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INSPECTION IN THE U.S. MARINE CORPS,
1775–1957
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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Samuel Nicholas, Commander of the Continental Marines, might have said it: "I'll be glad when this revolution is over so we all can learn how to be Marines." No, he didn't say these words, or at least no one overheard him; but the temptation must have been there. Samuel Nicholas, as a Captain and later a Major, commanded in name only. Save for the two occasions - the first raid on New Providence and the Trenton-Princeton campaign - when he personally led his men, Nicholas had little control over them.

Take, for example, the matter of recruiting. In the beginning, when the young patriots of Philadelphia were flocking to Tun Tavern, recruiters had been specifically ordered not to enlist deserters from the British Army or any person not American born unless the individual had a wife and family and was a "settled resident of the country."¹ Yet, within four years, Captain John Paul Jones took advantage of the alliance with France to enlist as Marines natives of that country who had never seen America.² Nor could anyone, not even Major Nicholas, adequately explain how William Murray, an Irishman loyal to the British Crown, came to be appointed sergeant of the Marine Guard aboard the frigate Alliance. The need for explanations arose when Murray was clapped in irons for helping to plan an intended mutiny.³

Another sore point was the matter of uniforms. The Continental Congress had prescribed a buff and green uniform for the Marines. Logic would demand that Major Nicholas see to it by frequent inspection and the back of his hand that his men turned out in buff and green. Such was not the case, for John Paul Jones garbed his Marines in red and white.⁴

Throughout the Revolution, Congress looked to the skippers of American fighting ships to set the standards for their men and to enforce them. While the officer in charge of the Marines might be charged with disciplining his force and preparing it for service, it was to their captain that the seagoing Marines looked for leadership. Besides showing in himself "a good example of honor and virtue" to his officers and men, the skipper had to be "very vigilant in inspecting the behavior" of his men "to discountenance and suppress all disolute, immoral, and disorderly practices, and also such as are contrary to the rules of discipline and obedience."⁵

In addition, one fairly formal inspection was required by regulations. This was an inspection of rations. Either the captain or an officer designated by him was to examine the bread and embalmed beef. If the former proved damp, it was to be "aired upon the quarter deck." As for the latter, he would take a look at the cask "and if any of the pickle be leaked out, ...have new made and put in and the cask made tight and secure."⁶ The sailing navy was no paradise for chow hounds.

As the Revolution drew to a close, the American Navy gradually disappeared from the sea and with it the battalion of Marines. Only three ships remained in commission by the spring of 1783. The last of these, the Alliance in which Sergeant Murray had done his perfidious work, was sold in 1785.⁷

The United States, however, was not long in discovering that in order to survive in a world infested with French privateers and Algerian pirates a navy was necessary. The existence of a Navy meant that a Marine Corps had to be created. Indeed, one of the principal justifications advanced by proponents of a Marine Corps was that the Marines already in service in ship detachments could be better disciplined in a central organization with one man, the Commandant, responsible for the whole. Congress passed the act establishing the Corps on 11 July 1798. The following day, William Ward Burrows assumed office as Major Commandant.⁸

Like Nicholas, Burrows was faced with the task of recruiting, paying, and supplying numerous, small ships' detachments. Although the law establishing the new Marine Corps provided only that the Commandant was authorized a staff in the event the Corps was called upon by the President to serve on land with the Army, Burrows managed to appoint an Adjutant, Quartermaster, and Paymaster - all to serve at Headquarters no matter how the Marines happened to be employed.⁹

The tenure of office of William Ward Burrows saw only the shadowy outline of an organized system of inspection. In October 1798, when recruiting activities along the East Coast became hopelessly enmeshed in red tape, he ordered his adjutant, 2d Lieutenant John L. Lewis, to "proceed to the Eastward, when, being on the spot, all will be rightly executed."¹⁰

More of a problem than recruiting troops was the juggling of the finances of the Corps. Paymaster or none, Burrows insisted that pay rolls, like all other paper work pertaining to Marines, should pass his personal scrutiny.¹¹ Alas, this practice availed him nothing, for at one time in his career as Commandant, Burrows was unable to account for \$9,428.55. Somehow he managed to amass this deficit in spite of the fact that he was required to submit each month to the Accountant of the Navy Department an account of his expenditures.¹²

As far back as 1803, the American Congressman was an inquisitive soul. Early that year Representative Joseph H. Nicholson of Maryland became curious about the duties of the Commandant. Needless to say, he penned a note to the Secretary of the Navy; and, naturally enough, he received a prompt, courteous, and complete reply. Principally, the Commandant was to deal with paper work - orders, reports, and routine correspondence. He also was responsible, though aided by the Paymaster, for the finances of the Corps. All requisitions and payments passed through him, and, most frightening of all,

he was held personally accountable for every penny. Finally, he was to "keep up the guards aboard ships..., and at navy yards; to superintend the discipline of the men on shore, and to see that all the arms are kept in a state of preservation."¹³ These last duties clearly imply some sort of system of inspection, but it is not likely that the Commandant himself left his desk very often. Judging from the volume and kind of correspondence surviving from Burrows' day, it seems that most of the actual inspecting was done by the officers in command of the various detachments. Headquarters exercised only the loosest kind of supervision.

Successor to Burrows and Commandant during the War of 1812 was a successful citizen of Philadelphia, Franklin Wharton, a businessman turned Marine. Affable but hardly dynamic, Wharton made one error in judgment which was to dog him for most of his career. In 1814, as the British advanced upon Washington, he rounded up a battalion of Marines, handed them over to his adjutant, Captain Samuel Miller, and sent them off to fight the Red Coats. Wharton did not accompany the task force; as a matter of fact, the Commandant was at Frederick, Maryland, when the victorious enemy strolled into Washington and burned the public buildings.¹⁴

Miller emerged from the campaign a genuine hero. At Bladensburg, Maryland, the captain had done a splendid job as a Navy and Marine contingent slugged away with the invaders.

Unfortunately, the rest of the American force melted away like snow in a blast furnace, so the gallantry of a few went for nothing. There were, however, those who thought that the "Hero of Bladensburg" was talking harder than he had fought. Whenever such an individual appeared on the horizon, Miller, a New Englander but an enthusiastic duelist, would get down his pistols and make ready to defend his honor.

In addition to acquiring a reputation at Bladensburg, the battling adjutant earned for his heroism a brevet promotion to the grade of major. Also, on 3 March 1817, he became the first Adjutant and Inspector in the history of the Corps.¹⁵

Not so fortunate was Franklin Wharton. His enemies began making all sorts of wild accusations concerning his alleged flight from Washington. Unlike Miller, the Commandant chose to ignore his detractors, referring to them as "that pigmy league for the members of which I shall ever entertain the most perfect contempt."¹⁶ He did not believe in dueling.

At Portsmouth, New Hampshire, an austere, young Brevet Major, Archibald Henderson, kept his ear cocked for the crack of pistols and the thud of falling bodies. He felt that an insult to the Commandant was an insult to the Corps. The least that Wharton could do was to put a pistol ball through someone's head. By the time that Major Miller took over as Adjutant and Inspector, it had become obvious that there would be no gun play. Henderson decided to take things into his own hands.

