

Centennial of the Beginnings at West Point; Its Early Struggles

WHERE THE NATION'S GREAT SOLDIERS ARE MADE

A Century's Growth, by Captain W. C. Rivers, Adjutant, United States Military Academy

WEST POINT, the seat of the United States Military Academy, which celebrates this month the completion of its 100 years of work for the country, was a place of great interest for Americans even before the thought of establishing a military school had been suggested.

Situated in the beautiful highlands of the Hudson, the dignity and beauty of the landscape give it an almost unique place in the varied and wonderful scenery of the continent. Overlooking from a flat plain, backed by high hills, a narrow turn in the river, it became the key point in the struggle for its possession in the Revolutionary War, and its ground was in that contest hallowed by the footsteps of most of the great leaders—Washington, whose headquarters were there in 1779; Hamilton, Greene, Putnam, Knox, Pickens and others having been familiar with the rugged mountains and grand views, which remain unchanged.

West Point in the Revolution. From its commanding position, it is strange that not until three years after the beginning of hostilities was West Point occupied by the troops and fortified. In the summer of 1775 a committee, under resolution of Congress, began the erection of fortifications on the opposite shore and on the island across the river—since known from the name of the fort as Constitution Island, but then called Mott's Island, from an early settler. Various committees having charge of the work on the island seem to have reported that the West Point commanded the works under construction, as did Lord Stirling, in his report in 1776, when he was sent by Washington to inspect the fortifications. No attempt was made to remedy the defect, however, until after disaster and defeat in October, 1777, when the British captured the works below West Point, overran the command, and easily forcing the surrender of Fort Mifflin. The surrender of Burgoyne's army compelled the British to retire to New York, after only 30 days' occupancy of the works, and Washington, in December, 1777, gave positive and full instructions for the construction of the river and for the erection of batteries that would hold the Highlands.

So, on January 20, 1778, General Parsons crossed over from the east side, and thus began the occupation of West Point as a garrisoned post, which has continued to the present time.

Plans for the new works were begun under the French engineer Riedere, on a scale that was impracticable, too extensive, and he was succeeded, March 20, 1778, by the illustrious Thaddeus Kosciuszko, whose name will ever be associated with the place and whose monument, erected by the state, stands on the site of Kosciuszko's camp, which was the site of the fort bearing his name, of which the well-preserved ruins still remain on the high hill, 500 feet above the water and 200 above the plain.

The great chain, some of the links of which weigh 100 pounds each still remain at West Point, was forged by hand at the iron works a few miles to the southwest, and was stretched across the river April 30, 1778, in order to aid in the construction of navigation. In 1779 Washington made his headquarters at West Point from July 25 to the 25th of November, when he removed to Newburgh, just above.

The British at this period of low ebb in the fortunes of the colonists were sending every man to the east side of the river in order to separate the colonies, when, on August 2, 1780, General Benedict Arnold was assigned to command at West Point. With the dramatic events following Arnold's attempt to deliver the fortress, through treason, into their hands, resulting in Arnold's escape and the execution of the less blame-worthy Major Andre of the British Army, all are familiar.

Generals Greene, Heath and Knox commanded at West Point till the cessation of hostilities, when it passed into the hands of Major George Plummer, some of the works were dismantled and many of the guns sold.

The need for educated and trained officers was keenly felt in the Revolutionary struggle, when dependence for scientific work had to be placed on foreign officers. Most of these were French, and some of them were soldiers of fortune without the character necessary to make them useful.

When war with France was threatened the weakness of depending on foreign talent was made apparent, and the les-



VIEW UP THE HUDSON

sons thus learned were deeply engraved on the minds of the patriots of the Revolution.

Early as October 1, 1778, Congress passed a resolution to appoint a committee to prepare a plan for a military academy at the Army. John Adams, president of the Committee of War and Ordnance, no doubt was responsible for the resolution, and he, with four others, was on the committee. The result was the establishment of the academy, by resolution of June 16, 1779, of the Corps of Invalids, which was intended for garrison duty, and to be composed of young gentlemen who, after instruction, would be appointed to the regiments in the field.

