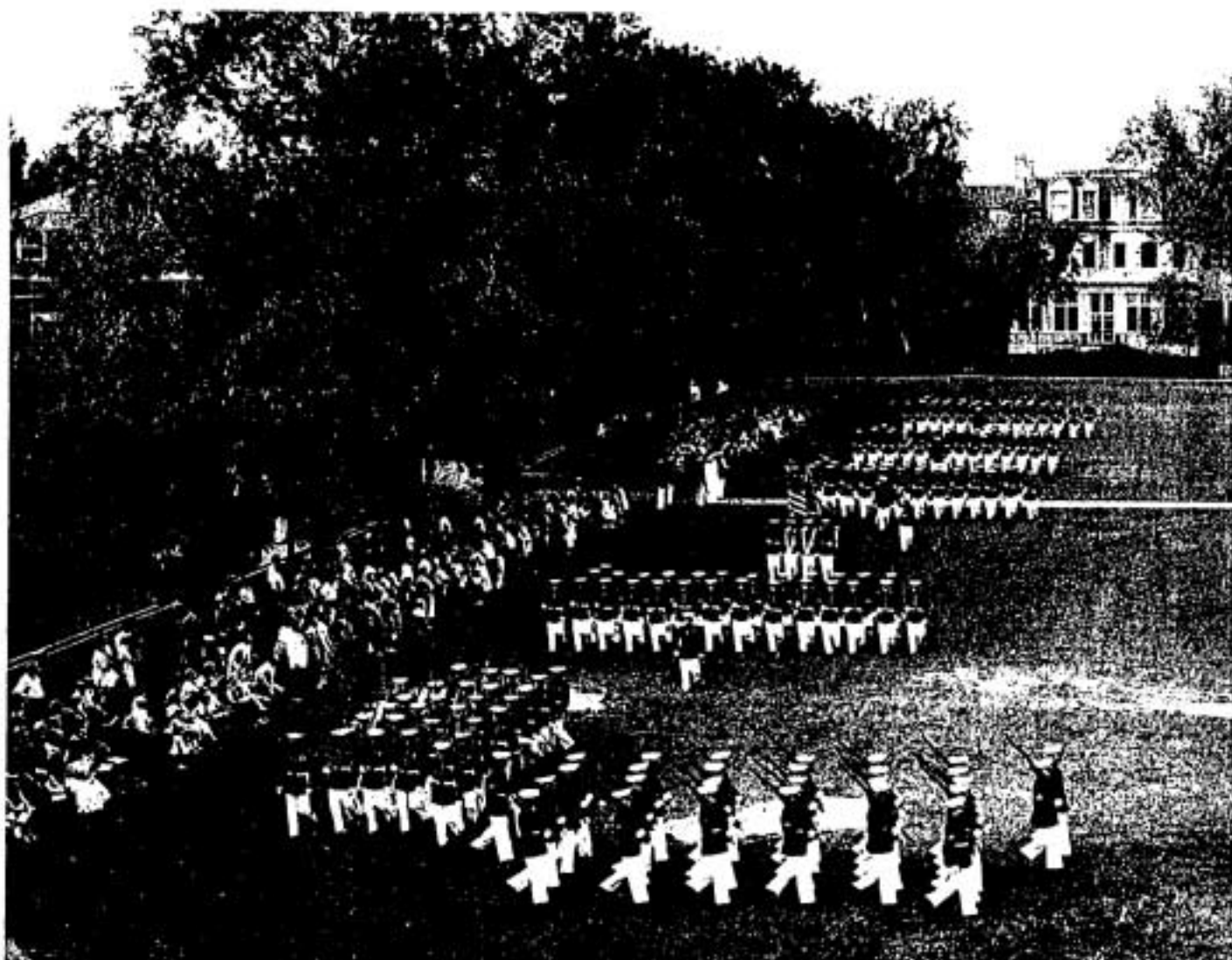


## POST OF THE CORPS



Eighth and Eye Marines passed in review at a Sunset Parade. Staff NCOs assume command positions for the last parade of the season

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**8th**

Sometimes called the showplace of the Corps,  
the Marine Barracks, Washington, D. C., is noted for the military  
smartness of its personnel and a meticulous routine

**N**OWHERE IS the military smartness, bearing and deportment traditionally accredited to the Corps over long years, performed to a higher degree than at the hallowed Marine Barracks at Eighth and Eye Streets Southeast, in Washington, D. C. The ceremonial nature of duty there demands it, and the Marines currently aboard that post have responded with pride and alacrity, partly because they've got an illustrious 154 years of the barracks' history to live up to.

