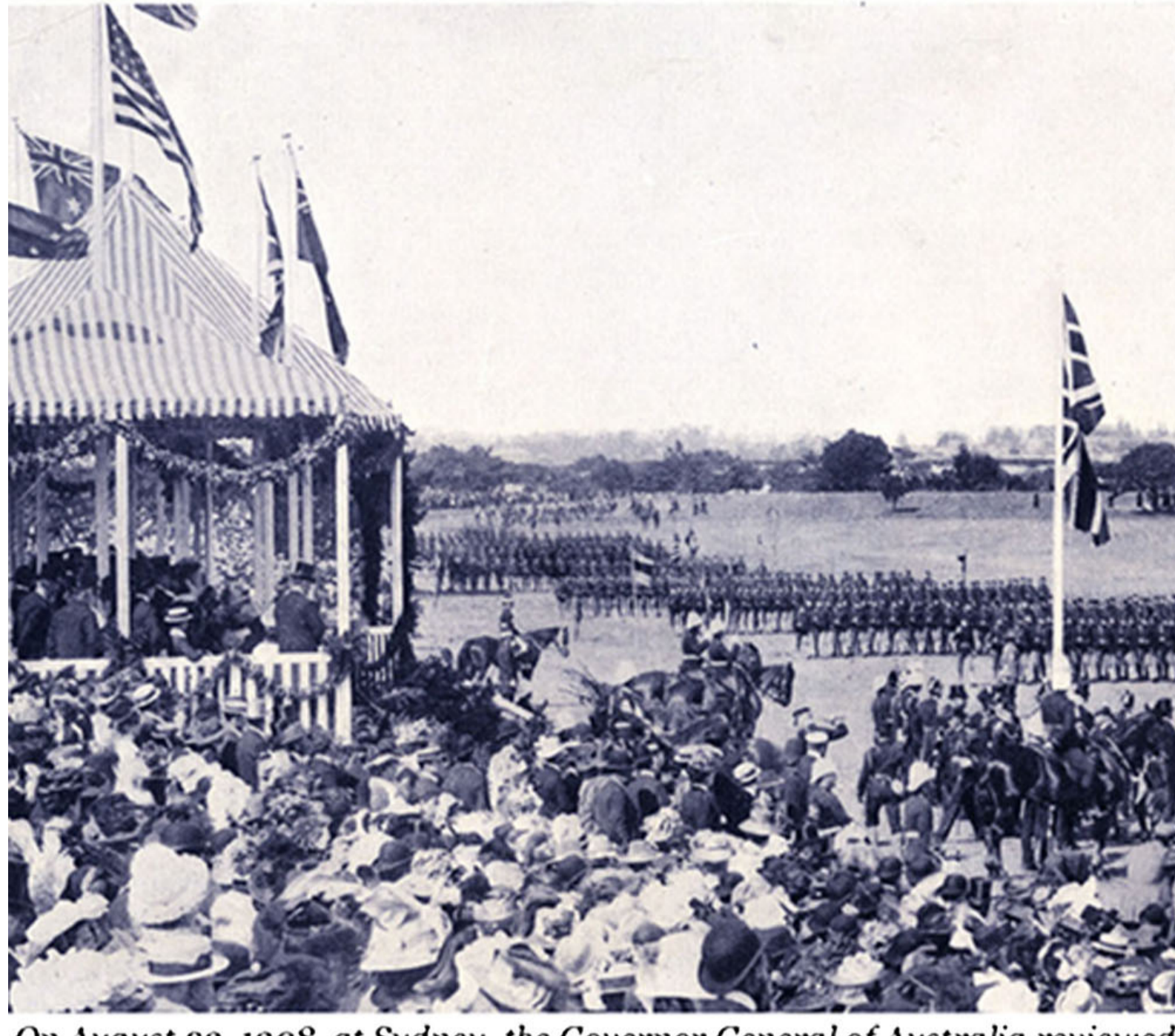


# The Growth of the Marine Corps

By ARCHIBALD HENDERSON



On August 23, 1908, at Sydney, the Governor General of Australia reviewed the regiment of marines from the U.S. battleship fleet. In the marching column were American and British bluejackets and marines and British and Australian soldiers. Today many of the men who took part in that holiday event are fighting the Hun together in France.

