

Occasionally, of course, discipline may be relaxed as a reward for any man or unit which has performed its duty in an outstanding manner. Thus, if prizes are won in competition or if a man undergoing punishment has done something worthwhile, you may end the punishment or let the whole unit on pass.

The health of the men will depend somewhat upon you, as well as upon the medical corps. The army can, by strictness, enforce sanitary regulations and these must be enforced. There must be no leniency where the health of the unit is at stake. There will always be some men whose morals are such that they will run the risk of catching social diseases when on pass. When men are given passes, they should be warned that they must take proper precautions and report to the medical officers according to regulations. If one of your men becomes infected, you must give him the works as regards punishment and stoppage of pay. You cannot afford to allow any slackness in this matter. Always you must be on your guard against treachery in the regimental infirmary. It sometimes happens that a noncom or even a private will prevail upon the orderlies in the infirmary to treat him on the sly and so keep his infection hidden from you and from the medical officers. If such a thing occurs in your battery, do not spare the offender. Give him the works. Sick soldiers are of no use, and a man who deliberately or carelessly disqualifies himself for his duty deserves no consideration whatever. Make it plain to your men that any mistakes of this kind will be severely dealt with and remind them each time they go on pass. In doing this, you will have to use such terms ~~that~~ will not offend the men who are clean-living fellows.

Sometimes it is helpful to let a group go on pass together with a noncom in charge, not with the idea that he will spy on them or mother them, but that he will see that they comply with regulations and get them back on time. There are some men who will hit the bottle too hard and may not turn up when they should.

You will find some old Regular Army sergeants who are very faithful to their duty and some who never go off the post except on pay day. They are the salt of the earth and the backbone of the army. But some of them on pay day go on a bust and you will do well not to discover this if you can avoid it, so long as discipline and duty are not sacrificed. This has been for generations the tradition of the old Regular Army, and you will sometimes have to put up with these occasional jags on the part of your very best because they live in that tradition.

In choosing a striker or "dog-robber" to shine your boots and look after you, you will fare better if you have a man who is resourceful and ingenious so that he can make you comfortable wherever you are and supply you with necessaries which are not easily found. I knew a British officer who claimed that a burglar was the best striker or "~~bater~~" as he called him. This probably is overstating the case, but you get the idea. Incidentally, you should beware of promoting your "dog-robber", as this will cause great resentment in your battery.

"bat man"