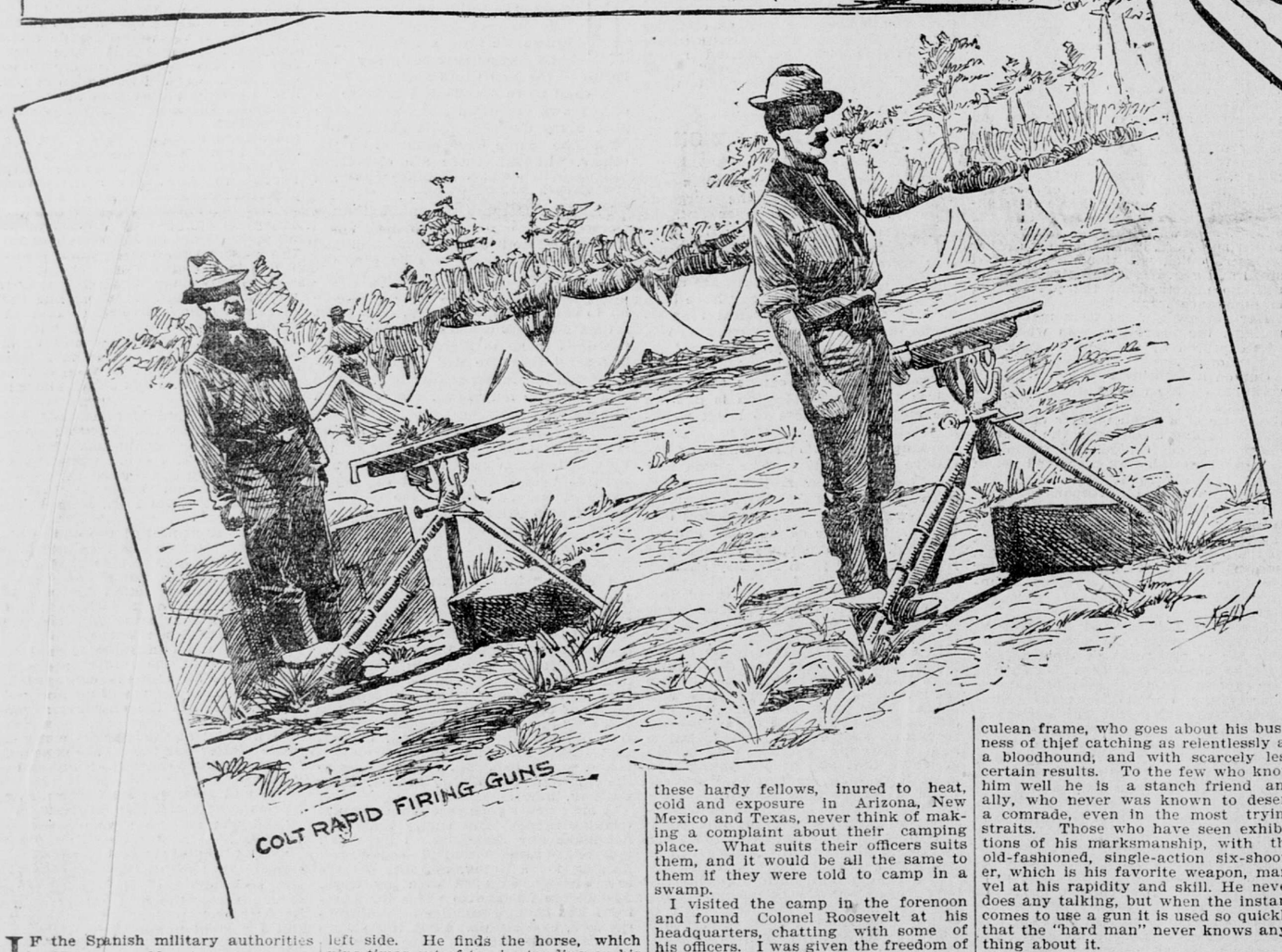
With Roosevelt's rough rider and Astor's Pet Artillery.

THE COWBOYS COFFEE MILL.

