Discipline in the United States Marine Corps, 1914-1941

By

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ABSTRACT

On the eve of World War I, United States Marines retained four basic assumptions about combat that underpinned their approach to training and discipline. Specifically, they relied heavily on military drill and appearance norms to instill blind obedience and subordination among Marines. However, combat in World War I and various small wars proved these assumptions outdated. The 1920s and '30s witnessed varied debates among Marines about the relevance of their doctrine, tactics, and discipline. Despite their harsh lessons that signaled the need for a different approach to discipline, Marines continued to uphold their four basic assumptions about combat. This resulted in Marine Corps doctrine, tactics, and discipline on the eve of World War II that still resembled those of World War I.

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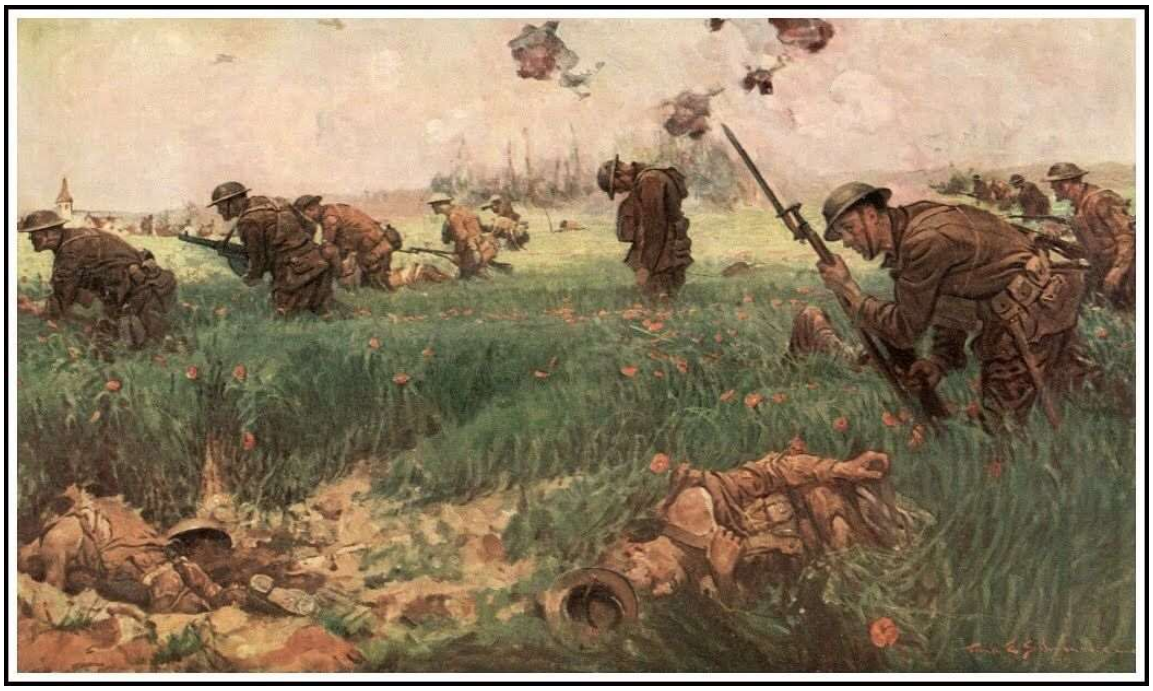

Figure 1. Marines On the Attack.
Source: Frank E. Schoonover, *How Twenty Marines Took Bouresches – June 6, 1918, 1927*, oil on canvas, Norman Rockwell Museum, https://www.frankschoonover.org/0-1000/901-1000/915-how-twenty-marines-took-bouresches-wheat-field-charge/

INTRODUCTION

On the evening of June 6, 1918, over 250 Marines of the 96th Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment formed neat lines on the wooded slopes atop a small ridge and marched towards their objective: the small town of Bouresches, France. Just over twenty reached the town.

Before machine-gun fire snapped through the air and artillery rounds shook the earth, many of the Marines traded jokes in the knee-high wheat fields. One officer fell with his abdomen torn open, another Marine crumpled as his knee shattered, and one lay in a pile of his blood and intestines. The outdated Marine formation—perfect as a parade—made easy targets for the German defenders. To make matters worse, the Marines' training left them mentally unprepared for the modern battlefield's industrial firepower—conditioned to machine-like obedience and to "forbear" the enemy fire, the Marines lay in the field for an hour, awaiting orders, while junior leaders struggled to think and innovate for the first time. Ultimately, the Marines' training won them a 50% casualty rate that day. Long after other militaries had stopped sending massed troops against enemy defenses, these Marines marched in a parade formation across 900 yards of open ground against German machine guns spewing 500 rounds a minute. Although the Marines captured the town, the battle was a tactical victory for the Germans, who intended to drain Allied forces of their strength and slow down the Allied attack. Despite the Marines' terrible losses, tactical defeat, and loss of combat effectiveness, observers praised these Marines for their blind obedience and brave ability to die in the face of

enemy fire.[1] In short, Marine leaders glorified the dead and wounded Marines for their discipline.

American military leaders have referred to "discipline" as an essential facet of military effectiveness, the application of military force to achieve a desired outcome at the lowest cost. Lieutenant Colonel Dick Winters – of *Band of Brothers* fame – observed, "The big thing that I derived from combat was the necessity of maintaining discipline – discipline in our troops and getting the job done in combat." U.S. Army General George Patton explained, "There is only one kind of discipline – PERFECT DISCIPLINE." Members of the U.S. Marine Corps historically prided themselves on their higher levels of discipline compared to other services. Surprisingly, with all of this emphasis on discipline, no written definition for the word exists in military publications[2].

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[1]Peter F Owen, *To The Limit of Endurance: A Battalion of Marines in the Great War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007), 63-91. Ibid., 18.

[2] General Patton quoted in United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1-3: Tactics* (Washington: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, 1997), 95-98. Major Dick Winters quoted in Cole C. Kingseed, *Conversations with Major Dick Winters: Life Lessons from the Commander of The Band of Brothers* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 2014), 80. See also John A. Lejeune, *Reminiscences of a Marine* (1930; repr., Quantico: Marine Corps Association, 1990), 463; and B.P. McCoy, *The Passion of Command: The Moral Imperative of Leadership* (Quantico: Marine Corps Association, 2007), 34-40.
On the lack of an agreed upon definition or understanding of discipline, see Jeremy S. Weber, "The Disorderly, Undisciplined State of the 'Good Order and Discipline' Term" (Research report, Air War College, 2016), 7-8. The closest thing to a definition I have found is in the Marines' *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1-3: Tactics* but this manual still falls short of a cohesive definition. Even the *Cambridge English Dictionary* lists numerous definitions of discipline. "Discipline," *Cambridge Dictionary*, Accessed March 6, 2022, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/discipline.
Founded in 1775, the Marine Corps, as explained by Title 10, chapter 507, section 5063 and chapter 1006, section 10173 of United States Code, is intended to be a "force-in-readiness" that can respond to crises concerning American interests around the world. The Marine Corps is amphibious in nature; Marines are a part of the Navy but perform much of their work on land after departing Navy ships. The first mission of the Marine Corps is to seize and defend advanced naval bases around the world in support of American interests. The second mission is to provide security for the Navy or other national assets (embassies, nuclear power plants, submarine bases). The third mission is to "perform other such duties as the President may direct." This last mission has given the Marine Corps its nickname as "America's 911 Force" because the President or Congress have often called upon Marines to respond to crises around the world and Marines are often first on the scene.

Without an agreed-upon definition, this discipline manifests in different, sometimes counterproductive, ways. Despite the prevalence of historical anecdotes that note failures of discipline's misapplication, I have yet to find any work that thoroughly addresses the topic. Carl von Clausewitz wrote *On War,* John English wrote *On Infantry*, and Dave Grossman authored *On Combat*; but there is no *On Discipline*—no all-encompassing text addressing discipline or its history in the military.

The lack of consensus on discipline is at the heart of this thesis. While it is important to establish the origins of discipline in Marine culture and its impacts on the battlefield, my ultimate goal is to use a (more) comprehensive history of discipline to advocate for its appropriate use in the modern Marine Corps. Lessons lost and learned from the numerous case studies in this thesis make an argument for a different approach to discipline among modern Marines.

The tangential studies on discipline that do exist in the historiography provide support for this thesis. Anthony Kellett—a military theorist, analyst, and Captain in the Royal Canadian Hussars—studied military behavior while working for the Canadian Directorate of Social and Economic Analysis. His *Combat Motivation* (1982) identified two types of discipline based on historical, cultural, and organizational research: imposed discipline and self-discipline. Imposed discipline is the will of a leader forced upon a

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On the Marine Corps' pride in its supposed higher levels of discipline, see Aaron O'Connell, *Underdogs: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 6, 18. Heather Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud: Crafting the Marine Corps Mystique, 1874-1918* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2019), 13, 125-127.

I chose to capitalize the "m" in Marine out of deference to Marine culture. As part of their cultural identity, Marines insist on capitalizing the "m" as another way to ensure the public knows they are different from the lowercase soldiers, sailors, and airmen.

group, which compels that group to act as one body. As explained below, Kellett noted that this type of discipline was best suited for small, professional armies before the twentieth century. On the other hand, Kellett defined self-discipline as obedience based on understanding and knowledge, or willing obedience because the individual knows an action is right and desires to do it. Kellett noted that self-discipline serves as the basis for all discipline and leads to the collective discipline traditionally sought through imposed discipline. The Marines at Bouresches displayed the sad results of imposed discipline on a modern battlefield that required high levels of self-discipline.[3] The case studies in this thesis from 1914 to 1941 do the same.

It is important to note that I witnessed other consequences of overreliance on imposed disciplines during my six years (2014-2020) as an infantry officer in the Marine Corps. Marines wore impractical equipment because it "looked nice" and could march neatly, but they failed to maneuver against an enemy machine gun position effectively. Many Marines believed that the best fighting units were also the best dressed and drilled in marching.[4] These experiences—along with other case studies and the voices of other

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[3] "Kellett, Anthony," Archeion: Archives Association of Ontario, accessed August 28, 2021, https://www.archeion.ca/kellett-anthony.
On the two types of discipline, see: Kellett, *Combat Motivation: The Behavior of Soldiers in Battle* (Boston: Kluwer, Nijhoff Publishing, 1982), 90-92, 133. Kellett details that imposed discipline requires that all commands from above be obeyed at once and without question. Imposed discipline is sometimes referred to as "bull----" by military members. Silly and petty rules regarding administration and appearance rather than combat historically contributed to cultivating instant obedience to orders, cohesion, and personal pride. Kellett goes on to explain that self-discipline implies self-control and self-restraint on the individual's part; it represents a more internalized discipline than institutionalized.

[4] "Drill" can encompass a broad range of practices. Generally speaking, it refers to the repetition of some practice to ensure said practice can be done to a precise standard regardless of circumstance. For example, elementary school children practice fire "drills" each year. The goal is that, should a fire occur, these young children, despite their panic can take the necessary actions to remove themselves from danger. Drills in the military serve a similar goal. First, you have the manual of arms, or "how to use your weapon 101." Then, there is drill in the sense of what most people would call "marching." "Close-order" drill refers to when troops are nearly shoulder to shoulder. "Extended" or "Open-order" drill refers to when

combat veterans—exemplify the need for a better understanding of discipline in the modern Marine Corps.

Thesis, Research Questions, Scope, and Method

As part of my investigation into the origins of these problems, I argue that from 1914 to 1941, the United States Marine Corps and many Marines saw discipline as a means to control untrustworthy troops, control firepower, conduct a bayonet charge, and subordinate individuals to officers' desires. The Marine Corps and Marines believed these outcomes were critical to success in battle and sought to ensure them through imposed disciplines like drill and appearance norms.

Using Kellett's framework, this research will help provide an important step towards a better understanding of discipline that will alleviate confusion and minimize misapplication of the term. This research will also help Marine leaders understand how history influenced their beliefs on discipline. Finally, this historical context will help

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troops are further apart. For Marines in WWI, this initial spacing was only four yards, but grew over time. Additionally, there are "functional" drills, much like a fire drill. These are gas mask drills, machine gun drills, abandon ship drills, etc. For this article, whenever "drill" appears, it refers to either the manual of arms or different variations of marching. More specific drills, like machine gun drills, will be named as such.

My personal experiences provided much of the motivation for studying Marine Corps discipline. In the desert, my unit was prohibited from wearing a wide-brimmed "boonie" hat designed to protect the wearer from the sun while also facilitating air flow. The reason? Our commander said they looked "unprofessional" or undisciplined. As an instructor at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center, I noticed that units as large as 120 Marines often formed into neat lines in order to charge up mountain slopes, despite the fact that these "parade-field" tactics have been discouraged since the lessons of the Battle of Bouresches.

For more on units that suffered consequences from too strict of imposed discipline, see Martin van Creveld, *The Culture of War* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2008), 359-361; Bruce Gudmundsson, *Stormtroop Tactics: Innovation in the German Army, 1914-1918* (Westport: Praeger, 1989); Martin Samuels, *Command or Control? Command, Training and Tactics in the British and German Armies, 1888-1918* (London: Frank Cass, 1995); English, *On Infantry*, 1981 ed.; and John Keegan and Richard Holmes, *Soldiers: A History of Men in Battle* (New York: Viking, 1986), 44.

current and future leaders implement a type of discipline more appropriate for modern combat.

This thesis documents how Marines from World War I (1914) to the eve of World War II (1941) interpreted and applied discipline. I chose this period for two main reasons. First, this large-scale, industrial warfare fielded armies and technology at a rate that confounded earlier notions of warfare and served as a catalyst for military innovations and tactical evolution.[5] Second, even though American combat involvement in World War I did not begin until 1918, Marines observed and wrote about the conflict's lessons since its beginning. Furthermore, Marines engaged in many "small wars" during this period, beginning with the Nicaraguan conflict in 1912 (Figure 2).[6] These small wars also witnessed changing technology and combat experiences that forced military innovations and tactical evolution. Since the small wars also continued after World War I, they provided a way to assess what lessons Marines learned and formalized (and which ones they lost) after the war.[7]

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[5] In the American Civil War, rifles could fire two to three rounds per minute to a range of 200 or 300 yards. Artillery was slow-firing and could reach between 1,500 – 2,000 yards. In World War I, rifles fired twenty to thirty rounds per minute to a range of 600 yards. Artillery fired much faster and had a range from 12,000 to 21,000 yards. Depending on the size of the shell and type of fuze, a shell could cause casualties anywhere from a 15 to 50 yard radius. Additionally, the proliferation of machine guns meant that troops routinely faced weapons firing around 600 rounds per minute at roughly 1000 yards or more.

[6] One might also consider these small wars as counterinsurgencies, guerrilla warfare, and unconventional operations. The Banana Wars refers to American intervention in Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, and Haiti between 1912 and 1934. However, for this thesis, I have also included the experiences of Marines in China from 1927-1941 and chosen to refer to these all as "small" wars.

[7] However, I chose to set 1914 as the starting year for this thesis because the early Nicaraguan operations were small and primary sources did not yield much insight for my research until later in the conflict.

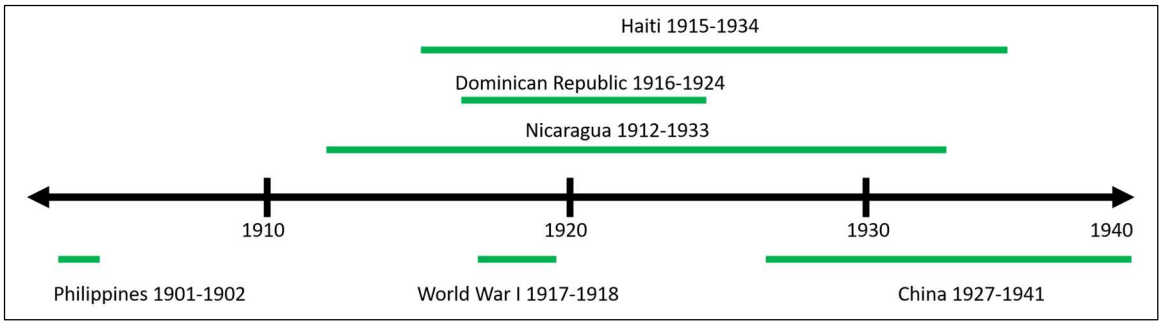

Figure 2. Timeline of Small Wars and World War I. Timeline created by the author.

My guiding research questions are: How have Marines' understanding and application of discipline changed—and stayed the same—from 1914 to 1941? What influenced these changes? Why did some eighteenth-century forms of discipline remain even after technological changes removed the underpinning logic behind them? How did changes in the Marines' interpretations of discipline create advantages or disadvantages on the battlefield? The answers to these questions will provide valuable insight into Marine Corps culture. As this thesis shows, Marines learned valuable lessons about combat that minimized loss of life, but many Marines forgot or discarded these lessons because they did not fit with accepted beliefs. These lessons lost led to more deaths as Marines struggled to relearn these lessons in World War II. Answering these questions will help modern Marines reflect on their culture and how their beliefs on discipline may be hindering their acceptance of much-needed lessons from the last twenty years of conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Concerning sources, this work primarily relied on U.S. Army and Marine Corps doctrinal publications from the era, representing the "official" approach to combat. Tactical manuals also provided some of the best ground for understanding how tactical thought evolved and stagnated between World War I and II. Boards of diverse officers

usually oversaw the publication of these manuals and often copied verbatim from earlier versions. While "official" publications, the contradictions within these manuals provide insight into the Marines' struggle to adopt new ideas while maintaining older traditions. However, as Keith Bickel noted, doctrine and practice often do not align. Therefore, I also analyzed the conversations among Marines in the Marine Corps' professional magazine, the *Marine Corps Gazette*. As the professional publication of the Marine Corps since 1916, the *Gazette* published debates from Marines of all ranks. As Marines experienced combat, their views on discipline, drill, and appearances evolved, sometimes at odds with doctrine. Juxtaposing the conversations in the *Gazette* with official policy helped portray how the organization and the individuals' beliefs changed, stayed the same, or contradicted each other. This juxtaposition allowed me to analyze popular trends and hypothesize what may have caused these trends. Furthermore, the nature of these articles means the authors wrote them soon after their experiences. Unlike memoirs, these articles relied on fresher memories.

Importantly, this data will tell a story. Not only will it provide better insight into *what* Marines believed about discipline over the years – and when those beliefs changed – but it will also provide insight into *why* Marines have applied discipline in the ways they have, an understanding largely absent from modern Marines. One of these stories is the development of institutional identity in the early twentieth century. As the reader will see below, Marines tied their views of discipline to their identity and to how the American public perceived them. This story constantly intersects with another, the Marine Corps' struggle to adapt and evolve in the face of changing technology and growing mission requirements. As evidenced in the doctrine and following articles, the

actions required for adaptation often challenged the Marines' perceptions of themselves and the institution.

