
ARMY WAR COLLEGE



★ A BRIEF NARRATIVE ★

INTRODUCTION

The Army War College is the senior institution in the Army educational system. At this College, selected officers are given instruction to prepare them for duties as commanders and staff officers in the highest positions in the Army, and in joint commands.

The history of the College is especially significant because of its close relationship to the development of the modern US Army. During the first half of the twentieth century, the Army was called upon to enforce United States national policy to a degree never before dreamed of, including participation in two World Wars.

The narrative that follows presents the most important points of the College's eventful history. Its activities, though covering only a short space of years, have made the Army War College a truly National institution.



ELIHU ROOT
SECRETARY OF WAR, 1899-1904
FOUNDER OF THE ARMY WAR COLLEGE

FOUNDING THE COLLEGE

The need for a place where officers could study the broad problems of warfare was forcefully pointed out by events of the Spanish-American War. That conflict demonstrated that the War Department was not organized and ready for the sudden mobilization, training, and oversea deployment of its fighting forces.

Profiting by the mistakes experienced in the Spanish-American War, the War Department, under Secretary Elihu Root, began studying ways to correct the situation.

In 1899, the Secretary of War, in his annual report, stressed the need for improvement in Army organization to meet the new responsibilities imposed upon the War Department by the country's new position in international affairs. The armed services had assumed important duties in the Philippine Islands and other parts of the Pacific, and in the Caribbean.

To create a more efficient Army, Elihu Root recommended, among other measures, the establishment of an Army War College

"... composed of the heads of the staff departments, properly so called, and a number of the ablest and most competent officers of high rank in the Army . . . these officers to be detailed for service in the college for limited periods, so that while the college shall be continuous in records, character and performance, it shall be constantly changing in its personal elements. It shall be the duty of this body of officers to direct the instruction and intellectual exercise of the Army, to acquire the information, devise the plans, and study the subjects indicated, and to advise the Commander in Chief upon all questions of plans, armament, transportation, and military preparation and movement." [In addition, officers] "... should be detailed for some fixed period during [the officers'] service to receive instruction at this college in the science of war, including the duties of the staff, and in all matters pertaining to the application of military science to national defense; that provision should be made for the continuance of such instruction by correspondence after the expiration of the period of each officer's detail, and all officers

should be invited and entitled to present, by written papers and reports, as a part of the regular course . . . the results of their investigations, explorations, reflections, and professional and scientific work, and upon such special subjects as may be prescribed by the college . . ."

From the foregoing, it is clear that Secretary Root visualized the College would have two major functions: 1. to provide an agency to perform what were essentially general staff duties; and 2. to provide instruction to officers in the higher fields of the military arts and sciences. Actually, it was his way of creating an agency to perform the planning and administrative requirements of the War Department until Congress enacted legislation creating a general staff—an organization that had proved so necessary for the administration of the large armies of foreign powers.¹

In February 1900, the War Department appointed a board to draw up regulations for a war college. The board consisted of Brigadier General Ludlow as President, Colonel H. C. Hasbrouck, and Lieutenant Colonel W. H. Carter. Lieutenant Colonel J. P. Sanger was later detailed as an additional member. On 26 May of the same year, Congress appropriated \$20,000 for

"contingent expenses incident to the establishment of the Army War College, having as its object the direction and coordination of the instruction in the various service schools, extension of the opportunities for investigation and study in the Army and Militia of the United States, and the collection and dissemination of military information."

Thus, the Congress accepted Secretary Root's ideas for an institution which would conduct instruction and perform planning and operating activities for the War Department concurrently. The last two were obviously the duties of a general staff.

In October 1900, the Ludlow Board submitted and recommended adoption of regulations for governing the administration and scope of work for the War College, following the original intent of the Secretary of War. However, its

¹ Ahern, George P., Lt. Col., USA. *A Chronicle of the Army War College, 1899-1919*, AWC, 1919, (from which much of the data in this narrative is taken.)

conclusion, urging the establishment of a general staff, was significant.

On 27 November 1901, the Secretary of War announced a progressive scheme of instruction for officers of the Army. A War College Board was to be set up to administer the program, with the presiding officer of the Board also designated the President of the Army War College. In the same order, Washington Barracks (now Fort Lesley J. McNair) in the

District of Columbia was designated the permanent home of the College.

