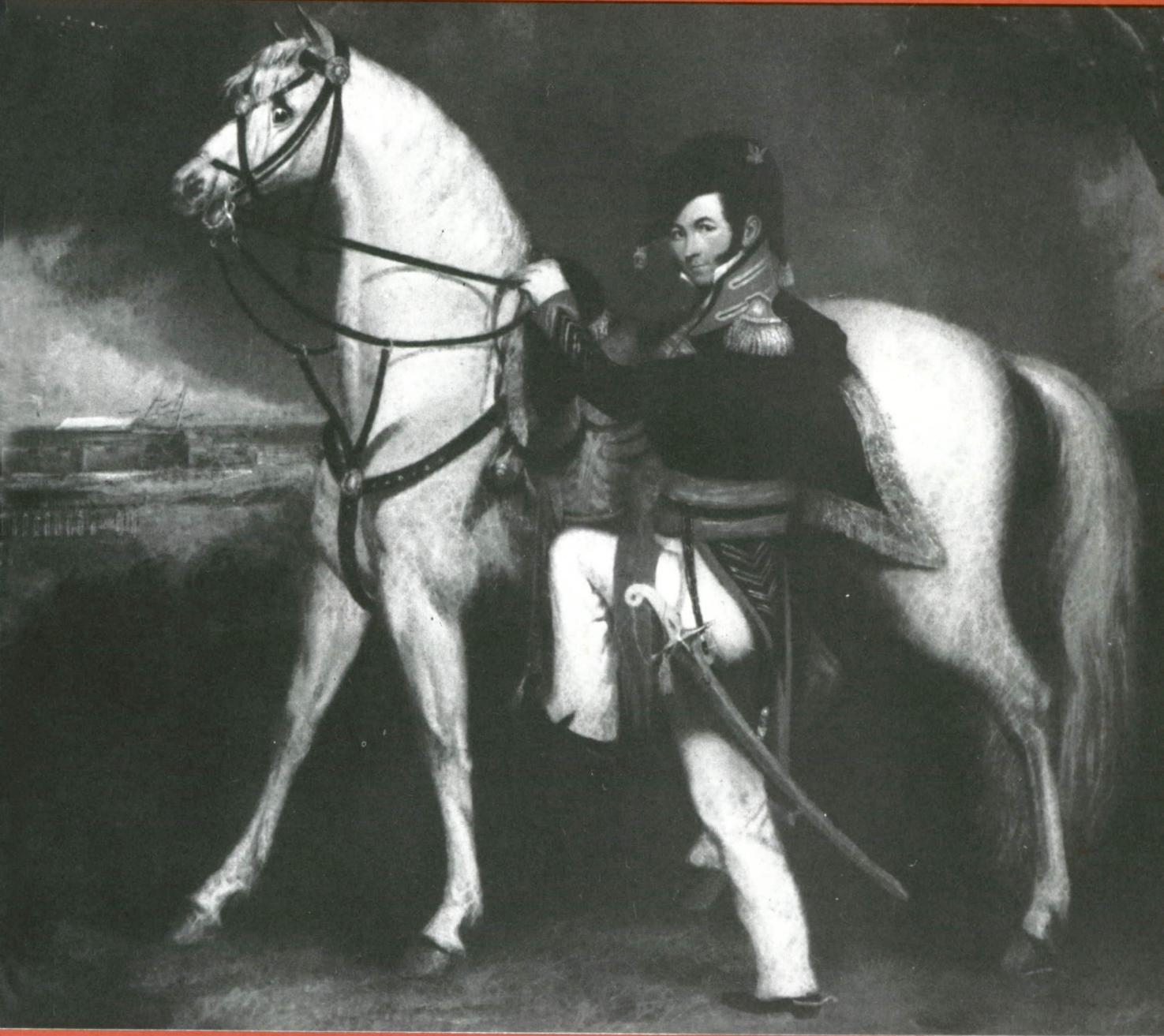


UNIFORMS OF THE AMERICAN MARINES 1775 TO 1829

By Major Edwin North McClellan, USMC



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

Front Cover: Major (Brevet Lieutenant Colonel) John Marshall Gamble, USMC, painted by Anthony Lewis DeRose, probably between 1827-1834 when Marshall was commanding the Marine Barracks, Navy Yard, New York. (USMC Photo #515617-A)

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20380

Foreword

For years, McClellan's uniform history has been a valuable reference tool for students of military dress. The fact that it existed, however, has not been widely known. It is being republished in view of the increasing number of people who have a serious interest in the field.

Although the McClellan history had very limited publication in mimeograph format and was more a compilation of notes than a polished narrative, it is so useful that it is being published in exact facsimile. No attempt has been made to validate or edit it but appropriate illustrations have been added from the files of the History and Museums Division. These were obtained from the various sources credited in the captions.

To further complement the facsimile, Mr. Ralph W. Donnelly of the Reference Section of the History and Museums Division, has prepared a preface which expands on the subject of uniforms and provides biographical data on Major McClellan.

Although this division does not intend to revise the McClellan uniform history, there is a continuing need to add to the knowledge of Marine Corps uniforms and accoutrements. Readers who can provide information or illustrations on this subject are invited to do so by communicating with the History and Museums Division.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. H. Simmons", is positioned above the typed name.

E. H. SIMMONS
Brigadier General, U. S. Marine Corps (Ret.)
Director of Marine Corps History and Museums

Reviewed and approved:
15 April 1974

Preface

The late Lieutenant Colonel Edwin North McClellan, USMC, a prolific historian of the Marine Corps, produced Part One of a proposed *Uniforms of the American Marines, 1775 to 1932* in 1932. The work was never completed past the year 1829 so the title is really not an accurate description of the contents. This publication was a limited edition, mimeographed, of just 200 copies, and consisted of 94 pages of text and 5 pages of index.

