PAPERS FROM THE HISTORY SEMINAR OF
KALAMAZOO COLLEGE

No. 1 KALAMAZOO'S OWN CO. "C"
126th Infantry Regiment, M.N.G.
Michigan National Guard
1859-1941

by

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It was a peaceful Sunday morning, that morning of Dec. 7, 1941, when out of the western skies appeared the engines of war and death of the Japanese Imperial Government. That day will long be remembered in the annals of American history, for on that day Japan struck a treacherous blow by her sneak bombing of the Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, which killed and wounded thousands and crippled a large portion of our fleet. It was this infamous attack that made every American fully aware that his nation once again was to be engaged in war. We had been attacked and we must fight. Thus it was, in a joint session of Congress on Dec. 8, 1941 that President Franklin Roosevelt asked that war be declared and it was passed that a state of war now existed between Japan and the United States. With this action, it was merely a matter of hours that we were also at war with the rest of the Axis nations, so the people of America bent to the task of waging a war at any cost to bring about a complete and total victory.

But what did the United States possess to wage a war with? As a Democratic nation, the policy of maintaining only a small Army and Navy had always been held. We are a peaceful nation. But through experience, we knew that some form of organized armed force must be maintained. And so it was, the citizen soldiers of the state militias were once again to be called on to protect the Union.

Fortunately, the United States was not caught fully unprepared.
War had been imminent ever since Germany invaded Poland in 1939 and as more and more friction between the Axis and United States developed, the Congress felt it wise to arm the nation. A little over a year before the Pearl Harbor incident, the militia of all the states had been called into federal service, the armed forces had been expanded and American industry retooled itself for war.

Therefore on Dec. 7, 1941, the men of Co. C, the militia company of infantrymen from Kalamazoo, Michigan, had already undergone extensive military training, were fully equipped and prepared to once again engage in a great war. They were stationed at Camp Livingston, Louisiana and would be among the first troops to engage the enemy on foreign soil.

The story of Co. C prior to its entrance into the Second World War is one that indirectly dates back to the early colonial days. It was such militia that the first settlers maintained in order to protect themselves from the Indians. "From our very beginning, grim necessity made every workingman a soldier. That was the beginning of the citizen soldier or militiaman. In 1631 Governor Endicott in Massachusetts published instructions from England for the training of planters and their servants in the arts of warfare. Events of militia action are numerous in early colonial history. They are found in Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia in 1676 and Leisler's Rebellion in New York in 1689. During the Revolutionary War, militia played an important role at Lexington, Concord and the siege of Boston. It is interesting to note that 40% of the troops under General Geo. Washington were militia."
When independence finally came the colonists naturally had a deep distrust and hatred for standing armies and professional soldiers. Their experiences with the British Army and the Hessian troops had been anything but pleasant. Thus they disbanded the Regular Army with the exception of a regiment of infantry and a battalion of artillery. For the defense and preservation of the nation the Constitution provided the following authority for a militia. "That Congress shall have the power to provide for the calling forth of the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions; to provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia and for governing such part of it as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the states respectively the appointment of the officers and the authority of the training of the militia, according to the discipline prescribed by Congress." This was put into effect by an act of Congress, May 8, 1792. "That each and every free able bodied white male citizen of the respective states and territories of the United States, resident therein, who is or shall be of the age of 18 years and under the age of 45 years shall severally and respectively be enrolled in the militia by the commander of the company whose bounds such citizen shall reside." Under this authority in August of 1805, Governor William Hull of the Territory of Michigan signed a bill for the organization of a body of militia in the Territory of Michigan. It prescribed the manner of enrollment, type of arms, uniforms, ranks, court martial practices and the procedure for organization of the militia. Several similar acts were passed by the Territorial Legislature. In 1806 on Oct. 7 was passed "An Act
concerning the militia of Michigan" which dealt with fines and appropriations. Others were passed on Dec. 21, 1808, Feb. 1809, 1820 (under Governor Lew Cass which outlined very conclusively an organization of the militia) and one on April 12, 1827. Although these detailed plans for a military force were in force, no actual organized militia existed other than unorganized volunteer companies throughout the Territory.

On January 26, 1837, by act of Congress, Michigan was proclaimed a state and Stevens T. Mason was the first elected governor. Among his duties was the organization of the militia. In 1838, by state legislation, the militia was formed and it was to include eight divisions, of two brigades each, of which each brigade consisted of two regiments.

To show the actual state of affairs at that time, the Governor's Annual Message is given. "At the last session of the legislature important changes were made in our militia system, but no adequate remedy is to be found in the existing laws. Under our guarded institutions, no substitute can be proposed for the militia amidst the sudden demands and exigencies of war. In the absence of a standing army, the citizen must be the defender of his country and yet we find our militia undisciplined, unarmed and in many instances without the mere forms of organization. Your attention therefore is invited to the subject as one worthy of your deliberation. Signed, Stevens T. Mason, Detroit, Jan. 7, 1839."

The following day Jan. 8, 1839 found this committee appointed in the state senate to be in charge of the militia. "Messrs. Cook, Kercheval, Summers." On April 12, 1839 the state passed "An Act to provide for the effectual defense of the state against
foreign invasion." It provided that the militia be known as the Michigan State Guards and its enrollment was to be voluntary. It prescribed no actual organization but did specify that on certain occasions, uniforms could be worn.\textsuperscript{13}

The reason for all this attempted organization of a militia was that there was much feeling of actual invasion of Michigan by Canada. Reports filtered across the Detroit river that the Canadians were building several frigates in Windsor, in preparation for a landing on Michigan soil.\textsuperscript{14} Although there was this fear, the mere fact that Michigan was so undeveloped, diverted most of the energy of the state toward developing itself both governmentally and physically rather than placing its energy in raising an army.\textsuperscript{15} This attitude is seen in the Governor's Message of 1840. "For several sessions, fellow citizens, your predecessors have had under consideration measures for the effective organization and discipline of the militia. I regret to say that no beneficial results have as yet arisen from their legislation. There is an indifference and wanton neglect of duty evinced by both officers and men which earnestly calls for correction at your hands. There must be more efficient drill with officers of the different corps. Without efficient and qualified commanders you can never place your militia on that high stand demanded under a government like ours. Signed, Stevens T. Mason, Detroit Jan. 6, 1840\textsuperscript{16}"

An interesting act of legislation passed May 18, 1846 provides for organizing an active militia stating that all males from ages 18 to 45 are subject to militia duty except firemen, ministers, judges, teachers, millers and ferrymen. It stipulated that if a company volunteered, its term of service would be of 6 years duration.
And for the first time, mention is made of an appropriation to support the militia. One might feel that with this immense amount of legislation, the state would have a sizable militia but on March 6, 1848, there existed only three companies of some 45 men apiece, in the entire state militia. They were the Frontier Guards of Wayne, the National Guards of Lenawee, and the National Guards of Livingston.

