

# HARDTACK AND COFFEE

OR

## The Unwritten Story of Army Life

*INCLUDING CHAPTERS ON*

ENLISTING, LIFE IN TENTS AND LOG HUTS, JONAHS AND BEATS,  
OFFENCES AND PUNISHMENTS, RAW RECRUITS, FORAGING,  
CORPS AND CORPS BADGES, THE WAGON TRAINS,  
THE ARMY MULE, THE ENGINEER  
CORPS, THE SIGNAL  
CORPS, ETC.

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SECOND CORPS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

### Illustrated

WITH SIX ELEGANT COLOR PLATES; AND OVER TWO HUNDRED  
ORIGINAL SKETCHES BY

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## CHAPTER IX.

### A DAY IN CAMP.

“ I hear the bugle sound the calls  
For *Réveillé* and *Drill*,  
For *Water*, *Stable*, and *Tattoo*,  
For *Taps* — and all was still.  
I hear it sound the *Sick-Call* grim,  
And see the men in line,  
With faces wry as they drink down  
Their whiskey and quinine.”



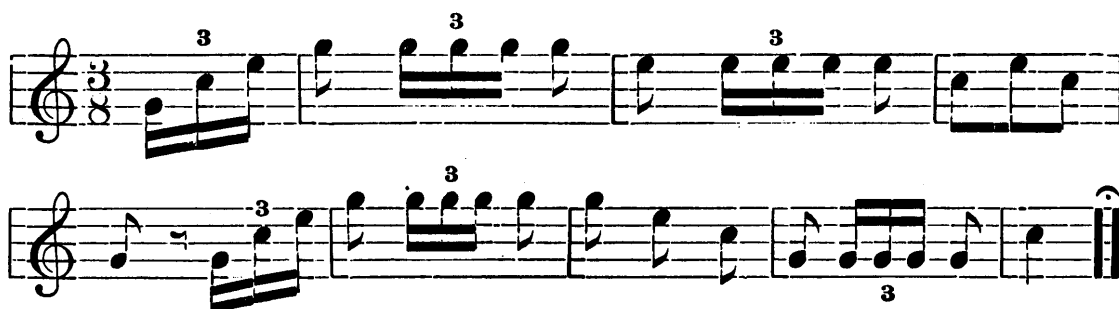
PARTIAL description of the daily programme of the rank and file of the army in the monotony of camp life, more especially as it was lived during the years 1861, '62, and '63, covers the subject-matter treated in this chapter. I do not expect it to be all new to the outside public even, who have attended the musters of the State militia, and have witnessed something of the routine that is followed there. This routine was the same in the Union armies in many respects, only with the latter there was a reality about the business, which nothing but stern war can impart, and which therefore makes soldiering comparatively uninteresting in State camp — such, at least, is the opinion of old campaigners.

The private soldiers in every arm of the service had many experiences in common in camp life, so that it will not be profitable to describe each in detail, but where the routine differs I shall be more entertaining and exact by adhering to the branch with which I am the most familiar, *viz.*: the light

artillery; and this I shall do, and, in so doing, shall narrate not the routine of my own company alone, but essentially of that branch of the service throughout the army as artillerymen saw and lived it.

Beginning the army day, then, the first bugle-call blown was one known in artillery tactics as the *Assembly of Buglers*, to sound which the corporal or sergeant of the guard would call up the bugler.

ASSEMBLY OF BUGLERS (*artillery*).



ASSEMBLY OF BUGLERS (*infantry*).



It was sounded in summer about five o'clock, and in winter at six. It was the signal to the men to get out of their blankets and prepare for the morning roll-call, known as *Réveillé*. At this signal, the hum of life could be heard within the tents. "Put the bugler in the guard-house!" — "Turn out!" — "All up!" — and other similar expressions, mingled with yawns, groans, and exclamations of deep disgust, formed a part of the response to this always unwelcome summons. But as only the short space of fifteen minutes was to intervene before the next call, the *Assembly*, would be blown, the men had to bestir themselves. Most of them would arise at once, do the little dressing that was required, and perform or omit their toilet, according to the inclination or habit or time of the individual.

A common mode of washing was for one man to pour water from a canteen into the hands of his messmate, and



A CANTEEN WASH.

thus take turns; but this method was practised most on the march. In settled camp, some men had a short log scooped out for a wash-basin. Some were not so particular about being washed every day, and in the morning would put the time required for the toilet into another "turn over" and nap. As such men always slept with their full uniform on, they were equivalent to

a kind of Minute Men, ready to take the field for roll-call, or any other call, at a minute's notice.

ASSEMBLY (*artillery*).



ASSEMBLY (*infantry*).



As soon as the Assembly sounded, the sight presented was quite an interesting one. The men could be seen emerging from their tents or huts, their toilet in various stages of completion. Here was a man with one boot on, and the other in his hand; here, one with his clothes but-

toned in skips and blouse in hand, which he was putting on as he went to the line; here was one with a blouse on; there, one with his jacket or overcoat (unless uniformity of dress on line was required—it was not always at the morning roll-calls, and in some companies never, only on inspections). Here and there was a man just about half awake,



FALL IN FOR ROLL-CALL.

having a fist at each eye, and looking as disconsolate and forsaken as men usually do when they get from the bed before the public at short notice.

Then, this roll-call was always a powerful cathartic on a large number, who must go at once to the sinks, and let the Rebel army wait, if it wanted to fight, until their return. The exodus in that direction at the sounding of the assembly was really quite a feature. All enlisted men in a company, except the guard and sick, must be present at this roll-call, unless excused for good reasons. But as the shirks always took pride in dodging it, their notice of intention to be absent from it for any reason was looked at askance by the sergeants of detachments. The studied agony that these men would work not only into their features but their

voice and even their gait would have been ludicrous in the extreme, if frequent repetitions had not rendered it disgusting; and the humorous aspect of these dodgers was not a little enhanced by the appearance which they usually had of having been dressed much as is a statue about to be dedicated, which, at the signal, by the pulling of a single cord, is instantly stripped of all its drapery and displayed in its full glory.

Other touches, which old soldiers *not* artillerymen would readily recognize as familiar, might be added to the scene presented in camp, when the bugle or the drum called the men into line for the first time in the day. When at last the line was formed, it was dressed by the orderly, — now called, I believe, first sergeant, — and while at “Parade Rest” the bugles blew.