This is not a connected exposition of the evolution of the Marine Corps uniform but is a chronological compilation of orders and correspondence dealing with Marine Corps uniforms, arms, and accoutrements from the Colonial Period through 21 October 1829. While it furnishes the raw material for uniform plates, the original contains only one sketch of a coat and several of button arrangements and chevrons.

A complete coverage for the period is not currently planned by the History and Museums Division, therefore, this earlier work is being reproduced at this time to meet an increasing interest in early Marine Corps uniforms and frequent requests for this basic material.

It remained for two artist-historians who are well known in uniform circles, the late Colonel John H. Magruder, III, and H. Charles McBarron, Jr., to develop the words into uniform plates via the medium of the pages of the *Military Collector & Historian*, the journal of the Company of Military Historians. Mr. McBarron produced the plates and text for "Captain Robert Mullan's Company of Continental Marines, 1779" (MC&H, v. I, no. 1, plate #2, pp. 2-3) and for "U.S. Marine Corps, Circa 1805-1818 (MC&H, v. II, no. 2, plate #24, pp. 25-28). Colonel Magruder produced "U. S. Marine Corps, 1797-1804 (MC&H, v. VIII, no. 1, plate #113, pp. 15-16) and "U.S. Marine Corps, 1826" (MC&H, v. IX, no. 1, plate #130, pp. 12-14).

Colonel Magruder also prepared a series of 22 Marine Corps uniform plates which were published in color as a booklet and as individual plates by the *Marine Corps Gazette* in the mid- 50s. Five of these are applicable to this reissue of McClellan's work, namely:

- Plate 1. 1st Lieutenant, Marines - 1775.
- Plate 2. Sergeant, Marines - 1780.
- Plate 3. Corporal, USMC - 1798.
- Plate 4. 1st Lieutenant, USMC - 1810.
- Plate 5. Sergeant, USMC - 1812.

In addition to his pictures, Colonel Magruder wrote various brief articles for the *Marine Corps Gazette* constituting what is referred to as his "Touch of Tradition" series. The applicable articles and their publication dates in the *Gazette* were:

"The Chevron."	(Nov. 1954, pp. 54-56.)
"Sergeant's Sword."	(Nov. 1954, pp. 33-35.)
"The Officer's Sword."	(Mar. 1955, pp. 43.)
"The Pig-Tail Marines."	(Feb. 1956, pp. 46-47.)
" . . .A Touch of Tradition."	
[Uniforms of 1812-34.]	(July 1956, pp. 34-34.)
[Leather Stocks.]	(Nov. 1956, pp. 37.)
[The Quatrefoil]	(Nov. 1957, pp. 34-35.)

A few pictures exist for this early Marine Corps period. One of the most outstanding is a full length portrait of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel John Marshall Gamble painted about 1830 by Anthony Lewis DeRose. This portrait now hangs in the Commandant's House and was used by *American Heritage* magazine on the cover of its February 1959 issue. More commonplace have been the bust and head portraits which have survived the years. Perhaps the most outstanding artist who produced a number of officers' pictures was the French-born Charles B. J. F. de Saint Memin (1770-1752). His portraits are found as engravings. His Marine Corps clients included Major Daniel Carmick, and Captains Robert Rankin, James Thompson, and James McKnight.

Oil portraits exist of John M. Gamble (as a captain), First Lieutenant Thomas S. English (c. 1825-'30), First Lieutenant Charles R. Floyd (1818- 1824), and Lieutenant William S. Bush (c. 1812).

Uniform detail is also found for a Marine Corps first lieutenant, circa 1825-'30, in a painting by an unknown artist, "The Dance - Jack Tar Ashore" as well as in a painting by a former officer [unidentified] of the Corps showing the officers' uniform of 1819.

Increased research in the area of uniforms, insignia, and accountments has been done in recent years, as exemplified by Colonel John A. Driscoll, USMCR, *The Eagle, Globe and Anchor, 1868-1968* (Quantico, Va.: USMC Museum, 1971), but there is much still to be done. The Revolutionary War period, now being researched, will be covered partially by a USMC Museum publication, *Uniform of the Continental Marines: A Manual for Reconstruction* with additional coverage scheduled for the forthcoming book on Marines in the Revolution.

Brief modern treatment of early USMC uniforms has been done by Colonel Robert H. Rankin, USMCR, first as Chapter V, "Uniforms of the United States Marine Corps from 1775 to 1840," in his *Uniforms of the Sea Services* (Annapolis, Md.: United States Naval Institute, 1962) and in his later work, *Uniforms of the Marines* (New York: Putman, 1970).

Edwin North McClellan was commissioned 18 Jun 1907 as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps and assigned to the School of Application at Annapolis, Md. Although his training was interrupted by illness, he completed his indoctrination in time to join the USS *Wisconsin* as part of the Great White Fleet world cruise of 1908-09.

On Christmas Day 1909 he was assigned to duty at Marine Barracks Norfolk. After his promotion to first lieutenant on 25 May 1910, he joined the Marines enroute to the Philippines. McClellan arrived at Manila on 2 December 1910 and served there until assigned to Peking, China, where he arrived on 1 August 1912. While in China he served as an early commanding officer of the famous Mounted Detachment at Peking from 18 December 1912 to 9 July 1913.

McClellan returned stateside to Mare Island and within a few weeks was ordered to Washington where he was assigned to the Navy's Judge Advocate General's office, reporting on 14 November 1913. He remained on this duty until sea duty took him to the USS *Arizona* on 9 February 1917.

