

FIRST SEPARATE NAVAL DIVISION.

This division was organized, April 15, 1898; its headquarters were on the naval militia ship "New Hampshire," and it was disbanded, February 15, 1899.

SECOND SEPARATE NAVAL DIVISION.

State Armory, Wood and South streets, Rochester; Boathouse, Charlotte.

The second separate naval division was organized, November 24, 1891, and performed duty for the United States during the Spanish-American war in the United States navy, and in the United States auxiliary naval force aboard the "Franklin" and other vessels.

REPORT OF THE CAPTAIN OF THE NAVAL MILITIA.

HEADQUARTERS, NAVAL MILITIA, N. Y.,
31 NASSAU STREET,
NEW YORK, October 10th, 1898.

Adjutant-General, General Headquarters, Albany, N. Y.

SIR:—I have the honor to submit the following report on the naval militia during the war with Spain:

The operations of the state naval forces were divided into two periods—one of preparation, and one of active service—and into two officially distinct duties, that in the navy proper, and that in the auxiliary naval force.

I. About the first of March, the naval militia of New York consisted of forty-nine officers and five hundred and four men. On March 26th, orders were received from general headquarters, to call for volunteers to proceed to League Island, Pa., to man the monitors "Jason" and "Nahant." On March 31st, the men were ready to proceed, but the detail for the "Nahant" did not leave until April 12th, as the vessel was not in condition, until that date, to be put into commission. During the early days of April,

However, Commander Duncan, and other officers and men, had gone to League Island, to help push the work on the monitors. The "Nahant" arrived at New York on April 17th, manned by the first naval battalion, with the exception of her commanding officer, Lieut. C. S. Richman, U. S. N. This vessel was the first of all monitors ready for actual coast protection. The officers and men were complimented by the commandant of the navy yard for prompt and efficient work, and Commander Duncan merits the thanks of the state for his intelligent energy during the whole period of preparation of the first naval battalion for service afloat. Lieut. R. J. Beach, and the crew, of the second naval battalion, who were fitting out the "Jason," also did their duty well, but that ship was delayed at League Island through no fault of the naval militia.

On March 31st, you informed me that the honorable secretary of the navy had requested the Governor to enlist the naval militia to its full strength. Recruiting was started, and no difficulty was experienced in obtaining men; uniforms and equipments were supplied to them by the state authorities with extreme promptness, and the force increased to 1,068 officers and men.

On the day of the arrival of the "Nahant" at New York, April 17th, the first naval battalion was called upon to furnish a crew for another vessel, the "Yankee." The orders were obeyed, and one hundred and fifty-five men were ready within six hours.

On the following day preparatory orders were received to man the U. S. signal stations at Montauk Point, Quogue, and Fire Island. Lieut. F. B. Anderson had previously been in communication with Capt. C. F. Goodrich, U. S. N., and had made preliminary contracts for equipment and stores for all the Atlantic coast. Lieut. Anderson's forethought and preparation left little to be done, and the stations were manned, under orders from Washington, on April 23d, this state being the first to report.

On April 22d, an increase of fifty-four petty officers and men of the first naval battalion was authorized, in order to properly man the engine-room of the "Yankee." Through the untiring efforts of Engineer Lieut.-Comdr A. B. Fry, they were at once

enlisted, and on the following day the "Yankee's" crew was ordered on board the "New Hampshire" for duty. On April 26th, her complement was again increased by seventy men.

On April 28th, the "Yankee's" crew was mustered into the navy.

Prior to this date the honorable assistant secretary of the navy had suggested the propriety of recruiting a torpedo and electrical division. I therefore obtained authority from you on April 25th, to create such an organization, to be known as the "first separate naval division," and its formation was at once begun. The command was given to Lieut. W. H. Wetmore, who showed great energy and ability in perfecting the division. A large portion of its men entered the navy as telegraphers and signalmen, while some were assigned to cruising vessels.

