

A DAY AT WEST POINT

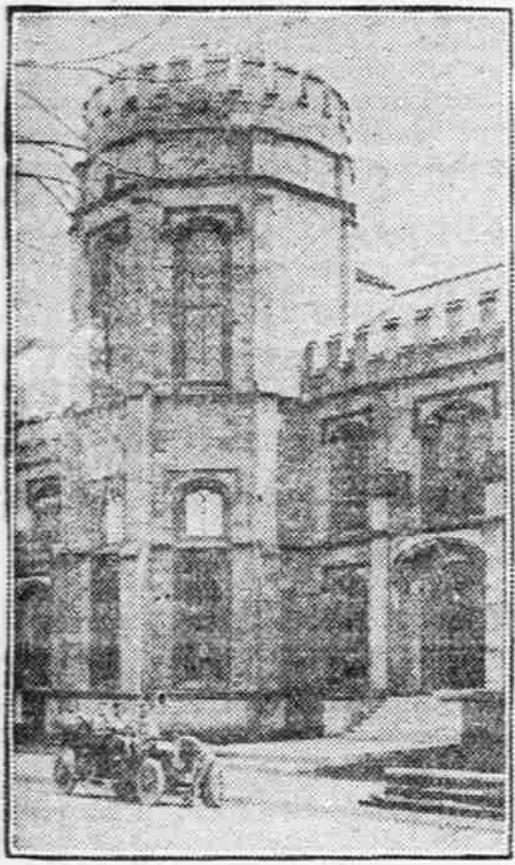


IN Revolutionary days West Point, which is now in the public eye because of the hazing episode, was known as the "Gibraltar of the Hudson." Washington saw the strategic advantages of the place, and it was through his urgings that it was fortified and held. After the war he outlined the plan of a military academy there, but it was not until the beginning of Jefferson's term that the school was actually opened. Even then it had little discipline or efficiency, and it was sixteen years later, in the presidential term of James Monroe, that the West Point of today began to take form. Monroe appointed as superintendent Colonel Sylvanus Thayer, who is justly known as the "father of the Military Academy." Thayer remained superintendent for nearly sixteen years, and under his able management the West Point of fame came into existence.

On a June morning recently the writer took a boat at Cold Spring and chugged across the broad river to West Point. I had previously made an appointment by telephone and was told that I would be placed under the charge of Captain Charles, the acting adjutant for the day. There were so much sunshine and scenery on the river that by the time the boat was across my civilian mind had forgotten just what office Captain Charles was supposed to be holding and finally concluded it was officer of the day. On landing I found bunches of cadets all along the way surveying. There were about forty-seven of these squads out on this particular morning. West Point is the most surveyed spot of ground on earth.

On inquiring where Captain Charles, "the officer of the day," could be found, I was informed that he was probably over at the summer camp, which was up a very tall hill and across a very broad ground, about a mile as the crow flies, but about three miles and a quarter as a man walks it on a hot morning.

On my way to the summer camp I was waylaid and halted several times



NORTH BARRACKS, WEST POINT.

by the scenery. On the top of Trophy Point, where stands the simple and fine column known as Battle monument, there is one of the most magnificent views on the planet. Looking north up the Hudson one beholds a sweep of the majestic river reaching ten miles or more to Newburg. On each side are the mountains of the Highlands, Bull Hill and Breakneck on the right and Crow's Nest and Storm King to the left. Jutting out into the river are Constitution Island, Stony Point and another green isle which makes a dot of verdure in Newburg bay. When I got into the middle of this scene, I not only forgot all I had ever heard about the office held by Captain Charles, but also where I was or what I was there for. I am as much in love with the Hudson and the Gateway into the Lowlands as a man is with his best girl, and when I got this new view of them I was really irresponsible.