The meticulous routine of today, however, has not been the forte of all the Marines who have been stationed there during that time. Now and again things have been hectic. In fact, the compound itself was begun under unusual circumstances.

Eighth and Eye was established as Marine headquarters in 1801, when the Corps moved from Philadelphia to Washington. The previous year, President John Adams approved a \$20,000 appropriation to provide for the garrison in the new capital. His successor, Thomas Jefferson, a personal friend of the second Commandant, Colonel William Ward Burrows, helped to select the building site. The tract turned out to be part of a land grant by Charles I of England to Cecil Calvert, Baron of Baltimore, in 1632. It cost the government an exorbitant sum for that time—\$6247.18.

The promise of a home in the Federal city was especially welcome news to a small detachment of men who had been sent to Washington for guard duty at the Navy Yard. They had been sit-



Main gate guard, Pfc John Morton (L), and measured post sentry, Pfc Joseph Cioffii, rendered Colonel Robert H. Williams, CO, sharp salutes

ting out the Fall of 1800 in a tent encampment on Prospect Hill overlooking the Potomac, but when Jefferson dedicated the barracks, his complimentary remarks took all the sting out of what had seemed to be neglect in the past.

"This barracks is not a gift to the Corps of Marines," he is reported to have said. "You men have earned it."

They also had to build it.

The original headquarters consisted of a two-story range of brick buildings and sheds at the south end of the two-and-a-half-acre quadrangle. The same area is now occupied by the administrative offices of the U. S. Marine Band

and its auditorium, a tailor shop and the guardhouse. A low, one-story building and the famous Center House occupied one side. Barracks, headquarters office buildings, a stable, carriage shed, storeroom and washroom occupied the other side. Within the enclosure was a swimming pool, long since removed, and the hull of an old ship, placed there to remind the Marines they were seagoing. A stone wall, two feet thick and 10 feet high, followed the perimeter of the compound.

In the closing decade of the 19th Century, the post underwent a series of face-liftings which altered its appearance to approximately what it is today. The original barracks was condemned to make way for larger quarters suited to a rapidly growing organization. Appropriations amounting to some \$300,000 were made within the next few years for construction of a new barracks block for enlisted men, a mess hall, gymnasium, auditorium, officers' quarters, a brick wall to replace the old stone one, and an iron grillwork gate.

The last of the really old buildings to be razed was Center House. If build-

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**& Eye**



The main thoroughfare at Eighth and Eye is sheltered beneath a picturesque arcade



The quadrangle doubles as parade ground and athletic field. Quarters in the background are for post's bachelor officers

### 8TH & EYE (cont.)

ings were articulate, this structure could have described some of the exciting episodes in the history of the Nation and the Corps. Center House had once been occupied by barracks commanders, and in its last days was used as a receiving center for recruits. Early American apostles of democracy, including Jefferson, were frequent visitors to the building where they sought the opinions of much-traveled Marine officers. Many a President, and foreign dignitary, came and went through the big stone archway that led in those days into the compound.

After his capture, Aaron Burr, according to legend, was confined in Center House. Following his memorable duel with Alexander Hamilton, Burr had escaped to the wilds of Texas and there had tried to set up a monarchy. While awaiting trial for treason, he is said to have carved his full name into a hand-hewn beam in the basement. When the structure later was dismantled, the beam was either lost or burned, as were other invaluable relics and old documents of the Corps. An iron vase from Tripoli was among the missing trophies.

Today, the tradition of the Center House is carried on in the building along General's row. Although located on the south end of the row, a sign on the building housing bachelor officers' quarters and dining facilities states, "Center House Mess," and dates the establishment from 1801, the same year the area was first occupied by the Marine Corps.

The Commandant's House, at the north end of the quad, completes the present day picture of the post.

Because of the tradition ensconced within its walls, and the faultlessness in dress and drill of the Marines stationed there, the post often is described as a showplace of the Marine Corps. While it has become a "must" for many sightseers touring Washington, in the Marines scheme-of-things, there is more to it than that.

"Our aim," Colonel Robert H. Williams, commanding officer of the post, said, "is to be a model of military appearance and courtesy for the rest of the Marine Corps."

