

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

OFFICER CANDIDATES SCHOOL
TRAINING COMMAND
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QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134-5033

GMK 1041
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MARINE CORPS HISTORY II

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Without the aid of references, describe common terms, sayings, and quotations used in the Marine Corps without omission. (MCCS-HIST-1001)
2. Without the aid of references, identify the historical significance of Marine Corps uniform items without omission. (MCCS-HIST-1003)

ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Without the aid of references, identify significant events in Marine Corps history during the period 1900-1933 without omission. (MCCS-HIST-1002d)
2. Without the aid of references, identify the historical background of the Marine Field Hat worn by Range personnel and drill instructors without omission. (MCCS-HIST-1003e)
3. Without the aid of references, identify the historical significance of the French Fourragere authorized for members of the 4th Marine Brigade without omission. (MCCS-HIST-1003f)

1. The Boxer Rebellion.

a. At the turn of the century a society known as the Righteous Fists of Harmony (Boxers) was formed in China. Many of its members were former Chinese soldiers who had been de-mobilized by the Chinese government in 1898. As a fundamentalist Chinese movement, they practiced martial arts, held secret rituals, and promised their members that they would be immune from foreign bullets. If one of their members was killed by a foreign bullet, his lack of faith and dedication were used as the reason for the failure. Dedicated to the expulsion of all foreigners from China, in the spring of 1900, they began to attack Europeans, especially missionaries, and their Chinese converts. Though they did kill several hundred European missionaries, they were especially brutal towards their own countrymen, killing several thousand Chinese Christian converts.

b. By May of 1900, Boxers were seen openly on the streets of Peking. The diplomats requested help, and in late May, a security force of 337 officers and men arrived. The security force consisted of British Royal Marines, German marines, Japanese marines, Russian sailors, Austrian marines, Italian sailors and an American contingent. The American contingent consisted of fifty Marines, five sailors, and a Navy doctor. They came from ship's guards detachments that were immediately available, and were commanded by one Captain John T. "Handsome Jack" Meyers. They carried no baggage except for their weapons so that they could carry extra ammunition. Soon after arriving, they were besieged and isolated for 55 days by a force of around 50,000 Boxers. The US contingent was assigned the mission of defending one wall of the Western compound of the Foreign Legation, and even though they were momentarily thrown back by overwhelming numbers, they maintained that post until a relief force could fight its way the 115 miles from Tientsin.

c. When a relief force reached the besieged compound fifty-four days later they found the Marines still defending the stronghold.

2. The "Banana Wars"

a. In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt established a corollary to the Monroe Doctrine in which he declared the United States' unilateral right to intervene in the Western Hemisphere. This would become a cornerstone of American foreign policy for the next three decades. The Marine Corps became an essential tool in the application of that foreign policy and ensured their involvement in a series of "Banana Wars," named for the main export from this region. It was at this time that the Marine Field hat or Campaign cover became standard issue to help Marines deal with the heat in the tropical climate. Marine Drill Instructors and Range Personnel still wear this cover. There were four main objectives of American foreign policy:

- (1) To control the sea lanes between the United States and the Panama Canal
- (2) To keep other foreign powers out of the Caribbean
- (3) To support American investors in these underdeveloped agricultural countries
- (4) To establish and maintain the local political stability that these strategic and economic purposes required

b. **Actions in the Western Hemisphere:** Marines found themselves on familiar shores in tropical regions throughout Central America and were in action again in such places as Cuba, Panama, Nicaragua, Mexico, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. Many of the heroes of the Far East furthered their legends during America's military interventions into Latin America.

c. **Panama.**

(1) Late in 1901, Marines went ashore on the Isthmus of Panama, which at that time was still part of Colombia, in order to protect trains that were hauling supplies for the construction of the Panama Canal. The U.S. government was encouraging the Panamanians to revolt against the Colombians and American business interests were financing this revolt. In 1903, the Republic of Panama was established and the U.S. rushed to secure a treaty for the rights to the canal that was under construction.