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A court martial would turn the trick. Either Wharton would be acquitted, and the Marine Corps vindicated; or he would be convicted, dismissed, and the organization purified. To remove the blemish, and possibly the Commandant, Henderson accused Wharton of, among other things, failure to lead his men in the field (neglect of duty) and refusal to demand satisfaction, preferably with a pistol, for the insults heaped upon him (conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman). At this point, Samuel Miller entered the fray, hurling at Wharton an accusation that the Commandant had failed to inspect his men - another example of neglect of duty.

No finer tribute to Wharton's character exists than the action of the court upon Henderson's charges. The notion that Wharton could be less than a gentleman must have struck these officers as ridiculous, for they pitched the charge into the waste basket.

The specification that the Commandant had failed to inspect adequately also crumbled to dust. Miller himself admitted that the defendant occasionally watched from the sidelines as the barracks detachment at Washington, D. C., paraded past and once in a while shouted instructions to the men. In addition, Major Richard Smith, in command of the New York barracks, testified that Wharton had twice visited him, "inquired into the discipline of the corps generally, and gave his instructions accordingly." This was deemed proof enough that the Commandant had zealously pursued his duties.¹⁷

As might be expected, the results of the court martial settled nothing. The system of inspection was not overhauled, and Wharton's critics did not stop their sniping. Some pressure was brought on the Commandant to resign. He refused; but, before the matter could come to a head, he died. Thus, in 1818 Anthony Gale, the next senior Marine officer, took over as Lieutenant Colonel Commandant.

Since Gale was no friend of Wharton, it would seem that everyone would have been delighted with his appointment, but such was not the case. Their mutual enmity stemmed from the wrong source. It had nothing to do with the honor of the Corps, for Gale's wrath dated from the time in 1815 when Wharton had ordered him to construct some buildings, then refused to pay for them. Besides, the Irish-born Gale was something of a rowdy.

A Marine officer was supposed to be a hellion in war and a gentleman in peace; Anthony Gale could not get it into his head that there was such a thing as peace. At the outset of his career, the young Irishman got in a quarrel with a Navy officer, took down his dueling pistols, and blew a fatal hole in his opponent. This moved the Commandant, William Ward Burrows, to dip his pen in venom and write: "Lt. Gale met the approbation of the Secretary, and myself and all. It is hoped that this may be a lesson to the Navy Officers to treat the Marines as well as their Officers with some more Respect."¹⁸

As Commandant, Gale was able to give free reign to his greatest talent - a knack for making enemies. He appeared, drunk, in most every quarter of Washington City. He offered the Paymaster of Marines the choice of meeting him pistol in hand on the field of honor or having the Commandant personally rearrange the staff officer's countenance. He also was alleged to have visited a house of ill repute - presumably not to make an inspection. At any rate, he was tried by court martial and dismissed from the service.¹⁹

In supervising the conduct of the Corps, Gale was a complete failure. As his quarrel with the Paymaster would indicate, he was in constant financial trouble. He left the service in October 1820, owing the government \$529.63.²⁰ As nearly as can be determined, the debt was never settled.

Nor were things more placid away from headquarters during the Wharton-Gale era. Service in the Mediterranean, for example, was far from fun. The fault lay in the already venerable Navy Regulations which were not specific in defining the status of Marines aboard ship. Discipline lay in the hands of the captain, so the Leathernecks might endure hell on one ship and enjoy paradise on another. Unfortunately, the former condition prevailed on too many vessels of the Mediterranean Squadron, so in 1817 the Marine officers appealed for Congress to define their duties.²¹

A year later, the legislators complied. It is not likely that their handiwork altered the outlook of the more "unenlightened" Naval officers - those who felt that a sailor had to fight his ship, while all a Marine had to do was look neat; yet, the new rules contained one important provision. Effective in 1818, the commanding officer of a ship's detachment had to inspect each week the clothing of his men. By 1865, this had been changed to a monthly inspection, and as such remained a part of Navy Regulations until 1948.²²

From the Mediterranean, the scene shifted to Washington, D. C., where Archibald Henderson was assuming the office of Commandant. Five years of bitter wrangling had left the Marine Corps in unenviable shape. Among the first pieces of correspondence to greet the new Commandant was a circular from the Board of Navy Commissioners noting that "various complaints have at different times been made to the Board that Marines at our Navy Yards are not so organized as to afford such protection to the public property and ships in ordinary as the Department expects from them."

Anthony Gale had received his share of criticism, little of it just, and he had responded by justifying his actions in a long, logical, and extremely well written letter to the Secretary of the Navy. His successor did not make the same mistake. Henderson realized that it would be useless to argue even if the charges were false, for after all no one likes to

admit to an error of judgment. Instead, he accepted the criticism and vowed to correct the abuses. "The duty of a strict inspection of the Guards of the Marine Corps becomes necessary," he wrote, "and on a tour of inspection on which I am about to proceed I shall make the most strict inquiry into the cause of the failure, on the part of those guards, in the performance of the duty expected of them."²³

Thus, in 1821 began the practice of an annual inspection of Marine Corps posts by the Commandant. There have been some lapses, due mainly to wars, and because of the chronic shortage of funds not every post has been visited each year yet the institution has survived to this day.

Under Henderson, the duties of the Adjutant and Inspector were codified. This principal staff officer would attend all parades at headquarters; inspect the arms, equipment, and military appearance of the troops at headquarters; and inspect the guards at Navy Yards upon the order of the Commandant. Besides clarifying the tasks of the office, the new Commandant wasted little time (about 10 weeks) in appointing Captain Parke G. Howle as Adjutant and Inspector in place of Samuel Miller.

As Commandant, Henderson adhered to previous practice by keeping a weather eye on the finances of the Corps. All expenditures, including contracts for rations and clothing, came under his scrutiny.²⁴ In this case, inspection paid dividends; for in 1828, the Commandant became suspicious of his Paymaster, demanded an accounting, and relieved that officer.²⁵

In May 1836, President Andrew Jackson accepted Colonel Henderson's offer to lead his Corps against the hostile Indians of Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. While serving with the Army, the Leathernecks came up against some new and unusual inspections. Horses, for example, had to be surveyed. Because of the humid climate, officers at supply depots had to inspect all provisions and forage before so much as a flitch of bacon or bag of grain could be forwarded to units in the field. Also, at every post the bacon had to be examined periodically, "scraped, and the sound parts separated from the unsound."²⁶

Once the campaign had ended, Henderson, now a Brevet Brigadier General, resumed the administration of the Marine Corps. Annual inspections were resumed, and in 1843 the general found time to conduct the Secretary of the Navy on a one-day tour of the barracks at Washington, D. C.²⁷ There was, however, one individual who was not satisfied with the way things were being done - the man was Samuel Miller.