By 1854 some progress was made. The state military department reported that "Pursuant to a call through the papers of the state, a convention composed of delegates from the uniformed companies and officers attached to the several divisions of the militia of Michigan, assembled at the armory of the Grayson Light Guards in Detroit on October 10, 1854." The purpose was to organize the several companies of the state, train, drill and equip them into an organized body. Also to record the number of eligible males for military service in the state. This was the first state wide organization so it named a staff and divided the state into nine military divisions. Actually at this time only nine companies existed.

In 1856 the Michigan Adjutant General's Department was organized with headquarters at Kalamazoo. The first report by Adj. Gen. Fred W. Curtenius tells of the action to date and apologizes for so little results. He states that the sympathy of the legislature and people are not behind the militia. Further warning is given of Canada's preparations for war. Canada then had 6 corps of infantry mobilized. Inventory of state military equipment places its value at $100,000 but there is no armory to put it in. Therefore an appeal for appropriations is made. The report also includes the procedure for acceptance of
volunteer companies. The company will consist of forty men between the ages of 18 and 45. They will receive Regular Army uniforms, choose their own officers and draw arms. Completion of these steps permits the company to be accepted in the service of the state. To date Dec. 1, 1856 the state militia consists of 13 organized companies. The Adjutant General's report in 1858 reveals another plea for organization and funds. It reports that only two people in the military service of the state receive a salary: the Adjutant General and the Quartermaster General. Under such conditions it is almost amazing that the state militia now consists of 33 companies to which no salaries are paid or equipment issued. In the summer of 1858 a military convention was held in Kalamazoo and it was found that there were 109,750 men in the state of military age. The following year, Feb. 14, 1859, the state was at last realizing the significance of a well equipped militia and thus passed an act to provide a military fund to aid the various volunteer uniformed militia companies. This was the first subsistence given the companies and it only averaged $110 per company per year.

Up to this time there had been no formation of a volunteer company from Kalamazoo other than one which had been formed for the war with Mexico in 1847. This was immediately disbanded upon its return. But in the summer of 1859, a citizen of Kalamazoo, John Dudgeon who was a buyer and seller of wheat and wool, promoted the idea of forming a volunteer infantry company. It through his efforts that on June 10, 1859 at the Burdick House was formed an infantry company which called itself the Kalamazoo Light Guard. At a later date, this Kalamazoo Light Guard was to be known as Co. C of the Michigan National
The first official record of the Kalamazoo Light Guard appears in the Adjutant General's report of Dec. 1, 1860. The several companies of the state are listed and classified as to fitness. The Kalamazoo Light Guard consisting of 45 men under command of John Dudgeon was classified as being in the first class. Its equipment included 40 rifled muskets and one cannon. The uniform was of grey and the company received $115 per year for support from the state military fund. In addition to the commander were Charles D. Hanscomb, First Lt., Benj. F. Orcutt, Second Lt., and I. Boughton, Third Lt.25

The condition of the state militia showed now only 28 acceptable companies with 12 on the waiting list. $3000 had been appropriated to run the state military board of officers and rules were set up for each company to comply with in order to get part of the appropriation. At that date the state possessed 110,600 able bodied men fit for military duty.26

In the next few months the trouble between the north and the south appeared to be crystallizing. The southern states were set on secession and one by one they began to secede from the Union. Governor Moses Wismer of Michigan, at the close of his term in 1860, urged preparedness because it then appeared certain that a civil war was soon to break out.27 On Jan. 14, 1861, the Kalamazoo Light Guard met at their armory which they had rented in the Humphrey Block and elected their non commissioned officers. The real purpose of the meeting was to spur interest in the company and enroll new members due to the impending crisis. They enrolled 7 new men and voted to procure the services of Orderly Sgt. Sum of Detroit as drill master. He was an
expert in that field and would teach Scotts tactics in place of Hardie's tactics. 28

On Feb. 2, 1861 the Michigan state legislature declared its adherence to the United States government and pledged its military power and resources for the preservation of the Union. There would be no concession or compromise. 29

On April 1, 1861 news reached Detroit that Fort Sumter had been fired on and Governor Austin Blair of Michigan told the people that war was inevitable. Again it must be emphasized that the military department was in a feeble state with only 28 companies which consisted of 1241 officers and men. The annual appropriation still being only $3000 per year for the entire state militia. Immediately Col. Fred W. Curtenius of Kalamazoo who was still Adjutant General began to prepare his militia for war. April 15, 1861 President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to enlist for one year. Public meetings were held throughout Michigan and volunteering began very quickly. On April 16, Michigan was called upon to give one regiment of infantry, fully armed clothed and equipped. On that same day the state appropriated the money needed and the Governor called for ten volunteer companies. The first ten to volunteer and be accepted would be called the First Michigan Regiment. On April 24, the 1st. Regiment was formed. 30 On that same day, the Kalamazoo Light Guard met and drafted resolutions expressing the feelings of the company in regard to the President's proclamation. In addition they would bring their company up to strength and offer it to the state immediately. Their hope was to be a part of the 1st. Regiment. An enlistment office was set up and was to be maintained while the company was in service. The armory was to be open at all times for drill and enlistment
purposes. The following day, April 25, the Kalamazoo Light Guard, along with nine other companies was accepted and organized as the 2nd. Regiment. It was to be under command of Col. Israel B. Richardson, would be known as a Detroit regiment and would be mustered into service for three months.

General Order No. 6, dated April 25, 1861, ordered the Captains of each company to report by letter to Col. Richardson and await orders before moving. The Regiment consisted of the following companies in respective order for duty on the line; Detroit Scott Guard, Adrian Guard, Hudson Artillery (as infantry), Flint Union Guard, Battle Creek Artillery (as infantry), Constantine Union Guard, East Saginaw Guard, Kalamazoo Light Guard, Kalamazoo No. 2 Co., and Niles Co.