(2) Marines prepared to assist in the defense of Panama from a Colombian invasion, but the incursion never occurred. At one point, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Brigadier General Elliott, took charge of all Marines in Panama. This was the first time a Commandant had taken charge of troops since Henderson had done so in the Florida Indian war. Marines remained in Panama as a protective force for the Canal Zone. The Marines were withdrawn from Panama when the U.S. Army took over defense of the Canal Zone.

d. **Cuba:** The Marines made several landings in Cuba between 1906 through the end of World War I, but saw no actual fighting. Their purpose was to protect American interests. To this end the Marines were largely successful. Their mere presence caused a lessening of tensions.

e. **Nicaragua.**

(1) The conflict in Nicaragua would become the largest of the "Banana Wars" and would span over 20 years. In May 1910, Major Smedley Butler led Marines ashore to protect American interests: this was the first appearance of Marines and they eventually put down the rebels that were threatening a pro-American government. By 1913, the rebellion had been subdued and most of the Marines were withdrawn only 100 men remained as a guard for the U.S. legation in Managua, the capital.

(2) The Nicaraguans resented the presence of American businesses and the Marines and by 1926, rebels were raiding American fruit, lumber and mining companies. In January 1927 the Marines landed in order to guard foreigners in Managua and protect American interests. Clashes between the Marines and the Sandinista rebels, named for their leader, Augusto Sandino, became more and more common.

(3) It was in one of these skirmishes in 1927, that the Marines pioneered a new concept utilizing aircraft, "Close Air Support." A Marine patrol was surrounded in a house when a large rebel force attacked them. Two Marine aircraft arrived overhead and strafed the rebels. Later that day, five more Marine aircraft arrived, this time with 17-pound bombs as well as machine guns, and they continued to pound the enemy force. Once the aviators

were finished, the Marine patrol was able to mop up the survivors that remained. Although Marine aviators first saw aerial combat over France, Nicaragua was the first time aviators coordinated their efforts with ground troops to destroy enemy forces. This new concept called "Close Air Support" has been central to Marine battlefield tactics ever since.

(4) The Nicaraguan intervention continued for over 5 more years with continued skirmishes and battles. In January 1933, the last Marines elements were embarked on ships to return home.

f. Veracruz, Mexico.

(1) The president of Mexico had been assassinated and General Huerta had made himself dictator. Marines were ordered to take control of Veracruz and seize a cargo of arms on a German ship intended for Huerta. On 21 April 1914, Marines, under the command of Colonel John A. Lejeune, assaulted Veracruz. By May, a regiment of Marines was ashore. The fighting was slow and tedious.

(2) Major Smedley Butler was awarded the Medal of Honor for the gallantry he displayed leading a battalion in the capture of the city.

(3) Major Smedley Butler is one of the most decorated officers in Marine Corps history. He is one of only two Marines to have received two Medals of Honor. He fought the Spanish in the Philippines and the Boxers in China before going to Central America to fight in the Banana Wars. Butler retired on 1 October 1931 after he was passed over for Commandant of the Marine Corps. He went on to become a lecturer who spoke out against war profiteering and fascism in the United States. In 1935 he wrote a book called "War is a Racket," in which he stated that during his military career "...I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism." Smedley Butler died on 1 June 1940 in Pennsylvania.

g. Haiti.

(1) Also in 1914, unrest was brewing in Haiti. The possibility of European intervention brought out the United States Marines. The Marines landed at Cape Haitian and plans were drawn up to restore the country and reestablish the government. A group of rebels and bandits called "Cacos" had been responsible for many of Haiti's problems. Sweeps were conducted of main cities and the bandits were either disarmed or sent to jail.

(2) While in route to attack a Caco fortress, Marines under Major Butler were betrayed by their guide and ambushed. As relentless attacks continued through the night, the Marines realized they needed more firepower. Gunnery Sergeant Dan Daly slipped out of the Marine's defensive perimeter and through enemy lines to retrieve a machinegun that was lost in a river during the first few minutes of fighting. Daly returned with the machinegun and at daybreak the Marines attacked, chasing the bandits from their fortress and burning it to the ground. Gunnery Sergeant Dan Daly was awarded his second Medal of Honor for his actions in Haiti.