It's a model worth imitating. The sartorial quality of the Eighth and Eye Marines is a product of special clothing issues, fitted tailoring, on-post cleaning and pressing services and conscientious personal care. Perfection on the parade

ground results from constant practice.

Although the station's strength is divided into three detachments—barracks, and its three ceremonial platoons and drum and bugle corps; Marine Corps Institute, charged with the educational research, operation and maintenance of the correspondence schools, and the Band—all take part in many of the demonstrations requested of the command.

Usually, the Barracks Detachment will call for help from MCI only at Sunset Parade or when they require more men than their three platoons can muster. The unofficial spirit of competition between the two does not prevent the former from praising the correspondence school's staff. MCI, it has been pointed out, deserves a great deal of credit for handling their primary duties with dispatch while looking every bit as sharp as the Barracks Detachment when in ranks.

All three ceremonial platoons of the Barracks Detachment double as military drill platoons, mostly because of the steady influx of requests for their attendance at military or civilian events. Nowadays the platoons take regular turns on a duty roster.

A ceremonial Marine's tour of duty at the Eighth and Eye barracks re-



cently was limited to one year, with an annual turnover of personnel taking place in February. Replacements—screened at Camp Lejeune from hundreds of candidates—must meet physical requirements of five-feet, 10-inches minimum height and unaided vision in ranks (no eyeglasses). Interviewers from the barracks also check the temperament, attitude and aptitude of applicants—traits which help ease the constant on-parade procedure which is a hallmark of the post.

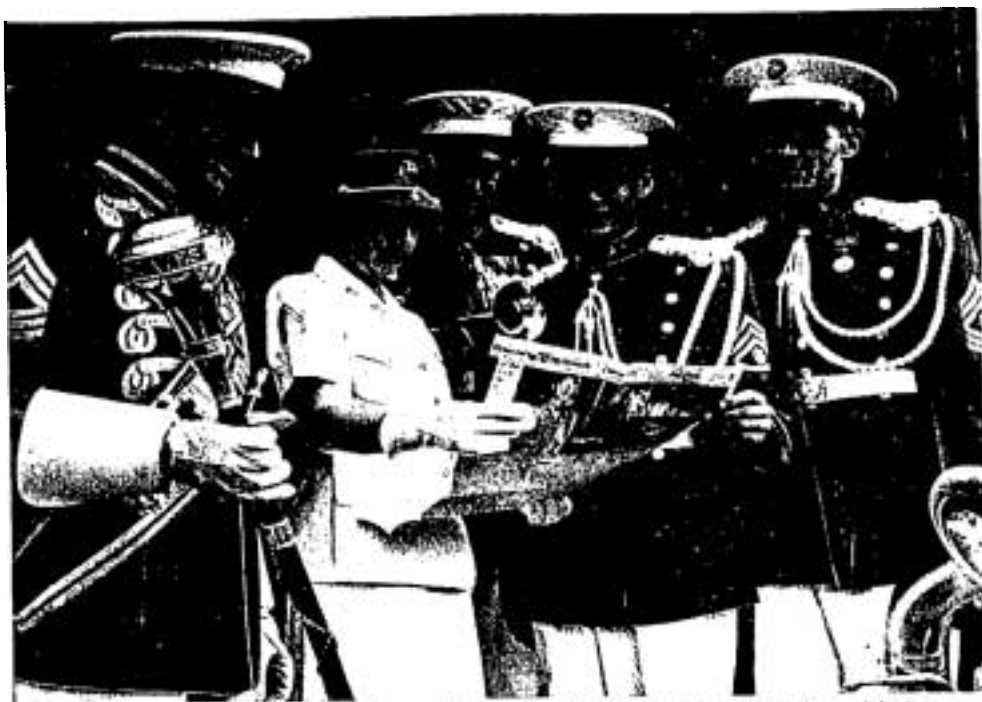
Men reporting for duty are usually awed by the spit and polish but once they learn the barracks' way, the awkward feeling disappears. It takes an average of four months before a man is salty and sure of himself in formation and becomes at home in dress blues. With a steady diet of parades, honor guards, burial details and guard duty, half his time is spent in blues. Newcomers draw two sets, four pairs of white trousers, extra white gear (belts, gloves, etc.) and an extra pair of dress shoes.

They're also issued two rifles—an M-1 and an '03 Intra-platoon competition keeps all stocks shining while inventive minds continually seek new ways to bring out a higher luster on the wood.

