

The Life Story of GENERAL JOHN J. PERSHING

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America's Greatest Soldier

BY H. F. Wheeler

CHAPTER XVI.
Visit Lincoln with me and talk with the man who knew Jack Pershing when he was professor at the university. A first call with me upon Henry H. Wilson, president of the State Bar association of Nebraska, the only member of the university's law school faculty of 1891. Mr. Wilson is 64 years old, an unusually well preserved man, and he recalls the days from 1891 to 1895 as if he had but just lived them.

"I remember Jack Pershing as if it were yesterday that he was with the university," the lawyer said to me when I talked with him in his office at Lincoln. "He was one of the most able men it has ever been my fortune to meet."

"There was much about him to impress me. Jack was young and Lincoln was the capital of our state then, even

in military science and tactics—they loved and idolized him. He was their hero. And what a soldier Jack was! I can see him now—and Mr. Wilson closed his eyes—"drilling the students on the campus. Let me tell you those students who made up the cadet companies of the university were drilled—never better before Jack's time, never better since. He was a strict disciplinarian; at the same time he was fair and square."

But to leave Mr. Wilson for a moment and talk with one of those students, grown to manhood now—Col. William Hayward, who commands the 15th New York Infantry, National Guard, a colored outfit, Colonel Hayward was a cadet at the University of Nebraska under Jack Pershing.

"The university," said Colonel Hayward, "under the terms of its charter,

practising instead of drilling. **STOPPING THE BAND**
Pershing was a glutton for work. He was a severe disciplinarian. But he was always just.

"I recall a humorous incident. There was a band indirectly under Pershing's command, but with civilian instructor named Easlerday. This unhappy leader had to take talent as it came to him. The band could play a few pieces—loudly and enthusiastically the plain 'umpahs,' but when it came to difficult passages of music most of the bandmen took their pieces out of their mouths to blow them out, or found some excuse for not playing.

"One day we had a grand review on the campus at which the governor and other dignitaries were present. The battalion passed in review at quick time. The band had counter-marched

followed such a rare friendship as come to men only once in a lifetime—enduring, immortal.

"THREE MUSKETEERS" REVIVED
Like Dumas' heroes of romance, "The Three Musketeers," these three young men formed an alliance—"one for all and all for one."

Indeed, Lincoln soon knew them as "The Three Musketeers." Later, when Burkett did go to the United States senate, when Magoon became a power in the war department and Pershing won a captaincy, they were known nationally as "The Three Musketeers." Some there are who so refer to them today.

The senator told me all about it. First of all, he repeated everything that Mr. Wilson had said to me, much that Colonel Hayward had said, then he launched forth into the story of "The Three Musketeers." An enthusiastic man, of charming, forceful personality, is the senator. His story was of compelling interest.

"Yes," he said to me, "Jack and Charlie and I were just naturally drawn together. The first time we met we were friends. And the friendship grew apace—it became affection, then love. We were together most of the time. We would be together in Charlie's office or at Jack's home. He was

living with his sister, Mrs. Butler. His father and mother and the rest of the family had moved—else they did soon after—to Chicago, where Mr. Pershing was in the clothing business.

"We would sit and talk and tell each other our ambitions."

The senator paused a moment, walked over to a picture hanging in his office. It was a picture of the law school class of 1891. His picture showed among the others of the class and faculty; so did Pershing's. Suddenly he turned to me.

"And you know," he declared suddenly, "We all attained our goal. Jack is a general. I became a United States senator. Charlie became a power in the war department and later was governor of Cuba."

(To be continued tomorrow.)

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A picture of the Pershing family taken shortly after General Pershing was graduated from West Point. Left to right are: Upper row—General Pershing (a second lieutenant at the time), Ann May Pershing, Grace Pershing (later Mrs. Richard B. Paddock, now dead), Ward Pershing (later a captain in the army, now dead) and James F. Pershing, the general's father; Lower row—Mary Elizabeth Pershing (now Mrs. D. M. Butler) and Ann Thompson Pershing, the general's mother.

as it is now. And then, as now, it was the center of the state's social activities, especially during the legislative sessions. Jack was a young man—a young officer fresh from the Indian wars—and he could easily have been a social lion. But he did not care for that role. No.

"Instead of whiling away his leisure time, the time when he was not engaged in his professional duty, which was much, Jack studied. Yes, the year he came here the university opened its law school and Jack was one of the first to register as a student. I was a professor in the school. I recall him as a keen, bright student, quick to grasp legal propositions. He stood high in the class and was graduated with it in 1892 with honors, securing the degree of doctor of laws. Later he was admitted to the Nebraska bar.

"As for the students he instructed

and played for us and all had gone well. The second time around was to be in double time. Pershing had given the band careful instructions. The band leader had assured Pershing that double time music would be properly executed.

"When the band struck up the double time—ye gods! The battalion could drill very well in double time without music. But with that music! No thousand legged worm could have kept step with it. Pershing stood it for a few minutes, then realized the hopelessness of the situation.

"Stop that band—that awful band!" he yelled.

"The band stopped. None of us were present at the interview later between Pershing and the band leader. But no such exhibition ever occurred again.

"When Pershing left us the cadets who had served under him wished to have some sort of a badge by which to remember him. Several were in favor of a gold medal. Then one boy had a real brain throb, with the result that a committee headed by John W. Dixon, now a law partner of Judge Morgan J. O'Brien, called on Pershing at his headquarters and asked him for a pair of his breeches.

"What in the world do you want with a pair of my breeches?" Pershing inquired with amazement.

"He was informed that the boys wanted to cut them up so that the blue of the breeches and the yellow of the stripes might be made into service ribbons. Pershing was plainly affected.

"I will give you the best pair I own," he said.

"And he did. We had our service ribbon."

Now back to Mr. Wilson. Mr. Wilson is a partner today of former United States Senator Elmer J. Burkett of Nebraska.

"The senator," Mr. Wilson said to me, "was in the law school—in that same first class—with Jack. You must talk with him."

And suiting his action to his words Mr. Wilson led me into the senator's office. A worth-while story, indeed, the senator had to tell—worth while and of compelling interest. Gen. John Joseph Pershing has two "best friends." One of them is the senator and the other is Charles E. Magoon, one-time governor of Cuba, formerly of Lincoln and now of Washington.

These three men met when Jack Pershing was commandant of cadets at the University of Nebraska.

Pershing was a second lieutenant with ambitions to be a general.

Burkett was a student in the law school with Pershing and had political ambitions—ambitions to go to the United States senate.

Magoon was a struggling young lawyer imbued also with political ambitions.

The three young men met and there

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