Access to primary sources was difficult before the *Marine Corps Gazette*'s founding in 1916. However, I consulted numerous secondary sources to provide context for the Marine Corps pre-1916. While outside the scope of this work, the reader must understand the context behind the Marine Corps' "coming of age" that occurred in the early twentieth century and the organizations' search for a distinct identity. Therefore, a summary is available at the beginning of chapter one.

Historiography

The historiography makes several points clear. First, common notions of discipline often reflected the imposed discipline designed for the technology and culture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Second, this imposed discipline was ill-suited for warfare in World War I and small wars. Third, for reasons discussed below, militaries continued to uphold older beliefs on discipline as vital for combat success despite the realities of small wars and World War I. What is missing—and what this thesis does—is to connect these different points into a coherent, Marine-focused narrative. Various books have addressed discipline in diverse ways, and these brief and varied discussions of discipline provided the greater context for my work. These discussions either uncovered a starting point for Marine Corps discipline or marked signposts throughout history as opinions on discipline changed. The types of work that address this component of military life fall into three broad categories: psychology, military history, and technical or specialized history.

The first category for the discussion of discipline is group dynamics and psychology, and these books explained discipline's roots in European warfare, technology's impact, and cultural tendencies to cling to outdated ideas. John Keegan's pivotal work, *The Face of Battle* (1976), Anthony Kellett's *Combat Motivation* (1982), and Dave Grossman's *On Killing* (2009) noted that for a man to kill another man was unnatural, combat was inherently chaotic, and the majority of troops would run or hide in battle. Militaries throughout history have concerned themselves with how to conquer this fear and instill order. Strict behavior imposed from above and repetitive exercises in obedience like drill were early modern solutions to control soldiers. Norman Dixon's *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence* (1976) explained the psychology behind these observations, but he importantly addressed the adverse side effects of these practices. Insistence on precise uniformity resulted in impractical uniforms, and obsession with drill created unthinking automatons incapable of adapting to changing battlefield circumstances. I am also particularly fond of Dixon's adoption of the term "bull" to refer to such aspects, a term referenced by Kellett and some other authors I encountered. Martin van Creveld's *The Culture of War* (2008) and John Lynn's *Battle* (2003) further affirmed the psychological benefits of drill, imposed order, and strict control towards getting soldiers to fight and provided anecdotes of when these practices hindered battlefield performance.[8]

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[8] John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (1976; repr., New York: Penguin, 1978). John Keegan served as a senior lecturer at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, Britain's equivalent to the United States' Military Academy at West Point.
Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*, rev. ed. (New York: Back Bay Books, 2009). Lieutenant Colonel (retired) Dave Grossman served as an Army Ranger and taught psychology at West Point. Military members widely regard him as an expert on the psychological impact of killing and combat, and his writings formed part of the ethics and combat

Kellett's *Combat Motivation* went further in explaining discipline's role in forming groups and helping humans overcome their natural aversion to killing and facing death. Kellett explored the role of discipline through drill, uniforms, or other rules in motivating soldiers to fight. Kellett noted that discipline served three primary purposes: suppressing the pull towards self-preservation, instilling order and control on an otherwise chaotic battlefield, and assimilating diverse groups of people into a cohesive military unit. However, Kellett observed that self-discipline is now more important and effective than imposed discipline. Marine historian, Allan Millett explained how Marines used imposed behavior and rules to suppress individuality to create a stronger group identity. Tad Tuleja's introduction and conclusion to his anthology, *Different Drummers* (2020), further explained the purpose of discipline. Tuleja explained how control and

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psychology curriculum while I was a student at the U.S. Naval Academy, the Marine Corps' Basic Officer Course, and the Infantry Officer Course.

Martin van Creveld, *The Culture of War* (New York: Presidio Press, 2008), 3-26, 16-128, 353-374. Dr. Martin van Creveld is an Israeli military historian, military theorist, and currently teaches at Tel Aviv University in the Security Studies Program. He has authored thirty-three books on military history and theory, lectured and taught at numerous military and civilian schools, and his work influenced the Marine Corps' adoption of maneuver warfare in the 1980s and 1990s.

Anthony Kellett, *Combat Motivation: The Behavior of Soldiers in Battle* (Boston: Kluwer, Nijhoff Publishing, 1982), 89-93, 133-139.

Norman Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence* (1976; repr., New York: Basic Books, 2016), 186. Dr. Norman Dixon served as a lieutenant in the Corps of Royal Engineers during World War II and was a Professor Emeritus of psychology at the University College of London. Side effects were primarily that the strict discipline and automatic responses cultivated through drill created excellent automatons, but poor leaders and thinkers. Dixon defined "bullshit" as, "the phenomenon involves ritualistic observance of the dominance-submission relationships of the military hierarchy, extreme orderliness and a preoccupation with outward appearances."

John Lynn, *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture* (New York: Westview Press, 2003), 114-157. Dr. John Lynn is a military historian with expertise in European militaries. At the time of his writing, he was the Oppenheimer Professor of Warfighting at Marine Corps University.

Two other works also address psychology and its role in culture. Alan Millett, "The U.S. Marine Corps, 1973-2017: Cultural Preservation in Every Place and Clime," in *The Culture of Military Organizations*, eds. Peter Mansoor and Williamson Murray (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 378-400, https://doi-org.ezproxy.mtsu.edu/10.1017/9781108622752; and Tad Tuleja, *Different Drummers: Military Culture and its Discontents* (Louisville: Utah State University Press, 2020). Dr. Tad Tuleja is a folklorist and writer with an interest in military folkore.

order through drill and uniform regulations psychologically helped cultivate group spirit, especially in the Marine Corps. He also cautioned that imposed disciplines often transformed into excessive rules and regulations that actually encouraged disobedience among troops. Furthermore, Tuleja agreed with the observations of previous authors that self-discipline was the most effective form of discipline.[9]

The second category for discussion is military history, and these works addressed discipline's origins and the changing aspects of battle over the centuries. One must start with a broad scope to understand military history and its treatment of discipline. Lynn's *Battle* explained the cultural and scientific developments in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that led to a belief that commanders could impose order on the chaos of a battlefield. Linear formations and standard uniforms met practical needs for musket employment and protected conscripts from the weather. They also helped fulfill growing cultural expectations of battle as a formulaic and ordered process. Kellett addressed in his work that the *type* of discipline militaries use has changed over the centuries from imposed to self as technologies changed how armies wage war. Creveld's *The Culture of War* expanded Lynn's ideas and explained how cultural beliefs about appearances influenced many military customs and traditions. The anthology *Warfare in the Western World* (1996) further detailed the technological and cultural influences on marching and discipline in European armies. Specifically, the

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[9] Creveld, *The Culture of War*, 106-128. Kellett, *Combat Motivation*, 89, 133-139.
Norman Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence* (New York: Basic Books, 1976).
Alan Millett, "The U.S. Marine Corps, 1973-2017: Cultural Preservation in Every Place and Clime," in *The Culture of Military Organizations*, eds. Peter Mansoor and Williamson Murray (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 378-400, https://doi-org.ezproxy.mtsu.edu/10.1017/9781108622752.
Tuleja, *Different Drummers,* 5-9; 189-192.

authors explained the influences of Maurice of Orange on Dutch military reforms in the late sixteenth century and Gustavus Adolphus' Swedish military revolution in the seventeenth century. While much of this history focused on the time before the United States, one needs to understand this European military culture and its influences on American military culture.[10]

Lynn referenced the belief that military tactics were no different from geometry. Military theorists, therefore, believed a "solution" existed to every military problem. If one studied enough, they could discover the formulas and solutions to all military problems. Lynn listed Dietrich Heinrich von Bülow and Henri Jomini as military theorists who epitomized this line of thinking. Technology also played a role in the ideas behind imposing order on chaos. Controlling massive bodies of troops in combat required the use of techniques to control movement and pass information. Older militaries used flags or noisemakers to direct forces, but musket-armed European militaries developed tight marching formations to coordinate every soldier's actions with that of the leader. However, current Marine Corps doctrine calls on Marines to *embrace* chaos and uncertainty instead of trying to impose order. Chaos and uncertainty are to be exploited and used to help defeat the enemy.[11]

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[10] Lynn, *Battle*, 114-157. Creveld, *The Culture of War*, 3-26, 353-374. Anthony Kellett, *Combat Motivation*, 89, 133-139.
Robert A. Doughty, Ira D. Gruber, Roy K. Flint, Mark Grimsley, George C. Herring, Donald D. Horward, John A. Lynn, and Williamson Murray, eds., *Warfare in the Western World: Military Operations from 1600 to 1871* (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1996), 3-28. Robert Doughty is a retired U.S. Army Brigadier General, American military historian, Vietnam veteran, and spent twenty years as the head of the United States Military Academy History department at West Point.

[11] Lynn, *Battle*, 114-157 and United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1: Warfighting* (Washington: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, 1997).

Caroline Cox's *A Proper Sense of Honor* (2004) examined the development of military culture in early America. She discussed discipline's role in the Continental Army and how the strict, European ideas of control and obedience often clashed with the more relaxed, egalitarian form of self-discipline that many American soldiers expected. Other works echoed this theme, such as Dr. Wayne Hsieh's examination of the Union Army of the Tennessee during the American Civil War. However, aside from noting the tensions between American and European approaches to discipline, these works did not provide many answers to my research questions, and early American military culture requires further research.[12]

Millett's *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* (1991) is a fundamental and regularly cited work for Marine Corps history. Millett's work did not significantly address discipline, drill, or the uniform's use in the Marine Corps but referenced them in his accounts of Marine operations during small wars, specifically in China. Keith Bickel's *Mars Learning* (2001) presented a focused history of the Marines' experiences in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua. While he did not focus on drill or appearances, Bickel provided helpful insight into how Marines attempted to codify lessons learned from their experiences. Richard Faulkner's *The School of Hard Knocks* (2012) presented a focused history of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) during World War I and analyzed the consequences of outdated beliefs about discipline,

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[12] Caroline Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor: Service and Sacrifice in George Washington's Army* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004). Caroline Cox is an academic colonial American historian and military historian.
Wayne Hisieh, "Ulysses S. Grant and the Culture of the Union Army of the Tennessee," in *The Culture of Military Organizations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 55-78. Dr. Wayne Hisieh is an associate professor at the United States Naval Academy and specializes in military and civil war history.

but his focus remained Army-centric. Edwin Simmons' *Through the Wheat* (2000) provided the best-focused history of Marines in World War I, but he did not analyze drill or discipline.[13]

Jeannie Johnson's *The Marines, Counterinsurgency, and Strategic Culture* (2018) critically examined how aspects of Marine culture affected their ability to learn from their experiences. Essential for my thesis, Johnson identified discipline as one of seven cultural values. She observed that Marines valued appearances over function and viewed the maintenance of appearance standards as a form of discipline. Furthermore, because she assessed that the most important value to Marines was the Marine Corps itself, Marines viewed anything which made the Marine Corps look bad as a threat. Johnson cited this obsession with appearances as a potential hindrance to operations. Obsessions with personal appearance carried over into other areas and led to situations where commanders cared more about how an operation looked on paper than whether it was

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[13] Allan Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps,* rev. ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 287-318. Dr. Allan Millett is a retired Marine Colonel, military historian, and professor at Ohio State University. Millett does not mention drill or discipline in his index.
Keith B. Bickel, *Mars Learning: The Marine Corps' Development of Small Wars Doctrine, 1915-1940* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2001). Dr. Keith Bickel received his doctorate in Strategic Studies from Johns Hopkins University. He previously served with the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the White House budget office and reviewed operations in Haiti, Bosnia, and the Persian Gulf.
Richard Faulkner, *The School of Hard Knocks: Combat Leadership in the American Expeditionary Forces* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2012). Lieutenant Colonel (retired) Faulkner served as a U.S. Army officer and commanded a tank company in combat. He has taught as an associate professor of military history at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He more recently published *Pershing's Crusaders: The American Soldier in World War I*.
Edwin Howard Simmons and Joseph H. Alexander, *Through The Wheat: The U.S. Marines in World War I.* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2000). Brigadier General (retired) Edwin Simmons served in combat in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. As a civilian, he served as the director of Marine Corps History and Museums. While he critiqued many of the aspects of Marine performance, he failed to identify the effects of discipline and drill on troop performance. Surprisingly, his index does not mention discipline and only mentions drill twice. While recalling combat experiences in Korea, Simmons seemed to almost praise a Marine's use of linear tactics, "They were beautifully deployed,' Simmons recalled. 'As they came through the dry rice paddy I thought of the Marines coming through the wheat fields at Belleau Wood in 1918" (p.xx).

successful. Johnson's conceptual framework for "lessons learned" and "lessons lost" also plays a central role in my thesis. Lessons lost refers to "a lesson that was recognized as valuable during (or immediately after) the era in which it was employed but failed to be institutionalized into long-term practice." Finally, Heather Venable's *How the Few Became the Proud* (2019) dealt with the development of Marine Corps culture and the role of drill and discipline in that culture. She explained how the Marines' obscurity as a military branch and threats of extinction from Congress forced Marines to create a unique identity. Marines emphasized their appearances and supposed higher levels of discipline as ways to attract high-quality recruits and stand out from the Army and Navy.[14]

Within military history are the specialized studies that dealt with tactics and technologies, and these works provided some of the best studies on the waning effectiveness of imposed disciplines. Bruce Gudmundsson's *Stormtroop Tactics* (1989), Martin Samuels' *Command or Control?* (1995), and Steven Jackman's article, "Shoulder to Shoulder: Close Control and 'Old Prussian Drill' in German Offensive Infantry Tactics, 1871-1914," all discussed tactics, discipline, leadership, and change within militaries at the turn of the twentieth century.[15] English and Gudmundsson's *On Infantry,*

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[14] Jeannie L. Johnson and James N. Mattis, *The Marines, Counterinsurgency, and Strategic Culture : Lessons Learned and Lost in America's Wars* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2018). Johnson defines lessons learned as "operational approaches that were recognized as best practices and were accepted and internalized into service culture… These may or may not have been codified into formal doctrine, but persistence of the practice (or mind-set) through informal mechanisms is enough to merit the lessons-learned category" (p.6).
Heather Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud: Crafting the Marine Corps Mystique, 1874-1918* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2019). Dr. Heather Venable is an academic military historian, an associate professor of military and security studies at the U.S. Air Force Command and Staff College, and previously taught at the U.S. Naval Academy.

[15] Steven D. Jackman, "Shoulder to Shoulder: Close Control and "Old Prussian Drill" in German Offensive Infantry Tactics, 1871-1914," *Journal of Military History* 68, no. 1 (January 2004): 73-104, https://www.jstor.org/stable/3397249. Jackman detailed the Prussian and German military's struggle to

rev. ed. (1994) neatly summarized the changing characteristics of warfare and the need for differently trained and disciplined infantry. They pointed out the consequences of antiquated discipline on a modern battlefield. In this same vein is William Lind and Gregory Thiele's *Fourth Generation Warfare Handbook*, which further explained the need for differently disciplined troops to face new characteristics of warfare.[16]

Organization

I chose to approach this topic through three chapters. Chapter one provides discipline's context in the Marine Corps on the eve of World War I. It opens with a brief history of discipline, drill, and appearances from the late-1500s and ends with an analysis of military publications and *Gazette* conversations. It explains *why* Marines behaved and fought the way they did entering World War I. Chapter two walks the reader through

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change their use of drill and discipline to meet changing technology on the battlefield. This struggle resembled the Marines' debates over drill and discipline after World War I and during the small wars era. Martin Samuels, *Command or Control? Command, Training and Tactics in the British and German Armies, 1888-1918* (London: Frank Cass, 1995). Dr. Martin Samuels is a military theorist, writer, and civil servant. Samuels depicted how an obsession with imposed disciplines like drill and appearances related to more centralized, top-down command structures.
Bruce Gudmundsson, *Stormtroop Tactics: Innovation in the German Army, 1914-1918* (Westport: Praeger, 1989). Dr. Bruce Gudmundsson served in the Marine Corps for twenty years as an infantry officer. The Marine Corps recalled him to active duty in order to help write the curriculum for the School of Advanced Warfighting, a course for lieutenant colonels. He has taught at the Marine Corps University, Army War College, Oxford, and the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. "Bruce Gudmundsson," Modern War Institute Alumni, Accessed August 28, 2021, https://mwi.usma.edu/modern-war-institute-alumni/bruce-gudmundsson/. Gudmundsson detailed the World War I German Army's development of a style of warfare that the Marines adopted in the 1980s and used to great success in the 1991 Gulf War. Gudmundsson noted that imposed disciplines hindered the ability to adopt this fighting style that emphasized initiative, creativity, and freedom of thought.

[16] John English and Bruce Gudmundsson, *On Infantry*, rev. ed. (Westport: Praeger, 1994). Dr. John English is a retired Canadian lieutenant colonel. He was a professor at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario and served as editor for Praeger Publishing's War Studies series.
William Lind and Gregory Thiele, *Fourth Generation Warfare Handbook* (Kouvola: Castalia House, 2015). William Lind is a military theorist and writer. He studied under famous U.S. Air Force colonel John Boyd and played a role in the U.S. Marine Corps' adoption of maneuver warfare in the 1980s and 1990s. While controversial and now seen by some Marines as outdated and out-of-touch, no one can deny Lind's prominent influence on the Marine Corps in the 1980s and 1990s. Lieutenant Colonel Gregory Thiele is a Marine Corps infantry officer and prolific writer for the *Marine Corps Gazette*. He has co-authored other works with William Lind that address light infantry tactics.

Marines' combat experiences in World War I and small wars. While these anecdotes are not exhaustive, they are enough to demonstrate that many Marines experienced combat in ways that challenged their earlier beliefs about discipline, drill, and appearances. Chapter three looks at what Marines did with these experiences. Similar to the first chapter, chapter three examines military publications through the 1920s and 1930s. The chapter also pulls from *Gazette* conversations right up to 1941. Despite combat experience, official publications largely failed to codify these lessons. However, individual Marines did not forget these lessons and expressed their changing opinions in the *Gazette*.

CHAPTER 1 - ASSUMPTIONS

A Brief History of Drill and Uniforms

Leading up to the experiences of World War I and small wars, Marines retained underlying assumptions about combat inherited from European military culture—the untrustworthiness of troops, the need for massed firepower, the importance of the bayonet charge, and the need for order and control to address the three previous assumptions. These assumptions influenced how Marines applied discipline. Therefore, a brief history of the origin of drill and uniforms is necessary.

