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# The Cadets at Plum Island

## THE JUNIOR PLATTSBURG



### First Federal Military Training

#### CAMP FOR BOYS

JULY - AUGUST, 1916

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FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE JUNIOR DIVISION  
OF THE MILITARY TRAINING CAMPS ASSOCIATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES .: 31 NASSAU STREET, NEW YORK CITY

## PART I.

### THE CREATION AND SPIRIT OF THE CAMP

"When you leave the unimpaired, hereditary freehold to your children, you do but half your duty. Both liberty and property are precarious unless the possessors have strength and spirit enough to defend them."

—Letters of JUNIUS: Dedication to the English Nation.

On 6 July, 1916, 1200 boys, eager and enthusiastic but without military training or discipline, entered the First Federal Military Training Camp for Boys, at Fort Terry on Plum Island; five\* weeks later the same number, physically and mentally "fit" and disciplined, respecting authority because they respected themselves, and bearing themselves like men, left camp for their homes.

The "Plattsburg Idea" was thus first successfully extended from business and professional men and collegians, to lads of from 15 to 18 years of age, drawn from twenty-four states, representing over 300 schools, and including the young man who worked in a city office or on a farm, as well as the lad who came from a crack boarding-school,—the one who had never learned to play drilling beside the one who had yet to learn to work, both subject to the same discipline and routine, sleeping in the same tents, eating the same food, and all wearing the same uniform; each in turn aiding the regular army cooks perform the duties of "kitchen police" (*i. e.*, cleaning up after mess), the merits of each being alone considered by the company commanders in the selection of non-commissioned cadet

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\*Future camps will last four instead of five weeks.

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officers, and all learning the great lesson that patriotic service is the greatest of democratic influences.

To those that were privileged to take part in their training it was an inspiration to feel the spirit which the great majority of these young men brought to their work: cheerful obedience, great earnestness of purpose and a determination to treat their work as *men's work* and not as a youthful frolic. From start to finish the cadets were worked hard but considerately; the discipline was strict but not harsh, and although the serious purpose of the camp was always evident, it was accompanied by a spirit of youthful energy and keenness among cadets and officers alike, which was a constant inspiration to both. The cadets were delighted to be trained by officers of the United States Army and West Pointers and were justly proud of having attended the *first* federal military training camp for boys.

As one parent, who visited Plum Island, said: "What impressed me most about the camp was the wonderful spirit of enthusiasm, not only of the boys, but of the officers;—it was a revelation!" One father "just ran up for an afternoon to look over the camp and see my son Jack," having nothing except the clothes he stood in; he became so interested that he remained five days,—got up at 5:30 every morning, messed with the cadets, borrowed fresh "things" from the Plattsburg men attached to that company, and finally struggled (he was a bit stout) into the field uniform of a private so that he might crawl on his stomach for nearly half an hour through the wet grass with a detachment which, as a field exercise, was attempting to surprise an out-post!

At the end of five weeks of out-door life, setting-up exercises, military drill and manœuvres, and the splendid driving force of high patriotic purpose, these young Americans returned to their homes in finer health, more obedient, yet more self-reliant, with straighter backs and larger lung capacity, and with greater promise of becoming valuable and efficient citizens and better sons than ever before. They had learned the great lesson that self-control and self-discipline are prerequisites to command over others; they had learned to *give* something to their country by taking the first step to make themselves physically and mentally fit to do their "bit" in case of need. Some had learned that shooting at a target 200 or 300 yards away with a military rifle is more valuable and interesting than lounging in front of a country store; others learned that five weeks of living, eating and sleeping in the fresh air were wonderful cures for the bent back, tired eyes, and unhealthy city life of the office boy. Others, whose lot in life had been cast in easier places, learned that time spent outdoors with other men in a military camp is better spent than in "fussing about" some summer resort, that the horizon of military training camp life is broader and its true meaning deeper than anything they had known before, and that the lessons of team-play, prompt and uncomplaining obedience and "sand," have a more important and more direct application to military efficiency than they had ever imagined!

One and all, they proved to their officers that the American boy is "all right"; that he has the true spirit and fire of patriotism in him if he is given half a chance to show it, and has not been "doped" with the poisonous

soothing syrup of too much luxury and comfort, and the soul-stunting idea of "letting the *other* man do it."

