immediate concern of the Marine Corps, Major Harrington's work was the basis for more detailed writing on the subject later. In 1935, a "Restricted"

*Major Harrington had published two articles entitled, "The Strategy and Tactics of Small Wars," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 6, No. 4 (December 1921) and v. 7, No. 1 (March 1922). These articles were a condensed version of his definitive treatise.



Brigadier General Samuel M. Harrington, USMC.
(USMC Photo #25101).

book entitled *Small Wars Operations* was published for use within the MCS. In 1940, a revised and corrected version of small wars was published for the Marine Corps by the Government Printing Office for general use, entitled the *Small Wars Manual*.

The curriculum at MCS began to change. As a result of the report of Colonel Robert H. Dunlap, Commanding Officer of MCS, concerning the Fleet Exercises of 1925, the CMC directed that the subject of Overseas Expeditions and Ship-to-Shore Operations be developed and made an important feature of the tactical course in both the Field and Company Officers' Schools.⁴⁷ By 1926, tactics studies emphasized Marine Corps activity in conjunction with the fleet and landing operations. The following subjects became part of the MCS regular curriculum: ⁴⁸

- (a) The strategy of the Pacific Ocean
- (b) Expeditionary forces
- (c) Naval considerations for an overseas expedition
- (d) Embarking and loading troops and supplies
- (e) Hydrographic and meteorological study
- (f) Tactical principles of securing a beachhead
- (g) Landing places (configuration, terrain, and naval artillery support)
- (h) Naval gunfire
- (i) Beach parties
- (j) Shore parties
- (k) Waves
- (l) Naval provisions for disembarkation
- (m) Disembarkation

- (n) Boats
- (o) Night landings
- (p) Command and liaison
- (q) Exercise and debarkation
- (r) Consolidation and exploration
- (s) Withdrawal

The above subjects of instruction, with respect to landing operations, totaled 49 hours as compared to five hours in 1925. The increased part the MCS would play in the development of landing operations was reflected in the schedule for the academic year 1927-28. A complete revision and expansion of the courses tripled the emphasis on landing operations.⁴⁹ MCS added a touch of sophistication with the addition of Army and Navy Officers as instructors or visiting lecturers. Army officers presented topics with respect to their own specialties. Naval officers quite definitely added their talents to the climate whereby landing operations would be made. Some of the lectures were presented by Captain Ralph M. Griswold, "United States Fleet Operations and the Naval Staff"; Captain Dudley W. Knox, "The Strategy



The Commandant, Major General John A. Lejeune, Senator Edward C. Hale, Chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs, and Brigadier General Eli K. Cole, at Quantico's airfield on 25 March 1925. (USMC Photo #515907).

of the Atlantic"; Commander Raymond A. Spruance, "Naval Intelligence"; Rear Admiral Frank H. Schofield, "The Strategy of the Pacific"; and Commander Howard M. Lammers, "Naval Gunfire in Support of a Landing."

During the academic year 1928-29, the schools were crippled by depletion of the staff of instructors, most of whom were sent to Nicaragua. However, this did not result in a decrease in the emphasis on landing operations instructions.⁵⁰

By 1930, the MCS had become the center for the development of techniques in landing operations. It would be at MCS, in the succeeding decade, that the experience, theory, and findings would be incorporated into a functional manual of doctrine.

Aviation—The Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines

If ground Marines were making strides in landing operations during the 1920s, the air Marines were making strides in tactics and techniques in aerial warfare. We have seen that through no fault of their own, Marine aviators did not support Marine ground troops during World War I. However, Marine air made up for it after the war. Marine aviation under the command of Major Thomas C. Turner was the only U.S. military air service that actually saw combat during the period between World War I and World War II. Marine air served in Santo Domingo from February 1919 until July 1924, in Haiti from March 1919 to August 1934, and in Nicaragua from 1927 to 1933. Throughout those years, Marine pilots were not only experiencing combat but were also contributing radically new tactics to both ground and air warfare.⁵¹ During this period of the twenties, Marine planes and pilots were sent to the Pacific for the first time when they were assigned to Guam. In April 1927, elements of three squadrons were shipped to Tientsin, China in support of the MCEF sent there. There was no combat action in China—it was centered in Latin America. It was in Santo Domingo in 1919 that Lieutenant Lawson H. M. Sanderson first experimented with dive-bombing.

