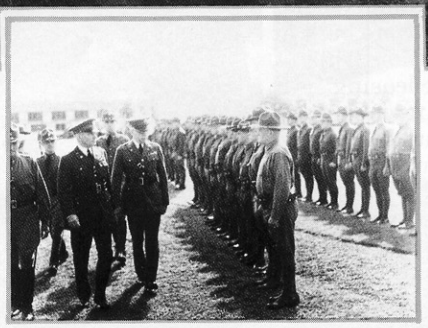

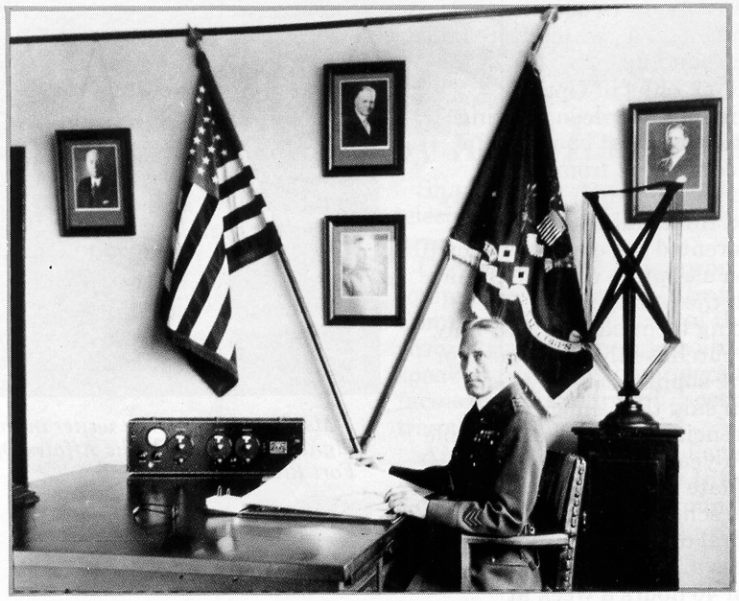

CLOCKWISE from bottom left, page 32: Maj. Gen. George S. Gibbs during his tenure as chief Signal officer, 1928-1931; Maj. Gen. George S. Gibbs inspecting his troops, 1930; George S. Gibbs (center) as a corporal, about 1898; George S. Gibbs as a lieutenant, about 1902; Maj. Gen. David P. Gibbs during his tenure as chief Signal office, 1963-1964; David P. Gibbs as a lieutenant, about 1932.

Father and son command the Corps

by Carol E. Rios

The appointment of David Parker Gibbs as chief Signal officer in 1963 made the position "a family affair." His father, George Sabin Gibbs, had served as head of the Corps some thirty-five years earlier (1928-1931). While the elder Gibbs had worked his way through the ranks from private to major general, son David graduated from West Point as a second lieutenant in 1933.

As a sergeant, the senior Gibbs first saw action in the Spanish American War, where he was decorated for gallantry in action against the Spanish forces at Manila. Various assignments took him to Alaska and Cuba before World War I. During the First World War, he was assistant chief Signal officer of the American Expeditionary Forces and was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for his participation in the Aisne-Marne and Meuse-Argonne offenses.

When the elder Gibbs retired in 1931, he left three sons to carry on the family's military tradition. The eldest was in the Navy, a lieutenant stationed aboard a submarine in Pearl Harbor, while the youngest was in his third year at West Point. The middle son, David, was then with the Fifteenth Field Artillery, but he would soon follow in his father's Signal Corps footsteps.

David Gibbs served in several Signal units prior to World War II, including the 1st Signal Troop of the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Bliss and the 11th Signal Company, Hawaii Division. His wartime assignments included Iceland, England, France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia. During the 1950s, he commanded the 1st Signal Service Group and the 51st Signal Operations Battalion, as well as serving in various staff assignments in Washington, D.C., Korea, and Japan.

While a brigadier general, Gibbs served as commanding officer of the Signal Training Center at Fort Gordon from 1955-1958. In 1963, he became the twentieth chief Signal officer of the U.S. Army and the second Gibbs to hold that position. (Effective March 1, 1964, the chief Signal officer was redesignated Department of the Army Staff, chief of communications-electronics.)

Ms. Rios is a Signal Corps historian at Fort Gordon, Ga.