

Nebraska National Guard in Summer Instruction Camp at Fort Riley



CAMP OF THE NEBRASKA BRIGADE AT FORT RILEY, KANSAS.

FROM office to plain, from paved street to country road, from soft mattresses in brass beds to ticks of hay on the hard ground, from dining table to lap, and dozens of other extremes vastly more trying to the inexperienced—this was the transition through in less than twenty-four hours for most of the thousand odd young Nebraskans when they, as the rank and file of the First and Second Infantry regiments of the Nebraska National Guard, with the artillery, engineers, signal corps and ambulance detachment, went to the military reservation at Fort Riley, Kan., the first week of August, to participate in the camp of instruction established there by Uncle Sam for his soldier boys. Pale of face, soft of hand, they left their homes; brown as Indians and calloused they returned. It was, of course, only a vacation trip for many of them, and looked upon as such. But, before the course laid out for them had been completed, the patriotism and military zeal of many a kahlk-lad youth was stretched high unto the breaking point.

Hard Work for Guardsmen.
For the ten days at the camp of instruction was not like the regular annual encampment of the National Guard. Uncle Sam did not arrange that immense camp merely to furnish a few days' sport for a lot of energetic young men, with only a semblance of military discipline. No, in-

stead, the boys were sent down there to work and learn—and to their great credit, let it be said, work and learn they did with less grumbling than if it had been their regular chosen daily toil at full man's wages. Under broiling sun they climbed steep and rocky hills, pushed through high weeds and brush, got wet in creeks and rain and dewy grass, charged over fields when the very rocks sizzled in the heat, until the more tender dropped to the ground to be picked up by the ambulance, unable to keep up with their comrades. Still, seldom a murmur down the whole long line of the country's independent citizen soldiers. At last camp was reached, and in the rain and deep mud the boys went at the work of hauling the equipment to where the respective company streets were assigned. In an incredibly short time, where before was but a bare slope of ground, stood a city of newly-issued khaki Stetson tents, laid out in perfect order. Next the men dug drain ditches to keep the water out of their cloth houses and off their streets.

Hard Night on Train.
The dates set for the Nebraska troops to go into camp at Fort Riley were from August 3 to 13, inclusive. Accordingly on August 3 the military organizations of the state boarded trains and met at Lincoln, from where they were forwarded in six trains to the camp. Companies L of the First, and O and I of the Second regiment, the three Omaha companies, left the Burlington station in the afternoon, arriving at Lincoln before night, and lay there until long after dark, before the journey was resumed. It was the first

night out for the boys and a tiresome one in the uncomfortable sleeping quarters, and they looked forward eagerly toward morning, when they should reach camp. The night had been warm and clear when they left Nebraska and car windows had been left open. But when daylight came and the first tired soldier opened his sleepy eyes, it was to give the alarm that it was raining, and those on the windy side of the train rose to find at least a portion of their clothing soaked. It continued to rain nearly all morning, boding ill for the time to pitch tents. At last camp was reached, and in the rain and deep mud the boys went at the work of hauling the equipment to where the respective company streets were assigned. In an incredibly short time, where before was but a bare slope of ground, stood a city of newly-issued khaki Stetson tents, laid out in perfect order. Next the men dug drain ditches to keep the water out of their cloth houses and off their streets.

Camp Routine Commences.
The Nebraska guard reached camp on Saturday, and nothing further than getting settled was attempted until sundown at 5 o'clock p. m. The next day was Sunday and this also was given over to getting accustomed to being in camp. A drenching rain in the forenoon put an end to the plans for church and gave the men an opportunity to test the efficacy of the trenches they had dug.

Monday morning the men were given two hours of battalion drill. It was evidently the intention of the officers to break the men in gently, for they were hardly taken out of the company streets for the morning drill, and in the afternoon were only marched to a field adjoining the militia camp for another two hours of close order work. On Tuesday they were taken still farther for extended order, and on Wednesday the same, the marches being gradually lengthened.

In Battle Array.
Thursday was the big day for the Nebraska troops, for they were then to participate in an extensive battle exercise with the regulars. Something like 10,000 men, including every branch of the service, were arrayed on both sides. To the old soldier of civil war days the sight of the long lines of marching men and guns, the trotting troops of cavalry, one after another, and the lumbering artillery, must have set his blood running anew with life. The men were sent out in heavy marching order, except for blanket rolls, which they were allowed to leave behind. And well it was they were relieved of this additional burden, for the day proved extremely hot, and those bald hills afford no shade to suffering men. Rations for one meal were taken by each man and blank ammunition was issued. The opposing sides were made up to the "blues" and the "browns"; that is, one side wore the khaki blouses and the other blue shirts. Umpires went with them, and all "noncombatants" being obliged to wear prescribed insignia or run the risk of capture.