**E**VERY AMERICAN high school boy knows that "All Gaul is divided into three parts," and every American who is interested in the defense of his country should know that the armed forces of the United States are likewise divided into three parts, the Army, the Navy and the Marine Corps. The soldiers of the Army fight on the land and the sailors of the Navy fight on the sea, but the marine partakes of the characteristics of both soldier and sailor and is equally at home in the fighting afloat or ashore.

Writing from the western battle front in France Mr. Henri Bazin, the well known war correspondent of the *London Graphic*, recently paid this tribute to the marine: "Since my contact with the American Expeditionary Forces in France, dating as it does in officially accredited fashion from the June day of 1917 that the first contingents set foot upon the soil of this war-torn republic, I have formed, both subconsciously and deliberately, closer relations with some units than others. Standing first and foremost among these preferences are the Soldiers of the Sea—the Marines."

That this high opinion of the American Marine is shared by many of his comrades in the sister services and by civilian admirers as well is attested by numerous official dispatches and reports and by frequent comment in the public press, and Congress has added its approval by more than doubling the strength of the corps.

The Act of Congress making naval appropriations for the present fiscal year carries a proviso increasing the Marine Corps from its permanent legal enlisted strength of seventeen thousand and four hundred to a temporary war strength of seventy-five thousand and five hundred with a proportionate increase in commissioned and warrant officers and the ad-

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Small arms practice is a hobby of the marines, and their record in countless rifle matches is a brilliant one. Nor is excellence confined to a few crack shots, for practically all marines shoot well.

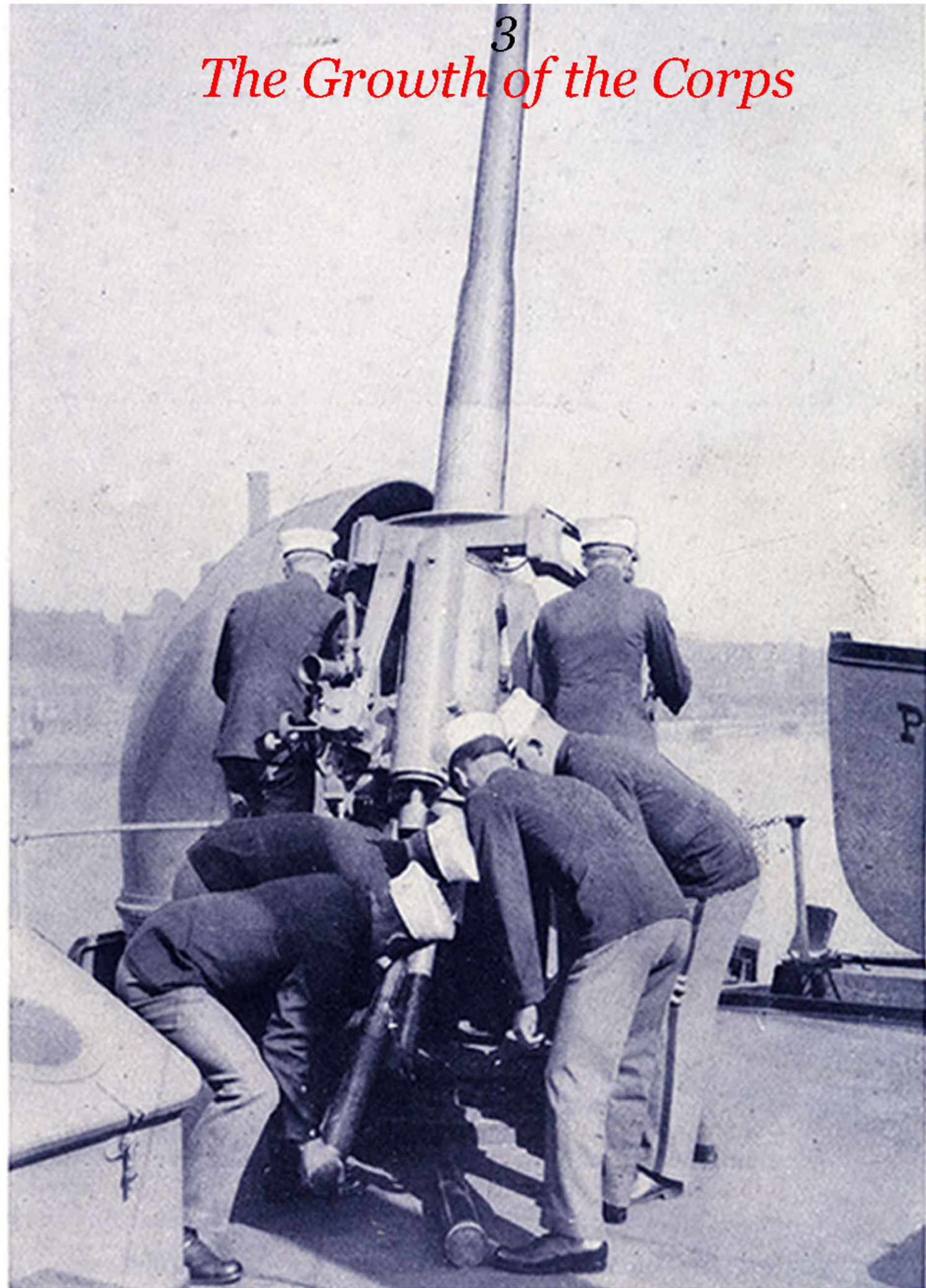
dition of two major generals and six brigadier generals. At the beginning of hostilities with Germany Congress, by an act approved May 22, 1917, authorized a temporary increase of the enlisted strength of the corps to thirty thousand with a proportionate increase in the different grades of officers below the rank of lieutenant colonel.