### RÉVEILLÉ.



There were words improvised to many of these calls, which I wish I could accurately remember. Those adapted to Réveill , in some regiments, ran as follows: —

I can't get 'em up, I can't get 'em up,  
 I can't get 'em up, I tell you.  
 I can't get 'em up, I can't get 'em up,  
 I can't get 'em up at all.  
 The corporal's worse than the private,  
 The sergeant's worse than the corporal,

The lieutenant's worse than the sergeant,  
But the captain's worst of all.

I can't get 'em up, I can't get 'em up,  
I can't get 'em up this morning;  
I can't get 'em up, I can't get 'em up,  
I can't get 'em up to-day.

These are more appropriate when applied to the infantry, where the call was blown before the men came into line.

When the bugle ceased to sound, the orderly-sergeant of a battery said, "Pay attention to Roll-call"; and the roll was called by the six line or duty sergeants, each of whom had charge of twenty-five men, more or less. These sergeants then made their report of "all present or accounted for," or whatever the report was, to the orderly-sergeant, who, in turn, reported to the officer of the day in charge. If there were no special orders to be issued for fatigue duty, or no checks or rebukes or instructions to be given "for the good of the order," the line was dismissed. Any men who were absent without leave were quite likely to be put on the Black List for their temerity.

Shortly after Réveillé, the buglers sounded forth the shrill notes of

#### STABLE CALL.



Here are the words sung to this call: —

Go to the stable, as quick as you're able,  
And groom off your horses, and give them some corn;  
For if you don't do it the captain will know it,  
And then you will rue it, as sure as you're born.

This call summoned all the drivers in the company to assemble at the grain pile with their pair of canvas nose-bags, where the stable sergeant, so called (his rank was that of a private, though he sometimes put on the airs of a brigadier-general), furnished each with the usual ration of grain, either oats or corn. With this forage, and a curry-comb and



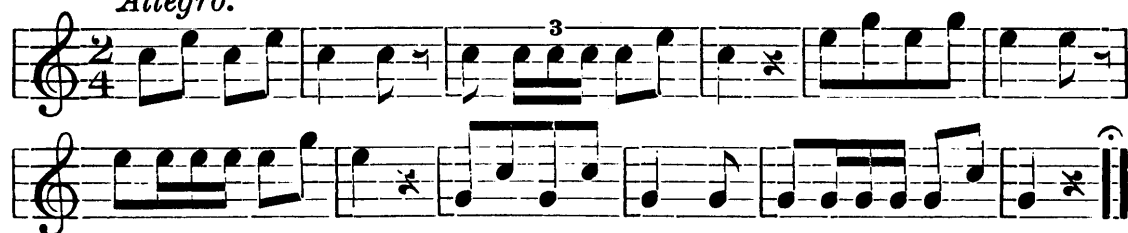
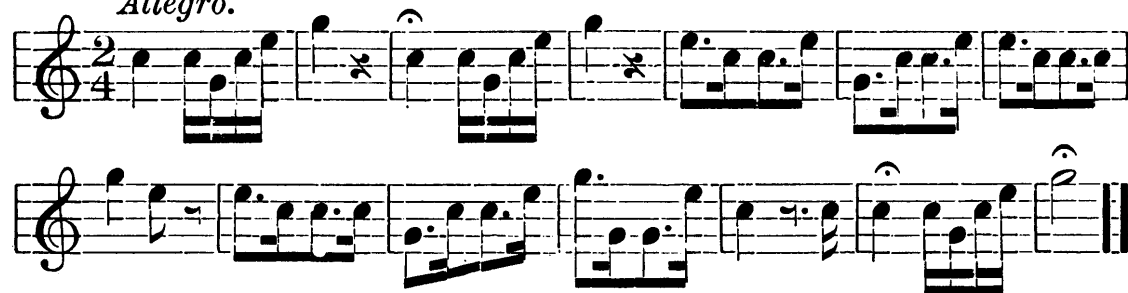
AT THE GRAIN PILE.

brush, they at once proceeded to the picket rope, where, under the inspection of the six sergeants, supervised also by the officer of the day and orderly, the horses were thoroughly groomed. At a given signal, the grooming ceased, and the nose-bags were strapped on. Sometimes the feed was given while the grooming was in progress.

The only amusing phase of this duty that I now recall, occurred when some luckless cannoneer, who would insist that he did not know the difference between a curry-comb and a curry of mutton, was detailed to minister to the sanitary needs of some poor, unsavory, glanders-infected, or greasy-heeled, or sore-backed, or hoof-rotten brute, that could not be entirely neglected until he was condemned by governmental authority. Now the cannoneers of a battery, who constituted what was known as the Gun Detachment, were an aristocracy. It is worthy of notice

that when artillery companies received their first outfit of horses, there were always at least three men who wished to be drivers to one who cared to serve as a cannoneer, the prevailing idea among the uninitiated being that a driver's position was a safer place in battle than that of a cannoneer. I will only say, in passing this point, that they were much disappointed at its exposures when they came to the reality; but the cannoneers, taking the recognized post of danger from choice, a post whose duties when well executed were the most showy on parade, as well as the most effective in action, upon whose coolness and courage depended the safety not only of their own company but often that of regiments, were nursed by these facts into the belief that they rightfully outranked the rest of the rank and file. The posturings and facial contortions of a cannoneer, therefore, who cherished these opinions, when called upon to perform such a task as I have specified, can readily be imagined; if they cannot, I will only say that they would have excited the risibilities of the most sympathetic heart. The four-footed patients alluded to were usually assigned to the charge of "Spare Men," that is, men who were neither drivers nor members of the gun detachments, who, by use, had come to fill the situation meekly and gracefully. There was one service that a cannoneer *would* occasionally condescend to do a driver. When the army was on the march, a driver would sometimes get weary of riding and ask a cannoneer to spell him while he stretched his legs; and just to oblige him, you know, the cannoneer would get into the saddle and ride two or three miles, but beyond that he kept to his own sphere.

Following close upon the completion of stable duties came Breakfast Call, when the men prepared and ate their breakfast, or received their dipper of coffee and other rations from the company cook-house. I can add nothing in this connection to what I have already related in the chapter on Rations.