Upon arriving at the summer camp I was told that I must report at the guard tent. I did not know what infraction of discipline I had been guilty of, but learned I was only to go to the guard tent because the guards are not supposed to talk, you know. When I asked for Captain Charles one of the cadets was called to conduct me over to that officer's tent. With chest out, shoulders back, chin in—you know the formula—this young man seized a musket, slammed it against his chest, about faced and, with the magnificent carriage of a pouter pigeon, drilled across the ground, with yours truly following humbly after.

We found that Captain Charles was not in. Thereupon we about faced once more and drilled back to the guard tent. Nobody knew just where Captain Charles could be found, but it was thought he would be around about 11 o'clock. As I wanted to see the museum I said I would go over there and come back. A guard pointed out the

museum building, which lies at the far side of another very broad plain. I was told that I was to go to this building and enter the first "sally port." I did not know exactly what a sally port is, but by that time I had my ignorance somewhat under control and knew better than to ask dumb questions. So I marched in as dignified a manner as possible across the long parade ground. I could not do it in as proud and imposing a way as my



CADETS AS DARING HORSEMEN.

pouter pigeon friend, the cadet, but still managed to cover the distance. Arriving at the museum, I found that a sally port is really harmless if you know how to get along with it and approach it in an unconcerned manner, as though you had been used to sally ports all your life. I could do this all the better inasmuch as it looked like a tunnel under the subway with which I had been on terms of enforced intimacy.

To describe the museum itself and to do justice to its wonderful historical collection one needs an entirely fresh supply of adjectives out of a dictionary that has never been soiled by the hand of man. In it are trophies from all our wars; also a large collection of guns whose brothers may become trophies in wars that are not yet pulled off. There is the flag reared by Ellsworth at Alexandria; there is a part of the flag-staff at Sumter; there are old wooden cannons taken from the Philippines; there are two handed Chinese swords captured at Peking; there are relics from Santiago and Manila; there are civil war relics, Mexican war relics, Indian war relics and relics from the two wars with our "hands across the sea cousins," the English, which they are trying to forget as much as we are trying to remember. The museum at West Point is well worth any man's time to see. If he takes it all in, it will give him a headache and a higher appreciation of his country's glory.

On this particular morning, however, I had a stern duty to perform. Captain Charles was still undiscovered. Parading back to the guard tent in my best form, I was told that he had not yet shown up, but an orderly who just then happened along said that the captain was probably down at the batteries, where a lot of cadets were shooting cannons at the side of a nearby mountain and were occasionally hitting it. This was down near the dock, and on walking back I found the distance had increased from three and one-quarter miles to three and seven-eighths, doubtless due to the expansive power of heat in the middle of the day. Upon reaching the barracks we found that Captain Charles was not there, had not been there, and nobody acted as though he knew or cared whether he was going to be there or not.

The target practice is really very interesting, especially to the people at the other end of the line. The West Shore railroad had to construct a tunnel so that the trains could dive into a hole when the cadets became too enthusiastic in shooting at the locomotive and the passengers. One of the biggest guns was trained on the top of a mountain and made the dirt and stones jump up in a most exciting manner. The only reason the top of that mountain had not been all shot away was that the gunners had not hit it often enough. I asked them what happened to the people on the other side of the mountain when the balls missed the entire landscape and went tearing up the atmosphere beyond. The orderly told me he did not know, but as there had been no complaints he supposed either that nobody had been hit by the stray shots or, if they had, that they had been killed instantly, so that they did not know what had struck them.

I still had to discover Captain Charles, and, having marched down the hill, I marched up again in reverse order from the famous king of France. The distance to the guard tent had now grown to four and five-sixteenths miles. One must be accurate in his

figures at West Point, where mathematics is the chief study. The increase this time I found to be due to the fact that it is a longer distance up a hill than in a straight line. At the guard tent nothing had been heard of Captain Charles, and a cadet was again sent to his tent, making the maneuver in the same splendid fashion as before. It was all in vain. Captain Charles was not there. I began to have doubts of that officer's corporeal existence, regarding him as a myth, like William Tell or the man who landed on that other celebrated William, surnamed Patterson. Most famous people, I find, are named Bill.

