

SANSPEUR

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INTRODUCTION

Those growing up since the end of the draft and who have lived through the “be all you can be” times of the modern United States Army may find it hard to conceive of a period when large numbers of patriotic, qualified citizens were barred from serving their country and state in the Armed Forces in general and the National Guard in particular.

However, in the 1930’s veteran Black New Jersey citizens found it impossible to fulfill their desire to continue their military service so nobly started on the battlefields of France in World War I. For that was the era of the segregated Army and the National Defense troop structure did not allow for the organization of any “Colored” units in the New Jersey National Guard.

In order to begin to understand the true meaning of the cause of this group of Jerseyians one must look to the role of the infantry regiment in the American Army, the unique place of the National Guard of the United States in American society and the American military and the historical trails that lead to the 1930’s. Once the paths are developed one can then look at the remarkable people who set in place a unit which would be called to duty on March 1941.

THE REGIMENT

The American military in general, and the Army in particular, is the product of a democracy and owes its organization and place in society based upon the history of the American democracy. It is made from the citizens of the democracy and not only reflects its character but in turn in its own way manipulates the society into its own mold.

The heart of the Army is the infantry. Not only is the infantry the largest single branch of the Army but it is the top rung of the ladder that is the Army; all other branches are in support. All actions of the Army, all plans, campaigns, and combat operations start and end with the infantry.

“To trace the history of the infantry is to trace the history of war itself, for where ever men have fought, Infantry men have been the key element.”ⁱ Infantry combat has remained constant since the first primitive battles - more instinct than design. It is the great equalizer. Regardless of changes in tactics, modernization of equipment or the institution of new concepts, infantry combat always comes down to a few individual soldiers coming together to live or die in a personal closeness no other element of society can experience or understand.

The building block of the American infantry from the Revolution to the end of World War II has been the regiment. From the time the 1st Regiment was established on 4 June 1784, the infantry regiment has been the main stay of organization and identification for the soldier.

From the end of the Revolutionary War through the era of the War of 1812 until the Civil War the number of regiments in the Regular Army expanded and contracted

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from one to thirty to ten. At the start of the Civil War President Lincoln could not rely on the Regular Army for the manpower to aggressively confront the Confederacy.

Accordingly, he authorized and called for thirty-nine regiments of volunteer infantry to serve. By the end of the war 1,700 volunteer regiments had been raised across the North, most by the various statesⁱⁱ. It is these regiments that are the key to the 1st Separate Battalion since they were organized by the states and initially supported with state funds.

These volunteer regiments were normally raised from a geographic area. Especially from 1861 - 1863, the regiments were made up of volunteers who joined for the "cause." They were friends, neighbors, husbands, sons and fathers, and brothers. They were the heart of their communities: farmers, craftsmen and artisans. They reflected the areas from which they came and, in turn, brought the war to the area from which they came. In most cases, once the regiment was formed and mustered it stayed together until destroyed in combat or demobilized.

In 1863 the large scale acceptance of Negro troops began and colored regiments were formed in a manner similar to the white regiments. By the end of the war 138 regiments of colored infantry had been formed.

At the end of the Civil War, the regular Army was reduced to 25 Regiments of infantry. With the start of the Spanish American War in 1888 and the need for additional forces the United States again turned to volunteers without expanding the regular force. A new Volunteer Army of the United States was created and raised primarily by calling to duty some 141 infantry regiments from the Organized Militia.

In the June, 1916, National Defense Act, the concept of regular army and Militia infantry regiments was continued when 31 regular and 110 National Guard (militia)

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regiments were authorized. During the period following World War I, the American public wanted to forget warfare for the most part. The troop structure was reduced leaving thirty-eight Regular Army regiments and 80 National Guard.

In 1940 with the fear of a new war growing, 40 National Guard infantry regiments were inducted into Federal Service, with 36 more to follow the next year. By war's end over 317 National Guard Infantry Regiments had been placed on Federal Active Duty.

In World War I as in the Civil War it was to the volunteer and militia (National Guard) infantry regiments that the Black citizens turned in order to serve in the Army. It was to these same regiments that the Black citizen of New Jersey turned to serve in during the 1920's through 1930's. These regiments were National Guard.

THE NATIONAL GUARD

As a result of the Revolution and the general fear the “Founding Fathers” of the United States had of a large standing army and a strong central government, the constitution contained provisions that maintained the concept of a part-time militia under the control of the various states. While there is no mention of the regular army in the Constitution, the militia, which eventually became the current National Guard, is specifically supported. This has led to a National Guard as a distinctly American institution. As such it is a unique, complex, and unfathomable defense institution. One that can only be really understood by those who have served in it.

The National Guard roots its strength and its inextinguishable vitality in its “hometown” nature. The key organizational principle now as always is that of the development of military units manned and officered at the community level, deriving spiritual cohesion from home associations and neighborly sentiments.ⁱⁱⁱ

As a public/military institution, the National Guard is one of the most successful enduring pressure groups in the American system. It is a highly organized military organization with ties to Governors and access into Congressional offices. As a result of its connections into the state the Guard has links to all political parties. Historically, it has been the source of patronage for governors and many Guard officers have engaged in partisan activity.^{iv}

Community groups and individual citizens have been drawn to the Guard by a desire for military service and the satisfaction associated with it: the prestige of uniform and rank, involvement in a cause, excitement and a role to play in times of crises.^v For

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most of its members, involvement in the National Guard is not a minor past-time but a major commitment. Even if not a career, it is a sustained activity, central to lives, absorbing time and commanding deep devotion.

A commission provides prestige in the military and the civilian community. Some members utilize membership to seek satisfaction of rank and prestige in an otherwise failed life.^{vi}

The fact remains that Federal assistance is needed to make the National Guard a true reserve. But it is only by the continued dependence upon long established local and state loyalties and unit traditions that a sufficient flow of volunteer manpower could be made available to keep up a reasonable level of forces. This flow of volunteers into militia and volunteer infantry regiments worked in the Civil War.

THE CIVIL WAR

The Civil War brought it all together for the first time for Blacks in America: the need for volunteers, the desire to serve the nation in the military, the need by the various states to enlist volunteer infantry regiments and the need to make a mark for self-fulfillment.