The order of 27 November is noteworthy for another reason. In it, the Secretary directed that officers who showed the greatest proficiency would be considered by the War Department for assignment to duties where their abilities could be most profitably used. This had a high morale value in that it gave new incentive to enterprising officers.



MAJOR GENERAL S. B. M. YOUNG
FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE ARMY WAR COLLEGE

EARLY OPERATIONS OF THE WAR COLLEGE

The War College Board was not announced until 1 July 1902. The officers named were Major General S. B. M. Young, Brigadier Generals W. H. Carter and T. H. Bliss, and Majors H. H. Greene and W. D. Beach. General Young was designated as the first President of the Army War College.

The Board established itself in temporary offices at 20 Jackson Place on the west side of Lafayette Square in Washington, D. C. In December 1902, it moved to 22 Jackson Place, where it remained until the Board was dissolved on 15 August 1903, upon the creation of the General Staff Corps.²

Shortly after the War College Board convened in July 1902, Secretary Root transmitted to the Board a list of military subjects for study. Those subjects covered practically the entire field of Army administration and operation. This mission required of the Board so much research and planning that no time was left to concentrate on instruction. In addition,

the members of the Board were also designated as members of a board to draw up procedure for a general staff. The Board was, in fact, a provisional general staff.

A general staff for the Army was finally authorized by Congress on 14 February 1903. On 15 August of that year, the effective date of the law, the War College Board was dissolved, and the War Department General Staff took over most of the duties appropriate to its functions.

After the formation of the War Department General Staff, the mission of the War College as an educational institution was more clearly defined. New regulations were issued placing the College directly under the Chief of Staff.

With the establishment of the General Staff, General Young was relieved as President of the War College to become Chief of Staff of the Army. He was succeeded in his former position by General Bliss.

²The building at 22 Jackson Place became the office of the first War Department General Staff and housed the War College until it moved to its new home at Washington Barracks in 1907.



FIRST HOME OF THE ARMY WAR COLLEGE
22 JACKSON PLACE, NW
WASHINGTON, D. C.

CONSTRUCTION OF A PERMANENT HOME FOR THE WAR COLLEGE

In the meantime, a permanent home for the War College was under construction. In 1902, Congress appropriated \$400,000 for a building and facilities at Washington Barracks in the District of Columbia.

On 21 February 1903, the cornerstone was laid with impressive ceremonies in which Presi-

dent Roosevelt; the Grand Lodge, F.A.A.M. of the District of Columbia; and high dignitaries of the government participated. Addresses were made by the President, Secretary Root, and General Young. The building was completed in 1907, and the War College moved from 22 Jackson Place in June of that year.



BRIGADIER GENERAL TASKER H. BLISS
PRESIDENT, ARMY WAR COLLEGE
15 AUGUST 1903—24 JUNE 1905

THE WAR COLLEGE UNDER THE NEW WAR DEPARTMENT GENERAL STAFF

On 1 November 1903, the War College began its operation under the new War Department General Staff. The personnel consisted of seven officers who comprised the entire Third Division of the General Staff. This division later became known as the *War College Division*. Shortly after beginning work, General Bliss submitted to the Chief of Staff a report which outlined his concept of the new Army War College. In substance, he recommended that a small group of carefully selected officers from the General Staff assist the Chief of Staff in making plans for the national defense. In addition, he recommended that other selected Army officers be detailed from time to time to work with the President and the two Directors of the College, and under their direction.

² Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Fifth Edition, Page 197.

FIRST CLASS AT THE COLLEGE

The first annual session of the Army War College opened 1 November 1904.⁴ The permanent Army personnel consisted of four officers of the General Staff, including General Tasker H. Bliss, the President. A commander was assigned to represent the US Navy. Nine officers were detailed as students. Among them was Captain John J. Pershing, who was later to become the most illustrious member of the class.

There was no actual classroom work under instructors. The students were assigned to committees for the solution of problems and

General Bliss, like Secretary Root, visualized the College in the sense of the Latin derivation of the word—"a body of persons having common interest or corporate functions".³ Nowhere in the original records appears the idea of the War College as an academic institution solely for the purpose of theoretical instruction in the military arts and sciences.