On April 29th, the crew of the "Nahant" was mustered into the navy.

On April 30th, Lieutenant-Commander Robert S. Sloan was appointed on the staff of the captain, and until June 17th, when he entered the navy, rendered most loyal and able assistance in helping to organize the auxiliary naval force.

On April 29th and 31st, at the request of Rear Admiral Henry Erben, U. S. N., in charge of the coast defense system of the United States, I sent details to Willet's Point, by your authority, to assist in protecting the mine fields, as Admiral Erben had no one to fulfill this duty. These men were volunteers, and it is respectfully suggested that the general government be asked to defray the expense incident thereto. On May 7th, the Governor ordered a patrol of the lower bay and of Throgg's Neck, to consist of eight tugs, one steam launch, and a yacht (kindly loaned by Mr. Alfred Carr), the general government not having sufficient vessels in this district to take care of the mine fields, and protect incoming and outgoing commerce. Seventeen officers and 112 men of the second naval battalion, ably commanded by Lieutenant-Commander R. P. Forshew, performed this duty in a most creditable manner for ten days, the state assuming the expense of the tugs and the pay of the men.

I would respectfully call your attention to the large amount of work done by the naval militia during the preceding dates; the total interval being less than a month. The organization was doubled in strength; over four hundred recruits were fully equipped and uniformed; three large naval vessels were manned and officered; signal stations were established, and the commerce of the harbor of New York protected for ten days. These labors were accomplished by the state. Our organizations were not recognized, as such, by the navy department; both officers and men laboring as individuals without pay from the government. They were compelled to stand examinations of a high standard, and while adjusting their business affairs had no promise that they would be given a reward for their patriotic self-sacrifice. As one of the many instances of that self-sacrifice, the "Nahant's" crew served from about the 1st of April to the 29th of that month before it was mustered into the navy, and certain of the officers who had been on board the vessel from the time she left League Island did not receive their orders to the monitor until June 14th. Again, the rations for the coast signal service had to be supplied by the state, for many days, after the men were on their stations. These facts are mentioned not in criticism of the past, but to prevent a repetition of such errors in future wars, and to show the preparedness of the military department under your charge.

The second naval battalion is especially worthy of commendation for its activity in recruiting and its steadfastness to duty. It was a new organization without suitable headquarters; had to overcome many obstacles incident to novel conditions, and there was great uncertainty as to whether its men would be accepted by the government. I respectfully urge that the borough of Brooklyn be requested to provide the second naval battalion with a proper armory on the water front at the earliest possible date.

On May 14th, the navy department reported that the monitor "Jason" was ready for sea. Seven officers and sixty-five men from the second naval battalion, and one officer and ten men from the second separate naval division left the following day to man that

vessel at League Island. She arrived at New York on May 23d; thence proceeded to Fisher's Island, and remained near that locality until the close of the war.

II. Work of the Auxiliary Naval Force.*—Up to this time only about one-half of the naval militia had been called into war service, and little had been done, except by the coast signal office in Washington, to place the organization in the field of duty for which it had been especially trained. Through the persistent and intelligent efforts of Capt. H. L. Satterlee, assisted by Lieut. Aaron Vanderbilt, Congress passed, in June, a law creating an auxiliary naval force, to consist of members of the naval militias of the states, and other persons, and on June 14th, the U. S. S. "New Hampshire" was transferred to the navy. From that date to the close of the war she was used as a receiving ship and for the headquarters of the third district. Captain John R. Bartlett, U. S. N., was appointed chief of the U. S. auxiliary naval force, and all the states are indebted to him for his appreciation of the proper sphere of the naval militia, and for his untiring efforts in its behalf.

The appendices show that up to this date only 521 of the naval militia had entered the navy. The second separate naval division of Rochester had not been recognized by the navy department, although a recruiting office had been opened at Buffalo. The men of this division had been mustering daily at their armory, but no orders were received from Washington, and at my request Captain Bartlett succeeded in getting recognition for this organization, and 64 officers and men were allowed to enlist. Lieutenant Walbridge and his division accepted any duty on any ship or station.