The usual time for reveille at camp was 6 o'clock, but on this morning the soldiers were awakened at 4 o'clock, at which time it is still dark, and by 6 o'clock they were

on the march. For hours they marched, halted and marched again, deployed, skulked, scouted, retreated, crawled and climbed, while the sun poured its heat down upon them mercilessly, but it was about noon before the battle began. Meanwhile the commands on both sides had been fighting strategic battles, as positions and the actions of the troops must count for nearly everything when real bullets are not used.

Progress of the Fight.
As the afternoon wore on the battle became general. Cannon roared, artillery grove up at a gallop, wheeled, poured forth a volley, and as quickly was gone again; cavalry appeared suddenly over a rise and in beautiful lines charged madly on lines of blue or brown, to be beaten back or go through as might seem most likely; infantry deployed and long lines of men moved slowly up hill and down on the other side, crossed valleys and began climbing again in the advances, halting to fire at intervals as they neared the enemy, and at last, as though their lives depended upon their work that day, charged and yelled until an onlooker might think they were really bent on shedding blood.

It was very pretty and blood-stirring to look at. But so far as the individual private soldier was concerned he knew very little about what was going on. He ran or walked or lay down or shot his blank cartridges, as he was ordered to by his officers, but didn't know whether the day was being won or not. His work was principally to carry out what he had been drilled in before. The battle exercises were more for the benefit of the officers, and to them they were of infinite good. The first day's encounter lasted well on into the afternoon, and when at last, toward mess time, the boys came trudging back, they felt that, in spite of the awful heat and the miles and miles of marching, to say nothing of the running on the stony and slippery hillsides, they had had an experience which they would not have missed even had they known in advance what

hardship was entailed in the gaining of it. On Friday the entire camp was again routed out at 4 o'clock in the morning and by 8 o'clock was on the move, but this time with only canteens and haversacks. The problem to be worked out that day demanded a great deal of marching on the part of the soldiers, but it was cloudy and rained a little, so they stood it better than on the previous day. The marching and countermarching, deploying and advancing, occupied nearly all forenoon and the battle opened in earnest about 11 o'clock. Just as the blues were preparing for a last general advance and charge, the shrill notes of the bugle at the chief umpire's position could be heard blowing "cease firing," and shortly afterward company officers were ordered to examine ammunition belts. It was then learned that ball ammunition had been fired on both sides. Further operations were called off and the several commands marched back to camp. That was the last battle exercise in which the Nebraska troops took part.

Thurston Rifles Win Credit.
Saturday was payday and brigade inspection, and the latter ordeal proved almost the hardest task asked of the boys to perform, particularly as they were unable to see the necessity of marching two miles under a broiling sun, loaded down with gun, haversack, canteen, blanket-roll and everything they had belonging to the state, to a field where the two regiments lined up, when a field of ample size adjoined their camp.