Technology, culture, and the Enlightenment all influenced the development of drill and uniforms. Drill originated from technological needs to effectively employ muskets—which were inaccurate past 150 yards, could only fire one shot every three minutes, and required a 32-step process to load and fire (Figure 3). The most effective way to employ these muskets was in volleys from massed formations, controlled by a single individual. As muskets replaced pikes, this volley fire culminated with a bayonet charge, essentially turning the muskets into short pikes. Drill provided the means to mass these musketeers efficiently and move them around the battlefield (Figure 4). Drill also trained musketeers through consistent and repetitive motion, helping ensure troops could fight using automatic "muscle memory" during the chaos of battle. In short, these technological constraints of limited range, accuracy, and complex procedures required troops to advance in tight formations across open fields against enemy cannons to reach a distance where troops could employ their muskets and charge with bayonets.[1]

[1] Although Roman legions used a form of marching, modern drill began with the Dutch during the late 1500s. On the history of drill, see Robert A. Doughty and Ira D. Gruber, eds., *Warfare in the Western*

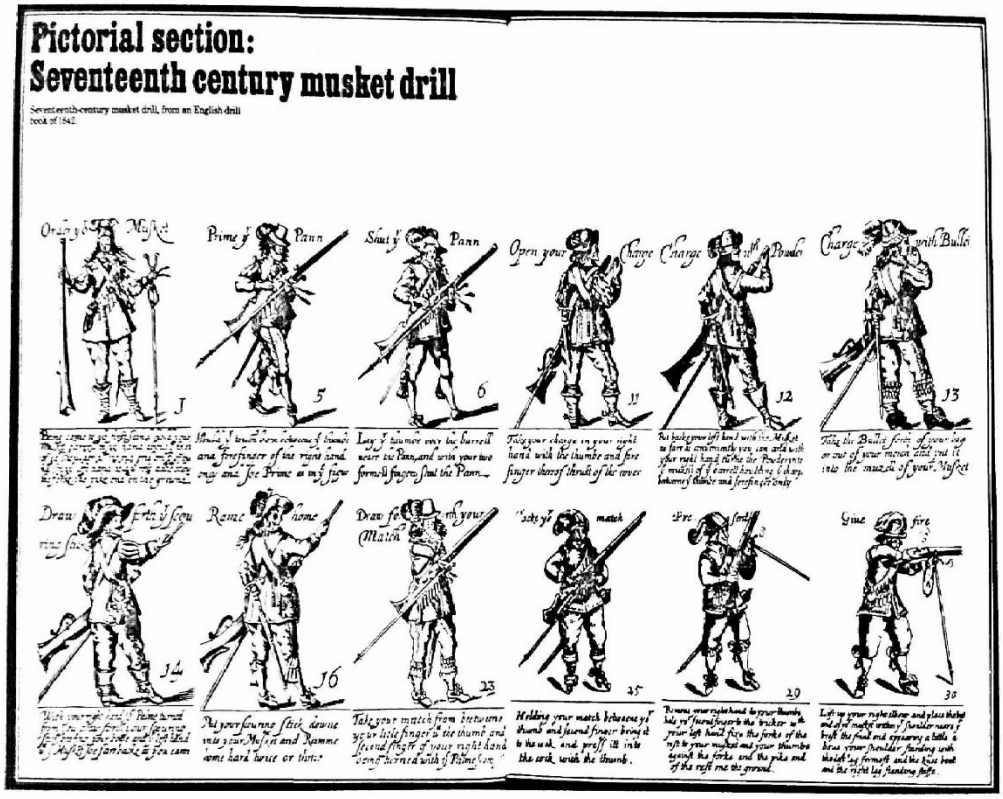

Figure 3. Musket Manual of Arms, 1642.
Source: Doughty and Gruber, *Warfare in the Western World*, 11.

World: Military Operations from 1600 to 1871 (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1996), 10-11, 71; Creveld, *The Culture of War,* 122-123; John A. Lynn, *Battle*, 126-129; and Kellett, *Combat Motivation*, 219.

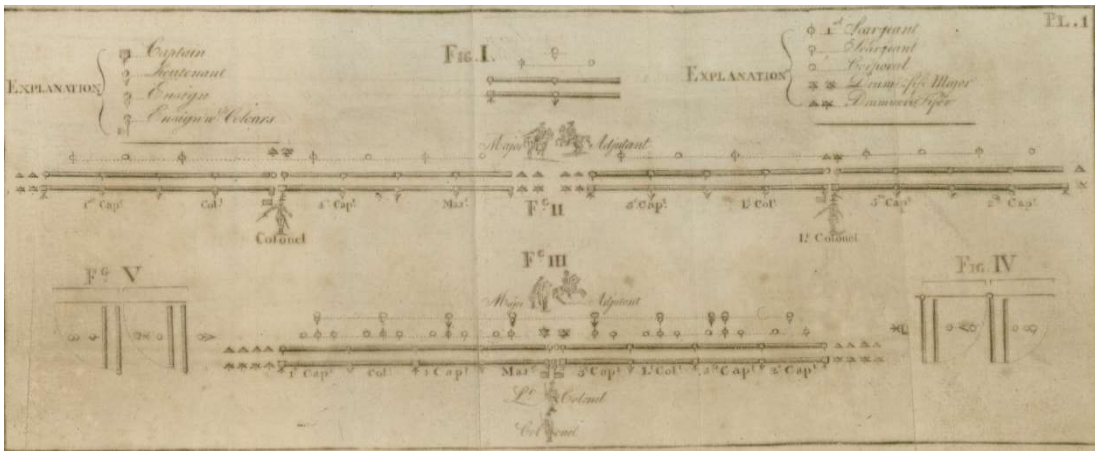

Figure 4. Linear Infantry Formations, 1779.
Source: Continental Army, *Regulations for the order and discipline of the troops of the United States, Part I* (Philadelphia: Styner and Cist, 1779), Image 176, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbc0001.2006batch30726/?sp=176.

Similarly, early uniforms emerged in the seventeenth century with requirements that officers provide their troops with a standard set of clothing or protective gear. Before this time, most armies went to battle with whatever the individual soldiers had on hand. Military leaders instituted regulations prescribing the cut and quality of clothing to ensure protection from the elements. However, these "uniforms" still did not result in uniformity of appearance, and they were purely practical.[2]

Class prejudices further influenced the development of drill through a distrust in the common soldier's trustworthiness and courage. Militaries often conscripted soldiers from the lowest and least-educated classes of society, and leaders held low opinions of these troops, believing they would flee or hide in battle. Leaders sought ways to maintain

[2] Lynn, *Battle*, 116. Prior to the sixteenth century, uniforms as one commonly envisions them were rare. The popular cultural concept of Roman legions marching in matching red tunics and matching armor is largely mythical. While Roman legions eventually wore similar – though not standardized – equipment and similarly undyed tunics, exact matching appearances were absent. See, Kate Gilliver, "Display in Roman Warfare: The Appearance of Armies and Individuals on the Battlefield," *War History* 41, no. 1 (January 2007): 1-21, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26061904.

order and ensure performance among ordinary soldiers. Drill was the primary way to impose this order and control and – with it - the officer's will.[3]

Drill also served to help soldiers "forbear" the enemy's cannon fire to get close enough to employ their muskets and bayonets. This "Battle Culture of Forbearance" utilized drill to instill instant and unthinking obedience. Drill also effectively suppressed the individual and, significantly, their fears.[4]

Enlightenment ideas regarding order and alignment affected how militaries sought to impose order onto war—an inherently chaotic phenomenon. Concepts about linear equations, geometry, and order attempted to reduce war's chaos to rules and neat lines. Enlightenment ideas called for precise, machine-like human coordination. These beliefs led military leaders to impose order and neatness on the battlefield through drill and formations and led societies to create ritualized, artificial military behaviors to better match their expectations of order. As military theorist and historian William Lind noted, much of what differentiates between "civilians" and the "military" deals with artificial behaviors like saluting, military ranks, and ceremonial drill.[5]

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[3] On cultural perceptions of conscripts, see Lynn, *Battle*, 123; Kellett, *Combat Motivation*, 136-137, 325-326; Creveld, *The Culture of War*, 122; Caroline Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor: Service and Sacrifice in George Washington's Army*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 3-5, 23-24, 96.

[4] On the Battle Culture of Forbearance, see Lynn, *Battle*, 128, 155. On drill's use to suppress the individual, see Lynn, *Battle*, 128, 155; Owen, *To The Limit of Endurance*, 5; William Lind and Gregory Thiele, *4th Generation Warfare Handbook* (Kouvola: Castalia House, 2015), 116; United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Order 5060.20: Marine Corps Drill and Ceremony Manual* (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters Marine Corps, 2019), ii, 1-2; Martin Samuels, *Command or Control?*, 118-119. On the psychological benefits of drill in combatting fear, see Norman F. Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence*, 182-184, Chapter 16; Lynn, *Battle*, 155-157; Kellett, *Combat Motivation*, 137, 325-326; Creveld, *The Culture of War*, 118-119.

[5] The medieval tournament and *chivalry* are other examples of these artificial behaviors. Lynn, *Battle*, 38-40, 151; Creveld, *The Culture of War*, 120.

Drill was a unique development in Western culture. Armies from the Warring States period in China and musket-armed Mughals of India developed coordinated movement without neat, precise drill. Indeed, the cultural influence of concepts regarding order and neatness is so strong in the West that these ideas continued to influence tactics after rifle technology made close-order drill unnecessary. Drill was also absent from cultures that fought as light infantry – foot-mobile troops focused on maneuverability over firepower. Native Americans during the French and Indian War are a great example most readers will recognize. Even when armed with muskets, these tribes fought as light infantry and did not march or coordinate their movements with linear tactics.[6]

Uniformity of appearance also reflected Enlightenment-era order. Since officers provided the clothing for their troops, they tended to decorate uniforms to display the commander's wealth and status. The flamboyant excesses of shoulder pads, gold braids, and polished buttons arose from this period. The consequences of this obsession with appearance are evident throughout history—polished metal makes an easy target. In fact,

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For cultural influences, see Lynn, *Battle*, 119-129, Lind and Thiele, *4th Generation Warfare Handbook*, 115; and Tad Tuleja, *Different Drummers: Military Culture and its Discontents* (Louisville: Utah State University Press, 2020), 4.
On artificial military behaviors, see Lynn, *Battle*, xxi, 72-78.

[6] Lynn, *Battle*, 38-40, 151; Creveld, *The Culture of War*, 120. Light infantry are often the units that fight on the peripheries of battles. For example, the Roman legions employed local tribes as light infantry to fight in the wooded hills surrounding the open plains where legions battled. The British Army employed Hessian *Jaeger* ("Hunter") units to scout the woods and swamps of North America during the American Revolution.

military leaders drafted early uniform regulations to *prevent* these excesses from detracting from a uniform's utility.[7]

Many of these same technological and cultural influences remained among Marines well into contemporary times. Modern Marines roll their sleeves so tightly that they struggle to remove their blouses, and the tightness negates the purpose of cooling down the wearer. Another example was the 2nd Marine Division's 2019 order requiring all Marines to wear their magazine pouches on the front of their body armor with a horizontal tourniquet pouch above them. While this ensured a matching appearance among Marines, magazine pouches on the chest and stomach are notoriously hard to access while in the prone position and even harder to access when a tourniquet pouch is above them.

These technological and cultural influences are best summarized as four assumptions or beliefs about combat. First, regular troops were not to be trusted and had to be closely supervised—by someone from the elite class—or else risk that they would hide or flee in battle. As technology improved, leaders feared their troops would waste ammunition by firing too fast or not firing at all. Second, even with changes in technology, officers viewed firepower as a critical predecessor to the bayonet charge. Massing firepower required compact, tightly-controlled groups of troops firing their

[7] On the evolution of uniforms and growing excesses, see Lynn, *Battle*, 116-118; Creveld, *The Culture of War*, 15-19; and Tuleja, *Different Drummers*, 4-9, 189-192. The "tri-corner" hats of the American Revolutionary War actually began as wide-brimmed hats to protect troops from rain and sun until unknown persons decided that they "looked better" pinned up. Ruffled sleeve-cuffs were added to uniforms to mirror popular fashions in France despite their interference with the musket manual of arms (Lynn, 117-118). In order to keep their uniforms white, the British took to applying pipe clay to their pants, even while on campaign. This pipe clay restricted the movement of the wearer and also shortened the lifespan of the fabric (Creveld, 19).

weapons according to the directions of a single officer. Third, the bayonet was the ultimate weapon to drive an enemy from their position. Convincing and training troops in the "spirit of the bayonet" required repeated drills and a final charge in a massed formation to prevent troops from losing their courage. Fourth, officers believed in instant and unthinking obedience to obtain this order, control, and courage. Drill and uniform regulations helped instill this habit of obedience, order, and control.

Early American Adoption of Drill and Uniforms

As the early-American military formed its own identity separate from Europe, drill and uniforms continued to serve both practical battlefield purposes and as a means to instill order, uniformity, and control. In the American Revolutionary War, George Washington desired "tight control and discipline" for military efficiency with the weapons of the time. He also attempted to instill uniformity among colonials. He authorized the practical and loose-fitting deerskin hunting shirt as a standard uniform item since it was already popular among troops. Despite American egalitarian ideals, officers firmly believed that common soldiers needed strict control as these officers viewed even the spirited colonial volunteers as untrustworthy.[8]

The new American public had a strong aversion to militarism – their lived experiences under British occupation and constant fighting among European countries were a powerful deterrent – which early American uniforms reflected. American uniforms mostly resembled professional civilian styles, unlike distinctly militaristic tall boots and flashy bedazzled European uniforms. However, Marine officers attempted to

[8] Cox, *Proper Sense of Honor*, xii, 55-60, 96. Mansoor and Murray, *The Culture of Military Organizations*, 17-32.

copy European and, later, U.S. Army uniforms. While the officer corps appeared to obsess over appearances, there remained a general lack of uniformity among enlisted Marines.[9]

In the early nineteenth century, Marines continued to use drill to improve weapons proficiency and train the sailors they served with aboard ships. They also conducted close-order drill to instill obedience and maintain combat readiness for their role in maritime raids. Nineteenth-century uniform regulations focused mainly on dress uniforms worn only on special occasions, but Marines often wore "work" uniforms. The 1859 regulations were the first to prescribe how Marines were to wear each uniform. Previous regulations only emphasized the wear of individual items and left much to the interpretation of local commanders. They mainly served as instructions for tailors or quartermasters in procuring uniform items. In the 1870s, arguments among Marine officers over uniform changes showed that uniforms played an increasingly important, but debated, role in Marine Corps culture.[10]

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[9] On early American uniforms, see Charles H Cureton, "From the Halls of Montezuma," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 1989. However, certain aspects of this "flashiness" eventually made it to America and the Marines adopted them in their dress uniforms. Creveld, *The Culture of War*, 24-25; and C.H. Metcalf, "The Early Years of the Marine Corps," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 1936.

[10] On the continued use of drill to instill discipline, see, Lorraine McConaghy, "The Old Navy in the Pacific West: Naval Discipline in Seattle, 1855-1856," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 98, no. 1 (2006): 19-20.
On Marines and maritime raiding, see Benjamin Armstrong, *Small Boats and Daring Men: Maritime Raiding, Irregular Warfare, and the Early American Navy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019), 158.
On early uniform regulations, see Charles H. Cureton, "The Old Corps: The Uniform Regulations of 1859," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 1992.The American Civil War found Union volunteers straining against this strict discipline as its insistence on complete obedience clashed with American ideas of equality and individuality.
On drill and discipline during the American Civil War, see Wayne Hisieh, "Ulysses S. Grant and the Culture of the Union Army of the Tennessee," in *The Culture of Military Organizations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 55-78. Dr. Wayne Hisieh is an associate professor at the United States Naval Academy and specializes in military and civil war history.

By 1898, the U.S. Army's *Infantry Drill Regulations* reigned as the standard for tactical training among Marines. This manual showed that tactics sought close, centralized formations under the vocal control of an officer (Figure 5). The goal was to ensure efficient and obedient movement towards the enemy until the officer could initiate a bayonet charge. Close-order drill remained the desired method of moving troops, but the manual also taught extended-order drill as suitable for battle. However, the manual warned that extended-order drill was dangerous since spread-out troops were harder to control. The manual expected troops to act in unison, and there was no need for thinking or initiative among troops under the command of the single officer controlling the formation. While the manual did not demand exact spacing while in formation on the battlefield, it limited how much a unit could extend while advancing across a battlefield. Notably, despite the manual's recommendation that troops use cover when available, other limitations practically prohibited individuals from moving from one piece of cover to the next while advancing.[11]

On the debates over uniforms in the 1870s, see Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud*, 43-44.

[11] United States Army, *Extended Order Drill: Infantry Drill Regulations* (Washington, D.C.: War Department, 1898), https://archive.org/details/extendedorderdri00unit/page/n5/mode/2up.

Figure 5. Skirmish Drill, 1896. Note the tight grouping of the Marines to keep them all within range of the officer's verbal control or that of the bugler.
Source: Edward H. Hart, *U.S.S. Maine, marine skirmish drill*, ca. 1896, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/det.4a14384/.

By 1917, the Marines had their own manual, the *Landing Force Manual and Small Arms Instructions*, which conveniently copied the Army's 1911 *Infantry Drill Regulations*. The *Landing Force Manual* retained an emphasis on control and order on the battlefield, and it encouraged leaders to create compact lines of troops under strict control from an officer. The troops only needed to promptly obey all commands from their officer to ensure they fired as required and charged when necessary. To achieve such obedience, strict control and behavioral conditioning through drill remained a standard of training.[12]

By the early twentieth century, American citizens and other service branches recognized Marines as the best in appearance. While the Marines' 1912 uniform

[12] Department of the Navy, *The Landing Force and Small Arms Instructions: United States Navy, 1916, Revised 1916, Containing Firing Regulations, 1917.* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1917), https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.hn37sh&view=1up&seq=5&skin=2021.

regulations did not mention discipline or the relation of uniform regulations to discipline, the regulations did seem to imply a connection. First, they hinted at the untrustworthiness of enlisted sailors and Marines through the prohibition of carrying sheath knives on ships and against wearing or keeping civilian clothes. Second, the regulations reminded leaders to consider an officer's appearance when filing their fitness reports, suggesting a connection between appearances and performance. However, unlike later regulations, the 1912 regulations mainly focused on the uniforms' functionality. The majority of the pages mirrored earlier regulations and served as a list of instructions for tailors on creating specific items instead of rules on how to wear the uniform. The portions of the manual that focused on uniform wear lacked the precision of modern-day regulations. Instead, they offered only general guidelines to ensure that clothing was "uniform in respect to quality, pattern, and color…" Overall, officers had thirteen uniforms, while enlisted Marines only had three.[13]

Conversations from the *Marine Corps Gazette* on the eve of World War I showed that Marine officers generally, but not always, upheld the beliefs about discipline and the supporting assumptions about combat. One lieutenant upheld the bayonet as the "final weapon of ultimate success," and volley fire remained the means to advance upon the enemy. He even noted that individual skill with a rifle was not as crucial as ensuring efficient volley firing. To achieve these ends, the author maintained that drill was the most fundamental training for a soldier. He also reinforced earlier beliefs about the

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[13] On opinions about Marines as the best dressed, see Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 174-175. For regulation justifications, see, Headquarters Marine Corps, *Uniform Regulations: United States Marine Corps, Together with Uniform Regulations Common to Both U.S. Navy and Marine Corps* (1912. Reprint, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917).

untrustworthiness of troops by noting that a shortfall of extended order was the loss of tight control and supervision over subordinates. The officer's control of the troops - imposed discipline - remained more critical than the troops' control of themselves and cooperation - self-discipline.[14]

A Marine major concurred. Marines needed an "unquestioning habit of obedience," and he warned that American individuality was dangerous since every Marine must "subordinate his private judgement to the will of another [upon] entering the military profession."[15] Another Marine agreed that discipline through drill was critical. The goal was a uniformity of performance on the battlefield, and one writer reminded readers of the need for strict observance of all rules and regulations - especially uniform regulations - through close supervision by superiors. To ensure compliance, this author also recommended monthly regimental inspections. He argued that discipline was only possible if officers exercised strict supervision to ensure obedience.[16]

In 1918, Colonel Theall, the secretary-treasurer of the Marine Corps Association, critically asked readers of the *Gazette* if they were still ensuring precise conformity to drill and uniform regulations. He reminded that being a Marine required "blind

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[14] Lt. Baker maintained, "The mental effect of close order drill is tremendous in its importance. It is, most of all, the factor which tends to create and further discipline." C.S. Baker, "Promoting Efficiency in Time of Peace," *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1916.