Sanderson found that he could hit a target more often by pointing his plane toward the target and releasing his bomb from a make-shift rack after diving to a low level (about 250 feet) at an angle of about 45°—the angle

which came to be known as glide bombing in World War II.⁵²

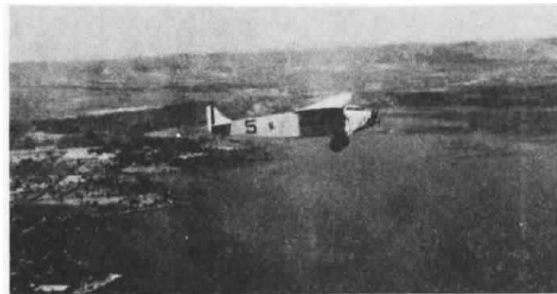
In February 1927, Major Ross E. Rowell, commanding officer of a unit of 6 DHs and 81 men, was directed to support the 5th Marines that had been dispatched to Nicaragua a month earlier. Rowell had further experimented with dive-bombing and made it mandatory in training his pilots. Dive-bombing became a standing operating procedure in Rowell's unit and a first for Marine air. Other services and other countries used dive-bombing developed in their own way. "Most senior Marine aviators doubt that any individual can claim credit for trying to hit his target by aiming his plane at it."⁵³ Also in the late twenties, Major Edwin H. Brainard, who succeeded Turner as Officer-in-Charge of Marine Aviation, managed to obtain the first plane the Marines ever had which was built to transport cargo, the three-engine Fokker transport. In 1927, Brainard himself delivered the Fokker to Nicaragua for use. After two other Fokkers arrived, Marine cargo operations made military history in flights made and pounds of freight carried.⁵⁴ In another first of sorts, a Marine patrol pinned down by Nicaraguan bandits spotted several Marine planes. The patrol laid out on the ground panels of cloth indicating the direction and range of the enemy and asked for an air attack. The subsequent bombing and strafing attack became the first known instance of an air attack being directed by ground troops.⁵⁵ This tactic became a fundamental element of close air support later on.

At home, in July 1926, Marine aviation was preparing for its second class of aerial observa-

