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# THE NATIONAL GUARD MAGAZINE

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Dedicated to the patient and patriotic officers and enlisted men of the National Guard of all the States and devoted to the service they so nobly represent

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FOR THE

### NATIONAL GUARD

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# THE NATIONAL GUARD MAGAZINE

Volume X.

MAY, 1913

Number 5

## Noble Service in the Great Flood of '13

How the National Guard of a Half Dozen States Met the Emergency With a trained and Organized Force.

TWO thousand lives lost and the destruction of nearly one hundred million dollars' worth of property is the final estimate placed on the havoc wrought by the disastrous floods which swept over the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Kentucky during the closing days of March and the forepart of April.

In Ohio, Columbus was the center of all activities in behalf of the stricken cities of that state. All supplies for the relief of the flood sufferers were consigned to Colonel Edward T. Miller of the Quartermasters' Department, O. N. G., and were by him forwarded, as speedily as the circumstances would permit, to those stricken cities most in need of food and clothing. As railroad communication was seriously interfered with throughout the state, the task undertaken by Colonel Miller was a huge one.

In many respects the situation in the city of Dayton was without parallel. For the first few days the city was unable to send to the outside world any adequate idea of the real loss. West Dayton was almost completely under water, and the houses in Edgemont, a residence section, were so deep in the flood that the destruction of property was almost complete. On the highlands of South Park and East Dayton pockets were developed and people were drowned in apparent elevations where it would seem naturally impossible. A wild and turbulent river four miles wide literally tore its way through the business section of the city, the waters coming so suddenly and swiftly that the people had no time to flee to the hills. The actual loss of life in Dayton has been placed at 128, while the property loss will range close to ten million dollars.

In Columbus the West Side, a populous residence and business district, was entirely covered by the flood. In some places the water rose to a height of nine feet. Three hundred and fifty buildings were either damaged beyond possible repair or entirely wrecked, while the number of lives lost is conservatively placed at one hundred. Thousands of workmen's homes were damaged in such a way that repairs can be made, but in hundreds of instances an entire loss of household goods was sustained. The property loss is placed in the neighborhood of \$3,000,000.

The city of Zanesville, where five lives were lost, sustained a loss of \$1,000,000 to property, mostly in the residence district. The city is in bad shape financially, and can stand all the help that the generous people of the United States will extend to it.

Loss of life in other cities of Ohio is placed as follows: Hamilton, 50; Miamisburg, 50; Piqua, 13; Tiffin, 18; Chillicothe, 18; Middletown, 14; Fremont, 14; Massillon, 5; Troy, 9; Zanesville, 5; Harrison, 12; Valley Junction, 6; Cleves, 2.

In Indiana the death toll has been placed at 64, as follows: Peru, 24; Brookville, 16;

Washington, 4; Frankfort, 2; Logansport, 1; Rushville, 1; Muncie, 1; Fort Wayne, 6; Terre Haute, 4; West Indianapolis, 1; Lafayette, 1; Newcastle, 1; East Mt. Carmel, 1; Shelburn, 1.

The entire National Guard of Ohio was called on by Governor Cox to do flood duty, and in each stricken district the boys led in the rescue work. Throwing aside their guns and haversacks, they plied rowboats and toted rations to the survivors; kept watchful eyes on all portable articles in the devastated districts; prevented looting, and did everything possible for human beings to do in the way of alleviating suffering. A statement issued by Governor Cox on April 7 gives an excellent idea of the grand work performed by the citizen soldiery. The statement follows:

"The militia developed to be a force easily put together and so distributed over the state as to be able to reach, without great difficulty, every flood-stricken section. The men have performed guard duty, manned the boats and, where necessary, have used the pick and shovel in an effort to bring order out of chaos.

"Five thousand officers and men were on duty. They are being gradually relieved now, and by the end of the week few will be in service, except where martial law must be continued. Officers are reporting from different parts of the state real deeds of heroism performed by the men. The supply expedition to Zanesville was not only a success, but more or less of a picturesque affair. Twelve big boats were taken from the train and thrown into the river and loaded with provisions within 30 minutes. Up until that time no boat had crossed the river at that point.

"At Dayton splendid service was rendered both by the naval militia and by the federal life-saving crew from Cleveland. One soldier lost his life in an effort to save others. Altogether, it has been the best opportunity ever afforded to develop the real function of the militia. At the three trying places, Dayton, Hamilton and Zanesville, splendid service has been rendered by General Wood, Colonel Zimmerman and Colonel Weybrecht. General Speaks is to be warmly complimented for the splendid generalship exhibited on his work.

"The statement is made that the Guard, in the last 10 days, has averaged four hours' sleep a day. There has been not a single complaint from a community where the soldiers have been sent. They have been not only of great service but their conduct has been highly commended."

At Marysville was one instance of the splendid spirit of the Guardsmen. Company B got word in a roundabout way that it was needed for service in Columbus, 25 miles away. Major F. D. Henderson, in charge of the Second Battalion, to which Company B belongs, called the company together. Then he asked for a volunteer to make the trip to Columbus to find out what was needed. Railroads were washed out, roads were inundated, the trip seemed impossible.

"I'll try it, sir," said Corporal Boyd Hoffman.

An hour later Hoffman, on his motorcycle, was fighting the rain and mud. Part of the way he rode along the railroad. Then he carried his machine across fields to the road. Finally, nine miles from Columbus, the machine failed him, and he floundered onward afoot.

It was four hours after Hoffman started that he waded across a flood-swept railroad bridge, south of the capital. He was soaked through and through, shivering and exhausted, when he stumbled into the Adjutant General's office and saluted Assistant General E. M. Peoples. His mission was fulfilled.

Another incident which shows the usefulness of the National Guard in times of dire distress was the accomplishment of Lieutenant Staley and a dozen members of Company B Signal Corps. On Friday, March 28, when the whole West Side of Columbus was cut off from communication with the outside world, Lieutenant Staley and his men made a forced march of twenty miles across the flooded river to the north and before morning had established communication with the outside world by means of a wireless station on the hospital grounds on the Hilltop. Later wires were strung and telephonic communication established with the military stations throughout the city.

## INDIANA.

Flood Conditions on a Parallel With Those in Ohio—Guardsmen Lead in Rescue Work.

The flood situation in Indiana was on a parallel with that of Ohio, although the loss of life and property is not so great. When the National Guard took possession of northern Indiana they found their task a gruesome one. Their duties consisted mainly in gathering up the dead, giving medical and surgical aid to the living, and helping the flood-stricken towns to re-establish their capacity for caring for themselves. Every Guardsman on duty in Peru was forced to perform the functions of a doctor and a nurse. They went about instructing the people to boil all drinking water; helped to rig up stoves, and where stoves were not available, instructed sufferers how to build camp fires on the ground out of the debris of destroyed homes. Many streets resembled gypsy camps, with fires at which the family's food is cooked. Three thousand and eight hundred persons were rendered homeless at Logansport, and the property damage reached a million dollars.

At Kokomo Guardsmen patrolled the submerged section in boats to prevent looting and aided in rescuing persons trapped in their homes.

It is believed that 500 lives have been lost in the state, 200,000 rendered homeless and property valued at \$20,000,000 destroyed.

A cyclone and terrific electrical storm devastated Terre Haute on the night of March 23, killing and injuring hundreds of people and destroying thousands of dollars' worth of property.

In Indiana, as in Ohio, the citizen soldiers performed their duties nobly. No matter what the nature of the work, there were no