(3) Fort Reviere was the last bandit stronghold in a mountain fortress in the jungle. Major Butler lead a twenty-four-man detail across an open area toward a drainpipe he knew led into the middle of the Caco stronghold. As the detail reached the drainpipe, they found the opening. Without hesitation, a Marine by the name of Sergeant Ross Tams along with Private Gross and Major Smedley Butler took the lead, and made a dash down the drainpipe, followed closely by the rest of the Marines. Moving quickly through the drainpipe, Sergeant Tams shot the sentry guarding the opening. The three Marines emerged from the pipe and attacked seventy bandits with pistols and knives. Soon the rest of the detachment arrived and fierce hand-to-hand combat ensued. When the fighting ended, fifty Cacos lay dead and the Marines captured the fortress. Tams, Gross and Major Butler all were awarded the Medal of Honor for their actions. This was Major Butler's second Medal of Honor.

h. Dominican Republic.

(1) On 5 May 1916, two companies of Marines arrived from Haiti to protect the American legation in Santo Domingo. On 18 June 1916, Colonel J.H. Pendleton arrived from San Diego with the 4th Marine Regiment and took command of all American forces ashore.

(2) Col. Pendleton also took full control of the Dominican Republic government. On 29 November 1916, the United States admitted that U.S. Marines were running the Dominican Republic. The U.S. military controlled the country until 12 July 1924, when officers deemed that the Dominican Republic was ready to establish its own constitutional government.

3. **Development of Marine Corps Aviation**

a. **Lieutenant Alfred A. Cunningham.**

(1) Prior to World War I, the advent of the airplane caused military organizations around the world to consider the possible tactical applications. Along with the U.S. Navy, the Marine Corps began to develop its air arm and on 22 May 1912, Marine Lieutenant Alfred A. Cunningham arrived at Annapolis, MD in order to begin the Navy's new aviation training camp. Lt Cunningham was the fifth aviator to graduate from the camp and thus is remembered as "Naval Aviator #5." He is also remembered as the first Marine to earn his wings.

(2) When the United States entered World War I, Marine aviation had a total of only 39 men. Despite this fact, however, in January 1918 Marine aviators from the 1st Marine Aeronautic Company began flying antisubmarine patrols over the Atlantic Ocean. In July the 1st Marine Aviation Force, consisting of 4 squadrons, arrived in Europe. Until late September, however, the Marines did not own a single plane and did most of their flying with French and British squadrons. Ultimately, Marine aviators participated in 43 joint combat raids and 14 purely Marine raids. By war's end, Marine aviation had grown to over 2,400 officers and men. The Commandant felt that Marine aviation had proven its worth and should be an integral part of the Marine Corps and naval aviation.

4. **The Marines Enter WWI (1917)**

a. **The U.S. Enters the War.**

(1) What was to become the First World War began in the summer of 1914 with Germany's invasion of Belgium. The rapid German advance swept through Belgium and into France toward Paris. In the Battle of the Marne, the French were able to halt the German onslaught and the war on the Western Front settled into bloody, immobile trench warfare. The United States remained neutral as a result of President Woodrow Wilson's efforts to stay out of the war. He was able to get himself reelected under the slogan "He kept us out of the war." However, five months after being reelected, Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war and on 6 April 1917, the United States finally entered World War I.

(2) American military strength at this time was insignificant in comparison with its European contemporaries. The Marine Corps began WWI with 511 officers and 13,214 enlisted men. By the end of the war, the Corps had grown to 2,462 officers and 72,639 enlisted men, which was enough to field two brigades to fight in Europe.

(3) Through Allied urging, the U.S. quickly sent a token force to bolster morale and show the tired, worn-out Allied armies that help was on the way. Major General John J. "Blackjack" Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), and his small staff were the first to land in Liverpool on 8 June. On 14 June, the first elements of the AEF sailed for France, including the 2,759 Marines of the 5th Marine Regiment.

