

The New York Guard in World War II

The Beginning

In 1940 under the threat of being pulled into the world at war, New York Army National Guard units were being rapidly inducted into federal service. On 21 October 1940 the 76th Congress removed the restrictions on Section 61 of the National Defense Act to allow State Military Forces. This had been heavily pushed for some time by New York Governor Lehman and Massachusetts Governor Saltonstall. The Governor directed the organization of the New York Guard and on 25 October 1940 General Orders Nos. 40 was issued by the Adjutant General's office.

Planning for the New York Guard, to include identification of force structure, Regimental Commanders and those NYARNG personnel "physically unfit" for activation, had been commenced as early as July and August by MG William N. Haskell, Commander NYARNG, until his activation on 23 October. The NYG was organized effective 25 October 1940 and on that same date MG William Ottmann assumed command. Initially BG George P. Tyner was the Chief of Staff.

The NYG structure consisted of one Headquarters, 5 Brigade Headquarters and 20 Regiments for a total of 1,116 Officers and 12,573 enlisted. The 1st, 2nd and 5th Brigades were in Metropolitan New York City, the 3rd Brigade was in Albany and the 4th Brigade was in Buffalo. In 1941 two additional Regiments were organized, in 1942 two separate Battalions were added in Long Island, and in 1943 a separate colored Battalion was added in the Brooklyn and Queens county area.

Organization and principal Commanders

Headquarters, 80 Centre Street NYC



MG William N. Haskell, NYNG



MG William Ottmann,
NYG



LTG Hugh A. Drum, NYG

MG William Ottmann from 25 October 1940 to 14 October 1943

LTG Hugh A. Drum from 19 October 1943 to 11 September 1948, also Commander NYARNG during its re-establishment.

Chief of Staff, BG George P. Tyner until 17 April 1941, then BG George A. Herbst. BG Herbst resigned 15 October 45 as a Major General, and was succeeded by BG William H. Kelly.



BG George A. Herbst, COS

First Brigade, New York City; Brig. Gen. John J. Mangan, Commanding; Retired 31 Dec 44, replaced with Brig. Gen George J. Lawrence.

composed of;

Seventh Regiment, Colonel Milton S. Bowman, commanding, to active duty 18 Sep 42, replaced with Colonel George K. Brazill;

Ninth Regiment, Colonel Mills Miller, commanding; retired 13 Feb 45, replaced with Colonel Lawrence A. Keyes;

Fifty-first Regiment, Colonel Lawrence Beattie, commanding;

Sixty-ninth Regiment, Colonel Louis Doan, commanding, replaced by Colonel George P. Lawrence who went to the Brigade command in 1945, replace by Colonel William P. Cavanaugh.

Second Brigade, New York City, Brig. Gen. Edward E. Gauche, Commanding, retired 2 Mar 43, COL Stanton acting commander, then 16 Jul 43 replaced with Brig. Gen. Anson C. Goodyear.

composed of;

Eighth Regiment, Colonel Walter X. Stanton, commanding;

Thirteenth Regiment, Colonel Robert P. Orr, commanding; replaced by Colonel Humphries.

Fifteenth Regiment, Colonel Elmer P. Sawyer, commanding, died 15 Aug 42, then Colonel William Woodruff Chisum;

Seventeenth Regiment, Colonel A. C. Goodyear, commanding, transferred to Brigade Command in 1943, 22 Jul 43 replaced with Colonel James C. MacKenzie, in 1945 Colonel George L. Bliss was listed as commander;

Twelfth Regiment established 6 Dec 41, Colonel George W. Winslow, commanding, in 1945 Colonel Louis E. Jallade was listed as commander;

Twenty-second Regiment established 6 Dec 41, Colonel William H. Vollmer, commanding.

Third Brigade, Albany, Brig. Gen. Bernard W, Kearney. Commanding;

composed of;

First Regiment, Colonel Willard H. Donner, commanding, with headquarters at Albany and units stationed at Albany, Hudson, Poughkeepsie, Binghamton, Walton and Oneonta, retired 29 Dec 44, Colonel James G. Tebbutt;

Second Regiment, Colonel Lester C. Higbee, commanding, with headquarters at Troy and units stationed at Troy, Cohoes, Hoosick Falls, Schenectady, Amsterdam, Gloversville, Saratoga, Springs and Glens Falls;

Sixth Regiment, Colonel George J. Winslow, commanding, with headquarters at Utica and units stationed at Utica. Mohawk, Watertown, Ogdensburg, Whitehall, Saranac Lake, Ticonderoga and Malone;

Fifty-sixth Regiment, Colonel John T. Sheehan, commanding, with headquarters at Newburgh and units stationed at Newburgh, Mount Vernon, Kingston, Middletown, Catskill, Peekskill, White Plains and Yonkers.