Following the Indian War, Lieutenant Colonel Miller had assumed command of the Marine Barracks at Philadelphia, a duty not as satisfying as a place on the staff. Then came orders to take charge of the Brooklyn barracks, and Samuel Miller grew to hate Brooklyn. His problem, however, seemed solved when President James K. Polk appointed George Bancroft as Secretary of the Navy. An eminent historian, the new Secretary, like Miller, was a native of Massachusetts.

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The disgruntled Marine officer poured out his troubles to the cabinet member "not only with a view to stand well with a new Secretary of the Navy from my native state but to claim his friendly aid in withdrawing me from the New York station, and placing me in the situation of office of Inspector General of Marines, and if necessary to obtain the President's authority." In other words the Adjutant and Inspector would be scrapped in favor of an Inspector General who, like his Army counterpart, would be completely responsible for keeping the Secretary of the Navy and the Commandant posted on the condition of the Corps. To justify this sweeping change, Miller called for the appointment of a board of Army officers to investigate the administration of the Corps, certain that these inspectors would uncover "the almost neglect in the inspection of posts by the Commandant - there never having been one solitary inspection agreeable to Army regulations - the inspections being mere transit from post to post."²⁸

Secretary Bancroft may have been honest, bored, or both. At any rate he merely forwarded the letter to General Henderson and waited to see what would happen. The Commandant simmered for a while, then, appropriately enough on the Fourth of July, he exploded.

First, he pointed to the fact that the Marine Corps, whether pursuing its normal role or on duty with the Army, had always performed efficiently. Next he harked back to the

unhappy days of Franklin Wharton, when Miller himself had been Adjutant and Inspector. "Who then inspected the posts? Did the Commandant of the Corps do so in person or did he direct the Adjutant and Inspector to perform this duty? There was no inspection of the posts before I took command of the Corps." Nor was much in the way of inspection required, judging from the decision of Wharton's court martial. Finally, Henderson dredged up the spectre of fiscal extravagance. To detail a staff officer to do nothing but inspect so small an organization as the Marine Corps would be sheer waste.²⁹

So much for the proposed Inspector General. The Commandant was to remain firmly in the saddle until his death in 1859. As for Miller, he volunteered to take the field against the Mexicans, was turned down because of his age, but eventually found his way back to Philadelphia where he died in 1855.

Close upon Henderson's death came the outbreak of the Civil War - neither event was to have a salutary influence on the running of the Corps. Yet, the war did benefit the establishment inasmuch as it occasioned a new edition of Navy Regulations.

Actually, this new set of rules concerned itself with the duties of guard commander and merely set down in writing what had been going on for some time. Commanding officers of Marine Detachments afloat were to report each day the status

and disposition of their guards, inspect clothing once each month, and "be particularly attentive to the comfort and cleanliness" as well as the "soldier-like appearance and efficiency" of their men. At a Navy Yard, the commanding officer of Marines had to make the same sort of daily report as his shipboard brethren, while the officer of the day made a daily inspection of rations to include their cooking and serving.³⁰ This emphasis on food and its preparation was reminiscent of the Indian War.

Another edition of regulations appeared in 1870, but it contained nothing new in the way of Marine Corps inspections.³¹ This same year, however, saw the creation of the Navy's Board of Inspections. Composed of three line Naval officers, a medical officer, a member of the Pay Corps, a Chief Engineer, and a Captain of Marines, the board was to inspect all vessels of war embarking on or returning from a cruise.³² In 1882 the Marine officer was dropped as a permanent member of the board; but from time to time until World War I, individual Leathernecks were assigned temporary duty with the Board of Inspections or either of its two offspring - the Board of Inspection and Survey or the Board of Inspection for Shore Stations.³³

As the Marine Corps moved into the so-called "Gilded Age," the office of Adjutant and Inspector emerged from the shadows to become an important and effective "right arm" of

the Commandant. By 1876, the Adjutant and Inspector had begun making an annual tour of the major Marine Corps installations; his was probably a more detailed inspection than that made by the Commandant.

The principal problem to which the Adjutant and Inspector addressed himself was waste, and since the Marine Corps had begun manufacturing its own clothing, he found plenty of reasons to complain. First, the Assistant Quartermaster at Philadelphia, who was saddled with the problems, had no adequate means of testing the material that went into uniforms. Then there was the matter of tailoring. To be blunt, Marine-manufactured clothing simply did not fit.

Issued what looked like gunny sacks with buttons, the enlisted man had to take the garment to a tailor and have it altered to look like a uniform. Since the clothing had to be cut down, the larger sizes were in constant demand, while small and medium sizes languished on the shelves eventually to be surveyed.³⁴

During this same period, the Adjutant and Inspector began eyeing the conduct of training throughout the Corps. Reports had to be submitted showing who presented the instruction and explaining "in detail" just what went on.³⁵ Another sure sign that peace was playing hob with the Marine Corps was the appointment, following the Civil War, of a Superintendent of Recruiting. The officers assigned this post, usually were not members of the Adjutant and Inspector's Department.³⁶

Gradually things got "shaken down" to the point where the Adjutant and Inspector had nothing more to say about clothing or training - or, perhaps, he simply gave up complaining. At any rate, he had no difficulty in finding another problem.

By 1883, the Marine Corps had accumulated a mountain of furniture. As Adjutant and Inspector, Major Augustus S. Nicholson was the one to carry out the Secretary of the Navy's order to inventory and inspect all furniture being used by the Corps. Once the list had been made and the battered property discarded, the Major could dispense with the quarterly "Schedule of Public Furniture," a bit of priority paperwork since 1878.³⁷

The tenure of office of Major Nicholson also saw the adoption of an "Inspection Report" to insure that all assistants in the department were looking for the same things. The form was divided into the following major sections: - Report of Troops (strength and disposition); Drills and Target Practice; Barracks and Quarters, Guard Houses, etc.; Police of Post, Water Supply, Kitchens, etc.; Quartermaster's Department; Medical Department; and, of course, General Remarks.³⁸

So much a part of the administration of the Marine Corps were the inspections conducted by the Commandant and his Adjutant and Inspector that both were included in the Navy Regulations of 1893. The Commandant was charged with making, under orders from the Secretary of the Navy, such visits of inspection as "he may deem proper in the interests of the

service." When ordered by the Commandant, the Adjutant and Inspector would "inspect the different posts of the corps and money accounts of disbursing officers, and report in writing the results of his inspection." In addition, the Quartermaster was to inspect annually the quarters, barracks, and public buildings. Like the Adjutant and Inspector, the Quartermaster would report in writing to the Commandant.