[15] Henry Davis, "Self Discipline: The Real Basis for Efficient Preparedness," *Marine Corps Gazette*, September 1916.

[16] Captain Dyer said, "In a word, the commanding officer of a regiment must preserve the strictest discipline and order in his corps, obliging every officer to a strict performance of his duty, without relaxing in the smallest point. . ." However, Dyer also stressed that obedience to uniform regulations was more of a health concern than one of aesthetics. Jesse Dyer, "The American System of Discipline," *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 1917, 84-85.

obedience" and "absolute subordination" to leadership and that officers should demand "exact detail" in ceremonies, drill, dress, and cleanliness.[17] Another Marine captain defined discipline as a "condition of order" within a group, which supported the accepted thinking about order as a prerequisite for battlefield success. He reiterated the importance of control and order in helping troops maintain courage against enemy fire. However, this captain pointed out that drill was only a means to an end and no longer the end itself. He also deviated from other authors by stating that discipline had to be more than blind obedience; it required reasoned understanding on the follower's part. He implied self-discipline as the discipline of modern war, brought about by a sense of duty and respect. Contradicting himself, he argued that Marines should obey even ridiculous rules and that such obedience was the way to build discipline. He also praised the charge of the light brigade—a British cavalry charge against Russian artillery that ended with high British casualties and no benefit—as an example of the right kind of obedience, despite that instance serving as a prime example of the *dangers* of blind obedience. He said, "Discipline means the [elimination] of the individual, and does more than break the soldier to unhesitating obedience: it teaches him to die, for duty's sake." He also argued that obedience to uniform rules further helped break down individual identities in favor of one group identity.[18]

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[17] Elisha Theall, "The Marine Corps Association: A Plea for Cooperation and a Bit of Introspection," *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 1918.

[18] Alfred, Lord Tennyson immortalized this charge in the poem of the same name. C.H. Brittan, "A Few Words on Discipline," *Marine Corps Gazette*, September 1918.

One Marine challenged these beliefs, especially that regular troops were untrustworthy without direct supervision. Colonel Van Orden argued that,

> …true discipline can be attained only through voluntary subordination. It must be based upon reason, and must appeal to common sense and sentiment, or it will fail when the test comes… it is not good shoes, nor smart uniforms, nor fine rifles that make discipline. Discipline has gone barefoot and in rags.[19]

Unlike the imposed disciplines that inculcated blind obedience, Orden favored intelligent obedience where men obeyed because they trusted their leader or understood the situation as their officer did. He argued that treating troops as "undeserving scoundrels" resulted in Marines who acted as such. Orden believed that good leaders respected and trusted their troops and that most troops would reciprocate that respect and trust with willing obedience. Despite these beliefs, Orden still believed that only lieutenants and above made decisions, not lower-ranking Marines.[20]

Discipline in 1918

At the onset of America's involvement in World War I, the Marines continued to rely on U.S. Army doctrine, specifically the Army's 1918 edition of *Infantry Drill Regulations*.[21] The 1918 regulations, like the manuals before it, portrayed discipline as the state of obedience among troops that allowed leaders to impose order on a chaotic battlefield and efficiently move and fire at the enemy until the final bayonet charge.

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[19] George van Orden, "Leadership: Discipline and Contentment," *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1917, 104.

[20] Orden, "Leadership: Discipline and Contentment," June 1917, 104-109.

[21] Marine Corps Order No. 51 of 1917 ordered Marines to refer to the *Infantry Drill Regulations* for tactical doctrine. Bickel, *Mars Learning*, 141. Marine Officers were well-acquainted with the *IDR* heading into WWI. Owen, *To the Limit of Endurance*, 18-19. It is important to note that the 1918 edition was simply an update of the 1911 regulations, not a complete revision.

Despite calls for initiative, most of the regulations still taught rigid, automatic obedience. Instant obedience through drill remained the way officers gained fire superiority, conducted bayonet charges, and controlled troops. The infantry's purpose remained "to bear the heaviest burdens and losses, both of combat and march."[22]

The Marines also attempted to adopt French doctrine from two translated manuals, *Instructions for the Offensive Combat of Small Units* and *Manual for Commanders of Infantry Platoons*.[23] The Marines struggled to fully implement this French doctrine because it required a level of initiative and decision-making the Marine Corps did not instill in non-commissioned officers.[24] Additionally, French doctrine required well-coordinated artillery support and accurate information of enemy positions, two items lacking from the American Expeditionary Force in early battles. Marines struggled to incorporate the concepts of flexibility, initiative, and judgment, concepts largely absent from their training centered on drill and marksmanship. Instead, the

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[22] United States Army, *Infantry Drill Regulations: United States Army, 1911, with War Department Changes, May, 1918*, Sherman Edition (Cincinnati: Stewart & Kidd Company, 1918), 95.

[23] Owen, *To the Limit of Endurance*, 38.

[24] Non-commissioned officers (NCOs) differ from officers in some important ways. NCOs are enlisted; they sign a contract for a certain period of service. Enlisted ranks are those many are familiar with: privates, corporals, sergeants, etc. NCOs are a specific sub-set of enlisted soldiers who have proved through competence and experience the ability to lead other enlisted. Corporals and sergeants are two examples of NCOs, and they typically filled roles such as the squad leader. In contrast, officers do not sign a contract, but instead take a commission. In lieu of a contract, officers sign on to assist in the mission (co-mission) of the President of the United States. Officer ranks are also familiar to many: lieutenants and captains. Officers and NCOs historically work together in the leadership of a unit. For example, a lieutenant will command a platoon of 30-45 troops with the assistance of a staff sergeant or gunnery sergeant. Under the lieutenant, sergeants will command one of three or four squads of 10-15 troops. Officers and NCOs all serve in leadership roles, but they fill different responsibilities and bring different experience with them. For example, imagine a factory where the supervisor is a young individual who holds a degree in systems engineering or business administration but is new to the factory. Underneath the supervisor is the foreman, an old and experienced floor worker with a high school education. The supervisor fills a similar role to the military officer, and the foreman to the NCO. Both complement each other in the running of the factory.

Marines adopted the most familiar parts: the ordered drill to control forward movement and rifle fire.[25]

Further influencing the Marines were the theories of one of their own, Lieutenant Colonel Harry Lee, who served as the executive and then commanding officer of the 6th Marine Regiment in France. He authored an authoritative article, "Notes on Musketry Training," that informed the Marines' approach to industrial warfare. Lee reinforced the reigning doctrine about firepower and the bayonet. His article called for the use of drill to create a "machine like" attack controlled by officers. The goal was to precisely control Marine rifle fire so the Marines could gain fire superiority with their rifles alone before engaging with bayonets. Officers choreographed everything, down to the forward sprints of the men. Officers were to designate which specific unit was to rush forward and where they would rush. Officers were to coordinate this through a complicated series of visual and audible signals to overcome battlefield noise.[26]

Therefore, close-order drill and appearance norms remained a mainstay not only in recruit training but also in the assembly areas in France. Before departing for France, Marines paraded before the highest-ranking Marine who inspected their uniforms and marching. In France, General Pershing commented on the Marines' appearances and indicated trust in their performance because of this quality. During readiness inspections in France, American Expeditionary Force inspectors noted and praised the appearances of Marine units. For the inspectors, a good-looking unit indicated a well-trained unit.

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[25] Owen, *To the Limit of Endurance*, 40-41.

[26] Harvey Lee, "Some Notes on Musketry Training and Field Exercises," *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 1917.

Marines practiced close-order drill daily with the full expectation that they would use it in combat.[27] Some Marine officers recognized this emphasis on close-order drill as "not much good," but these Marines viewed it as a necessary part of military life and put up with it. One American General observed, "men arrived in France who had never fired a rifle but who were good at close-order drill and had been led in mass singing." This training also continued to emphasize the bayonet charge.[28]

These conversations demonstrated that, in the early years of the twentieth century, most Marines viewed discipline through the lens of older assumptions. Lower-ranking Marines required constant supervision in combat. Bayonets were the key to victory, and superior firepower was necessary to get close enough to use the bayonet. Marines relied on strict control to ensure close supervision of Marines, effective firepower through volleys, and a stalwart bayonet charge. Marines instilled this control and obedience through drill and strict rules concerning appearances. While the detractors noted above did challenge these assumptions, their arguments had little effect on the majority of Marines as they experienced combat in France and numerous small wars.

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[27] For Marine use of drill and the importance of appearances, see Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 16-17,34; and Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 298; Edwin N. McClellan, "Operations of the Fourth Brigade of Marines in the Aisne Defensive," *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1920; Edwin N. McClellan, "The Fourth Brigade of Marines in the Training Areas and the Operations in the Verdun Sector," *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 1920.

[28] On officer criticism of close-order drill, see Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 28-29. On the prevalence of drill in training, see Owen, *To the Limit of Endurance*, 4-7, 9; and John W. Thomason, *Fix Bayonets!* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927.)., 32. For the general's observation, see Shaw, "Accuracy Versus Volume in Rifle Fire," *Marine Corps Gazette*, September 1940, 49. On the emphasis on bayonets, see Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 53.

CHAPTER 2 - EXPERIENCES

In 1918, Marines came face to face with modern, large-scale, and industrial warfare. They entered World War I with a series of assumptions about combat and discipline, and found their assumptions lacking. First and second-hand accounts from combat veterans, leaders, and Marine historians point to an overwhelming failure of drill (close and extended) and appearance norms to meet the Marines' disciplinary and training needs. Modern, dispersed battlefields taught Marines four crucial lessons. First, as enemy fire and dense terrain broke apart Marine formations, unsupervised Marines did not hide or flee as leaders feared. Some Marines continued the attack and eventually began to improvise and work together in small groups. Second, much of the close combat disintegrated from large, linear assaults into small groups of Marines firing and moving – often by crawling – close enough to kill German machine gunners with grenades or rifle fire. Third, Marines learned that their rifle fire alone was insufficient to support their movement towards the enemy; their tight formations designed to maximize volley firing and simplify control under officers proved outdated. Finally, Marines learned that instant and unthinking obedience was not the hallmark of successful troops. Instead, the average Marine's critical thinking, creativity, and initiative were necessary to fight on a dispersed and chaotic battlefield where weapons technology punished those who sought control and order through tight formations.[1]

[1] Some might levy the criticism that Marines *did* hide in the open wheat fields after their leaders perished. However, the tendency of Marines to remain in place after losing their leaders was an outcome of their disciplinary training. Trained to wait for orders, these Marines did just that. Without leaders to issue orders, many Marines laid down in the open, bearing the brunt of enemy fire, until one of their own eventually decided to take action on their own initiative.

World War I Experiences

The Marine's World War I experiences demonstrated problems with all four assumptions about discipline and combat. These five examples—Belleau Wood, Soissons, St. Mihiel, Blanc Mont, and the Meuse-Argonne Offensive—show the failures of discipline and drill and demonstrate Marines coming to terms with said failures in conflicting ways (Figure 6).

Belleau Wood

In early June 1918, the Germans launched a massive attack against French positions east of Paris along the Marne River near Chateau Thierry. The 4th Marine Brigade stopped the German advance and, by June 5, the Germans switched to the defensive.[2] In an attempt to take advantage of the lull, the 4th Marine Brigade received orders to attack across several hundred yards of open wheat fields to seize a densely wooded area and the small town of Bouresches.[3] The battle soon became known for the dark woods, and every Marine knows its name, *Belleau Wood* (Figure 7).

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[2] "Division" is an organized unit typically incorporating around 15,000 troops. In World War I, the 2nd American Division contained the U.S. Army's 3rd Infantry Brigade and the Marines' 4th Brigade. It also contained an artillery brigade and an engineer regiment. The Marine 4th Brigade contained the 5th and 6th Marine Regiments as well as a machine gun battalion. Each Marine Regiment contained three battalions and some smaller supporting units. Each battalion contained four companies, and each company contained four platoons. Owen, *To The Limit of Endurance*, 32-34.

[3] Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 300-301.

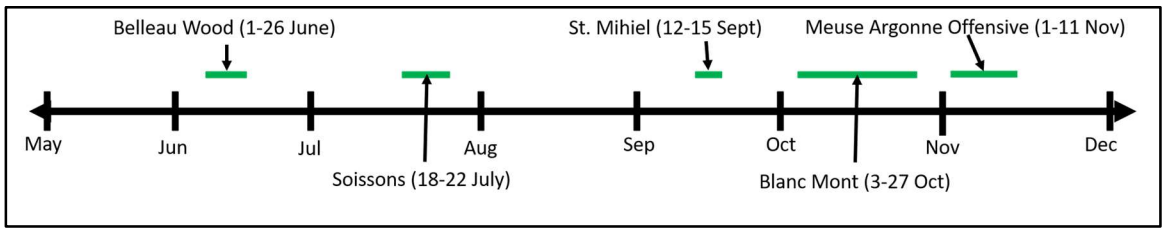

Figure 6. Marine Battles in WWI. Timeline created by author.

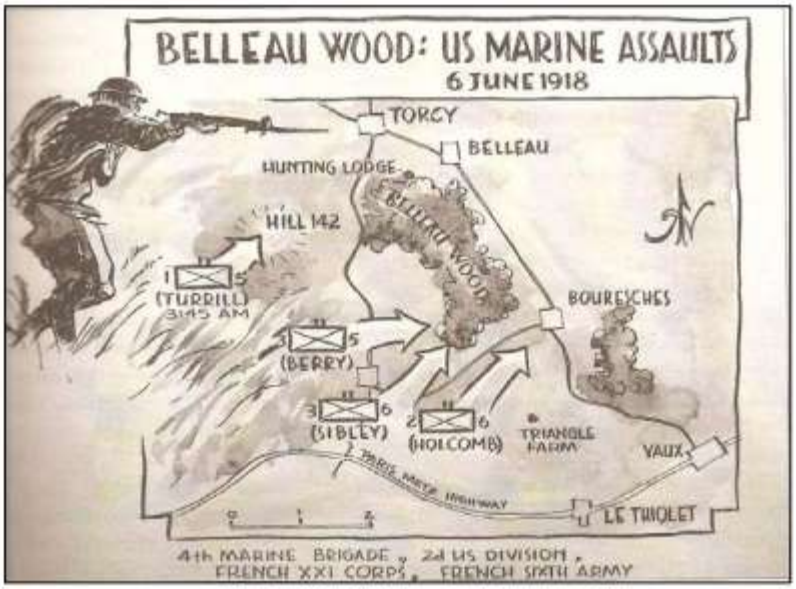

Figure 7. Map of Belleau Wood.
Source: Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 103. All illustrations by Charles G. Grow.

The Marines received their orders to attack with little time to prepare. As noted Marine Corps historian and combat veteran Edwin Simmons recalled:

> The battle for Belleau Wood was not well fought. It was a confused crisscrossing of battalions and companies stumbling blindly through gas-choked woods and suffering horrendous losses from German machine guns and field artillery. The Marines would lose almost half their men, but they would beat the best the Germans had to offer.[4]

[4] Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 101.

Without proper reconnaissance or artillery support, the Marines reverted to what they knew and attacked well-defended German positions at Belleau Wood in neat formations that the French and British had already abandoned (Figure 8). Simmons again pointed out that the battle reminded many of Pickett's charge or other American Civil War battles. First Lieutenant Thomason observed, "It was a beautiful deployment, lines all dressed and guiding true. Such matters were of deep concern to this outfit."[5] Alas, the preparations of the Marines forming into their neat lines tipped off the Germans that an attack was imminent.[6]

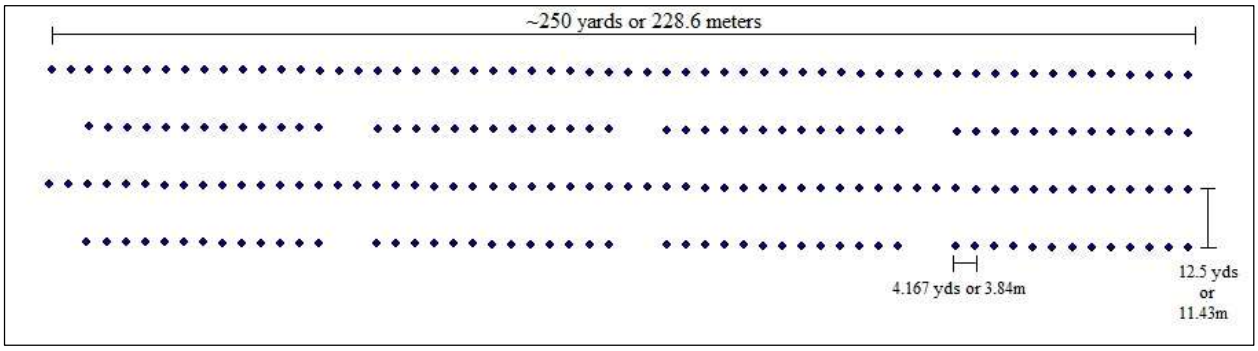

Figure 8. A Textbook Marine Company Assault Formation - based on a combination of manuals and publications from the period. Created by the author.

The observations of Colonel Catlin, the 6th Marine Regiment's commander, perhaps best displayed the Marines' assumptions about combat. In his comments, we see Lynn's Battle Culture of Forbearance exemplified—the obsession with the bayonet and

[5] Thomason, *Fix Bayonets!*, 10.