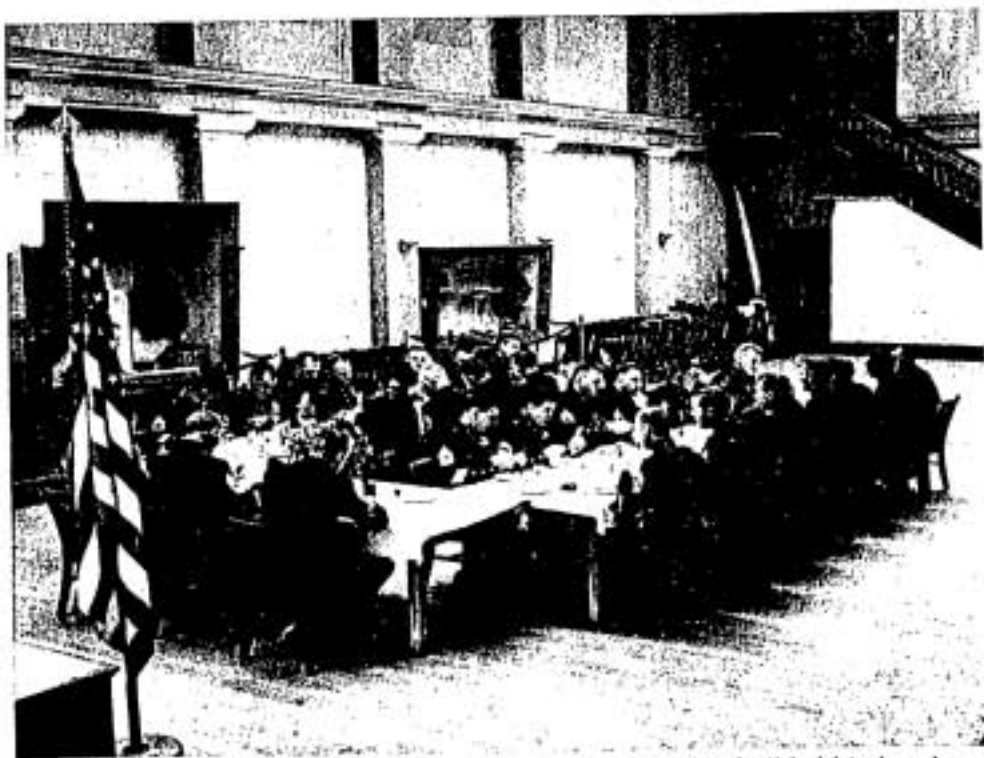
Each ceremonial platoon contains a 24-man military drill platoon, and within that, a 12-man platoon. The smaller unit has room to practice on the Ninth Street sidewalk, but the other has to march to a nearby playground. The grass-covered parade field inside the quad is "sacred" and used only for practice parades—and the real thing, although the four-man color guards sometimes rehearse on it. There are two color guards at Eighth and Eye, and two sets of Marine Corps colors—in case the standards are needed in two places at the same time. They are kept in Col. Williams' office and never removed unless accompanied by the post Sergeant Major, Master Sergeant Harold R. Johnston.

The Corps' age-old custom of providing special detachments has involved the small station in many historical skirmishes. The election riot of 1857 was not the least sensational of these. Notorious "Know-Nothings" imported armed thugs from Baltimore to take over the district polling places and influence voting by intimidation. They provoked such a wild riot that Capital

**TURN PAGE**



Only Woman Marine assigned here is SSgt. Virginia Pickel, publicist for band. Drum Major E. M. DeMar and bandsmen check clippings



Eighth and Eye Staff NCOs get together for "Mess Night," held in band auditorium. Formal social affair gives Staffs chance to get acquainted







SSgt. Paul V. Sieben is string instrument repairman and violin maker. He is also a regular member of the orchestra

## 8TH & EYE (cont.)

authorities asked the President for a party of Marines to act as riot breakers. While Commandant Archibald Henderson negotiated peace with the rebels who were manning a cannon in the street, a platoon of the colonel's Marines rushed the gun, taking the rioters by surprise.

A detachment of 90 Marines from Eighth and Eye aided in quelling the famous John Brown insurrection of 1859. Under the overall command of Army Colonel Robert E. Lee, the Marine detachment, Lieutenant Israel Greene leading, assaulted a barricaded engine house at Harper's Ferry and captured the besieged Brown and his followers.