As might be expected, the results following the establishment of the "Military Academy of the Army" were few, as from the nature of war the officers could not be assembled, and even if it had been practicable to do this they had their duties which were too onerous to spare the time necessary for the prosecution of book studies.

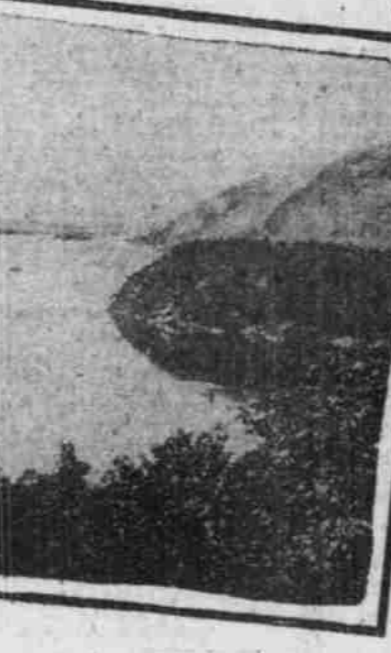
The idea was a sound one, even if the method of executing it was impracticable, and showed the early conception of the nature of war the officers could not be assembled, and even if it had been practicable to do this they had their duties which were too onerous to spare the time necessary for the prosecution of book studies.

In 1783, after the cessation of hostilities, Colonel Alexander Hamilton, as chairman of the Committee on Peace Arrangements, called on Washington for his views as to the peace establishment, Washington laid the matter before his officers at Newburgh. Generals Huntington, Pickens and others mentioned the urgent need for educated officers, and it was but natural that West Point, in plain sight, should be mentioned as a suitable place for a school.

Nothing definite was done, however, at that time, and when Washington became the first President under the Constitution he referred to it again in his message of December 2, 1789. When the message was discussed Jefferson, afterwards the firm friend and loyal supporter of the academy, whose portrait, painted by Sully, at



GUARD TENTS OF CADETS ENCAMPMENT



HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

the request of its officers, still adorns the buildings, thought that the establishment of such an academy was not authorized by the Constitution. Washington therefore referred to it in less definite terms than he had probably intended to employ, but so earnestly did he think on the subject that he could not be induced to omit the recommendation from his message. Again in his message of December, 1796, he remarked that "the desirability of this institution had constantly increased with every new view he had taken of the subject."

The law of May 9, 1794, had in the meantime authorized the organization of a corps of artillery and engineers, of 16 companies, with two cadets to a company, thus creating the new grade of "cadet" in the American Army.

This was a compromise measure along the lines of the old idea of "a Military Academy at the Army," and produced results equally scanty. A school for the artillery and engineers and for the cadets was, however, established at West Point in 1794, and books and instruments were purchased for their instruction under their own officers. The building was burned in 1796, though, and the school suspended. In 1798 an additional regiment of artillery and engineers was allowed, and the number of cadets doubled and four teachers were authorized but never engaged.

Washington, in his last message dealt emphatically with the plan to establish a military academy, and John Adams, long an ardent student of the subject and a warm supporter of the idea, dealt with it in a special message on January 13, 1800, and in a supplemental message January 21, 1800. The matter was referred to a committee, but was postponed in the Spring of 1800 over the end of the session.

In December, 1801, the Secretary of War was called on by Congress for a statement of the military establishment, and an act was finally passed, March 16, 1802, establishing the Military Academy. The idea was still prevalent that young men should be educated as a part of the army and not before they joined it, for the act provided for the separation of the artillery and engineers, authorizing the President to form a corps of the latter "stationed at West Point, in the State of New York." It also declared that "shall constitute a Military Academy."

Though 20 cadets were authorized for



CADET BARRACKS



CADET BARRACKS

the engineers and the artillery, no provision was made for them, and the early existence of the academy was one of constant trial and struggle. It opened, however, with 10 cadets, July 4, 1802. Major Jonathan Williams, an officer of wide experience, who had traveled and resided in France, was the first superintendent, and to his energy and capacity much of the success of the academy in its early trials is due.