[6] Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 101-106.

the use of drill as psychological protection against fear—while also seeing the disastrous results of drill applied to modern warfare:

> The battalion pivoted on its right, the left sweeping across the open ground in four waves, as steadily and correctly as though on parade. There were two companies of them, deployed in four skirmish lines, the men placed five yards apart and the waves fifteen to twenty yards behind each other. They walked at the regulation pace, because a man is of little use in a hand-to-hand bayonet struggle after a hundred yards dash. . . Oh, it took courage and steady nerves to do that it [sic] the face of the enemy's machine gun fire. . . In this frame of mind the soldier can perhaps walk with even more coolness and determination than he can run.[7]

The situation was much the same to the southeast of Belleau Wood outside the small town of Bouresches. As with Belleau Wood, the Marines received their orders to seize the town at the last minute and formed their neat ranks to make their assault (Figure 9). As noted in the introduction, the attack on Bouresches was a slaughter. Caught under intense artillery and machine-gun fire, the Marine advance stalled as Marines of all ranks fell wounded or killed. The Marines had emphasized drill and strict obedience in their training and, in the wheat fields surrounding Belleau Wood and Bouresches, they ate the fruit of their labor. Their training had successfully suppressed the majority's ability to think as individuals, take the initiative, and react to unexpected circumstances. Without their officers to lead them, the formations experienced a "tactical arthritis." By the end of the battle, the Marine Brigade at Belleau Wood sustained 4,000 casualties, or 55% of their total strength. This was the largest number of casualties for an American brigade for the entire war (Figure 10).[8]

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[7] Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 107.

[8] On drill's use to suppress the individual and dangers of "tactical arthritis", see English, *On Infantry*, 1981 ed., 219-220; Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, 44; Lynn, *Battle*, 120-123, 128, 155; Owen, *To The Limit of Endurance*, 5, 208; Lind and Thiele, *4th Generation Warfare Handbook*, 116; Samuels, *Command or Control?*, 118-119; Gudmundsson, *Stormtroop Tactics*, 22; Kellett, *Combat Motivation*, 329.

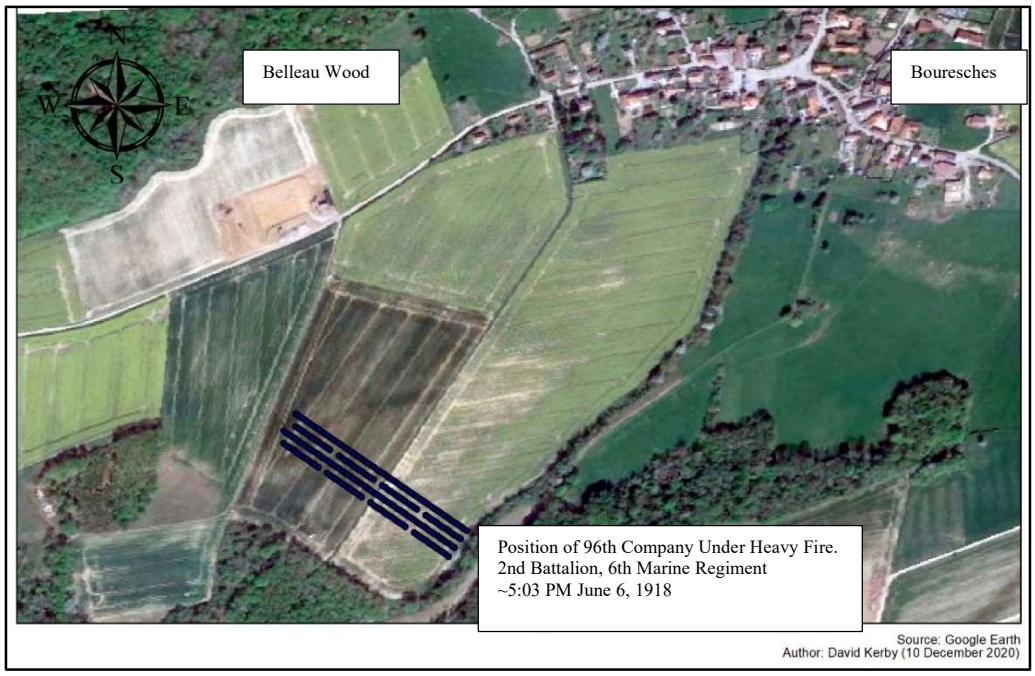

Figure 9. Marine Formation Against Bouresches. Created by the author.

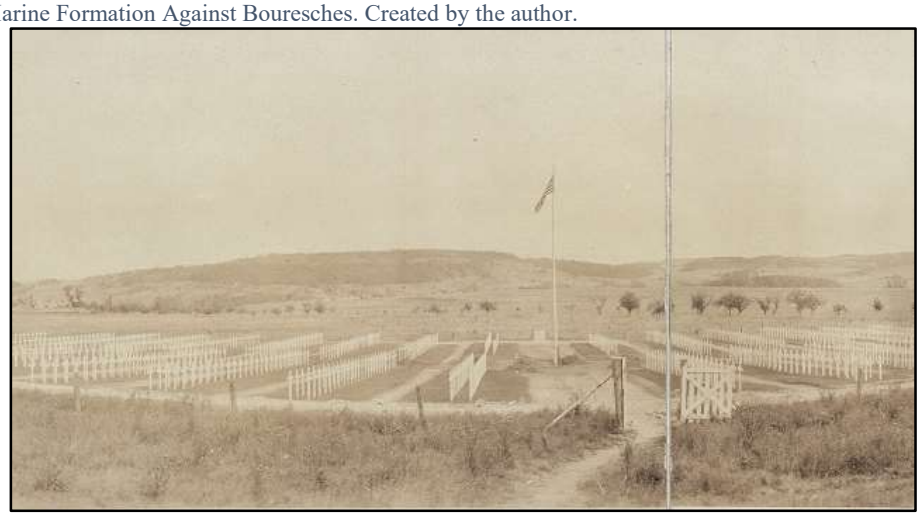

Figure 10. The American Cemetery at Belleau Wood, France. The graves tragically mimic the way in which those troops died, "as if on parade."
Source: W.L. Mann, *American cemetery - Belleau Woods, France. Where over 2000 regulars and Marines who gave their lives in the victory at Chateau Thierry and Belleau Wood, sleep the last sleep*, 1919, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/pan.6a35629/.

On the outcome of Belleau Wood, see Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 124. At the smaller battle for Bouresches, the 2nd Battalion of the 6th Regiment suffered 76.4% casualties, Owen, *To the Limit of Endurance*, Appendix A.

Despite these casualties, the Marines still managed to accomplish their mission and learn some hard lessons in the process. While most Marines floundered without direction from their officers, some managed to improvise and adapt to the circumstances. As units dwindled due to casualties, some lower-ranking Marines took charge and commanded those around them to crawl forward in small groups. They soon forgot to maintain formations worthy of a parade and began moving in "rushes," or short sprints to avoid being hit by enemy fire. Marines in small groups found that they could fire and maneuver on individual machine guns effectively. Instead of tightly controlled, centralized drill techniques, these Marines had to rely on initiative, critical thinking, and small unit leaders to move forward in a decentralized manner towards a common goal. Contrary to the fears of their leaders, these spread-out Marines did not run away in the absence of direct supervision. Instead, they ran forward and embraced the chaos (Figure 11).[9]

[9] On the Marines' use of small groups to move forward, see Owen, *To The Limit of Endurance*, 14 and Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 107, 114. For more on the battle, see John A. Lejeune, *The Reminiscences of a Marine* (1930; repr., Quantico: Marine Corps Association, 1990), 293. "Rushes" are still taught to this day. The dominating idea is the difficulty for someone to see and shoot a moving target in under three seconds. With this in mind, Marines are taught to sprint forward in three second intervals. While doing this, the Marine to their left or right "suppresses" the enemy to the front with their rifle fire. While the Marines at Belleau Wood were not the first to discover this technique, they were the first to popularize it among Marines.
On embracing chaos: Current Marine doctrine teaches that instead of trying to instill order on a chaotic battlefield, Marines should instead try to cultivate that chaos to their advantage. This doctrine expects Marines to be comfortable with chaos. See United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1: Warfighting* (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, 1997).

Figure 11. Small Marine Units Preparing to Seize Bouresches. Surviving Marines left the open field for the cover of a ravine and outbuildings to protect their approach into town.

Soissons

While these techniques appeared again, accounts of later battles show the Marines as slow to adopt these on a large scale. Richard Faulkner's *The School of Hard Knocks* (2012) noted that the inability to learn from mistakes was widespread throughout the American Expeditionary Forces. High casualty rates created an "unbreakable cycle of ineffectiveness as half-trained leaders were supplanted by even less trained and less experienced officers and NCOs."[10] Under this reality, the Marines began the Battle of

[10] Faulkner, *The School of Hard Knocks*, 321.

Soissons on July 19, where the Marines suffered about a thousand casualties a day (Figure 12). Marines arrived at the battle late and attacked without much of their supporting machine guns or artillery. As at Belleau Wood, Marine formations disintegrated as they encountered rough terrain and effective German fire. Again, it was only by moving in small groups that Marines were able to take German positions.[11]

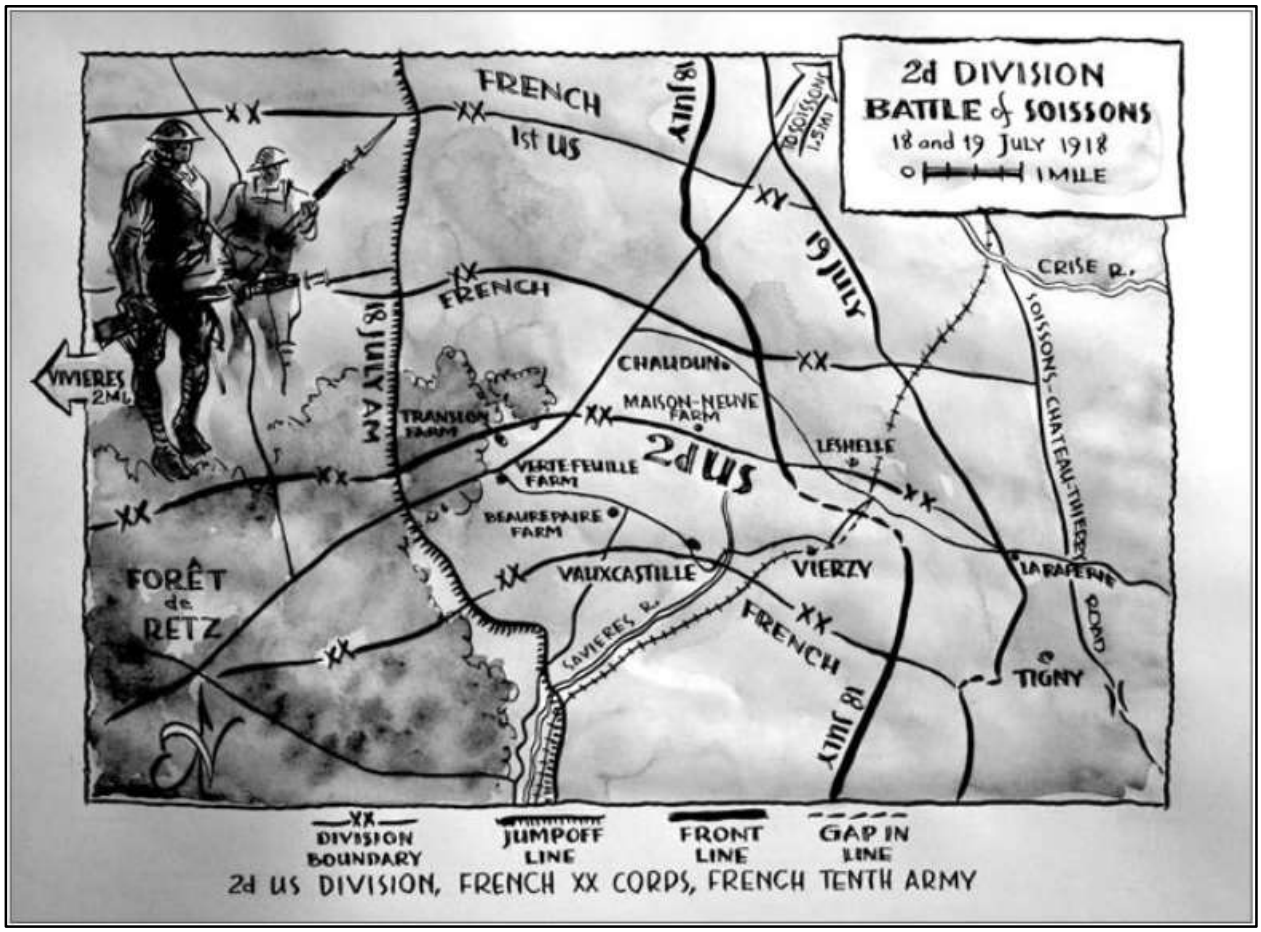

Figure 12. Soissons.
Source: Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 163.

[11] Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 143-154.

After Soissons, the Marines reconstituted their ranks with replacements and returned to intensive training with drill and parade-like maneuvers. The 2nd American Division Commander, General Lejeune, even made time for a massive parade and ceremony while recuperating for the next battle.[12] One specific anecdote demonstrates how ingrained the desire for order and appearances was among the Marines. While inspecting gear close to the front lines, a small unit of Marines stood in close-order formation while their superior inspected their clothing and equipment. During the inspection, a German artillery shell landed in their midst, killing or wounding eight.[13]

General Lejeune was not wholly obsessed with appearances, however. His writings suggested a nuance and a level of common sense regarding the matter. In his 1930 memoir, he argued that successful leaders during the war were not the ones that blindly enforced uniform regulations in the front trenches. It was not worthwhile, he said, to yell at a soldier "who might perhaps have his coat unbuttoned, or have on rubber boots under forbidden circumstances." Instead, Lejeune argued that discipline came from kindness, justice, and severe punishment of only serious offenses. "Constant nagging" and punishments for "petty" offenses were counterproductive. He believed that while minutiae were unimportant in battle, it played a role in returning troops to a sense of "normalcy" after combat.[14]

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[12] "The battalions not at the Training Camp all carried out a training schedule within their areas, including close and extended order drills, assault formations, grenade throwing, gas and signal drills." McClellan, "The St. Mihiel Offensive;" Lejeune, *Reminiscences of a Marine*, 305-310.

[13] Lejeune, *The Reminiscences of a Marine*, 318.

[14] Ibid., 308.

St. Mihiel

While the Marines were beginning to recognize the lethality of new technology after Soissons, they still struggled to rectify these lessons during their next battle with their beliefs in the need to maintain order and control over troops through close supervision. As the fighting at St. Mihiel began in mid-September, the Marines continued to conduct battle according to their beliefs and training (Figure 13). Edwin Simmons again noted that Civil War generals would have been familiar with such formations. At the tactical level, the Marines had slightly modified their company formations. Instead of four waves, all in lines with only about four yards between each man, the Marines now attacked with only the first two waves in lines with five to ten yards between each man. General Lejeune observed the consequences of these linear formations while walking across the battlefield, "some eight or ten of our gallant men in a line, lying where they fell, their faces toward the enemy. They had been killed by machine gun fire as they came over the crest of the ridge."[15]

[15] Lejeune, *The Reminiscences of a Marine*, 329.

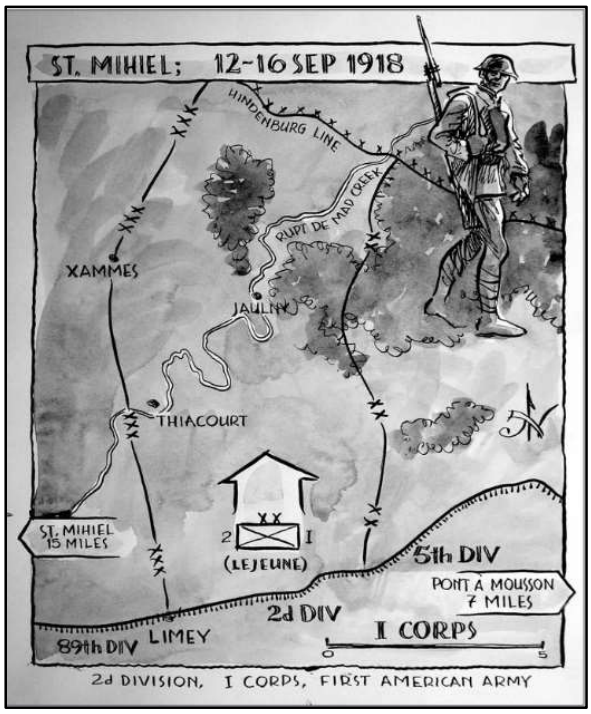

Figure 13: St. Mihiel.
Source: Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 187.

As the Marines approached German positions, they again learned to take cover whenever they encountered a machine gun before crawling close on a flank to use their grenades.[16] Thankfully, the Germans began withdrawing from St. Mihiel when the 2nd American Division attacked. Resistance was not as deadly as it could have been, and the Marines avoided costly losses.

General Lejeune's reflections on the battle lack recognition of lessons learned and continued to display a belief in the importance of Lynn's Battle Culture of Forbearance. He praised his men, who "carried the machine gun positions…following the retreating

[16] Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 188-192; Lejeune, *The Reminiscences of a Marine*, 327-329. For more details on the battle, see Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 193-194.

enemy closely" and boasted that September "12th was a glorious day in the history of the Second Division. It broke through the enemy line and pressed forward irresistibly and rapidly, overcoming the opposing force by the power and vigor of its attack."[17]

Blanc Mont

The Marines' next battle at Blanc Mont demonstrated how Marines relied on more control – in the form of artillery integration –to overcome enemy firepower (Figure 14). On October 1 near Blanc Mont, the Operations Memorandum for the Marine Brigade stated, "The Regiments will take the usual formations-column of battalions-each regiment with one battalion in 1st line, one in support and one in reserve." A rolling barrage preceded the attacking troops, advancing at a set rate of 100 meters every four minutes. While the Marines held to their ordered and controlled formations, they increasingly centralized control to coordinate artillery support and better mitigate casualties in the advance. General Lejeune noted that coordination with artillery had improved to the point where, "No casualties were suffered by the attacking force, as it followed the artillery barrage so closely as to surprise the entire garrison in dugouts in which they had taken refuge…"[18]

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[17] For General Lejeune's reflections, see Lejeune, *The Reminiscences of a Marine*, 328-330.

[18] On the conduct of the battle and the Operations Memo to the Marine Brigade, see Edwin N. McClellan, "The Battle of Blanc Mont Ridge," *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 1922. For General Lejeune's assessment, see Lejeune, *The Reminiscences of a Marine*, 357.