Eighth and Eye Marines still get their turns of special detachment duty each time the President or Mrs. Eisenhower visit the hideaway at Camp David, Maryland. Fifty-six dungaree-clad Marines, armed with M-1s and ammunition, help the Secret Service guard the country's First Family while it relaxes away from the whirl of Washington. It's a no-liberty detail, although the off-guard sometimes is invited to dip in the President's swimming pool.

Barracks' Marines are asked occasionally to lend color to the Washington social scene and recently have appeared at functions of the Irish, Russian, Chinese and Canadian embassies.

Of late, they've formed also as honor guards at National Airport for the arrival of foreign dignitaries.

Guard duty at Eighth and Eye is rotated among the detachment's ceremonial platoons every third day. Sentries man four normal posts—main gate; a roving patrol around the outside perimeter evenings, Saturdays, Sundays and holidays; a watch at the Ninth Street garage, and another at the MCI and band warehouse at Seventh and "G" Streets. The "measured post" at the main gate during noon hour and in the evening from 1600 to 1700, is awarded to the sharpest Marine in the unit. Armed with an '03 (this weapon is used for all ceremonies), the sentry on that post comes to port arms for persons entering and leaving, and presents arms to officers. When parades and honor guards are scheduled for the barracks, an additional sentry is posted at the gate.

The measured post was reinstated when Captain Robert N. Burhans, Barracks Detachment exec—and guard officer, and Technical Sergeant Robert Bunce, detachment gunnery sergeant, returned from a two-week observation tour with the London Brigade of Guards.

The post is comparable to a small city-within-a-city. Barracks Detachment's special duty platoon carries the post's headquarters section; stewards and drivers for the Commandant and general officers living aboard; exchange

and Special Services personnel, and maintenance and mess hall personnel. In addition to the 30-days mess duty common to most posts, non-rated men at Eighth and Eye also pull police duty a month at a time on a permanent five-man police gang. Housekeeping means polishing a fabulous amount of brightwork.

Chow, as served six times a day by Master Sergeant John Guy, mess sergeant, is above average. The usual courses are supplemented by bread and pastries from the ovens of Master Sergeant Frank Tarbox, post baker, whose Marine Corps Birthday cakes are works of art.

On-post recreation suffered a blow when the 44-man Drum and Bugle Corps, under Drum Major William O. Nickell, set up bunks and lockers on the hardwood floor of the gymnasium. "D&B," post nomenclature for the organization, is a part of the Barracks Detachment, although it often takes to the parade field with the Marine Band. Latest addition to its schedule is playing at Thursday evening colors at the Marine Memorial, across the Potomac in Arlington.

Andrew "Pop" Bennett, tailor shop boss, has seen Marines come and go—often off to war—during his 25 years as a civilian employe aboard the station. General Shepherd, he recalls, was a major when he first started pressing blues. Pop's son is his assistant these days behind the bars of the old brig where the tailor shop now is located. Prices are reasonable.

While a small headquarters section of the Marine Corps Institute handles that detachment's administrative load in the old *Leatherneck* offices at Eighth and Eye, the school itself has moved to the Naval Gun Factory down the street. Its personnel, however, are members of the post and subject to the ground rules. When the MCI troops fall out for drill on Wednesday mornings and Thursday afternoons, they wear dungarees and barracks caps, as prescribed for the rest of the command. Schooling takes place at a District park on the other side of the Anacostia river, across the Eleventh Street bridge.

