

The Mount Airy News.

VOL. XXXIX

MOUNT AIRY, NORTH CAROLINA, THURSDAY, JUNE 7, 1917.

NO. 47

FAST MOLDING FUTURE COMMANDERS OF MEN OUT OF RAW MATERIAL

Men Training For Officers to Lead Armies in France Embrace Many Professions.

Chattanooga, Tenn., June 2.—"Advance and thrust! Front pass and lunge! Re-tire and thrust! Rest!" Company No. 116, Reserve Officers' Training Camp, brings its rifles to the ground, and wipes its streaming brows, lamenting. Bayonet exercise is something to test the stamina of hardened regulars, to say nothing of a collection of college boys, clerks, lawyers, merchants, newspaper men, et cetera, such as compose the membership of the Fort Oglethorpe training camp, and, for that matter, all the others. To stick to the undiluted truth, there are only 115 companies in the Georgia camp; but let this one be denominated No. 16, to avoid personalities.

At the command, "Rest," an average of perhaps 145 of the 150 men composing company 16 roll back their sleeves and note with relief that their wrist watches register 11:27. That means that the next command will be "Assemble," after which the company will be marched back to barracks to wash up for mess, which in this case would be dinner, at noon. A paragraph on one of the Chattanooga papers recently pulled one to the effect that this will be "no wrist-watch war." Obviously, he had not been to the officers' training camp, or he might have observed that that is precisely what it will be in so far as the equipment of the men is concerned. The reason is simple, but sufficient. The wrist is the only convenient place for a soldier to wear his watch. With the cartridge belt on, the watch pocket just below the waist band of the trousers is extremely difficult to get at. To wear the watch in the shirt pocket means that it is almost certain to be smashed the first time the company is ordered to advance by rushing, which necessitates falling flat to the ground at the end of the rush, and falling extremely quick, at that. Consequently, there are at least 10 wrist-watches in the camp for every one of the ordinary sort. It will be a wrist-watch war by a huge majority.

The Day's Routine

What the paragrapher meant, of course, was that it will be no war for mollycoddles, and in that he has the hearty and unanimous indorsement of the officers in charge of the training camp. The training, especially for the first five weeks, has been so designed that there will not be a weakling left among the future officers at the end of that period. It speaks volumes for the discrimination of the examining officers that after the first two weeks of grueling work only 50 men out of the 2,500 at the camp have succumbed.

To understand what that means, let us return to the mythical company 16, now back in the company street and dismissed. They turned out at 5:15 in the morning, and at 5:25 fell in for the first time. The occasion was "setting-up" exercises before breakfast—a strenuous 35 minutes in itself. Breakfast came at 6, in the mess hall opposite the company barracks, for each company is a separate entity, eating and sleeping to itself. After breakfast, the company street was "policed," that is to say, cleaned up from end to end. Beds also were made up and the barracks swept out. At 7 the day's work started and it was a continuous drive from that moment on. The mornings are given over to drill in squads, platoons and companies, to bayonet and signaling exercises and to instruction in the use of small arms. Not Hercules himself could go through the morning without feeling the strain, and company 16 came in pretty well fag-

ged—that is to say, everybody except the company commander, detailed from the regular army, who is always fresh as a daisy, although he goes through work practically as severe as any man in the ranks. For endurance a regular army man has Hercules backed off the map.

At 10 Comes "Taps."

But after dinner there will be a blessed hour, an entire 60 minutes, during which company 16 will not have a thing to do, except learn a few pages of the Infantry Drill Regulations, the Manual of Interior Guard Duty, the Plattsburg Manual, maybe a bit of the Signalling Manual, and glance at a few other textbooks for outside reading. At 1:30 the commander will take them off to some shady spot where he will proceed to find out how lamentably little they have gathered from this course of study. After some two hours of cross-examination, No. 16 will gather itself together for a hike, a pleasant little stroll of six to eight miles in a couple of hours; or if the lesson hour runs close to 4 o'clock, the company will be taken back to the parade ground and put through more setting-up exercises. After 4:30 there is nothing to do but take a bath before supper; but as there is always a formidable waiting list at the bath houses, it sometimes becomes an exciting race to get back before 5:30 when mess call sounds for supper. At 7 the whole regiment is gathered together and somebody makes a speech—"general conference," it is called, and often it is the most valuable part of the day's work. After the conference, it is study more books until 9:30, when tattoo sounds; and at 10 comes taps.