On April 26, the Regiment was ordered to report May 3 at Agricultural Fair Grounds at Detroit and would be known as Cantonment Blair. On May 1, the Kalamazoo Light Guard left Kalamazoo to join the 2nd. Regiment. Thousands were at the train station to cheer them as they left. Among the speakers of the occasion were Judge Welles, Gen. Curtenius and Rev. Taylor. They arrived in Detroit on the same day and a letter from one of the men describes the conditions. "May 4, 1861. The trip from Kalamazoo to Detroit was pleasant and when we arrived it was raining. No preparation had been made for the troops so quarters were found in a hay loft. Thus the quarters were very inadequate and besides that the food is terrible. The lack of organization is appalling but all of the men of the Guard wish to thank the ladies of Kalamazoo for providing them with good warm blankets." By May 2 all of the companies
had arrived so the organization of the Regiment began. The Kalamazoo Light Guard as a part of the Regiment would henceforth be called Co. I. Its officers were Capt. Dwight May from Kalamazoo, 1st. Lt. Wm. J. Handy from Kalamazoo and 2nd. Lt. John M. Nowell from Detroit. 37

A letter dated May 10 from one of the men, shows much discontent at Cantonment Blair. As yet no uniforms had been issued and the Regimental officers were attempting to make them all enlist for three years instead of three months. Of the entire Co., only nine volunteered to enlist for three years. Among these were R.H. Eldred, J. Wilkinson, Charles Porter and Wm. Shakespeare. 38 While the Regiment was being organized, it was transferred to Fort Wayne also at Detroit and on May 25, 1861, the Second Michigan Regiment was mustered into federal service. It comprised 1013 officers and men. 39 A letter dated May 31, 1861 places a better light on affairs. The Co. is now in order and the men are more contented after a brief pass over the weekend in Kalamazoo. Much rumor is prevalent about leaving for Washington soon. 40

June 6, 1861, the Regiment moved from Fort Wayne for field duty in Virginia. 41 A dispatch from the Pittsburg Post mentions the troop train of the Regiment as it passed through Pittsburg on June 9. "The Second Michigan Regiment passed through last night on the Cleveland and Pittsburg Railway. The men all looked to be in fine shape, completely equipped and very confident. They appeared very young and of good sturdy stock which must be traced to the fact that they are of good Michigan farmer stock." 42 June 10, 1861 they arrived in Washington and in a few
days took up quarters at Camp Winfield Scott on Washington Heights near Chain Bridge.\textsuperscript{43}

Since the Kalamazoo Light Guard, now Co.I, has become a part of the Second Michigan Regiment, the history of the Regiment is now given as the two histories can be considered as the same.

The following is a report from the War Department records of the history of the Second Michigan Regiment in the Civil War.

"The first engagement of the Regiment was at Blackburn's Ford, Virginia on July 18, 1861 with only a small loss in wounded. Serving with Gen. Tyler's Division, the enemy was found to be too powerful and well fortified so a withdrawal was made.

The Regiment, although not actually engaged at Bull Run, had the honor to cover the retreat from that disastrous field. Much credit is due the Regiment since the retreat was a stampeded, but the Second Regiment retired in good order and retained control of the situation.

During the winter, the 2nd lay near Alexandria and in March under command of Col. Orlando M. Poe (Richardson was now a Brig. Gen.) entered on the Peninsula Campaign under Gen. McClellan. It served in Berry's Brigade, Kearny's Division, Heintzelman's Corps and took part in the siege of Yorktown. It was engaged at and on the following: Williamsburg, May 5; Fair Oaks, May 31; near Richmond, June 18; White Oak Swamp, June 29; Charles City Cross Roads, June 30; and Malvern Hill, July 1. Total casualties were 138 wounded or missing and one dead.

At Williamsburg Gen. Hooker had repeatedly called on Sumner for help but could get none, for that officer had ordered a large portion of troops in hand to the right under Hancock to keep the Confederates in check in that direction and to flank the works if possible, so he fought on, maintaining his ground until between
four and five o'clock when the gallant and dashing Phillip Kearney came up with his division with orders from Heintzelman to relieve Hooker's worn and fearfully thinned regiments. Kearney pressed to the front and Hooker withdrew.

Kearney deployed Berry's Brigade to the left of the Williamsburg Road, Birney's to the right and two companies (Co. I being one under Capt. Handy) of the Second were pressed forward to cover the movement and drive back Confederate skirmishers, who were almost silencing Union batteries. At this time the Union forces began to push with 800 men a Rebel force of 1600 men. The Second had the key position and led off with the first success of the day while covering the artillery.

Col. Poe tells of the Second at Fair Oaks when they charged across an open field against an enemy ten times their number but stopped them in mid-career.

After Fair Oaks, Major Dillman assumed command but was replaced by Col. Poe at Harrison's Landing August 15th. August 19th. from Yorktown the Second sailed to Alexandria and then entrained for Manassas. Enroute to Centerville enemy cavalry was met and repulsed. August 29, now under Major Dillman, in crossing Bull Run and moving to the front, the enemy was discovered in force so the Second withdrew across the stream under heavy fire. After various skirmishes and crossings the Second withdrew and returned to Centerville.

On Sept. 1 the Second marched for Fairfax Court House, engaging the enemy at Chauntilly and arrived at Fairfax at Sunrise.

During the remainder of the month the Second made several short marches, finally reaching Fort Ward where it encamped until Sept. 25th. and then marched to Upton's Hill. Oct. 1 the 3rd. Corps of which the Second was a part made a reconnaissance up the Potomac as far as Edward's Ferry, Md.
On Oct. 11 the Second broke camp, formed a line of battle to meet Stuart's Cavalry and then proceeded to Edward's Ferry. Here it remained on picket duty until Oct. 28 when the march was again resumed to White's Ford. Then crossing into Virginia, the Second marched in the direction of Leesburg and arrived there Oct. 31.

Between Nov. 1 and Nov. 8 the Second remained in and around Leesburg. Nov. 15 the Second was transferred to the First Brigade, Burn's Division, 9th. Corps and joined the command at White Sulphur Springs on the same day. Nov. 29 the Second was in front of Fredericksburg where it was placed on duty supporting a battery.

Dec. 12 the Second crossed the Rappahannock which was also the first of the battle of Fredericksburg, but the Second was held in reserve, suffering two casualties from long range shell fire. From Dec. 12 to Feb of 1863 the Second went into camp.

In Feb. 1863 it moved to Newport News, Va. but by March 19 was in Bardstown, Ky. with Col. Humphrey in command. Remaining in Kentucky during April and May, it reinforced in June the army of Gen. Grant in Mississippi. Being engaged in the siege of Vicksburg and upon its surrender the Second moved with Gen. Sherman in pursuit of Gen. Johnston who was in the vicinity of Jackson, Tenn. On July 10 the Second arrived at Jackson.

On July 11 the Second charged the works of Jackson, forced the enemy inside and waited for reinforcements. None came since Sherman had issued countermanding orders. Casualties were heavy but under cover of darkness the Second returned to its original line of battle. July 16 the enemy evacuated Jackson so in the next three days the depot was burned and the track of the Memphis and New Orleans Railway torn up. From Jackson the Second went to Milldale.

