

SUGGESTIONS FOR OFFICERS GOING TO SEA

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A FEW weeks ago a Marine Officer who had received his preparatory orders to command the guard aboard a battleship asked the writer for some dope on sea duty. As quite a few Marine Officers are sent to sea who are not familiar with this important phase of our profession, it is possible that these suggestions may be of help when ordered aboard ship.

Sea duty should not be looked upon as something to be dodged as a great many officers at present seem to think. As a famous Marine General once remarked, "You are not a real Marine until you have made a cruise at sea." We are essentially a part of the Navy and therefore should be familiar with its life and personnel. The only way to obtain their viewpoint, learn their game and form close personal associations with them is by going to sea. An officer will find the knowledge gained at sea and the friends made there of inestimable value to him as he rises in the service especially at posts where he is under a Naval Commandant and on expeditions when Naval Officers are in command. Therefore every Marine Officer should strive to go to sea.

In describing routine and life aboard ship it is difficult to speak in anything but generalities as each ship differs in its life and customs and each commanding officer has his individual ideas of how his vessel should be run. Therefore each senior Marine Officer on reporting aboard ship for duty has his own particular problem to work out.

I

BOOKS TO STUDY

An officer who has never been to sea before should procure the following books and study such sections as are given below.

The Boat Book, U. S. Navy, 1920.

Pages 11-51; 108-116; 131-160.

The Ship and Gun Drills, U. S. Navy, 1922.

Pages 1-70; 105-117.

The Bluejackets' Manual, 1918.

Pages 105-115; 119-132; 143-176; 593-606.

Naval Ordnance, U. S. Naval Academy.

Such parts as apply to the 5-inch Battery, especially nomenclature and fire control.

Naval Courts and Boards.

Duties of a Judge Advocate of a General Court-martial.

Training Regulations.

Such parts as cover the "School of the Soldier, squad, platoon and company."

Navy Regulations.

Chapter 5 (Honors and Salutes).

Marine Corps Manual.

Marine Corps Company Administration.

Pay rolls.

Muster rolls.

Property (accountable officer).

By thoroughly familiarizing himself with the above publications a Marine Officer will find that ships' routine and nautical phraseology will come quickly, allowing him more time to concentrate on his organization and gunnery drills.

II

UNIFORMS

The quantity of uniforms needed aboard ship vary with the individual. However, it must be borne in mind that a Marine Officer at sea is always under the eye of the Navy and therefore he must appear at his best at all times. It is therefore the best policy to be well stocked in clothes before going aboard ship. This is especially true of an officer going to the Battle Fleet as good Marine Tailors on the west coast are hard to find and the opportunity for fittings limited.

An officer going to the Battle or Scouting Fleet will need the following uniforms:

- 2 suits of Blues.
- Blue, White and Khaki caps.
- Black, White and Russet shoes.
- 6 suits of Khaki with straight trousers.
- 3 pairs of Khaki breeches for landing parties.
- 1 pair leather puttees.
- 4 suits of Whites.
- Blue Mess dress.
- White Mess dress.
- Boat cape.
- Overcoat.
- 6 pairs of white gloves.
- Campaign Hat.

An officer going to the Special Service Squadron will need the following uniforms:

- 1 suit of Blues.
- Blue, White and Khaki caps.
- 6 suits of Khaki with straight trousers.
- 4 pairs of Khaki breeches with leather puttees for landing parties.
- 6 suits of Whites.
- Blue Mess dress.
- White Mess dress.
- Boat cape, authorized but not essential.
- Overcoat.
- 4 pairs of White gloves.
- Campaign Hat.

In addition to the above uniforms each officer going to sea should provide himself with civilian clothing, as it is customary throughout the Navy and required on some ships that officers going on liberty wear civilian clothes.

Besides the regular equipment carried by a Marine, each officer should provide himself with a button board, N.C.O. Polish, Jewelers' rouge and a brush for polishing his buttons and ornaments.

III

ROUTINE

The daily routine of sea varies with each ship and depends on the particular drills or work to be performed and ship movements schedule. A usual day's routine as applied to Marines is about as follows:

0630 Reveille.

Hammocks stowed immediately.

0700 Breakfast.

Turn to and clean up compartment and get ready for quarters.

0800 Colors, guard of the day renders honors. Physical drill, with or without arms or informal guard mount may be held at this time.

0900 Quarters for muster and inspection. The Marine Officer receives report of his guard, which forms at his division parade. At "Officers' call" he falls in according to the number of the Marine division (usually the seventh) and at Executive Officer's command division officers report their divisions. Upon being dismissed inspect your guard and give them the manual of arms. All hands double time around the ship at the command of Executive Officer on the bugle. At recall go below and change into old clothes. General quarters is sounded immediately and the Marine Officer goes to his station either in the top or at the guns. He reports by 'phone or voice tube to the Gunnery Officer when his guns are manned and tested out and then carries out the prescribed gunnery drills.