His writing career seems to have begun on this JAG assignment as he prepared the Index-Digest of Court-Martial Orders for the years 1914, 1915, and 1916, as well as the "Naval Digest, 1916." His office work was combined with study at George Washington University Law School in Washington, D. C. which led to a law degree in 1916.

McClellan was promoted to major (temporary) while still on the *Arizona*. The same month he was promoted to Force Marine Officer, Battleship Force No. 1, Atlantic Fleet and transferred to the USS *Minnesota* where he remained until almost the close of the war, being detached to Marine Barracks, Quantico on 14 October 1918.

With the close of the war in Europe, McClellan was ordered to France on 28 February 1919 for duty with the Historical Section of the AEF. He was specifically charged with "collection historical data regarding activities of Marines during operations in Europe.

Parenthetically, the Historical Branch, War Plans Division, General Staff, U.S. Army, had been organized in Washington, D.C., in February 1918. Shortly thereafter, Professor Robert Matteson Johnston, the eminent American military historian from Harvard, was commissioned with the rank of major and sent to France with a small party of associates and reported to General Headquarters of the A.E.F.

McClellan returned to the U. S. from his tour with the Army Historical Branch on 17 August 1919 and joined HQMC three days later.

It is presumed his experience with Dr. Johnston was fruitful for on 8 September 1919 the Historical Section, Adjutant and Inspectors Department, Headquarters, USMC, was established by authority of Marine Corps Order No. 53. On the same day, McClellan was ordered in charge, serving until 31 May 1925. He returned for a second tour of duty, from 20 June 1930 to 2 March 1933. The section consisted of one commissioned officer assisted by an average of three privates acting as clerks.

MCO No. 53, the original charter for the Marine Corps Historical Division, established the Historical Archives for all material of an historical nature, which was defined as material from which administrative value had disappeared. This reflected Johnston's work in France where one of his first tasks had been to organize "a system of archives where daily reports were tabulated so that there might be a basis for the projected history of the war...." The section was specifically instructed to prepare a history of the Marine Corps in World War I, and to bring up to date the history of the Corps.

The order to prepare a history of the Corps in World War I led to the submission of a "concise history" on 26 November 1919 which was approved and published in 1920. A first edition of 50,000 copies was soon exhausted, and a second edition of 100,000 was authorized. A continuing need for the publication and its acknowledged value led to a facsimile reprint edition of 14,000 copies in 1968, just 50 years after Belleau Wood.

McClellan had now embarked upon an unparalleled career of writing on the history of the Marine Corps which led to more than 100 published articles, some being short "vignettes" while others were long detailed studies.

In addition to his work in the Historical Section, he served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Marine Corps Association from 1 July 1921 to 1 October 1922, and edited five issues of the *Marine Corps Gazette*.

On 21 October 1921, McClellan suggested to MajGenCmdt John A. Lejeune that 10 November, the birthday of the Corps, be de-

clared a Marine Corps holiday and celebrated throughout the Corps, that a birthday dinner be held in Washington, and that a General Order be issued on this subject. As a direct result of McClellan's suggestion, Marine Corps Order No. 47 (Series 1921) of 1 November 1921 was issued and later incorporated in the Marine Corps Manual.

After completing his first tour of duty with the Historical Section, McClellan was detached on 1 June 1925 for duty at the Marine Barracks, Pearl Harbor, T.H. He was in Hawaii until 15 November 1927 when he returned to the Pacific coast. After a brief tour in the Western Recruiting Area, he was sent to join the 5th Regiment, 2d Brigade, Nicaragua, reporting 19 October 1928 as the official photographer.

Returning from Nicaragua on 24 July 1929, he had a brief tour at Quantico and shortly afterwards the Navy Register carried the new notation, "Graduate Marine Corps Schools, Field Officer's Course."

McClellan returned to Headquarters on 20 June 1930 to enter upon his second tour in charge of the Historical Section. On this assignment, he endeavored to meet the requirement of Order No. 53 of 8 September 1919 to revise and bring up to date the history of the Corps.

Concentrated labor on his part resulted in the production of chapter after chapter toward a complete history of the Corps. Approximately 22 chapters were completed during his first tour of duty in the 20s while nine chapters are credited to his second tour of duty in the 30s.

On 6 September 1932, an outline of a seven-volume history of the Corps was drafted, designed to carry through 1933.

The McClellan history ultimately developed into 31 chapters consisting of 1063 pages of text, 836 pages of notes, and 303 pages of index. All of the 26 chapters for Volume I (through the War of 1812) were published as were the early chapters of Volume II. One isolated chapter, that dealing with the Marine Corps and Japan, 1846-1860, was also completed. His early monograph on the Marine Corps in World War I was undoubtedly the nucleus for the projected Volume VI, "The World War."

To say these chapters were "published" is a misuse of the term. His second tour of duty was during the Great Depression and at that time formal publication was not economically feasible. He resorted to the mimeograph machine and 200 to 300 copies of each chapter were produced for judicious distribution. Some chapters were revised so that two versions exist. In 1954 the New York Public Library microfilmed the McClellan history, the closest to publication the work has achieved.

As corollary to his chronological and topical histories McClellan wrote a small book entitled, *Uniforms of the American Marines, 1775 to 1832, Including the Uniform of the Colonial American Marines, 1740-1742*, which was published in mimeographed form in 1932. More a series of notes than a continuous and cohesive exposition, it still remains the best done to date.

On 2 March 1933, McClellan was reassigned to writing a history of the Adjutant and Inspectors' Department. This assignment was interspersed with trips to Philadelphia for historical research. File memos show that in 1934 he assisted the Office of Naval Records and Library, then under the late Commo Dudley W. Knox, in searching for documents for the Navy series on the Quasi War with France.