BREAKFAST CALL (*in artillery*).*Allegro.*BREAKFAST CALL (*in infantry*).*Allegro.*

At eight o'clock the bugler blew

SICK CALL (*in artillery*).SICK CALL (*in infantry*).

Here are the words improvised to this call: —

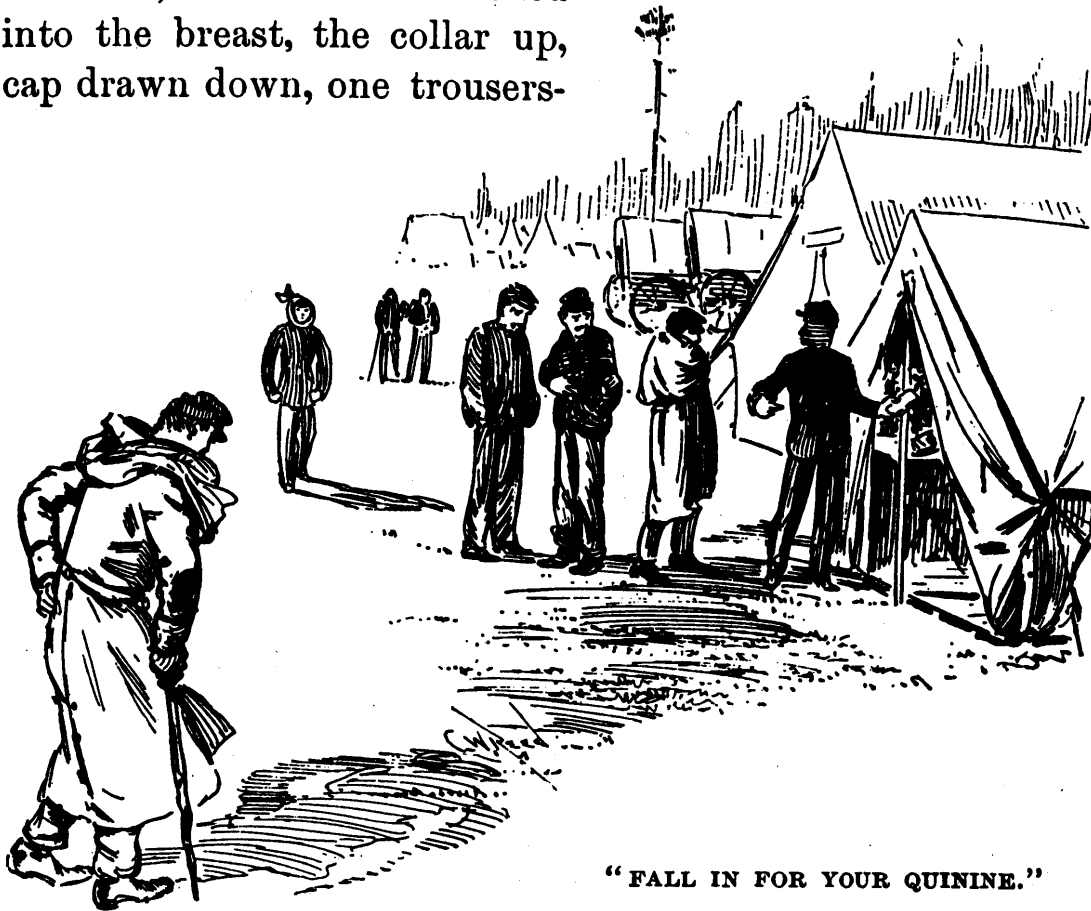
Dr. Jones says, Dr. Jones says:  
 Come and get your quin, quin, quin, quinine,  
 Come and get your quinine,  
 Q-u-i-n-i-n-e !!!

In response to this call, some who were whole and needed not a physician, as well as those who were sick, reported at the surgeon's tent for prescriptions. Much used to be said by the soldiers in regard to the competency or incompetency of army surgeons. It was well understood in war time that, even though an examination of fitness was required of surgeons to secure an appointment in the army, — at least in some States, — many charlatans, by some means, received commissions. Such an examination had as much value as those the medicine men made of recruits in '64 and '65, for those who have occasion to remember will agree that a sufficient number of men too old or diseased came to the front in those years — no, they did not all get as far as the front — to fairly stock all the hospitals in the country. A part of this showing must be charged to incompetent physicians, and a part to the strait the government was in for recruits. The appointment of incompetent surgeons, on the other hand, is to be condoned in a government sorely pressed for medical assistance, and all too indifferent, in its strait, to the qualifications of candidates.

Nothing in this line of remark is to be construed as reflecting on the great mass of army surgeons, who were most assiduous workers, and whose record makes a most creditable chapter in the history of the Rebellion. There are incompetents in every class.

Every soldier who tried to do his duty, and only responded to sick-call when in the direst need, should have received the most skilful treatment to be had ; but a strict regard for the facts compels the statement that a large number of those who waited upon the doctor deserved no better treatment than the most ignorant of these men of medicine were likely to administer. Yes, there were a few individuals to be found, I believe, in every company in the service, who, to escape guard or fatigue duty, would feign illness, and, if possible, delude the surgeon into believing them proper subjects for his tenderest care. Too often they succeeded,

and threw upon their own intimate associates the labors of camp, which they themselves were able to perform, and degraded their bodies by swallowing drugs, for the ailments to which they laid claim. I can see to-day, after a lapse of more than twenty years, these "beats on the government" emerging from their tents at sick-call in the traditional army overcoat, with one hand tucked into the breast, the collar up, cap drawn down, one trousers-



"FALL IN FOR YOUR QUININE."

leg hung up on the strap of a government boot, and a pace slow and measured, appearing to bear as many of the woes and ills of mankind as Landseer has depicted in his "Scapegoat."

Sometimes the surgeons were shrewd enough to read the frauds among the patients, in which case they often gave them an unpalatable but harmless dose, and reported them back for duty, or, perhaps, reported them back for duty *without* prescription, at the same time sending an advisory note to the captain of the company to be on the lookout for them. It was, of course, a great disappointment

to these would-be shirkers to fail in their plans, but some of the more persistent would stick to their programme, and, by refusing food and taking but little exercise, would in a short time make invalids of themselves in reality. There were undoubtedly many men in the service who secured admission to the hospitals, and finally their discharge, by this method; and some of these men, by such a course of action, planted the seeds of real diseases, to which they long since succumbed, or from which they are now sufferers.

