

Why Colors Are Carried

Why does a regiment have colors? This question has been asked time and again by newly enlisted men.

Why is there so much solemnity about ceremonies in which the colors play the leading part?

Authorities tell us that it is most probable that as soon as men began to collect for common purposes "some kind of a conspicuous object was used as the symbol of the common sentiment for the rallying of the common forces." The records that we have from the beginning of civilization confirm this view. In Egyptian, Syrian or Jewish history the story is the same—the ensign had its place and its purpose. So with the Persians, the Greeks and the Romans. Sometimes the ensign took one form, sometimes another, but always it was felt that there was need of a conspicuous object to rally and inspire.

Colors Not Modern

In the song of Solomon (Chap. 6 verse 10) there is a reference to regimental colors which is very frequently quoted and is as follows: "Terrible as an army with banners," showing that the regimental standards served a purpose for them.

There is its service in symbolism. It is a service that has entered largely into the calculations of great military commanders. Honors that are bestowed, whose symbols in field service are little strips of ribbon of no intrinsic value, are prizes that the soldier covets. He would brave the supreme sacrifice for the ribbon that would tell of his valor, and it is not all vanity. It has a reflex that enters largely into the soldier's reckoning. The fact that he once dared to die, as the ribbon proclaimed, would spur him on to nobler effort; would transform his weakness into strength if ever his courage faltered. The decoration, the ribbon or the medal—both—minister to and reward the individual.

The symbolism of the colors is larger by far and its influence is of the highest importance with regard to the morale of the troops.

In the olden days of more primitive warfare, commanding generals often seized the colors and rallied their troops about them. The Archduke Charles, at Aspern in 1805, led his untired troops to their last assault while carrying the colors in his own hand. In the first battle of Bull Run, General Joseph Johnston, with raw troops that were facing demoralization, rallied his men about him by taking the colors himself. In the battle of Prague, Marshal Schwerin went to his death bearing the colors.

American Colors at the Front

The modern practice for a time was to leave the colors behind so as to reduce visibility. This dates from the battle of Isandhlwana in 1879 when two gallant young lieutenants met their death protecting the colors. But, in the Russo-Japanese war both armies often went into action with their colors because of the influence of the National emblem on the troops, and any one who has read closely the record of the great European conflict—in which America is now participating—knows of the frenzy of joy that swept over Paris when captured standards were exhibited. Recently an American artillery regiment sent its colors to the main advance lines and asked a French officer to certify in pen and ink on the colors themselves the fact that they had been at the front. The signature of this French officer and his certification is a trophy for which every American expeditionary unit strives. The influence of the baptized colors will be tremendous.

In olden times, the regimental colors bore the arms of the Knight or Lord who claimed the devotion of the individual soldier. No such Knight or temporal Lord claims the devotion of American troops and the regimental colors bear the National Coat-of-Arms and the designation of the regiment.

The Infantry was the first to replace its standard with the colors. For the Cavalry was much later still commanded by the nobleman, or the man of gentle birth, who claimed the fealty of the individual soldier. The Infantry was the first to serve the larger claim—the claim of the whole people.

BIG PRISON FOR SLACKERS

Work is to be started immediately upon a prison cantonment at Leavenworth, Kan., to accommodate 3,000 persons, of which will be lodged slackers, spies, alien enemies and other war offenders. The building will cost \$236,000.

GERMANY CAN MUST WILL BE BEATEN

Bishop Luther B. Wilson, who recently returned from France, brought this message from General Pershing:

"There is no ground for the heresy that Germany cannot be beaten. GERMANY CAN BE BEATEN. Germany MUST be beaten. Germany WILL be beaten."

AMERICAN SOLDIER TELLS HIS MOTHER HE'S HAVING GRAND TIME IN FRANCE

"I hope you are not worried about me. I never was having a better time in my life and am always seeing and doing new things."

This is not from the journal of a school boy's holiday. It is from a letter written by an American soldier, a man in the Rainbow Division. He is Joseph McKinley, Jr., whose father is a New York Police Captain. Originally he was enlisted in the 7th New York but was transferred to the new 155th, the basis of which is the Fighting 69th.