The natural questions are: How did the Junior Camp idea start? How was the camp made possible? How was it organized and conducted? How did one get there? How much did it cost to attend? What was the work like? Will there be other similar camps next year? and What part will the Junior Plattsburg play not only in the future of young Americans, but also what important significance and bearing will it have upon the safeguarding and true *Americanization* of the United States?

This article is written primarily for those that did not attend the 1916 Camp, but who wish they had, or that ought to wish they had, and to inform parents and school principals how and why the camp was made possible, and of the obligation owing from each of those cadets, that had the honor of attending the *first* camp, to do his share to make next year's camps equally successful. In a succeeding article it is proposed to compare such Junior Division camps with the cadet training of the Swiss and Australian systems, and to show the relation and importance of some such adapted and modified system of *universal compulsory* physical and military training and service, under federal control, for the young men of the United States.

During the winter of 1916 it was decided to hold a federal camp under officers of the United States Army, modelled after the Plattsburg camps of 1915, and open to all young Americans from 15 to 18 years of age. The idea "took" at once; a committee was formed and devoted last winter to making arrangements with

the Department of the East for holding the camp and to recruiting for it. It was believed that the practical co-operation at the camp of graduates of boarding-schools and universities, who had also been to Plattsburg, would be useful to the regular officers detailed to the somewhat novel duties of a boys' camp, would give confidence to parents who might be hesitating about letting their sons go, and would also afford a number of the 1915 Plattsburg men the invaluable opportunity and experience of acting as military instructors under regular officers. Accordingly, about twenty Plattsburg men received several months of special drill and instruction, in order to qualify as lieutenants, and after being certified as competent to act as instructors and drill masters, were detailed to Plum Island.

During the winter and spring, funds raised by the Committee through private subscriptions among the friends of the military training camp idea, amounting to about \$15,000, made the camp possible. Of this sum, \$12,000 was spent in the maintenance of an office and clerical staff in New York for attending to correspondence, in recruiting for the camps and in disseminating information; for the construction of floors for about 200 tents, building eight large screened mess-shacks, where 1,200 cadets all had their meals at the same time; providing a similar shack for Y. M. C. A. meetings; constructing large shower baths, latrines, piping, etc., for each of the eight companies of cadets. A Special Assistance fund of about \$3,000 was devoted to uniforms and camp subsistence for lads whose families could not afford to send them.

Contrary to the general misconception that the Government provided everything, it may be interesting to

know that the United States furnished the camp sites, tents, cots, bedding, rifles, ammunition and labor—nothing else. The Government did *not* pay for food, transportation or clothing.

A well deserved tribute should be paid to the indefatigable energy and patriotism of Major-General Leonard Wood, Commander of the Department of the East, and to his able staff assistant Major Kilbourne, in organizing and arranging all military details for the camp; to Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Hero, Jr., C. A. C., the commander of Fort Terry, for his ability, energy and scientific care, and to his efficient staff of officers; to the eight West Point cadets who, out of the two months of their *only* "leave" in their four years' course, voluntarily gave five weeks to serving as first lieutenants of companies, without compensation. It was a high privilege for every young American in that camp to come in personal contact with the officers of the United States Army and these West Point cadets who were at Plum Island, and to learn (what it would be well for every citizen of the United States to learn) that a finer, cleaner, more efficient or more modest company of gentlemen cannot be found than the officers of the United States Army. They "know their job", and they perform their duties thoroughly and well. They have deserved well of their fellow citizens, but, instead, they have generally been neglected, ignored and unappreciated. They have been forced to content themselves with the advice which Emerson must have intended for unappreciated merit: "The reward of a thing well done is to have done it". The regulars are entitled to be proud in the consciousness that their deeds and not their words speak for them.

It was planned to hold two camps at Plum Island, for the enrollment for the first camp soon exceeded 1200 cadets, but owing to the outbreak, later, especially in New York, of infantile paralysis, it was deemed wise to abandon the second camp, notwithstanding the fact that *not a single case* of this disease occurred on the island.

The only qualifications required of a cadet were, (1) that he should be of good character and have the consent of parent or guardian to attend; (2) that the recruit should be between 15 and 18 years of age; (3) that he should have the certificate of a doctor that he was physically fit for the work, and (4) that he should have the equivalent of a common school education.

