

## Camp Commander Is Engineer of Wide Experience in Building for U. S. Army

Cramming wide experience, both of life and his profession, into a few short years, Lt. Col. R. E. M.



Des Islets, 39, came to Camp Adair qualified as a builder and an executive by wide-spread accomplishments for the U. S. Army engineers, and his promotion from major to lieutenant colonel came through after his arrival at Camp Adair.

Bonneville dam, great power and navigation project of the lower Columbia river, with one end of its huge pile of concrete on our own Oregon shore, was Col. Des Islets' responsibility immediately prior to his Camp Adair assignment. In fact, his work there is still on his hands "in addition to his other duties," because the stage has not yet been reached which will free him completely from responsibility.

The colonel has been responsible head of construction and operation of the physical features there, and still is, although he is now sharing this job with a resident engineer there. Disposal of electricity and promotion are in other hands. Periodical visits back to Bonneville, and more frequent telephone communications are still a part of the colonel's job.

The military head of Camp Adair is busy. It is a big surprise to those close to him that he is able to handle the mass of detail which goes through his office every day, and still use speedy and accurate judgment in his decisions on the larger questions. And through it all, he has time to smile, tell a good story, or listen equally well as occasion arises. He's able to be "the hard-boiled colonel" of army tradition, even in his comparative youth, when it is necessary, but his organization at Camp Adair makes these necessities very infrequent.

Col. Des Islets was graduated from West Point in 1926 and immediately got into a building job for the army. He was assigned to Fort Bliss, after a period with troops on the Mexican border, and laid out the new post including utilities, theatres, an in-door riding hall.

On the side, he assisted in counter espionage along the Mexican border, and it was through the efforts of him and his associates that a revolution was put down before it began. They predicted within two hours, the time of the beginning of the revolution and made it possible to frustrate it without interference of U.S. troops, thus saving diplomatic concussions on both sides of the border.

Old-time patriotism and love of country deeply buried in the colonel's heart were accentuated during his next army assignment. He attended the engineering technical school at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, which is only four miles from Mt. Vernon and laid in a country steeped in the traditions of the American revolution and the country's growth since.

Upon graduation from this school, the colonel went to Hawaii with troops. This assignment included some engineering in reorganization of defense layouts on the north shore of the island of Oahu.

Upon returning from the islands, the colonel was assigned as an instructor of R.O.T.C. cadets at Auburn university, Alabama, where he imparted some military engineering to many fine young men who are now fellow officers on active duty. Although Col. Des Islets' job there was military engi-

neering, he saw even more in a responsibility of character building in the young men of the south, and now recites many pleasant memories of the development of these cadets from college freshmen to officers in the army.

Ability of the Camp Adair commandant was recognized by the war department following the Auburn assignment, when he was ordered to attend the Commanding General's Staff school, the height of army recognition and the goal of all career officers in the army. The school is at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, and technique of administration, tactics and handling of troops up to 125,000 on one mission is included in the course. Completion of this school is necessary to the higher ranks in the army.

Col. Des Islets has had much interest in athletics in the past, and regrets that engineering duties have taken most of his time away from that field. He has an impressive record of his own. Besides football and track at West Point he went to Paris and Amsterdam in 1924 and 1928 as a high hurdler in the Olympic team representing his country. He coached army athletics on the side on many of his assignments and only last year led his league as a hitter in soft ball with his Bonneville team.

Mrs. Des Islets and a boy, 10, live in Corvallis. The colonel is human along with his professional character, and he regrets that he is not able to become personally acquainted with the thousands of men and young men who will be working here helping him to do his bit for the great war effort. He has made a definitely fine place for himself in the communities about Camp Adair, and has developed warm friendships here during his short stay.

All the rest of us interested in the early and efficient completion of the camp, to make it ready for our share of the big new army, are fortunate that we have a man of the calibre of Col. Des Islets at our head. We may count upon him for his share in the work and if we follow his leadership, Camp Adair will be a credit to us and to the army.

### M. F. Low Representative Of Accident Commission

M. F. Low, representative of the claims department of the State Industrial Accident commission, has an office and puts in a shift each day at Camp Adair. He is on hand to handle any claims that arise and to assist the contractors and employees.

Mr. Low was formerly in business in Corvallis, later in Albany and now resides in the state capital.

### Main Contractors Are Listed for Information

The following firms are larger contractors at Camp Adair, and each has a headquarters office at the camp:

Strong and McDonald; National Builders; Lovering, Halvorson and Sletton; Four Builders; Moore, Roberts and Freethy; Hoffman, Wright and Smith; Nat McDonald-Kern and Kibble and Parker-Schram.

Every effort is being made in the towns about the camp to dig out every available apartment, room and house for workers.

Ride with Tom today, Dick tomorrow and Harry the next day—and then bring them with you the next. It's worth an effort.

### Safety Always A Weekly Check

During the past two weeks the frequency of our accidents at Camp Adair has jumped about 100 per cent. There is something wrong—this should not be. There are too many hours lost on this project from accidents. Yes, we hear from all sides that this is due to the number of inexperienced men working on this project, that men are being furnished for these jobs who are not trained men but come out as such, that they are in reality "green" men who do not know how to handle tools safely or work in a safe manner because they are not trained in this craft, that these men are calling themselves craftsmen and a lot of them have never worked at this trade, but have joined the union and have gone to work here. There are many other excuses that are just excuses and not an answer to our problem.

It is not enough for us to say that we cannot do anything about this and that it is just one of those things. We must get this job finished and finished on time. We must teach them to work safely and efficiently. Every hour that is lost on this project because of an accident is an hour gained by our enemy.

Each and every man that holds a supervisory position from the

general superintendent down to the line foreman must realize that it is his job to get this done and do it safely for safety has long been recognized as one of the fundamental requirements on each and every job. These men in the supervisory positions will have to spend a little more time with their men in organization and wherever at all possible select and assign the men in their crews to jobs for

which they are the best fitted on the basis of their qualifications, and train them to work safely. Good tools should be furnished as well as safe surroundings to work in. If this policy is followed, it will go a long ways to make our work here at Camp Adair more enjoyable and we will reach the goal that we are all shooting at—FINISH ON TIME AND SAFELY.  
J. Glenn Julian.

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