On July 5th, I had the honor of receiving a commission, as lieutenant-commander U. S. navy, and on July 8th, was ordered as assistant to chief, U. S. auxiliary naval force, in charge of the third district.

*The auxiliary naval force, although an addition to the navy, was part of the regular service. The officers received the same commissions as other volunteers and the men were enlisted into the United States navy.

The district extended from Newport, R. I., to Seabright, N. J., and included the following vessels:

New Hampshire,	Lieut.-Comdr. J. W. Miller, commanding.
Nahant,	Lieut. E. M. Harmon, commanding.
Jason,	Lieut. Gardiner I. Jones, (*) commanding.
Aileen,	Lieut. W. R. Addicks* and Lieut. W. H. Stayton, commanding.
Free Lance,	Lieut. T. C. Zerega, commanding.
Elfrida,	Lieut. (J. G.) M. A. Orlopp, commanding.
Enquirer,	Lieut. W. H. Stayton, commanding.
Huntress,	Lieuts. F. Parker (*) and W. R. Addicks, (*) commanding.
Restless,	Lieut. A. H. Day, (*) commanding.
Kanawha,	Lieut. F. F. Fletcher, (*) commanding.
Sylvia,	Lieut. W. G. Ford, commanding.
Viking,	Cadet B. B. Wygant, (*) commanding.

The "Kanawha," "Sylvia" and "Viking" were almost immediately detached and sent to Cuba. The "New Hampshire" became a school of instruction, and the cutters supplied by the state were useful in exercising boat crews for "distant service." Lieutenant R. P. Forshew rendered valuable service as executive officer of the "New Hampshire."

When I took command of the district all the above vessels, except the "New Hampshire" and the two monitors, were under repairs at the New York navy yard, but through the exertions of their officers five of them were on their stations by July 15th. The duty assigned was to protect the mine fields at Sandy Hook, the Narrows, and Throgg's Neck, and to patrol the entrance to New York harbor. The importance of this duty was self-evident, the vessels were scouts to announce the approach of the foreign foe, but more especially were they necessary for the guidance of domestic and deep sea vessels through the intricate mine fields.

(*) Lieuts. Addicks and Jones belonged to the Massachusetts naval militia; Lieut. F. Parker and Lieut. Day, to the Connecticut militia; Lieut. Fletcher and Cadet Wygant to the regular navy.

The commerce of the great port of New York needed protection at every moment, while the mines had to be maintained intact, ready for instant use. The officers assigned to these vessels required, in addition to seaman-like qualifications, an intimate knowledge of inland waters, as well as decision of character to properly enforce the harbor regulations, and to deal with the merchantmen. The captains of the patrol boats fulfilled these requisites, and performed their duty with a thoroughness which was highly commendable. Many of the officers in addition to their cruises along shore during the previous years, while in the naval militia, had had ten days' experience from May 7th to May 17th. in the service, when the Governor ordered them to tugs patrolling the same mine fields.

About the end of July, the danger from an enemy's fleet having disappeared, the army removed most of the mines, and on July 30th, I proceeded from New York with the "Elfrida," "Free Lance," "Aileen" and "Restless" for a cruise of instruction through Long Island sound; the "Huntress" joining the squadron on August 2d. It was a most valuable experience for all. The squadron was kept at close distance most of the time, and the various commanders vied with one another in perfecting fleet evolutions. The target practice was fair, and the night attacks at Fisher's Island showed that the men were alert, and could be soon taught to appreciate war conditions. The vessels were handled well, especially in going in and out of harbors at night. The squadron returned to New York on August 9th.