McClellan was promoted to lieutenant colonel on 1 March 1934 and was detached from his historical and writing duties on 15 June 1934 for a brief assignment in Haiti, returning to the Marine Barracks, Navy Yard, Philadelphia, on 15 August 1934.

Within a few months he was off to the Orient, being assigned to duty with the 4th Marines in Shanghai. But this assignment was of short duration as he was sent to Cavite, Philippine Islands, where he commanded the Marine Barracks at the Navy Yard. His active duty career came to a conclusion at Cavite with his retirement on 30 June 1936.

He returned briefly to Pennsylvania, making his home at Bryn Mawr and then moved to Honolulu until 1941 when he returned to Philadelphia.

When *The United States Marine Corps in the World War* was reprinted in 1968, Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Leonard F. Chapman traveled to Philadelphia to present an autographed copy to McClellan. McClellan, 87 years old, was honored at a ceremony held 10 December 1968 at the Philadelphia Naval Base. The Commandant, in speaking of McClellan's history, said it "is still the essential starting point for any meaningful research into our past."

McClellan lived several more years, dying at the Philadelphia Naval Hospital on 25 July 1971. He was survived by his divorced wife, two sons, and a daughter.

Historians today owe a debt to McClellan for the tremendous amount of historical work he produced. His monumental history, although never finished, constituted an extraordinary achievement alone. The back-up of more than 100 articles reflect a picture of an intense individual who must have driven himself hard to produce the amount he did. All Marine historians since owe him a debt of gratitude.

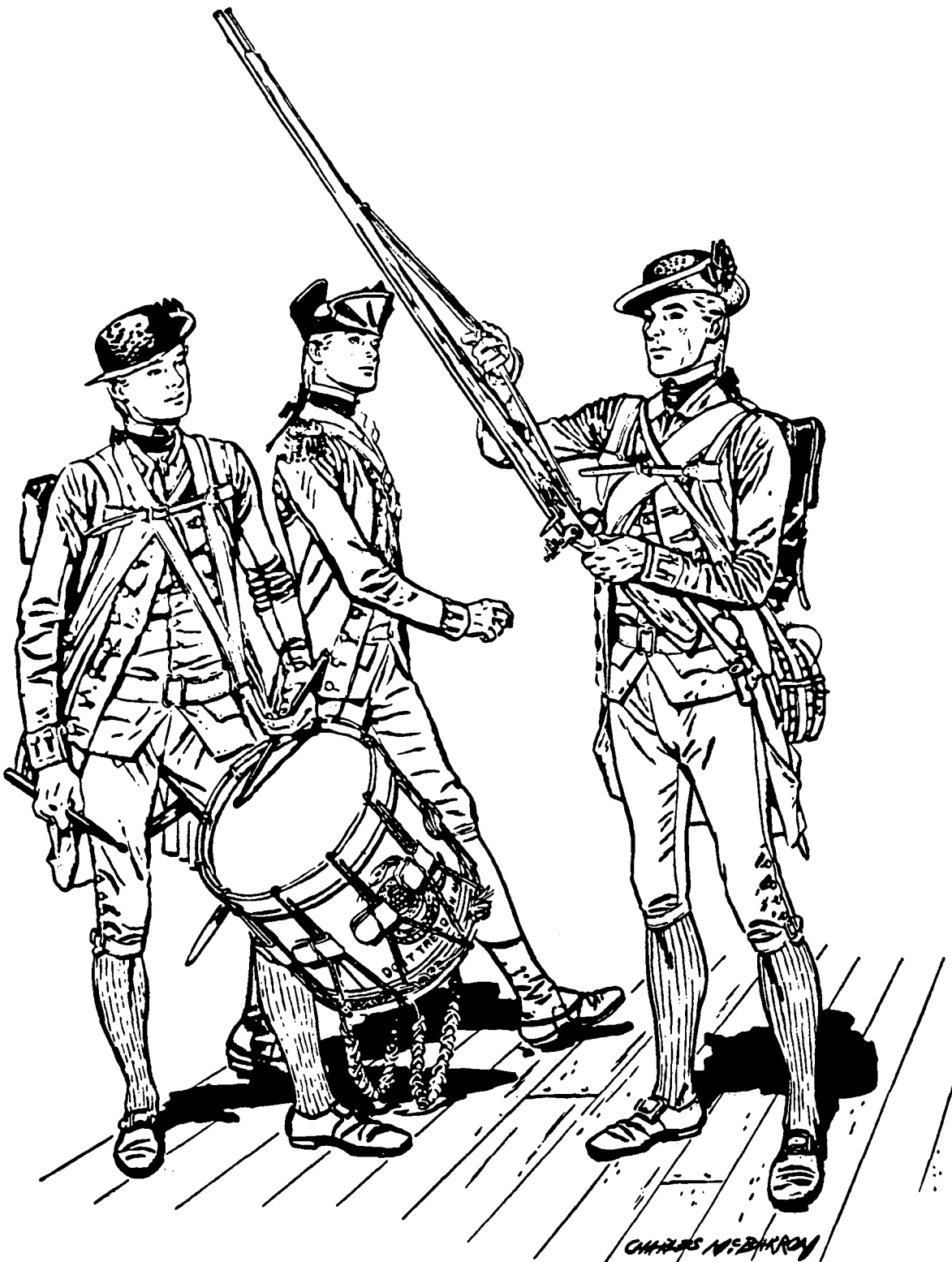
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Facsimile reproduction of <u>Uniforms of the</u> <u>American Marines, 1775 to 1932</u>	

Engraving, presumedly of a Continental Marine officer of the brig Alfred in 1776, part of the decoration on a powder horn in the possession of the Marine Corps Museum, Quantico, Virginia (MCB Quantico Photo #3-2821-69)



Black and white base drawing of Continental Marines in the uniform of 1779 done by H. Charles McBarron for a hand-colored plate (No. 2) of the Military Uniforms in America series of The Company of Military Historians. Reproduced by permission.