(4) Patriotism across the country was high at the beginning of World War I. Recruiting posters went up soliciting young Americans to join in the fight. A famous Marine slogan, "First to Fight," made its first appearance on Marine recruiting posters at the beginning of the war. The slogan, "First to Fight," points out that Marines have been in the forefront of every American war since the founding of the Corps.

b. **American Forces in France: The Fourth Marine Brigade.**

(1) The 5th Marine Regiment and the 6th Marine Regiment, which arrived in France between October 1917 and February 1918, later joined by the 6th Machine Gun Battalion of Marines. Together they formed the 4th Brigade of Marines. The 4th Marine Brigade and the Army's 3rd Infantry Brigade plus an artillery brigade were formed as the 2nd United States Division, known as the "Indianhead" Division for its shoulder patch depicting an American Indian chief. Marine Brigadier General Charles A. Doyen commanded the Second Division until Army

Major General Omar Bundy superseded him. Doyen was the first Marine ever to lead an Army division. The identities of the Marine regiments assigned to the 4th Marine Brigade remain important in today's Marine Corps because their performance earned them several accolades from the French, to include citations for gallantry and the right to wear the *Fourragere*. The *Fourragere* is a scarlet and green cord worn on the left shoulder of the service and dress uniforms and is still worn by Marines in the 5th and 6th Marine Regiments today.

(2) The Marines did not go into action until mid-March of 1918 when they were sent into the line near Verdun, a supposedly "quiet" sector. The Germans sought to end the war before the full weight of the American forces arriving in France could be brought to bear. They launched a major offensive on the Western Front. One of the attacks of this offensive hit the French between Soissons and Reims on 27 May. The French were pushed back to the north bank of the Marne River, about 40 miles from Paris. This crisis brought the Americans into the fight.

c. Belleau Wood, 6 - 26 June 1918.

(1) Early in June of 1918, the 2nd U.S. Division was rushed into the line to plug a gap that the Germans had cut in the French lines. The Marine Brigade's assignment was to "Hold the line at all hazards." The German attack was eventually stopped and both sides consolidated their positions. The Germans facing the Marines were dug into defensive positions in a place called Bois de Belleau, or Belleau Wood. As Marines moved to the front, retreating French soldiers encouraged them to "fall back... retreat..." telling them that advancement was impossible. In classic Marine fashion Capt Lloyd Williams reportedly answered, "Retreat hell, we just got here!"

(2) Poor battlefield intelligence and a lack of patrolling led the Marines to believe that the Germans did not occupy Belleau Wood. The Marines took up positions along the Paris-Metz road, the Germans' fortified positions in Belleau Wood, and attacked on 6 June. They ran headlong into a regiment of German infantry with an interlocking network of machinegun nests and artillery support. For twenty days, the Marines fought the Germans before securing the woods. It was some of the fiercest fighting in Corps' history and involved a great deal of hand-to-hand combat. It was not until 0700 on 26 June 1918 that a Marine rifle company reached the north edge of the woods.

(3) Gunnery Sergeant Dan Daly led one of the charges across the wheat fields. To inspire his Marines, he was heard to say, "Come on, you sons of bitches! Do you want to live forever?" By evening, the Marines destroyed the German defensive line and pushed the Germans out of Bouresches. For five days the Marines pushed forward until 12 June when the last German defensive line was broken. The woods, except for a small corner, were controlled by the Marines. On 13 June, the Germans counterattacked, only to be repelled as Marine sharpshooters dropped the German attackers at 400 yards. In massive assaults, the Germans kept coming behind a wall of mustard gas. The Germans met death and failure against the Marines.

(4) During the battle a Marine took a diary from a dead German soldier and while reading it, chanced upon some of the soldier's last written words that stated his unit had found a nickname suitable for the gallant Marines-- they called them "*Teufelhunden*" which means "Devil dogs". The German high command classified the Marines as "Shock Troops," a classification reserved only for the finest military organizations.

(5) Casualties were extremely high. In less than three weeks of fighting, the Marine Brigade had taken over 50 percent casualties; 126 officers and 5,057 enlisted men were killed or wounded.

(6) The French were extremely impressed with the U.S. Marines and their tenacious spirit. The French Parliament declared the Fourth of July to be a national holiday in honor of the Americans fighting in France. The French gave the Marines a citation for gallantry at Belleau Wood, the Croix de Guerre, and ordered that the Bois de Belleau be renamed the "Bois de la Brigade de Marine."

d. Soissons, 18-20 July 1918.