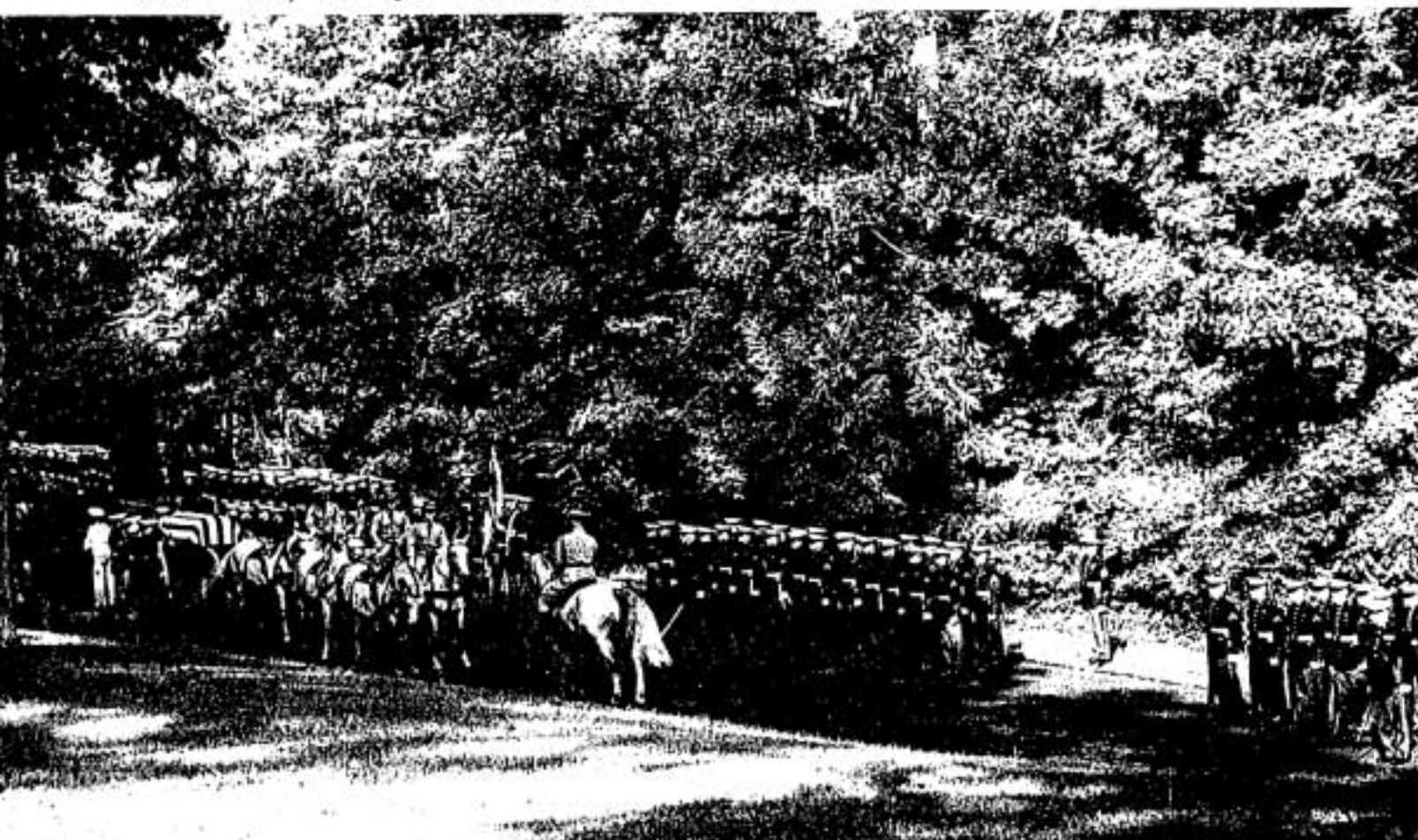
On occasions, the height requirement for Eighth and Eye duty is waived to fill an MCI instructor's billet in a technical field but that's the only exception.

During its existence the Marine Band has become known as "the President's own." It made its debut at the White House before President John Adams on New Year's Eve, 1801. Since then, it has played for every inauguration and every President, and has been called on many times in cases of national bereave- (text continued on page 23)



Eighth and Eye's elite Drum and Bugle Corps adds luster to many Washington social events. Here