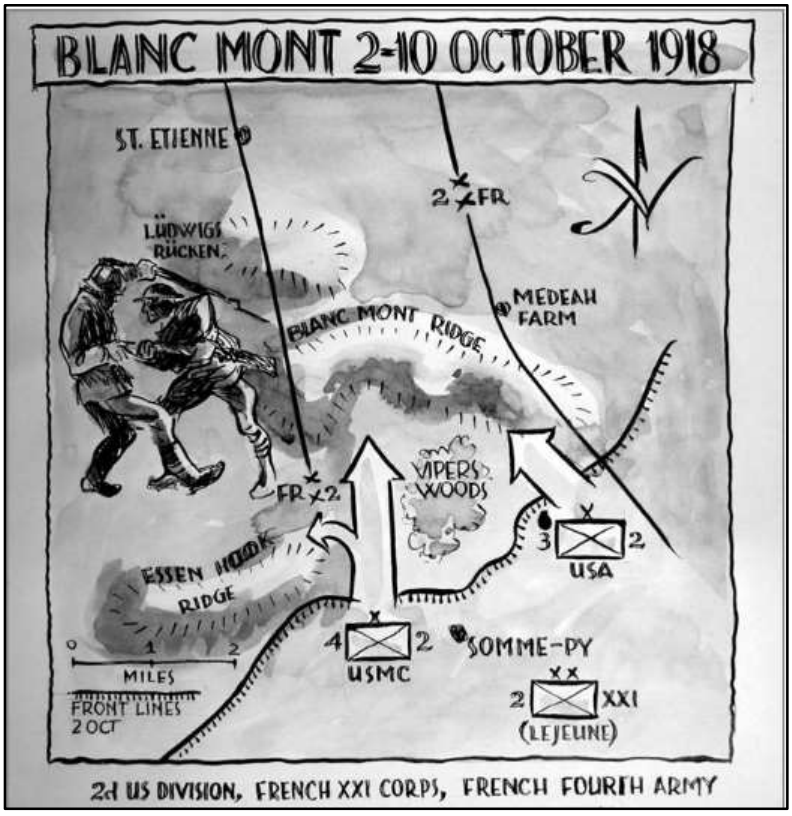

Figure 14. Blanc Mont.
Source: Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 204.

Meusse-Argonne Offensive

However, by the time of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive in November, the 2nd Division adopted what Lejeune described as a "revolutionary" approach. The troops began moving at night to infiltrate German lines, surpass strong defenses, and surprise Germans behind the front. The 2nd Division relied on darkness and poor weather to cover their forward movement. When they encountered resistance, the lead elements pinned down the German forces while flanking elements surrounded the enemy. This greatly minimized casualties, and on one particular night, Lejeune noted that the Marines

sustained no losses. Had the 2nd Division attacked during the day, Lejeune wrote, they would have sustained heavy losses.[19]

In 1918, Marines faced warfare that challenged their assumptions about combat and discipline. The survivors of Belleau Wood, who continued to attack German positions even after their leaders became casualties, challenged the belief that the "common" soldier would run or hide without direct supervision. While Marines indeed used their bayonets, they found grenades and rifles much more effective.[20] Marines also learned that fire superiority alone was not always enough to enable their forward movement. The combination of artillery, machine guns, and *smart* movement through terrain or at night helped mitigate casualties and allow Marines to attack German positions at their weakest – instead of strongest – points. Finally, Marines saw that it was the individual Marine who won the battles. Praise for the individual's grit, initiative, and ability to adapt countered the individual-suppressing control, order, obedience, and training methods that the Marines valued. Marines paid a steep price for their lessons, suffering higher casualty rates than American Army units.[21]

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[19] On the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, see Lejeune, *The Reminiscences of a Marine*, 383-392.

[20] Other authors have argued that the bayonet was not used as much as was advertised. Due to a variety of psychological and physical factors, troops were more likely to shoot or club the enemy than "skewer" them. See Dave Grossman, *On Combat*, 120-129 and John Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, 268-267. Keegan points out that bayonet wounds accounted for less than 1% of all wounds during World War I.

[21] Simmons, *Through the Wheat*, 256.

Small Wars Experiences

During numerous small wars of the early twentieth century, Marines learned that small wars operations challenged many assumptions about combat and discipline. First, these operations resulted in the dispersion of their forces. The size of the host nation and the limited number of troops available meant that Marines often manned outposts or went on patrol where the senior Marine was lower in rank than traditionally expected. Second, while Marines found opportunities for using their bayonets, the addition of submachine guns and automatic rifles meant that most killings happened from bullets and grenades. The bayonet charge was not common nor desired. Third, because of the dense jungle terrain, leaders found it hard to control the fire of every Marine on patrol. Instead, Marines acted as individual parts of a team, cooperating and using their submachine gun or automatic rifle to help other Marines maneuver to a better position from which to kill the enemy. Fourth, because of the remote nature of operations and immense responsibility entrusted to lower-ranking Marines, Marines developed critical thinking, creativity, initiative, and a level of individuality not common among highly-drilled troops subject to strict control and blind obedience.

In training for small wars, many Marines retained drill and uniform regulations as a valuable item for instilling discipline. Through the manual of arms, drill also served to teach the basics of firing and loading weapons. Marching provided a way to efficiently and orderly move troops from one place to another. As Major Samuel Harrington wrote in his 1921 “The Strategy and Tactics of Small Wars” series, he believed American troops succeeded because their courage and discipline kept them in ranks and allowed them to complete bayonet charges while undisciplined natives fled. As one will see

below, this was not the case, but the bayonet charge remained the goal, and drill served to instill the required courage, order, and control that were the supposed defining traits of "white men."[22] With these beliefs in mind, regular parades, inspections, and drill practice composed the majority of training (Figures 15 and 16).[23]

Figure 15. Marine Inspection.
Source: Stephen M. Fuller and Graham A. Cosmas, *Marines in the Dominican Republic, 1916-1924* (Washington D.C.: History and Museums Division Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1974), 100.

[22] Samuel Harrington, "The Strategy and Tactics of Small Wars," *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 1921; Samuel Harrington, "The Strategy and Tactics of Small Wars," *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 1922.
In all of the primary sources I consulted, Marines only referenced race twice. However, there is certainly an opportunity for further research on the relationship between race and America's approach to small wars at the beginning of the twentieth century.

[23] On the continued use of drill in training for small wars, see Bickel, *Mars Learning*, 82, 95, 138, 141, 143, and 186-189.

Figure 16. Marines in a Skirmish Line. Note how they still maintain close ranks under the direct supervision of an officer who controls their firing.
Source: Fuller and Cosmas, *Marines in the Dominican Republic*, 127.

When Marines encountered irregular warfare in Central America and the Caribbean, they relied on their training, which had instilled them with unthinking, automaton performance and a penchant for order. In Nicaragua, one lieutenant led a pack train of mules out of the wooded hills onto a flat, open valley. Once the group left the restrictive jungle trail, they instinctively bunched into a tighter formation ingrained from frequent parades and close-order drill practice. Once in the open and grouped together, they made easy targets for nearby guerrillas, who ambushed them to great effect.[24]

[24] M.L. Curry, "Jungle Warfare Weapons," *Marine Corps Gazette*, May 1934. While training local forces in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua, Marines also relied on drill for the basic training of host nation forces. All Marines recognized discipline as necessary to success in small wars, but some identified close-order drill as a precursor to that discipline. Bickel; George C. Thorpe, "Dominican Service," *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 1919.

Marines discovered that, in the tight jungle or mountainous terrain, it was difficult to maintain the ordered and controlled formations that their doctrine taught were necessary to gain fire superiority and conduct a bayonet charge. Instead, Marines had to find creative ways to attack their enemies. In Haiti, the soon-to-be-famous Marine, Smedley Butler, found the bandit Fort Riviere situated on a cliff with fortifications observing the main trails. To attack the fort, he utilized the night to move into position. Then, he used machine-gun fire from one side to "suppress" the fort while his assault element attacked along a ridgeline towards the fort's entrance. Butler chose a narrow approach from the left and utilized forces converging from multiple directions. This, combined with his approach during the dark makes it very unlikely he followed the doctrinal linear attack techniques (Figure 17).[25]

[25] Robert Debs Heinl and Nancy Gordon, "The American Occupation of Haiti," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 1978.

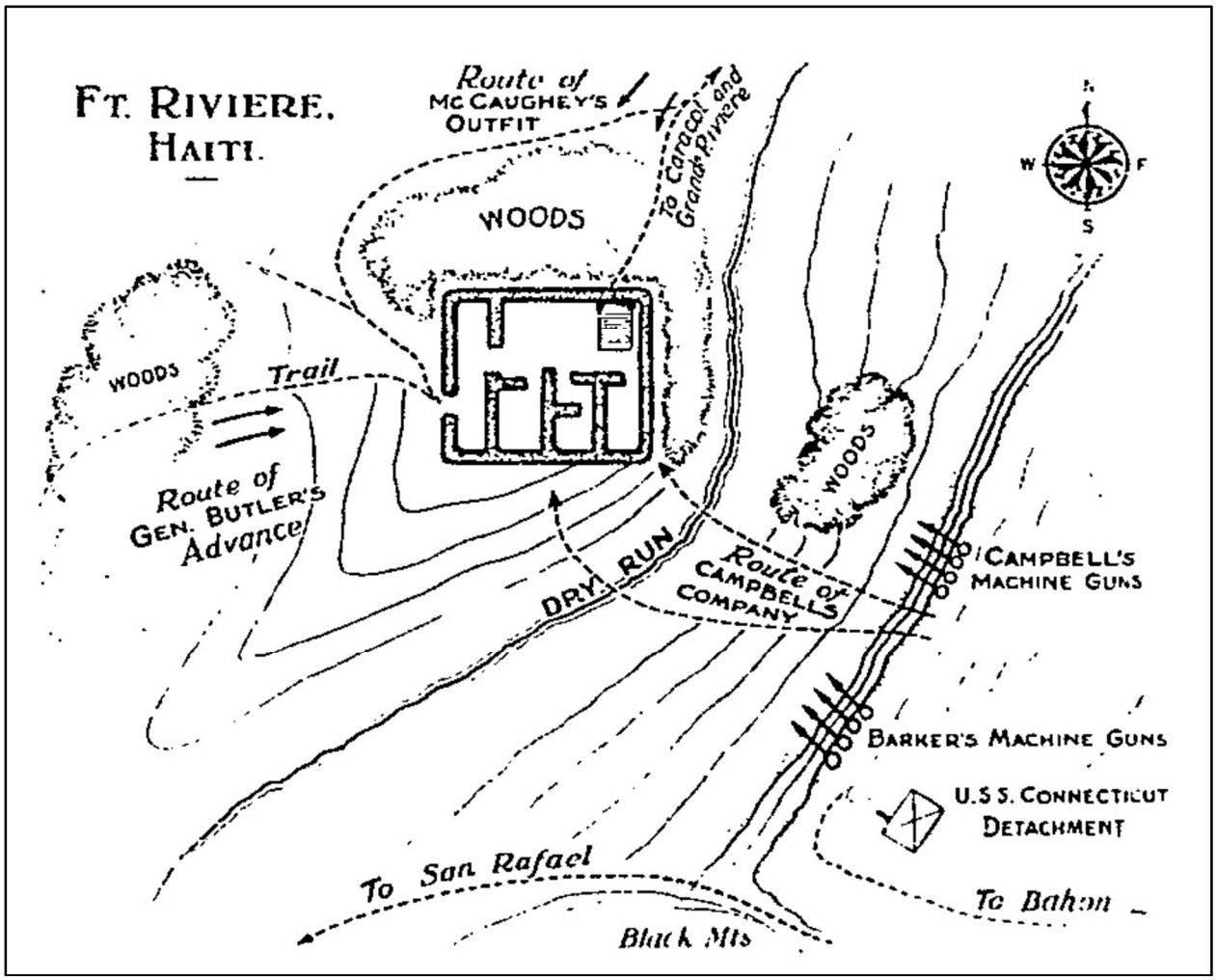

Figure 17. Smedley Butler's Capture of Ft. Riviere.
Source: Robert Debs Heinl and Nancy Gordon, "The American Occupation of Haiti," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 1978, 33.

In Nicaragua in the 1920s, Marines also discovered something akin to modern tactics in response to guerilla ambushes. In October 1927, Lieutenant O'Shea engaged a force of roughly 300 bandits with only nine Marines and twelve native police, or *Guardias*. Lieutenant O'Shea did not employ volley fire, and his troops instead combined fire and movement at the individual level to extricate themselves from the situation. To survive, O'Shea's patrol left the trail for the dense jungles and maneuvered their way back to safety. Despite enemy fire from multiple directions, O'Shea noted,

"The entire patrol were cool and deliberate in their actions, advancing under cover where possible and taking careful aim before firing."[26]

During a fierce battle, May 13-14, 1928, Captain Bleasdale recounted how the Marines had moved in narrow but dispersed formations. Upon engagement with the enemy, the Marines' actions contained elements of suppressing fire and intelligent individual maneuver. Absent was the doctrinal volley firing followed by a bayonet charge. Bleasdale recommended that Marines being sent to small wars attend a sniper course to improve their accuracy since musketry principles and volley fire, the technical principles underpinning the need for drill, were irrelevant. These instances showed that Marines fought best when loosely arrayed to maximize firepower and cover, and that the effective use of automatic fire and maneuver led to the defeat of rebel forces instead of the bayonet. Regardless of the official tactical doctrine or status of training, Marines in Nicaragua utilized tactics that lacked aesthetic appearances or the centralized control of drill and musketry tactics. This contradicted the latest doctrine of the 1927 *Landing Force Manual*, discussed in chapter three, which called for tightly controlled and centralized fires by the officer.[27]

Finally, Captain Merritt Edson's lengthy patrols along the Coco River in Nicaragua provided other lessons. In 1928 and 1929, Edson led teams of Marines up the remote Coco River in northern Nicaragua to survey its further use as a supply line for

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[26] Division of Operations and Training, "Combat Operations in Nicaragua," *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 1929, 29.

[27] J.G. Walraven, "Typical Combat Patorls in Nicaragua," *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 1929. Merritt A. Edson, "The Coco Patrol," *Marine Corps Gazette*, August 1936 all Victor Bleasdale, "La Flor Engagement," *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 1932.

Marines battling guerrillas. Edson noted that the jungle terrain made it extremely difficult for a commander to exert control over his entire unit. His patrols exhibited no visual sense of order in their organization, and Edson kept his troops dispersed to protect them from enemy fire. Edson also noted that maintaining military appearances was nearly impossible, and they left behind shaving toiletries, a radical notion when the gas masks of World War I required daily shaving (Figure 18). Edson's patrols' successes demonstrated that Marines of all ranks needed ingenuity and creativity to solve novel problems. Marines conditioned to wait for orders and blindly follow their leaders are not prepared to think in this manner.[28]

[28] Merritt A. Edson, "The Coco Patrol," *Marine Corps Gazette*, August 1936; Merritt A. Edson, "The Coco Patrol," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 1936; and Merritt A. Edson, "The Coco Patrol," *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 1937.

Figure 18. Coco River Patrol. Note the butt-naked Marine – except for his life vest – in the right picture. *Source*: Photographer unknown, United States Marine Corps History Division, Archives Branch, https://grc-usmcu.libguides.com/c.php?g=806488&p=6322787.

From these experiences, Marines learned that technological advancements nullified the fundamental thinking behind bayonet charges and ordered combat formations. Greater firepower among smaller units and dense jungles resulted in greater spacing between units and individuals. Even when grouped, the thick jungle underbrush left each Marine isolated on the battlefield. Marines had to coordinate with each other and work together as a team instead of blindly following the command of an officer whom they could rarely see or hear. Marines in these situations had to develop critical thinking, initiative, and creativity to survive. Marines learned the same lessons in the "big" war—the tactics and techniques Marines developed in the Caribbean closely

resembled what the Marines developed in World War I to counter German machine-gun nests in the dense woods on French battlefields. However, despite the prevalence of these tactics and techniques, there was minimal widespread adaptation or codification of these lessons.

CHAPTER 3 – LESSONS LEARNED

Despite these experiences, the Marine Corps largely continued to interpret discipline through the lens of its pre-twentieth century assumptions, which resulted in a continued emphasis on order, control, and obedience through drill and rules concerning appearances. As one Admiral observed in 1918,

> Many officers conscientiously believe that it is their duty to keep a vigilant lookout for all violations of their numerous regulations, the majority of which concern the minutiae of appearances and ceremonious forms rather than military efficiency.[1]

Conversations in the *Gazette* promoted this line of thinking. In December 1918, a Marine lieutenant colonel wrote a plea to the *Gazette* for the Marine Corps to adopt its own drill book that mirrored the Army's *Infantry Drill Regulations*. His concern stemmed not from disparities in combat performance but an embarrassing performance by Marines at the Chicago World's Fair building dedication in Chicago. While most concerned about the embarrassment's effect on the Marine Corps' public image, he also argued that uniformity in drill was necessary for teamwork and cooperation among Marines and soldiers.[2] In March of 1919, a captain seconded this call for a Marine-specific manual to ensure uniformity with the U.S. Army.[3] In June, Major William Upshur replied to both articles and defended the Navy's 1918 *Landing Force Manual* as sufficient. Upshur, a Medal of Honor recipient and veteran of fighting bandits in Haiti, sat on the board that revised the most-recent manual. He claimed that it adequately blended the Army's

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[1] William Sims, "Military Character," *Infantry Journal*, Vol 14, no. 8, Feb 1918: 562.

[2] Wm. F. Spicer, "A Plea for a Marine Corps Drill Book," *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 1918.

[3] Gustav Karow, "An Additional Plea for a Marine Corps Drill Book," *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 1919.

Infantry Drill Regulations with naval requirements and that Marines needed no other manual. While the manual did focus more on the practical application of drill in combat, it still lagged behind lessons learned both in small wars and in World War I. Though Upshur did not write the manual, it is curious that he did not critique the manual's prescription of such tightly controlled drill in combat. His own experiences in Haiti, specifically his actions that won him the Medal of Honor, demonstrated that small wars required different tactics, techniques, and skills than what close- and extended-order drill provided. Additionally, the 1918 manual did not incorporate any of the lessons from Haiti in its brief chapter on "minor" warfare.[4]

While the 1918 *Landing Force Manual* fell short of capturing the lessons of small wars, the 1921 *Landing Force Manual*, at first glance, appeared to capture the lessons of World War I. The 1921 manual dedicated only fifteen out of over 800 pages to small wars. For drill, the 1921 manual warned against obsessing over particular formations and recommended adjusting dispersion based on the terrain. It also recognized the importance of initiative, self-reliance, and individuality at the level of the common soldier. The manual encouraged officers to deviate from orders when they no longer applied. Troops were only supposed to move in the open when other troops protected their movement by suppressing the enemy. The manual further discussed the importance of surprise and concealment to avoid casualties while moving. Regarding movement, the manual recognized that troops might have to move as individuals, from cover to cover,

[4] Bickel, *Mars Learning*, 89, 153; William P. Upshur, "A Marine Corps Drill Book," *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1919; Heinl and Heinl, "Occupation of Haiti," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 1978, 32-33.

across a battlefield. Finally, the manual recognized that combat was no longer linear but a series of smaller battles among small units.[5]

Despite claiming lessons learned, the 1921 manual contradicted itself by emphasizing the bayonet, tightly controlled firing, and ordered movement to habituate unthinking obedience. Blatantly, the manual said this of attacks on fortified positions:

> The attack of a carefully prepared trench system is characterized by a powerful artillery preparation and the simultaneous launching in assault at a prescribed hour of large masses of infantry, widely deployed and organized in depth, the assaulting waves being preceded by a rolling barrage. For an attack of this kind, all action is regulated down to the minutest details of time and space by superior authority. The action of all forces that take part in the attack proceeds according to prearranged schedule. The initiative of subordinates is reduced to a minimum. . . . The infantry overcomes the enemy by the mere fact of advancing.[6]

Ultimately, four beliefs or assumptions remained in the manual. First, the manual maintained the importance of fire superiority. The manual portrayed forward movement as only feasible when well-skilled marksmen delivered controlled fires on an enemy position. Second, the manual continued to emphasize the bayonet as the ultimate weapon. It erroneously argued that the side with the best bayonet training usually won in battle during World War I. It also stated that bayonet training developed quick obedience to command. Third, the manual reiterated the importance of control and order through drill on the battlefield. Close-order drill remained the foundation for control, order, and obedience. It taught extended order as the way to move across a battlefield but cautioned that it resulted in a loss of control over troops. Lynn's Battle Culture of Forbearance

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[5] Department of the Navy, *Landing Force Manual, United States Navy, 1920* (Washington: Department of the Navy, 1921), 96, 146-150, 164-165, 720-721, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.hnfj68&view=1up&seq=1&skin=2021.