The guard officer told me that my last chance of finding a trace of Captain Charles was to go to the officers' clubhouse, which he pointed out across a parade ground in another direction. On the door of this building I found an admonition to keep out, on pain of death or the guardhouse, I do not remember which. Just then a colored mail carrier hove in sight, however, and as mail carriers, like policemen and editors, are supposed to know everything I asked him and at last was set right. Yes, there was a Captain Charles—he was an actual flesh and blood person and was acting adjutant. He would be found at the headquarters, seven buildings up and four to the left.

Upon discovering Captain Charles my troubles were over. Doors that had before been shut suddenly opened. I was shown all over everything, from the clean and up to date kitchens to the clubhouse and the library. Better than all, I was invited to lunch and met the other officers, from Commandant Howze, whom I had roasted editorially in a New York newspaper the year before, down the line. I was even thawed out to the extent that I told the commandant about having roasted him, and he did not seem to mind it at all. What is the use of abusing anybody if he doesn't know about it or pays no attention?

At the West Point library are manuscripts and famous letters that would set the average collector crazy. There are autograph letters from Frederick the Great all down the line, including the original of General Grant's "immediate and unconditional surrender." There are original full length paintings of Presidents Jefferson and Monroe. Most notable of all, however, are memorial tablets to James A. MacNeill Whistler and Edgar Allan Poe, both of whom were students at West Point, but neither of whom graduated nor became a soldier. Yet it may well be that the fame of Whistler and Poe will be kept green after that of all the warriors turned out at West Point has faded, so much greater is it to create, even though it be but a painting or a poem, than to destroy.

J. A. EDGERTON.

BRISTOW FOR SENATOR.

Postal Fraud Investigator Named by Republicans of Kansas.

Joseph L. Bristow, the investigator of postal frauds for the United States government, who has been made the Republican candidate for United States senator from Kansas to succeed Chester L. Long after a bitter fight in the primaries throughout the state, has a striking record as a public official. Mr. Bristow first gained national fame because of the able and impartial manner in which he investigated the great postal frauds in Cuba. The result was the prosecution of Neely and Rathbone. Three years later, and still a fourth assistant postmaster general, he was named by President Roosevelt to rip out the fraud believed to exist in branches of the post-office department in Washington. And Bristow ripped, no matter how many high and mighty statesmen or politicians sought to protect their friends. As a result Bristow, six feet two and as thin as half a fence rail, loomed up pretty big as a national figure, even as a vice presidential possibility. During McKinley's administration Bristow incurred the enmity of Mark



JOSEPH L. BRISTOW

Hanna, and everybody in Washington said Hanna would get Bristow's scalp. But McKinley stood by Bristow and went to Hanna. "I guess I'll try Bristow awhile longer," which meant that Bristow could stay in the postoffice department as long as McKinley was president. When complaints were made to Roosevelt about Bristow by powerful politicians Roosevelt said, "The one thing against Bristow is that he is so infernally honest."

Bristow has long had senatorial ambitions. He was for years a newspaper owner and editor. After editing the Salina Republican he became publisher of the Ottawa (Kan.) Herald. Born in Kentucky, Bristow is now fifty-eight years old.

A BAD PLAN OF TRAVEL.

The Scheme That Worried One Woman on Her Trip Abroad.

"When I hear of people joyfully making plans for their first trip abroad," said a man who has made many a transatlantic voyage, "I am tempted to give them a little bit of advice, based, of course, on my own observations, but particularly upon a remark made to me by a middle aged woman whose seat in the saloon was next to mine on my return trip last summer. This woman had a husband, and it was to him that she referred in answering my question one day. I asked her what she had been doing on the other side. She looked half quizzically, half reproachfully, at her spouse and said, 'Well, my principal occupation was trying to keep track of John.'