Plum Island lies at the easterly entrance to Long Island Sound, about 13 miles off New London, and can be reached by boat from that port or from Greenport, Long Island. Fort Terry on Plum Island, together with Fort Wright on Fisher's Island and Fort Michie, constitute a closely related chain of coast defense fortifications, guarding the "back door" to New York.

Plum Island is an ideal spot for such a camp. Instead of being a low-lying, sandy and treeless waste, as many had pictured it in their imaginations, it is a high-cliffed, island plateau about four miles long and so irregular in shape that it varies from about two hundred yards wide at the "waist" to nearly two miles at the "shoulders". It has a rolling, hilly surface, with clumps of fairly heavy timber at each end, and a few ponds; these natural features constitute an excellent "terrain" not only for extended order drill, out-post, picket and advance guard problems, but also for manœuvres and skirmishes between battalions of several hundred cadets each. The negligible num-



ber. of hospital cases during the camp is the best testimony of the healthfulness of this locality. Scarcely any cadets were ill and the most serious case was one of tonsilitis.

Turning to the practical side of the camp, each cadet paid\* for his transportation to and from camp, for his field uniform (consisting of two olive drab woolen shirts, preferably two pairs of breeches, a pair of canvas leggings and army shoes, and a blouse or jacket and campaign hat) costing about \$15; for his food for five weeks, in camp, \$22.50, and for his laundry during that period, \$1.50. Inasmuch as the uniform should, with reasonable care, last through three camps of one month each, and a pair of shoes should be good for at least one such camp and a half of another, the equipment cost should not be measured by the initial outlay alone. Opportunities for spending money at the camp were few and consisted principally of buying ice cream and simple food at the post exchange, and ten-cent admissions to the post movies,—the other moving picture shows, given under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A., being free. Trips to New London and smoking were prohibited.

There were eight companies of about one hundred and fifty cadets each, of which five were encamped near the easterly end of the island and known as the "East Camp," and three were located in the "Hill Camp" about one and a half miles further west and nearer the army post at Fort Terry.

Each company was commanded by a captain or first lieutenant of the Regular Army; the West Point cadets

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\*It is hoped that in the year 1917, and in succeeding years, Congress will appropriate a sufficient sum to pay all expenses of holding such camps, including traveling expenses and cost of uniforms and subsistence of cadets.

acted as first lieutenants, and the two or three Plattsburg men assigned to each company acted as second lieutenants. This mixture of regular army officers, West Pointers and "Plattsburgers" proved a very fortunate idea and made an effective officers' team. Incidentally it may be mentioned that the officers had the same food as and messed with the cadets.

Plum Island was a melting pot for young Americans—not a melting pot where individuality was killed and lost and the mass poured into moulds all exactly alike and left to cool and harden in dull uniformity—far from it—but a melting pot where Jew and Gentile, Protestant and Catholic, native and foreign-born mixed on an equal footing with an equal chance to prove the manhood that was in them, and to learn the great lesson that the strength, the stability, even the existence of a nation, depend upon the willingness of its citizens to *give* something of their time, their comfort and their convenience, and their lives, if need be, to their country.

We value little what costs us nothing; a nation which demands nothing of its people will receive nothing from them; a nation that is in the attitude of a suppliant toward its citizens can never expect their entire respect and support. If the United States could be certain that it would never have another war the increase in national spirit resulting from compulsory universal military training and service would alone repay their establishment. Furthermore the demonstration that *all* men physically fit *must* share in the obligations as they share in the privileges of citizenship would do more to bridge the chasm between labor and capital than all legislation and boards of arbitration or conciliation combined. The sincerity of the demand for

equality of opportunity would then be measured by the practical recognition of equality of manhood obligation.

Nor should the practical military value of training young men be overlooked; the official records of the North and South during the Civil War show that 2,141,296 lads of between 15 and 18 years of age were enrolled in their armies.

The camp at Plum Island was an attempt by the American boy to answer and respond to the appeal to patriotism so finely expressed in the Report of the Special Commission on Military Education and Reserve appointed by Massachusetts in 1915:

“The most frequent criticism as to American boys is that they seem to lack a sense of responsibility or of loyalty and duty to something beyond themselves. A spirit of devotion to his country is the finest spirit which a boy can acquire. That spirit is not at all incompatible with the teaching that every endeavor must be made to maintain peace. The militaristic spirit which means blind faith in the doctrine of force is perhaps the most vicious idea which could be instilled in a boy’s mind. The military spirit which means a willingness to serve and fight for his country in time of need, which recognizes as abhorrent the point of view which relies on others to perform the service and do the fighting, is a fine and unselfish sentiment which can not be too early instilled into the youthful mind.