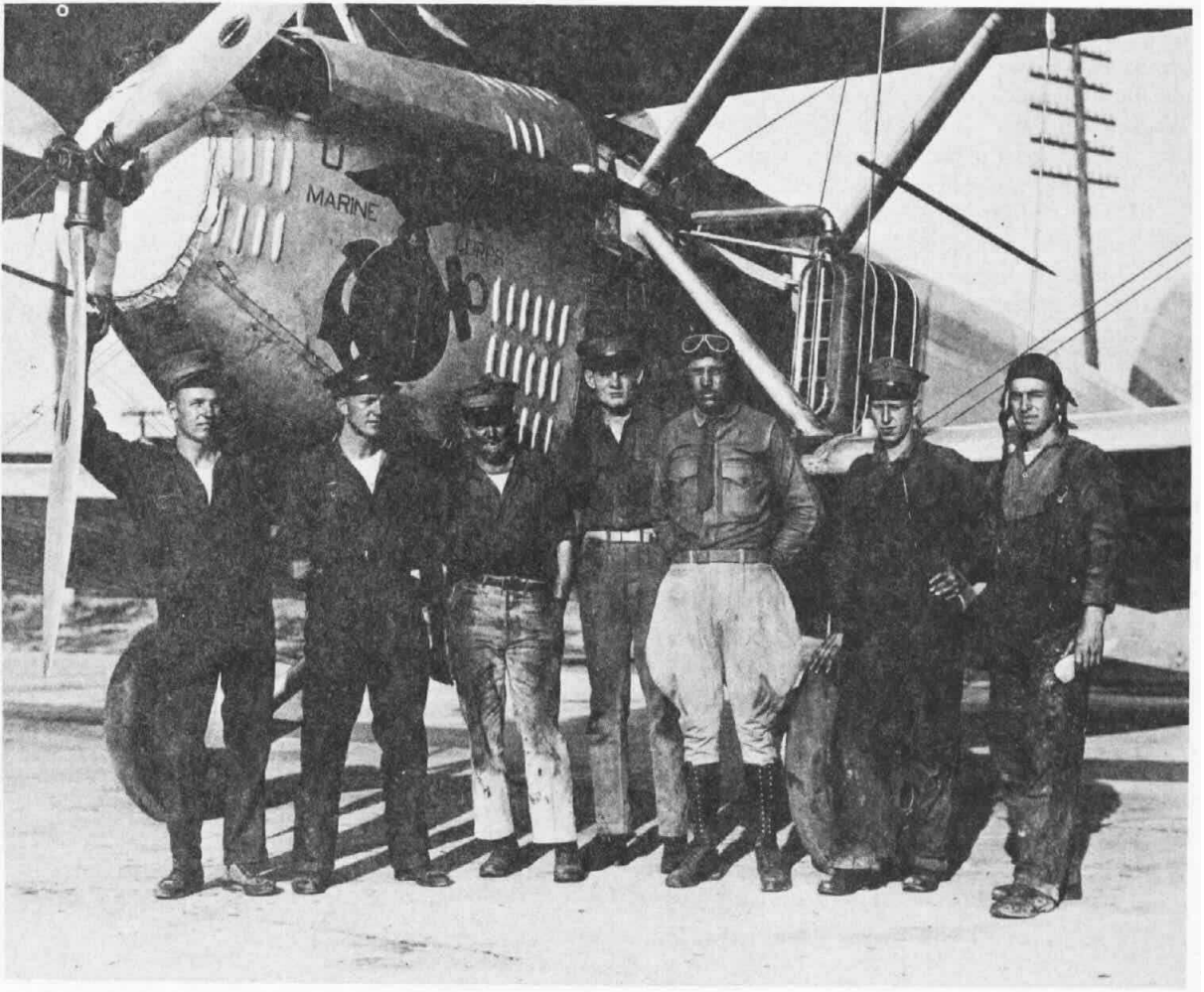
tion. The Commanding Officer of the School of Aerial Observation located at Quantico had requested the Brigade Commander, MCEF to direct cooperation of the Fifth Regiment with the Observers School in an air-ground communication problem. He considered the practice essential in rounding out the aerial observer for work with the infantry. In addition to their normal duties with expeditionary forces, Marine aviators participated in national air races, aerial surveys, night flying, exhibition flying, and other flight training.

By 1930, Marine Corps aviation was firmly entrenched in two major installations and three overseas bases located as follows:

Aircraft Squadrons, East Coast Expeditionary Force, Marine Barracks, Quantico
 Aircraft Squadrons, West Coast Expeditionary Force, Naval Air Station, San Diego
 Detachments with 2d Brigade, Managua, Nicaragua
 Detachments with 1st Brigade, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
 Detachments with Naval Station, Guam, Mariana Islands



An early Marine transport plane, the Fokker TA-2, gaining altitude over Lake Managua, Nicaragua, on 9 April 1930. (USMC Photo #530022).



Lieutenant Christian F. Schilt and his crew standing in front of a DT-2 torpedo bomber at New York in October 1925. Lieutenant Schilt was awarded the Medal of Honor for actions in Nicaragua in 1928. (USMC Photo #515971).