Besides these staff inspections, the new rules prescribed certain inspections to be conducted by detachment commanders ashore and afloat. At a Navy Yard, the commanding officer had to inspect rations and meals, conduct a weekly sanitary inspection (which included a check of arms, equipment, and quarters) and hold a full dress inspection each Monday. Meanwhile, the Officer of the Day would periodically inspect the guard and inspect all mess formations. Aboard ship there was the monthly clothing inspection and a daily inspection of quarters lockers, store rooms, and rifle racks. In addition, the command had to be formed for inspection both morning and evening. As if this were not enough, the guard also was subject to periodic inspections by the Fleet Marine Officer when ordered to do so by the flag officer.³⁹

The advent of this revised set of regulations had its impact on the Corps. Out was the old Inspection Report, a two-page form; and in its place the Corps adopted the "Memorandum of an Inspection" - 27 pages long with literally acres

of room for the inspector's comments. There were 26 individual topics to be covered, ranging from "Inspection of Command" to "Wash Room, Bathroom, Water-Closets, and Urinals."⁴⁰

Although the strict requirements of the 1893 regulations were reprinted just three years later, they had little effect on the band of hardy individualists - you could call them characters - who peopled the Marine Corps at the turn of the century. Foremost of this old breed was Henry Clay Cochrane, whose career began with the Civil War and ended with the Philippine Insurrection. Cochrane was no mossback, if anything, he was too much of an innovator.

While in the Philippines, Colonel Cochrane decided to hold a sham battle to liven up training. Since no blanks were handy, he commandeered some old muzzle-loading cannon and ordered the men to ram home first a charge of powder and then some frayed union suits. For an entire morning, the defenders fired smouldering underwear at the attacking force. To give the storming parties an even break, Cochrane designated certain Marines to act as trees and bushes. With wisps of straw stuffed in their collars, they served as concealment. All went well until the defenders, poised atop a crumbling fort, began pelting their adversaries with garbage. At this point, the exercise became one of the goriest fist fights in the annals of the Corps.⁴¹

While in command of the Marine Barracks, Philadelphia, Cochrane turned his peculiar talents to the problem of inspections. No one familiar with the colonel was surprised when he elected to hold his Monday inspection, still required by regulations, on Thursday; but this was only the beginning. Determined that his command should learn how to behave in the presence of a Flag Officer, Cochrane assembled his men, drove a stake in the ground, and solemnly announced that it was a General of Marines. The battalion then passed in review, each officer tossing a snappy salute at the inanimate general.

The climax, of course, was an inspection in ranks. Pulling up the stake and tucking it under his arm, Cochrane sauntered along until he came to a company that was at about half strength. The colonel turned to the lieutenant in charge, a young and somewhat mystified Smedley D. Butler, and told him to have the company open ranks. Stealing a quick glance over his shoulder, Butler reassured himself that his handful of Marines was drawn up in a single rank, then explained that it was patently impossible to comply.

Henry Clay Cochrane's white beard twitched menacingly. The lieutenant, young and inexperienced as he was, could not attain true military proficiency unless he acted as though there were two ranks. Butler gave the necessary commands and the inspecting party strode down the line of imaginary Marines - with Cochrane pausing from time to time to point out some deficiency or other.

Once this charade was finished, Cochrane, stake in hand, again approached the luckless Butler. "Lieutenant, have the men ground their knapsacks!" Now there was not a single knapsack on the parade ground that morning, so once again he tried to reason with his superior. "Would you like to be relieved of your command, Lieutenant?" No, Butler wouldn't; he passed the word for the men to prepare their packs for inspection.

Halfway down the first rank, the real one, Cochrane glanced at a make believe knapsack and began berating the owner for sloppiness. The impetuous Butler leaped to the defense of his man with the sane, irrefutable argument that it was not fair to chew out a live Marine for a "constructive" mistake. The colonel sighed. Once again the young officer had missed the point, for Cochrane was merely thinking of the man's future. Sooner or later a general would reprimand him for an untidy knapsack; thanks to Colonel Cochrane, he would know how to act.⁴²

Nor were the foibles of the commanding officer the only factor affecting the execution of Navy Regulations. Frederic M. Wise testified that when he was a young lieutenant at Olongapo in the Philippines, the Marines stood in double jeopardy. At morning parade the officer in charge would drill the men until he was satisfied with their sharpness. Then came the final verdict - from his wife. Likely as not, she would lean out the window and order her husband to "Make them do it again."⁴³

Meanwhile, back at headquarters, the Adjutant and Inspector (who probably was unaware of just what Chehrane and his colleagues were up to) pressed his drive to bring uniformity to the Corps. To fulfill this ambition, Assistant Adjutant and Inspectors established offices in the less accessible parts of the world. One such office, from which an eye could be kept on the West Coast, Hawaii, and Alaska, was established 17 September 1903 at San Francisco. On 18 January of the following year, the Assistant Adjutant and Inspector for the Far East - Guam, China, and the Philippines, set up his office at Manila.⁴⁴

Rest assured, however, that in some remote corner of the globe someone was bound to be flouting the regulations. Take for example the Marines who accompanied the diplomatic mission to Abyssinia, December 1903 - January 1904. While carrying the American flag to this little known corner of the world, the handful of Leathernecks and bluejackets that accompanied the diplomats went 54 days without a bath. On the 55th day, the Naval officer in charge grew suspicious that his command was afflicted with lice and decided to hold his own sanitary inspection. When all was ready, the lieutenant stepped from his tent, his beard trimmed to perfection. Then, after muttering his apologies, the outfit's hospital steward reached into the officer's Van Dyke and came up with a disgustingly healthy louse. The inspection was cancelled.⁴⁵

Yet, the Adjutant and Inspector, with his assistants, was doing yeoman service. Lieutenant Colonel Charles H. Lauchheimer, for example, managed to inspect, within a year after taking over as Assistant Adjutant and Inspector for the Far East, all the Asiatic posts except the Naval Hospital at Yokohama.⁴⁶

The year 1905 saw another revision of Navy Regulations. Again, few of the changes had any effect upon inspections in the Marine Corps. The same staff inspections - by the Commandant, Adjutant and Inspector, and Quartermaster, were called for. Ashore, the Monday inspection and the weekly sanitary inspection remained on the books, while the Officer of the Day was charged with the new duty of making a daily inspection, "at an hour designated by the commanding officer," of the grounds, quarters, bakehouse, mess room, cells, and sinks. Afloat, the only change was the abolition of the old rule that the Marines had to be formed for inspection both morning and evening.⁴⁷

Immediately following the War with Spain, there was a sudden emphasis upon marksmanship in the Marine Corps. Behind this upsurge of interest were Charles H. Lauchheimer, who had been appointed Inspector of Rifle Practice in 1899, and Major George F. Elliott. The latter officer had become vitally interested in marksmanship while serving with the Marine battalion at Guantanamo Bay during the War with Spain.⁴⁸ Later

with Elliott as Commandant and Lauchheimer as Adjutant and Inspector, the new program of rifle instruction and competition got off to a brilliant start. There was, however, some friction; for each of the two apparently considered himself the "Father of Marine Corps Marksmanship." Affairs came to a head in the autumn of 1909 while Lieutenant Colonel Henry C. Haines was serving as Inspector of Rifle Practice.

