

## The Fateful End Of P.C. Officers Who Have Been Malacañan Aides

Major Baviera, retired, here gives an interesting account of the incidents in the lives of aides-de-camps to former Governors-General.

By MAJOR LUCAS BAVIERA, *Retired*



The readers of *Khaki and Red* who are mostly Constabulary officers should be interested to know the curious and ironical luck of their brother officers who have been assigned as Aides-de-Camp to former Governors General of the Philippines. Fate has, apparently, worked against all of them for many were untimely and forcedly separated from the service. Untimely because they were able to reach the twenty or more years period required for the retirement with life pension. Some of them died relatively young of protracted and painful diseases.

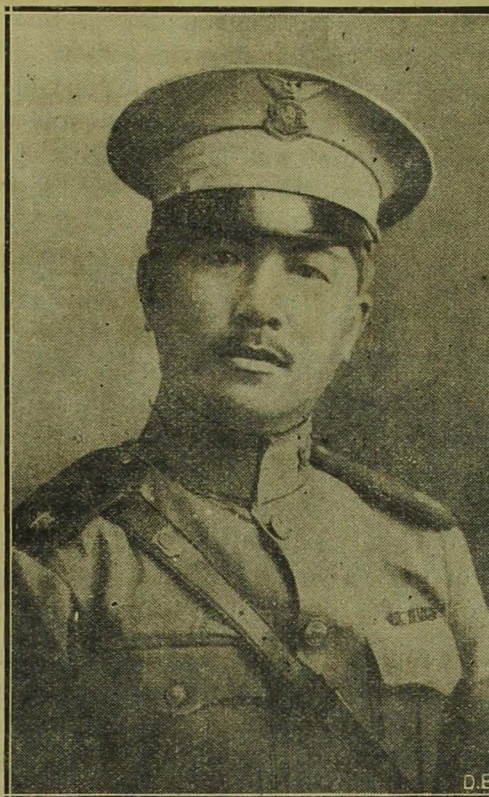
The chronological order and brief story of each one of the Constabulary aides at Malacañang follows:

Major George S. Holmes, a handsome and tall man, was the first P. C. Officer who was assigned as aide-de-camp to former Governor General Cameron Forbes and afterward Governor General Francis B. Harrison. He conducted and accompanied Mrs. F.B. Harrison on the *s.s. Manchuria* bound for the States which was stranded near the coast of Japan. He was afterward appointed Superintendent of the Constabulary Academy. Later on he was confined in a hospital, suffering from a sort of mental derangement, which was the cause of his separation from the service.

Captain Michael J. Byrne was aide-de-camp to former Vice-Governor Gilbert. Shortly after this assignment he resigned.

Captain Jeff D. Gallman was Senior Inspector of the Ifugao sub-province. Due to his exceptionally good services rendered among the Ifugaos, Governor Forbes, offered him the position of aide-de-camp. Unfortunately, on their return trip to Manila, the Captain behaved in a manner that displeased the Governor, for he was under the influence of some irritating substance. Upon their arrival in Manila, he was ordered back to Quiangan, his station. Shortly after he resigned. Captain Gallman was one of the finest officers in the service. All his promotions were due to meritorious service rendered in the field among the primitive people of the mountains.

Colonel R. W. Jones was the aide-de-camp to former Governor General Francis B. Harrison. While the Colonel was performing this duty, he was given another assignment as Brigadier General of the National Guard. In spite of an unknown disease—a sort of general spasm of the muscles—which required him to go to the States several



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times and consult the best known specialists, he was able to reach the retirement period with a life pension. Shortly after his separation from the service, he died comparatively young, from the same disease, after a long period of suffering.

Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Oñate, former Chief Surgeon of the organization was the first Filipino officer to achieve the distinction of becoming the aide-de-camp to a Governor General of the Islands. This officer accompanied former Governor General Harrison and his brother, Archibald, on their trip to the States in 1918-1919, as the Governor's private physician.

His separation from the service was untimely for he was unable to retire with a life pension. Back in the year 1914, Colonel Oñate was appointed a political officer to work jointly with General Charles E. Nathorst, then still a Major, for the passage of the Constabulary Pension Retirement Act. It is the irony of Fate that an officer who worked hard for our actual Pension and Retire-



ment Act, left the service without enjoying the benefits of the same.

Colonel Lucien R. Sweet was first aide-de-camp to former Vice-Governor Yeater, who was at the time Acting Governor General. Subsequently he became aide to Governor General Leonard Wood. Against his will he had to go on leave due to his dreadful disease—Cancer. While he was confined in a hospital, he was unexpectedly promoted General and Chief of Constabulary. Shortly afterward, he died of a malignant tumor. Before his death he had a long period of terrible pain. His desire to come back to the Islands and work in the capacity of Chief was not fulfilled. Fate was against him. He was well-known for his uprightness, squareness and fairness.

The last of the series of Constabulary aides at Malacañang was Colonel R. A. Duckworth-Ford. This officer was an English subject. He was ordered by Governor General Wood to go to Hawaii to investigate labor conditions among the Filipinos in the Territory. While he was doing this work, he took advantage of this opportunity to secure American citizenship in one of the Federal Courts. After about ten years separation from the service, he was one of those five American officers who were appointed Majors during General Wood's regime.

It was reported that his well-written and complimentary articles concerning Governor General Wood's administration which were published in the *London Times* were rewarded with his assignment as Malacañang aide. He had hardly had his twenty years service when he retired. As in Colonel Oñate's case, the real cause of his separation is a mystery, for immediately after his long vacation abroad in 1932, when he was supposed to be in the height of fitness, he retired or was forced to re-

tire. He had the reputation of being a good writer. *Khaki and Red* has published some of his articles and stories. Destiny was against him for his desire to stay longer in the service was not achieved.

Fortunately for the Constabulary, all the officers above cited have been promoted by sheer merit, from one rank to the next higher one, demonstrated in field service in the different provinces to which they had been formerly assigned.

If the rapid promotion of an officer is due to social graces, intimate connection with the publishers of newspapers of wide circulation, who indirectly publish his name and picture and to the management of banquets for the powerful ones, etc. and not to sheer merit the organization will become demoralized.

This story may serve as a warning to the officers of the service who aspire to be an aide-de-camp to the Chief Executive of the Islands, that the position may carry with it a tragic and sad end.



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