During the 1903-4 session, there were no "students" assigned to the College. The permanent personnel's work included problems for solution by the commanders of the territorial divisions; preparation of plans for the dispatch of expeditionary forces; and arrangements, with the Naval War College, for joint Army and Navy maneuvers for the following year.

"learned by doing." The type and scope of the problems was much the same as for the preceding year.

The first years of the War College have been discussed in some detail because of their influence in setting the pattern of succeeding years. As each year passed, the College took on, more and more, an academic complexion. Among the innovations were lectures on topics of current interest pertaining to international and national affairs as well as purely military subjects.

⁴ An event of international interest occurred on 14 November 1904, when the German Ambassador unveiled a statue of Frederick the Great at the new War College building. The statue was a gift from the German Government. During World War I, it was taken down. After hostilities, it was replaced on its pedestal, only to be removed again in World War II.—*Fort Lesley J. McNair—A Brief History of the Post*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1950.

MODIFICATIONS IN CURRICULUM AND ORGANIZATION

In the 1906-7 course, a series of problems in strategy and tactics was introduced, with a field reconnaissance of the battlefields of the Antietam Campaign. Thereafter, field trips, or staff rides, to the Civil War battlefields were made annually.

In June 1908, the War Department General Staff underwent one of its numerous reorgani-

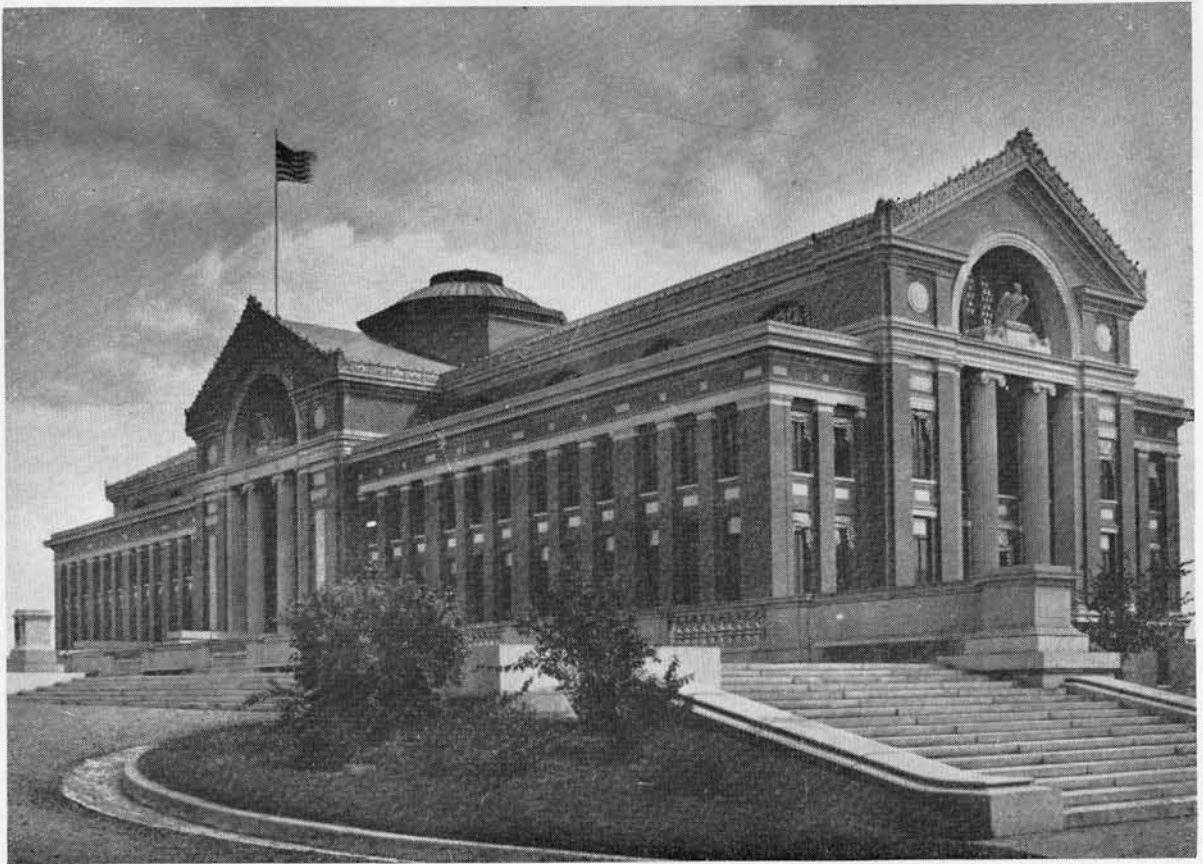
zations, which quite naturally had its effect on the Army War College. Prior to this time, the General Staff consisted of three divisions. The First Division dealt with the mobile forces, and was actually the executive agency of the Chief of Staff. The Second Division dealt with information (Intelligence). The Third Division was charged with preparation of war plans and

matters relating to mobilization. As has been explained, the Third Division was closely associated with the War College.