The next service performed by the naval militia, composing the auxiliary naval force, was the patrol work at Montauk Point. On August 11th the "Aileen," Lieutenant W. H. Stayton commanding, was sent to Fort Pond Bay to report to Passed Assistant Surgeon Macgruder, U. S. quarantine hospital service, and on August 14th I arrived there on the "Restless." The proper courtesies were exchanged with the army officials on shore. Subsequently, on August 24th, the "Restless" was relieved by the "Elfrida." Relative to the duty performed at Montauk, I quote from the excellent report of Lieutenant Stayton submitted to me:

“ The work was of various characters, as follows :

“ 1. Establishing Quarantine Grounds.—After consultation with Surgeon Macgruder, the quarantine grounds were selected and buoyed off just to the westward of Rocky Point. All incoming transports, numbering more than thirty, were met and conducted to their anchorage by the auxiliary vessels. The transport fleet was kept anchored in proper and convenient formation, the loaded transports nearer the harbor, and those unloaded, but still in quarantine, well to the westward. Instructions were given and all preparations made for conducting the transports to safe anchorages in the event of a blow.

“ 2. Maintaining Quarantine Regulations.—Both by day and night the transports were prevented from communicating with other vessels or with the shore. This required active service, as many as thirty or forty vessels having been met and warned daily.

“ 3. Establishing and Maintaining Harbor Regulations.—After consultation with Surgeon Macgruder and the transportation department of the army, regulations upon this subject were established and enforced. There were but two wharves, one used for quarantine and the other for general purposes. All incoming vessels were stopped and directed to the proper wharf. They were required to anchor in proper formation at convenient points until the facilities for landing permitted the vessel to go to the wharf, due regard being paid to seeing that troops and perishable stores were first landed.

“ 4. Attending to the Landing of Troops.—The vessels were in constant attendance and rendered assistance when requested, and whenever the service could be performed without danger of infection.

“ 5. Carrying Stores to Transports.—Many transports came in short of stores, provisions and medicines. We supplied them with Red Cross, army and stores received from individual contributions. We also met each incoming transport; ascertained the needs of those whose troops could not at once disembark, and to the best of our ability supplied them. The patrol vessels also

performed all possible service for the Red Cross, purchasing, carrying and distributing stores necessary for the immediate relief of the sick.

“Various miscellaneous services were also performed, such as transporting sick officers; taking the convalescents out for air; carrying general officers to places they desired to visit officially; taking dispatches to and from men-of-war in quarantine. This latter item, while seemingly unimportant, resulted in getting the ‘St. Paul’ and ‘Harvard’ away from Fort Pond Bay sooner than they would otherwise have left. Telegrams could not be sent on board the vessels, and would have remained at the office for days. We took the telegrams, opened them, and delivered them by megaphone, saving many days charter price of the American liners.

“In conclusion, I have the honor to report the very valuable services of Surgeon J. C. MacEvitt, of the ‘Jason,’ who went ashore, and, during that vessel’s stay, performed arduous and valuable service in charge of a ward in the hospital. Maj.-Gen. Young, U. S. A., requested me to specially mention Surgeon MacEvitt’s services and requests your commendation thereof. Lieut. Jones was indefatigable in his efforts to relieve the sick, and was very successful. I trust you will commend him for his zeal, faithfulness, and humanity. A better estimate can be made of the extent of the services of the patrol fleet at Fort Pond Bay, when it is mentioned that the vessels averaged more than eighteen hours per day under way.”

In drawing your attention to the excellent service of Surgeon MacEvitt and Lieutenant Jones, mentioned by Lieutenant Stayton, I would state that Lieutenant Stayton’s indefatigable work at Fort Pond Bay was worthy of the highest praise. He was ably assisted by Lieutenant M. A. Orlopp, commanding the “Elfrida,” and subsequently by Lieutenant T. C. Zerega, who relieved Lieutenant Orlopp.