What the boy should be taught is that nothing can ever make other than glorious and holy the death of one who dies for his country, and that no boy can shift to the shoulders of others a duty to the nation any more than he can a duty to his family or friends.”

Fort Terry was non-sectarian, non-political, unselfish and unmercenary; it aimed to make better citizens, better Americans; to teach a spirit of respect for authority, orderliness and clean living; to prove to young men that self-control spells STRENGTH; that "courage conquers all things; it even gives strength to the body". It aspired, in the broadest sense, to respond to the stirring call of Daniel Webster in his speech at the laying of the cornerstone of Bunker Hill Monument: "Let our object be our country, our whole country, and nothing but our country."

## PART II.

### LIFE AND TRAINING AT PLUM ISLAND THE FUTURE OF THE JUNIOR PLATTSBURG MOVEMENT

"The military tent, where boys sleep side by side, will rank next to the public school among the great agents of democracy."

—THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Early in the afternoon of Thursday, July 6th, three steamers cut their way through the blue waters of Long Island Sound, two from New London and another from Greenport, their decks crowded with brown-uniformed figures intermixed with others dressed in civilian clothes. The cheers and shouts of the cadets crackled across the water and verified the dry comment of an old regular sergeant standing beside the officer at the dock ready to take down the names of the newcomers: "Sir—I guess by the sound o' things we've got a bunch o' live ones!" And so we had! Before long the "live ones" began scrambling up the hill from the dock to the bluff above, there breaking into two steady streams, one flowing toward the East and the other to the Hill Camp.

The receiving officers, in assigning cadets to the several companies, did so regardless of size, age or previous military training, but, on the other hand, endeavored, so far as was possible, in the hurly-burly of arrival, to scatter schoolmates. On first thought this may seem inconsiderate and unnecessary; on reflection, however, it will be appreciated that one of the big purposes of the Camp was to break away from the

narrowing influence of school cliques, so that the Camp might live up to the democratic ideal of such camps so well expressed by Colonel Roosevelt.

Like a flood tide the arriving cadets swept into the company streets where they formed in long lines to report to the company officers assigned to receive them and record their names, schools or employments, and previous military training, if any.

Baggage was quickly piled in the tents at the heads of company streets; each company was then roughly "sized" and divided into squads of eight cadets each, based upon this "sizing" method; and a temporary cadet corporal was appointed as leader of each squad, which was then assigned to a tent containing eight cots. From that time until the end of the camp these eight cadets (with such changes as were rendered necessary by later and more accurate "sizing", and the promotion or demotion of corporals) formed a "team" of their own, constituting a unit in the bigger machine of the company. The semi-independence of squads gives scope to individuality, but their necessary cohesion shows the value of team work.

The day following the arrival of the cadets the regular routine of the camp, that was to be maintained for nearly five weeks, began in earnest. The bugle sounded the first call for reveille at 5:45 A. M., and at 6 o'clock each company formed in its own street for assembly and roll call, the movements of the cadets being stimulated by the sharp reminders of the regular sergeant attached to each company: "Jump in there"—"Cover off smartly"—"Look sharp, you heroes", and other similar remarks. The names of lates and absentees were thereafter taken at every formation and

placed on the "skin list", and after a few days such delinquents were given punishments consisting principally of extra tours of duty, confinement to company streets, patrolling, etc.

Immediately after assembly at 6 o'clock, the cadets were given ten minutes of calisthenics and breathing exercises, sometimes topped off by a short dog-trot run, to take the cobwebs out of their brains and start the circulation going. A fifteen-minute interval between their return and 6:30 gave them time to wash up for breakfast, to which each company was marched at attention in column of twos, the cadets standing at their regular places in the mess-shacks until ordered by an officer to be seated. The rattle of knives, forks and plates, that then broke loose afforded an excellent imitation of the crackle of a machine gun. This noise was punctured by heartrending appeals to "pass the grease" and "the cow". To prevent indigestion from fast eating, an order was published requiring cadets to remain in the mess halls at breakfast and supper at least 15 minutes, and at dinner 20 minutes. Between 7 and 8 o'clock sick-call gave an opportunity for all the "sick, lame and lazy" to visit the doctor, receive prescriptions and have any blisters on their feet treated. The tents and streets were "policed" (*i. e.*, cleaned and all rubbish picked up), and the cadets got ready for the first morning drill period of two hours, from 8—10 A. M. After a rest of half an hour there was a second drill period of an hour, until 11:30, when there was a rest of half an hour before the cadets marched to dinner at 12 o'clock. The afternoon drill period lasted from 1—2:30, followed, several days each week, by visits and talks in the batteries, where the coast-artillerymen demonstrated the operation of the