The cadets lived in the old Revolutionary barracks, which was without stoves or conveniences of any kind. They cut their own firewood and sawed it for the fireplaces in the barracks. Many had difficulty in securing food, there being no common mess, and the cadets boarded here and there. Of discipline there was little or none, and the uniform was worn or not at pleasure. The uniform was blue, until the adoption of the present gray uniform, September 4, 1816. Cadets were admitted at all ages and at any time, regardless of their qualifications, and, due to the rigor of the climate, there was vacation from December to March each winter.

Various laws changed the number of cadets, until the eminently wise custom of appointing one from each Congressional district was established, March 1, 1842. The law of June 6, 1860, gave each Senator one appointment and the President 30, so that the total authorized will be (under the new apportionment of Congress) in 1901-2.

The Academy may be said to have been in a struggling and chaotic condition until the appointment of Major Sylvanus Thayer as superintendent, in 1817. He enforced the law as to the qualifications of cadets, drafted rules on the organization and discipline of the corps, organized them into companies and classes and systematically the Academy on the same general plan that exists today.

At one period before the Mexican War there was in some states much opposition to the Academy, on the erroneous ground that its students were supposed to be rich young sons, and that they would form an aristocracy. The success of its graduates in the Mexican War showed the fallacy of the grounds of the opposition, and the Civil War demonstrated the fact that no similar reason was applicable to the Revolution had more fully justified the wisdom and foresight of its founders.

There have been three epochs in building the Academy, which may be called inflexible rather than severe. Each and



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every act of omission or commission that is observed by vigilant Army officers or cadet officers is noted down, and each day all such offenses are publicly posted where cadets may see them. Such a report might read: "Dust on mantel, 10:30 A. M." or "Floor not properly swept," or some slight dereliction at drill in parade might bring a report of not going through some movement correctly.

With reference to all such reports, cadets have the right to write an explanation of the circumstances, and if this is satisfactory the report will be removed. Otherwise, he receives demerit for it, with possible punishment also. Punishments usually consist in the offender being confined to his room when the others have recreation hours, and may include "tours" of two hours' walking equipped as a sentry.

The principle is that each and every offense has a corresponding punishment, which, while small or nominal in many cases, is as sure as can be followed.

Cadets enter at all ages from 17 to 22, and from all parts of the country. On arriving at West Point the newcomer, or "plop," is in a strange land, amid strange faces, but he soon comes to know his own classmates, among whom strong and lifelong ties are formed.

Life in the Corps of Cadets is absolutely democratic. Cadets are allowed no money and being allowed to receive nothing from home for their rooms, or in the way of clothes, it is indeed hardly ever known by them whether the parents of their comrades are millionaires or farmers. Nor do they care nor want to know, as each cadet is taken completely on his character, and his standing among his fellows depends absolutely upon himself. No amount of money or could numberless "grandfathers" affect this or the manner in which he is treated by his fellows at all. The most exacting ideas of truth, honor and courage prevail in the Corps of Cadets, and religion is highly respected. No boy who is sincerely religious need ever expect a look or a sneer from any of his classmates or officers. The cadets receive \$45 a month, which is credited to them on the books, and against which their board, clothing, and other expenses are charged. Any surplus is given to them only at the one furlough at the end of the first two years, or at graduation. No money being in their uniforms do not even have pockets

to contain it—or to feel the want of it. With the constant round of drill, studies and parades a cadet's life is indeed a strenuous one, and he has little time for other things.

Rising at half-past 5 in the Summer and at 6 in Winter, his studies begin at 8, and he either is confined to his room studying or is reciting till 4, except when he goes to dinner at 1. At a quarter past 4 he goes to drill for an hour and a quarter, and after half-past 8. No cadet is allowed to have a servant, horse, dog, bicycle or any similar luxury which all cannot have, nor to ride in a carriage.