About the end of August the auxiliary fleet was put out of commission, and the monitors returned to League Island. Prior

to this, however, the efficiency of the naval militia had been further tested, when, on July 16th, the cruiser "Buffalo" and the transport "Rainbow" were ordered to New York from Norfolk. No regular officers were at the time available. Lieut. W. H. Stayton was ordered to command the former vessel, and Lieut. E. N. Harmon the latter. Lieut. R. P. Forshew, Ensigns E. N. Walbridge, F. P. Hill, and S. L. Crossing joined the "Buffalo," and Ensign E. N. Robinson the "Rainbow." This was the first instance when vessels of large tonnage had been completely officered by the naval militia. The work was creditably performed; the vessels made quick passages to New York, and the officers were complimented on the manner in which the ships were handled.

While the New York signal stations were not officially under the charge of the commanding officer of the third district, of the auxiliary naval force, their headquarters were on board the "New Hampshire," and Captain Bartlett was also chief of that service. Through his courtesy, I had ample opportunities of judging how its duties were performed. Lieut. H. L. Satterlee (formerly captain on the Governor's staff) and Lieuts. F. B. Anderson and E. C. Weeks, and Assistant Paymaster W. L. Sawyer, were on the staff of Captain Bartlett at Washington, while Lieut. Alexander Duane and Ensign W. H. Gunning were stationed at New York. Capt. Bartlett repeatedly informed me that these officers performed most intelligent and loyal duty. The outlying stations at Montauk, Quogue and Fire Island were in charge of petty officers, who were left greatly to their own discretion at remote points, and fulfilled the requirements of the positions to the satisfaction of the navy department.

All the duties mentioned under this caption, namely, on board monitors, converted yachts, and in the coast signal service, were those to which the state had trained its naval militia, under suggestions from Washington.

III. The Cruise of the U. S. S. "Yankee."—It should be remembered that, during April, current opinion, as expressed

in many newspapers, still maintained that the "Maine" had been blown up by an interior explosion, and that the modern battleship was an intricate piece of mechanism, which might prove most disastrous to its crew in time of action. Consequently, the navy found it extremely difficult to obtain recruits, and called upon the naval militia to man sea-going vessels. New York volunteered for the "Yankee," and this merchant vessel was converted into a man-of-war and placed on her station in eleven days after her crew was mustered into the navy. The "Yankee" was the first of her type to be ready for sea; her crew was mustered into the navy twelve days before any national guard organization entered the army from this state. She was the first vessel manned by naval militiamen to be under fire; the last ship to leave action at the Santiago battle of June 6th, and the naval force of New York was in an engagement before any other volunteer organization of the United States.

The thanks of New York are due to Commander W. H. Brownson, U. S. N., for his qualities as a fair and just commanding officer, and for the opportunity he gave the "Yankee's" men to show their excellent gunnery, which won the applause of Sampson's fleet. Their previous training had been confined to coast defense exercise, but they soon mastered ship technicalities, and left the navy, on September 2d, with an unexcelled record, amid the plaudits of their fellow-citizens. The report of Commander Duncan is appended and gives the details of the "Yankee's" cruise.

IV. The Lessons to be Derived From the War.—1. The general line of policy pursued by this state during the past should not be changed. The personnel of the naval militia is well fitted to defend the immediate coast of the state. If it be desired to perfect the officers and men for deep-sea duty, the general government must provide suitable tools, in the way of modern ships. This has been recommended by me in many annual reports.

2. If the general government provides these ships, it would naturally expect a high standard of excellence both in officers and men. This standard can be obtained by the enactment of a

national naval reserve law. All naval militiamen who pass the examinations should belong to the naval reserve.

3. There would thus exist two forces, progressing together towards the perfection set by the navy; that of the state, sufficient in the future, as in the past, to protect its own harbors; that of the government, to form in time of war its auxiliary naval force. The former to be an organization. The latter a collection of individuals, professionally developed from the state force and from the merchant marine.

4. The national naval reserve should have its own ranks and ratings, and they should be distinct from those of the navy. No one should be entitled to enter the navy as an officer in time of war unless he has served in the naval reserve. All officers and men of the naval militias, who served in the late war, should be eligible for the reserve; their ranks and ratings to be determined by a standard government examination.