I must hasten to say that this is not a burlesque on *all* the soldiers who answered to sick-call. God forbid! The genuine cases went with a different air from the shams. I can see some of my old comrades now, God bless them! sterling fellows, soldiers to the core, stalwart men when they entered the army, but, overtaken by disease, they would report to sick-call, day after day, hoping for a favorable change; yet, in spite of medicine and the nursing of their messmates, pining away until at last they disappeared—went to the hospitals, and there died. Oh, if such men could only have been sent to their homes before it was too late, where the surroundings were more congenial and comfortable, the nursing tender, and more skilful, because administered by warmer hearts and the more loving hands of mother, wife, or sister, thousands of these noble souls could have been saved to the government and to their families. But it was not to be, and so they wasted away, manfully battling for life against odds, dying with the names of dear ones on their lips, dear ones whose presence at the death-bed was in so many cases impossible, but dying as honorable deaths as if they had gone down

“With their back to the field and their feet to the foe.”

This is one of the saddest pictures that memory brings me from Rebellion days.

The proverbial prescription of the average army surgeon was quinine, whether for stomach or bowels, headache or

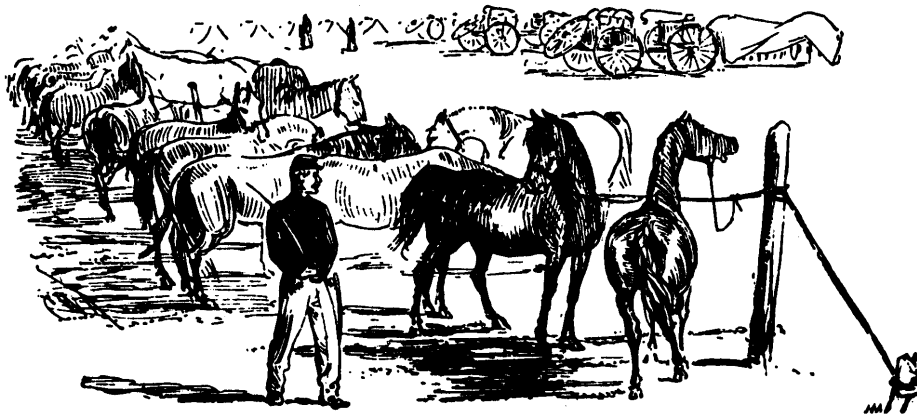
toothache, for a cough or for lameness, rheumatism or fever and ague. Quinine was always and everywhere prescribed with a confidence and freedom which left all other medicines far in the rear. Making all due allowances for exaggerations, that drug was unquestionably the popular dose with the doctors.

After Sick-Call came *Water-Call*, or

WATERING CALL,



at which the drivers in artillery and the full rank and file of the cavalry repaired to the picket-rope, and, taking their horses, set out to water them. This was a very simple and



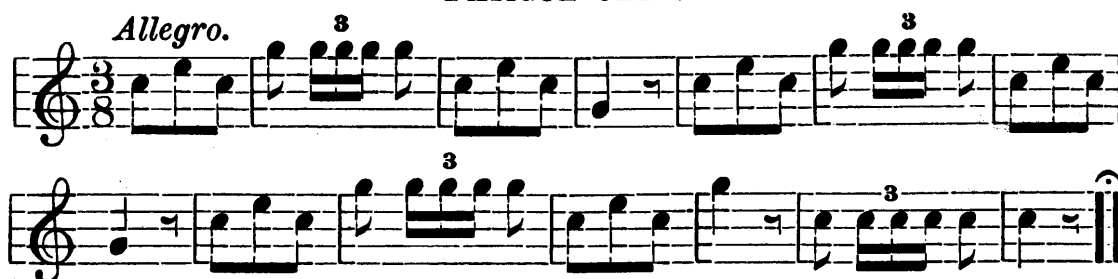
THE PICKET ROPE.

expeditious matter when the army was encamped near a river, as it frequently was; but when it was not, the horses were ridden from one-half a mile to two miles before a stream or pond was found adequate to the purpose. It was no small matter to provide the animals of the Army of the Potomac with water, as can be judged from the following figures: After Antietam McClellan had about thirty-eight thousand eight hundred horses and mules. When the army

crossed the Rapidan into the Wilderness, in 1864, there were fifty-six thousand four hundred and ninety-nine horses and mules in it. Either of these is a large number to provide with water. But of course they were not all watered at the same pond or stream, since the army stretched across many miles of territory. In the summer of 1864, the problem of water-getting before Petersburg was quite a serious one for man and beast. No rain had fallen for several weeks, and the animals belonging to that part of the army which was at quite a remove from the James and Appomattox Rivers had to be ridden nearly two miles (such was the case in my own company, at least; perhaps others went further) for water, and then got only a warm, muddy, and stagnant fluid that had accumulated in some hollow. The soldiers were sorely pressed to get enough to supply their own needs. They would scoop out small holes in old water courses, and patiently await a dipperfull of a warm, milky-colored fluid to ooze from the clay, drop by drop. Hundreds wandered through the woods and valleys with their empty canteens, barely finding water enough to quench thirst. Even places usually dank and marshy became dry and baked under the continuous drought. But such a state of affairs was not to be endured a great while by live, energetic Union soldiers; and as the heavens continued to withhold the much needed supply of water, shovels and pickaxes were forthwith diverted from the warlike occupation of intrenching to the more peaceful pursuit of well-digging, it soon being ascertained that an abundance of excellent water was to be had ten or twelve feet below the surface of the ground. These wells were most of them dug broadest at the top and with shelving sides, to prevent them from caving, stoning a well being obviously out of the question. Old-fashioned well-curbs and sweeps were then erected over them, and man and beast were provided with excellent water in camp.

Fatigue call was the next in regular order.

## FATIGUE CALL.

FATIGUE CALL (*infantry*).

