

## UNITED STATES ARMY PAYS VISIT TO KING AK-SAR-BEN XV

Great Display Made by Large Body of Men Representing All Arms of the Military Establishment of the United States in Connection with the Annual Fall Festival at Omaha

THE ACTION of the War department in ordering to Omaha several regiments of soldiers of the regular army to participate in the annual Ak-Sar-Ben festivities is an indication of the high favor in which King Ak-Sar-Ben stands with the powers that be.

For the land of Ak-Sar-Ben is the only place on earth the American government will send its soldiers to crook the knee to a monarch. The sending to Omaha this large body of soldiers is not a one sided affair, by any means, for Uncle Sam very seldom if ever drives a poor bargain.

The government's object in sending soldiers out among the people is to bring the army closer to the people and in the end to create for the army a warmer place in the affections of the taxpayers. In time of war it is very easy for the people to love the soldier, but it has been demonstrated that in time of peace there has been little favorable thought given the soldier. So the War department conceived the idea of sending the soldiers among the people to show that they were real human beings and entitled to serious consideration and their business is of importance, and incidentally to create in the breast of the young man a love of country which the soldier inspires, and a desire to wear the uniform.

Another object of the government in sending out its soldiers to participate in civic celebrations is to drill its men in march; familiarize them with camping in the open and broaden them by association with civilians. The government inaugurated the system of loaning its troops to civic organizations two years ago when the soldiers were sent to St. Louis to participate in the festivities incidental to the balloon races. Then came requests thick and fast for soldiers to help out in local entertainments and carnivals. The War department was satisfied with its experiment and now when requests are made for men of the army if they can be spared the government will send them. Objection being made solely to sending the soldiers out for purely local entertainments or carnivals.

The soldiers who participated in the parade Thursday afternoon marched to Fort Omaha from Des Moines, making the trip to Council Bluffs in six days. The trip to the fort could have been made in that time, but the officers decided to camp in the Iowa city for the night. For a large body of troops this was an exceptionally long march. The soldiers, pack trains and artillery stretched out over three miles in length. In this march the soldiers used small shelter tents and many of the boys got their first experience in camping out. Both men and horses arrived in Omaha in first class shape, though the average travel per day was in the neighborhood of twenty-eight miles.

These long marches are also of immense value to the horses, which usually do not stand the pace as well as the men. The horses are not stabled at all and are compelled to stand in the open regardless of weather conditions.

The soldiers who have been participating in the Ak-Sar-Ben festivities have just completed a similar engagement at Des Moines and they bear testimony to the good effect of mingling with the people. Not only have they the appearance of a superior crowd of men, but the conduct of the individuals has been such as to commend them to the people generally. Considering the fact that vacations such as this one comes to the soldier very seldom, the restraint of the men has been remarkable. On the streets and on the carnival grounds, though there were 4,000 soldiers mingling with the crowds there has been no report of misconduct or ungentlemanly action such as might have occurred among so many soldiers a few years ago.

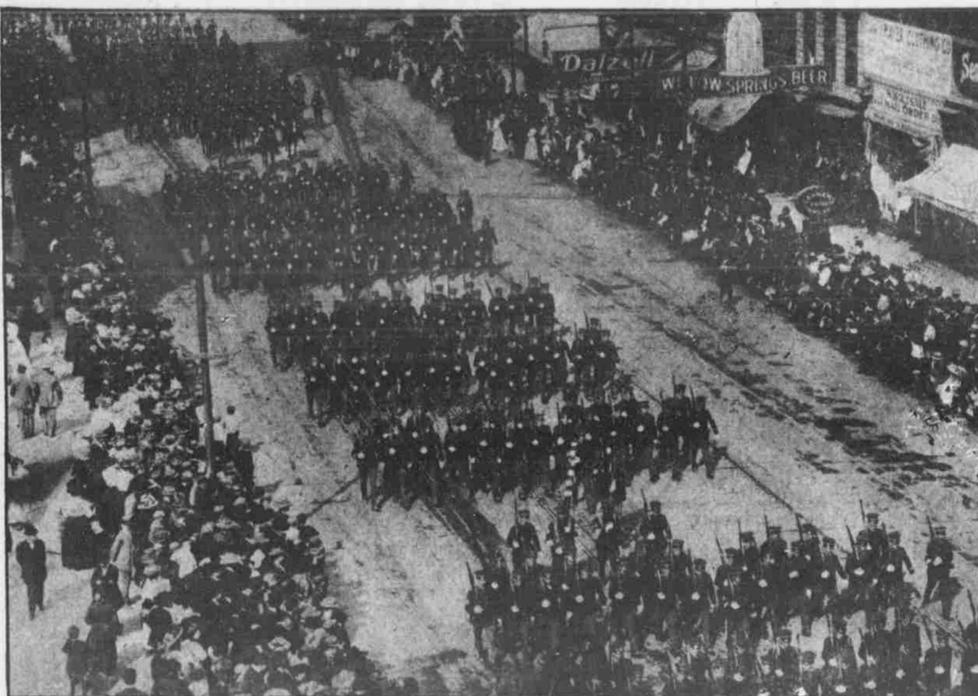
To the soldiers the hikes across country are in the nature of outings and are immensely enjoyed, though the hikes are not given for that purpose. Officers and enlisted men alike say they enjoy marching through the crowds in the civic parades and they enjoy camping close to a city, where they are brought in close touch with civilization.

