

**Col Roy Batterton USMC Ret.  
The “Evening Parade”  
Marine Barracks, Washington D.C.**

**Note: Col. Batterton was awarded two Silver Stars,  
two Bronze Stars, and two Purple Hearts  
during WWII and Korea**

My tour with General Chapman was from July 1, 1956 to August 1, 1957. I had met General Chapman at Headquarters Marine Corp and Quantico Marine Corps School after the war, but had never served with him, so I did not know him from a personal standpoint.

His reputation had always been perfection, a gentleman and a bright mind. He had everything going for him. I recall he was a stickler for regulation. The only way to wear your hat was squared, strait ahead, the cap brim set so that you barley saw your eyes. He felt that this was the correct way to wear your cap. He was a good teacher, when you learned from him you felt the cap not only looked better, but felt better and that he made all Marines look like **Marines**.

His inspections were articulate and very detailed of troops and living quarters. He expected everything to be exactly right; of course this was quite a challenge. I recall when he came to the barracks his first morning, he was there precisely at reveille, walking through the barracks. It was a great surprise to the troops, no one had ever done this before and I had never heard of it being done anywhere else.

This put everyone on notice, that he knew what was going on, and if not, he would find out.

Later on he decided that the barracks needed to be organized so that all the Marines knew their location in the barracks and what their responsibilities were. He had signs placed on the ceiling posting which squads were located in each section and which platoons were in each section, all very detailed. I felt it was unusual to say the least, but he believed in that sort of organization. Everyone was responsible for their particular job. He was fair but demanding, you know you had to produce or else! He was a true gentleman, so no one could fault him for his organization.

### **The Marine Evening Parade**

I believe the earliest tattoo was developed by the Scottish regiments who would put on the parade in Edinburgh. This was an event that everyone wanted to see and tickets were difficult to obtain. It was used for public relations and open to the public.

The British government used the Military Tattoo parade as essentially advertising for Bermuda and of course public relations. The parade took place at night on what had

been a playing field. There were some structures around and these were made use of to give the feel of ramparts, as well as to stage the finale, with a lone piper played after all units had left the field, as the last note ran through the air, all the lights were turned off. After a brief period the lights were brought back up, the piper no longer at the post. Needless to say it was a moving event, which I am sure, touched the hearts of those who watched.

We were requested to send a company (approximately two platoons) along with two or three officers and, myself as officer in charge to take part in the event. This was brought

about by a meeting of Col. Bob Heinal and the Commandant, General Randolph McCall Pate. Col. Heinal had been meeting with the British liaison officer (I do not remember his name but have a photo of Tattoo parade director, Bob Heinal and liaison officer) and had had preliminary discussions about the US Marines involvement in the tattoo.

The original concept of the Evening Parade was developed after then-Col. Chapman reviewed the British Tattoo at Hamilton, Bermuda. He asked me what I thought about it for the parade at 8<sup>th</sup> and I. Of course, I told him I thought it would be a great idea, but would be difficult to initiate. The parade in Bermuda was held under spectacular lights. The staging was a real show of the various military units of the British Empire.

Upon our return I believe the first day of work for us was May 29<sup>th</sup>. The first under lights barracks parade was July 5, 1957 (no positive date on record), not a great deal of time to prepare. It wasn't very good, but was a first with lighting borrowed from the Navy yard and other sources as well as what we had on hand. These arrangements were crude, to say the least. It was a big change, going from what had been a comfortable traditional sunset parade to complicated evening parade under lights. It was quite a challenge, and took a lot of practice and concern of everyone in the barracks.

There was in my opinion a bit of pressure on Col. Chapman, as it had to succeed or he may not have seen promotion! I never heard whether Gen. McPate generally enjoyed the new format, but it has continued on with improvements to what it is today.

My tour ended in August of 1957 when I was ordered to Quantico.

### **The tradition of the Mug**

One tradition which I started was when any officer was being detached after serving at 8<sup>th</sup> and I, was to have two pewter beer mugs engraved with his name and date of his tour. One was to hang at the bar from the time he began his tour, and the other given to him at the time he left to have for his personal possession to have as a remembrance of his tour. I still have mine but couldn't locate mine at the bar. I wondered whether this tradition has changed or not?

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Col., U.S.M.C. (Ret.)