

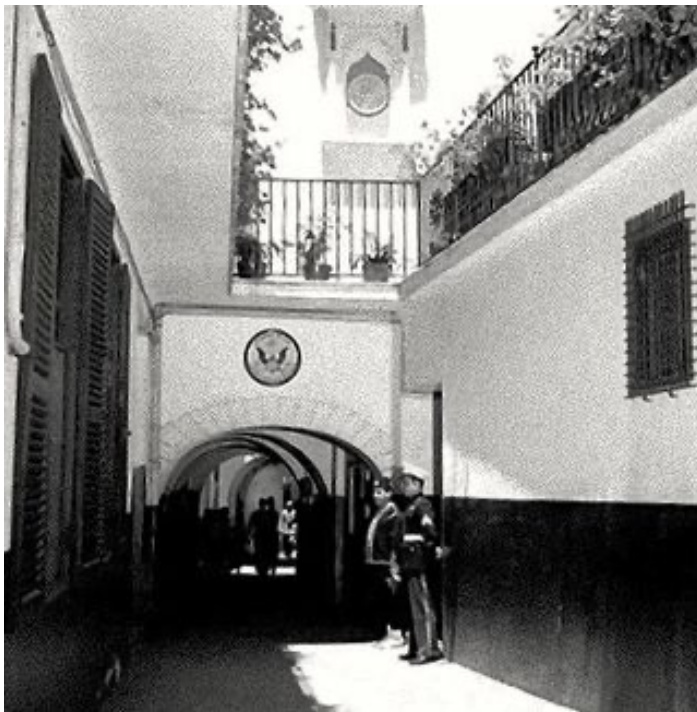


Dress Blues on America Street

2013 blog article by Gerald Loftus (former Resident Director of TALIM, the Tangier American Legation Institute for Moroccan Studies)

<https://legation.org/dress-blues-on-america-street/>

The First, The Proud



In the days of the Tangier International Zone, the American Legation was guarded by a contingent of US Marines, and by the Tabor or Moroccan gendarme force of the Zone. But the photo at left might surprise those who don't know the geography of the American Legation in Tangier. The guards are on the street, a pedestrian street that runs through – and under – the Legation.

Thanks to Legation friend Franklin Koppel for getting us this precious photo.

Older Tangier residents recall the days of Marines-in-the-street, and we love the story told by the father of one of our staff. As a boy, he would gather up

his courage and lung power and race by the Marine every time he had to pass by on Zankat Amrika – America Street, where the Legation is Number 8. It wasn't just the Marines; he was also afraid of the jinn or spirits who were said to inhabit the place. Talk about intangible security measures...



After all these years sans Marines (we assume they moved over to the new U.S. Consulate General Tangier, when it opened in 1961), Zankat Amrika again has Dress Blues. Left and right, the latest addition to our museum's exhibit on the history of Moroccan-American relations, "Corporal TALIM."



Cover (to civilians, the Marine's cap) was provided by Staff Sergeant Adam Peerey, Detachment Commander of the new Consulate General Casablanca Marine detachment.



Wikipedia has a very helpful entry on Marine Corps uniforms, and notes that some variants of Dress Blues "*because they are considered formal wear, are rarely seen... except on Marine Recruiters and Marine Security Guards.*"

The generous gift of the Dress Blues was from Dr. Amin Tarzi (photo at left), director of Middle East Studies at Marine Corps University.

We are particularly happy with Dr. Tarzi's gift, since it

includes some of his own history – his belt from his service as a member of the Marine Corps Reserve. Dr. Tarzi hails from a distinguished Afghan family, and is an internationally-known expert on the Middle East and South Asia.

The Marine Embassy Guard Association – MEGA – is a repository of much of the history and lore of MSGs over the years, and serves as a clearing house for old friends trying to get back in touch. On MEGA's well-constructed website, we learn that in 1949, at the very outset of the new Marine Security Guard program at U.S. diplomatic missions, "the first fifteen Marines departed Washington on their assignments, nine of whom went to the Tangier American Legation." Another first for the Legation.

Tangier had actually seen Marines much earlier; in 1904, during the Perdicaris Affair, U.S. Marines accompanied the Atlantic Fleet for a show of force – in those days, TR's "Big Stick" approach, literally gunboat diplomacy.

**AMERICAN MARINES
LANDED AT TANGIER**

**Guard Detailed to Protect the
Belgian Legation.**

BRIGANDS' DEMANDS GRANTED

**All Raisuli's Conditions to be Complied
With by Sultan in Order to Se-
cure Captives' Release.**

WASHINGTON, June 8.—American ma-
rines have landed in Africa. Admiral Chad-
wick this afternoon cabled the Navy De-
partment from Tangier as follows:

"I have placed a guard at the Belgian
Legation, having been asked to do so by our
Consul General here."

It is said at the State Department that

Gerald Loftus, text; Mohammed Jadidi: photos