Prior to the Civil War American Negroes had few rights as citizens and in fifteen states they were denied humanity: they were articles of property. “The Civil War wrought a revolution in the Negro’s status, North as well as South. It brought freedom, citizenship, and eventually, equal civil and political rights (in theory at least) to all Negroes.”^{vii} The impetus of wartime change impelled the desegregation of schools and transportation facilities in many parts of the North.

“The Negro was not merely a passive recipient of the benefits conferred upon him by the [Civil War]...The contribution of the Negro soldiers helped the North win the war and convinced many Northern people that the Negro deserved to be treated as a man and an equal....”^{viii}

Initially Blacks were denied the ability to enlist in the military. The Civil War was seen as a “White Man’s war” directed at the restoration of the Union. Two of the main objections to the enlistment of Negro troops were a deep seated racial prejudice of most Northerners; and, most people in the North believed that the colored men, especially ex-slaves, were too servile and cowardly to make good soldiers.^{ix} The enlistment of Negro troops in the Union Army beginning in late 1862 was one of the most significant events of the Civil War. But even before they were enrolled in the Army Blacks made

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major contributions to the war effort in the North, over 200,000 freedmen served as laborers, teamsters, cooks and scouts.

After the Battle of Antietam and the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, slavery and the rights of Blacks became an issue. In the end the sympathy aroused by colored victims of the Draft Riots, the practical need for additional volunteers in the Army and the political activism of groups and individuals such as Frederick Douglass compelled the Congress to authorize the raising of Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiments.

Black leaders knew that if the Black man proved his patriotism and courage on the field of battle , the nation would be morally obligated to grant him first-class citizenship.^x According to Frederick Douglass:

Once let the Black man get upon his person the brass letters, US, let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship in the United States.^{xi}

By March, 1863, Northern states were actively recruiting into Negro regiments. “Yesterday a slave, to-day a freeman; yesterday a civilian, to-day a soldier.”^{xii} By August fourteen regiments were in the field and twenty-four more were organizing.

With widespread prejudice in the ranks of the Federal regiments against the enlistment of Negroes and the prevailing belief that Negro troops would be cowardly, if

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the men of a colored regiments should fail, as for various reasons many white regiments had done, their failure would be attributed to their race.^{xiii}

One of the regiments raised and in the field was the 54th Massachusetts into which Frederick Douglass' two sons were enlisted with the oldest, Lewis, obtaining the rank of Sergeant Major. The 54th's attack on Ft. Wagner, North Carolina, and the resulting death of a large number of its men and its Colonel, Robert Shaw, in action made an impression on the North and convinced the public that Negro troops could serve in the line as indicated by Confederate officer, LT. Irerell Jones: "The Negroes fought gallantly, and were headed by as brave a colonel as ever lived."^{xiv}

Sergeant Major Douglass wrote after the attack of Fort Wagner that..."this regiment [the 54th] has established its reputation as a fighting regiment...Remember if I die I die in a good cause, I wish we had a hundred thousand colored troops we would put an end to this war."^{xv}

For the Black soldiers it was clear that they were fighting for more than just the restoration of the Union. As Christopher A. Fleetwood wrote in 1863: "This year has brought about many changes...[many] would have thought impossible. The close of the year finds me a soldier for the cause of my race. May God bless the cause and enable me in the coming year to forward it on."^{xvi}

The issue of equal pay between Black and White regiments allows an opportunity to understand the depth of the Negro soldier's commitment: "We did not come to fight for money...We came not only to make men of ourselves, but of our other colored brothers at home...not money...principle that made us men when we enlisted."^{xvii}

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“We ask for equal pay...not because we set great value upon money than...human liberty...money is mere trash; but we contend for equal pay...upon the principle : that if we receive equal pay...when we go into the war, we hope to receive equal rights and privileges when we come out of the war.”^{xviii}

Finally, as Corporal Thomas Long wrote: “If we hadn’t become sojers, all might have gone back as it was before;...but now things can never go back, because we have showed our energy & our courage & our naturally man hood.”^{xix}

Black soldiers themselves perceived a great personal stake in the war. They fought for their own freedom and beyond that for the freedom of all four million slaves. Many, especially those who had been free before the war, also fought for equal citizenship in a restored Union. Free and slave alike, they fought to prove their manhood in a society that prized courage as the hallmark of manhood.^{xx}

The first true steps were taken by Blacks in the military to mold the democracy and address the more detailed issues faced by their community during the Civil War. The next steps would be taken in World War I...

WORLD WAR I

At the start of the Great War, the War Department General Staff had neither plans nor policies for the 15 to 70,000 members of Colored National Guard regiments. The Selective Draft channels had developed a philosophy that Colored men should be given a role in the war's combat phase by the creation of a complete division of Negro draftees. The result of this effort was the first Black combat division the 92nd Division (National Army). The problem was the numerous small National Guard units and regiments.

This problem was exacerbated by a series of riots within the Regular Army's 25th Infantry Regiment (Colored). If the discipline could breakdown in a regular army unit, what would happen in the lesser trained and controlled National Guard units? In a typical example of "...Events [making] policy not policy [making] events..."^{xxi} the National Guard units were embarked for Europe in an expeditious manner and dumped on the French. Once turned over, in contravention to the policy for white units, French helmets and arms were issued and the regiments were reorganized to French specifications and assigned missions along side French formations. In essence, it was the last the Americans saw of the units until after the Armistice.^{xxii}

"...It is safe to say that the conditions under which these Black defenders of democracy fared were strikingly similar...All were made to feel the sting of segregation, demoralizing in its nature, but in effect this came to naught, for these men were one hundred per cent American, and neither physical hardship nor mental adversities sufficed to extinguish for them that beacon light on the horizon which indicative of an everlasting Democracy for all the people of the earth..."^{xxiii}

Three of the regiments, the 370th, 371st and the 372nd, went to the 157th Infantry Division (The “Red Hand Division”) which had been decimated at Verdun. The 370th Infantry Regiment was a National Guard Regiment officered by Black officers while the 371st was made up of draftees from the South and all of its officers were white initially. In its turn, the 372nd was a composite National Guard Regiment with a mix of White and Black officers. These regiments were individually deployed with the French even though they were loosely organized under the 93rd Infantry Division which was not fielded until the end of the war.