The good conduct of the soldier boy, however, should not be a surprise to the people for a man has to be a man to get in the army nowadays. The applicant not only has to be physically as sound as a dollar, but he must possess common school education and be of good moral character. That the officers in charge of the recruiting stations are living up to these rules is evidenced by the high standard of the men, in the army compared with the soldier boys who use to get to town to blow it up.

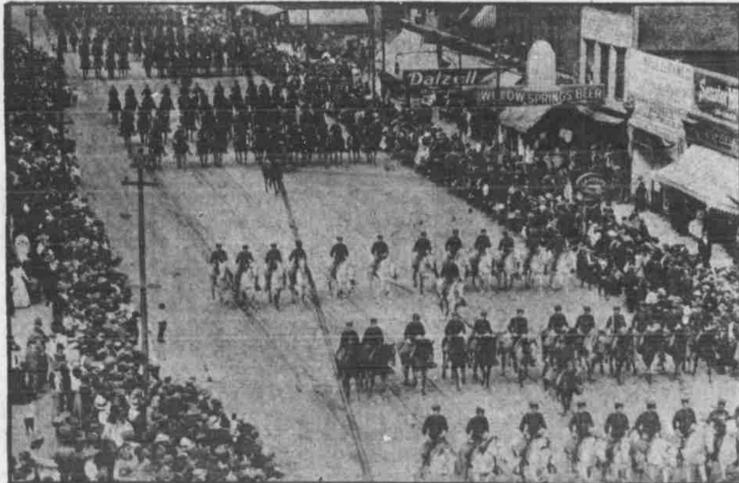
In every garrison the soldiers are compelled to attend a school,



GENERAL MORTON AND STAFF AT HEAD OF PARADE.



PORTION OF THE COLUMN OF THE SIXTEENTH INFANTRY.



PART OF THE CAVALRY DIVISION.

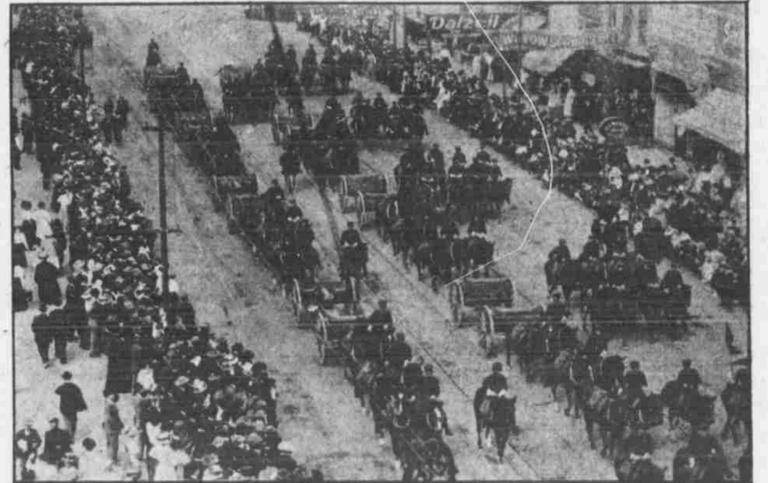
formerly colonel of the Seventh cavalry and was promoted when holding that position. Among the soldiers in camp at Fort Omaha this week are many who belonged to the Seventh over in the Philippines and to them the occasion is a reunion. These soldiers have been entertained in bunches and have entertained each other. In honor of General Morton Lieutenant Troup Miller gave a dinner at the Omaha club Tuesday night and on this occasion many of the incidents of the Philippines were lived over again. Colonel Morton is to retire next April and the occasion was also in the nature of a farewell to a faithful commander.