The artillery were almost never detailed for fatigue duty outside of their own company. The only exception now occurring to me was when an artillery brigade headquarters was established near by, and an occasional detail was made and sent there for temporary service; but that was all. Our camp fatigue duty consisted in policing or cleaning camp, building stables, or perhaps I should more accurately designate them if I called them shelters, for the horses and mules, burying horses, getting wood and water, and washing gun-carriages and caissons for inspections.

This building of horse-shelters was at times no mean or trivial enterprise, and sometimes employed a great many men a great many days. When the army was on the march, with no danger impending, the horses were unharnessed and tied to the picket-rope. This was a rope about two hundred feet long and two inches in diameter, which, when the battery was drawn up in park, was hitched to the outer hind wheel of a caisson on one flank of the battery, and then carried through the hind wheels and over the ammunition-chests of the intervening caissons and made fast to a hind wheel of the caisson on the other flank.

In camp, a different plan was adopted. If it was in the open, a line of posts was set at intervals, such as would keep the rope from sagging low, and to them it was secured. The earth for ten feet on either side was then thrown up beneath like a well graded street, so as to drain off readily. Sometimes the picket was established in the edge of woods, in which case the rope ran from tree to tree. In summer camp a shelter of boughs was constructed over the picket. In winter, a wall of pine-boughs was set up around, to fend off bleak winds. Now and then, one was roofed with a thatch of confiscated straw; and I remember of seeing one nearly covered with long clapboard-like shingles, which were rifted out of pine-logs.

The character and stability of all such structures depended largely upon the skill displayed by regimental and company commanders in devising means to keep men employed, and on the tenure of a company's stay in a place. But at this late day I fail to recall a single instance where the men called a meeting and gave public expression to their gratitude and appreciation in a vote of thanks for the kind thoughtfulness displayed by said commanders. In fact, not this alone but *all* varieties of fatigue were accompanied in their doing with no end of growling.

It *was* aggravating after several days of exhausting labor, of cutting and carting and digging and paving, — for some of the “high-toned” commanders had the picket paved with cobble-stones, — to have boot-and-saddle call blown, summoning the company away, never to return to that camp, but to go elsewhere and repeat their building operations. It was the cheapest kind of balm to a company's feelings, where so much of love's — or rather *unwilling* — labor had been lost, to see another company appear, just as the first was leaving, and literally enter into the labors of the former, taking quiet and full possession of everything left behind. Yet such was one of the inevitable concomi-

tants of war, and so used did the men become to such upsettings of their calculations that twenty-four hours sufficed, as a rule, to wipe out all yearnings for what so recently had been.

I will add a few words in this connection in regard to the mortality of horses. Those who have not looked into the matter have the idea that actual combat was the chief source of the destruction of horseflesh. But, as a matter of fact, that source is probably not to be credited with *one-tenth* of the full losses of the army in this respect. It is to be remembered that the exigencies of the service required much of the brutes in the line of hard pulling, exposure, and hunger, which conspired to use them up very rapidly; but the various diseases to which horses are subject largely swelled the death list. Every few weeks a veterinary surgeon would look over the sick-list of animals, and prescribe for such as seemed worth saving or within the reach of treatment, while others would be condemned, led off, and shot. To bury these, and those dying without the aid of the bullet, I have shown, was a part of the fatigue duty of artillerymen and cavalrymen.

The procuring of wood was often a task involving no little labor for all arms of the military service. At Brandy Station, Virginia, before the army left there on the 3d of May, 1864, some commands were obliged to go four or five miles for it. The inexperienced can have little idea of how rapidly a forest containing many acres of heavy growth would disappear before an army of seventy-five or a hundred thousand men camped in and about it. The scarcity of wood was generally made apparent by this fact, that when an army first went into camp trees were cut with the scarf two or three feet above the ground, but as the scarcity increased these stumps would get chipped down often below a level with the ground.

After fatigue call the next business, as indicated by the drum or army bugle, was to respond to

DRILL CALL (*artillery*).DRILL CALL (*infantry*).

I will anticipate a little by saying that the last drill of any kind in which my own company engaged took place among the hills of Stevensburg, but a day or two before the army started into the Wilderness in '64. From that time until the close of the war batteries were kept in constant motion, or placed in the intrenchments on siege duty, thus putting battery drill out of the question; such at least was the fact with light batteries attached to the various army corps. The Artillery Reserve, belonging to the Army of the Potomac, may have been an exception to this. I have no information in regard to it.

The artillery, like the infantry, had its squad drill, but, as the marchings and facings were of only trifling importance, there was an insignificant amount of time spent on them. The drivers were usually exempted from drill of this kind, the cannoneers of the gun detachments doing enough of it to enable them, while drilling the standing-gun drill, so called, — a drill without horses, — to get from line into

their respective stations about the gun and limber, and *vice versa*. But long after this drill became obsolete and almost forgotten, the men seemed never to be at a loss to find their proper posts whenever there was need of it.

So far as I know, artillerymen never piqued themselves on their skill in marchings by platoons, keeping correct alignment meanwhile, whether to the front, the rear, obliquely, or in wheelings. Indeed, I remember this part of their schooling as rather irksome to them, regarding it as they did, whether rightfully or wrongfully, as ornamental and not essential. It undoubtedly *did* contribute to a more correct military bearing and soldierly carriage of the body, and, in a general way, improved military discipline: but these advantages did not always appear to the average member of the rank and file, and, when they did, were not always appreciated at their worth.

The drill of light-artillerymen in the school of the piece occupied a considerable time in the early history of each company. Before field movements could be undertaken, and carried out either with much variety or success, it was indispensable for the cannoneers and drivers to be fully acquainted with their respective duties; and not only was each man drilled in the duties of his *own* post, but in those of every other man as well. The cannoneers must know how to be drivers, and the drivers must have some knowledge of the duties of cannoneers. This qualified a man to fill not only any other place than his own when a vacancy occurred, but another place *with* his own if need came. This education included a knowledge of the ordinary routine of loading and firing, the ability to estimate distances with tolerable accuracy, cut fuses, take any part in the dismounting and mounting of the piece and carriage, the transfer of limber-chests, the mounting of a spare wheel or insertion of a spare pole, the slinging of the gun under the limber in case a piece-wheel should be disabled; even all the parts of the harness must be known by cannoneer as

well as driver, so that by the time a man had graduated from this school he was possessed of quite a liberal military education.