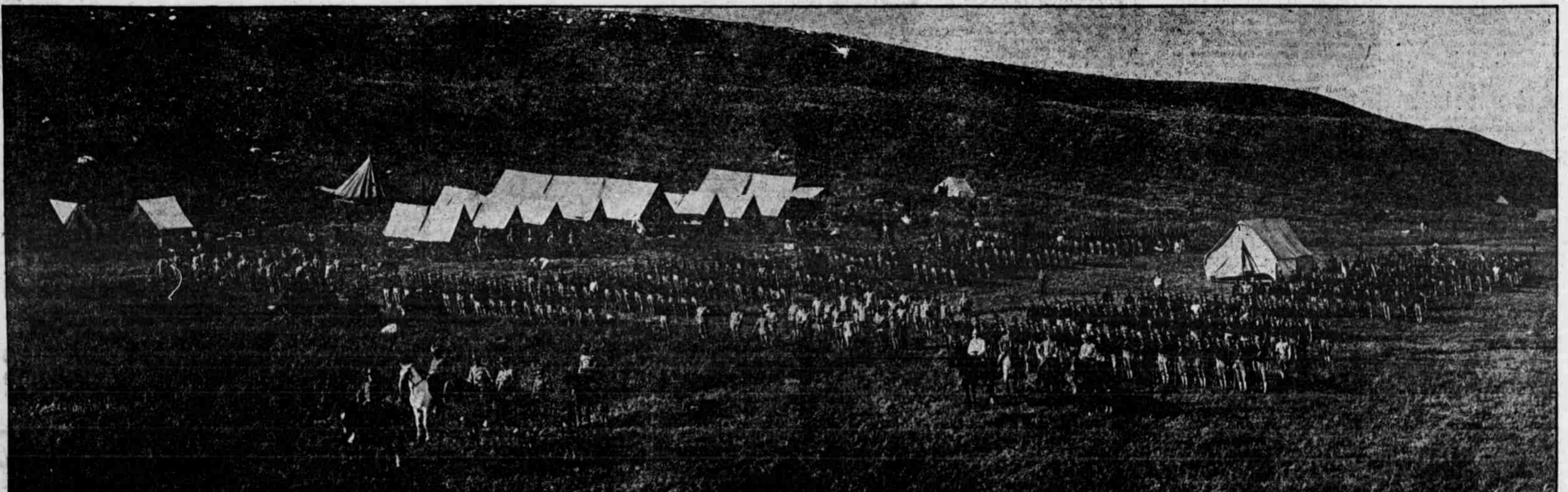
It might be a matter of pride to many Omahans, while the subject of inspections is mentioned, to know that an Omaha company was given the distinction by the regular army officers of being composed of the finest body of men, who put up the best appearance as soldiers, had their guns, equipment, and tents in better shape than any other company in the two regiments. This honor was given to Company L (Thurston Rifles), of the First regiment, on two separate occasions following inspections, and Captain Bash, the company commander, was congratulated upon the standard of his organization. A sight which was new to the militia and which attracted them so much as to nearly interfere with their own work, was the sudden change when the "general" was blown down on Wednesday. Instead of a

field of tightly-drawn tents, almost as far as the eye could reach, it changed in a twinkling to a field of poles with the lan cloth folded upon them. This was done in the morning to allow a perfect airing of the ground under the tents, and in the late afternoon, they were replaced as before. The militia were ordered to move their tents into the company streets for the day.

Tip from the Regulars.
One of the greatest sources of benefit for the militia boys was the association with the men of the regular army. The regulars made free to enter the militia camp every evening, and while they often laughed outright at the errors of the awkward "rookie" at guard mount, they taught the citizen soldiers many tricks of the trade which they had learned only through years of service. They taught many of the boys how to care for their guns, and groups of regulars and militia-men could be seen in every company street at night, earnestly discussing the art of being a soldier in a most friendly manner. The citizens admitted frankly that they knew but little about soldiering, but said they were there to learn, and the regulars never let pass an opportunity to help them.

The picture shown herewith of the brigade of Nebraska infantry was taken on the return of the two regiments from the Ogden flats where, in a scorching sun, they drilled for two hours, marching to and from the field, a distance of about two miles, with but one rest each way. The men were very tired and longed for the order "dismissed," but were obliged to draw up in front of brigade headquarters, while the photographer on a specially built tower, secured an exposure.

Hundreds of stories, humorous and otherwise, could be related about the experience of the men at Fort Riley this year, but camp incidents are very much the same from year to year, and fall to interest from frequent repetition. The incidents may be just as serious, the experience just as fearful to those involved as they were the first time the world ever had a soldier, but they have lost their power to interest. But let this be said, if anyone thinks that the Fort Riley instruction camp was only a joke—the Nebraska boys worked some down there.