Leaving Milldale Aug. 4, it went to Crab Orchard, Ky. On Sept. 10 the Second marched to Knoxville, Tenn. and on Oct. 10 moved
out to engage the enemy at Blue Springs. After this engagement it retired to build winter quarters at Lenoir.

Meanwhile the Rebels under Longstreet were advancing on Knoxville so the Second was ordered back in the field. From Nov. 14 to Dec. 4 the Second was actively engaged in the defense of Knoxville. Finally the enemy withdrew but casualties were heavy on both sides which were due to hardships, privations, lack of food and clothing from the siege. The extreme suffering from cold and hunger of Burnside's Army at Knoxville was without parallel in the whole war.

Dec. 8 the Second marched to Rutledge and on Dec. 15 met the enemy at Thurley's Ford, and thence on Dec. 16 to Blair's Cross Roads where it remained until the middle of January 1864. At this time their three year enlistment period had expired so 198 of the regiment re-enlisted being called Veteran Volunteers. Thus the regiment was broken up so on Feb. 4 orders were received to report to Detroit for a 30 day furlough. Feb 24 the Second arrived in Detroit and furloughs were issued for 30 days.

It must be remembered that although the Second was a part of the Federal Army, this idea of a national army had not been conceived and worked out too well. The war was operated on a strictly State basis. In Kalamazoo, Co. I or Light Guard Headquarters maintained its own recruiting service to fill the ranks of the company which was fighting at the front. The State during the war was responsible for maintaining its fighting units at the front, even sending its own hospital trains to the battle fields to bring wounded men back home to Michigan. With such diverse sources of command, concerted action on the part of a Federal Army was much more difficult.

During the furlough the depleted ranks were filled and the Second rendezvoused at Mount Clemens when it was up. Orders were received April 4, 1864 to proceed to Annapolis, Md. to reenforce
the army of the Potomac. On May 5, having crossed the Rapidon river, it joined the army.

May 6 it participated in the "Battle of the Wilderness" losing 94 men. On May 10, 11, 12 it was the battle of Spottsylvania Court House. In this battle Capt. James Farrand of Co. I was killed. A Rebel brigade had suprised an artillery battery, taking it intact and turning it upon the Second. Gen. Wilcox commended the Second for the way in which it acted under such severe circumstances. Because the Second was able to hold its position under the barrage finally driving the enemy from the battery, the entire line was saved and a rout was prevented.

On May 23 the Second, now the Second Brigade, was engaged at Ox Ford. At Bethesda Church June 3 there were 38 casualties. From Bethesda Church, the regiment marched to Cold Harbor where it was engaged on June 7. June 12 it crossed the Chickahominy river and on June 15 crossed to the south side of the James river and fought before Petersburg on June 17, 18.

Withdrawing from in front of Petersburg the regiment marched to the Weldon Railway and on June 19 engaged the enemy with 5 casualties resulting. From June 19 to Sept 30 it participated in the movement on the right flank of the Rebel army. On Sept 30 it engaged the enemy at Poplar Spring Church suffering 19 casualties. From Sept 30 to Oct 27 the regiment remained in camp near "Peebles House". At this point, being on picket duty, fortifications were built but on Oct. 29 the regiment moved outside of Petersburg to build trenches for the ensuing siege.

On March 25, 1865 it attacked Fort Steadman in conjunction with the siege of Petersburg. Heavy losses were sustained. The result was that 300 prisoners were taken and Petersburg fell. April 3 the regiment engaged itself in the capture of Petersburg after which it moved to the South Side Railway which was 18 miles from the city.
Six days later, the end came and that famous surrendered of Gen. Lee to Gen. Grant took place at Appamatox Court House April 9, 1865. April 18 the Second left for Alexandria and on May 23 it passed in a grand review with the Army of the Potomac before the President of the United States at Washington. On May 27 it was detached for duty in the city of Washington where it went into camp at Kolorama Park. July 28 found the Second Regiment mustered out of the Federal service and preparations for leaving on the following day were made.

July 30 the Second Regiment arrived by train from Washington in Cleveland. It boarded the steamer "City of Cleveland" whose captain was Wm. McKay of the Cleveland Line, and sailed for Detroit. Aug. 1 the regiment docked in Detroit and was received with great enthusiasm. On Aug 8 the regiment and component companies were paid off and officially disbanded.

On the same day the Kalamazoo Light Guard arrived back in Kalamazoo and was greeted very warmly by the citizens.

Officially now the Kalamazoo Light Guard was out of existence since the State only posessed three companies of Infantry for its militia in the summer of 1865. They were the Detroit Light Guard, Lyon Guard and Scott Guard. Actually though, the Kalamazoo Light Guard was kept in organization if only as a means of social gathering. Many of the veteran members were found getting together rather regularly on Monday nights and calling themselves by their old company name. Thus it was this sort of skeleton outfit that was maintained from 1865 to 1872. On Sept 13 1872 the citizens of Kalamazoo were notified that a volunteer infantry company would be accepted in the service of the State if prescribed requisites were met. The Kalamazoo Light Guard which was the only semblance of a military company in Kalamazoo thus offered to become that company. It chose officers and voted to meet every Monday night.
By 1873 the Light Guard had created much interest in Kalamazoo and was parading for various occasions. Jan. 27 1873 it received arms and made note that after each Monday evening meet, the Guard would drill. 50 Feb. 21, 1873 finds the Guard in high hopes of bringing its organization up to State prescribed strength. It paraded on Feb. 16 to encourage enlistments. The new uniform which had not as yet arrived was to be grey trimmed with gold. The cap is to be grey with a white and blue seam. Present officers then were Capt. J. D. Summer, 1st. Lieut. C. H. Brown, 2nd. Lieut. G. E. Dunbar and the total strength was 43 officers and men. 51

From the Allegan Journal comes a note which more or less shows what sort of an organization the Guard was at this time "The Kalamazoo Light Guard is an awkward squad and contains few or no old "vets". The Co. commander is said to know more about farming than soldiering. He wished to oblique his column marching and gave the order, "Haw around the puddle". The Kalamazoo Gazette took immediate pains to point out that this was true because the attitude of the Guard was to allow everyone at some time or other to hold a position of command. This would increase the efficiency of all and not a mere few. 52

March 4 1873 was the big day of the Kalamazoo Light Guard. On that day it met at the Armory to be sworn into the State service. It presented a magnificent appearance and mustered about 50 guns. Adjutant General Robertson administered the oath at 8:00 P.M. and the company was sworn in as Co. D. of the Michigan State Guards. Locally though it would still be known as the Light Guard. 53

April 18 the guard voted to drill every Monday night for public exhibition, 54 and on April 25 the new uniforms arrived. They looked very much like those of the famous 7th. New York Infantry Regiment. 55
Henceforth, although a part of the State Guards, the Kalamazoo Light Guard became one of the leading elements of society. Of course it simulated military training but its chief purpose became that of a social organization around Kalamazoo. May 30, 1873 tells of the Light Guard in a Decoration Day parade. It marched to Mountain Home Cemetery to decorate the graves. Likewise on the Fourth of July did the Guard march. At this time the citizens donated a flag to them. On Jan. 2, 1874 the Kalamazoo Light Guard was making ample preparation for its grand annual ball which would come off at the Burdick House Jan. 14. "It would probably be the grandest affair of the kind that has ever come off in Kalamazoo". A band was to be brought from Detroit and the cost for bringing it here would be something over $100. March 6, 1874 shows just how social minded the guard was. It elected its officers and in addition elected a secretary and treasurer. On July 4, 1874 the Guard traveled south to Three Rivers and helped them celebrate the holiday.