Drummer

Officer

Marine

**Captain Robert Mullan's Company,
Continental Marines, 1779**

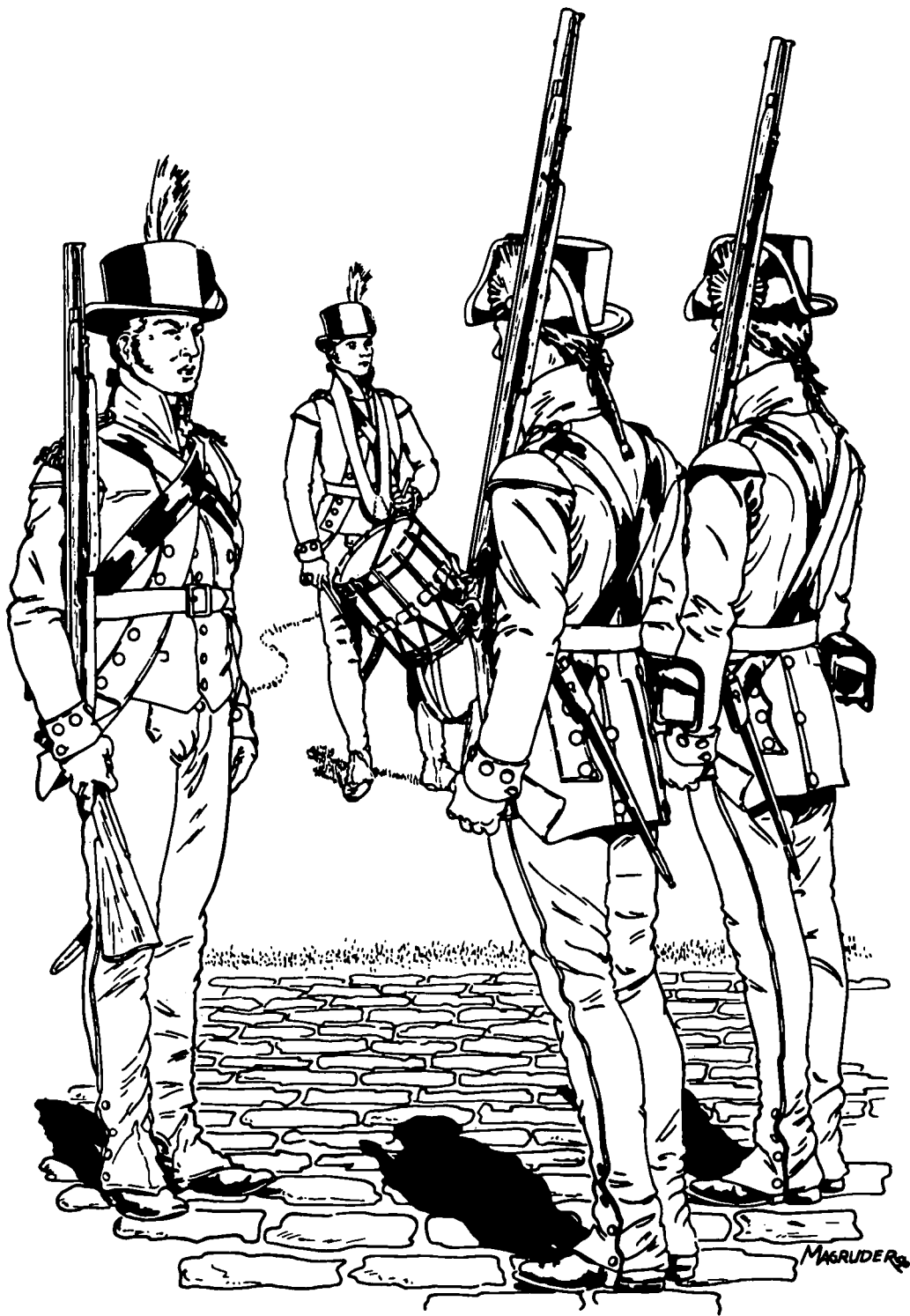
Miniature of Captain Matthew Parke, Continental Marines, who served in European waters on the Ranger and Alliance, 1777-1780. Done in Paris by an unknown artist during the American Revolution. (USMC Photo #520163)



Engraving of Captain Daniel Carmick, USMC, done by Charles
B. J. F. de Saint Memin in 1798. (USMC Photo #524214)



Black and white base drawing of Marines in the uniform of 1798-1804. Done by Lieutenant Colonel John H. Magruder III for a hand-colored plate (No. 113) of the Military Uniforms in America series of The Company of Military Historians. Reproduced by permission.