5. The general government should standardize the naval militia of the various states, by refusing to give arms or equipments unless a certain minimum of excellence was reached. The scope of examinations for entrance to the naval reserve should be published, and a certain proportion of the naval militiamen of each state should have passed it before any aid was supplied by Congress. A special examination should be given to men wishing to join the signal service.

Some of our best officers were not able to enter the navy, although experts in the branch which the navy department had encouraged. The country thus lost the services of many of our most enthusiastic and intelligent rank and file, for the reason that they could not pass the strict requirements of an ensign's or lieutenant's examination.

Others, who were the first to volunteer, received commissions far below their deserts. The case of Lieutenant S. D. Greene was especially noticeable. He graduated with the highest honors at the naval academy, and had served in the naval militia of the state since it was organized. Notwithstanding this record he

was given a commission as junior lieutenant on board the "Yankee;" the reasons assigned by the department being that the complement of that ship permitted no higher rank, and that certain members of his class were only junior lieutenants. Many non-graduates, who held lower positions in several different states, and who subsequently entered the navy, were given higher grades. The inference from the department's ruling would naturally be that it is a detriment to graduate as a "star" at the naval academy, and to promptly offer one's services to the country. Such examples of injustice can under a proper system be avoided in the future.

6. The experience of the war has shown that certain minor changes should be made, such as the following: Uniform of enlisted men should be that of the navy, as far as material is concerned, and similar in design to the regulars, with the addition of a suitable state and organization distinguishing mark, which can be removed, if necessary, in time of war. The uniform should be purchased from the navy, thereby saving a large expense to the state. Paymasters should be bonded, and their duties should be the same as those in the regular service. The physical examination should be that of the navy.

7. Although superficially not germane to this report, I have considered it my duty to dwell upon the subject of federal and state relationship, as the question will undoubtedly be brought up in official quarters at Washington. The attempt may be made to centralize all military and naval power at the capital, and to minimize the service which the volunteers have rendered the country. Certain members of the naval militia are in favor of this proposition, but others who have also seen duty in the navy still believe most firmly that the nine years of effort spent in building up the state naval forces have been productive of excellent results, even when tested by service and a war, for which the whole country was but partially prepared. They feel positive that the quick, patriotic response of the naval militia to every call made upon it, that the sentiment developed for the navy by those who had long interested themselves in marine study, far

outweighed any technical shortcomings which were quickly obliterated after a few weeks' service afloat.

I, therefore, respectfully suggest that the state of New York continue its generous support to the naval militia, and that it urge upon Congress the immediate organization of a national naval reserve on the plan outlined above, not to take the place of the present state force, but to supplement it. There will thus still exist local organizations as schools for naval education; continuing the coast defense training until the individual members can graduate into a national corps. Such a process of evolution accords more with the spirit of our institutions rather than that revolutionary one which centers all power in the general government; for the government works slowly, and at a distance, in times of peace, and does not always feel the pulse of the people who must naturally be relied upon to furnish volunteers in time of war.

In addition to the persons previously mentioned in this report, thanks are due to the Red Cross Society and to the Naval Reserve Association for hospital stores and supplies and to the Sons of the Revolution for colors presented.

Passed Assistant Surgeon J. S. King and Assistant Paymaster A. R. Pardington were most faithful and zealous in the performance of the duties of their departments.

Mention should also be made of those officers who volunteered and who were not accepted by the navy, although they were well fitted for coast defense duty. Actuated by the highest motives of patriotism and without official reward, they performed many days of unostentatious service at a time when certain civilians, manifestly unfit for government positions, were clamoring for high military place and reward. The officers of the naval militia of this state, with one exception, stood by their men and received junior commissions, or not, as their country saw fit to bestow. The lesson thus set should not be forgotten.

Respectfully,

J. W. MILLER,

Captain, N. M.