As the military life of the company at this stage, the year 1876 began the State annual encampment for State troops. On August 7 the encampment was held in Grand Rapids and it dealt in rifle training, drill tactics, life in the field and maneuvers and fighting principles. Also at this time the State troops enlarged from two regiments to three regiments. Because of this the Kalamazoo Light Guard or Co. D. now became Co. C. of the Second Michigan Regiment. It was proudly announced that the company now possessed one cannon.

The social life of the company still went on "Miss. Lucille Gibbs Presented a lecture entitled, Kalamazoo Light Guard in Union Hall last Saturday evening" and numerous articles like this continued. or "Judge Howes delivered a lecture before the Kalamazoo Light Guard, entitled, Lafayette". His rhetoric was indeed superb and much emphasis was placed on the importance of the Light Guard. But
on July 27, 1877 the Guard was ordered off for its encampment unexpectedly. A late dispatch one night ordered the Guard to Grand Rapids the next morning. Since no one was expecting this many openly proclaimed they couldn't go. Thus a few were placed on the train at eleven o'clock that morning under guard. 2000 people were at the depot and when the train left, three cheers were given and the 54 boys of the Kalamazoo Light Guard moved out for Grand Rapids. Again in 1879 the annual encampment was held at Grand Rapids. It was known as Camp Custer. In 1880 the encampment was held from Aug. 9 to Aug. 14 at the National Park Grounds in Kalamazoo. This was known as Camp Chandler. The Commander of Co. C was Capt. R. F. Hill.

1883 finds Co. C headed by Capt. E. M. Irish. Total strength 41 officers and men. The encampment was held at Camp Griffith at Island Lake, which is near Brighton. The Inspector General of the U. S. Army noted that the state troops were showing much improvement in regard to military bearing. Again in 1884 the encampment was at Island Lake from Aug. 7 to Aug. 14. At this time the 23rd. U. S. Infantry Regiment (Regular Army) was there also and served as an instructor group for the State troops.

In Kalamazoo on April 8 1885 the Light Guard gave an exhibition drill at the Excelsior Rink and it was said no other company in the State could excel it in appearance. A note concerning its armory is significant of the state of mind of the guardsmen.

"The Kalamazoo Light Guard has completed the furnishing of the Armory parlours by purchasing at E. A. Carder and Sons two finely upholstered easy chairs, twelve leather covered chairs finely made and finely finished, six elegant tables and other smaller articles of furniture. It will be one of the most comfortable armories in the State. Oct 28 1885".
The encampment in 1887 was still held a Island Lake, Aug. 7 to Aug 12 and known as Camp Robertson, but in 1888 the site for that year was Mackinac Island. This was Camp Luce from July 19 to July 23. The 23rd. U. S. Infantry Regiment was on duty again to aid the State troops. Springfield rifles were issued and Sharpes were discarded. Because of the interesting historical site that the Island is, it was hard to keep the troops at work. Many men had brought their families and were more interested in sight seeing. Capt. Frank C. Andrews headed Co. C. The year 1889 found the encampment at Goguac Lake which is near Battle Creek. It was known as camp Smith.

Of interesting note is an order dated Dec. 15 1889. "Light Guard Attention. Headquarters Co. C., Michigan State Troops. Every member of Co. C. is hereby notified that drills will hereafter be held regularly on Monday evening of each week at 7:30 and you are ordered to attend said drills subject to the code of laws of the Kalamazoo Light Guard and State Militia Laws. D. E. Groesbeck, Capt. Co. C." From that can be seen that interest is not too great and the usage of Co. C. over Kalamazoo Light Guard is becoming evident.

The encampment for 1890 was again held at Goguac Lake and known as Camp Black. The 23rd. U. S. Infantry again assisted in the encampment. Capt. Harry Bush was in command of Co. C. Prior to this the annual ball held Feb. 16 1890 proved to be the gala affair of the season. Again on Jan 4, 1895 Co. C. Held its annual ball. "The society event of the season occurred Friday night when the local company of Michigan National Guard, Co. C. 2nd. Regiment, gave their annual ball at the armory. Some 80 couples were present which included guests from abroad." The encampment that year was at Camp Deven, Island Lake and Co. C. was commended as being the best on guard duty. The guard was formed without a break by 1st.
Sgt. Arnell. 1st. Lt. Nolan was in charge of the company. From 1895 to 1898 the company carried on much the same.

In 1898 the situation greatly changed. There had been a rebellion in Cuba and Spain had been unable to suppress it. The interest and favor of the United States supported Cuba and so offers of mediation were offered to Spain but rejected. Then a campaign by the American press began to stimulate public opinion into wanting to wage a war with Spain. This began the latter part of January.

On Feb. 4 1898 Co. C. held its annual ball but this time the military feeling was very prevalent because war rumors were beginning to circulate. On Feb. 15 in Havana Harbor, the U. S. S. Maine was blown up and sunk. Popular feeling ran high April 6 found many new recruits in Co. C. and drill was two nights a week now. On April 11, President McKinley delivered a war message to congress and asked for authority for forcible intervention. April 20 the United States recognised Cuba as an independent people. A formal declaration of War was only a matter of days away.

On April 23 1898 the State Militia was ordered out "In response to the proclamation of president McKinley, calling 125000 men to the colors for two years service, Governor Pingree ordered the Michigan National Guard to move to Island Lake to train and become equipped. "From there the national government will draw the men into battle. The training at Island Lake will be rough and will simulate actual war conditions". At 10:30 A. M. Capt. Joseph I. Nolan of Co. C. received this order. "Have your command ready to move in heavy marching order to Island Lake not later than Tuesday April 26. Every available blanket and overcoat must be taken. Do not bring stoves or provisions, except rations en route. The men will find use for private blankets for a few days. Citizens overcoats may be worn if short. Route wired later by Q. M. General. by Command of the Governor. E. M. Irish, Adj. Gen."
The company consisted of 86 men plus its three officers, Capt. Nolan, 1st. Lt. Joseph B. Westnedge, 2nd. Lt. W. J. Redmond. On the same evening the company met in the armory, orders were explained and preparations were made to leave.