[6] Department of the Navy, *Landing Force Manual, United States Navy, 1920*, 174.

continued to appear, as the manual stated that the infantry's job was to steadily advance against the enemy while ignoring artillery and machine guns. The "offensive spirit" remained critical, and the manual reminded company commanders "to develop in his men patriotism, soldierly virtues, and the desire to close with the enemy." The manual called for "compact" firing lines to facilitate fires and dictated strict control of forward movement. Despite the manual's teachings on individual movement, officers strictly controlled all rushes through voice commands. Fourth, underpinning the necessity of drill and strict control was the assumed unreliability of common troops. The manual intended drill to "inculcate that prompt and subconscious obedience which is essential to proper military control," and "to habituate men to the firm control of their leaders…" Much of this guidance remained similar to, or copied verbatim, from the 1911 and 1918 regulations (Figure 19).[7]

[7] Department of the Navy, *Landing Force Manual, United States Navy, 1920* (Washington: 1921, 1921).
On fire superiority, see 170-172 and 187-188.
For order, control, and drill, see 144, 164, 172, 447, 505, and 721.
On the need for obedience, see 442.

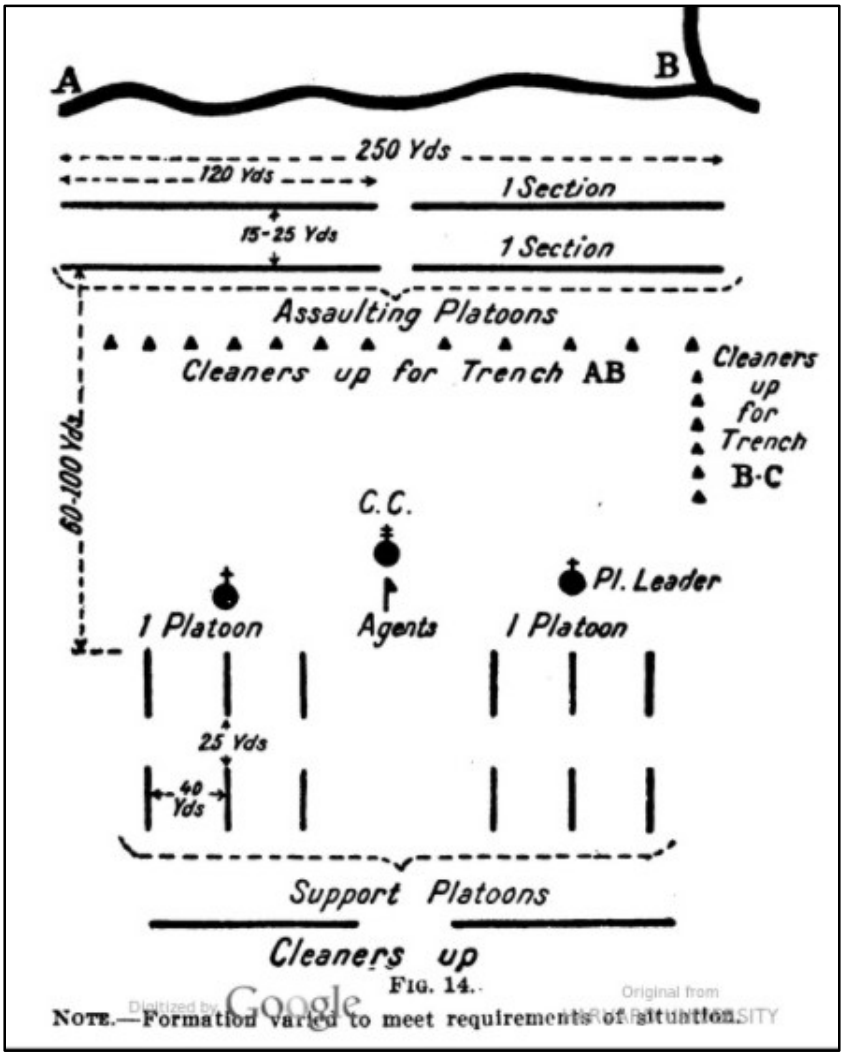

Figure 19. Company Assault Formation, 1921.
Source: Department of the Navy, *Landing Force Manual, United States Navy, 1920*, 197.

The outcomes of this manual were on full display in 1924 when the Marine Corps conducted training on the historic Antietam battlefield. In the "Sharpsburg Maneuvers," 3,200 Marines marched from Quantico, Virginia, to Sharpsburg, Maryland, to practice "modern" tactics. While they borrowed the general situation from the historic battle, the *Fall Exercises, 1924*, booklet issued to every Marine stated that the purpose was to "demonstrate with personnel and material of the Force how an attack would be conducted

under present day conditions…" The Marines did not intend to mimic Civil War tactics, and the many Civil War veterans in attendance commented on the greater spacing between Marines. However, the Marines still fixed bayonets and marched across open fields. As photographic evidence shows, these 1924 techniques primarily mirrored those of World War I. Additionally, examination of the daily schedules shows that a significant emphasis of the training was close-order drill and attention to appearances. Marines spent almost half of every day on drill or ceremonial parades in preparation for the final battle (Figure 20).[8]

Figure 20. Sharpsburg Maneuvers, 1924. Every machine-gunner dreams of a sight like this.
Source: *Marines at Sharpsburg, Md., 9/12/24*, 1924, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2016838441/.

In 1927, the Navy released an updated *Landing Force Manual*, and much remained unchanged. Close-order drill remained the method to move troops to battle, with extended-order drill the means to move across a battlefield. However, the 1927 version was even more explicit in the intended utilization of the bayonet:

[8] "The Marines Land at Antietam," The National Park Service, last modified April 7, 2020, https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/historyculture/marines1924.htm.

> The bayonet is the ultimate factor in every assault and the soldier must realize that its successful employment requires of him not only individual physical courage but also perfect discipline. . . In a bayonet fight the nerviest, best-disciplined, and most skillful man wins. . .[9]

Outside of doctrine, Marines' writings in the *Gazette* showed that some shifts in thought on discipline occurred. However, there remained an overwhelming acceptance of the same beliefs about combat that made strict control, imposed order, and blind obedience a priority. Separate from Marine experiences in World War I and small wars, a Marine captain argued that the Marines' role aboard Navy ships required that Marines maintained neat appearances through uniforms and drill to display discipline among the sailors. The Navy expected Marines to enforce instant obedience on ships and, therefore, Marines must exhibit this obedience and order among themselves. Among all the other voices, this Marine retained an emphasis on the primary role of Marines as shipboard enforcers.[10]

A Marine major emphasized the importance of drill for discipline, group socialization, and combat training. He also emphasized musketry training, which included volley fire techniques requiring strict order and obedience instilled through drill. Part of this emphasis on drill for group socialization appears to have originated from his observation of increasing diversity among Marine recruits.[11]

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[9] Department of the Navy, *Landing Force Manual, United States Navy, 1927* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1927), 100, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.$b74325&view=1up&seq=5&skin=2021.

[10] Robert Blake, "The Marine at Sea," *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1925.

[11] A.D. Challacombe, "Our Peace and Wartime Training of Recruits," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 1939.

Several Marines took to the *Gazette* with their recommendations for uniform changes. One recommended discarding fancier uniforms because they lacked relevance. Another argued that uniforms should not focus on appearance alone as this limited practicality. One colonel argued that Marines only required two types of uniforms, the seasonally appropriate field uniform and one dress uniform. This was quite the departure from the thirteen uniforms listed in the 1912 regulations for officers. However, a major disagreed with these opinions and argued that these fancy uniforms contributed to Marine pride and set Marines apart from other services.[12] In 1921, Captain Lockhart argued that appearances and obedience to uniform regulations were a visible sign of discipline and esprit. If Marines took pride in their uniform, they also had pride in the organization and could therefore be trusted not to disappoint their leaders.[13]

By 1924, Major Dyer – cited earlier – seemed to have shifted his understanding of discipline from an imposed discipline to self-discipline. This self-discipline required education, and Dyer cited the experiences of Marines in Haiti as evidence for this. He argued that Marines who knew what to do and how to do it could have the trust of their superiors. Dyer also seemed to understand what psychologists later observed, that practices that emphasized blind obedience to a central authority undermined the ability of individuals to think.[14] Another Marine concurred and argued that officers needed to do

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[12] Col Thorpe argued that Marines should adopt uniforms based on practicality, hygiene, popularity among Marines, cost-effective/space-saving, and ability to improve *esprit de corps*. George C. Thorpe, "The Uniform," *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1919.; Harold Wirgman, John Marston, and Henry C. Davis, "Suggestions and Criticisms on Changes in Uniforms," *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1919.

[13] George B. Lockhart, "Esprit De Corps," *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1921.

[14] Dyer also concluded by drawing upon themes of Marine exceptionalism to call for better education among Marines. Jesse F. Dyer, "Notes and Discussions," *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1924.

more than simply memorize regulations as they had done in the past. A broad education and dedicated study of the military profession were now necessary.[15]

One lieutenant colonel wrote that Marines should design uniforms to meet needs in the field. He did admit that an important secondary role was to improve "morale and self-respect" through appearances but maintained that this was secondary. As an example, he cited the pith helmet in Haiti as a practical alternative to the campaign hat favored by Marines. The Pith helmet maintained its shape and appearance while also fulfilling functional requirements (Figure 21).[16]

Figure 21. *Above left*, British WWI Pith Helmet; *right*, USMC Campaign Hat. Note the variation in appearance of the campaign hat. It was only "uniform" in the roughest sense.
Source: Tommy's Militaria, https://www.tommysmilitaria.com/en-GB/ww1-british-headwear/ww1-british-khaki-drill-pith-helmet-named-soldier-/prod_10446#.YeG7nv7MLIU; Stephen M. Fuller and Graham A. Cosmas, *Marines in the Dominican Republic 1916 – 1924* (Washington, D.C.: History and Museums Division Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1974), 109.

[15] R.H. Dunlap, "Education in the Marine Corps," *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 1925.

[16] However, this Marine noted that replacing the campaign hat would be difficult because of its ties to tradition on the Western frontier as a "cowboy" staple. J.K. Tracy, "Notes on Uniform," *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1926.

Another Marine discussed the importance of camouflage and criticized unthinking obedience as dangerous. While inspecting positions during an exercise, he found artillery pieces lacking camouflage:

> Upon interrogation the soldiers replied that they didn't know camouflage, as they had never received any instruction, except for occasional talks out of 'some book.' They had erected the nets over the guns as they had received orders to do some camouflaging and merely executed the orders without knowing why. They were more interested in keeping the guns well painted and the metal-work shiny, than in concealing themselves. [17]

This Marine warned against the current obsession with "spit and polish" since this gave away positions to enemy aircraft. A separate Marine corporal pointed out, "At close range, where most contests will be decided, rugged terrain, small dispersion, immobility, ease of isolation, and opposition high-angle fire and snipers are apt to be unkind…" To best prepare for combat of this sort, this corporal argued that the ordered and controlled drill field was no longer applicable to the realities of combat. Instead, training should focus more on developing the individual.[18]

By 1940, Captain Shaw provided the math to support the corporal's conclusions. Captain Shaw recognized that technology and the changing means of warfare made individual skills essential. He argued that drill was obsolete, both for combat training and for instilling discipline and courage. Instead, he argued that discipline and courage came from confidence in one's fellow troops. Marines could only build this confidence through training that developed the individual's skill, intelligence, and initiative. To support his argument, Shaw used mathematical probability to demonstrate that the

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[17] Peter Rodyenko, "Modern Camouglage," *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 1941.

[18] Russell M. Catron, "A Study of Marine Corps Infantry Weapons," *Marine Corps Gazette*, August 1936, 32.

prevailing ideas of fire superiority – gained through high volumes of fire delivered by ordered and controlled troops – were not as effective as advertised. Furthermore, he demonstrated that accurate fire from well-trained individuals actually provided a higher number of "hits" among enemy troops. He cited numerous examples from combat, including World War I and recent German operations in Poland. Close-order drill took time away from the extensive training individuals required on a modern battlefield, and he argued that leaders could also attain the outcomes sought by drill through practical training in individual skills and small unit tactics. Shaw quoted the British military theorist and historian, Liddell Hart, "The only infantryman of use in modern warfare is one so highly trained in the use of cover that he can stalk machine guns, and so highly trained as a shot that he can pick off their crews."[19]

While individual Marines debated back and forth about drill, appearances, and discipline, the Marine Corps published its official doctrine for small wars in 1940. In contrast to other debates that argued that Marines should prepare for a large, conventional war in the Pacific, the *Small Wars Manual* reminded readers that small wars were the *norm* for Marines. The manual acknowledged that small wars presented unique problem sets that could not be solved through formulaic applications of rules or with conventional fighting methods. The manual also noted that these problems required dispersed units led by low-ranking Marines to display initiative, adaptability, and proficiency in tactical skills.[20]

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[19] S.R. Shaw, "Accuracy Versus Volume in Rifle Fire," *Marine Corps Gazette*, September 1940.

[20] U.S. Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual*, (1940; repr., New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2009), 1-2, 1-10, 1-6, 4-1, 4-16, 6-14. A quick note on pagination for the *Small Wars Manual*. 1-2 references page "one tac two," or page two of chapter one.

And yet, as with other doctrinal manuals, the *Small Wars Manual* had its share of contradictions. Regarding drill, the *Small Wars Manual* preached that when time was limited, Marines should discard drill in favor of more practical training.[21] In contrast to the imposed disciplines of drill, the manual often discussed behaviors and skills that were nearly impossible to supervise and enforce in the jungle. These behaviors and skills required self-discipline.[22] However, in a sample training schedule, the manual included weekly ceremonial parades and drill as part of training. This suggests that at least some authors believed that these ceremonial aspects played an important role. These contradictions were evidence of how the Marine Corps compiled the manual. Instead of a single author or board of editors, the Marines took the works of various authors and compiled them into one manual.[23] Simply put, the Marines tried to have it both ways—not upsetting tradition *and* implementing lessons learned. The result was that Marines were willing to preach initiative but strongly inclined to enforce rules and practices antithetical to initiative.

By 1941, the Marines had updated their *Landing Force Manual,* but they still combined the drill regulations with Army combat publications and demonstrated that their focus was large-scale conflict. Only two chapters from the 1941 *Landing Force Manual* appeared to relate to tactical matters, and only two pages of over 900 addressed

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[21] U.S. Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual*, 4-7.

[22] The manual referred to these self-disciplines as "march discipline." March discipline referred to the important actions to successfully conduct movement through enemy territory. U.S. Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual*, 6-50.

[23] For the training schedule, see U.S. Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual*, 4-25. Bickel also noted that this led to much redundancy and contradictions, like those on drill above. For Bickel's notes on the *SWM*'s creation, see, Bickel, *Mars Learning*, 205-234.

small wars. The contents of the manual also hinted at a conflicted approach to drill. The opening chapter on drill emphasized it as only a ceremonial function that served to build discipline. However, just a few pages later, the manual discussed the role of both close- and extended-order drill in combat. The manual maintained close-order drill as a proper means to move troops towards combat, while it taught extended-order drill as a means to advance under fire. Then, again in chapter fifteen, the manual warned against striving for precision and exactness on the battlefield and encouraged the use of cover and lying down. The chapter further contradicted itself and stressed that leaders must maintain order and control among their troops. The manual followed the trend of earlier manuals preaching for initiative and individual movement among subordinates, but it still practically taught ordered and heavily controlled movements on the battlefield. The Marines continued to believe in the bayonet as the ultimate weapon of victory and in a subsequent need for drill to achieve the needed fire superiority and control.[24]

On the eve of World War II – as technology and global crises required a greater understanding of tactics among lower-ranking Marines – Marine Corps tactics and discipline grew more complicated and contradictory. While some Marines were able to get their innovative ideas or newer tactical methods codified into doctrine, other Marines continued reinforcing the assumptions thousands of Marine casualties already demonstrated as outdated. Marines had seen how battle was inherently chaotic, disrupted

[24] Department of the Navy, *Landing Force Manual, United States Navy, 1938, Reprinted, 1941* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1941), 1-3, 2-65, 1-11, 15-33, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112107255835&view=1up&seq=3&skin=2021. The pagination for the 1941 *LFM* is similar to that of the *Small Wars Manual* except that it refers to sections instead of pages. 1-3 references "chapter one, section three."

large units into smaller fights for survival, and never followed prescribed orders or rules. Nevertheless, many Marines – especially at higher ranks – continued to believe that the average Marine could not be trusted to make decisions and that strict control from above was necessary to impose order on the battlefield.

In addition to the Marines' beliefs about combat, the Marine Corps' growing involvement in active public relations campaigns also influenced the Marines' decision to retain stricter forms of order and obedience, as these were hallmarks of Marines. After the media's publicity about Marine exploits during World War I, "Marine" had come to symbolize an elite soldier.[25] Guarding and building on this elitism became important to Marines. As Heather Venable pointed out in her work on the development of a unique Marine identity, Marines believed they were the "best drilled and disciplined Corps in any Branch of our Services. On board ship they out sailor the sailors, and on shore they beat the Army in their own tactics."[26] Lieutenant Colonel Spicer's 1918 article, where he lamented the Marines' poor performance in drill, also demonstrated this close connection between drill and Marine Corps identity.[27] In 1927, an anonymous editorial in the *Gazette* recognized the importance of appearances on recruitment and public opinion. The author noted that the service of Marines in guarding the U.S. mail across the country improved recruiting as citizens widely praised Marines for their appearances and behavior.[28] For the Marines in China, frequent dress parades and fancy uniforms formed

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[25] Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud*, 196-200.

[26] Ibid., 13.

[27] Spicer, "A Plea for a Marine Corps Drill Book," December 1918.