The effect of the recent act will be to make the "Soldiers of the Sea" into quite a respectable sized little army which, in addition to all of the many duties required under the Navy Department, will be able to send a division to fight with the American Expeditionary Force in France. The marines have formed a part of this force since it first landed in France in 1917, and proudly boast that they were the "first to land in France," thus keeping up their traditional slogan, "First to Fight," a phrase rightly earned by early participation in every war, great and small, in which the United States has been engaged from 1775 up to the date of our entry into the present world war.

Published tables give the maximum strength of a typical infantry division as approximately 28,000 officers and men. under the command of a major general, such a division being composed of three infantry brigades, each commanded by a brigadier general, together with the necessary troops of the Medical and Supply Departments, but this strength may be varied to suit the ever changing conditions of war. In practically all of the modern armies the division is the standard administrative and tactical unit of organization upon which the whole military structure is founded. Divisions are in turn united into army corps and these corps finally combined into field armies containing in proper proportion all of the various arms of the service required for the efficient conduct of war; infantry, artillery, cavalry, aviation corps, signal corps, hospital and medical units, transportation and supply trains and personnel, communication troops, railroad personnel, gas and flame divisions and tank regiments.



In large armies the personnel for the



different arms and departments and corps are especially enlisted and trained for each organization, but in the Marine Corps, owing to the varied nature of the services required of it both afloat and ashore, and its relatively small size as compared to a fully organized army, it has been necessary to train officers and men in the duties of many arms of the service. Thus the very necessities of his life have molded the marine into the all around fighting man, as Kipling aptly puts it, "soldier and sailor too." This requires a careful selection in recruiting, adds greatly to the attractiveness of the service to the adventurous spirit of youth and engenders an esprit de corps that makes mightily for efficiency and discipline. As one old sergeant of marines stated it, "the life may have its ups and downs but it's never monotonous."

The assertion frequently made that the Marine Corps is the oldest branch of the United States service is based upon the fact that the Second Continental Congress, sitting at Philadelphia on the 10th of November, 1775, passed a resolution reading as follows:



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*“Resolved, That two battalions of Marines be raised consisting of one colonel, two lieutenant-colonels, two majors, and other officers, as usual in other regiments; that they consist of an equal number of privates with other battalions; that particular care be taken that no person be appointed to offices, or enlisted into said battalions, but such as are good seamen, or so acquainted with maritime affairs as to be able to serve to advantage by sea when required; that they be enlisted and commissioned to serve for and with the present war with Great Britain and the colonies, unless dismissed by order of Congress; that they be distinguished by the names of the First and Second Battalions of American Marines.”*

These marine battalions were evidently modeled after the British Marines and, as a matter of fact, as early as 1740 three regiments of British Colonial Marines had been raised in the colonies for service afloat or ashore, and their Colonel-Commandant was Colonel Spotiswood, a Virginia gentleman of considerable military experience.