1130 Recall.

1300 Drill call. Go to gunnery drills if it is the order of the day. After being dismissed from these, Marine Detachment generally holds a short drill of its own on:

Automatic rifles and machine gun.

Squad movements.

Bayonet exercises.

Orderly instruction.

Lecture on extended order, scouting and patrolling.

Guard duty.

Boats.

Signal flags.

Semaphore and such other drills as Marine Officer may direct.

1630 Recall.

Sunset colors, guard of day renders honors.

Fridays are generally a field day and all hands clean ship and equipment.

Saturday morning, Captain's inspection of ship and personnel.

IV

GUARD DUTY

Guard duty aboard ship is usually run with four hour watches "day on and day off," although it is sometimes possible to run "a one in three guard." The posts furnished are as follows:

- Captain's orderly.
- Executive Officer's orderly.
- Admiral's orderly, if a flagship.
- Chief of Staff's orderly, if a flagship.
- Communication orderly.
- Brig Post.
- Telephone orderly.
- Life Buoy Post at sea.

The guard is generally relieved around 0800. The most intelligent men are used as orderlies while the ones not particularly neat can be used for gun strikers (one per man), messmen and compartment cleaners.

When your ship has the division guard, which occurs about every third day, one Marine Officer must remain aboard.

In rendering honors the full guard is only turned out for an Admiral visiting or leaving the ship officially, coming in or going out of port, or passing a ship where a salute is rendered. In presenting full guard to an Admiral coming over the side, give "Present arms" as his foot hits the top grating of the gangway. The band will sound "Ruffles and Flourishes" and play "The Admiral's March". Keep them at present arms until after the Admiral passes your guard (the latter is not obligatory but looks more military). On the Admiral's return give "Present arms" as he approaches your guard and remain so until after he goes over the side. The band plays "Ruffles and Flourishes". The Captain leaving or returning to his ship officially rates only the guard of the day and the honors are rendered by the Sergeant of the guard. At inspection by the Captain or Admiral have your detachment at "Open, ranks". At his approach "Present, arms," in this position. Then usual inspection.

V

FINAL ADVICE

When reporting aboard ship show the Officer of the Deck your orders and he will direct you to report to the Executive Officer. Have the messenger take you to the Marine Officer's room. Find out from him what the uniform of the day is and shift into it. Then report to the Executive Officer with your orders and ask him when it will be convenient for you to report to the Captain. Wear sword, and if in Blues, white gloves. At sea a Marine Officer wears his sword at all formations in which his guard falls out under arms.

Go aboard ship with the idea of making as many friends as possible. Try to coöperate in every way to make your ship a happy one and the best in the fleet. A Marine Officer always gets a lot of extra jobs wished on him.

Take them and don't grumble. Try to make yourself indispensable in the ship's activities. If any kind of an athlete, go out and help coach the ship's teams. All these things help to make friends in the ward room and an officer can help his detachment a great deal by having friends among his brother officers.

At sea personal cleanliness and neatness of uniforms and equipment count for a great deal. The average Captain of a ship wants a guard that always puts up a soldierly appearance at inspections, has clean, snappy and efficient orderlies and the remainder of the guard doing their duty well with no reports. Add to this a guard that can hit the target at Battle Practice and you will be considered a first-class Marine Officer.

Encourage the men of your detachment to go out for ship's athletics. It helps a lot to have Marines on the various teams and boat crews and there is also keen competition between the various divisions aboard ship and other ships' detachments.

Remember that there are only seventy-five Marines aboard a battleship to one thousand one hundred bluejackets, so don't try to buck the Navy. Be diplomatic and swallow your pride if necessary to prevent useless argument. Remember that the Officer of the Deck has the Captain's authority for any order he gives. Many times he is junior to you in rank and apparently in the wrong when ordering a Marine to perform some extra duty. Don't bawl him out as it will surely lead to trouble. If you have a real kick, go to the Executive Officer with it and generally you will find he will more than meet you half way.

Most guards have a lot of false ideas about their rights aboard ship. Don't let them feel that every time they get a little extra work that the Navy is trying to put something over on them. Discourage any feeling that may exist in your guard that the Naval Officer and Bluejacket are greatly inferior in a military sense to a Marine and therefore do not require the same respect and courtesy. The Navy's job is to run the ship so naturally they are not going to be as soldierly as a Marine whose principle duty is to drill well. Make your men always salute snappily and be neat in appearance. Foster a pride in your detachment and ship and make your men believe a seagoing Marine is far better off than his brothers ashore.