great guns and mortars, and the use of rangefinders and other instruments was explained by a regular officer. Special elective courses of instruction were also given in the afternoon in radio-telegraphy, signalling, gas engines, the use of searchlights and map sketching.

At 3:30 every afternoon, unless bad weather prevented, the cadets went in swimming under the observation of a competent instructor and several boatmen. The Y. M. C. A. rendered valuable assistance; its members were active and obliging in many ways, among others, in arranging religious services for the various denominations, in giving most useful help in the dispatch and distribution of the heavy camp mail, in providing free moving picture shows in the evenings, and in holding several track athletic meets, which developed a keen inter-company rivalry and competition, and in supervising the safety of the cadets while swimming.

With the exception of the performance of police duty by two squads from each company in the afternoon, the cadets had three hours (2:30—5:30 P. M.) free for recreation of all kinds. Many exciting baseball matches were held during these hours, as well as tennis and track games.

Supper was at 5:30, and at 6 o'clock the companies were assembled and marched to Retreat—an evening ceremony usually held on the parade-ground when the sunset gun is fired and the companies stand motionless at "attention" while the Star Spangled Banner is played and Old Glory is slowly lowered. This simple but impressive ceremony is an inspiration to patriotism and respect for the Flag. At an army post every soldier must, at Retreat, interrupt whatever he is doing and stand at attention facing the Flag; every other man



raises his hat and women and children usually stand at attention. How often in the United States, when a regiment carrying the American flag marches through a city or town, do we see proper respect shown by the people that line the roadway? The great majority ignore their flag entirely, for they have never been taught to honor it.

After retreat the cadets frequently had boxing matches under the supervision and control of an officer who saw to it that the men were fairly matched, and that there was no "slugging". The bugler sounded the Call to Quarters at 9:15 P. M., followed 15 minutes later by "Taps". As the last notes died away, lights in the tents were put out and every cadet was required to be in bed and to remain there and without conversation or disturbance of any kind. An officer from each company was on duty every night, and at Taps made the rounds of each tent in his company with a pocket flash-light, checking up the number of men in each tent and requiring silence in the company street.

During the second week in camp the cadets were initiated into the duties of night sentry duty, preceded by an informal ceremony of guard-mounting. In regular rotation the squads of a company furnished sentries between 7:30 P. M. and midnight. After 9 o'clock sentries were required to challenge and halt any person crossing their section of the sentry beat running around the camp. The vigilance of sentries and knowledge of their duties were tested by visits by the officer of the day.

During the first week the cadets were not given rifles, but were taught the rudiments of drill in close order formation; later, regular army rifles were served

out, but as a precaution against accident, bayonets were never supplied. After ten days' drill with rifles and instruction in the manual of arms the cadets, at evening parade, gave an exhibition of marching and of smartness and finish in the manual that astonished and delighted their officers. Visitors at the island a fortnight after the camp began, who saw the good "set-up" and excellent drilling of the cadets, could hardly believe such rapid progress possible. It proved what a bright, earnest lot of young men, determined to learn and under competent instruction, can accomplish, especially when both they and their officers can concentrate without interruption upon the work in hand during a period of intensive instruction. This is only one of a number of important reasons why a period of military training in the *field* is so much more valuable and stimulating than drilling in an *armory*.

As soon as their progress in close order work warranted the cadets were instructed in extended order or skirmish drill, when they quickly appreciated that the use of arm signals and the whistle by officers instead of verbal commands was only possible among men who had learned the rudiments, at least, of discipline and the habit of working together as a team. Cadets learned how to crawl, the use of cover in hiding themselves from the observation and supposed fire of an enemy consisting of other sections of their own or other companies; how a fold or undulation in the ground was sufficient to conceal a whole company only a short distance away, provided they lay close and did not unnecessarily expose themselves. They were also taught how, when the hostile fire became too hot to permit of the further advance of the company as a

whole, to dash forward by platoons or squads at the call of "*Follow me!*", for 30 to 50 yards, quickly flinging themselves on the ground and opening fire.