Among the kindest of men was George F. Elliott, but he had a fierce temper. On one occasion in the Philippines, he became infuriated when Lieutenant Smedley Butler could not set the proper pace for his command. To call Butler's attention to his error, Elliot pitched a rock at the young officer's head.⁴⁹

Although Colonel Haines was familiar with his Commandant's traits, he decided nonetheless that the time had come to have a little fun with General Elliott. At the time, 30 September 1909, the Quartermaster of the Corps was putting the finishing touches on a new rifle range at Stump Neck, Maryland. This facility had been planned and built under the close personal supervision of the Commandant. Now, as though thinking aloud, Haines mentioned that he ought to inspect the new range to make sure it was properly laid out. Elliott answered, icily, that no inspection was necessary. The colonel repeated his idea and got the same reply. Then the general looked up in time to see "Lieutenant Colonel Haines looking out the

window, grinning...." Wrote Elliott to the Secretary of the Navy: "The Commandant considered this conduct to be unsoldierly and unmilitary." Needless to add, 30 September was Haines' last day as Inspector of Target Practice.⁵⁰

The successor to Haines, Captain Dickinson P. Hall, received orders to report directly to the Commandant. This annoyed Colonel Lauchheimer no end. From the day that he himself had been appointed to the office until Haines' dismissal, the Inspector of Target Practice always had been an Assistant Adjutant and Inspector. To call attention to this breach of tradition, Lauchheimer waited until the new arrival had assumed office then inquired of the Commandant why Captain Hall had not reported to the Adjutant and Inspector. Nothing happened, so the Colonel repeated his query. Since there still was no reaction on Elliott's part, Lauchheimer penned a brief note mentioning his unanswered question and tactfully pointed out the inspection of marksmanship had always been a function of the Adjutant and Inspector's Department. The Commandant's reply defining the relationship of Commandant and Adjutant and Inspector regarding target practice was quick and to the point.

In the Marine Corps, wrote Elliott, no one inspected anything save "at the pleasure of the Commandant." The Secretary of the Navy agreed, and the Inspector of Target Practice became for the time being an aide to the Commandant instead of an Assistant Adjutant and Inspector.⁵¹

This clash of personalities, however, had no effect on the growth and increasing importance of the Adjutant and Inspector's Department. For better administration of the sprawling Corps, four Inspection Districts were created effective 1 February 1910. The Philippines Inspection District at Manila and the Pacific Coast district at San Francisco were outgrowths of existing Assistant Adjutant and Inspectors' offices. Entirely without precedent were the South Atlantic and North Atlantic district located at Norfolk and Philadelphia respectively.⁵²

Under this new system, the Marine Corps worked in close cooperation with the Navy. Within the continental United States and in the territories of Hawaii and Alaska, inspections of Marine Corps stations and detachments were so scheduled by the Commandant that they would coincide with inspections made by the Navy's Board of Inspection for Shore Stations. Before beginning his rounds, the Marine inspector would first report to the president of that board. When scheduling an inspection in the Philippine district, which included Guam, there was no need to coordinate with anyone.⁵³

Little more than a year's experience was all that was needed to prove that this system of Inspection Districts was too ambitious. Travel on the East Coast of the United States was not so difficult as to require two Assistant Adjutant and Inspector's offices. The work could be handled from Headquarters. Thus, in May 1911 the death knell was sounded for

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the North Atlantic and South Atlantic districts, while those at San Francisco and Manila remained operative.⁵⁴

Shortly after succeeding Elliott as Commandant, Major General William P. Biddle noted that all was not well in the Philippines. In fact, the 1st Brigade had managed to escape inspection for almost a year. To remedy this situation, he decreed that if at all possible the Philippine posts would stand inspection by the Assistant Adjutant and Inspector at Manila every six months. In addition, the inspector would make the trek to Peking once each year; but Guam, the loneliest outpost in the Pacific, was visited only "whenever practicable."⁵⁵

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Apparently, the Philippine Inspection District continued to have its difficulties, for beginning in 1913 the commanding officer of the 1st Brigade was required by Navy Regulations to submit an annual report to the Commandant. This summary had to touch upon the "general condition and efficiency of the brigade, description of all military drills and target practice, discipline, and sanitary condition." Obviously it could not be prepared unless the command had been frequently inspected.

According to the Navy Regulations of 1913, the Commandant still had to make an inspection on order of the Secretary of the Navy. Also, the Commandant could order the Adjutant and Inspector to conduct inspections and investigations. The inspection of buildings and public property remained the duty of the Quartermaster.

At Marine Barracks, the commanding officer still held his Monday inspection and each week scrutinized the arms, quarters, cells, and grounds. His work was supplemented by the officer of the day who visited guards, inspected the men at mess formations, examined provisions and meals, and checked the grounds.

Aboard ship the Marine officer continued to hold a monthly inspection of clothing, to examine quarters, rifle racks and the like each day, and to visit sentinels.⁵⁶

By 1913, the system of inspection used by the Adjutant and Inspector's Department had taken a definite form. Two field offices, the Philippine Inspection District at Manila and the Pacific Coast Inspection District at San Francisco, were in operation. The former kept an eye on all posts in the Philippines, China, and on Guam; while the latter continued to look after the West Coast of the United States, Alaska, and Hawaii.

From headquarters, inspectors visited all posts along the Atlantic Coast, Guantanamo, and Panama. Generally the Adjutant and Inspector visited each of the barracks or detachments in person, but sometimes he sent one of assistants. In the years just prior to World War I, the Commandant ordered these inspections twice each year.

Recruiting was another of the department's functions. An Assistant Adjutant and Inspector, Major Albert S. McLemore,

also was Officer in Charge of Recruiting. His was the task of inspecting the recruiting offices and occasionally serving as a deputy of the Adjutant and Inspector in making the semi-annual inspection of posts and stations.

Of course, the inspections themselves generated a great deal of essential paperwork, this over and above the muster rolls, and the like that had to be processed by the Adjutant and Inspectors Department. Reports, for example, from the Board of Inspection for Shore Stations had to be endorsed and returned to the Navy Department. Perhaps the most startling aspect of the department's inner workings was the amazing economy with which it operated. Clerical help for the Washington office was 3 civilians and 17 enlisted Marines; while a trio of enlisted men was detailed to assist the Officer in Charge of Recruiting. Four clerks were stationed at San Francisco and three at Manila - all of them Marines.⁵⁷

On the eve of World War I there were three organizations conducting inspections within the Naval establishment: the Adjutant and Inspector's office, the Board of Inspection for Shore Stations, and the Board of Inspection and Survey for Ships. Strange to relate, there was one type of Marine detachment which came under the jurisdiction of none of these offices. Marines serving aboard receiving ships lived in a sort of limbo. As Leathernecks they should have been subject to the prying eyes of the Adjutant and Inspector, but at least

one Naval officer, the skipper of USS Reina Mercedes, objected to having a Marine inspection party roaming over his ship. On the other hand, a receiving ship was not a part of the shore establishment and subject to the Board for the Inspection for Shore Stations; nor was it really among the vessels in commission which were the province of the Board of Inspection and Survey. In July 1913, this vexing, if trifling, problem was passed on to Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels. He decided that receiving ships would be classed as ships in commission, a decision which remained in force throughout World War I.⁵⁸

The greatest military effort in which the Marine Corps had yet to take part, World War I had a pronounced effect on the system of inspections so carefully devised over the years. The magnitude of the war, made compliance with the inspection provisions of Navy Regulations practically impossible. Indicative of the situation was the plea of Major General Commandant George C. Barnett that Secretary Daniels grant him authority to direct the Adjutant and Inspector to embark on an inspection tour "when the services of Officers for that purpose can best be spared." Barnett's request was dated 9 August 1917, exactly four months and three days after America's declaration of war.