Fourth Brigade, Buffalo; Brig. Gen. Edwin G. Ziegler, Commanding;

composed of

Third Regiment, Colonel Edward M. McCabe commanding, with headquarters at Syracuse, and units stationed at Syracuse, Auburn, Oswego, Oneida, Geneva and Elmira;

Twenty-first Regiment, Colonel Fred C. Wegner commanding, with headquarters at Rochester and units stationed at Rochester, Geneseo, Corning and Hornell;

Sixty-fifth Regiment, Colonel George D. Toomey commanding, with headquarters at Buffalo and units stationed at Buffalo and Medina, replaced 20 May 42 with Colonel John F. Malone Jr.; **Seventy-fourth Regiment**, Colonel Allan F. Reif commanding, with headquarters at Buffalo and units stationed at Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Tonawanda, Jamestown and Olean.

Fifth Brigade, Brooklyn, Brig. Gen. Emil M. Podeyn, Commanding;
composed of

Fourth Regiment, Colonel John J. Byron commanding, with headquarters at Jamaica and units stationed at Jamaica, Flushing and Hempstead, replaced in 1943 by Colonel Martin.

Fifth Regiment, Colonel Charles H. King commanding, with headquarters at New York City and units stationed at New York and Brooklyn, replaced with Colonel George A. Shedden who retired 8 Jan 42, replaced with Colonel Arthur A. Farrell;

Forty-first Regiment (Fourteenth), Colonel Gabriel G. Hollander commanding;

Twenty-third Regiment, Colonel Lennox C. Brennan commanding;

First Separate Battalion, established 1942, Freeport, Major Ahearn, commanding;

Second Separate Battalion, established 1942, Riverhead;

Third Separate Battalion (colored), established 1943, Kings & Queens, Major Myles Anderson Paige, commanding.

Uniforms and Equipment

The State purchased uniforms for enlisted men consisting of cotton O.D. shirt with a black necktie, a woolen overseas cap with the letters "N.Y." 3/4 of an inch in height embroidered on the left side of the front in infantry blue, a one-piece uniform of cotton drill material with a shoulder sleeve patch of infantry blue 2-3/8 inches in diameter with the letters "N.Y." embroidered in black 3/4 inches in height, chevrons, collar insignia, and dismounted canvas leggings. For armory service the soldier furnishes his own shoes. The State also purchased 1500 sets of individual infantry equipment for enlisted men other than the rifle and pistol belts mentioned above. Two sets of this equipment was issued to each company for instruction purposes. The remainder was to be stored in the State Arsenal for issue should any unit be called to active service.



The uniform for officers was the same as that of the New York National Guard except that the cap ornament and all buttons have the State Coat of Arms and on the lapel of the collar are the letters "N.Y." The shoulder sleeve insignia of the overcoat and service coat was the same as that prescribed for enlisted men.

The War Department supplied Lee-Enfield rifles, bayonets, and bayonet scabbards, but no other arms, equipment or uniforms. The State purchased web cartridge belts for each man armed with the rifle and web pistol belts for each man armed with a pistol. During 1942 the War Department withdrew all but 100 rifles per Regiment and replaced these with 12 gauge shotguns of various configurations. In 1942 Thompson sub-machine guns were provided at about 3 per Infantry Company. Each company already had two Reising sub-machine guns that had been furnished by the state. 1944 was marked by a sweeping change in the arms with which the Guard was equipped. All Federal shotguns were withdrawn by the War Department and were

replaced by rifles (US Rifle, Cal. .30, M1917 Enfield.). Also received were 132 Browning machine guns, cal. .30, water-cooled, 132 cal. .22. machine gun trainers, and 132 machine gun carts. In addition 1,700 45 cal pistols were shipped to the Guard.

By 1943 the NYG had only thirty vehicles. In 1944 twenty Scout cars were received to be organized into one scout car platoon per brigade, eventually this grew to 61 Command Reconnaissance Cars, 1 1/2 ton, 4x4. Additionally 100 new Ford 1-1/2 ton trucks, ten 5-passenger automobiles, 30 motorcycles, and 180 bicycles were received. In 1945 the 100 trucks were replaced with Chevrolet trucks which were then replaced with 109 2 1/2 ton trucks and 24 trailers with searchlights. Other items received in 1945 were 22 ambulances, 240 bicycles, 68 motorcycles and 81 "jeeps." to replace the Command Recon Cars. In March 1945, the War Department authorized issue of 276 Radio Sets SOR 511-0 to the State Guard.

Training

Initially in 1940 no training camps were planned due to funding and the lateness of the season. Starting in 1941 a ten day summer camp was conducted, usually two Regiments at a time at Camp Smith. Some units trained at Fort Ontario, probably due to the NYG COS having recently been the Post Commander there. Summer camps typically started in March with two Regiments from the Buffalo area and ended in September with the colored Regiment from Harlem, which in 1943 included the 3rd Separate battalion. In 1944 the camp period was increased to 12 days. Training during the year was four hour drills one night per week at unit armories. All drills and camp was done at no pay or allowances.



US Rifle, Cal. .30, M1917 Enfield.



Browning machine gun, cal. .30, water-cooled

In May 1941 the U.S. Army issued rules for State Guards to comply with the minimum training standards of U.S. troops, as listed;

1. Basic discipline training of the soldier.
2. Physical training, personal hygiene and first aid.
3. Their own interior economy and administration.
4. Their own shelter, supply and movement.
5. Their own security.
6. Signal communication.
7. Protection against chemical agents.
8. The use of non-toxic gas and smoke.
9. The proper care and use of all weapons with which the Guard is equipped.
10. Dismounted drill, to include the company.
11. Extended order drill.
12. Methods and formations for suppressing domestic disturbances.