Doing this sort of business over and over again, day after day, got to be quite tedious, but it all helped to pass away the three years. One part of this instruction was quite interesting, particularly if the exercise was a match against time, or if there was competition between detachments or sections; this was the dismounting and remounting the piece and carriage. In this operation each man must know his precise place, and fit into it as accurately as if he were a part of a machine. This was absolutely necessary, in order to secure facility and despatch. In just the measure that he realized and lived up to this duty, did his gun detachment succeed in reducing the time of the exercise. One gun's crew in my company worked with such speed, strength, unanimity, and precision, that they reduced the time for performing this manœuvre, including loading and firing, to forty-nine seconds. Other batteries may have done even better. The guns we then used were the steel Rodmans, weighing something over eight hundred pounds, and four of us could toss them about pretty much at will. I say four of us, because just four were concerned in the lifting of the gun. We could not have handled the brass Napoleons with equal readiness, for they are somewhat heavier.

After cannoneers and drivers came to be tolerably familiar with the school of the piece, field manœuvres with the battery began. The signal which announced this bit of "entertainment for man and beast" is known to Army Regulations as

## BOOTS AND SADDLES,



a call whose tones at a later period sent the blood of artillerymen and cavalrymen coursing more rapidly through the veins when it denoted that danger was nigh, and seeking encounter.

Battery drill was an enterprise requiring ample territory. When the vicinity of the camp would not furnish it, the battery was driven to some place that would. If cannoneers as a class were more devout than the other members of a light-artillery company, it must have been because they were stimulated early in their military career to pray — to pray that the limits of the drill-ground should be so contracted that the battery could not be cantered up and down a plain more than half a mile in extent, with cannoneers dismounted and strung along in the rear at intervals varying with their running capacity or the humor of the commanding officer; or, if mounted, clutching at the handles or edge of the limber-chest, momentarily expecting to be hurled headlong as the carriages plunged into an old sink or tent ditch or the gutter of an old company street, or struck against a stump or stone with such force as to shake the ammunition in the chests out of its packing, making it liable to explode from the next concussion — at least so feared the more timid of the cannoneers, when their fears of being thrown off were quieted so that they could think of anything else. On such occasions they appreciated the re-enforced trousers peculiar to artillerymen, and wished government had been even more liberal in that direction. But this mental state of timidity soon wore off, and the men came to feel more at home while mounted on these noisiest and hardest-riding of vehicles; or else sulked in the rear, with less indifference to consequences.

Notwithstanding the monotony that came of necessity to be inseparable from them, battery drills were often exhilarating occasions. It was in the nature of things for them to be so, as when the artillery in action moved at all it must needs move promptly. A full six-gun battery going across

a plain at a trot is an animated spectacle. To see it quietly halted, then, at the command, "Fire to the rear. — Caissons pass your pieces-trot-march. — In Battery," break into moving masses, is a still more animated and apparently confused scene, for horses and men seem to fly in all directions. But the apparent confusion is only brief, for in a moment the guns are seen unlimbered in line, the cannoneers at their posts, and the piece-limbers and caissons aligned at their respective distances in the rear.

There was an excitement about this turmoil and despatch which I think did not obtain in any other branch of the service. The rattle and roar was more like that which is heard in a cotton-factory or machine-shop than anything else with which I can compare it. The drill of a light battery possessed much interest to outsiders, when well done. It was not unusual, when the drill-ground was in proximity to an infantry camp, for the men to look on by hundreds. To see six cannons, with their accompanying six caissons, sped by seventy-two horses across the plain at a lively pace, the cannoneers either mounted or in hot pursuit, suddenly halt at the bugle signal, and in a moment after appear "In Battery" belching forth mimic thunder in blank cartridge at a rapid rate, and in the next minute "limbered up" and away again to another part of the field, was a sight full of interest and spirit to the unaccustomed beholder; and if, as sometimes happened, there was a company of cavalry out on drill, to engage in a sham fight with the battery, a thrilling and exciting scene ensued, which later actual combats never superseded in memory; for while the cavalry swept down on the guns at a gallop, with sabres flashing in the air, the cannoneers with guns loaded with blank cartridges, of course, stand rigid as death awaiting the onset, until they are within a few rods of the battery. Then the lanyards are pulled, and the smoke, belched suddenly forth, completely envelops both parties to the bloodless fray.

As the drilling of a battery was done for the most part by sounding the commands upon a bugle, it became necessary for cannoneers and drivers to learn the calls; and this they did after a short experience. Even the horses became perfectly familiar with some of these calls, and would proceed to execute them without the intervention of a driver. Cavalry horses, too, exhibited great sagacity in interpreting bugle signals.

Sometimes the lieutenants who were chiefs of sections were sent out with their commands for special drill. A section comprised two guns with their caissons. There was little enthusiasm in this piecemeal kind of practice, especially after familiarity and experience in the drill of the full battery; but it performed a part in making the men self-possessed and expert in their special arm of the service. Beyond that, it gave men and horses exercise, and appetite for government food, which, without the exercise, would have been wanting, to a degree at least, and occupied time that would otherwise have been devoted to the soldier's pastime of grumbling.

At twelve o'clock the *Dinner Call* was sounded.

#### DINNER CALL.



#### DINNER CALL (*infantry*).



I can add nothing of interest here beyond what I have already presented in my talk on rations.