The authorization of the marine battalions was followed by the establishment of a Colonial Navy and the Continental Army later grew out of a consolidation of the troops from the different colonies under the command of General George Washington.

These first American marines served throughout the Revolution aboard ship and on shore as well and were frequently mentioned for bravery and gallantry. It is interesting to note that even at this early date they were styled “the web-footed soldiers” since they were at home in a fight either on terra firma or upon the sea, and that their picturesque uniform combined the green colors of the colonial riflemen with the white commonly worn by sailors at that date. This uniform for officers consisted of a green coat faced and slashed with white, the skirts turned back to show the white lining, a silver epaulette on the right shoulder and silver buttons; a white waistcoat edged with green; white breeches with green stripes; black gaiters and shoes, and the three cornered cocked hat of the



*392 Marines were awarded the Navy Cross during the course of W.W. I.*

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period.

Through the century and a half that has passed since their creation the American Marines have worn many different styles of uniform, but their winter field uniform of today of forestry green would appear to be a return to first principles, although the modern uniform is sombre and devoid of the facings and bright decorations that made them conspicuous in 1776.



After the close of the Revolution the army was disbanded and the navy abolished and with the latter the marines ceased to exist. In 1798 the necessities for a military and naval establishment became imperative and Congress passed the laws authorizing such action, that for an army being the first, followed on the 30th of April, 1798, by an act authorizing a Navy Department, and on the 11th of July, 1798, by an act establishing a Marine Corps to consist of a major-commandant, four captains, sixteen first lieutenants, twelve second lieutenants, forty-eight sergeants, forty-eight corporals, thirty-two drummers and fifers and seven hundred and twenty privates.

This was the beginning of the present Marine Corps and the law provided that officers and men might be detailed for service aboard the ships of the navy or on shore at naval establishments, or that they might be transferred by order of the President to the army for service at forts and garrisons or for other duty on shore, provisions practically the same as those in effect today.

During the War with Tripoli, 1801-1805, carried on by the Navy for the suppression of the so-called Barbary pirates, the marines took an active part aboard ship and also ashore with landing parties, one of the most important of the latter being the storming and capture of the fortress of Derne, officially chronicled as the first occasion upon which the Stars and Stripes was hoisted over a captured fortress of the Old World.

In 1809 the corps was increased to a strength of fourteen hundred officers and



*One of the many  
Marine patches of  
the U.S. 2nd Division*

men with a lieutenant colonel commandant at its head, and it fought through the War of 1812 at approximately that strength. In this war detachments of the Marine Corps took part in every sea fight from that between the U.S.S.

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*President* and  
H.M.S. *Belvidera* on  
June 23rd, 1812, to  
the one between the  
U.S.S. *Hornet* and  
H.M.S. *Penguin* on  
the 23rd of March,  
1815, the last action  
of the war. The  
marines also served

SEA POWER

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The corps makes a specialty of establishing advanced bases. This squad is drilling at a naval gun landed in the tropics.