The cadets have in recent years taken, under encouragement of the authorities, great interest in athletics, and, considering the limited time for practice, have achieved remarkable results. Their football team last year took high rank among the four leading university teams, and much time is devoted to baseball, polo, tennis and fencing, in which they won the intercollegiate championship this year.

Results of West Point Training. The training at West Point is intended to develop character first of all—to make honorable, straightforward and truthful men—and then to train the mind for clear thinking and the body for hard work.

In addition comes the practical and technical military instruction, combined with discipline and subordination. West Point has to take the material furnished it by the people all over the land, and mold it to the best it can. The resulting product is best seen by looking to the careers of its graduates.

In civil life many have been distinguished. In the early part of the century most of all the railroads, canals, bridges, National Improvements and explorations were made or carried out by West Point graduates. Among the United States were one President of the United States, the President of the Confederacy, four Cabinet Ministers, 14 Ambassadors and Ministers, 25 Senators and Representatives in Congress, 15 State Governors, 40 college presidents, the bishop and 20 other clergymen, 12 physicians and any number of men holding honorable and prominent positions under the Government or the state.

In war its graduates took prominent parts in that in Mexico, and came into pre-eminent prominence in the Civil War. In the United States, 15 State Governors, 40 college presidents, the bishop and 20 other clergymen, 12 physicians and any number of men holding honorable and prominent positions under the Government or the state.

One hundred and fifty-one of the Confederate Generals were West Point graduates, and among them were the commanders of all their great armies, as well as the President of the Confederacy—Lee, Beauregard, Johnston, Longstreet, Pickett, Sherman, Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Thomas, Hooker, Sedgewick, Hancock, Reynolds, Chamberlain, Custum, Merritt and many others whose names are household words.

The whole number of cadets admitted in the century was 5904, of whom 1171 had graduated with the class of 1892, and 273 still remain cadets. Of the graduates, 1900 are living, of whom 1400 are Army officers (about one-third of the total number of officers in the Army) in active service, 500 are in the reserves, and 1000 are in the Army, and 200 in civil pursuits. The graduates of West Point have ever responded to the call of the people in the crises of the Nation, and have often given their lives on the field of battle, and they have ever been found true to the motto of their alma mater—"Duty, honor, country."

GEORGE B. R. GOODWIN. (Copyright, 1902.)

GEORGE ADE'S FABLE IN SLANG

OF THE MODERN BENEFACTOR WHO MADE A SUCCESS IN A NEW LINE OF WORK

ONCE there was a Multi-Millionaire who felt jealous when he saw Carnegie throwing 50 Gold Pieces at the Squirrels, while Coal-Oil Johnny Rockefeller was handing his pet University another Million every time a new student came in out of the Tall Grass and Matriculated.

He saw that a very Rich Man who wishes to be Respected must fill his clothes with Currency and go out and slather it around and holler for everybody to have something on him and keep the Change. He decided to follow the prevailing Fashion and spend his Money before he died, thereby giving the H-H to the Legal Profession.

But when this would-be Philanthropist got ready to cut the Strings on his Bundle he struck a Snag. The Philanthropist Business had been overworked. Every Town large enough to be indicated on the Map had a Carnegie Library. He found that the Orphans were receiving more Care and Attention than the Children of Club Women. About the only Little Ones who got into the Country in the Summer were the Homeless Waifs. As for Colleges, they had multiplied so rapidly that all through the Middle West it was practically impossible to get Harvest Hands. The Poor Workingman showed no inclination to go against the Free Reading Room and the Cheap Lectures on Astronomy, for he had the Price in his Pocket, and preferred to play Seventy-Seven in some German Place where they served Hot Lunch.

It began to look as though the benevolent Millionaire would have to burn his Money or else leave it to the usual Nephew, who lived on High Balls and Musical Comedy.