LEADING A CHARGE OF HIS COWBOY CAVALRY



COLT RAPID FIRING GUNS

IF the Spanish military authorities in Havana could get a momentary glimpse of a regiment of soldiers encamped in the sand at West Tampa they would see one of the numerous sights calculated to cause them uneasiness. Colonel Roosevelt's rough riders are there, to the number of a thousand, and they certainly deserve the name that has been given them.

They are not "roughs" by any manner of means, but they are rough, nevertheless, and will play rough when they get a chance at the enemy. They don't know a great deal about the manual of arms, as practiced by the American army, and they can't load a rifle and fire it with the trained regulation of a veteran soldier. But they can handle a Winchester with a swiftness and deadly precision that is astonishing, and what they can't accomplish with that weapon their heavy six-shooters will take care of.

The rough riders are not men selected and graded as to size, weight, soundness of teeth and waist measurements. Some of them weigh close to 250 pounds; others won't tip the beam at over a hundred. But the little fellows grizzled by years of exposure on the Western frontier, are as tough as pine knots and can shoot as fast and as straight as a man who weighs three times as much.

"Teddy's" rough riders can't ride a horse at all—that is, according to military regulations. They do not grasp the reins at a point one-third from bit to end; they do not all sit erect, with line of back ranging with the line of the horse's spine; they don't all sit with chin erect and eyes front, knees straightened out and toes only touching the stirrup. In fact, every man apparently has his own way of riding and when he starts for a horse the half-wild beast knows something is coming.

It doesn't make the slightest difference to one of these men whether he mounts from the right side or from the left side. He finds the horse, which nine times out of ten is standing on his hind legs in the air, and in a jiffy there is a man in the saddle.

The horse rears and plunges, tries to throw his rider by every means known to bronchos, but the rider, turning half-way around in his saddle, yells to "Bill" or "Snuffy" or "Shorty" to do something that he has forgotten, and then darts off with the speed of the wind. Once the horse is started he has to go. The rider is the master, and his unmilitary seat, his supple, swaying body, meeting every motion of the horse, is a picture of grace and skill such as can be seen nowhere except in the far West, or with this outfit of men who come from there.

And to top it all off, these men cannot fight at all, according to the rules laid down in the tactics for cavalrymen. But they can drop the reins of their horses, guide them with their knees, whip out a six-shooter with each hand and get in about three shots to a mounted cavalryman's one, with the distinction that every shot goes very close to where it is intended to go. They are a picturesque, devil-may-care lot of hardy men, whose hearts are in the right places and whose hospitality is as broad as the limits of the earth. Their language is sometimes more picturesque than polite, to be sure, but they are used to emphasizing their remarks when obedience is not immediately forthcoming. They have a wholesome disregard for rules and regulations and books on field instruction. They haven't much use for junior lieutenants of the army, as a rule, and particularly for those of State regiments. But they uphold their officers, who are to a large extent regular army officers, in everything they say or do. If any one wants to see an aurora borealis in midsummer or a shower of shooting stars in midday, let him go into the camp of the rough riders and criticize any of its officers, before the men.

The camp of the rough riders lies directly west of the town of Tampa, is an open sand flat where the sun beats down all day with the heat of a furnace. Any regiment of volunteers camped there without shade and without tents would die off like sheep. But these hardy fellows, inured to heat, cold and exposure in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, never think of making a complaint about their camping place. What suits their officers suits them, and it would be all the same to them if they were told to camp in a swamp.

I visited the camp in the forenoon and found Colonel Roosevelt at his headquarters, chatting with some of his officers. I was given the freedom of the camp and told to make all the photographs I wanted.

"Here is a strange thing," the colonel said. "I have here among a lot of recruits Bob Wrenn, the champion tennis player of America, who wants to join this outfit. He's a strapping good fellow, with plenty of nerve, and I've sworn him in. Isn't he an odd character to have with a cowboy outfit, well sprinkled with ex-United States marshals, sheriffs of formerly 'hard towns,' and such types of Western life as I have in this regiment?"