Decidedly, it is no life for a sybarite; an yet you might make a long day's journey without finding a more cheerful place than company 16 barracks. That is, you might, unless you had chanced to visit in on the day after the company had been given its second shot of the anti-typhoid serum. Then you would have found a congregation of misanthropes of the deepest dye. All the world was wrong that day. Company 16's arms ached; its heads ached; its backs ached; its commander was transformed from a pleasant, unbending, gentlemen, into a monster of incredible viciousness; and the kaiser was sure to win the war. Anti-typhoid serum is powerful stuff, especially the second dose, which is the worst of all. It is the essence of gloom, a distillation of despair; and the man recently inoculated is a man bereft of friends, a man with no joy in life. His last dog is dead.

One Blue-eyed Doctor

The reputation of the serum went before it, and many and various as autumn leaves were the excuses that company 16 had framed up before its visit to the hospital. Few members there were so lacking in ingenuity that they were not provided with what was, in their own estimation, a perfectly legitimate excuse to present to the doctor for not taking the dose. But company 16 did not know what it is to go up against an army surgeon, especially a surgeon with a bright blue eye, a merry, twinkling blue eye, but withal the most incredulous, the most skeptical, the most sophisticated blue eye in the world. Alas for company 16! The blue eyed doctor had heard each and every one of its 150 excuses so often that he could have repeated them as easily as the multiplication table; and his answer to each was the same—a jab of the needle and a dab of iodine. Company 16 went to the hospital with high hopes; it came back in a ruined community.

But fortunately 24 hours sees the end of the worst of the anti-typhoid treatment, unless there is something radically wrong with the man before he takes it. Company 16 begins to take interest in life again the third

day. Its recuperation can be measured by the company cook better than by anybody else. The first day he can count on having perhaps 200 meals eaten, instead of 450; but after that he had better count on at least 500 to 600 ordinary meals.

The government has been generous to its future officers in the matter of rations, as well as in other things; but its greatest piece of generosity is in the officers it has detailed as instructors. Company 16 may have its own opinion about that, for the instructors are selected from among the most efficient men in the service, and having a particularly efficient man in command doesn't always add to a company's happiness in the beginning. Especially when it comes to that most obnoxious duty of a soldier's life, inspection, is this apparent. Woe then to the man who has involuntarily carried the careless methods of easy-going civilian life into camp with him. Verily his sin shall find him out, and not only that, but all the company shall know of it, and comment thereon with freedom and sarcasm.

Fine Type of Men

Nevertheless, the man in the ranks of No. 16 stands in no danger of anything worse than good-natured ragging, for his comrades are gentlemen for his comrades are gentlemen to a man. Here again the discrimination of the examining officers is proved, for a finer type of man than the average student at the officers' training camp America does not produce. Collegians of the years 1915-16 and 17 predominate, but every profession is represented—every profession, that is, except medicine, for the doctors needs no training of the sort given at Fort Oglethorpe. One man discovered in the course of half an hour's investigation half a dozen lawyers, a score of newspaper men—for some unexplained reason the fourth estate has contributed, in proportion to numbers, perhaps more than any other trade—three teachers, an architect, a biologist recently engaged in research work in a government laboratory, several Associated Press telegraph operators, a college professor entitled to wear half the alphabet behind his name, and an ethnologist, just returned from a six years' tour of the world, made in an endeavor to prove that Egyptian civilization had declined before a mulatto Pharaoh ascended the throne. He claims to have proved it.

But the college boys predominate. It is the youth of America that is going out to try conclusions with the kaiser, as is proved by the innumerable meetings of alumni of every college in the three states, and the singing of college songs every time more than two or three are gathered together. Some body garnered tremendous applause on the first night by perverting one of the college ditties to such effect that the last lines ran:

"Oh, we'll twist the kaiser's tail
And we'll ride him on a rail,
Carolina, Caroli-i-i-ina."

No Cliques and Castes.