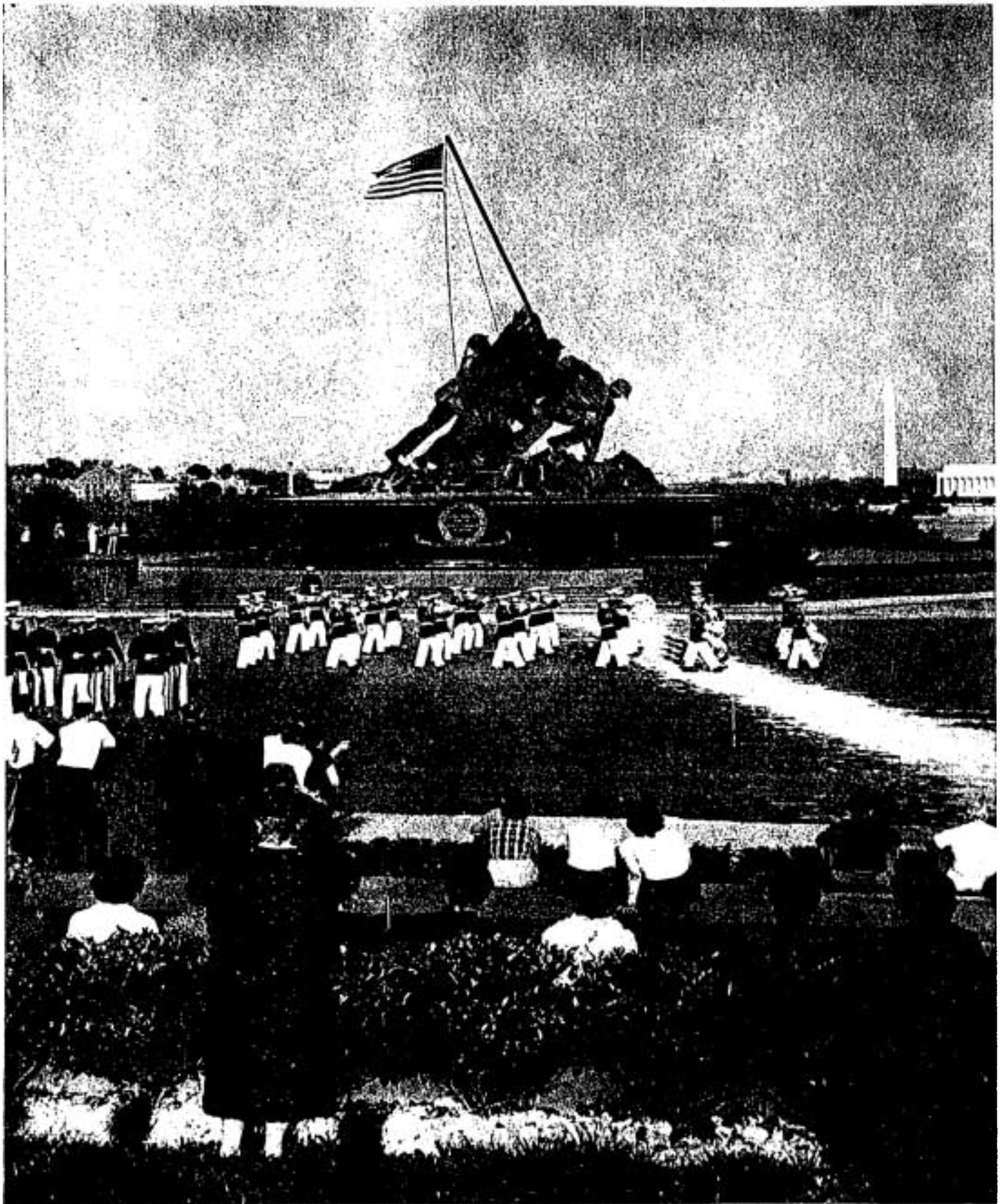
they play before gathering of Telephone Pioneers of America at swank Sheraton-Park Hotel ballroom



Providing troops for funeral details at Arlington National Cemetery is traditional duty for Eighth

and Eye men. Marine Corps Institute and Barracks Detachment each furnish troops for this assignment