[28] Anonymous, "Editorial," *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 1927.

a part of a public relations campaign designed to awe the local Chinese and deter any thoughts of attacking American interests (Figure 22).[29] However, one Marine detachment under Smedley Butler kept his Marines busy with practical military training, athletics, and forms of entertainment. Butler was a maverick, though, and often challenged the establishment. Still, the vast differences between the "spit and polish" Marines and Butler's Marines further displayed the internal conflict over drill and appearance's place in a modern military. Outside of battlefield concerns, Marines saw obedience to uniform and drill regulations as critical to protecting their organization's identity and public image. While a broader study of this specific point is needed, these anecdotes illustrate that Marines associated discipline with appearances and drill as a way to ensure group compliance to cultural norms the Marines deemed necessary, even as drill and appearances' relevance to combat waned.

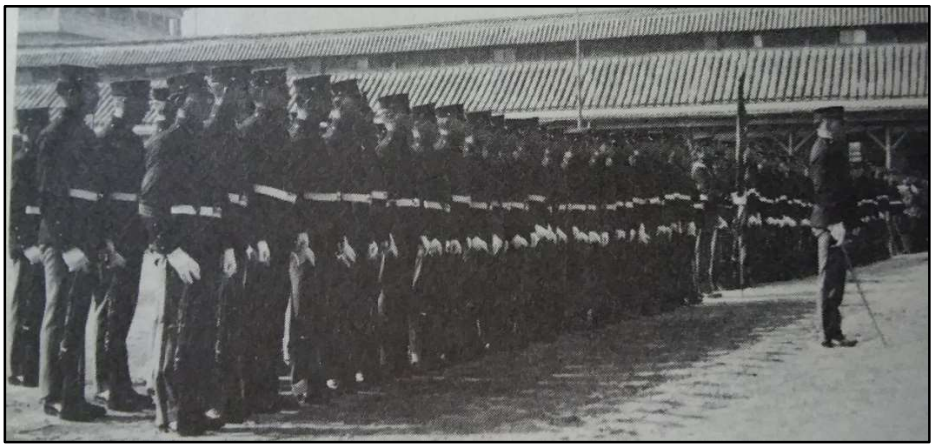

Figure 22. Marines in Dress Uniforms, China, ca. 1910.
Source: Allan Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps,* rev. ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 242.

[29] Millett, *Semper Fi*, 212-229.

CONCLUSION – LESSONS LOST

Lessons Lost

In 1942, Marines began their first significant offensive combat action of World War II on the island of Guadalcanal, where they paid for their lessons lost. As Company B, First Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment made their way through the jungle, they fixed bayonets and prepared to charge a Japanese position. Thinking they had the element of surprise, the Marines stormed over a ridge crest only to find Japanese soldiers waiting patiently for them with machine guns and deadly sniper fire. During the fierce combat for control of the island, Marines labored to navigate the thick jungle terrain. Officers struggled to control their men, and NCOs lacked the training to lead their small units. Marines tended to "bunch up" into tight groups and easy targets. They also struggled to make decisions and cope with the chaos and uncertainty of the jungle battlefield.[1]

After the battle, Marine leaders – many of them small wars veterans – provided feedback and recommendations based on their Guadalcanal experiences, echoing the advice of Marines writing in the '20s and '30s. One leader remarked, "Encourage your individuals and bring them out."[2] Another concurred, "Leadership and initiative is so important here," and, "We need trained soldiers who have initiative and know what is the right thing to do."[3] These leaders recommended better individual training, decision-making practice, and self-discipline related to stealth and camouflage. One leader

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[1] United States Marine Corps, *FMFRP 12-110: Fighting on Guadalcanal* (1943; repr., Washington, D.C.: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, 1991), 3-4. English and Gudmundsson, *On Infantry, rev. ed.*, 143-144.

[2] U.S. Marine Corps, *Fighting on Guadalcanal*, 19.

[3] Ibid, 56-57.

explicitly stated that Marine officers needed to build their common sense instead of only studying manuals.

This example from World War II demonstrates that despite the lessons learned from small wars and World War I, Marines continued to rely on imposed disciplines like drill and uniform regulations because of outdated assumptions about technology and combat. First, while acknowledging the importance of individuals, Marines in practice continued to display a distrust toward lower ranks. Second, while Marines accepted that rifle fire alone was not enough, they relied on order and control to integrate artillery and machine guns into their old concepts about firepower. In order to maintain the order and control necessary to achieve this firepower, Marines continued to emphasize close- and extended-order drill. Third, Marine doctrine continued to teach the bayonet as the ultimate weapon of success and emphasized the importance of gaining fire superiority to enable Marines to advance upon the enemy with their bayonets. Marines also retained bayonet training because it instilled the proper "spirit" and aggressiveness for victory. Fourth, while preaching the importance of initiative, Marine doctrine and training continued to stifle initiative by emphasizing drill, "blind obedience," and "absolute subordination."[4] Marines also valued drill and uniforms for their aesthetic appeal, utility for public relations, and role in creating a unique identity for the Marine Corps. These imposed disciplines failed to instill the behavior combat required of Marines in 1942.

While individual Marines called for self-discipline, most Marines and the Marine Corps as an organization continued to emphasize order, control, and blind obedience

[4] Theall, "The Marine Corps Association: A Plea for Cooperation and a Bit of Introspection," 84.

through imposed discipline from 1914 to 1941. The Marines who called for self-discipline learned from combat experience, changing technology, studying foreign conflicts, or a combination of all three. Marines kept some eighteenth-century forms of discipline even after technology removed their underpinning logic because many Marines saw these behaviors and practices as fundamental prerequisites for combat effectiveness or sacred tradition. The Marines' outdated understanding of these behaviors and practices hindered their ability to quickly adapt and innovate to combat's chaotic and uncertain nature. While Marines did adapt and innovate, it was often only after numerous casualties. The Marines' emphasis on unquestioning obedience through imposed disciplines doomed them to the "School of Hard Knocks" as World War II began.

Implications for Today

These conclusions are critical because the modern Marine Corps continues to display similar issues. The tactics and techniques of modern Marines bear little resemblance to those of World War I or World War II, but – despite these tactical changes – the current Marine Corps regulations concerning drill and ceremony are almost twice the length of the regulations used in combat by Marines in World War I.[5] Additionally, in a 2020 memorandum, the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps claimed, "The precision and attention to detail that drill and ceremony demands directly contribute

[5] In 1911, the *Infantry Drill Regulations* used by the Marine Corps composed only 392 pages (https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.31951002026001h&view=1up&seq=5). The current *Drill and Ceremonies Manual* spans 534 pages, surpassing even the 1911 regulations when drill was still used in combat (MCO 5060.20, https://www.marines.mil/News/Publications/MCPEL/Electronic-Library-Display/Article/1867417/mco-506020-cancels-mco-p506020/).

to success on the battlefield."[6] Modern Marine doctrine also continues to display struggles over the kind of discipline appropriate for modern Marines. This doctrine primarily calls for the self-discipline needed to function on a chaotic and decentralized battlefield but also continues to advocate for blind obedience.[7]

The influences of the four assumptions discussed earlier carry modern consequences. While most Marines do not teach drill and bayonet charges for combat, their frequent use of ceremonial drills makes them more likely to resort to ordered – and easy to control – formations on the battlefield when faced with uncertainty.[8] Marines' fondness for order and appearances has led to detrimental practices such as neatly aligning packs, tents, vehicles, and troops while conducting tactical exercises. Ordered and linear behaviors like this make it easy for an enemy to locate and target Marine elements – drone operators can easily locate and target Marines that neatly align their gear (Figure 23).

Marines also continue to struggle with trusting lower ranks. GPS tracking, high-resolution cameras mounted on portable poles, constant radio communication, and surveillance drones in Afghanistan and Iraq granted commanders unprecedented levels of supervision and created leaders accustomed to centralized control. This control

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[6] Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Troy Black, SMMC Memo 02-20, https://www.hqmc.marines.mil/Portals/145/SMMC%20Memo_02_20_%20Non%20Negotiables%2019%20Nov%202020.pdf.

[7] United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1-3: Tactics* (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, 1997), 95-98.

[8] I personally witnessed this consequence as an instructor at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center from 2018-2020. When faced with an unknown enemy and unknown terrain, leaders up to the rank of captain tended to align their troops – sometimes almost shoulder to shoulder – and "charge" forward over open terrain.

permeated Marine culture – a "good" commander effectively utilized technology to control their subordinates' every action.[9]

[9] This level of control and coordination afforded some benefits in the limited conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, at the tactical level, the desire for constant communication has led to dangerously large electromagnetic signatures in headquarters elements. Timothy Coulter, Tyler Schecter, Gene Harb, and Joshua White, "A New COC: Smaller, Better, Faster, Stronger: Adapting Command and Control for Peer to Peer Combat," *Marine Corps Gazette*, May 2020, 14-19.
Examples of micromanagement include the use of surveillance technology in Iraq and Afghanistan to spy on the movements of Marines and ensure they were following proper procedure. The weekly "safety brief" is another example, where leaders chastise Marines and repeatedly warn them against obvious dangers like drinking and driving, unprotected sex, drunken conduct, and speeding. In the Second Marine Division, Marines accused the Division Commander of micromanagement after he dictated a daily schedule for all Marines and ordered all Marines to wear their magazine pouches on the front of their chests; see Andrea Scott. "Crackdown at Lejeune: Inside the 2nd Marine Division commander's controversial call for discipline." *Marine Corps Times*, May 2, 2019. https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2019/05/02/crackdown-at-lejeune-inside-the-2nd-marine-division-commanders-controversial-call-for-discipline/.

Figure 23. *Top*, Drone Picture of a Marine Unit; *below*, The drone operator was able to assume that the troops were likely in the trees nearby. Russian rocket artillery is easily capable of destroying the entire area depicted in the image. *Source*: Walker D. Mills, "Enclosure 1," Images taken by an RQ-11 Raven Unmanned Aerial System during the First Battalion, Fourth Marine Regiment Marine Corps Combat Readiness Exercise in 2018.

However, as in the 1920s and '30s, Marines continue to challenge these assumptions. Again, some Marines have learned the importance of the average Marine's ability to solve complex problems while isolated from their superiors. In the November 2020 *Marine Corps Gazette*, several well-known Marine writers addressed the need for the modern Marine Corps to adapt in the face of complex global problems. These authors

reminded readers that the Marine Corps' ability to adapt fundamentally rested with the individual Marine and their "ability to think critically, quickly, and decisively."[10] Newer Marine Corps doctrine astutely warned that the above-mentioned culture of control and micro-management stifled boldness and initiative in individuals. Numerous articles and books have emerged, reinforcing the need to empower individuals and instill self-discipline.[11]

To fully answer my initial question about the best kind of discipline for a modern Marine Corps requires a much broader study. While this research only focused on the relationship between drill, appearances, and discipline during the early twentieth century, a broader study covering the Marine Corps' existence from 1775 to today may reveal other insights into Marines' relationships with discipline. Today's Marines and the Marine Corps need an introspective study of discipline that effectively explores what approaches may work best in future conflicts.

Until the completion of such a comprehensive study, my limited case study and lessons lost offer some recommendations and food for thought for modern Marines. I can

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[10] Sean F.X. Barret, Mie Auger, and Michael D. Wyly, "Re-Maneuverizing the Marine Corps: Looking Back to Move Forward," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 2020, 39.

[11] Franklin Annis, "Krulak Revisited: The Three-Block War, Strategic Corporals, And The Future Battlefield," *Modern War Institute*, February 3, 2020, https://mwi.usma.edu/krulak-revisited-three-block-war-strategic-corporals-future-battlefield/.
United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 7: Learning* (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters Marine Corps, 2020), 67.
For just a few of these other articles, see Wayne A. Sinclair, "Millennials Merging: Leading a New Generation in War," *Marine Corps Gazette*, September 2006; Roger Misso, "Trust or Trust Not. There is no 'Verify,'" *U.S. Naval Institute Blog*, December 21, 2015, www.blog.usni.org; Matthew Deffenbaugh, "Adult Learning Theory: Time to recognize the Marine Corps has grown up," *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 2016; David Furness, "Winning Tomorrow's Battles Today: Reinvigorating maneuver warfare in the 2d Marine Division," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 2019; and Damien O'Connell, "Can You Beat a Marine? The case for decision games in Marine Corps recruiting," *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 2020.

best summarize my recommendations with the observation, "We focus too much on screaming on the parade deck and not enough on whispering in the woods."[12]

First, enlisted Marines are of a higher quality than ever before and far surpass that of seventeenth-century conscripts. Traditional practices focused on control and blind obedience are unnecessary among troops who possess high morale and are motivated to do what they must. With today's all-volunteer force – and increasingly selective training focused on quality over quantity – young Marines are more motivated to serve than ever before.[13] Lieutenant Colonel Van Orden noted that troops respond in kind to how their leaders treat them – if treated as irresponsible, they will act irresponsibly; if trusted and given responsibility, the vast majority strive to live up to such trust. Modern leadership experts have further supported Van Orden's observations. Leaders must start treating their Marines with trust and grant them more responsibility.[14]

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[12] The_Cognitive_Raider, "Imagine asking for 13 weeks to turn civilians into warriors, and when you're done they can't even shoot pistols, ground fight, stalk up to an enemy position, or start a fire in the woods. Imagine calling yourself a Marine and you haven't even embraced, much less read, the USMC's warfighting philosophy. We focus too much on screaming on the parade deck and not enough on whispering in the woods," Instagram photo and text, January 29, 2022, https://www.instagram.com/p/CZUfCSQr4h2/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link.

[13] Notably, the education levels of enlisted Marines today are far superior to those of enlisted troops during the era when drill was re-introduced to military training. Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy, *2019 Demographics Profile of the Military Community* (Department of Defense, 2019), https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2019-demographics-report.pdf; Lynn, *Battle*, 123; Kellett, *Combat Motivation*, 136-137.

[14] Van Orden, "Leadership: Discipline and Contentment."
Modern authors who support this view are John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993); Simon Sinek, *Start With Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action* (New York City: Penguin, 2009); and Simon Sinek, *Leaders Eat Last: Why Some Teams Pull Together and Others Don't* (New York City: Penguin, 2014).

Second, technological changes in the twenty-first century have further undermined the underlying principles of imposed disciplines like drill. The Marine Corps should remove drill from all unit activities except at the Recruit Depots and Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C. – "Eighth & I." Marines should no longer include drill in formal-school curriculum, graduations, unit ceremonies, or the Commanding General's Inspection Programs. Even weekly formations do not require drill.[15]

Marines should replace time spent on drill with more practical exercises. Sound training historically resulted in better cooperation, obedience, and battlefield performance than from imposed disciplines like drill.[16] Battle drills, patrolling, land navigation, martial arts, and other skills are practical alternatives.[17] Tactical decision games, decision-forcing cases, and other forms of wargaming are other ways to build the decision-making capability that drill stifles. Additionally, a parade square is insufficient for modern weapons training. Instead, Marines must practice firing, reloading, and remedial actions from different body positions and varied gear. Daily dry-fire drills are

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[15] The Israeli Defense Forces may serve as a useful model for the daily or weekly formation. Conversations with former IDF members indicate that IDF units typically gather in a loose formation, a "school circle," or a "gaggle" to take accountability and pass word. If a leader insists that Marines must be in neat ranks to accurately account for personnel, how does this leader expect to keep accountability of their Marines during dispersed operations at night?
If used with an awareness of its downsides, recruit drill can still prove helpful for the basic socialization of Marine recruits. As for Marine Barracks, Washington, its ceremonial functions meet a societal desire and discarding ceremonial drill may result in undesired public backlash. The cultural appeal of the "ideal" through popular-culture notions of ordered and linear combat is still evident in American society.

[16] Kellett, *Combat Motivation*, 79.

[17] For numerous examples of exercises that can replace drill and the benefits of doing so, see: Gudmundsson, *Stormtroop Tactics*, 87; English, *On Infantry* (1981 ed.), 221; Lind and Thiele, *4th Generation Warfare Handbook*, 40; H.J. Poole, *The Last Hundred Yards* (Emerald Isle: Posterity Press, 1998); and Reuven Gal, *A Portrait of The Israeli Soldier* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986).

the modern equivalent of the manual of arms.[18] Removing drill from daily activities and replacing it with practical exercises will help re-orient Marine culture from one centered on order and control to a culture appropriate for the Marines' modern doctrine.

Third, Marine leaders should shift away from a culture of "blind obedience" and "absolute subordination" to encourage freedom of thought, creativity, and initiative. Marines should obey because they understand, not just because their leaders order them to do so – this requires emphasizing self-discipline over imposed discipline. This will result in Marines who do the right thing because they believe it is right. Additionally, this culture requires leaders to ensure subordinates understand the "why" behind all actions in peacetime. This becomes beneficial during operations when there is no time to explain the "why." Troops in such instances will instantly obey because they know their leader and trust their leader's judgment rather than obeying because of conditioning to do so blindly. Creating this culture also means that subordinates will be mentally prepared to make their own decisions when they become isolated, or the situation changes.

Consequently, this will necessitate a shift away from obsessions with appearances. As this study shows, appearance norms since at least World War I primarily served cultural tendencies and lacked the practical nature of early uniform regulations. Embracing a culture that encourages critical thinking will inevitably mean taking a more practical approach towards appearances, as individuals will be less tolerant of frivolous regulations. Uniforms and uniform regulations need to be combat-oriented.

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[18] For examples of dry-fire drills, see Karl Erickson, "Dryfire Rifle Drills," published by *Tactical Rifleman*, May 8, 2020, YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBZhV-bySFM&ab_channel=TacticalRifleman.

Fancy uniforms that make one *look* like a warrior will not result in the desired morale and *esprit de corps* if the Marines wearing them cannot *fight* like a warrior. Morale and *esprit* are better built from a foundation of confidence in one's own fighting ability and that of the Marines in one's unit.

Modern Marines find themselves in a similar situation to 1941: facing a growing threat in the Pacific and an aggressive European power after decades of operations from which some seem unwilling to learn.[19] As I finish the final revisions of this conclusion, Russia has invaded Ukraine in the first full-scale war in Europe in over seventy years. Regardless, whether the next conflict is a large-scale war "in the snow of far-off Northern lands" or a series of small wars "in sunny tropic scenes," modern Marines must adapt themselves and their discipline to create the highest quality individuals possible.[20]

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[19] On the Marine Corps' unwillingness to learn, see Matt Tweedy, "Reflection on Failure" and the "What Good Losers Do" series from *The Warfighting Society*, https://www.themaneuverist.org/post/reflection-on-failure-by-major-matthew-tweedy-usmc and https://www.themaneuverist.org/post/what-good-losers-do-by-easton.

[20] The second verse of the Marine Corps Hymn states, "Our flag's unfurled to every breeze, From dawn to setting sun; We have fought in ev'ry clime and place, Where we could take a gun; In the snow of far-off Northern lands, And in sunny tropic scenes; You will find us always on the job, The United States Marines."

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