

each regiment, or a portion of it, should march on its flank and rear, and prevent soldiers from entering any premises.

4. Immediately upon arriving in camp, or in a town or city, the provost officers of divisions or brigades, in the districts assigned to their command, should station guards to enforce compliance with the Army Regulations and orders of the commanders.

5. Details of men for provost guard should be selected from officers and soldiers having the best reputation, in their respective commands, for efficiency, intelligence, and attention to duty. A proper observance of this rule aids much in establishing and enforcing discipline among large bodies of troops.

6. Orders for provost guards should be delivered to each chief or commanding officer of a detachment in writing, and by him read carefully to all the men on duty.

7. The discipline and order of camps, if carefully watched by regimental and brigade field-officers of the day, leaves only the vicinity of camps and the ground intervening to be guarded by the provost. The posting of the guard, therefore, becomes a matter depending upon the personal care and judgment of the provost of divisions and brigades, and no certain or positive rules can be laid down other than those heretofore given.

8. No man should be chosen for provost guard duty who can not read and write. As it is highly important that all attempts at forgeries in passes, safeguards, etc., should be immediately detected. Any neglect in this respect might sacrifice an army.

1. The details of duties of provost guards are generally laid down by the provost marshal general of the army or town.

The following regulations were established for the provost duty of the Army of the Potomac in February 1862.



“A provost marshal for each division will be appointed by its commander. The division provost marshal will obey the orders of the division commander in all matters affecting interior police, but will be responsible to the provost marshal general, and be guided by such instructions as he may from time to time give. A sufficient guard will be detailed by the division commander for duty under the orders of the provost marshal.

“A local provost marshal for a city or village will, when necessary, be appointed by the commanding officer or by head-quarters.

“For brigades and detachments, a deputy provost marshal may, when necessary, be appointed by the division commander.

“The duties of the provost marshals, general and local, relate to the general police of the army, and embrace the following subjects.

“Suppressing of marauding and depredations, and of all brawls and disturbances, preservation of good order and suppression of drunkenness beyond the limits of the camps. Prevention of straggling on the march.

“Suppression of gambling-houses, drinking-houses or bar-rooms, and brothels. “Regulation of hotels, taverns, markets, and places of public amusement.

“Searches, seizures, and arrests.

“Execution of sentences of general courts-martial, involving imprisonment or capital punishment.

“Enforcement of orders prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors, whether by tradesmen or sutlers, and of orders respecting passes. “Deserters from the enemy. “Prisoners of war taken from the enemy.

“Countersigning safeguards. Passes to citizens within the lines, and for purposes of trade. “Complaints of citizens as to the conduct of the soldiers. The provost marshals, general and local, will notify the regimental commanders concerned of all arrests of soldiers made under their orders, and will cause the men to be delivered, with a copy of the charges against them, to their proper officers.

“They will see that the orders respecting passes to officers and men absent from their comps are their expiration. Passes so taken up will be turned over the guard belongs, who will cause them to be examined; and all forged passes, or passes granted by improper authority or

for unauthorized periods, to be reported to the division commander.

“All deserters from the enemy, and other persons coming within our lines, will be taken at once to the provost marshal of the nearest division, who will examine them in presence of the division commander, or an officer of his staff designated for the purpose, and communicate the result and the information obtained to the provost marshal general. In important cases, the deserter or other person will be sent to the provost marshal general with the report.

“All prisoners captured from the enemy will be turned over to the provost marshal of division, who will send them at the earliest practicable moment, where complete descriptive lists and information as to where, when, and how they were captured, to the provost marshal general.

“All safeguards granted at head-quarters will be countersigned by the provost marshal general. Persons found violating such safeguards will be instantly arrested by the provost marshal.

“Passes to citizens within the lines, and for purposed of trade, may be granted by the provost marshal, general and local, who will be guided strictly by the instructions heretofore given by head-quarters upon the subject.

“The provost marshals will investigate all complaints of citizens in regard to the conduct of the troops, and will report the facts in the case to the division commander.”

2. Thorough and careful perusal of these instructions will impart to the guard much information as to his duties.

3. When an army is on the march, if it is desired to protect the property of the inhabitants, the provost detail from