These rough riders all adhere to the .45 caliber Colt pistol, which has been in use in the West since pioneer days, and which has not yet been equaled. They will not use the Government 38-caliber revolver, claiming that it is too light and jumps too much for accurate shooting. That their judgment is sound is evidenced by the fact that since the 45 was replaced in the army by the 38 the average of accuracy in pistol shooting has dropped almost 50 per cent.

Through the influence of their commander the regiment has been equipped with two Colt rapid fire guns, using the small 27 caliber steel jacketed bullet, and capable of firing accurately 600 shots per minute, at ranges from 200 yards to two miles.

The regiment is not well supplied with tentage, having only the little "dog tents" which are carried by the men on the march. They don't seem to care anything about tents, however, as almost every man has lived out of doors all his life, and has been accustomed to sleeping under a tree, with no roof but the starry sky.

As types of the make-up of the rough riders, three men who have been selected as scouts may be taken as a fair average of the men. One of these is B. F. Daniels, and his last address was Cripple Creek, Colorado. He is a Marshal of that famous type that has rid the West of its hard men. He has the reputation of having always brought in his man, when he went after him, although not infrequently the man was sent in, in a wagon, feet first. Ben Daniels has a record. To those who do not know him well he is a cold, passionless, secretive man of Herculean frame, who goes about his business of thief catching as relentlessly as a bloodhound, and with scarcely less certain results. To the few who know him well he is a stanch friend and ally, who never was known to desert a comrade, even in the most trying straits. Those who have seen exhibitions of his marksmanship, with the old-fashioned, single-action six-shooter, which is his favorite weapon, marvel at his rapidity and skill. He never does any talking, but when the instant comes to use a gun it is used so quickly that the "hard man" never knows anything about it.

Daniels has had a long and varied experience in the West. He was Marshal of Dodge City, Kansas, years ago, when that town was considered the hardest town in the country. He is and has been for years a close friend and companion of Bat Masterson, the famous Sheriff, now in Denver. He has been tried for years as a scout against Indians on the frontier and against the cattle thieves and rustlers who almost caused a war in the early nineties.

There are seventeen notches on the handle of Daniels' six-shooter, and every notch could tell a thrilling story if it would. In person Ben Daniels is a giant. He stands nearly six feet one inch and weighs 240 pounds. There isn't an ounce of fat about him.

Colonel Roosevelt said, in speaking of his three scouts, that too much could not be said of Daniels as a man and a fighter in a just cause. Armstrong, he says, is another type, and is also another of his scouts. He is highly esteemed by his commander. Bell, the third man selected as scout for the outfit, shares equally in the confidence of Colonel Roosevelt and is equally valuable. All three men are distinct types of the West, and each is invaluable in his particular line of work.

J. T. Armstrong is from Refugio County, Texas. He has long been a Deputy Sheriff in that county and has had a list of experiences similar to those of Daniels. The organized bands of thieves who a few years ago terrorized that section of the State have good reason to remember this nervy man, who was largely instrumental in breaking them up and sending many of them to their last accounting.

Sherman M. Bell, who is seen at the right in the picture, hails last from Cripple Creek. He is equally important as a scout with the outfit of which he is a member, and his past record is almost equally thrilling. He is a man of quiet demeanor, but crafty, keen and untiring in the discharge of his duty, either as an officer in the West or as a scout.

A book of goodly proportions might be compiled in this camp, for it teems with Western celebrities. I have selected these three simply as types of the men. Reminiscences of every Western Indian campaign, cattle war or other disturbance that has occurred within the last twenty years can be found here, for of such men as have passed through these experiences is the regiment of rough riders made up. There isn't any question as to whether they will fight. There is one order, however, they will be likely to ignore and that is an order to retreat. They are not made of the sort of stuff that goes into a fight with any such end in view. I cannot conceive of any human force that could withstand the onslaught of this thousand men once they are turned loose. All the tricks of Indian fighting, coupled with the great expertness they possess in the use of weapons, will render them an uncontrollable force, and the first body of Spaniards they run against will have reason to believe that inferno has been turned upon them, if any of them get away to tell the tale. By the time this reaches the eye of the reader the rough riders will be in Cuba, if present plans are carried out. I can ask no better assignment than to be permitted to report their first meeting with the Dons, who fire from the shoulder, shoot high, and form in solid phalanx.