But it is to be doubted whether the promised mayhem and indignities visited on his imperial majesty were responsible for the ear-splitting yell that went up as much as the single word, "Carolina." More than two-thirds of the camp is ready to cheer at the word—in fact, just aching for an opportunity. At a general conference the other night a speaker made reference to the fact that the medical records of the Confederacy show that 30 per cent of the casualties suffered during the war between the sections by the south were borne by the one state of North Carolina, and the shout that came up must have been heard in Roanokeville.

Headquarters, however, is not particularly anxious to emphasize any sort of local pride. Great pains has been taken to distribute the men from

each state and in fact from each of the principal cities, throughout the camp. If a group of men came in together it was a certainty that each of them would land in a different company. Under such a system there is small danger of the formation of cliques and castes.

Greensboro's 40-odd men consequently are scattered all down the line and it is only by chance that they encounter each other at all. How it fares with your neighbor there is no way of knowing, unless he does something so conspicuous as to attract the attention of his whole company, and so to furnish food for camp gossip. It is commonly reported, however, that Greensboro is conspicuous, even in the North Carolina group of giants, for the bigness of its men. There are 10 who together tip the scales at 1,750 pounds. The Tar Heels are by far the biggest men in the camp, take them as a whole.

That statement perhaps demands a little modification. The 10 Greensboro men weighed 1,750 pounds when they arrived in camp. It is perfectly safe to say that they do not weigh that now, nor anything like it. The whole command grows lean and lank, as the days go by; but where fat entered the men before, muscle is taking its place. They are growing hard.

Drill on Historic Snodgrass Hill

The regulars come over from Fort Oglethorpe and look with a humorous, not to say cynical, eye at the "Boy Scouts" as they call the cadets on account of the red, white and blue hatcord. It is not to be wondered at that the army enlisted men, in spite of their uniform courtesy to individuals, are not greatly impressed with the body of student officers as a whole. Company with the mathematical precision of a regular regiment drill, the formations of the "Boy Scouts" are pretty ragged. But they are getting better every day. There is a little more smoothness of alignment, a little more snap, a little less hesitation, every time company 16 forms. The company commander almost daily expresses his wonder that anybody should ever have suspected the members of the company of the ability to become soldiers, but down in his heart he is getting a little spark of pride in his men, in spite of the seasons of despair that occasionally seize him.

For there is one thing about the training camp that counts enormously, although it may not show in the beginning—every man is working his hardest. After all, these men mean business, and it can be seen more plainly every day. The college songs, the laughter, and the endless joking, are only the effervescence of youth. Down at bottom nobody forgets what the gathering means for a moment.

The parade ground where the companies do their daily drilling is Snodgrass field, the comparatively level space at the foot of Snodgrass hill, the eminence that General Wilder held in September, 1865, when Wilder's superior, Thos. by has stand was saving the remains of Rosecrans' defeated army during the battle of Chickamauga. If the Confederates could have taken that hill, they might have destroyed the Federal army. They knew it, and the fury of their repeated assaults is attested by the fact that when the fight was over their dead were so thick on Snodgrass hill that a man might have walked from its foot to its top on their bodies.

The companies that are now forming at the foot of that hill are made up of the grandsons of the Confederate dead. They lack the military technique, but they know who they are. None of them pretends to be much of a soldier as yet, but they can learn, and it would be little short of treason to America to doubt that they have the spirit that carried the gray line time and again up Snodgrass hill in that hopeless endeavor.

A HUNDRED THOUSAND TROOPS IN FRANCE BY THE TIME SNOW FALLS.

War Department Hopes to Send to France Before Winter Three Full Divisions of Guard Chosen from Entire Guard Strength.

Washington, June 2.—One hundred thousand regulars and national guardsmen in France by the time the snow falls.

With this slogan to inspire them, officials of the war department are bending every effort to devise schemes of intensive training under which the national guard organizations, which have already been summoned to the colors in three increments, beginning July 115, will be whipped into shape in the quickest possible time.

The hundred thousand figure, it is said, is a minimum figure for the number which the department expects to have across the water before winter sets in. The maximum will depend entirely upon the speed with which the guardsmen can be trained and the transportation facilities that are available.