On April 24, 1898 the United States was formally at war with Spain. The next day brought reports that the Island Lake area was rapidly being prepared to handle the troops. Unfortunately it was April so the weather was very disagreeable and wet. April 27 saw Co. C. leave Kalamazoo. The company would travel to Grand Rapids by way of the Chicago, Kalamazoo and Saginaw Railway, at which place it would join the Grand Rapids Co. and go to Island Lake. There was a celebration at the station including parades and speeches. Gen. William Shakespeare on behalf of the Orcutt Post of the G.A.R. presented a flag to the company. Kalamazoo College was dismissed at 10:30 that morning to cheer seven of its members who were in the company. They were 1st. Lt. J. B. Westnedge, Cpl. E. R. Houghton, H. B. Irland, Hugh Mead, D. C. Kinney, E. J. O'Brien and H. C. Porter. Just prior to leaving, each member of the company was presented with a small American flag by Col. Foote. On the same day Co. C. arrived at Island Lake at 4:30 P.M. Everything was prepared for them except no commissary department had been set up. The men remarked how well they had been received on the journey to camp, there was a continual celebration all along the route. The first night in camp was very cold and there was frost on the ground.

April 29 finds every man of Co. C. volunteering in the army of the United States, nothing is formally done about this so everyone eagerly awaits orders. The area at Island Lake is called Camp Eaton. On April 30 some 14 men returned to Kalamazoo, unacceptable since they have families or dependents. According to Capt. Nolan, everything is shaping up fine because the quarters and food are much better. He has great expectations for Co. C. (Many visitors are
expected at camp on the following Sunday so they are warned to bring their own lunch since Camp Eaton doesn't have the facilities. Capt. Nolan was in town May 3 to secure more volunteers since some men have been rejected for physical reasons. May 5 finds the Second Regiment of which Co. C. is still a part, getting into shape fast. Everyone appears to be anxious for war duty in Cuba. May 7 was pay day for Co. C. The pay scale was as follows: Private $13 per month, Cpl. $15 per month, Sgt. $18 per month, 2nd. Lt. $1400 per year, 1st. Lt. $1600 per year, also on that day the war department requested a regiment of infantry from Michigan. On May 11 Capt. Nolan resigned due to ill health and it was then known that Michigan troops would go to Tampa, Fla. then to Cuba. On May 15, the company and its regiment of 810 officers and men were mustered into the Federal Service. They are now known as the 32nd. Michigan Volunteer Infantry. It was called the 32nd because it follows in numerical order the Civil War Regiments from Michigan. May 18 was when the regiment was ordered to Tampa. The arrival of 31 sleeping cars was necessary to transport the regiment southward. On the next day they left and the journey took them through Toledo, Cincinnati, Kentucky and Atlanta. On May 24 the regiment arrived in Tampa. It was encamped on a palmetto beach and the water, food and quarters were bad. Spiders, Snakes and yellow fever added additional obstacles. As yet no guns or ammunition had been issued. June 7 was again pay day so in order to save the men some money many of the gambling joints at DeSota Park were raided. Life in Tampa is described by a letter dated June 22. "So far the only excitement is that of catching a few stray Sapniards in the interior. We are just existing, growing beards, fishing and catching baby alligators. Everyone is anxious to sail for Cuba." On June 23 the harbor at Tampa was reported to be full of transports but the facilities for loading were too small and overcrowded.
Major P. L. Abbey tells of the situation up to July 17. "Weeks have come and gone and we are still in Tampa with no Spaniards to fight. Most of us are aching for a fight. We've drilled hour after hour in the hot sun, had sham battles, skirmished over miles of ground, slept on the ground, drunk and ate terrible food but still we aren't in the war. One thing is for sure, and that is, we are real soldiers now and not just National Guards. The former Kalamazoo Light Guard, whose members wore three inch collars, smoked cigarettes and played dude, are now a fighting outfit. There has been much rain and the camp is under water. Very shortly we will move to Tampa Heights, Ebor City. Six times we have been on the verge of leaving for Cuba, even had horses and equipment aboard the transport but each time the orders were changed. The only good feature about Tampa are the good looking Cuban girls. How we ache to land at Santiago." 99 On July 22 Co. C. received money from Kalamazoo citizens to help care for the sick because there were many yellow fever patients. 100 On the next day Co. C. with the regiment went to Fernandia, Fla. because of the disease ridden conditions in Tampa. The new camp is high and dry but is now under martial law and no passes are allowed. 101 July 29 reports that Co. C. is doing nicely at Fernandia. 102 By August the morale of the men was very low. For one thing they had been training in deplorable conditions and had not gone anywhere. The yellow fever had struck over half of the men and now that the war was almost over in Cuba they felt very useless. An attitude of "Let's fight or go home" prevailed. On Aug. 3 the United States and Spain had come to peace terms and only a date to cease hostilities, remained to be set. 103 On Aug. 6 word was received that Capt. Westnedge was seriously ill with fever. All of the hospitals in the area were overcrowded with typhoid, malaria and yellow fever cases. 104

At last on Aug. 13 hostilities were ceased and the United States
and Spain were once more at peace. Thus Co. C. of the 32nd regiment made preparations to return home. Before leaving, on Sept. 11, Harry C. Porter, former student at Kalamazoo College, died of fever at a hospital in Ft. McPherson. He was the first man to die in Co. C. during the Spanish war, later Sgt. Edward Shields died of fever also.

On Sept. 16 Co. C. Arrived at Island Lake. By Sept 23 it had arrived in Kalamazoo for a 30 day furlough. A huge crowd greeted the veterans and a big banquet was served the men of Co. C. at the Burdick House. The men were all very bitter over the entire affair and army red tape was blamed for the lack of efficiency. Many members were still in hospitals with yellow fever. All of the Co. at one time or another had contracted the fever.

After the 30 days were up, orders were changed and the men were to be discharged at Kalamazoo. By Nov. 4 all of the men had been examined, paid off and mustered out of the service. This took place at the Armory in Kalamazoo under direction of regular army officers.