Thus, step by step they were brought to the point where they were fit to take part in small manœuvres or skirmishes against other companies such as out-post and scouting problems, advance guard, picket duty, etc. After each problem of this character the company commander (with the aid of a diagram or rough map) gave a short lecture on the work of the day, while the events were still fresh in the minds of the cadets, after which the lieutenants would also describe and explain the work of their platoons. By these field demonstrations, lectures and a certain amount of required reading the cadets were shown, in the field, theories, their practical application, and their results. After substantial progress had been made under the guidance of officers the cadet sergeants were given opportunities to drill the cadets in platoon and company formations and also to handle sections of the company in a field problem, with excellent results.

During the last half of the camp special attention was given to explaining the mechanism, care and use of the regular army rifle. Frequent inspections of equipment and punishment for dirty guns and for abusing or dropping guns, soon taught the lesson that the rifle is the most important part of the soldier's equipment and must be cared for accordingly.

Target rifles of .22 calibre (*i. e.*, the regular rifle with a small bore in the barrel and a lighter charge) were served out and the officers of each company instructed and coached the cadets in the mysteries and

importance of "breathing" while aiming and sighting, the "trigger squeeze" and the "creep of the trigger", in order to secure steadiness of the rifle when aiming and firing. The target practice was in the kneeling, sitting and prone positions, with small targets at 50 and 75 feet distant. The results accomplished by the cadets, many of whom had never fired a rifle before, were excellent, some perfect and other remarkably fine scores being made. Officers critically supervised the work and instantly punished the slightest carelessness; but the greatest punishment a cadet could receive was to lose his next turn to shoot a string of ten shots!

After the small calibre practice companies or portions of companies were taken, in turn, to the regular rifle range and each cadet was given a chance to fire a string of ten shots with the regular army rifle and service ammunition at targets 200 and 300 yards distant. Even greater care and stricter discipline (if possible) were maintained on these occasions and the cadets realized the importance of the instruction they had received when they felt the heavy "kick" of the rifle, especially when improperly held. Not even the smallest hesitated to fire the heavy rifle, and as a result of their attention to coaching not one got a serious kick.

In addition to regular daily inspections by company officers an inspection of the most minute character was made every Saturday morning by Col. Hero and his staff; they examined each company, its street, tents and also the cadets, who stood in line at attention in front of their respective tents. Nothing escaped the vigilant and trained eyes of the inspecting officers; a lost hat-cord or button, dirty faces, a pair of shoes

out of line under a cot, equipment in disorder, a towel on the ground, a scrap of paper in the street or between tents—all were noted; nor were the shower baths, latrines or incinerators where rubbish was burned, omitted. Thus the lessons of personal cleanliness, orderliness and camp hygiene were taught. That day the work finished at noon and the afternoons were devoted to sports, swimming and recreation generally, until retreat at about 6 o'clock.

On Sunday reveille was half an hour later than on week-days, and with the exception of calisthenics in the morning, there was no work of any kind. Religious services for the various denominations were held in the morning and the remainder of the day was devoted to visitors, recreation and a band concert in the afternoon. Among the distinguished visitors at the camp were General Wood and ex-President Roosevelt, each of whom gave a most interesting talk to the cadets.

On weekday afternoons, and sometimes on Sundays, the Hill and East Camps alternated in holding parades. The keenest rivalry existed among the various companies as to which should be considered by the reviewing officer to have had the straightest line. Toward the end of the camp the marching swing of the cadets and the excellence of their lines were a surprise both to visitors and officers. The general verdict was that "Plattsburg had nothing on the Cadets!" One of the principal reasons for the splendid *esprit de corps*, military appearance and excellent drill of the cadets, was the strict discipline and control exercised over them. There was much greater insistence upon military formality and discipline at Plum Island than there was at Plattsburg, either during the 1915 or 1916 camps. Among the

cadets it was noteworthy that those companies where the discipline was most strict not only were the best drilled but also had the best *morale*. The fact is, a young man who volunteers for a military camp in charge of officers of the regular army expects strict discipline and has less respect for his officers if they fail to exercise it.