Upon first arriving in Europe in April, 1918, the members of the 372d Regiment were utilized on work details in the ports and supply depots. This misuse of combat troops combined with ill feelings between white and black officers and noncommissioned officers led to a feeling of disquiet and disgust. The issues eased when the Regiment moved to the front on 27 May and then joined the Red Hand in June.

They were warmly received by the French for “...all were of the true Democratic Spirit.”^{xxiv} However the problems between the white and black officers persisted causing constant dissatisfaction which confused the French. In the end the White Regimental commander had all black officers except two chaplains and two dentists, relieved and reassigned.

“While in this sector the elimination of colored officers was begun. As far back as May when the regiment was stationed in...the seeds of discord had been sown...orders were issued that were...unmilitary...separation of colored officers and white officers...at the officer’s mess...In a word, the Democracy for which the men were supposed to be fighting was ignored and ridiculed by the conduct and attitude of the higher officials of

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this Regiment... A barrier was established between the white and colored officers, which seriously hampered the progress of the Regiment...”^{xxv}

These problems persisted to the point of even affecting the Noncommissioned officers and leading to a fear that the unit would be turned into stevedores. Until the Regiment went into the line at the Meuse- Argonne issues continued to churn. In an almost anti-climatic note, once the Regiment entered combat it performed well giving a good account of itself to the point where it was awarded the French Croix de Guerre for heroism as a unit and 102 individual awards for gallantry under fire.

By the end of the War, the 372nd had proved itself. As an American unit without experience, it went into the line with the best the French had and was recognized as a courageous fighting unit. As a National Guard unit, the Regiment proved that in spite of the expectations of the Regular Army that the National Guard could field an effective fighting force. Finally, as a Black infantry outfit, the members of the Regiment proved that they had the discipline, courage, talent and training to overcome all opponents, including even the Germans.

THE FIRST SEPARATE BATTALION

“...[T]hrough the twittering twenties and the thrifty thirties of this Century, a man had to have a degree of dedication to and an inborn belief in the need for such service or he could not have been a good ...Guardsmen...”^{xxvi} Now where is this “inner belief” more clearly demonstrated than in the New Jersey State Militia.

“To the Honorable Commander of the New Jersey Guard: The undersigned, the citizens and legal residents of the City of Pleasantville, County of Atlantic and State of New Jersey, recognizing the great importance and value to this City and its people of the New Jersey Guard, respectfully request and urge you to create and establish in the City...a colored unit of ... the Guard.”^{xxvii} In reply to such requests and petitions for a Colored National Guard unit, the Adjutant General of New Jersey as the commander of the State’s National Guard expressed the opinion of the Militia Bureau under instructions from the Secretary of War limiting the strength of the National Guard, and had advised that no authorizations for additional units were available. In addition the State had not been provided the funds to fully establish the units already authorized by the Federal government. The New Jersey National Guard considered the issue closed.

However, pressure increased on the Adjutant General to address the issue of Black citizens joining the National Guard. In a October, 1927, letter to then governor, A. Harry Moore, the Adjutant General surfaced the concept of a state force: “...the only alternative would be to organize the proposed regiment as distinctive state troops...”^{xxviii} The idea took hold.

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Then in a letter dated December 20, 1927, the Adjutant General seemed to reverse himself by stating that Section 61 of the National Defense Act limited the rights of states to the organizing of police and constabulary forces. Accordingly he felt that under federal law the state did not have the right to establish a state militia force other than the Federally recognized National Guard.^{xxix} But matters were beyond this consideration.

In response numerous requests and petitions from World War I veterans who had served with distinction at Alsace - Lorraine and the Meuse-Argonne and hundreds of non-prior service citizens, the New Jersey Legislature passed and the Governor approved Chapter 149, Laws of 1930 as a "...Supplement to an act entitled 'An act concerning the militia of the State' (Revision of 1925), ...The Adjutant General of the State is hereby authorized and directed upon the adoption of the necessary appropriation therefor by the Legislature, to organize and equip, within three months thereafter, a colored battalion of infantry in the State of New Jersey. Such a battalion, when organized, shall become a part of the State Militia of this State, and shall be subject to all the provisions of the act...The officers of such battalion shall be commissioned by the Governor, as other militia officers are now commissioned..."^{xxx}

The Adjutant General of New Jersey continued to question the wisdom of the legislation and the establishment of a unit outside of the authorized troop structure. "The high degree of efficiency and morale which the military and naval forces of this State have attained is due to a great extent to their freedom from the injection in any manner of political influences....The Governor...[and it is assumed The Adjutant General]...will find themselves involved in complications which would prove extremely embarrassing and hard to extricate themselves from..."^{xxxi}The question of Federal restrictions on State

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authority continued to bother The Adjutant General when in October, 1931, he formally submitted a request for legal review of the issue to the State's Attorney General. The Attorney General in a classic move returned the question to the Adjutant General stating that the issue was a "military matter".^{xxxii}

The resolution to the legal issue of the formation of a state militia force separate for the National Guard was provided by the Judge Advocate General of the War Department Militia Bureau in January, 1933: "...The authority reposed in Congress to provide for the organization, arming and discipline of the militia when exercised by it, as it has been in the National Defense Act is exclusive....a state can not legally maintain military forces in time of peace, organized militia or otherwise..."^{xxxiii} By the time the legal opinion was issued, the organization of the 1st Separate Battalion was under way. To address the concerns, in 1937 under the provisions of New Jersey State Statutes, the name of the unit was adjusted from 1st Separate Battalion, New Jersey State Militia to 1st Separate Battalion, New Jersey State Guard.

The Adjutant General was flooded with letters where "I...do respectfully request your consideration for a commission in [a Battalion of Colored Infantry]. I am connected with the police department of [Wildwood] and a member of the postal team. Served overseas with 807 Infantry in Argonne Offensive...My Grandfather served in War of 1865. My father served in the Spanish American War. My brothers served in the 10th U.S. Calvary on border..."^{xxxiv}

In spite of the fact that its actions might be in violation of Federal law, the New Jersey Legislature passed the Appropriation Bill of 1931 which included an item of \$40,000 with which to commence the organization of the 1st Separate Battalion, New Jersey

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State Militia. This battalion of Black New Jersey soldiers was subsequently ordered “...organized, designated and stationed...” by General Order 10, July 15, 1931. Owing to the preponderance of colored population in and around the cities of Newark and Atlantic City it was decided that the first two companies organized would be located there.