Although thoroughly disgusted in the manner in which affairs were handled, by Dec. 20 1898 the former men of Co. C. wished to reorganize. They called a meeting and selected a board of directors to look after affairs. Official orders from the State Military Board would have to be issued before anything could be done. On Aug 30 1899 a meeting was held and a local organization was set up. Forty men pledged to join Co. C. when the State would again recognise Co. C. Also the company would march in the Decoration day parade in Muskegon. On July 9, 1899 word came from the Adjutant General in Lansing that the Michigan National Guard had been reorganized and that on July 10 Co. C. would be accepted as a part of the State Guard again, being in the Second Regiment. The law was very inadequate as to the status of former Co. C. men, whether they were still in State service or not after being discharged from Federal service.
Thus those who didn't wish to remain in the Michigan National guard could be discharged and those who wished to remain could re-enlist. Since the State Guard was not a part of the army of the United States, new officers for Co. C. must be elected because Capt. Westnedge is enlisted in the army of the United States. So the following day July 10, 1899 58 men formed Co. C. and Joseph B. Westnedge was elected Captain. (This was the official muster date into State service once more.) Announcement was made that weekly Monday night drill would be started immediately and there would be no encampment for the year. Equipment was immediately requisitioned from the State.

Once more Co. C. went back to a peace time existence. This new period ended the era where Co. C. was merely a social organization. From now on the emphasis was placed solely on military efficiency. In 1900 from Aug. 8 to Aug 12 the annual encampment was at Camp Withington, Island Lake. The new uniform consisted of a campaign hat, hat cord, blue shirt, blouse, trousers, leggings and black shoes. Co. C. was complimented on its military bearing. The next two years found the encampments at Manistee because Island Lake had become contaminated. It was Camp Bliss in 1901 and Camp Hawley in 1902. Co. C. was headed by Capt. Don Ingraham.

In 1903 the first federal legislation was made in reference to the state national guards. The government had fought two wars with state troops and experienced much difficulty because of the diversity of commands. This Act of 1903, although not very important or strong was a step in the right direction and in a few years would culminate in a strong national guard act. The federal government definitely needed some control over state troops. Also in that year, the encampment was held at West Point, Kentucky which overlooks the Ohio River. This was from Sept. 30 to Oct 10 and held
in conjunction with troops from Indiana and Wisconsin. Co. C. traveled there in tourist sleepers of which there were not enough. They bivouced in an area called Camp Young and there were issued new khaki uniforms and U. S. magazine rifles. Although the organization was extremely poor, it was the first combined maneuver held, so better results were anticipated on the next maneuver. 116

The encampment in 1904 was from Aug. 4 to Aug. 12 and held at Camp Boynton at Ludington. Some men following the encampment were discharged from the Co. because of non attendance at drills and non payment of dues. 117 Again at Ludington in 1905 from Aug. 9 to Aug. 16 went Co. C. to the encampment. Co. C. is in excellent organization and can be equipped and fully assembled for service in six hours. Mention is made that the rented armory is very inadequate. 118 In 1906 the encampment was at Ft. Benjamin Harrison just outside of Indianapolis, Ind. and in 1907 it was in Ludington at Camp McGurrin. 1908 brought the encampment back to Ft. Benjamin Harrison. Co. C. stated that it now could be assembled in four hours. Also that a new armory was badly needed. 119

By act of May 25, 1909, Michigan State Legislature, the militia became more completely organized. It provided for the State to build armories, for the governor to organize a National Guard Reserve to protect the State when the National Guard had been called out. It also abolished the elective system of promotion of officers and gave the governor the authority to call the guard out to quell riots within the State. That year the encampment was held at Camp Hanah, Ludington and the strength of Co. C. then was 70 men and officers. 120 The following year shows a change in State policy. The appropriations for the Guard are much larger and much more equipment is issued to the men and companies. That year the encampment was held at Ft. Benjamin Harrison from Sept. 24 to Sept 28. 121
In 1911 no encampment was held because the Co. had been called out by the State to quell a riot at the State Prison at Jackson. There had been prison riots throughout the nation and it had been necessary to call State troops into service to preserve order. There was no effective State Police at this time. Otto K. Buder who was 17 at the time of the riots recalls the Co. in bivouac outside the prison on Portage St. During the disturbance a civilian who was thought to be smuggling arms into the prison was shot and killed.\textsuperscript{122}

Because of the inadequate armory facilities in Kalamazoo $30,000 was appropriated in 1912 for building an armory. $10,000 was donated by the City of Kalamazoo. Late in 1913 actual construction was begun and it was finished in 1914.\textsuperscript{123} At this time the State had been attempting to locate a permanent area for its annual encampment and such a site was offered by Rasmus Hanson of Grayling. He donated 15000 acres of land overlooking Portage Lake at Grayling to the State for a permanent military reservation.\textsuperscript{124}

Again in the summer of 1913 the Guard was called out due to internal disturbances. The early part of the year was filled with labor disputes in the Houghton copper region. These strikes eventually led to violence so on July 25 the entire State Guard was called out. Co. C. mobilized and entrained that very evening at 7:50 P.M. for Grand Rapids. At Grand Rapids it joined other units for field duty at Houghton. Capt. Wm. S. Forbes was in command as the company left and it is noted that hardly anyone saw the company off. The Co. arrived on July 26 and didn't expect any trouble but on July 27 the order was for fixed bayonets to keep the area quiet. On the evening of July 28 the strikers attempted to sabotage the arsenal and Co. C. fired the first shots of the uprising. On July 31 a hand to hand battle was waged as the strikers rushed the powder house. Prior to State Troop aid the entire area had been in a complete state of
terrorization and civil authorities were powerless to handle the situation. Thus after the initial clashes Co. C. was on constant guard duty to maintain peace. By Aug. 10 the trouble was over and Co. C. returned home on Aug. 14—tanned and hardened by the experience. An interesting point to be brought out here is that the men were not paid immediately after their arrival in Kalamazoo. After a week of waiting with no pay, formal complaints were issue to the state of the bad food and quarters at Houghton and also of the intentions of the Co. to revolt. It was feared that the entire Co. might be mustered out and charged with mutiny but fortunately the pay arrived and this never happened. 125

In 1915 on April 22 the Second Regiment was changed to the 32nd. Michigan Infantry which corresponded to the same name it had had in the Spanish American War. 126 On June 3, 1916, President Wilson signed the Army Reorganization bill which at last federalized the National Guards of the Several states. This actually made the National Guard a reserve component of the Regular Army. It provided for federal army control of the training of guardsmen, of their services, for their pay, uniform and equipment. It was an act that had been needed for some time because it unified and coordinated the entire militia system. 127

In the early months of 1916 rebel forces in Mexico under Villa had become uncontrollable by the Mexican government. In January some 19 Americans had been murdered and on March 9, Villa had entered American territory and attacked American forces. With consent of the Mexican president, American forces stationed on the border had entered Mexico on March 15 in pursuit of Villa. Minor skirmishes occurred and there was acute danger of war because there was some evidence of German intrigue behind the whole affair. 128