When the Commandant finally made his request of the Secretary of the Navy, there had been no tour of the posts by the

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Adjutant and Inspector for almost a year. Expansion and wartime mobilization had taken their toll, but the situation soon was rectified. By the spring of 1918, the Adjutant and Inspector once more was making his rounds. To conserve manpower, time, and money, the Quartermaster sometimes sent one of his assistants to examine public property while the Adjutant and Inspector was probing into the efficiency of the command.⁵⁹

Leathernecks serving in France with the American Expeditionary Force were subject to inspection by Army officers. As a matter of fact, in a post-Armistice visit the Chief of Staff of the 2d Infantry Division commended the 6th Marine Regiment for precise saluting and military courtesy.⁶⁰

Once the war had ended the Adjutant and Inspector's Department regained an even keel, but righting the ship proved a difficult task. One inspector noted that as late as the winter of 1919, some posts maintained no list of deficiencies or recommendations. "Some," groaned Colonel Louis J. Magill, "could not even recall the date of the last inspection." To remedy this he recommended that copies of inspection reports be forwarded to the detachments involved, a proposal that was promptly accepted.⁶¹

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Apparently that mighty dreadnought known as Navy Regulations also was shipping water. The rules promulgated in 1913 had twice been reprinted, without significant change as far

as the Marine Corps was concerned. The year 1920 saw an entirely new edition.

First and most startling change was the absence of the article which required the Commandant to inspect his Corps upon order of the Secretary of the Navy. Instead he was to submit the customary annual report, but to draw up such a report would require a careful scrutiny of workings of the organization. As before, the Adjutant and Inspector made his inspections at the desire of the Commandant, while the Quartermaster was required to inspect buildings and public property. A periodic administrative audit or analysis of the accounts and returns of disbursing officers was mandatory for the Paymaster.

In the field, the commanders of all Marine brigades were to inspect their commands, or any specified portion of them, when the Commandant so desired. Like the brigade commanders, the officer at the head of the Department of the Pacific (an outgrowth of the Pacific Coast Inspection Division) was to inspect his organization "when ordered by competent authority."

At Marine Barracks, the weekly sanitary inspection continued to be held, while the Officer of the Day maintained a close watch on his sentinels, rations, meals, and the condition of the area.

Afloat the Marine officer had to conduct two inspections in addition to visiting sentinels frequently. One was the

1- monthly examination of clothing, the other a daily check of living quarters, lockers, cells, rifle racks, and the like.⁶²

These portions of the 1920 regulations, by the way, remained unchanged until World War II.

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During the period of re-adjustment that followed the Armistice of 1918, the Marine Corps found itself caught up in a Congressional inquiry into charges that Marines stationed in Haiti were making a practice of murdering innocent civilians. In October 1919, Brigadier General Henry C. Haines, formerly associated with marksmanship and now the Adjutant and Inspector, made a thorough inspection. Unfortunately, the results of Haines' inspection did not make the headlines; the atrocity stories did. Granted there were isolated outrages, it would have been folly to indict the entire Marine Corps for wholesale murder. In September 1920, Major General Commandant John A. Lejeune landed at Port au Prince to make a first-hand investigation.

7. " The Commandant inspected every post in the Republic of Haiti and, according to the instructions given him by the Secretary of the Navy, did his best to ferret out the truth. In his report, Lejeune admitted that there had been some illegal executions of Haitian citizens; but he maintained, quite properly, that the average Marine had conducted himself in a humane, loyal, and, when necessary, gallant manner. A Naval Court of Inquiry convened in October 1920 upheld his findings.⁶³

Under the leadership of General Lejeune, the entire Marine Corps became dollar conscious. Like every other place where Marines were serving, Haiti became a fiscal battleground. During a tour of the Caribbean, Lieutenant Colonel Hugh Matthews, Assistant Quartermaster, visited the republic to make sure that no public property was being abused. Apparently all was well, for his recommendations concerned the problem of speeding supplies over an inadequate road net. More in keeping with the spirit of the times were his remarks concerning conditions at St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

At the latter place, tons of advance base equipment, stored in the impact area of a rifle range, were quietly rusting away. The obvious solution was to get rid of the surplus property, salvaging what was useful and scrapping the rest. Once the equipment was gone, the range could be abandoned in favor of a smaller and less valuable tract. Rent for the current range was \$1,200 per year; another one could be had for as little as \$10. This inspection paid a cash dividend.⁶⁴

In a sense, the handling of the Haitian affair was typical of Lejeune's administration, for he was a firm believer in seeing things for himself. The Commandant's inspection became an annual event, but sometimes it had a secondary purpose. In fact, his journey to Haiti, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico in the spring of 1924 had about it something of a circus atmosphere.

Aboard the transport Henderson with General Lejeune's party were 86 newspaper editors and publishers. Along with inspection and maneuvers, the tour was arranged to obtain favorable publicity for the Corps. It was a primitive Joint Orientation Conference; and a very effective one, for the newsmen were able to spend an entire day ashore with the expeditionary force at Culebra, see Port au Prince, and visit Santo Domingo City.⁶⁵

Nor was the Commandant content to insure merely the military efficiency of his organization, for he was acutely conscious of the moral obligation of the Corps to the young men in its ranks. "These men," wrote Lejeune, "are in the formative period of their lives, and officers owe it to them, to their parents, and to the nation, that when discharged from the service they should be far better men physically, mentally, and morally than when they enlisted."⁶⁶

To attain this lofty goal, Lejeune encouraged a form of spiritual inspection unique in the annals of the Corps. While serving in France with the Y. M. C. A., John H. Clifford, a clergyman with a face like a benevolent bulldog, had become attached to the Leathernecks. Following the war, Clifford became an "Honorary Chaplain, USMC." With a diligence worthy of the Adjutant and Inspector himself, Clifford toured the various posts, exerting what General Lejeune termed "a fine moral influence for good among the enlisted men."⁶⁷

The Marine Corps Manual of 1921 was thoroughly overhauled just five years after it first was issued. In the field of inspections, the first edition merely set forth the duties of the Officer of the Day as contained in Navy Regulations. Far more specific was the volume which appeared in 1926.

First off came the admonition that "a minute and careful troop inspection of arms, equipment, clothing, and general appearance" was a part of the prescribed minimum for daily routine. This in addition to the weekly sanitary inspection and the other requirements of Navy Regulations.

Again the Officer of the Day had his work cut out for him. He would: (a) visit sentinels, (b) at posts where there were no organized companies inspect the men at all mess formations, (c) at a designated hour inspect the grounds, quarters, bakehouse, kitchen, mess room, cells, and sinks, and (d) examine the sergeant of the guard's report.