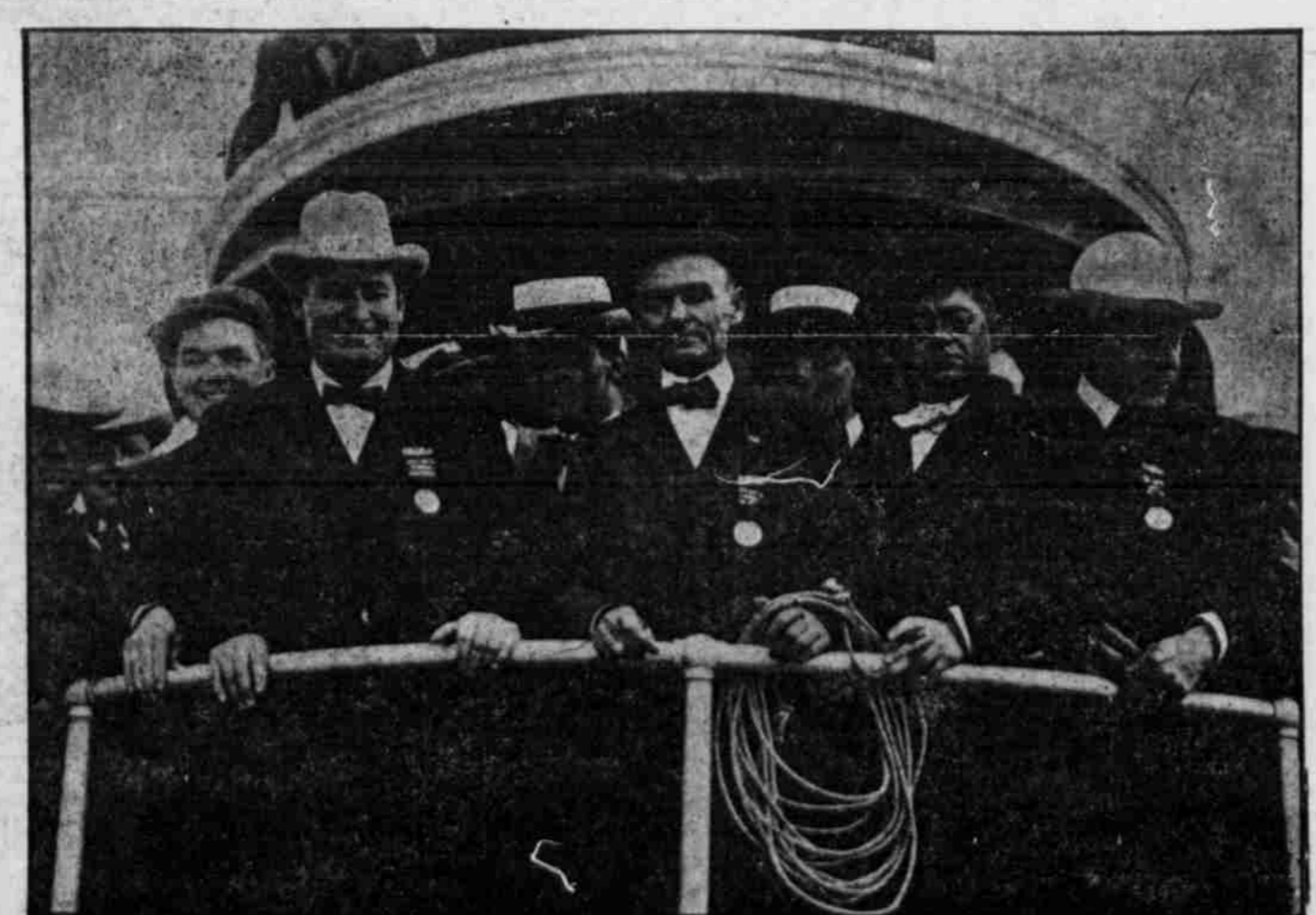
NEBRASKA BRIGADE AT FORT RILEY, KAN., AFTER A HARD MARCH ON A HOT AFTERNOON—GENERAL J. H. CULVER AND STAFF IN FOREGROUND; FIRST REGIMENT AND BAND ON LEFT, SECOND REGIMENT AND BAND ON RIGHT; PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN FRONT OF BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS.

How the Home Folks Greeted W. J. Bryan in the New York Harbor

LITTLE old New York was stirred to the very center during the last week by Nebraska. It wasn't only the landing of William Jennings Bryan that made Father Knickerbocker sit up and look about, although that was the main occasion for the uprising. The real interest centered around the "home folks," who gathered there to give a western welcome to a western man. What these fellows did for New York is still being told in the newspapers, and from the Battery to the Bronx the old town was given a thorough going over. Not a bet was overlooked by that bunch of live wires, but everything was played wide open clear across the layout, and if there was piker in the lot, he hasn't been heard from as yet.