(1) In July of 1918, the Germans again lunged forward; this time with 49 divisions, whose objective was, once again, to take Paris. However, with the entrance of the United States into the war a year prior, the Allies were significantly stronger and repulsed the German attack within 48 hours. General Foch, the French general in command of all Allied forces, launched a counteroffensive aimed at severing the supply lines for the German armies around Chateau-Thierry with the focus of the attack to be around the town of Soissons. The Allied attack began in

the pre-dawn hours of 18 July. After two days of bitter fighting, the Marines had advanced six miles deep into the German lines. After suffering more than 50 percent casualties in the lead battalions, the Marines were pulled out of the lines. They had driven to within a mile of their objective before having to be replaced due to casualties. This attack eventually triggered the general retreat of the German army.

(2) Again, casualties were extremely high with the Marine Brigade losing 2,015 men killed or wounded. The French government awarded the Marines a second Croix de Guerre for their performance at Soissons.

(3) Following the battle, as the 2nd U.S. Division was sent to the rear, Brigadier General John A. Lejeune took command of the Marine Brigade. A few days later, Lejeune, now a Major General, took command of the 2nd U.S. Division.

e. St. Mihiel, 12-15 September 1918.

(1) After a comparatively quiet two months, the 2nd U.S. Division was again ordered into the attack. This time, they were to fight as part of the newly formed U.S. First Army under the command of General Pershing. Their attack was to be the precursor of a massive offensive intended to break the back of the German army and end the war. The objective of this preliminary attack was a salient extending from the fortress city of Metz, centered on the town of St. Mihiel.

(2) The Germans realized that this position was going to be hit hard and began pulling back to a stronger defensive line. Shortly after the German withdrawal began, the Americans went over the top. The Marine regiments started the battle in a supporting role but were pushed forward and continued the assault, consolidated their gains and held off German counterattacks. The bulge at St. Mihiel that had existed since 1914 had been wiped out.

(3) The fact that the Germans had already begun their retreat in combination with an extremely heavy preparatory barrage kept casualties relatively light in comparison with the previous battles. One hundred thirty-two Marines were killed and 574 wounded in the fight for St. Mihiel.

f. Blanc Mont Ridge, 3-6 October 1918.

(1) As the Allied armies were preparing for the great offensive, Generals Pershing and Lejeune had to fight to keep the U.S. forces together as a fighting force instead of spreading the American divisions piecemeal throughout the Allied armies. General Pershing was successful in keeping the American units together as a whole but was required to attach the 2nd and 36th U.S. Divisions to the French Fourth Army. General Lejeune then had to struggle to keep his division together. To do this, he told General Gouraud, who commanded the French Fourth Army, that if his division was not broken up it would take Blanc Mont Ridge. This ridge dominated the Arnes River Valley and was the key to the French front in the upcoming offensive. It was also very well fortified.

(2) On the morning of 3 October, the offensive began. By mid-morning, the Marine Brigade had captured the German main line of resistance on Blanc Mont Ridge with the exception of the western slope. The French who had been supporting the Marines' attack, were unable to move up under the intense German fire. The Marines were unable to get into position to attack the western tip of the ridge until the following day. This delay would prove very costly, and 4 October 1918 would become the bloodiest day of the war for the Marines. In that day's fighting 1,100 Marines were killed or wounded and by the end of the day the Germans still held part of the ridge. Early on 5 October the Marines once again assaulted and seized the remaining German positions on Blanc Mont Ridge.

(3) Fighting in the area continued for several days, and the Marines tried to take the town called St. Etienne-a-Arnes but with the extensive casualties that had been absorbed in the fight for the ridge, they had to be pulled out of the line. By 10 October, all Marine units had been relieved.

(4) In a week of fighting, the Marine Brigade had 494 killed and 1,864 wounded. Following the battle of Blanc Mont Ridge, the French awarded the Marines a third Croix de Guerre for gallantry. The third award entitled the Marine Brigade to wear the French *Fourragere*, which is a scarlet and green cord worn on the left shoulder of

the service and dress uniforms. Marines of the 5th and 6th Marine Regiments to this date are authorized to wear the French *Fourragere*.

g. Meuse-Argonne, 1-11 November 1918.