“The Colored people of Essex County and the State are anxiously awaiting disposition of the Colored Battalion which was sponsored by our good Assemblyman, Dr Hargrave. The Newark Herald as the leading colored newspaper of the State is interested in seeing the Battalion get away to a good start.”^{xxxv} In response, The Adjutant General requested that the Assemblyman, Dr. Hargrave, recommend a committee to screen the population of Newark for suitable membership in the company in Newark.

Once authorized by the Legislature requests for commissions as officers in the battalion flooded in as well as inquires about enlistment. Typical was J. Mercer Burrell who offered his services as “...the first colored man from the State of N.J. to be commissioned an officer during the war...Active in 3 veterans organizations...9 years in the practice of law in the City of Newark...Headed the committee which assisted in securing the appropriation of \$40,000 for the Battalion...Thoroughly familiar with the life of colored citizens throughout the State enjoying their confidence and support...”^{xxxvi} Mr. Burrell wanted to be a recruiter.

Typical of the early history of the battalion, Company A was mustered into State service of 25 September 1931 when fifty-three men met at the company’s drill hall in an old theater at 16th and Littleton Avenues in Newark. The Company’s first action was to elect its officers who would be screened and qualified by a New Jersey National Guard qualification board. Subsequently, A Company’s first officers were:

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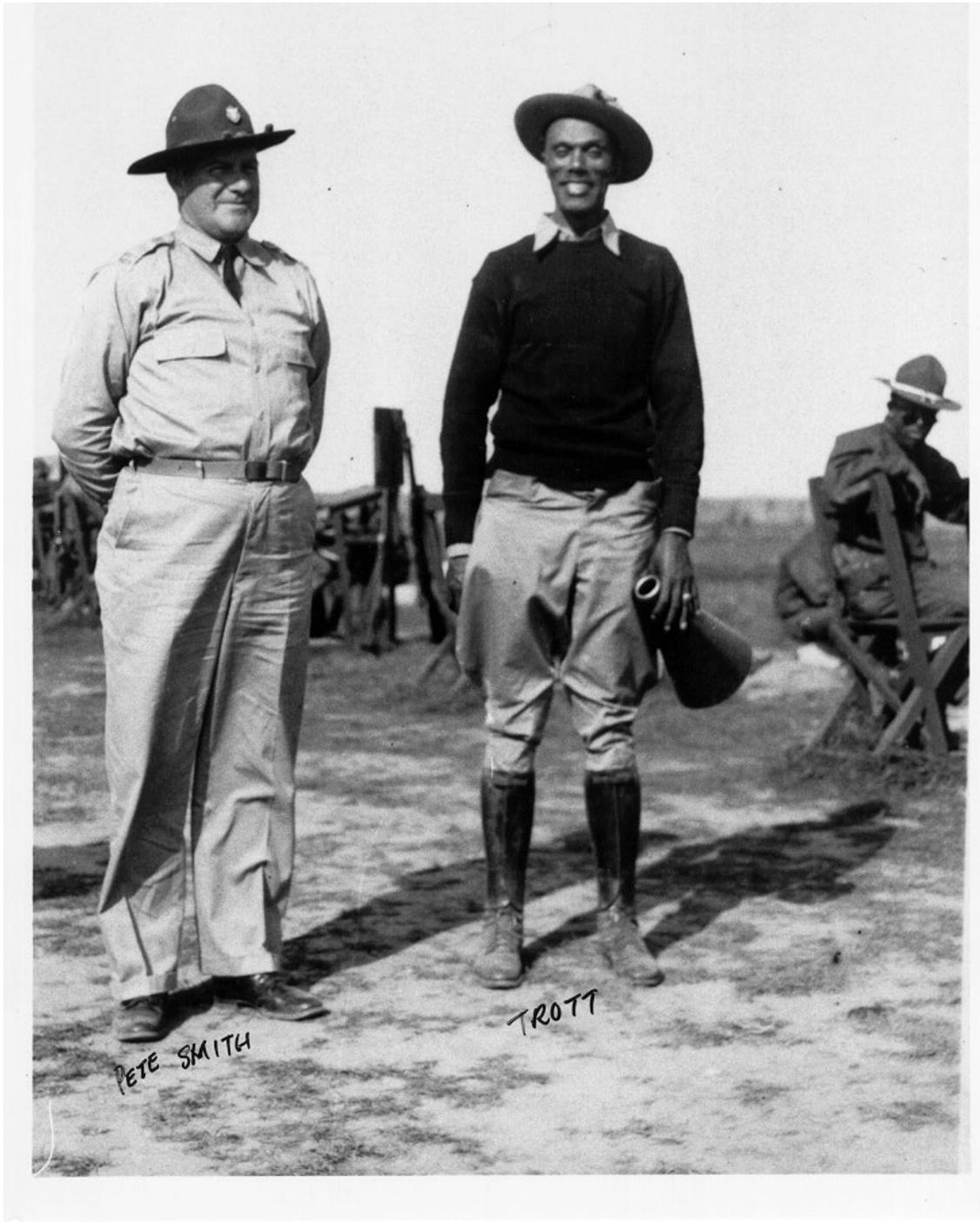
Captain William D. Nabors

First Lieutenant Robert D. Trott

Second Lieutenant Henry C. Collins.

After his appointment Captain Nabors observed that: “We found at the beginning, a very decided disillusionment on the part of the majority of the Negro Citizens over the aftermath of the past war, particularly as to their expectation of the recognition of their rights and privileges as citizens were concerned. I am happy to now see an improvement...Out of the influence this organization will wield...I see the possibilities of a profound improvement in the morale and revival of that inherent loyalty of a very neglected group of citizens...It will well be worth the expense and labor connected with the organization of this Battalion.^{xxxvii} To this First Lieutenant Trott added that “I assure you that I shall put forth my best effort in helping to make the organization what it should be; one of the best units in the State, in order that it will not only reflect credit on all colored people of the State, but to the military establishment and the entire people of the State of New Jersey...”^{xxxviii} Captain Nabors believed in his ability and his responsibility to the point that prior to 1940 he had resigned from the New Jersey State Militia and been appointed as the military advisor to the President of Liberia.^{xxxix}

The Company continued to meet and drill two days each month and to receive its field training at Camp Sea Girt, the State National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt, New Jersey, for two weeks each summer.