Music, Summer Dress

Sergeant, Winter Dress

Private, Winter Dress

U. S. Marine Corps., 1798-1804

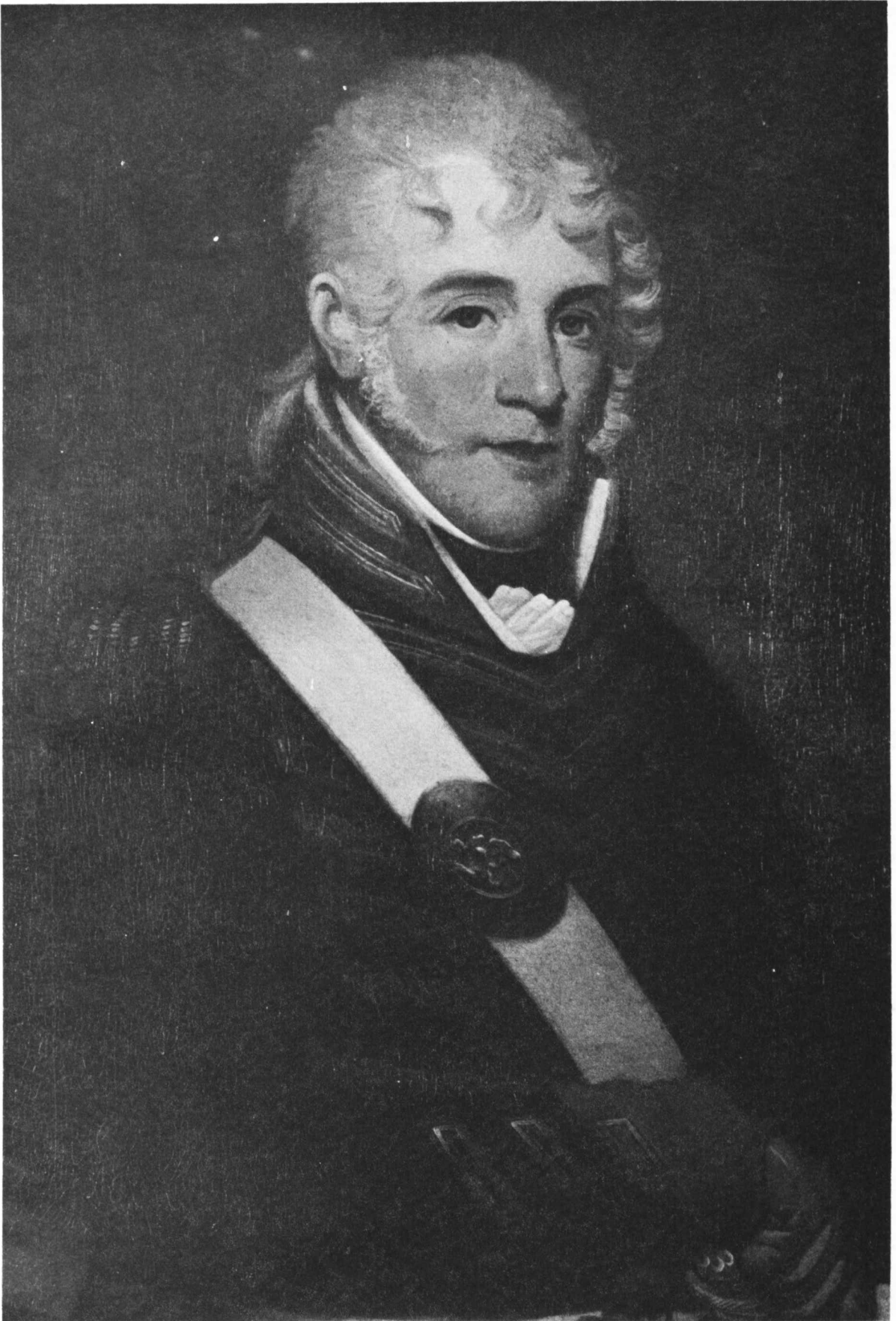
Enlisted man's hat plate of the 1812 era. The scroll in the eagle's beak reads "Fortitudine," motto of the Marine Corps in the War of 1812. Specimen from the collections of the Marine Corps Museum, Quantico, Virginia. (MCB Quantico Photo #11-3289-69)



Marine officer's center brass portion of a copper breast plate of the War of 1812 era. It can be seen in the painting of Lieutenant Bush following. Specimen from the collections of the Marine Corps Museum, Quantico, Virginia. (USMC Photo #530310)



Oil portrait, artist unknown, of Lieutenant William S. Bush, USMC, done in 1812 or earlier. Bush commanded the Marines on the USS Constitution during its engagement with HMS Guerriere on 19 August 1812 and was killed in the battle. (USMC Photo #525113)



Black and white base drawing of Marines in the uniform of the 1805-1818 era. Done by H. Charles McBarron for a hand-colored plate (No. 24) of the Military Uniforms in America series of The Company of Military Historians. Reproduced by permission.