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New York special to the Sunday Call: It is now definitely settled that John Jacob Astor's battery will go to the Philippines. Final orders to this effect were sent to Captain March last night. The battery will start immediately. It is expected it will embark from San Francisco with the rest of General Merritt's troops, comprising the third shipment, about June 23.

The horses and mules purchased by Colonel Astor will not be sent to San Francisco. General Merritt will take only a few horses with him as an experiment. He believes the native horses to be more serviceable and less expensive. The animals purchased by Colonel Astor will be bought by the Government and sent to Cuba.

Special Correspondence of The Call.

NEW YORK, June 15, 1898.—The Astor Mountain Battery, so-called because of the munificence of John Jacob Astor, the well-known millionaire, is about to leave its temporary quarters for San Francisco, en route to the Philippines.

Mr. Astor conceived the scheme to equip and sustain a company entirely at his own expense for emergency work in our present war. This desire he made known to President McKinley, and upon its acceptance Mr. Astor formed an entirely independent organization which should go at once to the front, preferably to the Philippines—an artillery company, in truth, which should be of mountain and emergency equipment in conformity to the regulations of the regular army, but individual in name and distinctive in object and support. The mountain battery is indeed a modern light artillery. It is the first appearance of such a battery in this war, as well as in the war service of this Government.

The enrollment calls for ninety-eight men. A rigid examination is to be pased similar to that required of the regular army volunteer for the East.

The company is, of course, volunteer. The men come from all walks of life and for the most part from in and about New York, although some hail from Montreal, and one or two from Detroit. A fine, healthy, intelligent set of young fellows they are, too. They average between 25 and 30 years of age.

Among the vocations and professions represented are eight lawyers, several doctors; the late superintendent of the Presbyterian Hospital, New York City; a United States marshal from Texas, a barber from the West, and men from the regular army and the artillery, and over half a dozen boys whose fathers rank high on the list of United States millionaires.

As soon as the organization had shaken hands all around a vote of thanks was sent to Mr. Astor. In an appropriate resolution they told him of their appreciation of the chance his munificence had given them; they said they hoped to be an honor to the country and to the name of their benefactor, which they proudly bore, and that they should always "remember the Maine."

Of late days the men have found time to form a glee club, dignified by the name of Astor Battery Glee Club.

Its orchestration include three violins, four banjos, three guitars and two mandolins, which the members are expecting to take with them to camp.

The battery has a mascot, of course, a rescued Irish collie. He is the pet of the battery and answers to a list of names worthy of royal imperial blood. His collar bears the following inscription:

"ASTOR BATTERY, U. S. A.
We Remember the Maine."

Thanks to the voluntary contributions of his mates, he is to go to the front with full uniform, excepting only the trousers and pedal paraphernalia.

Mr. Astor has been most generous in giving orders for the personal equipment of the men. Each man receives two uniforms, one the blue cloth of light weight of the regular artillery, a brown campaign hat, brown canvas leggins and gauntlets. The other uniform is of brown canvas stuff, known as kaki cloth, trimmed in scarlet, pockets and shoulder straps included. With this canvas suit is worn a cork helmet—white—such as Stanley wore during his African sojourn. Similar helmets are worn by the British service in the far East. These helmets are water proof, with top and side ventilation. A protection hood which falls over the shoulders is made to adjust to each. The entire headgear weighs only seven ounces. The outfit further includes three suits of underclothing, three blue woolen shirts, six pairs of socks, three pairs of canvas leggins, two pairs of tramping shoes, six handkerchiefs and a pair of buckskin gauntlet gloves.

The men enter for three years' service and receive $15 60 a month. A rumor has it that the day the battery moves each man will receive $100 in gold.

The field equipment includes twenty horses and 100 mules and six Hotchkiss rapid firing guns. Each man carries a self-cocking Colt revolver of the latest pattern with a shooting bullet of 40 caliber and five chambers; and a saber with a long curved blade, the regulation artillery saber.