Captain Peter Smith, Instructor/Inspector; Robert Trott, Company A, 1st Separate Battalion, NJSM



1934 - Camp Sea Girt, NJ - Rifle Team, Company C, 1st Separate Battalion, New Jersey State Militia

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As the word of the Battalion spread applications for membership continued to be sent to the Adjutant General: “[I]...served throughout the World War as Bn. Surg. 3rd Bn 372nd Infantry being entered active service July 17, 1917. This regiment was part of the 157th Division French. I myself have been decorated with the Croix de Guerre with a bronze Star...”^{x1}

B Company mustered into State Service in Atlantic City on September 23, 1931, at the All Wars Memorial Building, Kentucky and Adriatic Avenues, and the members immediately elected as their officers:

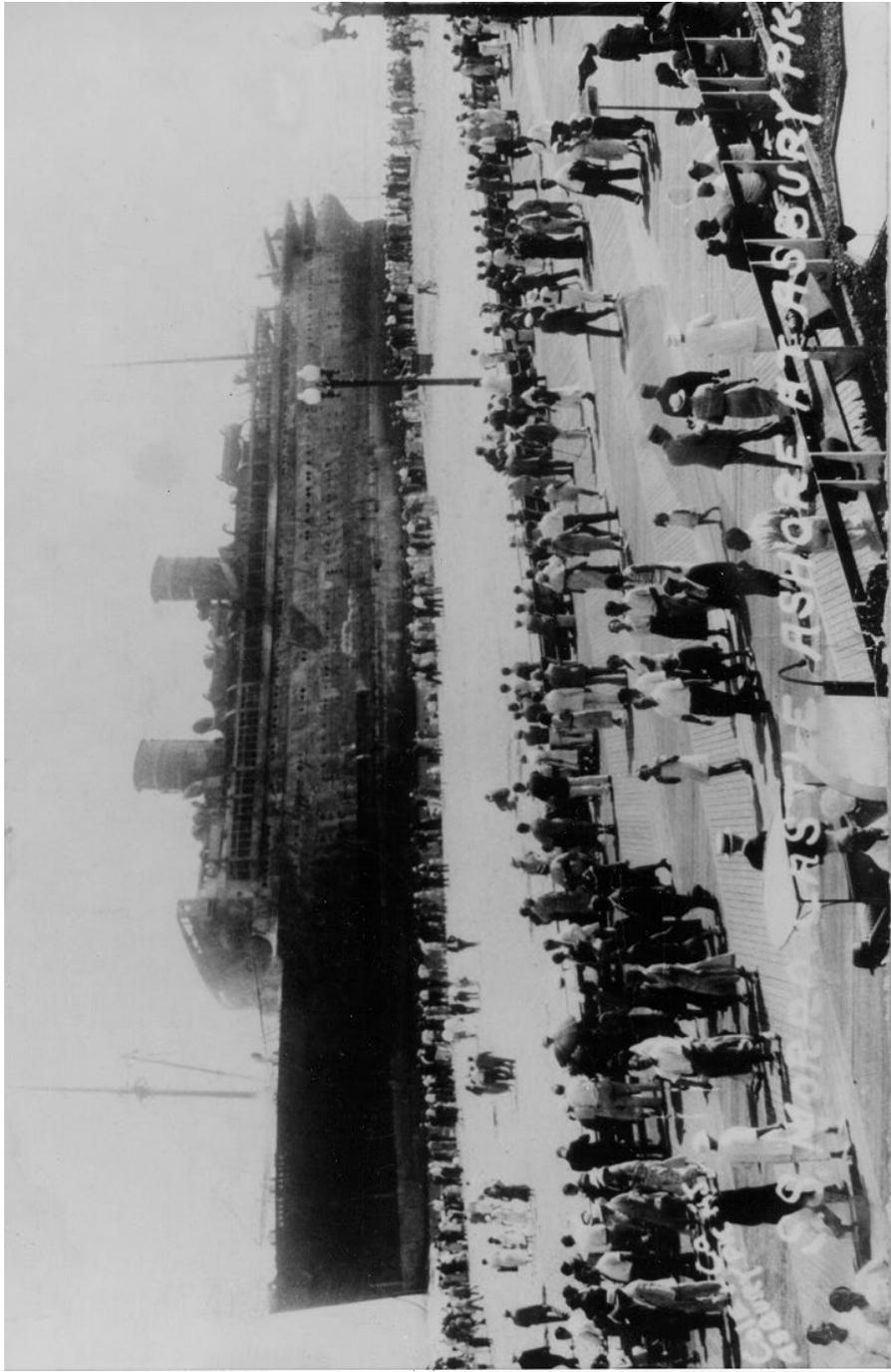
Captain Thomas M. Gregory

First Lieutenant Richard R. Queen

Second Lieutenant Edwin W. Lockwood

In his letter to Adjutant General Gilkyson applying for a position in the 1st Separate Battalion, Army Reserve Lieutenant Richard Queen presented a resume that was typical of his peers entering the battalion. Lt Queen was a veteran of five years with the 10th Cavalry and was commissioned in October, 1917. He served in France with the famed 369th Infantry Regiment.

On September 8, 1934, upon reporting for training at Camp Sea Girt, with its sister company, B Company was immediately thrown into the rescue of the victims of the *S.S. Morro Castle* which was burning off shore. Although the weather was stormy to hurricane proportions, the men of the two State Militia units never stopped their efforts until the drowning were rescued and the dead recovered. Members of the two companies who were professional undertakers and assistants established a field morgue in the Post Exchange building at the camp; while others performed rescue duties and security.