(1) The last battle in which the Marine Brigade saw action in WWI began long before the Marines joined the fight. Early in October, American and French divisions attacked the well-fortified German position in the area between the Argonne Forest and the Meuse River. The Germans had established an intricate defense in a deep network of mutually supporting positions. By 11 October the Allies had suffered 75,000 casualties. The need for reinforcements was extreme.

(2) The 2nd U.S. Division, now rested and reconstituted after Blanc Mont Ridge, began its assault early in the morning on 1 November. The Marines attacked, following closely behind the rolling barrage that preceded them. Although the Germans were retreating, they still put up stiff resistance. By mid-afternoon, the Marines had reached their day's objective and after nightfall the Germans pulled out, retreating behind the Meuse River. The Brigade's advance was rapid and decisive. The following day, 2 November, was a day of rest and action was limited to probes and localized patrolling. As the advance continued, the German army became demoralized by continued night attacks. The Americans were now chasing a withdrawing enemy. By 6 November, the Marine Brigade's forward-most elements were along the Meuse River but the retreating Germans had destroyed all bridges and the Marines' crossing was repeatedly delayed. By 10 November, the German withdraw had become an out-and-out retreat and there was very little effort by the Germans to stop the Allied advance. Late in the evening on 10 November, engineers managed to get a bridge in place and the Marines forced a crossing despite heavy casualties. On 11 November 1918, the two Marine battalions and an army battalion that had crossed the river advanced out from the bridgehead and continued the attack until word of the Armistice reached them.

h. The End of World War I: The Treaty of Versailles ended the First World War. The 4th Marine Brigade fought in eight actions in the closing months of the War. Five of the actions were great battles and the Marines were victorious in every one of these battles. Every one of the victories except the last played a major role in forcing Germany to sue for peace.

5. Women Marines.

a. The First Woman Marine.

(1) On 12 August 1918, the Secretary of the Navy authorized the Commandant to enlist women in the Marine Corps Reserve to perform Clerical Duties. The next day, on 13 August 1918, Opha Mae Johnson was the first woman to enlist in the Marine Corps. She is remembered as the first woman Marine.

(2) Women in Service.

(a) In all, about 300 women served as enlisted Marines during the war. Although their purpose was to release men from their office jobs for combat duties, they received instruction in drill and military ceremonies, worked under the same military regulations, took the same oath as their male counterparts, and wore a skirted version of the green service uniform.

(b) Officially, the program was named Marine Reserve (F). (The "F" denoting female) However, many nicknames came into use, the most popular and widely used being "Marinette". In 1919 the Marine Reserve (F) program became a casualty of post-war downsizing, and was disbanded.

6. Post WWI: During and after World War I, the Banana Wars continued in Central America and the Caribbean. Marines were consistently called upon to protect American interests and provide security in such places as Haiti, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic. During this same period the concept of close air supports was implemented for the first time and the serious study of amphibious assault was undertaken. This study generated the first Manual for Landing Operations.

a. **Mail Guards.** In 1921, robberies and fraud beset the U.S. Mail Service. Presidential Order dispatched Marines to post offices, railroad stations, and postal trucks and trains to protect the mail. Marines guarded the mail for four months, and not one piece of mail was stolen. Again in 1926, the Marines were sent to guard the mail and again they achieved the same results.

b. **Commandant General John A. Lejeune: Establishing a Legacy.**

(1) John Archer Lejeune was born on 10 January 1867 in Louisiana. He received a B.A. from Louisiana State University and then attended the U.S. Naval Academy until he graduated in 1888. He did a two-year cruise as a cadet midshipmen until 1 July 1890 when he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps. Thereafter, he saw action in the Spanish-American War aboard the *USS Cincinnati*.

(2) As a major in 1903, Lejeune was sent to Panama to lead a battalion of Marines who were helping the Panamanians with the revolting Colombians. General Lejeune did other foreign tours in Cuba with the Second Provisional Marine Brigade in 1912, in Veracruz, Mexico with the Second Advanced Base Regiment in 1914, and then with the Second U.S. Division during World War I starting in 1918.