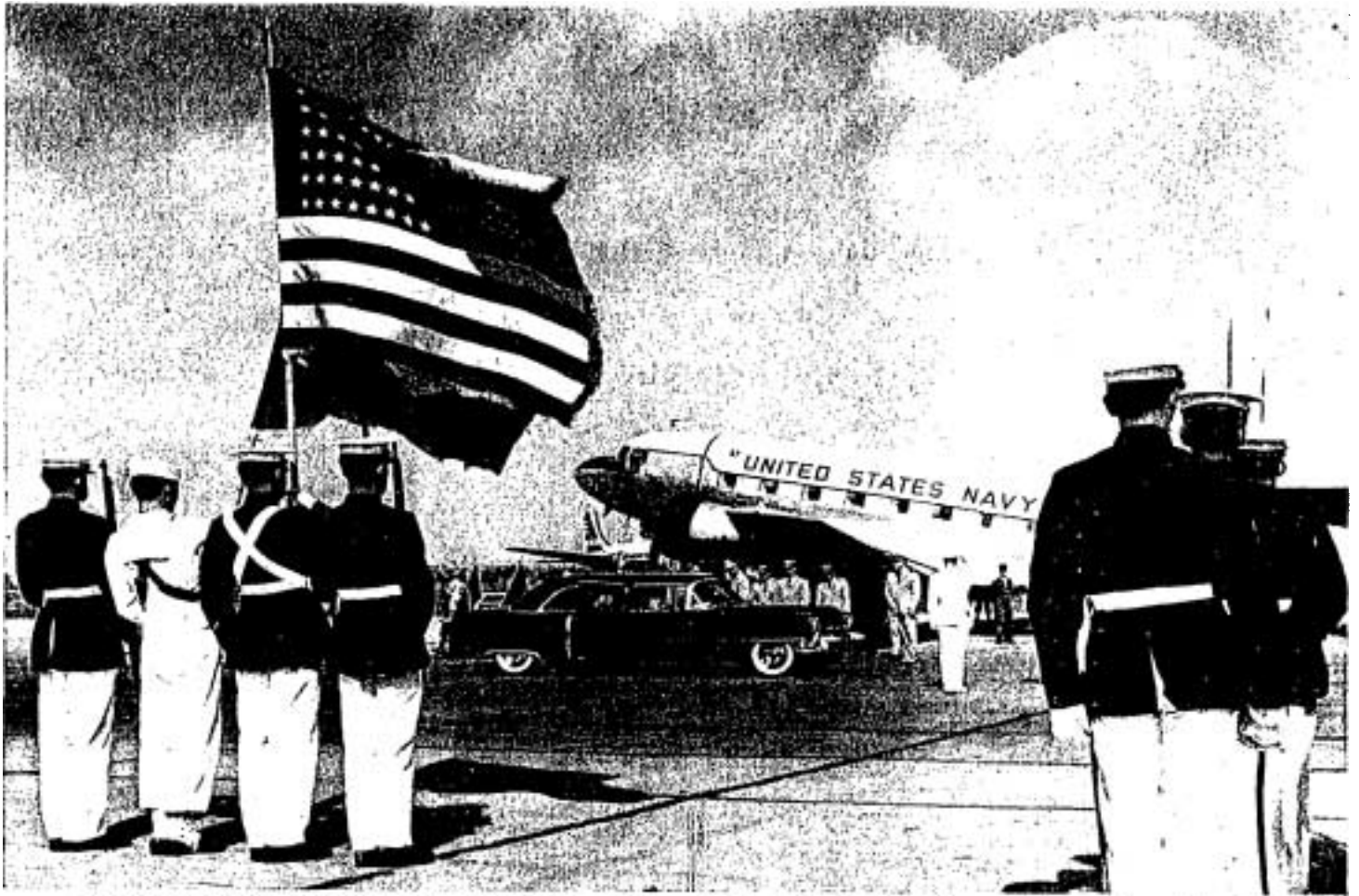
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Soon after Marine Memorial Statue was unveiled, Marines began Thursday evening colors ceremony.

Here Drum and Bugle Corps swings past statue. The Lincoln and Washington monuments are nearby





Combined Navy-Marine Corps color guard, and Eighth and Eye troops form honor ceremony for

visiting dignitaries. Scene: National Airport during recent arrival of the Dominican Republic's CNO

## 8TH & EYE (cont.)

ment. It played funeral marches for Zachary Taylor and Abraham Lincoln, and accompanied the body of James A. Garfield to Cleveland. At the funeral of William McKinley, it played hymns that had been favorites of the deceased President. It was again assigned the place of honor among all armed services musical organizations, to lead the enormous procession at the funeral of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Band ranks and rates of pay differ from any found in the Regular service and are created directly by Congressional authority. The leader—Albert Schoepper—holds a rank equivalent to a captain. By Marine Corps standards, Drum Major Edmond M. DeMar is a master sergeant while principal musicians are equal in grade to technical sergeants. Other ranks include second class musicians, sergeants and third class musicians.

The present leader received the baton

upon the retirement of Lieutenant Colonel William F. Santelmann, whose father had held the position when Santelmann began studying music at six years of age.

The band answers all requests for services that are deemed military, official or patriotic and approved by the Commandant. Although the group tours the country annually, at no time can it leave the Capital without express permission from the White House.

When the band serenades the Commandant and his lady on New Year's Day, it's carrying out an old Corps custom—which is only natural. Preserving the traditions and customs of the Marine Corps could be described as part of the post's reason for existence. That, and demonstrating the color and efficiency of a great fighting organization, are tasks the Marines at Eighth and Eye do proudly, and well.

END