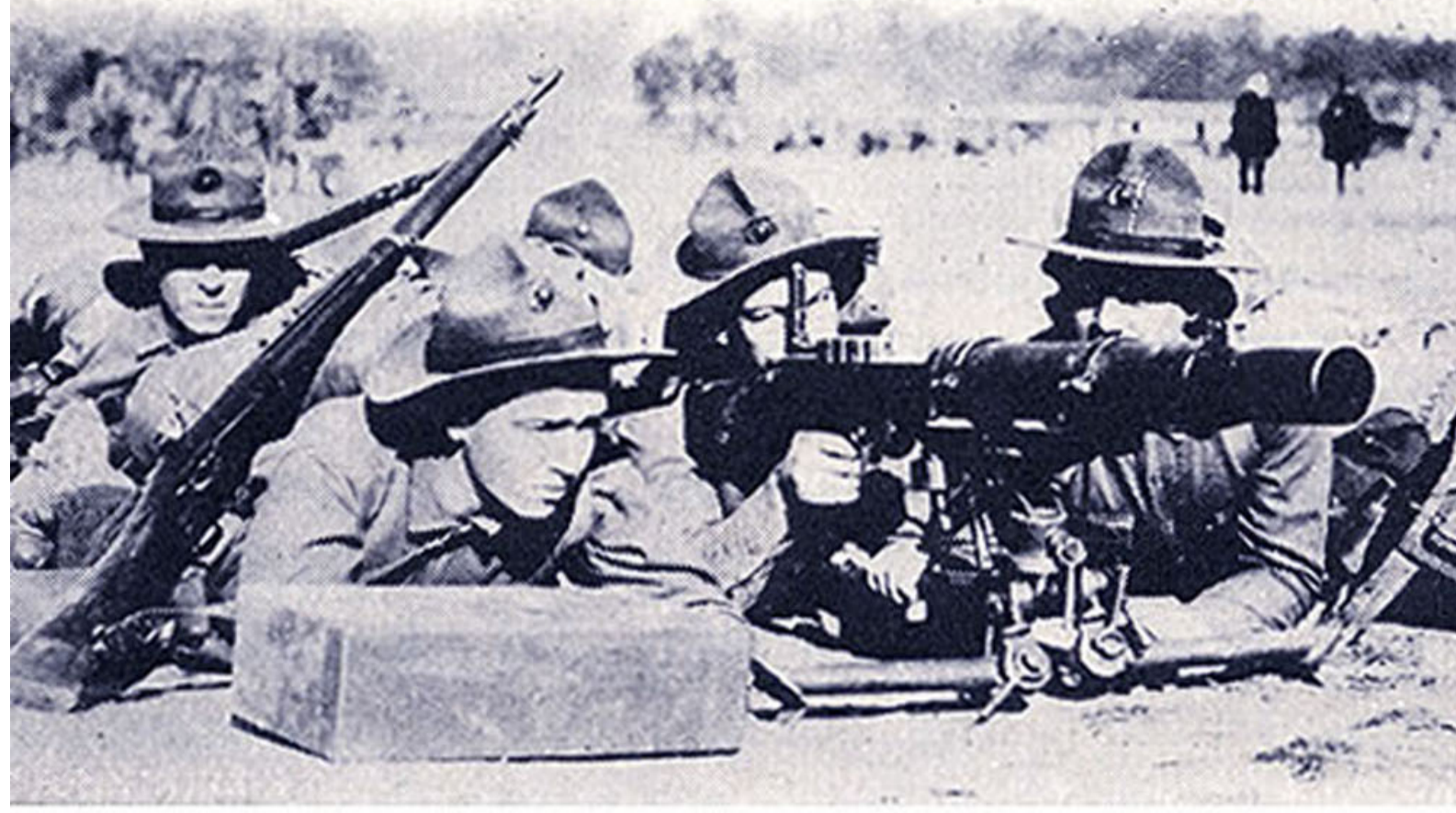
on shore with the Army, notably at the battle of Bladensburg, August 24, 1814, which preceded the capture of Washington by the British under General Ross, and at the battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815, the last land engagement of the war.

During the operations against the hostile Indian tribes in Florida, 1836 to 1842, known as the Seminole War, the marines served afloat with the Navy and on shore with the Army and suffered numerous casualties. In 1834 the Commandant of the corps was given the rank of colonel.

During the Mexican War, 1846-1848, the marines attached to the Pacific Squadron under Commodore Sloat took part with the sailors in many landing expeditions on the coast of California and Mexico, while those attached to the ships of the Gulf Squadron took part in similar operations on the east coast of Mexico. A battalion of marines was attached to the Army of Occupation under the command of Major General Winfield Scott, which landed at Vera Cruz, marched overland to Mexico City and terminated the war by the investment and capture of that capital.

In the assault on the Castle of Chapultepec, which dominated the city, the marines were assigned the advance position in the storming party, an action which was perpetuated by inscribing upon the colors of the corps the motto, "From Tripoli to the Halls of Montezuma." Later this motto was replaced on the corps' colors by the motto of the corps "Semper Fidelis," but the original

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The marine takes kindly to work with the machine gun. Indeed, any kind of a shooting iron appeals to him. This squad are at drill with a Lewis gun.

idea is still retained as the theme of the Marines' Hymn,

"From the Halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli,

We have fought our country's battles on the land and on the sea."