The first expeditionary force of between 25,000 and 30,000 regulars, forming a division, which Major General Pershing was ordered to take to France at the earliest possible moment is being rapidly made ready for departure, although all details as to personnel of the forces chosen to go, and the date and place of departure, are being carefully withheld.

Other Increments Will Follow.

Following the sending of the first expedition, other increments will set sail, it is understood, as rapidly as they can be made ready and can be spared from the ranks of those organizations which must be kept in this country as a nucleus for the training of the selective draft conscription army.

The national guard organizations, it is understood will probably be sent in the order in which they perfect themselves. As the national guard of New York is acknowledged to be among the best trained of the militia organizations of the country, it is not improbable that they will be among the first to go.

The re-organization of the training camp plans, are necessary by the reduction in the number of cantonments to be built, will not interfere, it was said at the war department, with the training of the national guard units. There has been no countermanding of the orders to these organizations to assemble at their state mobilization camps July 15, July 25, and August 5, as their respective increments have been ordered to respond.

Under the plans being worked out these organizations will be given a certain amount of training at their state camps before going to the divisional training camps. At these camps, it is understood, the militia units will be classified according to their degree of fitness and the extent to which their ranks are filled up to the required strength.

Disregard Divisional Lines

Those best fitted, it is indicated, will be subjected to special training, occupying probably not more than a month, after which they will be sent abroad as transport facilities are available. The others will have to undergo longer training, and will be used in large part as training units for the selective draft conscripts. After the arrival of the various units in France—guardsmen as well as regulars—they will probably be given further training behind the lines before being sent to the front.

So anxious is the department that the militia organizations sent over will be the best trained of the lot, that it is not unlikely that in picking those to go the department will disregard the divisional lines set up for

training purposes and make up the expeditionary divisions out of the units selected from various training camps.

If possible the department hopes to be able to send over before winter three full divisions of guardsmen, or from 75,000 to 80,000 although, as explained, the maximum number will largely depend upon the speed with which the training goes on, and the success which the government meets in solving the problem of transports.

If the plans of the department work out smoothly the first units of the national army, as the troops of the selective draft are to be known, will be available for transportation to Europe by early spring, if the war lasts that long. British and French military experts here estimate that the war probably will go another three years.

Free Insurance and No Pensions.

Washington, June 2.—Plans for issuing \$4,000 free government insurance on the life of every American soldier and sailor during the war in lieu of pension, arrangements will be taken up next week by the council of national defense. A report prepared by Assistant Secretary Sweet, of the commerce department, ready to be submitted, urges that the insurance be provided through legislation before American troops are sent to France.

The defense council took up the question some weeks ago and turned the whole subject over to the department of commerce for investigation. The report now ready offers a long list of arguments showing the advantage of working out a compensation system before American lives are lost in the war.

The plans as prepared provides for a flat insurance of \$4,000 on the life of every officer and private in the military and naval service, to be paid to his beneficiaries without premiums. A government insurance bureau would handle the whole subject, and there would be provision for a system of insurance by which officers and men desiring to do so could take out amounts higher than \$4,000 free policy by paying premiums at peace rates.

The plan would provide also insurance for partial or total disability, the case of death the insurance would be paid in installments, whose amount would be determined by a government board.

Government officials are convinced the best way to dispose of the pension problem is to meet it before-hand. The history of the pension system since the Civil War has shown many abuses which it is hoped to avoid by providing insurance before the men are killed.

WOMEN GIVE OUT

Housework is Hard Enough When Healthy.

Every Mount Airy woman who is having backache, blue and nervous spells, dizzy headaches and kidney or bladder troubles, should be glad to heed this Mount Airy woman's experience:

Mrs. C. F. James, 257 S. Main St., Mount Airy, says: "My back often felt as though some one had driven a knife into it and after stooping, sometimes I couldn't straighten up. My kidneys were weak and caused me a great deal of misery. My nerves were in a very bad way and I couldn't stand the least excitement. I was run down in health and could hardly do my housework and often I had to stay in bed for several days at a time. A couple of boxes of Doan's Kidney Pills removed the pain in my back and made my kidneys act more regularly."

Price 50c at all dealers. Don't simply ask for a kidney remedy—get Doan's Kidney Pills—the same that Mrs. James had. Foster—Milburn Co., Props., Buffalo, N. Y.