The NYG actually served as a pre-training for federal service. Many NYG soldiers were promoted to Corporal upon being drafted into federal service due to their previous training. In the years 1942 through 1945 over 18,600 soldiers were drafted out of the NYG.

Exercises

15 August 1941; A mock saboteur exercise at battery park.

16 April 1942; The entire NYG was mobilized in a practice alert. Statewide about 95% of the 17,000 troops reported to their armories within the first five hours.

29 April 1942; Five thousand soldiers from the twelve metropolitan regiments of the New York Guard were mobilized at their armories and transported in a fleet of fifty buses and 200 taxicabs to 100 strategic points throughout the city in an emergency test of their readiness to deal with concerted citywide sabotage by enemy agents and fifth columnists.



22nd Regiment, New York Guard
Bridge Guards
Brooklyn Bridge



22nd Regiment, NYG, Laguardia Airport
Laguardia Airport



Company D, 7th Regiment, NYG
Grand Central Terminal, NYC 1942
Grand Central Station

4 August 1942; Mock saboteur exercise in Bronxville by three companies.

October and November 1942; Small unit maneuvers were held in New Rochelle, Timber Point LI, and Wingedfoot Club in Mamaroneck SI.

18 April 1943; Exercises in Brooklyn and Bronx.

14 June 1943; A simulated paratroop invasion was conducted in Central park and Staten Island and 27 June a similar exercise on the Warburg Estate in Westchester. (may be connected to poster)

11 October 1943; An exercise in Scarsdale.

10 September 1944; Command Post Exercise at Camp Smith.

9 September 1945; Command Post Exercise at Camp Smith.



Strength

Year	Officers	Enlisted	Total	Yearly Avg	Authorization
December 1940	832	1,624	2,456	n/a	13,689
December 1941	1,148	12,032	13,180	12,228	13,689
December 1942	1,429	15,005	16,434	14,912	18,847
December 1943	1,523	15,252	16,775	15,228	19,942
December 1944	1,640	16,824	18,467	15,243	24,722
December 1945	1,703	16,705	18,676	18,848	24,722

The NYG had great difficulty maintaining strength due to the drafting of NYG members. During 1942 39% or 4,503 soldiers and 1943 40% or 6,305 soldiers were drafted for federal

service. By 1945 the war was over and soldiers were not re-enlisting, however returning former NYARNG soldiers were rejoining the NYG units representing their old commands.

Activations

2-3 August 1943; Harlem Riots. 8,000 Guardsmen were ordered to standby in Metropolitan armories after riots in Harlem. Riots were due to a colored U.S. Army soldier being shot by a NYC policeman. 1,500 civilian volunteers, 6,000 NYC policemen, U.S. Army Military police and Air Raid Wardens were able to prevent a recurrence and NYG troops were not deployed.

31 January to 11 February 1945, inclusive; during a traffic emergency caused by heavy snow storms and freezing temperature. Units and over 2,000 soldiers were activated in upper New York from Poughkeepsie to Buffalo. Additional troops were activated 1 January for Watertown to Rochester lines. Aid to Civil Authority Medal – Traffic 1945 bar

14-15 April 1945; at Poughkeepsie during funeral services of the late President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Aid to Civil Authority Medal – Poughkeepsie 1945 bar

11-13 June 1945; Company E, 74th Regiment at Jamestown during a freak tornado that caused much damage to property. Aid to Civil Authority Medal – Jamestown 1945 bar

17-20 December 1945; The 4th Brigade was mobilize and order into active service, with eight officers and fifty enlisted men from the personnel of Headquarters, 4th Brigade; the Scout Car Platoon, 4th Brigade, and the 4th Truck Company, equipped with such motor vehicles as may be necessary, to aid the civil authorities of Buffalo in clearing traffic routes through streets of that City. Troops were paid and supplied by the city.

25 May 1946; Threatened Rail Road strikes. Warning order but no activations.

Special Events

On 22 January 1942 with much fanfare William H. (Jack) Dempsey, the famous boxer, was sworn in as a 2nd Lt and Aide-de-Camp to MG Ottmann. With less publicity he was discharged on 24 April 1942 a NYG career of three months.

On 20 August 1942 Mme. Wellington Koo, wife of the Chinese Ambassador to the Court of St. James, visited Camp Smith. Mme. Koo reviewed the First Infantry Brigade comprising the Sixty-ninth Regiment, Manhattan, and the Fifty-first Regiment, Manhattan, Brooklyn and Staten Island.



Beginning of the end

By late 1945 the war was over and the National Guard Bureau was working on new ARNG force structures for the states. LTG Drum developed a new TDA to reposition the NYG for conversion into the new NYARNG. This new force structure was to be implemented 1 January 1946.

Our next article will be the restructuring of the NYG, its conversion into the NYARNG, and the fight to maintain a state force after World War II.