During the Civil War the marines served aboard the ships of the navy in all of the principal naval engagements and landing expeditions and battalions of marines serving with the army took part in many of the battles on land, and after the close of the war the corps consisted of two thousand men under a colonel commandant. From 1867 to 1876 the commandant held the rank of brigadier general, but the opening of the War with Spain in 1898 found it commanded by a colonel commandant and with a strength of two thousand men and seventy-five officers. To provide men urgently needed for the ships and shore stations of the Navy Congress increased the corps to an enlisted strength of 3,073 with additional officers in the lower grades and gave the commandant the rank of brigadier general.

The services performed by the marines in the War with Spain aboard the ships of the Atlantic and Asiatic Fleets and in the defense of the naval base at Guantanamo, Cuba, won added laurels for the old corps and recognition by Congress in the shape of a provision in the Naval Personnel Act of March 3, 1899, authorizing an increase to two hundred and eleven officers and six thousand enlisted men.

The next eighteen years were active ones for the marines; the results of the War with Spain brought added responsibilities to the United States with the new dependencies in the Atlantic and Pacific, and the marines were frequently called upon to sail at a moment's notice on expeditions to protect American interests abroad or to guard the lives and

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properties of Americans and foreigners during revolutions and disorders in other countries.

These disturbances are of such recent date as to require no detailed description but they served to give both officers and men the training in the field under war conditions which kept the fighting edge keen. Among them may be enumerated the Philippine Insurrection, 1899 to 1903, the defense of the foreign legations at Peking, China, and the expedition which relieved the siege of Peking during the Boxer Revolution of 1900, the Panama Revolutions of 1902 and 1903, the Second Intervention in Cuba, 1906 to 1909, the Nicaraguan expedition in 1912, the Vera Cruz expedition in 1914, the Haitian expedition in 1915, the Santo Domingo expedition in 1916, and the expeditions incident to unsettled conditions in Mexico between 1911 and 1917.

In order to meet the requirements of the growing navy and to provide officers and men for these constantly recurring expeditions Congress from time to time added to the authorized number of officers and enlisted men, adding approximately eight hundred men in each of the years 1902, 1903 and 1908, and in the latter year raising the commandant to the rank of major general.

The law of August 29, 1916, which practically reorganized the whole naval service, increased the permanent establishment of the Marine Corps to approximately fifteen thousand enlisted men officered by nearly six hundred commissioned officers, including four brigadier generals of the line and one at the head of each of the three staff departments, and forty warrant officers, the warrant officer grades of marine gunner and quartermaster clerk being created to correspond with the grades of gunner and pay clerk in the Navy. This law also authorized the President to increase the enlisted strength to seventeen thousand four hundred, with a proportionate increase in officers, in case of national emergency requiring the country to be put into a complete state of preparedness for war, which action was taken by the President after the entry of this country into the war.

This short historical outline of the services performed by the marines from 1775 to the present day shows how they have won their efficiency as a fighting force and their popularity with the people by hard service on the sea and on shore in many lands.

The service is recruited, like the other branches of the naval establishment, by voluntary enlistment and the standard is kept high, as befits a corps whose duties are so manifold. After enlisting the recruits go for a course of intensive preliminary training to one of the two Recruit Depots, located at Mare Island,