Among other interesting and popular activities was the publication, during the last half of the camp, of a weekly newspaper appropriately named the "Range-finder," after the important instrument used to ascertain the ranges for the great guns. This paper gave all the camp news including accounts of baseball, athletic games, letters, copies of the addresses of General Wood and Colonel Roosevelt, and also contained excellent photographic illustrations.

The frequent glimpses of squadrons of destroyers and torpedo-boats, which, during a portion of the summer, "rendezvous" for manœuvres in Gardiner's Bay, a few miles to the southward were picturesque features of life at Plum Island, where an interesting exhibition was also given the cadets of the submersion and navigation of submarines.

Owing to the insufficient size of Plum Island and because of the difficulties of transporting men, equipment and supplies to the mainland, it was found impossible to arrange a "hike" or week's practice march, which constitutes the finale of the training at Plattsburg. Nevertheless, the cadets were taught to roll the pack, to pitch shelter tents, and a very interesting field problem, held the day before breaking camp and consisting of a sham battle between the eight companies of the regiment (made more realistic by the use of

blank ammunition) and stimulated by the presence of Col. Hero as chief umpire, roused the keenest interest and rivalry among officers and cadets. Although no decision was rendered as to which side won, a very interesting criticism of the manœuvres was given on the field by the umpires and battalion commanders.

As the time approached for breaking camp, it might be thought that discipline would have relaxed, and that the minute care of details would have slackened. Such, however, was not the case and the last lesson the cadets received the day before leaving was the methodical care exercised in the return of Uncle Sam's property. Arms and equipment were carefully cleaned, turned in, checked and accounted for, and all heavy baggage was carried to the dock. The next morning the camps were astir at sunrise, and by 6 o'clock bedding had been neatly piled at the heads of company streets, and hand-baggage made ready.

Boat schedules had been announced the night before, and even such details as the particular portions of each steamer's decks to be occupied by sections of the different companies were not overlooked in organizing an orderly and prompt embarkation. Again the three steamers were laden with brown uniformed figures and again their cheers echoed from the departing shores of Plum Island, but the vessels carried a changed and richer freight: they had brought cargoes of boys eager to learn and filled with patriotic purpose—they carried away young men equally enthusiastic, but proud in the consciousness that they had joined those "who *willed* to be Americans", who had done their first "bit" in the cause of national service, and who had learned the

great lesson of history that "the Romans did not love Rome because she was great; Rome was great because the Romans loved her. Carthage had commerce. Rome had ideals".

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General Wood has officially designated those who attended the Plum Island camp as "The First Junior Training Regiment" and all are members of the Junior Division of the Military Training Camps Association of the United States, membership in which is limited to men, now about 20,000 in number, who have actually served in federal training camps.

The holding of similar camps in the future is assured and, in large part, depends upon the enthusiasm and work done by members of the First Junior Regiment in recruiting among their friends for next year's camps. Camps next summer at Plum Island, Portland (Maine), Fort Niagara and Fisher's Island have already been officially announced; others will undoubtedly be held at military reservations on the Great Lakes, the Pacific Coast, and in the South.

The Junior Division Executive Committee (offices, 31 Nassau St., New York City) holds weekly meetings in New York where plans are made and ways and means considered for the future, and already district committees have been formed in the principal cities of the United States.

Hundreds of communications and letters have been exchanged between its Secretary, others of the Committee, and members of the First Junior Regiment.



Practically every letter shows that the writer would come again, even had he experienced the discomforts of the rainy June camp so well described by a Plattsburger in the Philadelphia *Ledger*:

“Last night with my kit in a muddle,  
Last night as I lay in the rain,  
Last night with my head in a puddle,  
I swore I was coming again!”

Within three months after the close of the Plum Island Camp the names and addresses of nearly 10,000 boys had been received *solely through the cadets who attended this year's camp!*—and the real campaign of education, information and recruiting has hardly begun!

Shall *all* American boys who are physically fit, have the opportunity of learning what such Junior Military Camps can teach, or shall this great privilege be limited to the comparative few whose parents can afford to send them and to those whose way is paid by the generosity of individuals, or shall the *people* of the United States demand that Congress shall establish a system of *compulsory military training and service* and appropriate a sufficient sum of money to pay for the traveling expenses, uniforms and subsistence of young Americans ambitious to follow the example of the young men of the Commonwealth of Australia and of the Swiss Republic?

*Archibald G. Thacher.*

