

**THE MESS  
OFFICER'S  
ASSISTANT**

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The mess officer's assistant by L. R. Holbrook

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**L. R. HOLBROOK**

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## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The first edition of the MESS OFFICER'S ASSISTANT was prepared in the early part of 1908, for the use of student officers taking the course at the Mounted Service School. This edition became exhausted some months ago and rendered a complete revision and re-setting of the type necessary.

The subject matter, though not prepared for enlisted men, was found to be of such general interest to Instructors and Student Cooks as to cause part of the text to be used in our regular instruction.

This book teaches the essential principles to be followed in the messing of troops and contains much information of interest to the officers rather than to the enlisted man. It should, however, be constantly studied in connection with the Mess Sergeant's Handbook which contains much information relative to the financial handling of the mess not heretofore published.

L. R. HOLBROOK,

*Captain, Commissary, U. S. Army.*

January 15, 1911.

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

The Second Edition having been exhausted, it has become necessary to print a new edition. Major Holbrook, being absent in France, the new edition has been left to us to get out. It is the same as the old edition with a few minor corrections.

U. S. CAVALRY ASSOCIATION.

## INTRODUCTION.

For some years past much experimenting has been carried on to determine the most suitable ration for horses, cattle, hogs, sheep, poultry, etc., with a view to determining what food is the most economical, with reference to the end desired, and today, through mutual arrangements, between Agricultural Colleges and Commanding Officers of military posts, extensive experiments are being made on horses of entire troops and batteries to determine just what amounts and kinds of forage will produce the best results commensurate with, or regardless of, cost.

*me* In regard to human dictary, much has been written and some experimenting has been done, but without doubt we have more reliable information as to the manner of feeding animals than men. Data ~~is~~ available covering experiments with a few individuals, and with small squads of men—soldiers, students and athletes—and the results ably analyzed by physiological experts show beyond a reasonable doubt that people in



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general eat too much, especially of protein foods—and that a more rational method of eating brings about remarkable changes in one's desire for food, both as regards class and quantity—and that many diseases are curable through a proper regulation of the diet.

In this little book no attempt has been made to set forth new methods or principles, but to clearly announce those which we believe should be followed in handling the ration as now provided. As desirable as it may be to reduce the consumption of food to actual requirements and to introduce new methods of mastication, it must be recognized that our men are mostly young and hardy, and are daily subject to strenuous outdoor exercise that enables them to consume, with impunity, classes and quantities of food that would be impossible with those whose habits are quite sedentary, or who have already become so disabled through improper dietary habits as to force them to seek renewed youth and energy in new and well proven methods.

*216* Our rations is based upon what men undergoing a considerable amount of labor actually consume, when they are free to choose their food and eat it in such quantity and manner as their

inclination suggests. The minimum consumed by such people has been considered as the least amount that should be supplied as a regular diet. Professor W. O. Atwater placed the daily requirement at 3,500 calories for a man doing moderate work, and at 4,500 calories for a man at hard work. Professor Chittenden has, however, shown conclusively that mental and bodily vigor are maintained and even tend to be greatly increased on a much smaller quantity of food. He shows that the meat proteins especially should be reduced much below that found in the ration allowance, as the amount of toxins present in such foods are sufficient to produce injury in the system, while protein itself is not required in the quantity supplied by the articles now composing the ration, to replace waste and repair the muscular tissues.

The time is not yet ripe, however, to reduce our ration to the standard established by Professor Chittenden. The people at large will first have to be educated up to Scientific Nutrition, and it would be impracticable to change the well established habits of young and growing men, such as now constitute the greater part of the enlisted strength of the Army.