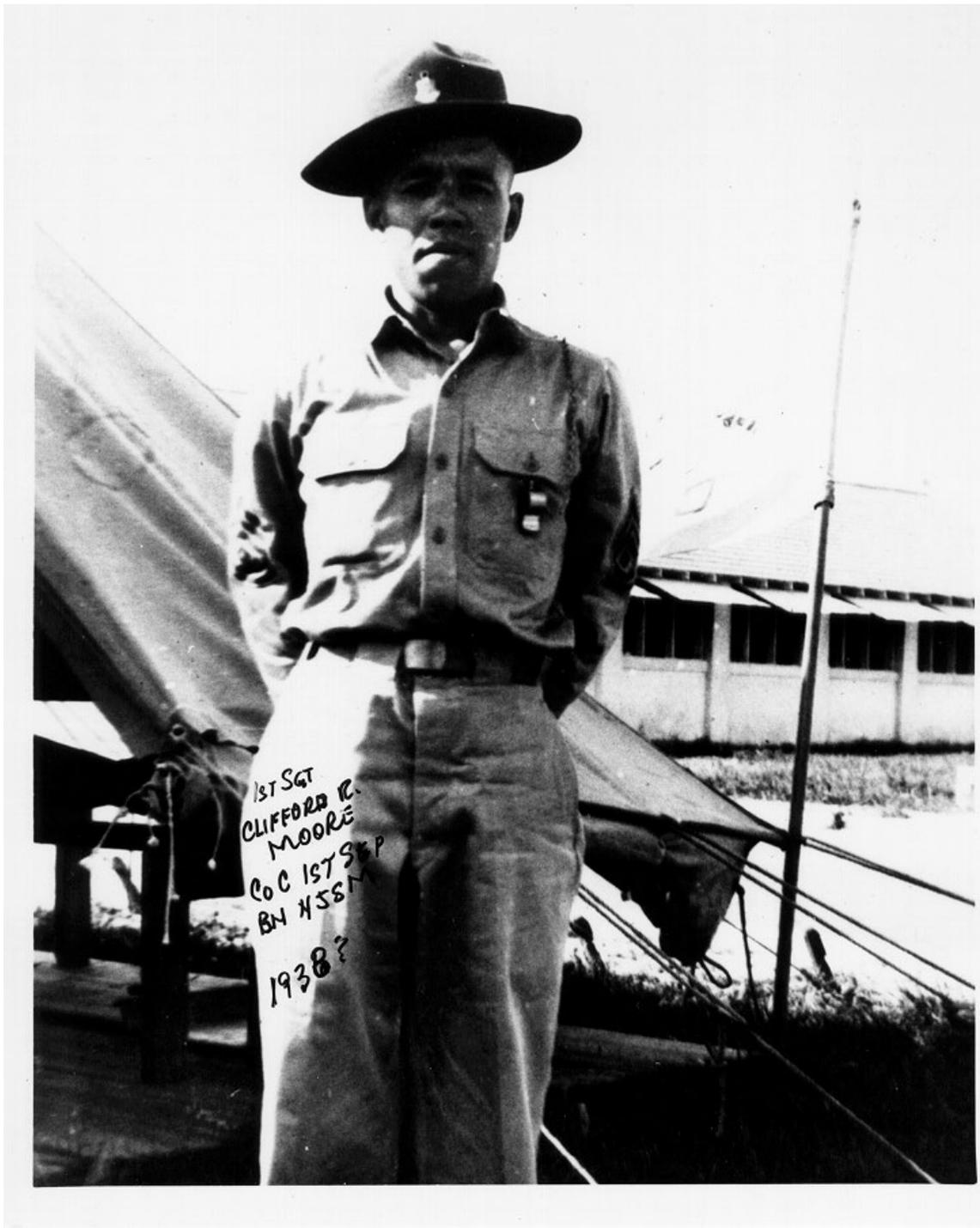
Aug 1934 - Asbury Park, NJ - S.S. Morro Castle
The actions of A and B Companies of the 1st Separate
resulted in the State Legislature fully funding the
the other two companies of the battalion and a Headquarters

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For their actions the New Jersey Soldiers of A and B Companies of the First Separate Battalion received citations for “...courage, courtesy and sympathetic handling...” of a very gruesome duty from Governor A. Harry Moore and the New Jersey Legislature.