The reorganization clearly demonstrates how a change in physical arrangement brings about a change in organization. It emphasizes a lesson in staff coordination worth recording for the benefit of all military personnel.

When the War College moved to its new building at Washington Barracks, its personnel from the Third Division was separated by about four miles from the Second Division, which remained at Jackson Place. It became apparent that the Third Division, whose major work was done at the War College, could not

effectively carry on its duties of war planning without close contact with the Second Division. Though the change was originally opposed by its Chief, the Second Division was eventually moved to the Army War College. This move in turn precipitated the reorganization of the General Staff into two sections. The First Section's duties remained essentially the same as those of the First Division and the Second Section took on those of the old Second and Third Divisions. Under the Second Section, as newly organized, there was created a Military Information Committee and the Army War College Committee, both permanently located at the Army War College.



THE ARMY WAR COLLEGE BUILDING
1906-1940
WASHINGTON BARRACKS
(NOW FORT LESLEY J. MCNAIR)
This building was constructed as the
permanent home of the Army War College.

While there were some minor changes in the organization and operations of the College in the intervening years, no major change occurred until the passing of the National Defense Act of 1916. Under that law, it was mandatory that the President of the Army War College be a member of the General Staff. However, it specifically prohibited the detail of any other officers on General Staff duty as instructors or students at the War College.

The intent of the law was to restrict the College's activity "to that of instruction of

⁵ Ahern. *op. cit.* Page 262.

THE WAR COLLEGE AFTER WORLD WAR I

In the midst of the war, the General Staff was again reorganized. Under War Department Orders of 9 February 1918, the Military Intelligence Branch of the War College Division was moved to the Executive Division of the General Staff. The "War College Division" was dissolved, its functions being taken over by the War Plans Division. The new War Plans Division was located at the Army War College and the Director of the War Plans Division became the President of the Army War College.

Upon recommendation of its Director, the War Plans Division, was moved to the War Department Building in June 1919, where it could be in closer contact with the other sections of the General Staff. The College, however, continued under the supervision of the War Plans Division, but its name was changed to the General Staff College. Major General James W. McAndrew was assigned as Commandant the same year.

At this point, a chronicler, who at the time assembled many of the facts which form the basis of this narrative, breaks out of his customary impersonal recitation of memoranda, orders, and schedules to summarize past achievements and anticipate developments yet to come. Some of his words are prophetic and have a peculiar application to the postwar period today—thirty-one years after they were written. He said,

"The new regime is now replacing the old . . . The period 1899-1919 has

⁶ Ahern. *op. cit.* Page 285.

students under a president, a director and a suitable body of instructors selected from the Army at large, omitting the General Staff."⁵

The 1916-17 course opened 28 October 1916, with eight instructors and twenty-one students assigned. Because of the declaration of war on 6 April 1917, the class was graduated 25 May, and classes suspended until after the war. During hostilities, however, the College carried on the study of doctrine and techniques dealing with the current problems of the war.

witnessed a substantial advance in the character and scope of military instruction in our Army. The great war recently terminated has furnished a testing ground where every phase of the art and science of war has tried out our military leaders and awarded them a creditable share in the victory. No little share in the results achieved is due our system of higher military instruction—a system that left much to be desired, but nevertheless, with all the disadvantages of novelty and lack of a properly trained personnel, contributed in a large measure towards our success in the test of a great war.

An important period now begins, where stock will be taken of the lessons learned, mistakes noted, doubtful questions discussed, and military preparedness provided as far as our people will furnish the authority."⁶

A new era in the arts and science of warfare was recognized in 1919. Few persons, however, dreamed that the character of warfare in 1914-18 would be magnified beyond all comprehension in scope and destructiveness in another World War just twenty years later.