The climax of the visit of the soldiers came Thursday, when they delighted thousands with their spectacular march through the principal streets of the city. Never before have so many soldiers marched through Omaha in honor of Ak-Sar-Ben and the people of the entire state showed their appreciation

by turning out by the thousands. From the entry of the troops until the passage of the freight train all along the line of march the soldiers were given a tumultuous welcome. The infantry, the cavalry, the artillery, the freight train—all had been seen before by some of the people, but the parade seemed new to all. The enthusiasm at times along the line of march was intense, as officers were recognized or some favorite company passed in review.

General Morton and his staff marched at the head of the parade until the city hall was reached, when they wheeled out of line and reviewed the soldiers, and, indeed, it would be a cold commander whose heart did not throb with pride as he witnessed the triumph of his boys.

From the time of the assembly call until the parade disbanded there was not a hitch or a break. With clocklike precision the boys in blue went



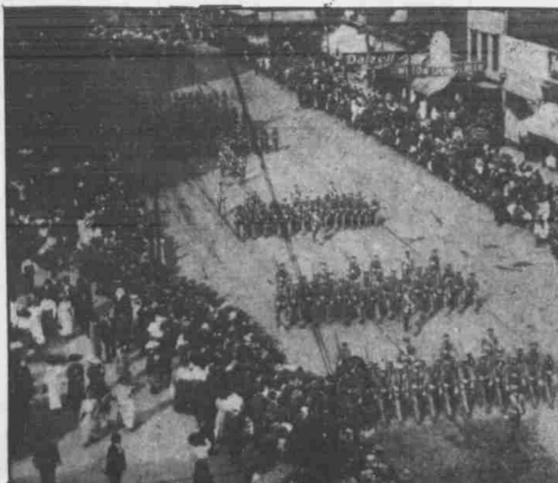
PART OF THE SIXTH ARTILLERY.

which is conducted by a graduate of West Point and the grade runs as high as that of a high school. At Fort Omaha the signal corps school is said to be one of the very best conducted by the government. A four-year course in that school prepares a person to assume most any position in electrical engineering and many who have taken the course and then left the army are holding positions of importance all over the country. Practically all of the wireless operators have taken a course in such schools as this. The soldier who demonstrates that he has an aptitude for electrical engineering is promoted rapidly and his pay increased with every promotion, or as progress is shown.

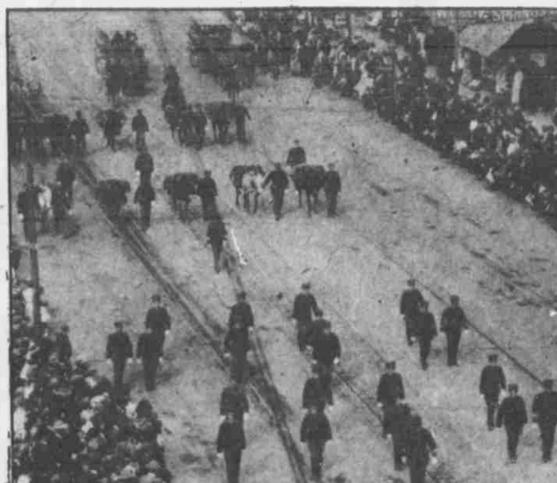
The standard of the army is also being raised by the action of the government in weeding out undesirables. When an enlisted man fails to show improvement, or his conduct indicates that he will not be a credit to the army, he is permitted to withdraw, buys his way out or is let out.

The soldier boys are real human and in their veins run good, rich, red blood, as was demonstrated by an incident on a motor car several nights ago. A strike breaking conductor, who, witnesses said, was under the influence of liquor, insulted a woman passenger. One of the soldier boys promptly knocked him down. An exaggerated report of the affair was made to the police and a bunch of boys in uniform was arrested, but as soon as the facts were known they were discharged without any prosecution.

This visit to Omaha has proven to be a reunion at least for the Seventh cavalry. General Morton was



FUTURE SOLDIERS—THE HIGH SCHOOL CADETS.



HOSPITAL CORPS.