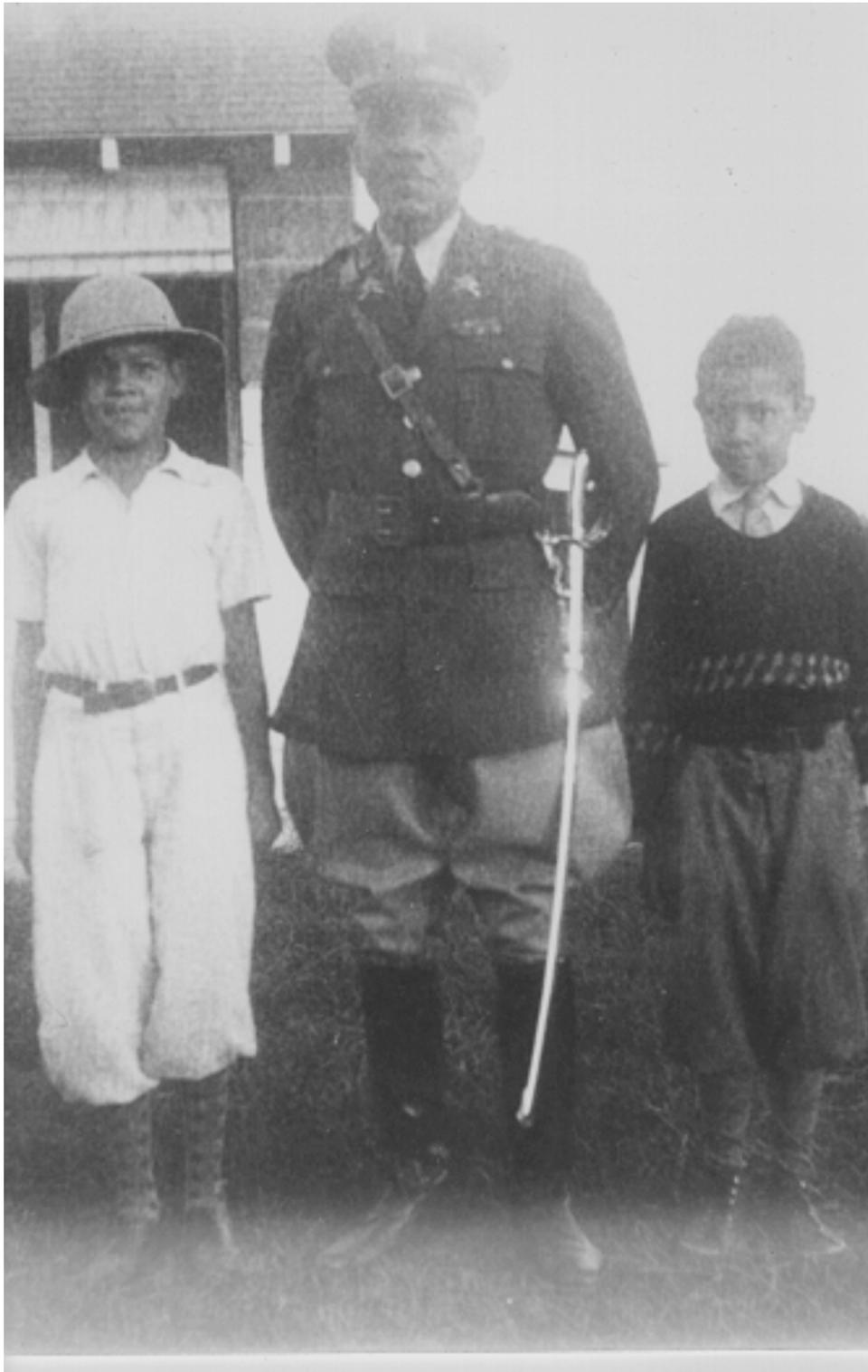
Due to the continued demand by the public and in recognition of the Battalion’s efforts during the *Morro Castle* incident, a year later, the legislature appropriated funds for a battalion headquarters and Companies C and D. On 4/5 February 1935 these units were mustered in Camden and Trenton. As the efforts continued to enlarge the Battalion and seek Federal recognition of it as a National Guard element, other important issues were raised by the leading citizens of New Jersey. “I wish ...to call your attention to the fact that of the two existing companies...the entire personell of the commissioned officers are all colored men who are active in the Republican ranks...this [is] quite unfair...any interest which you may take...will be greatly appreciated by ...the colored Democrats...”^{xli}

Spencer C. Moore of Magnolia, NJ joined Company C in Camden in July 1940 after he turned eighteen and graduated from high school. His brother, Clifford, was the unit’s First Sergeant and Captain Richard Williams was the first company commander. Williams, a veteran of the Spanish-American War, the Mexican Border Campaign and World War I was strict and the company set an example of service. Moore’s father encouraged his association with the military. “Magnolia was like Mississippi and we wanted to fight for our country but knew that our service would make conditions better for all of us.”^{xlii}



1938 - Camp Sea Girt, NJ - First Sergeant Clifford Moore, Company C, 1st Separate Battalion. Later commissioned as an officer when the 1st Separate's successor, 1-372nd Infantry was mobilized onto Federal active duty.

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1935 - Spencer Moore (left); Captain Williams, Commander, C Company; Tommy Williams

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The battalion remained in the State Militia while a paper war raged between New Jersey, the National Guard Bureau and the War department - with side skirmishes in the Congress of the United States - over obtaining Federal Recognition and the granting of it official status as a National Guard organization.

The official status of the Battalion made little difference to the people of New Jersey. Mr. D. H. Moore in a letter to Major General Higgins, the Adjutant General of the New Jersey National Guard, summed it up best when he wrote on September 13, 1937: "Dear Sir: Wants to be an officer in the colored battalion, N.J. Guard."^{xliii} In a follow up letter, Mr. Moore went on to explain that he had thirteen years in the infantry (24th and 25th Infantry Regiments) "...I feel it is my place in the Guards (Colored) being a man [who] understands Army training...If the Col could understand it is a old soldier (as the old timer say) just in your blood and want [to] be back with the life..."^{xliv}

Finally, with the growing crises in Europe and the mobilization of the National Guard becoming more of a reality as a result, a vacancy was "found." The 1st Separate Battalion, New Jersey Militia was reorganized, redesignated and brought into the New Jersey National Guard as the 1st Battalion 372d Infantry Regiment, the same regiment in which many of New Jersey's Black soldiers had fought in World War I. When Federal Recognition was granted in September, 1940, the battalion became New Jersey's first Black National Guard unit.

In an unfortunate twist of fate, it had taken so long for Federal Recognition to be granted, that by 1940 many of the original members of the 1st Separate Battalion were too old to join the National Guard. Among the members who had fought for the existence of the battalion, shepherded its development and guided it to this pinnacle but

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who could not cross over were: Richard Trott, who at 60 had been in the 1st Separate for ten years and was a veteran of the 24th Infantry and the Mexican Border, Thomas M Gregory, a combat veteran of World War I and a graduate of both Harvard and Columbia Universities, and Richard Queen, who had seen so much hope for the future in the establishment of the Battalion.

However, as fate would have it the, 1st Battalion 372nd Infantry would not be a National Guard unit for long. On 10 March 1941 it was mobilized onto active federal duty. As with their fellow National Guard elements, the Regiment was called to duty for a year that would last for almost six.

“Actually the Guardsmen were an almost perfect cross-section of their many hometowns, the sections of their cities, and the traditions of their units. But the longer they had been in the local Guard unit, the greater the likelihood that they were leaders among their pay-group peers...perennial consent for the enlistment in the local Guard unit was predicated upon the young man being associated with one or more friends of long standing, and with active duty, should it come, initially under officers who hardly could avoid being thoroughly acquainted with the civilian as well as military minds.”^{xlv}

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1935 - Officers of the 1st Separate Battalion, New Jersey State Militia
Top row third from left is Trott followed by Williams
Bottom row second from right is Nabors followed by Queen

CONCLUSION

After mobilization the battalion was stationed at Ft Dix, New Jersey, where it was joined by the other battalions of the Regiment from Washington, D.C., Massachusetts and Ohio. During the war the Regiment was utilized for the internal defense of the New York City area and as a training unit until April, 1944. In April of that year the entire Regiment was transferred to Fort Huachuca, Arizona, through Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky. It then shipped to Ft Lewis, Washington, before moving to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii in order to prepare for the invasion of Japan. The war ended first and the Regiment was returned to Ft Dix for eventual inactivation on 31 January 1946.