The name, Army War College, was restored in August 1921. From that time until 1940, instruction in the College followed a well-developed pattern as an integral part of the Army school system. Under this system, the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, conducted instruction in the ad-

ministrative and tactical operations of the Division and Corps, while the Army War College concerned itself with the broad operations of field armies and the study of the higher echelons of the War Department. The latter embraced studies of the political, economic, and social matters which influence the conduct of war.⁷

During this period, the faculty of the War College averaged sixteen Army and two Navy officers and the students averaged about ninety officers, including representatives of the Navy and Marine Corps.

⁷ Saunders, Oswald H., Major, Inf., *The Army War College, The Military Engineer*, March-April 1934, Vol. 26, Page 102.

⁸ Saunders, *op. cit.* Page 103.

THE ARMY SCHOOL SYSTEM AFTER WORLD WAR II

After World War II, the Army again made a study of its entire school system to take advantage of experience gained during that conflict. The board which conducted the study is generally called the Gerow Board, after its President, Lieutenant General Leonard T. Gerow.

Drawing upon the experiences of the war, this board emphasized the interdependence of land, sea, and air power in modern warfare, and the necessity for joint (Army, Navy, and Air Force) instruction in our service schools. This requirement for joint participation was especially urgent in the fields of mobilization of national resources, over-all intelligence, and strategy. World War II had demonstrated the fact that in modern military planning and operations each service is only a member of the fighting team.

A major contribution of the Army to this unification of the land, naval, and air forces was placing the facilities of the Army War College in Washington at the disposal of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a National War College and an Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Both schools are now in operation. The National War College deals with problems of strategic nature on the national level, while the In-

The course was designed to serve as a vehicle for what would constitute graduate research work in a civilian university. Committee work was the chief method of instruction. Lectures supplemented research. The College policy of encouraging a free interchange of ideas, and the philosophy of "learning by doing" was continued.⁸

When the Army began its mobilization in 1940, classes were suspended at the College in order to release more officers for important command and staff assignments with the expanding forces.

dustrial College concentrates on problems of mobilizing the nation's resources.

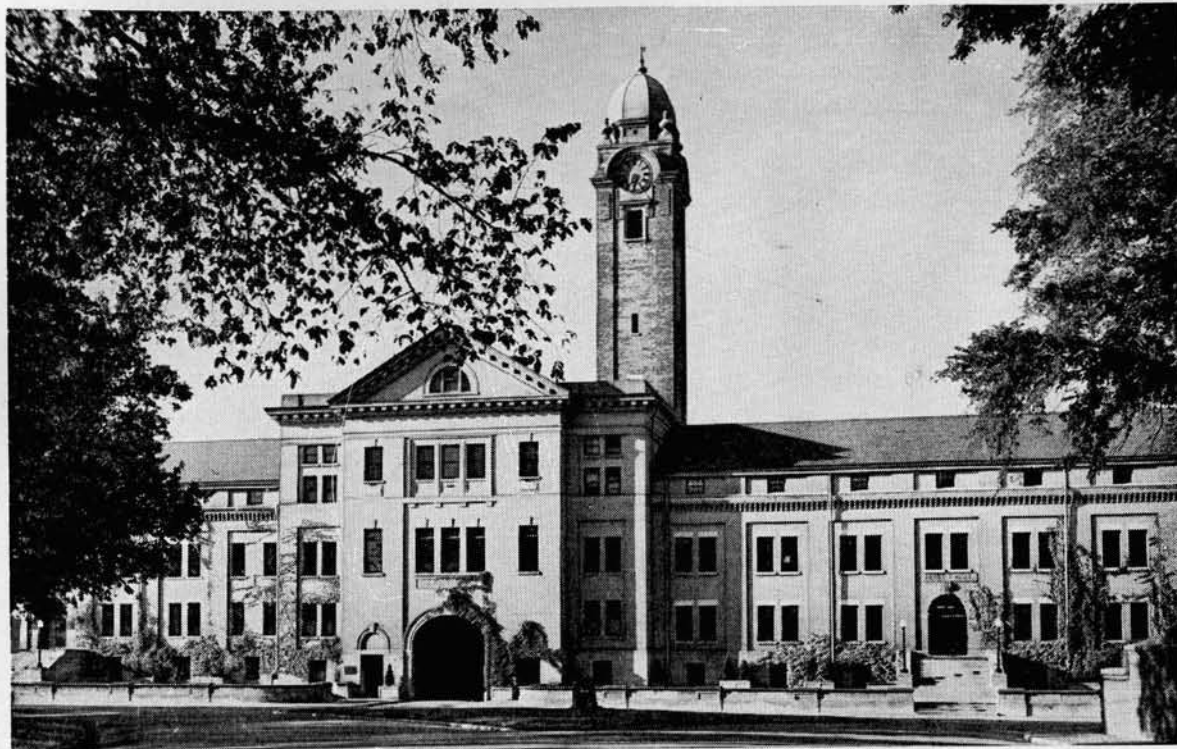
The gap left by the suspension of the activities of the Army War College was partially solved by the establishment of specialized courses in the latter part of the Regular Course at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. Some of the instruction formerly conducted at the War College was presented in these specialized courses.