"Surely there is suffering somewhere in this World," said the ex-Millionaire. "Some one is waiting for a Helping Hand. Now to find him." He began a careful Study of Social Conditions and soon discovered that the real

Sufferer, the mute and patient Victim who was getting the Hooks oftener than any one else, was the Gentleman who wore the High Collar and carried in his Hip-pocket a Little Work on Etiquette and Good Behavior.

The poor Reptile whose Wife got up in the Morning and grabbed the Paper to see if the Family was mentioned, he was the character necessary to make them useful.

When war with France was threatened the weakness of depending on foreign talent was made apparent, and the les-

blage until it was discovered that in front of each Plate was a Card laying that any one attempting to make a Speech would be thrown out on his Neck. Three or four of the Spell-Binders were temporarily suspended from the Banquet table their Faces down among the Cut Flowers and wept for Joy. The Dinner proceeded with tremendous enthusiasm. There were no Dark Clouds on the Horizon, "thunder and lightning." No one was wondering how long the Mayor or the Congressman was going to Spout, or whether they had Manuscripts concealed on their Persons. The Orchestra played Cool Songs without any interruption from the Chairman. No one said anything about the Feast of Reason and the Flow of Soul. The Man with the Megaphone Voice cut no ice whatsoever, for they had him seated up. Every one went home feeling good.

Next day no less than 40 grateful Persons stopped the Reformer on the Street and bade him Godspeed in his Noble Work.

The next thing the Society did was to offer a Cash Bonus to any one giving a Reception at which there would be no standing in Line and shaking Hands.

A special Fund was set aside for the purpose of having Children in the Public Schools taught, by means of Charts, the Deadly Effects of the Lap Supper.

Then the Society offered a Bounty of \$2 for the Sculp of any Person guilty of Amateur Theatricals, and a Reward of \$100 for the Body, dead or alive, of any one proposing a Lady Minstrel Show.

A diamond-encrusted Brooch was offered to every Young Woman who would pledge herself never to sing anything that she learned at the Conservatory. Special Endowments were offered to Colleges on condition that Graduates should not be permitted to arise on a Hot Day and quote from Emerson.

A large Sum was set aside to secure the passage of a Law prohibiting the sale of Plutes to any one except a German employed in an Orchestra.

Society Leaders were quietly bribed to circulate the Report that Party Calls were no longer fashionable.

A Hall of Fame was established for Bridal Couples that refused to take Presents and cut out the Reception at the Home of their Parents.

Then the Multi-Millionaire inaugurated a Grand Movement for the final Emancipation of those who wear Dress Clothes. He worked on the Legislature to set aside three days in every Week for the private use of those who would do as they please, without being pulled and hauled. Any one who broke in on these days with Invitations was liable to Prosecution, the Penalty being a Fine or Imprisonment, or both.

By the time this Practical Reformer had spent a couple of Millions helping the unfortunate Upper Classes to throw off the Shackles, he was the most popular character in the Country.

His heroic Example induced many weak and faltering Souls to swear off the Entertainments that had been slowly but surely leading them toward the Foolish House.

After he passed away his Statue was set up in every Park and his Birthday was observed in the Public Schools with a Half-Holiday instead of a Programme of Recitations and Speeches.

WHAT THE COURTS DECIDE

RECENT FINDINGS OF INTEREST ALIKE TO LAWYERS AND THE LAITY.

WHERE a telegraph company received and contracted to deliver a message with reasonable diligence to the addressee at a certain hour and charges were not paid or guaranteed for delivering it elsewhere, the Supreme Court of Texas, in the case of Western Union Telegraph Company vs. Swearingen (67 S. W. Rep. 767), held that the company was under no obligations to deliver the message at his home several miles from such town.

Contributory Negligence. Where a man discovered his child on a railroad track a short distance in front of an approaching train, the Supreme Court of Texas, in the case of San Antonio & Corpus Christie Railway Company vs. Gray (67 S. W. Rep. 755), held that the fact that he ran back along the track toward the train in an effort to save his child, does not render him liable to a charge of contributory negligence.