Finally, there were numerous lesser inspections required by the revised manual. Arms would be inspected frequently. The commanding officer and post quartermaster had to examine any private land or buildings leased by the Marine Corps upon the termination of the lease. In addition, the post quartermaster was responsible for the of quarters allotted to officers on the reservation. Any vessels in the custody of the Corps were to be frequently inspected by the

commanding officer or some other officer detailed for the task. Finally an inspection or inventory had to accompany any change of property accountability.⁶⁸

Also contained in the new manual were the duties of recruiting officers. Those placed in charge of Recruiting Divisions were directed to inspect their commands within 30 days after taking charge and every two months thereafter. Those at the head of Recruiting Districts were to make an inspection within 15 days after reporting for duty.⁶⁹

An innovation mentioned in both the 1921 and 1926 manuals was the Marine Corps Reserve. From its inception this organizations had been under the control of the Commandant who was to guide its destinies just as he directed the regular establishment. By 1926, with the reserve on a fairly solid footing, Reserve Area commanders were empowered to execute, in so far as possible, the duties of a post commander. They would be assisted by recruiting personnel.⁷⁰

No manual can possibly spell out what to do in every possible situation, and the tome of 1926 was no exception. Situated at the Naval Operating Base, San Diego, within the geographical confines of the Department of the Pacific, was a Marine Corps Expeditionary Force. The senior Marine line officer at San Diego was in command of the expeditionary force. Apparently some difficulty arose when elements of this force were detached as security guards at the operating base. In

such cases, as the Commandant reiterated, the commander of the expeditionary force was not responsible for the routine administration of such detachments, but he had the right and duty of inspecting all parts of his command.

Further to clarify the status of these small detachments, the Commandant charged the senior Marine line officer in the 13th Naval District (in other words the Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Expeditionary Force) would keep the Department Commander, Department of the Pacific informed of the status of all units and detachments in the district.⁷¹

In the meantime, the Commandant continued the practice of personally inspecting as much of the Corps as possible. Major General Commandant Ben H. Fuller, for example, embarked in the autumn of 1931 upon a tour of inspection of Panama, Nicaragua, and the Pacific Coast. A great deal of good was accomplished; besides checking into the Marine Corps Expeditionary Force he found time on his return to Washington to observe the experimental armored vehicles at Fort Riley, Kansas. There was time, too, for relaxation - invitations to play golf on the Managua links and a visit to the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer motion picture studios at Hollywood.⁷²

The transit from post to post, however, did involve a degree of personal risk - a fact brought forcibly home by the death of Colonel Thomas C. Turner. Since shortly after World War I, the Officer in Charge, Marine Corps Aviation had been

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required by the Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics to inspect the
Leatherneck squadrons. Orders for the tour were, of course,
signed by the Commandant.

In October 1931, in the course of an inspection of avia-
tion units in Haiti, Turner landed at Gonaives. His plane
rolled off the runway, its left wheel sinking deep into the
sand. The Colonel jumped out of the craft and, not realiz-
ing how much the plane was canted, strode into the arc of the
whirling propeller. His injuries proved fatal.⁷³

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Apparently the 1926 manual proved better than satisfactory.
At any rate, the 1931 edition contained only one new provision:
a stern warning to inspect rifles when issued or turned in.⁷⁴

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A change in the duties of Officers in Charge of Recruit-
ing Divisions occurred in 1932. The change, quite possibly
adopted to save money, absolved such officers of the task of
making inspections of their entire divisions every two months.
Instead, such tours would be made at six-month intervals.⁷⁵

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Major General Commandant John H. Russell, from some in-
explicable reason, must have become dissatisfied with the
work of the Adjutant and Inspector's Department. On 1 October
1935, he decreed that future inspection of posts and all acti-
vities except reserve and recruiting would be made by an in-
spection board appointed by the Commandant. Such a board would
have a member from both the Paymaster's and Quartermaster's
Departments, and follow a schedule prepared by the Adjutant

and Inspector. Reserve units and recruiting offices would be inspected by the officers in charge of these activities at the order of the Commandant. This order, by the way, was not formally revoked until 1942.⁷⁶

Thus life in the Adjutant and Inspector's Department settled down to peacetime routine. In 1937, the office was reorganized into eight groups. Of these, only one, the "First Group" under Colonel Calvin B. Matthews, had anything to do with inspections. Among its duties were: (1) its own administration, (2) mail and files, (3) messengers, (4) inspection, and (5) the adjudication of discharges and awards.⁷⁷

The department, it would seem, became buried under an avalanche of paperwork once the nation began mobilizing for World War II. In September 1940, while the Navy Department was axing away at red tape to let the contracts for a dozen new aircraft carriers, the Adjutant and Inspector tried to streamline the functions of his own office. To effect a smoother flow of correspondence, a new routing slip was devised. It was a work of art, green in color, with plenty of room for initials; but it did have one serious flaw. A full page, six paragraphs, of instructions were needed to tell people how to use it.⁷⁸

Another segment of the Corps, the reserve, had its own peculiar difficulties. As the organization continued to grow, the problem of inspection and standardization of

ld training became increasingly acute. A visit by General Fuller
es to the summer camp at Virginia Beach, Virginia, in 1931 sent
was the morale of reservists soaring skyward;⁷⁹ but it is not
likely that this inspection was more than a gesture of en-
courage-
ment to the fledgling organization. Far more important
was the assignment in 1932 of regular officers as official
observers at the reserve summer camps. The following year,
these observers were dubbed Advisor-Inspectors⁸⁰ and became
forerunners of today's Inspector-Instructors.

In keeping with the policy laid down by General Russell,
the Director, Marine Corps Reserve began inspecting his vari-
ous organized units. On the other hand, the Inspector-
Instructor's duties were mainly advisory, but he was charged
with ascertaining "by inspections that required standards
are met relative to troops, armory, Government property, re-
cords, etc. All inspections should be made with a view to-
ward the correction of errors and mistakes and compliance with
regulations, orders, and instructions."⁸¹

Like the reserve, recruiting also had undergone changes
in structure during the 1930's. The Western Recruiting Divi-
sion, for example, had been placed by 1940 under command of
the Department of the Pacific. Like the Director, Marine
Corps Reserve, the Officer in Charge of Recruiting inspected
his organization subject to the general supervision of the
Commandant. Instead of being charged with making specific

inspections, the 1940 edition of the Marine Corps Manual merely required that the officer in charge of a recruiting division would "exercise supervision over the affairs of the districts assigned to that division."⁸²

World War II sealed the doom of the Adjutant and Inspector's Department. In spite of General Russell's edict of 1935, Navy Regulations continued to insist that the Adjutant and Inspector should make such inspections and investigations as the Commandant might desire. Yet, the fact remains that little use was made of the department. In August 1942 only 1 of 16 sections within the Adjutant and Inspector's Department was concerned with inspections - and it also handled Marine Corps Exchanges.⁸³

Marine Corps Order 182, 1 October 1942, theoretically put the Adjutant and Inspector's Department back in the inspection business by abolishing the board system set up by General Russell. In actual practice, this decision did not halt the drift of the department toward pure administration. In May of the following year, a new Personnel Department was created by merging the old Division of Personnel, the Division of Reserve, and the Division of Recruiting with the Adjutant and Inspector's Department.⁸⁴

With the demise of the Adjutant and Inspector, someone had to shoulder the burden of inspection. The Commandant reasoned that since some three-fourths of the Corps was

ie assigned to the Fleet Marine Force, the best temporary solution was to create the Post of Inspector General, Fleet Marine Force.⁸⁵ This, however, was merely a stop-gap measure. Not until the war was almost over was the problem solved.