The six Hotchkiss guns are known as three-inch mountain guns, throwing a twelve-pound shell. These guns are a very powerful little weapon, especially designed for mountain service.

The Hotchkiss is a French gun; the factory is in Paris. It is thought by experts to be superior to the Krupp make, though similar in construction. The breech mechanism is strong and simple and is operated by the turn of a lever, sliding the breech block to the right. Each gun is forty inches long and alone weighs 204 pounds, with carriage but little over 800 pounds. When ready for action the gun stands thirty inches from the ground. It is in two pieces—gun and carriage. Four men are required to handle each of the two parts and they manage each piece with side handle bars and loops of rope forming a sling, a contrivance made for the purpose. The carriage consists of a cradle supported by a tripod. Into this cradle the gun is set. The cradle is fitted with spring clamps. In mounting a gun all that is required is to set up the tripod, drop the gun into the cradle and the clamps hold it in position by automatic action. Two minutes is required to unsling, mount and load, and two minutes to return the gun to the mule's back. When the battery is moving on level ground the guns are placed on their carriages and drawn by mules hitched tandem, but over mountain trails the guns are taken apart. The gun proper is carried in a sling between two mules pack-saddled, while its complement of wheels, ammunition boxes, etc., is distributed among the beasts of burden.

The officers in charge of the Astor Battery are: First lieutenant, Peyton C. March, late of the Fifth Artillery, in command. Lieutenant March is a warm personal friend of Mr. Astor's and it was at his solicitation Lieutenant March was put in command. Second Lieutenant Koehler and Second Lieutenant Williams, late of the Sixth Artillery, junior officers. Among the non-commissioned officers are: Sergeant Crimmins, late of the Fifth Artillery, U. S. A.; Sergeant Burton Holmes, who has seen active service in the British army in India and Africa; Sergeant Young, a member of the famous Young family of Salt Lake City, and identified with the Mormon settlement of Utah. Sergeant Stillman, of late a commander of a battalion stationed at Detroit, Mich. All commissioned and non-commissioned officers are mounted.

Among the supplies which arrived last week were 120 red flannel blankets of fine quality for the horses; also long brush hooks and axes for clearing the way when the battery operates in a wooded country.

Lieutenant March has reported to Washington that, except for some unforeseen delay in the arrival of supplies, his battery will be ready to move Wednesday, June 8. The shell boxes, immediately upon arrival, were sent to the Government magazine at Fort Wadsworth for loading with ammunition, and they will be shipped probably directly to the Presidio at San Francisco.

Mr. Astor has made arrangements for a special train to convey the troops. It is to be made up of sleepers and baggage cars. Each man has been given a brierwood pipe and a pouch of tobacco. Lieutenant March has orders from Mr. Astor to keep the boys well supplied with tobacco until they sail from the Golden Gate.

The men are most impatient to be off and hail with delight each new delivery of equipment. They are being housed in one of Mr. Astor's buildings on Broadway, just above Spring street, and though the lower windows are whitewashed, hiding from public gaze the rows of neatly made cots and mess tables, in the upper story the men sit watching Broadway and its traffic. An American flag has been pasted upon one of the large windows. The groups of civilian-clad young fellows have created general comment and the starting day promises to be an event in New York life heralded with enthusiastic crowds wishing them godspeed.

According to the best authorities less than one thousand-millionth part of the sun's rays reaches the earth. It is fortunate that this is so, as any considerable concentration of the rays upon our planet would speedily destroy it. According to the same account, if all of the ice at the north pole were so placed that the heat of the sun could be focused on it, it would dissolve at the rate of 300,000,000 miles of solid ice per second. The heat is estimated to generate energy at the rate of 10,000 horse-power to every square foot of space. The beginning of the radiation of heat from the sun must date back something like 100,000,000 years. Like everything else it had its start and must have its finish. It may continue for 15,000,000 or 20,000,000 years longer, but there is a limit and it must be reached. One cannot but wonder at the condition of the universe at that time and what will come after.—New York Ledger.