The passage of the National Security Act of 1947 and the experiences gained from three years of postwar operation of Army schools made desirable a re-appraisal of the entire Army school system to bring it within the new structure of the Department of Defense. Accordingly, the Department of the Army created a board to study and make recommendations on the educational system for officers. Lieutenant General Manton S. Eddy, USA, was appointed President of the Board.

After intensive study, the Board submitted recommendations concerning the entire subject of Army education. Among its recommendations was the resumption of a War College course to replace the specialized courses at Fort Leavenworth.⁹

The Department of the Army, on 11 October 1949, approved the findings of the Eddy Board,

⁹ *Report of the Department of the Army Board on Educational System for Officers*, 15 June 1949 (Eddy Board), Pages 3, 4, and 36-42.



MAIN ACADEMIC BUILDING *
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS

HOME OF THE ARMY WAR COLLEGE, 1950-51 COURSE

The Army War College occupies Grant and Sheridan Halls, the right portion of the building. The Command and General Staff College occupies the left portion.*

with some minor modifications, and directed the re-establishment of the Army War College. Major General Joseph M. Swing was designated Commandant of the War College, and assumed his duties on 1 April 1950. Brigadier General Arthur G. Trudeau was designated Deputy Commandant. The Department of the Army directed that the 1950-51 course be held at Fort Leavenworth. The following is quoted from the Department of the Army Directive of 11 October 1949:

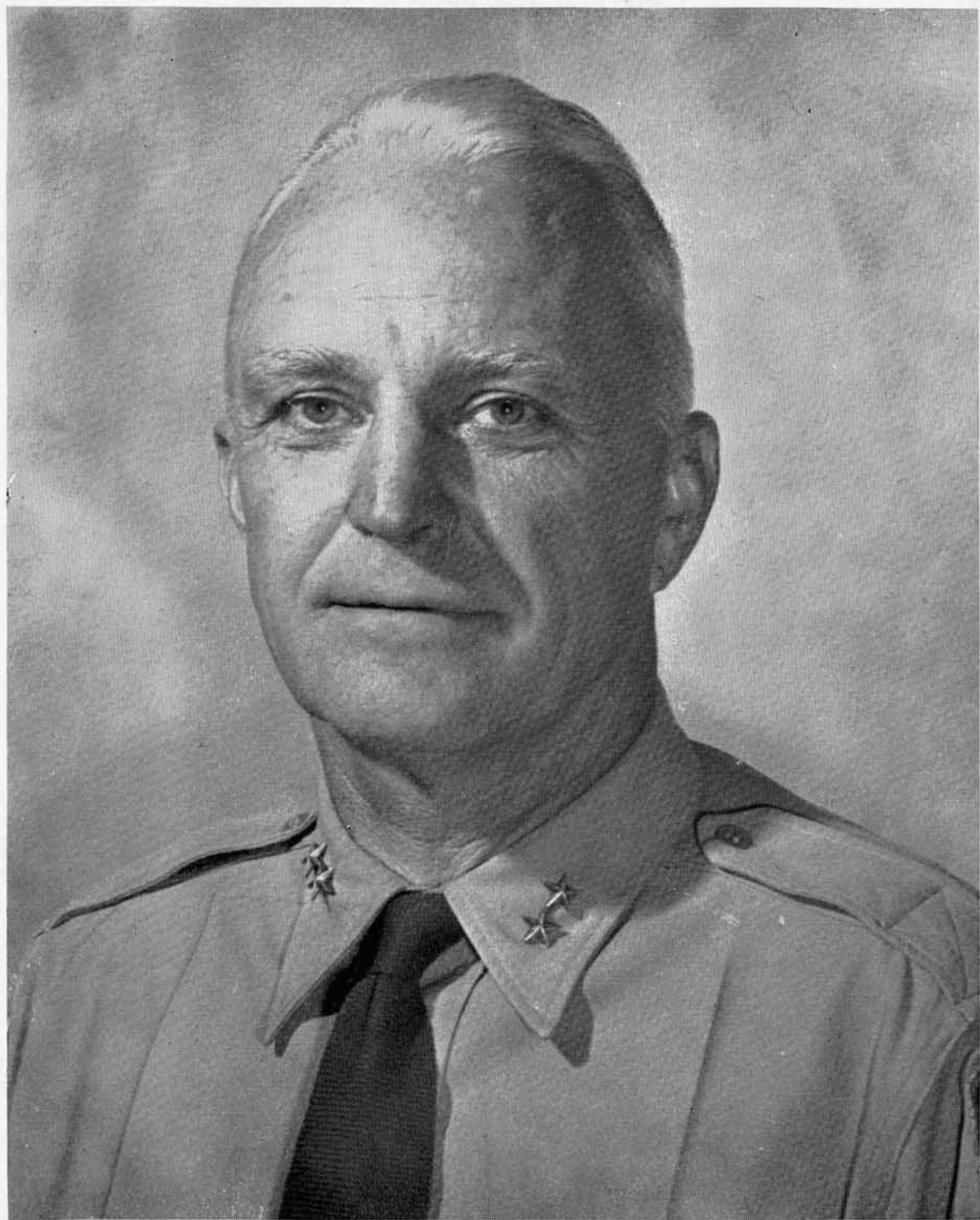
“Selected graduates of the Regular Course at the Command and General Staff College after another period of

duty, will attend the Army War College. This Course will be approximately ten (10) months in duration.

The scope of this Course will include instruction in the duties of the commanders and staffs of the higher Army echelons not included in schools previously attended, such as the army group; theatre army headquarters; zone of interior; and Headquarters, Department of the Army, with emphasis on the Department of the Army.

This Course will be designed to emphasize Army technique necessary to carry out the Army's mission as a part of the Department of Defense . . .”

* Showing L to R Sherman, Grant, and Sheridan Halls.



MAJOR GENERAL JOSEPH M. SWING, USA
COMMANDANT, ARMY WAR COLLEGE
1 APRIL 1950—

THE OBJECTIVES AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE COLLEGE TODAY

The Army War College is the highest institution in the Army school system. It functions under the supervision of the Chief, Army Field Forces.

Army students are selected from officers who are graduates of the Command and General Staff College, or whose experiences have given them equivalent training. They must have 13 to 21 years' commissioned service. Students from the Departments of State, Navy, and Air Force are selected according to the requirements prescribed by the respective departments.

The Course is divided into three phases, with objectives as follows:

Phase I—The Army and National Security.

1. To broaden the background of the students with respect to the organization of the United States for national security and particularly with respect to the organization of the Department of the Army.

2. To develop a wider knowledge of the national policies, plans, and objectives of the United States, with particular reference to the international aspects thereof.

3. To increase the students' ability to cope with the problems involving national policy.

Phase II—Current Army Problems.

1. To familiarize the students with current Army problems, policies, programs, and operations.

2. To analyze and evaluate the role of the Army in future war.

3. To develop and recommend Army doctrine in the areas of the military arts and sciences where new doctrine is required.

Phase III—War Planning.

1. To increase the students' familiarity with the techniques of war planning.

2. To develop the students' ability to solve the military problems inherent to war planning.

Instruction is conducted by means of lec-

tures, committee work, individual research, seminars, and field trips.

Guest lecturers provide basic information on all subjects under study. The analyses and conclusions presented by these speakers afford important source material for the students in their committee studies.

The major part of the students' work is done in committees. The committee normally consists of six to eight students. The chairman and members of each committee are selected by the College.

In addition to the research performed by students engaged in committee studies, each student prepares an individual study on a selected topic.