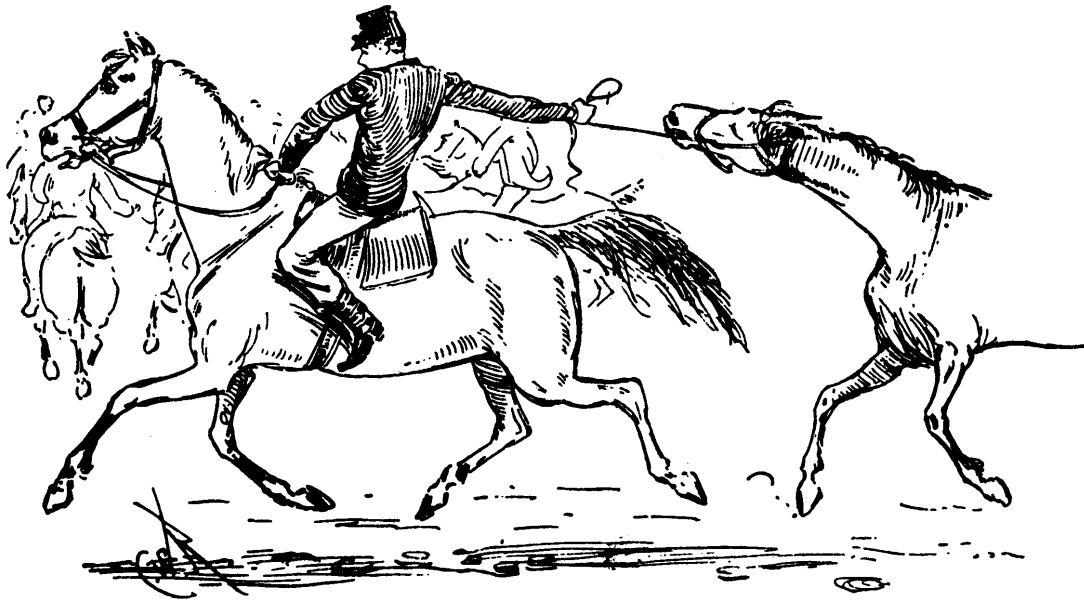
There was nothing in the regular line of duty in light artillery for afternoons which could be called routine, although there was more or less standing-gun drill for cannoneers early in the service. In the infantry, battalion drill often occupied the time. The next regular call for a battery was *Water Call*, sounded at four o'clock, or perhaps a little later. On the return of the horses *Stable Call* was again blown, and the duties of the morning, under this call, repeated.

At about 5.45 P. M., *Attention* was blown, soon to be followed by the *Assembly*, when the men fell in again for *Retreat* roll-call.

## RETREAT.



The music for this was arranged in three parts, and when there were three bugles to blow it the effect was quite pleasing. The name *Retreat* was probably given this call because



GOING TO WATER.

it came when there was a general retiring from the duties of the day. This roll-call corresponded with the *Dress Parade* of the infantry. Uniformity of dress was a necessity at this time with the latter, and quite generally too in the artillery; but the commanders of batteries differed widely in taste and military discipline. A company of soldiers was what its captain made it. Some were particular, others were not, but all should have been in this matter of dress for at least one roll-call in the day. At this parade all general orders were read, with charges, specifications, and findings of courts-martial, etc., so that the name of E. D. Townsend, Assistant Adjutant-General, became a household word. At this time, too, lectures on the shortcomings of the company were in order. The lecturer employed by the government to do this was usually the officer of the day, though now and then the captain would spell him. A lecturer of this kind had two great advantages over a lecturer in civil life; first, he was always sure of an audience, and, second, he could

hold their attention to the very close. None of them left while the lecture was in progress. Now and then an orderly-sergeant would try his hand in the lecture field, but unless he was protected by the presence of a pair of shoulder-straps he was quite likely to be coughed or groaned down, or in some other way discouraged from repeating the effort.

The shortcomings alluded to were of a varied character. I think I mentioned some of them in the chapter on punishments. Sometimes the text was the general delinquency of the men in getting into line; sometimes it was a rebuke for being lax in phases of discipline; the men were not sufficiently respectful to superior officers, did not pay the requisite attention to *saluting*, had too much *back talk*, were *too boisterous in camp*, *too untidy in line*. These, and twenty other allied topics, all having a bearing on the characteristics essential in the make-up of a good soldier, were preached upon with greater or less unction and frequency, as circumstances seemed to require, or the standard in a given company demanded.

After the dismissal of the line, guard-mounting took place; but this in the artillery was a very simple matter. The guard at once formed on the parade line were assigned to their reliefs, and dismissed till wanted. Sometimes the guard-mounting took place in the morning, as did that of the infantry. The neatest and most soldierly appearing guardsman was selected as captain's orderly. But guard-mounting in light artillery was not always thus simple. Camp Barry, near Washington, was used as a school of instruction for light batteries, for a period of at least three years. During the greater part of this time there were ten or a dozen batteries there on an average. Under one of its commandants, at least, a brigade guard-mounting was held at eight o'clock A. M., and here members of my company responded to the bugle-call known as the "Assembly of Guard," for the first and last time.

## ASSEMBLY OF GUARD.



The infantry bugle-call for the same purpose was more familiar, as it was heard daily for months. It ran as follows:—



This call was immediately followed by other music, either a brass band or a fife-and-drum corps, to which the details from the various companies marched out on to the color-line, where the usual formalities ensued, such in substance as may be seen at a muster to-day. The guard necessary in a single company of artillery was so small that the call with the bugle was rarely if ever sounded, at least in volunteer companies. A detail of cannoneers stood guard over the guns night and day, and over the cook-house and quartermaster's stores at night, and sometimes there was one posted in front of company headquarters. A detail of drivers, also, went on duty at night at the picket-rope, to assure that the horses were kept tied and not stolen by marauding cavalrymen.

In the safe rear, where, as the men used to say, the officers were wont to sit up late at night burning out government candles, while they devised ways and means to keep the men exercised as well as exorcised, a guard tent was pitched in front of the camp, in which the guard were compelled to

stay when off post, much to their disgust sometimes; but when the company or regiment was in line along the glorious front, that unpopular lodging-house was abandoned, and each guardsmen slept in his own quarters, on his own army feather-bed, whither the corporal of the guard must come for his victim in the silent hours when that victim was wanted to go on post.

With the infantry, guard-mounting took place in the morning at eight o'clock. The guard was divided into three equal portions, called reliefs, first, second, and third. each relief being on post two hours and off four, thus serving eight hours out of the twenty-four. With all the irksomeness of the detail, the guardsman enjoyed a temporary triumph as such, for on that day, at least, he could snap his fingers at roll-calls and all calls for fatigue duty — in short, was an independent gentleman within certain limits.

