

AN ADDENDUM TO THE SAGA OF HOLMES AND WALKER

I received an e-mail from my posting on Holmes and Walker asking if there was any truth in the story that Holmes and Walker had personally bought their entire company a set of dress blues? I had almost forgotten that one but it definitely needs to be added to the list of eccentricities of this famous (infamous?) pair of characters.

Indeed, Holmes and Walker DID buy their entire company a set of Dress Blues, and here's how it went. Since both Holmes and Walker had nothing to spend their money on except for the Corps, and since they also realized that any unit that was outfitted completely in Dress Blues would get every ceremonial detail that came down the pike ...which was exactly what they had in mind! What they did is this:

Holmes and Walker were the Commanding Officer and Executive Officer of an "SDT Company" at Quantico at the time. "SDT" stood for [Marine Corps Schools, i.e. Quantico] "Schools Demonstration Troops" which were used for instruction and demonstrations for OCS, PLC [Platoon Leaders Class] and the Officer's Basic School during their training cycles.

The two stalwart lads fell in their company and asked for a show of hand of all those would like to have a set of Dress Blues? Virtually every hand went into the air. They then asked of those, who would be willing to purchase a set of Dress Blues out of their own pocket (as I recall a full set was less than \$50 in those days). At any rate, sure enough a few hands went up. Walker following Holmes with a notebook took down all the names of those who were willing to finance their own Blues. They then asked how many would be willing to contribute "some money" towards a set of Blues. More hands went up and again, names and amounts were taken. This was followed by those who would be willing to kick in any amount towards a set of Dress Blues, and the final tally was logged into Walker's notebook.

Holmes and Walker then marched the entire company down to the Quartermaster (the main uniform supply organization at Quantico at the time) and lined 'em up inside (this was a large building). All hands in the company were fitted for Blues, and between the Holmes and Walker, the two of 'em wrote a check for the remainder! Needless to say, Holmes' and Walker's Company got every ceremonial detail that came down the pike! To them it was money well spent, and exactly what they had in mind.

Another chapter to be added to an almost unbelievable pair of characters in an era long past in a Corps resplendent with characters. It never hurts to have individual Don Quixotes with windmills to joust – may it always be so!