- The answer lay in the establishment, effective 14 August 1945, of an Inspection Division headed by the Inspector General, Marine Corps. The Corps had come a long way from the days of Samuel Miller.

ins Purpose of the new agency was to assist the Commandant in improving the "administration, efficiency, and economy of the Marine Corps." This the Inspector General would achieve by "(a) making such inspections, investigations, and reports as may be directed by the Commandant; and (b) assisting commanders and other members and employees of the Marine Corps in the performance of their duties, supplying information when appropriate, and suggesting to them ways and means of improving conditions."

u- As far as specific duties were concerned, the Inspector General had to "insure" that at least one inspection be made during each fiscal year. Subject to the division's scrutiny were all commands, posts, and stations including those under the Department of the Pacific as well as aviation facilities. Exempt were Fleet Marine Force units beyond the continental limits of the United States and all detachments afloat.

It is interesting to note that the Inspection Division was to "unearth complaints, especially from men in confinement, investigate, and make recommendations to correct any unwholesome situation."⁸⁷

The eyes of the Inspector General, as far as nonappropriated funds were concerned, were the area auditors. These officers were placed at the larger posts where the handling of such funds had become a complicated and time-consuming task. Although field representatives of the Inspector General, area auditors might also act as staff officers to advise their commanding officers on the use of non-appropriated funds.⁸⁸

The duties of the Inspector General - to make periodic inspections and special investigations and to administer the program of auditing non-appropriated funds, were spelled out in the Marine Corps Manual of 1949. Perhaps the outstanding feature of this publication is the infrequency of references to inspections.

Subject to inspection were rifles (initially examined upon issue and return but after July 1958 checked semiannually), post offices, and reservists. In general, supervision of the last was the province of Directors of Reserve and Recruitment Districts and Inspector-Instructors; but the departmental commander, Department of the Pacific, might undertake such inspections of West Coast reserve units as the Commandant might direct.⁸⁹

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Although fewer inspections were required by the manual, there was no hint of laxness in the running of the Corps. A greater degree of responsibility was placed in the hands of wing and division commanders. In fact, an officer, usually a colonel, had been assigned the post of Division Inspector since 1942.⁹⁰ A similar billet later was created on brigade and wing special staffs.

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Creation of the Inspection Division and the assignment of inspectors to major commands caused, if anything, an emphasis on close supervision which could not be attained by a lengthy listing of required inspections in a manual. Gone are the days when a commanding officer could while away his time inspecting imaginary knapsacks. Yet, there are times when the person being questioned has to answer with that same type of agility which Smedley Butler displayed when confronted by Henry Clay Cochrane.

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Typical of this brand of quick thinking was the reaction of a Navy Corpsman who was asked by an inspector if his storeroom was infested with rats or roaches. His answer was an unqualified no. The inspector pointed to a column of roaches parading across the deck, but even this did not shake the young bluejacket. "Them's not ours, sir," he replied. "They belongs to the galley and is just passing through."⁹¹

By the autumn of 1952, activities of the Inspection Division had been clearly defined. In general the office

operated from Headquarters Marine Corps, except for a section under the operational control of the Department of the Pacific.

Area Auditors, field representatives of the Inspector General, would be placed as needed at the various posts and stations.

Annual inspections were slated for all activities save units afloat and activities of the recruiting service subordinate to Recruiting Area Headquarters. In brief, annual visits were to be paid by inspection teams to security forces and other Marine Barracks, Recruit Depots, Reserve District Headquarters, Recruiting Area Headquarters, and State Department security guards. Generally, only the regional headquarters of these security guards was scrutinized; but if there were no such headquarters, the individual detachments were visited. All activities not under these headings would be inspected at intervals not exceeding 24 months.

Fleet Marine Force units, Recruit Depots, Training and Replacement Commands, formal Marine Corps schools, and reserve activities were subject only to an administrative inspection. Except for trainees, students, and instructors, Marines assigned to such activities could be required to stand individual inspection. A general military inspection, however, lay in store for other units.

In the field of investigations, the head of a department or division at Headquarters Marine Corps now might

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request an inquiry by asking the Commandant to refer the particular problem to the Inspection Division. All investigations were to be conducted according to the provisions of the Manual of the Office of Naval Inspector General.

Audits, naturally, had to be made even if no representative of the Inspector General was assigned to the particular post or station. Only "periodic audits" were required of the Area Auditor, but activities lacking the services of such an officer had to open their accounts twice each year.⁹²

An example of the flexibility of the present system of inspections is the handling of the Parris Island tragedy of April 1956. Even before the last of the bodies of the six Marines drowned in Ribbon Creek had been recovered, the Commandant and his Inspector General were on the scene. The actual inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the accident was not conducted by a representative of the Inspection Division; but an examination of the entire system of recruit training was entrusted to Major General David M. Shoup, who was given the title of Inspector General for Recruit Training.⁹³

To cite the work done by the Inspection Division because of the Parris Island drownings as typical would be a serious error. A better example of the division's functions would be the accomplishments of the calendar year of 1957. That year 303 units were inspected, three of them reinspected, and four investigations conducted. The Audit Branch toiled with 361

accounts, and the Liaison Branch made 15 trips with representatives of the Office of Naval Inspector General - these in connection with the survey of bureau managed activities of the Naval Shore Establishment.

The work of the Inspection Division during 1957 brought impressive results. Five changes to the PRAM, four changes to the Marine Corps Manual, and six altered or entirely new Marine Corps Orders were brought about by the division's recommendations.⁹⁴

Best summary of the changing methods of inspection employed by Headquarters Marine Corps is the simple statement that inspections have kept pace with the growth of the Corps. In the days of Archibald Henderson, an annual tour of the posts by a single individual was enough to set officers pawing through regulations and enlisted men to pressing their blouses. As the Corps became larger and more complex, the Commandant needed assistance; and help was provided by the Adjutant and Inspector's Department. Unfortunately, this office, since it also performed most of the functions of today's Personnel Department, became bogged down with paper work. Among the devices used to supervise the Corps when the Adjutant and Inspector's eyesight began to fail were inspection boards, Division Inspectors, and the post of Inspector General, Fleet Marine Force. Thus evolved the Inspection Division with its Inspector General. Under present conditions no Commandant,

even though he religiously followed the time-honored practice of making an annual tour of inspection, could possibly maintain the Marine Corps at peak efficiency without the zealous assistance of the Inspection Division and, most important, the whole-hearted aid of the unit commanders themselves.

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