Seminars on selected subjects are held during the year. A member of the faculty acts as monitor.

The students and faculty make scheduled field trips to various US and oversea areas. The purpose of these trips is to enable students to gain first-hand information on places and installations of military interest. To permit maximum coverage, the class is divided into groups each of which visits one of the selected areas.

The Faculty, headed by the Commandant and Assistant Commandant, is composed of selected officers who are qualified in various aspects of the military arts and sciences, either from broad study or war experiences, or both. Three officers, one from each of the Departments of State, Navy, and Air Force, are assigned to the staff as advisers.

The primary duties of the Faculty are to determine the nature and scope of the problems, assist the students in selection of reference material, and give the students general guidance in their studies and deliberations. The Faculty neither formulates nor suggests categorical solutions to problems assigned for student study.

Though it no longer performs planning and operating functions of the General Staff, it is apparent that the War College is continuing the salient features of Secretary Elihu Root's original aims.

FUTURE HOME OF THE COLLEGE

The Department of the Army has selected Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, as the future home of the War College. Plans are now under

way to modify facilities and obtain housing for personnel at that location in preparation for the 1951-52 course.

PRESIDENTS AND COMMANDANTS OF THE ARMY WAR COLLEGE

<i>Name</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
PRESIDENTS			
YOUNG, SAMUEL S. B. M. (Army War College Board)	Major General	Jul. 10, 1902	Aug. 15, 1903
BLISS, TASKER H.	Brig. General	Aug. 15, 1903	Apr. 15, 1905
WOTHERSPOON, W. W.	Lt. Colonel (Acting)	Jun. 25, 1905	Dec. 3, 1905
BARRY, THOMAS H.	Brig. General	Dec. 4, 1905	Feb. 21, 1907
WOTHERSPOON, W. W.	Lt. Colonel (Acting)	Feb. 21, 1907	Oct. 8, 1907
WOTHERSPOON, W. W.	Brig. General	Oct. 9, 1907	Jun. 19, 1909
BLISS, TASKER H.	Brig. General	Jun. 21, 1909	Dec. 1, 1909
WOTHERSPOON, W. W.	Brig. General	Dec. 1, 1909	Feb. 1, 1912
MILLS, ALBERT L.	Brig. General	Feb. 2, 1912	Aug. 31, 1912
CROZIER, WILLIAM	Brig. General	Sep. 1, 1912	Jul. 1, 1913
LIGGETT, HUNTER	Brig. General	Jul. 1, 1913	Apr. 22, 1914
MACOMB, M. M.	Brig. General	Apr. 22, 1914	Oct. 12, 1916
KUHN, JOSEPH E.	Brig. General	Feb. 1, 1917	Aug. 25, 1917
Classes Suspended in World War I (1917-1919)			
COMMANDANTS			
MCANDREW, JAMES W.	Major General	Jun. 15, 1919	Jul. 6, 1921
MCGLACHLIN, E. F., JR.	Major General	Jul. 14, 1921	Jun. 30, 1923
ELY, HANSON E.	Major General	Jul. 1, 1923	Nov. 30, 1927
CONNOR, WILLIAM D.	Major General	Dec. 20, 1927	Apr. 30, 1932
SIMONDS, GEORGE S.	Major General	May 1, 1932	Jan. 31, 1935
CRAIG, MALIN	Major General	Feb. 4, 1935	Oct. 1, 1935
GRANT, WALTER S.	Brig. General	Oct. 3, 1935	Jun. 29, 1937
DEWITT, JOHN L.	Major General	Jun. 30, 1937	Nov. 30, 1939
PEYTON, PHILIP B.	Brig. General	Dec. 1, 1939	Jun. 30, 1940
Classes Suspended in World War II (1940-1950)			
SWING, JOSEPH M.	Major General	Apr. 1, 1950	_____

During the World War the graduates of Leavenworth and the War College held the most responsible positions in our armies. And I should like to make it of record that, in my opinion, had it not been for the able and loyal assistance of the officers trained at these schools, the tremendous problems of combat, supply, and transportation could not have been solved . . . in all essential respects, the directive genius, almost without exception, was the educated soldier.

—John J. Pershing, General, USA



Photo by
Instructional Aid Services
Command & General Staff College
Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas

Gen. Swing