Not False Representation. An assertion by the seller of a business in the purchaser's presence that the business would make "a bushel of money" and similar statements were not false representations, such as would avoid the purchaser's note given for the business, hold the Court of Appeals of St. Louis, Mo., in the case of Black vs. Epstein (67 S. W. Rep. 756).

Not Direct Interest. The interest of the judges or jurors as taxpayers and citizens of a county, in a prosecution wherein the fine, if imposed, would go to the county, is held by the Court of General Sessions of Delaware, in the case of State vs. Lynn (61 At. Rep. 373), to be such direct, tangible and substantial interest as to constitute ground for change of venue.

Unauthorized Police Power. Under laws relating to cruelty to animals, in New Hampshire it is provided that "Whenever an officer shall take any such animal into his possession which appears by reason of age, injury or other cause to be disabled for use, said officer shall call upon three disinterested citi-

zens, who, under oath, shall examine such animal, and if they shall find such animal to be disabled for use," said officer shall at once cause such animal to be killed." In passing upon this statute, the Supreme Court of New Hampshire held that such statute, inasmuch as it authorized the destruction of a person's property without notice or an opportunity to be heard, was an unauthorized exercise of the police power, and a violation of the constitutional guaranty against depriving a person of property without due process of law.

Only a Trespasser. One who, knowing that a conductor has no authority to grant free transportation, enters and rides upon his train with deliberate intent not to pay his fare, under an agreement or under a tacit understanding with the conductor that he shall ride free, is held by the United States Supreme Court of Appeals, in the case of Purple vs. Union Pacific Railroad Company (114 Fed. Rep. 125), to commit a fraud upon the railroad company, and not a passenger, but is a mere trespasser, to whom the only duty of the company is to abstain from wilful or reckless injury.

Disclosing Private Business. A wholesale mercantile firm, in answer to a general inquiry from another house for information regarding the credit, promptness and financial standing of a customer, is held by the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, in the case of Foster vs. McAlester (114 Fed. Rep. 145), not to be bound to disclose its own business relations or the state of its account with such customer.

School Board's Liability. Where a Board of Education contracts for improvements for a school building, the Supreme Court of California, in the case of Morgan vs. Board of Education (88 Pac. Rep. 703) held that it cannot escape liability for breach of its contract by claiming the public funds could not be used to pay damages.

Validity of a Governor's Act. Though the process of the courts cannot be directed against the Governor off-

cially, Judge Taylor, of the New York Supreme Court, special term, in the case of Guden vs. Dike (75 N. Y. Supp. 784) holds that the validity of his acts when affecting the rights of individuals by removing an officer from a public office, may be passed upon judicially in civil or criminal proceedings to which he is not a party.

Damages to Grain Crop. A party contracted to harvest grain, agreeing to commence not later than July 5, but failed to commence until July 15. In the meantime a large amount of the grain about out to be harvested was destroyed, and it was contended that damages were recoverable for this loss on account of the failure of the first party to perform his contract, and the jury so found. On appeal the Supreme Court (California) in the case of H. Holt Manufacturing Company vs. Thornton, 68 Pac. Rep. 708, affirmed the verdict of the jury, holding that the damages were not to be remote or speculative.

Stopped From Enforcing Indebtedness. Where the sole stockholder of a corporation by his statement as to its resources and by his silence as to any liability of the corporation to him, induced a purchase of his stock in the belief that it was not so indebted, the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit, in the case of G. W. Timm-Republican Printing Company (115 Fed. Rep. 29), held that such stockholder is stopped from enforcing any indebtedness as against the purchaser of the stock.

Charge of the Judge. It is not erroneous for the judge, in the trial of a civil case, to call the attention of the jury to the fact that they have taken an oath to try the case according to the evidence and the law, as given them in charge by the court, and that they cannot set up any ideas of their own in reference to the law of the case, in opposition to what is contained in the charge of the court. There is nothing in such a charge calculated to embarrass a conscientious juror in the discharge of his duty. (Akridge vs. Noble, 41 S. E. Rep. 78).