His letter also says: "Dear Mother:—This is the first opportunity I have had to write to you. In the first place, I have been on the go all of the time since I left you. Everything and everybody is on the go all of the time."

"There is no stop to anything, but I nevertheless have suffered very little in this long journey. I have not lost a night's sleep nor one meal, except when I was seasick. I was sick twice and, believe me, some sickness. "I think you will have to come over here to live when the war is over, for I dread that one awful trip across the ocean back home."

"The only trouble is that I have money but no cigarettes. The cigarettes they sell here are terrible. They are either English or French make, and nothing like—(deleted by censor)."

"I had a safe and speedy journey across and I will write often. I will close now as I hear the brass call blowing."

"Your loving son, Joe."

BEST OF CARE WILL BE GIVEN U. S. SOLDIERS BY Y. M. C. A. OVER THERE

It is well understood now that the American army abroad will set a new standard for the care of other armies. America does not look upon her soldiers as mere food for cannon. They are, as President Wilson so aptly put it, soldiers of freedom. The thoughtful consideration for their welfare will be projected right into the front trenches. Never will the man in olive drab feel that he is out of touch with the homeland.

The \$50,000,000 subscribed for the Y. M. C. A. is the soldiers' own fund. The Y. M. C. A. is merely the steward of it.

Every week Trench and Camp hopes to be able to tell of new plans for spending this money in the interest of the soldiers.

Just glance over this list of things that are even now on their way to France as well as to the camps and cantonments: Chocolate, candy, syrups, writing paper, motion picture machines, baseballs and bats, footballs, volley balls and quoits, portable electric lighting outfits, ink, pens, pins.

Day after day throngs of salesmen from all over the United States are at the Y. M. C. A. purchasing headquarters. The Y. M. C. A. men are buying at unbelievably low figures.

The whole output of one lemon-drop factory has been contracted for. It will cost about \$120 a month to ship them to France, but they will be shipped. This is but one, and a minor one, of the problems of transport that must be arranged. The quartermaster corps of the Y. M. C. A. is no mean institution. Already hundreds of tons of Y. M. C. A. supplies are ready for shipment. It is expected that a large ship will have to be placed at the disposal of the association.

With that self-sacrifice that has characterized the Y. M. C. A. effort throughout, the secretaries bound for France have been giving up their trunk space to supplies for the men. Much has been transported in that way.

Headquarters are rapidly being multiplied in France and when the larger units of the new army arrive they will find the Y. M. C. A. ready to resume the work so well done in the home training camps.

French Give High Praise To U. S. Engineers at Cambrai

Tribute to the gallant conduct of the American army engineers overseas was paid by the French Government in an official communication containing the following paragraph:

"We must remark upon the conduct of certain American soldiers, pioneers and workmen on the military railroad in the sector of the German attack west of Cambrai on November 30. They exchanged their picks and shovels for rifles and cartridges and fought with the English. Many died thus bravely, arms in hand, before the invader. All helped to repulse the enemy. There is not a single person who saw them at work who does not render warm praise to the coolness, discipline, and courage of these improvised combatants."

All hail to the Engineers! Engaged in the perilous work of road building and of projecting new railroad lines right up to the latest advances of General Byng's army they were threatened by a German turning movement.

Shovels and picks were dropped and rifles were seized.

The bravery of our American Engineers, suddenly become combatant troops, thrilled even those accustomed by years of observation to deeds of valor.

The American soldier can fight!

He has won the admiration of his Allies and, by hard-hitting, by playing the game according to the rules, he has shown the people of Potdam that he is a lover of strength to the forces of freedom.

There are regiments of stevedores over there, too. Strictly speaking they are not combatant troops. But let the need arise and they will acquit themselves like men, like Americans.

Berlin papers please copy.

RE-READING BIBLE

General Allenby, commander of the British forces in Palestine, is doing something more than conducting a successful military campaign against the Turks. He is driving people to re-read their Bibles to refresh their memories of Boersheba, Dan and Gaza. Like another Samson, he has pulled down the gates of this last-named town.

That Rookie from the 13th Squad.

By P. L. Crosby.



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