

Sandy Hook, Gateway NRA, NPS  
An Oral History Interview with Albin Zwiazek  
Soldiers' Daily Routine  
52<sup>nd</sup> Coast Artillery, Battery C  
1937 -1939



Al Zwiazek on Guard Duty



Al and Marge Zwiazek in 2003  
Photos courtesy of NPS/Gateway NRA

Editor's notes in parenthesis ( )

Al Zwiazek: Well, you would be awakened at 6:15 in the morning. That would be First Call and then at 6:25, that's Assembly. You would form outside (outside the barracks on the sidewalk), at 6:30. You would hear Reveille and then the senior man in the battery would report to the officer of the day who would stand out on the parade ground and say, "Sir, C Battery is all present and accounted for" or "D Battery" or whatever the case may be. And then you went back in and cleaned up around your bunk, cleaned the floor, shaped everything up. Seven o'clock, you went down to eat (at the mess hall). And then about ten to eight (7:50), you'd have First Call again. You go out there for Close Order Drill at about eight o'clock, or maybe if you had to go down to the guns, there'd be no Close Order Drill. You'd clean the guns or fire them. It depends what time of the year it was. And, usually, in the spring, fall, and winter, we'd have Close Order Drills first if we weren't occupied with the large guns. And that consisted of about 45 minutes of drilling and then you would go out on details, double work details or something. You studied for like a second class gunner, first class gunner, and so forth. In inclement weather, you would get like a (inaudible) or you'd get instructions on small arms or coast artillery, too. And then you would have Recall at about 11:30 and then you go back to you barracks, you clean up, change into Class A uniforms if you were in fatigues. You never go to eat in fatigues in the mess hall. And then you'd have lunch at noon, then you'd fall out again at ten to one (12:50). One o'clock you went out on a detail, and if there was a parade scheduled that day, you'd come back around four o'clock. You would shave, shower, whatever, change clothes, and get into the uniform that you were going to wear for the parade, and retreat was at five o'clock and that's when the parade started. After the parade you'd go to the mess hall automatically, no call or anything, you go to eat. Then, in the evening, you had free time. You polish your shoes, your brass, your flank-coat, your belt or something. There was always something to do. Or you hang around, you do bunk fatigue, which is where you lounge around on your bunk with your boots on. And then at 9:15, it'll be lights out. The call is called 'tattoo', that's the longest call in the Army, a long bugle call, and that's when you're supposed to go to bed. A lot of people think that when taps is sounded you go to bed. No. When taps is sounded you should be sleeping already. Taps go at eleven o'clock and that ended the day. Next day was the same thing again. But, on Wednesday afternoons if you had no duties to perform, if you were not on guard or KP (kitchen patrol) or at the guns, you had the afternoon off.

END OF INTERVIEW