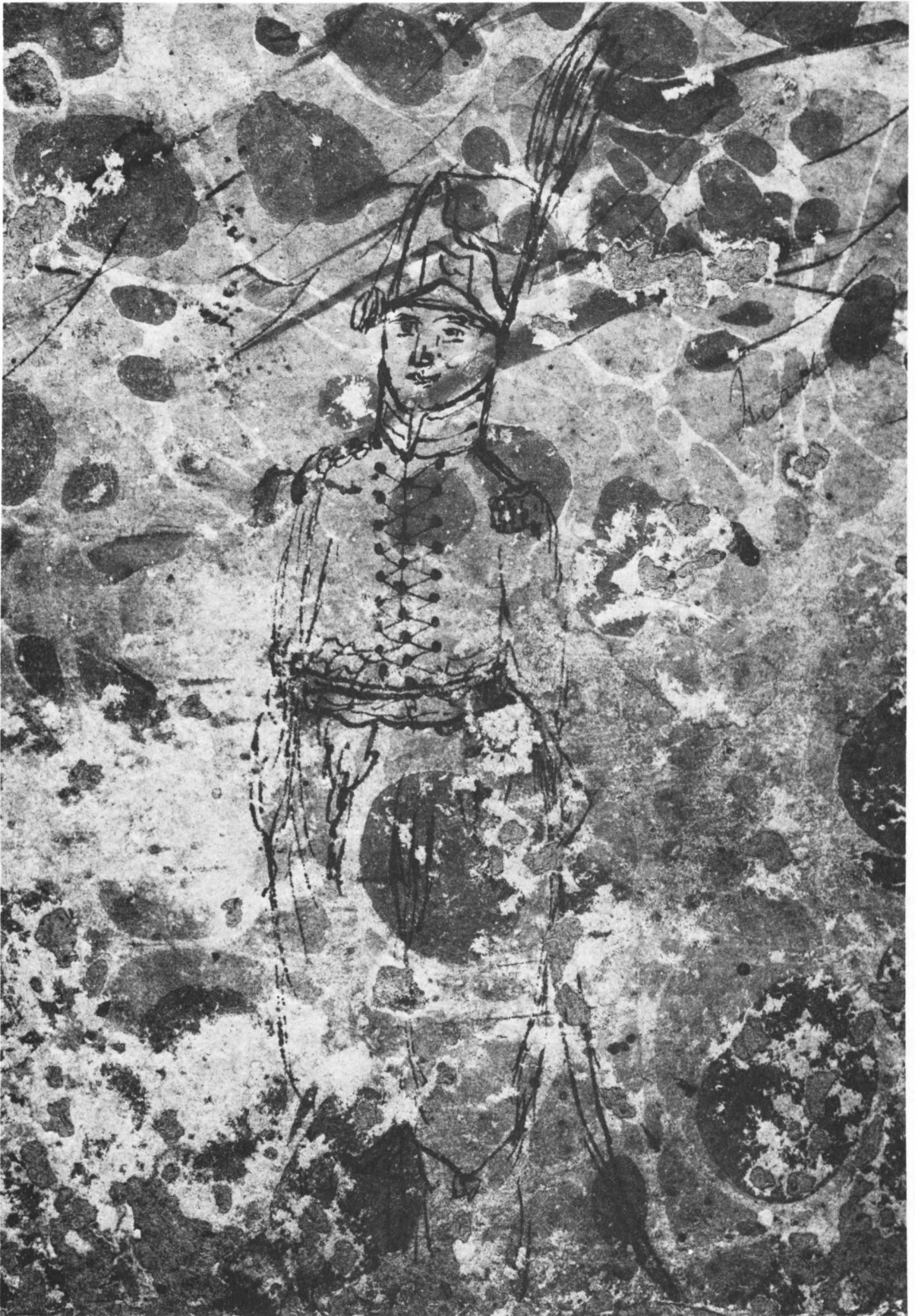
Officer

Private

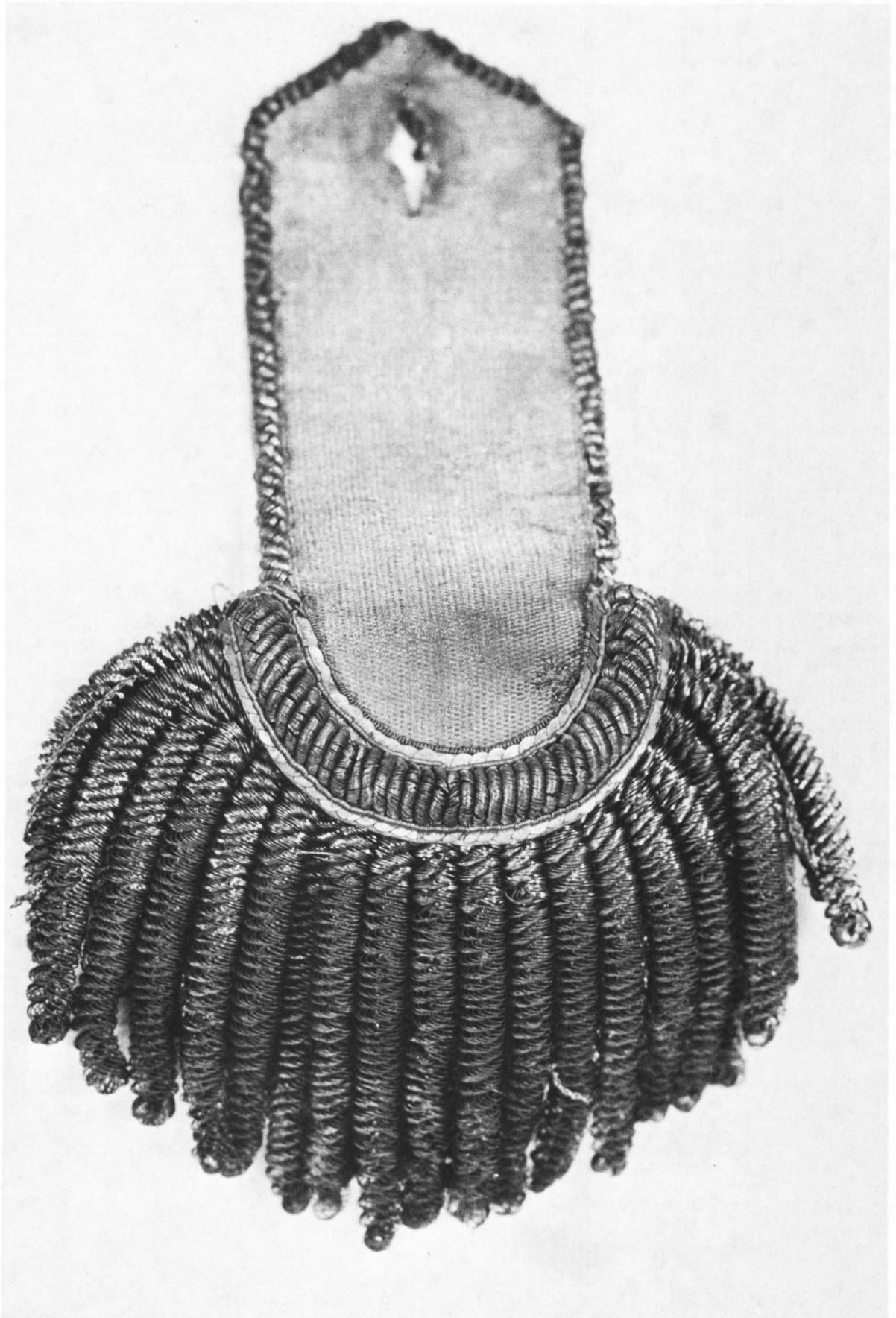
Sergeant

U. S. Marine Corps, circa 1805-1818

Sketch by an unknown artist of a Marine officer from the cover of an officer of the day's report book of the Marine Barracks, Washington, D. C. in June 1811. From the collections of the Marine Corps Museum, Quantico, Virginia. (Marine Corps Museums Photo)



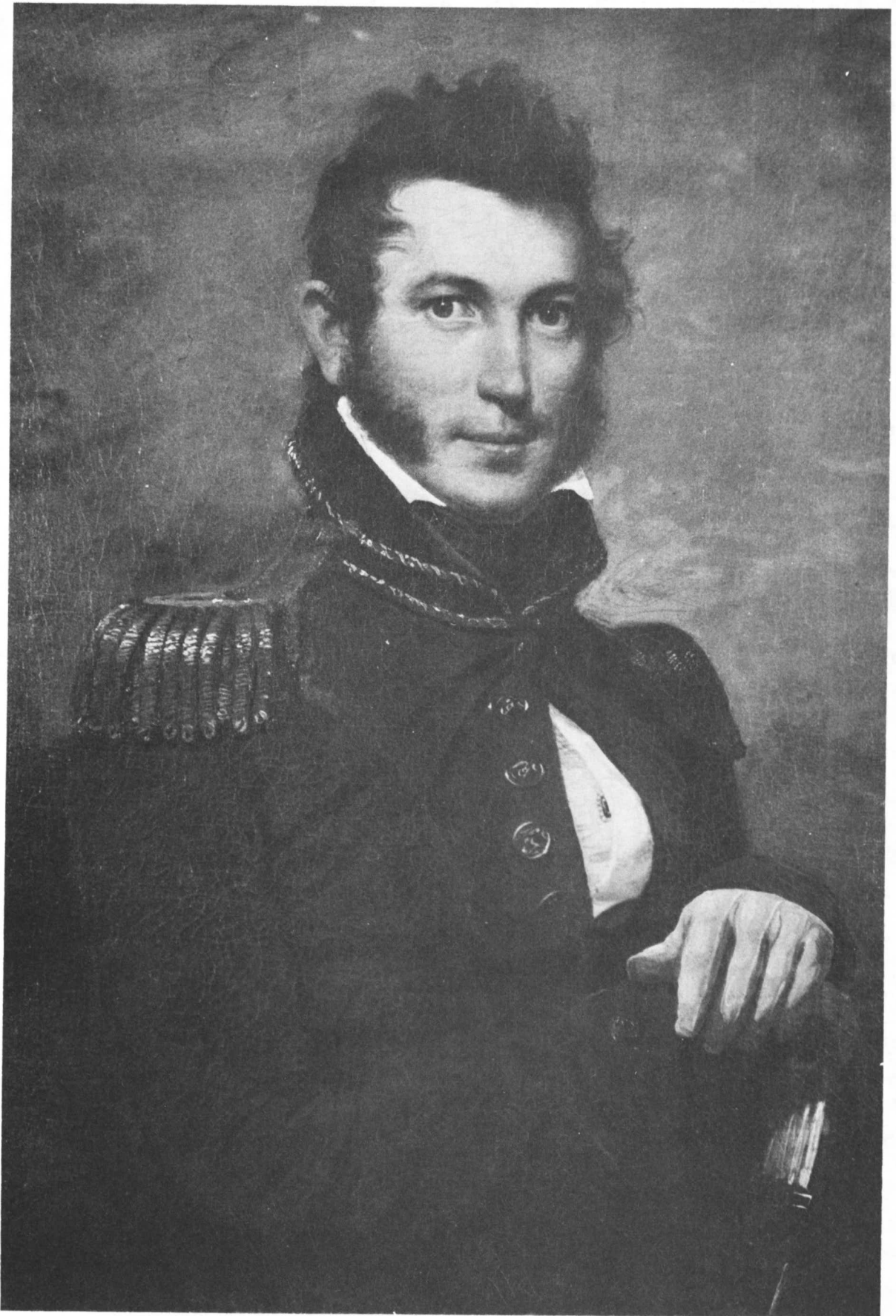
Marine Corps officer's epaulette of the 1812 era. It can be seen in the painting of Captain Gamble following. Specimen from the collections of the Marine Corps Museum, Quantico, Virginia. (MCB Quantico Photo #Q13-739-70)



A print of a Marine lieutenant and a private about 1813 by Charles Hamilton Smith in his Costumes of British and Foreign Armies, a copy of which is in the Harry Widener Memorial Room, Widener Library, Cambridge, Mass.



Oil portrait of Captain John Marshall Gamble, USMC, done by Waldo about 1815. Another portrait of Gamble as a field officer in the 1827-1834 period is used on the cover of this monograph. (USMC Photo #A408592)



Engraving from a painting of an officer of Marines, showing the uniform of 1819, attributed to a former officer of the Corps. (USMC Photo #301147)