"It developed that her concern was not over what John might do in European capitals, but simply related to the difficulty each had in meeting the other after pursuing their several ways in a strange city, she to browse among the shops and he, an inveterate sightseer, to visit this, that and the other spot of interest. Their general scheme, as I was informed, was to diverge, say, in the morning, following their respective bents and arranging to meet at a certain place at a certain time. The plan sounds feasible, but it is experimental, and, as both of them found, it was an experiment that didn't work well. First one would be delayed and then the other, and if you have ever waited for a person in a foreign city you can appreciate the particular variety of anxiety that comes in about ten minutes. There's a feeling that something has happened to the missing person, for one thing, and, for another, there's an increasing realization that you yourself are wasting time. If you start out to look up the delinquent, the case becomes practically hopeless. The needle in the haystack is easy compared to that search. When the reunion does come at dinner time in the hotel or pension, explanations are received with tears or laughy disdain. Oh, I know; I've been through it."—New York Press.

A Kaleidoscope of Fashions.

For my part I commend a quick changing fashion and could I have chosen my period would have fixed on the fickle years of the first empire, when fashions shifted from week to week, and that, too, with such fine shades of difference that only the most frivolous could follow them. Then the great conqueror brought to Paris finery from the ends of the earth, muslins from India, garlands of roses from Bengal, stuffs shining with gold and silver from Cairo; from Turkey, of course, turbans, and from the far east shawls—shawls from Kashmir, from Persia and from the Levant; shawls, particolored, blue—bright blue—and red and green and black and the clear yellow of the sun; shawls patterned with all the interlacings of Asian car-pice and fit not only to hang from the shoulders of the fair, but to give a coquette of eastern fancy day long visions of the orient. From the past, for all time as well as all the earth was then Napoleon's, came the fashion of the troubadours—chapeaux a Cre-neaux, sleeves a la maameluk, chevexes a Penfant, leading to a very modern period who can say what charming Gothic airs? How do not such revolutions of fashion enlarge the feminine heart and teach it to live in all ages and all climates!—Lucy M. Donnelly in Atlantic.

The Adored One.

He is a confirmed bachelor. In fact, his attitude toward women is almost that of a misogynist. His particular bete noire is a new acquaintance of his sister, Miss Blank.

He met her in the street the other day and, seeing no way out of it, stopped and spoke to her. She saw how he was fidgeting to get away and said:

"You seem very preoccupied. Ah, I know! You are thinking of the one you adore."

"I adore no one," was his stiff rejoinder.

"You can't deceive me. I know you are deeply in love. Besides, your sister showed me a photo of the object of your devotion only last night. It isn't a type I admire. But there, every one to his taste. I won't tell any one. Goodby."

And before he could reply she was gone.

When he reached home he said to his sister:

"What girl's photo did you show Miss Blank last night?"

"Not any. The only photo I showed her was one of yourself."

Then it dawned upon him what Miss Blank was driving at.—London Scraps.

Automatic Salt Works.

About a hundred miles north of Lima, near the town of Huacho, is one of the great curiosities of nature, a salt factory on an automatic plan. When the tide comes in it fills a lot of shallow basins, and the water is prevented from flowing back into the sea by closing the gates. The atmosphere is so dry that the water evaporates rapidly and leaves a sediment of salt in an almost pure state, which is scrapped up, packed into sacks and shipped to market. Within the coast a little farther the percolation of sea water through the porous rocks into pits and hollows has caused immense deposits of salt to accumulate. The salt is taken out in blocks six or eight inches square and sold in that form. As soon as the salt is excavated the water comes in again and in a year or two has solidified and is ready for the market. Wells driven into the sand disclose strongly impregnated water at a depth of twenty-five feet, which seems to be a great deal heavier than the sea water, and is drawn off into vats for evaporation.

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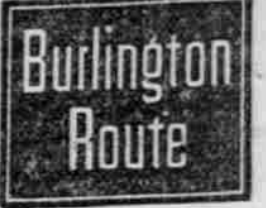
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