After the war, the 372d Infantry was reorganized into separate battalions in Ohio, Massachusetts and New Jersey. New Jersey's 1st Battalion became the 122d Anti-aircraft Artillery Battalion. However, the state statute that allowed for the initial formation of the 1st Separate Battalion had been repealed as "unconstitutional" since New Jersey had adopted a new Constitution that among other things outlawed discrimination and segregation.

Accordingly, The New Jersey Department of Defense (the State Headquarters of the New Jersey National Guard) issued General Order Number 4, dated 12 February 1948, which in effect directed that no qualified person shall be denied any military rights, nor be discriminated against in the exercise of any military rights, and not be segregated in the militia because of religious principles, race, color, ancestry, or national origin.

Therefore, despite United States Department of Defense policy which called for a segregated military and therefore kept the National Guard segregated, New Jersey law prohibited it. The governor at that time, Governor Driscoll, in the tradition of his pre-war predecessor A. Harry Moore, insisted on integrating the New Jersey National Guard regardless of the policies of the Federal military. As a result, the New Jersey National Guard was the first United States military organization to fully integrate, followed ultimately by the entire National Guard of the United States. The active military would not take this step until almost two years after ordered to do so by President Harry Truman's Executive Order 9981 issued on 26 July 1948.

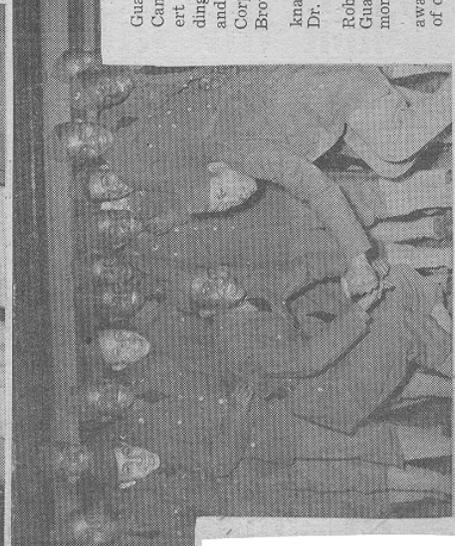
The Citizen Soldiers of the 1st Separate Battalion had completed their mission. As private citizens, veterans, members of the State Militia, the National Guard and the active federal military they set an example of loyalty, fidelity and military efficiency not easily matched. They had lived up to the bold statement emblazoned on the 1st Separate Battalion's distinctive crest with its Princeton Tiger ready to pounce, that they all proudly wore: **SANSPEUR** ("WITHOUT FEAR"). Now with its demise, it again led the way - toward the total integration of the Armed Forces of the United States and the living proof of the deceleration made by Frederick Douglass so many years before.

THERE'S HUMOR AND PATHOS AS THE BOYS TAKE LEAVE OF THE FOLKS "BACK HOME"

PHOTO COURTESY
4/5/41



Mixed with humor and pathos, the National Guardsmen took leave of their families and friends from Camden Armory last week. Upper left: Corporal Robert Valentine and his fiancée, Mary Herbert. The wedding date has been postponed. Right: Rudolf Holly and his sweetheart, Mary Holly. In the foreground, Corporal Earl Brown kisses his mother, Mrs. Margavet Brown, "goodbye."
Center: Spencer Moore of Magnolia, N.J., has his knapsack and equipment inspected by his proud father, Dr. R. L. Moore, and his sister, Alice.
Right: Miss Jessie Pitts smilingly stands by Private Robert Duckett, lone colored member of the National Guard from Woodbury, N.J., who passes off his final moments before departure, with a snooze.
Lower photo: The boys go into a dance as they await the final call to leave home and friends for a period of one year. They're anxious to be off.—Lawson Photos.



1941 - Mobilization of 1-372 Infantry, New Jersey National Guard, for "one year" just prior to World War II; Center is PFC Spencer Moore of Magnolia a member of Company C in Camden, NJ; with Moore is his father Dr. R. L. Moore and his sister, Alice.



On the lawn of her parents
1943 - Three lieutenants from Magnolia, NJ - Lt Clifford Moore (ex-1ST SGT, C/1st Sep)(left);
Lt Spencer Moore (ex-PFC, C/1st Sep); Lt M. Alice Moore (Sister of Lt's Moore)

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END NOTES

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- ⁱ Sawicki, p.1.
ⁱⁱ Sawicki, p. 2.
ⁱⁱⁱ Hill, p.xi.
^{iv} Derthick,, p.2.
^v Derthick, p. 4.
^{vi} Derthick, p. 6.
^{vii} McPherson, p.vii.
^{viii} McPherson, p.xii.
^{ix} McPherson, p. 164.
^x McPherson, p. 161.
^{xi} Frederick Douglas, Douglas' Monthly, Volume V (August, 1863), p.852.
^{xii} McPherson, p. 171.
^{xiii} Burchand, p. 74.
^{xiv} Burchand, p. 143.
^{xv} McPherson, The Negro Civil War, p. 191.
^{xvi} McPherson, The Negro Civil War, p. 192.
^{xvii} McPherson, The Negro Civil War, p. 198.
^{xviii} McPherson, The Negro Civil War, p. 201.
^{xix} McPherson, The Negro Civil War, p. 213.
^{xx} McPherson, For Cause and Comrades, p. 128.
^{xxi} Hill, p. 276.
^{xxii} Hill, p. 277.
^{xxiii} Mason and Furr, p. 9.
^{xxiv} Mason and Furr, p. 40.
^{xxv} Mason and Furr, p. 99.
^{xxvi} Hill, p. 347.
^{xxvii} Petition submitted by the Citizens for a Colored New Jersey Guard Unit, Pleasantville, New Jersey. 1927. New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Archives.
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^{xlv} Hill, p. 382.