I have stated it to have been the duty of the corporal of the guard to seek out the members of the various reliefs in their quarters, when the time came for them to go on post. There was more or less of lively incident attending these explorations — not, however, with the sanction of the corporal, to whom the liveliness was anything but amusing. Your corporal of the guard was up to the average of ordinary officers in intelligence, and, as he was just started on the ladder of promotions, fully intended to do his whole duty at least; and so he was wont to prepare himself for his nightly rounds by obtaining such a knowledge of the local geography of the camp as would enable him to arouse and assemble his guard with the least inconvenience to himself and the least commotion to the camp. But the best laid plans of corporals of the guard would frequently “gang agley,” even though they used every precaution, and so it was the rule rather than the exception for him to get into the wrong tent, and, after waking up all the inmates and getting the profane to swearing, and all to abusing him for his stupid intrusion, to retreat in as good order as possible and try

again. The next time perhaps he would get into the right one, and, after scrutinizing his list of the guard once more, call out the name of *Smith*, for example. No answer.



STOCKADED SIBLEY TENTS.

There was a kind of deafness generated in the service, which was almost epidemic among guardsmen, especially night guard; at least, such seemed to be the case, for the man that was wanted to go out and take his post was invariably the last one in the tent to be awakened by the summons of the corporal; and long before that waking moment came, the corporal had as aids on his staff all these self-same inmates who had been victims to the assumed deafness of the man sought, and whose voices now furnished no mean chorus to the corporal's refrain.

Sometimes, when the knight of the double chevron was a man of retiring and quiet demeanor, he would save his lungs and make an effort to find his man by stepping inside the tent, and flashing the light of his army candle from the open side of his tin lantern upon the features of each of the

slumberers until he came to his victim, when he would shake him by the shoulder and arouse him. The only drawback to this method occurred when the reflections of the corporal woke up the wrong man, who, if he happened to be one of those explosive creatures whom I have before mentioned, was not always complimentary to the intruder in his use of language.

Once in a while, in making his midnight rounds, when calling the name of one of his guard through the door of the stockade, the corporal would be politely directed by some one from within, perhaps the very man he wanted, to "Next tent below"; and many a time this officer succeeded in getting such an innocent and unsuspecting household completely by the ears before being convinced of the joke which had been played on him, when he would return to the first tent in no enviable humor; for meanwhile the men to be relieved were chafing and sputtering away at the non-appearance of the corporal and the relief. I think there was no one minor circumstance which vexed soldiers more than tardy relief from their posts, for every minute that they waited after the expiration of their allotted time seemed to them at least ten; so that the reception which the corporal and relief received when they *did* arrive was likely to be far from fraternal.

Speaking of the corporal of the guard reminds me of a snatch of a song which used to be sung in camp to the tune of "When Johnny comes marching home." Here is the fragment:—

My Johnny he now a Corporal is!

Hurrah! Hurrah!

My Johnny he now a Corporal is,

You bet he knows his regular biz,

And we'll all feel gay, etc.

At 8.30 P. M., the bugle again sounded "Attention," followed by the "Assembly," about five minutes afterwards, and the tumbling-out of the company from their evening sociables, to form in line for the final roll-call of the day, known as *Tattoo*.

## TATTOO.



But this was Tattoo in the artillery. A somewhat more inspiring call was that of the infantry, which gave the bugler quite full scope as a soloist. Here it is:—



Ere the last tone had died away, we could hear, when camped near enough to the infantry for the purpose, a very comical medley of names and responses coming from the several company streets of the various regiments within ear-shot. It was "Jones!"—"Brown!"—"Smith!"—"Joe Smith!"—"Green!"—"Gray!"—"O'Neil!"—"O'Reilly!"—"O'Brien!" and so on through the nationalities, only that the names were intermingled. Then, the responses were replete with character. I believe it to be among the abilities of a man of close observation to write out quite at length prominent characteristics of an entire company, by noting carefully the manner in which the men answer "Here!" at roll-call. Every degree of pitch in the gamut was represented. Every degree of force had its exponent. Some answered in a low voice, only to tease the sergeant, and *roar* out a second answer when called again. There were upward slides and downward slides, guttural tones and nasal tones. Occasionally, some one would answer for a messmate, who was absent without leave, and take his chances of being detected in the act. Darkness gave cover to much good-natured knavery.

Tattoo was blown in artillery with the company at "Parade Rest," as at Réveillé. The roll-call and reports followed just as before, and the company was then dismissed. Well do I recall, after the lapse of more than twenty years, the melodious tones of this little bit of army music coming to our ears so consecutively from various parts of the army as to make continuous vibrations for nearly fifteen minutes, softened and sweetened by varying distances, as more than a thousand bugles gave tongue to the still and clear evening air, telling us that in the time specified a hundred thousand men had come out of their rude temporary homes — possibly the last ones they would ever occupy — to respond to their names, and give token that, though Nature's pall had now overshadowed the earth, they were yet loyally at their posts awaiting further orders for their country's service.

After this roll-call was over, the men had half an hour in which to make their beds, put on their nightcaps, and adjust themselves for sleep, as at nine o'clock *Taps* was sounded, which in the artillery ran as follows :—



In the infantry, the bugle-call for *Taps* was identical with the *Tattoo* call in artillery. At its conclusion a drummer beat a few single, isolated taps, which closed the army day. At this signal all lights must be put out, all talking and other noises cease, and every man, except the guard, be inside his quarters. In a previous chapter I think I stated that the Black List caught the men who violated this regulation. Some officers enforced it with greater rigidity than others, but all must have a quiet camp. Yet here, as elsewhere, rank interposed to shield culprits from violations of military regulations, and, while the private soldier was punished for burning his candle or talking to his messmate after the bugle-signal, general, field, staff, or line officers could and did get together and carouse, and make the night turbulent with their revelry into the small hours, with no one to molest or call them to an account for it, although making tenfold the disturbance ever caused by the high private after hours.

*Taps* ended the army day for all branches of the service, and, unless an alarm broke in upon the stillness of the night, the soldiers were left to their slumbers ; or, what was oftener the case, to meditations on home ; the length of time in months and days they must serve before returning thither ; their prospects of surviving the vicissitudes of war ; of the

boys who once answered roll-call with them, now camped over across the Dark River; or of plans for business, or social relations to be entered upon, if they should survive the war. All these, and a hundred other topics which furnished abundant field for air-castle-building, would chase one another through the mind of the soldier-dreamer, till his brain would grow weary, his eyes heavy, and balmy sleep would softly steal him away from a world of trouble into the realm of sweet repose and pleasant dreams.