That he is well pleased with the action of his soldier boys and that the association with civilians is bringing the army into better repute the following order issued by General Morton after the Des Moines tournament testified:

At the closing hour of this tournament and before the departure of the troops the commanding general wishes to express to the command his congratulations over the success upon all lines of this largest military tournament ever held in the United States, and to express his appreciation of and gratification over the interest, energy and real display by every organization, thus causing the whole affair to move from start to finish without hitch, friction or jar and with uniform good feeling throughout, though the contests were spirited and executed with great determination.

There is equal satisfaction over the conditions that obtained in the camp. The ground being contracted for camping such a large command made it too condensed for comfort and made necessary the enforcement of the strictest sanitary measures, which was accomplished with gratifying results, with hardly a complaint from the vigilant sanitary inspector.

The commanding general's interest in these military tournaments is based almost wholly upon the conviction that the better the army is known and understood by the people the better it is for the people and army. He is convinced that this encampment, with its exhibitions of army life and many of the features of its training, has been a revelation to many thousands of people, and of mutual benefit.

But the best feature of all has been the bearing conduct of the command, which have evoked the highest terms of praise from people and press and demons not only the high standard of character of the men of the army, but its equally high order of training discipline.

through the streets, wheeling around the corners in perfect line. Infantry and cavalry it was, all the same. Steeds pranced and sabers rattled, but never once was the formation broken and never once was there excitement or haste or worry.

A feature of the parade which attracted much comment was the age of the soldiers. Seldom was there a "grizzled" veteran, but the officers and men, though many were veterans of a war and wore medals for gallant service, looked young, indeed, to carry the responsibility that rests upon them. Riders never before sat on their horses more gracefully than the cavalry boys who participated in the parade and infantrymen marched as one solid body. The cavalry band received a most generous welcome.

The pack mules were a revelation to the younger generation and an attraction for the older generation. The mules to the old veterans may not have been such a sight, but to the civilians who seldom come in contact with army folks this was a most interesting feature of the parade. Each mule was armed with two bales of hay and they trudged along as unconcerned as though pulling a plow in old Missouri. No bridle hindered them, but they followed the bell mule of the drove. One young woman, who had evidently been reading the advertisements lately, in answer to an inquiry, said the mules were loaded with "home-made fireless cookers." She said she could tell by the hay sticking out of the bundles.

The six-mule teams driven with a jerk line won the admiration of those who have tried to drive one mule with two lines and a rope.

The soldier boys won the hearts of the people. For hours thousands who had secured a point of advantage to view the parade stood and waited patiently. It was a tedious wait, too, for there was much crowding and pushing, but it did not sap the enthusiasm of the visitors.

The stamp of approval was placed on every company and as an endorsement of the honorable calling of the soldier the High School cadets came in for the greatest applause of any company. If encouragement was needed to make the boys stick to the business they got it Thursday afternoon.

The fact that many of the regiments in the parade have made glorious history for the government also added much to the interest. The Thirteenth infantry was organized during the revolutionary war and became a regimental organization in 1812, taking part in the Mexican war. In 1861 William T. Sherman was its colonel.

The Second cavalry was organized in 1824 and participated in the Mexican war. The Fourth cavalry dates its history from 1840. The Seventh cavalry, known as Custer's regiment, was organized in 1866.

The Seventh cavalry received great applause when it was recognized by the visitors for its history is new and its progress has been watched by many who were pioneers in this country when it was organized and many who became personally acquainted with its officers and men.

All in all Thursday was a red-letter for Uncle Sam's soldier boys in Omaha. Much was expected of them and they made good. And not the least of the pride felt and expressed by Omaha people and the visitors was that occasioned by the presence in the line of the future soldiers of the country as represented by the High School cadets, who made a splendid appearance.

At Fort Omaha the soldiers have had a gala time. General Morton invited the people of Omaha to visit the fort at any time and thousands have taken advantage of the invitation to bring themselves in close touch with real soldiering. It is from this association that the commanding general expects his soldier boys to profit.

Some of the soldiers appear to be hardly out of their teens and they are enjoying life to the limit. Hundreds of the boys in blue secured leave of absence to take in the town and visit the shows on the carnival grounds. Their uniforms gave them right-of-way through the gates and on the street cars. While they did not fail to have their fun on the grounds and proved good speeders around the confetti barrels, no policeman has registered against a soldier, a single complaint.

The troops who spent the week in Omaha are: Second cavalry from Des Moines; Fourth cavalry from Fort Meade; Seventh and Fifteenth cavalry from Fort Riley; Thirteenth infantry from Fort Leavenworth; Sixteenth infantry from Des Moines. The Seventh cavalry will leave Tuesday on its long march back to Fort Riley.