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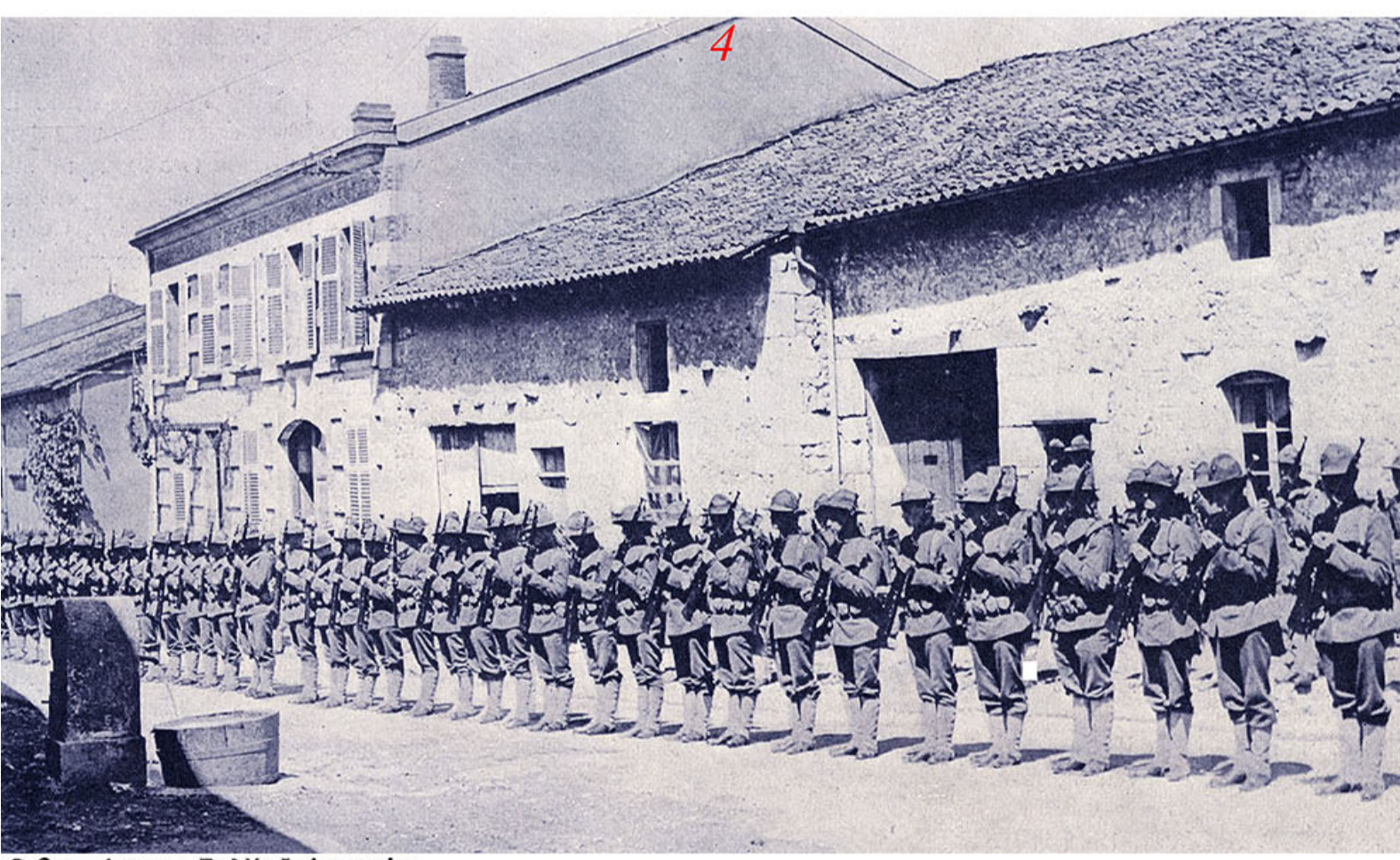
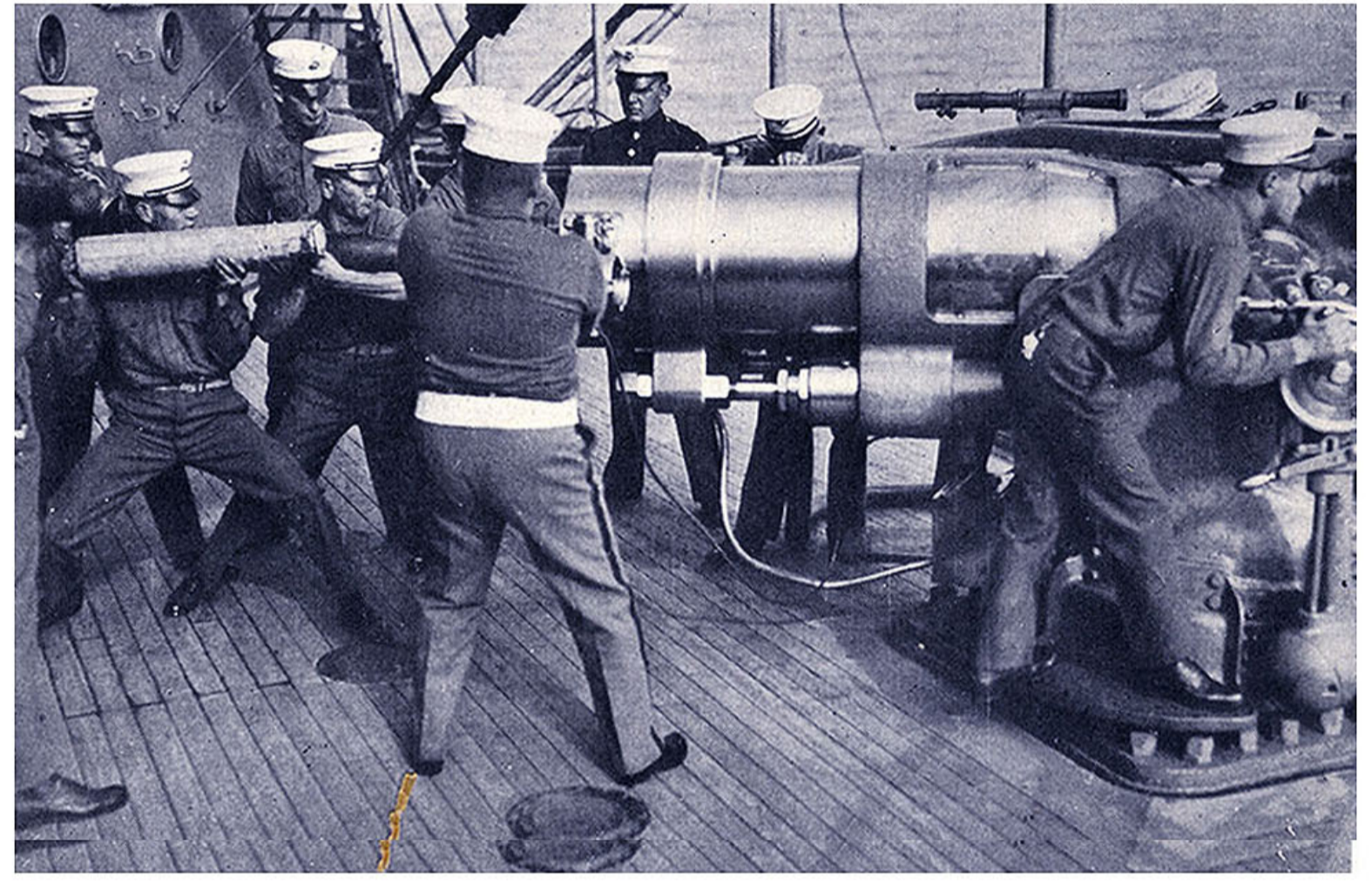
California, and Paris Island, South Carolina. After finishing the course at the recruit depot the recruit is transferred to one of the barracks located at each navy yard and station or he is sent to the Marine Corps Training Camp at Quantico, Virginia, where the training embraces almost everything that a soldier can learn short of actual war service. Then he is ready for assignment to a battalion for foreign service or to sea duty with the Marine Detachment aboard one of the battleships or cruisers of the active fleet.

The activities of the marines on shore duty embrace almost every branch of the soldier's profession: infantry, machine guns, field artillery, siege artillery, coast artillery, signal corps, aviation and even cavalry, for in China and the West Indies well equipped mounted detachments have done efficient work, thus proving that the "horse marine" is no joke. On the sea he works on deck alongside of the sailor, mans the anti-aircraft guns and guns of six-inch caliber and smaller which form what is known

**[Not]** (Continued on page 66)



You've heard the old jokes about the horse marines? Here is a mounted detachment of our sea soldiers in Peking.



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Inspection this time is not aboard ship, but in the streets of a town "Somewhere in France."

Soon after this photograph was taken they proved their mettle on the enemy.



The marine guard of a battleship formed for inspection. Has anyone ever seen a slouchy marine? "There ain't