(3) On 1 July 1920, President Wilson appointed Major General John A. Lejeune the 13th Commandant of the Marine Corps. Lejeune remained in office until he retired in 1929.

(4) His intelligence, manners, and political savvy kept the Marine Corps relatively strong through the turbulence of the 1920s. During this time, Americans blamed the war on militarism, politicians sought popularity through pacifist, isolationist stances, and the Marine Corps fought often unpopular wars in Latin America.

(5) He also established the Marine Corps Institute and enhanced the officer corps through the Company Grade Officer's School and the Field Grade Officer's School.

c. **Formalizing the Corps' Birthday.**

(1) One of the Commandant's greatest legacies stems from his decision to formalize the customs surrounding the celebration of the Marine Corps birthday.

(2) On November 1, 1921, he directed that a reminder of the honorable service of the Corps be published by every command, to all Marines throughout the globe, on the birthday of the Corps. In formations or parades, his original message and a message from the current Commandant are read to all hands.

(3) Throughout the world, wherever Marines are gathered, the birthday is further celebrated with a formal social gathering and a cake cutting ceremony. The guest of honor slices the cake with a Mameluke sword, and then two pieces are handed out.

(4) The oldest and youngest Marines present are recognized, and then given the first two slices of cake. The celebration then continues, often with a formal meal and dancing.

d. **Scarlet and Gold:** Commandant Lejeune also decreed that the official colors of the Marine Corps are scarlet and gold. These colors had been associated with Marines for years and Gen Lejeune made it official. Scarlet stands for the blood Marines shed and gold shows the world that Marines are bold.

7. **Amphibious Development**

a. **Lieutenant Colonel Earl H. Ellis.**

(1) Earl H. "Pete" Ellis enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1900. He saw service in the Philippines, where he learned Japanese. On 6 December 1901 he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant. As a Major, he served on Gen Lejeune's staff in France during World War I. Following the war, he was assigned to an intelligence section at Quantico, Virginia.

(2) At Quantico, he studied numerous merchant and seaplane captain reports of Japanese activities and in 1921 wrote a paper that stunned the world.

(3) LtCol Ellis envisioned that conflict between the United States and Japan would eventually tempt the Japanese to launch a surprise attack and destroy the American Pacific Fleet.

(4) He revolutionized Marine Corps thinking by proposing the Marine Corps would have the task of seizing and holding advanced bases for the Navy. Against Japan, these assaults would have to be made against heavily fortified islands in remote parts of the Pacific.

(5) Such thinking was revolutionary for two reasons. First, military thinkers of the day looked at the horrifying British failure to seize a foothold into Turkey at Gallipoli as an example of how modern technology would forever render senseless an amphibious assault against a defended beachhead. LtCol Ellis dismissed those thinkers by saying such an assault will succeed with proper advanced planning and application of Naval gunfire. Second, previous Marine thinking was that the Marines would defend bases for the Navy. Ellis again challenged that assumption and the Commandant listened.

(6) In a memorandum dated 11 Feb 1922, Gen Lejuene wrote that it was vital to have "a mobile Marine Corps force adequate to conduct offensive land operations against hostile Naval bases..." a radical proposition at the time.

(7) Gen Lejeune and others who embraced Ellis' thinking saw that offensive amphibious tactics were developed at Quantico and tested and validated in such places as Cuba, Panama and Hawaii. The Marine Corps spent the better part of the 1930's preparing for such a war as Lieutenant Colonel Ellis predicted.

(8) Lieutenant Colonel Ellis died on 12 May 1923 at the age of forty-three. Eighteen years later his prophesies came true, but he never knew.

b. The founding of the Fleet Marine Force.

(1) On 7 December 1933, General Russell established the Fleet Marine Force (FMF). Its mission was to execute landing operations. To this day, all Marine Corps operations focus on supporting the FMF, now called the Operating Forces.

NOTES:

REFERENCE:

1. MCRP 6-11B "Marine Corps Values: A Users Guide for Discussion Leaders"
2. Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps, by Allan Millett