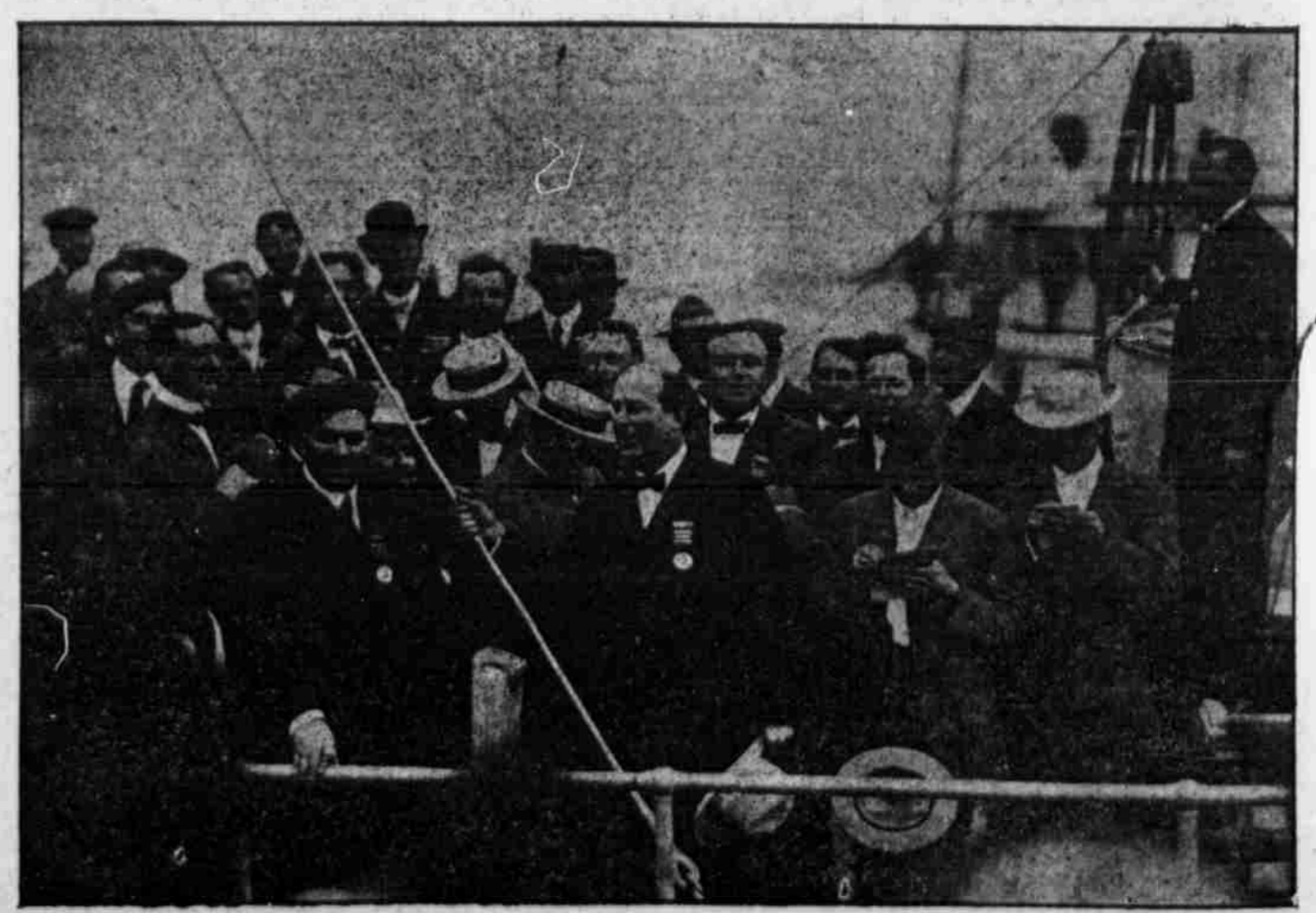
Former Councilman Dave O'Brien was the advance agent for the push, and he had things pretty well hot up before the boys all got there. On their arrival he took Mayor Jim Dahlgren in with him, and from that time till the day of departure Dave and his piccolo voice and Jim and his larlar were the most talked of things in New York. But these weren't the whole show, not by a jugful. Mayor Brown, Mayor Henker, Mayor Ward, Mayor Binkey, Mayor Watake, Mayor Gering and Mayor Freitag, Mayor Ullie and Mayor McCrue, each and all of whom aided in keeping the name of Nebraska to the front during the week. Then there was a crowd of untired wheelhorses and hard workers, who pulled from morning till dewy eve, and back again for the peerless leader and anything else in sight. All of these combined made matters move just a little bit swifter than seemed good for the eyes of the New Yorkers.

known smile of Mr. Bryan is equalled by the complacent smile of Mayor Jim, and the expansive grin of Councilman Dave is too well known in Nebraska to need identification. City Clerk Dan Butler looms up in one of the pictures and in the other Editor Newbranch seems to be taking himself seriously. The hitherto irrepressible Richmond doesn't appear in either of the photos, but it will be noticed that some of the New York reporters are very busy getting what Mr. Bryan is saying. Other



BRYAN AND DAHLGREN ON THE NEBRASKA DELEGATION'S TUG.

faces familiar enough in Nebraska will be noticed in the pictures. The special train with the Nebraskans



BRYAN'S FIRST SPEECH IN AMERICA AFTER HIS JOURNEY.

on board is now on its way home, with private citizen get such a greeting from his tired but happy party on board. The fellow countrymen, and as a reception it whole affair is unique in the annals of a likely to stand a record for a long American affair, for never before did a time.