With the affair not settled by June, on June 19, 1916 the entire
Michigan National Guard was called out for service on the Mexican border. Co.C., assembled at its armory and reported at Grayling June 25. Here as a part of the 32nd. Regiment, it was mustered into federal service on July 1, 1916.129

The Regiment left for El Paso, Texas and arrived there on July 12. It encamped some 300 yards from the Mexican border and the encampment was called Camp Cotton. Since the trouble in Mexico had been almost dissolved, the Regiment merely trained and guarded the Rio Grande river from Fort Hancock, Texas to Las Cruces, New Mexico. In addition, sham battles were fought with Regular Army troops from Fort Bliss. Condition during the winter were not too desirable since there was much snow and cold weather. By January, the Regiment was certain of not seeing service in Mexico, so on January 18, 1917 it left for Fort Wayne, Michigan, arriving there January 24. On Feb. 7, 1917, the Regiment was mustered out of the federal service. Then as the Act of June 3, 1916 specified, it reverted to its former National Guard status. Prior to this Act much confusion existed each time the units were mustered out of federal service. Now, all that had to be done was to bring the Co. up to strength of 100. This was done immediately and the weekly drill periods were once more begun. The men felt favorably disposed toward the Mexican affair in that the experience proved to be invaluable.130

It is reported that had the mustering out of troops begun a few days later, it would have been stopped and the Regiment remained in federal service. The reason being that during this period, relations between the Imperial German Government and the United States were becoming more and more strained. Germany had been at war since 1914 and in the process all of Europe was thrown into it. The United States had attempted to maintain a policy of neutrality toward the whole affair. In truth, the United States maintained
a neutrality "against" Germany, in that, popular feeling in America was for Germany's enemies- France and Great Britain. American ships had carried supplies to England and several had been sunk by the German Navy. Thus in December 1916, the Imperial Government issued an ultimatum that "it intended to blockade the entire eastern Atlantic coast and unrestricted warfare would be wage on all ships, to become effective Feb. 1, 1917" The United States protested and the German Government then agreed to search and sink only vessels with contraband of war aboard. On Feb. 1, Germany started her undersea war campaign with complete disrespect of her agreement by sinking unarmed vessels without warning. The German ambassador in Washington was given his passport and, still the Imperial Government persisted in its unrestricted submarine warfare. Therefore, on April 6, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany. 131

All National Guard organizations received orders to recruit up to their maximum war strength as provided by the new National Guard Law. June 1, the 32nd. Regimental headquarters was established at the Kalamazoo armory. July 15, by a War Department order, the 32nd. Regiment was to prepare to be mustered into federal service. Co. C. assembled at its armory, drew rations and equipment and commenced drill and training. On Aug. 5, 1917, Co. C. at its own armory became a part of the Army of the United States. On Aug 16, Co. C. left Kalamazoo for the mobilization of the Regiment at Grayling. By nightfall, the entire regiment had assembled at Grayling and army life had begun in earnest. 132

Henceforth the story of Co. C. in the World War becomes one where it is synonymous with its regiment, the 32nd., which was soon to change its name, therefore the following report is from Emil B. Gansser, a Captain in the Regiment, who made a detailed history of the Regiment in World War I.
"During the stay here, much emphasis was placed on physical conditioning, in that not much information concerning modern warfare was forthcoming from Europe. July 18, 1917 saw the formation of the 32nd Division from National Guard Troops of Michigan and Wisconsin. The Division was to be assembled at Camp Mac Arthur in Waco, Texas. Thus on Sept. 15, the Regiment entrained and started on its southward journey. The train passed through Kalamazoo and the townspeople turned out in force to greet their own Co. C. and Col. Westnedge who was to command the Regiment. Portions of the Regiment paraded. Sept. 19, after going through Illinois, Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma, the regiment arrived at Camp Mac Arthur. At Waco a new system for an infantry brigade was ordered so the 31st Michigan Infantry regiment was divided between the 32nd. and the 33rd. regiments. On Sept 23, 1917, the 32nd.(with Co. C.) and part of the 31st. became known as the 126th. Infantry Regiment, National Guard, under command of Col. Westnedge. Capt. Robert L. Wright commanded Co. C.

The Division was in training in an infantry prescribed course of 16 weeks. This included extended and close order drill, rifle training, bayonet practice, instruction in use of mortars and grenades, gas warfare and entrenchments and bivouacs.

By December there were many rumors about leaving for overseas soon. In January, the Division received orders to report to the Port of Embarkation at Hoboken, New Jersey. Thus the 126th. regiment left Waco for New Jersey(Camp Merritt) on Jan. 18, 1918. On January 26 the regiment arrived at Camp Merrit which was some 15 miles from Times Square. By Feb. 15 everything was in order so regimental headquarters was put aboard the transport, U.S.S. President Grant and on the next day the entire regiment boarded the transport. The ship, a former German Hamburg American liner, left its pier
on Feb 17 and joined a convoy at rest off Sandy Hook. Late Monday night, Feb. 18, the convoy began to move out to sea. The three mile limit was not passed until after midnight so the foreign service of the 126th regiment begins Feb. 19, 1918.

In mid-Atlantic on Feb. 27, the entire convoy was thrown into a submarine scare. The convoy scattered and all alone, the President Grant went after the dark object in the water. It turned out to be a barrel. March 4, 1918 the light house at Brest was sighted and at 11:30 in the morning the convoy stood at anchor in the bay before Brest.

March 6 the regiment stepped onto French soil and immediately boarded a train of "40 and 8s" (small box cars built for 40 men or 8 horses) for St. Nazaire. While at St. Nazaire the regiment served as a replacement outfit to the 1st Corps. This depleted the regiments of all their privates and captains. After that, it served as a labor outfit to assist the Service of Supply troops at the port. St. Nazaire was a huge supply depot for ships from the United States. Since the 32nd Division was among the first to arrive in France, the problem of supply was still far from being solved.

This service of supply work lasted until the German offensive in March. On March 21, 1918 the 32nd Division was made a temporary combat division. From April 5 to April 7 the Division moved easterly across France through Nantes, Tours and Bourges. The 126th regiment encamped at Champlitte.

Training thus ensued and although conditions on the German front looked black the Division remained at Champlitte which was the 10th Training Area.

May 14, the training ended and the regiment prepared to take over a sector at the front. At 8:00 A.M. on May 15 the 1st Bn. (Co.C.
was apart of it) entrained for an unknown destination. As it soon was evident they were headed for Belfort near Alsace to take over a quiet sector. On Feb. 16 they arrived and had their first experience of war. There were two airplanes overhead dog fighting.

On Feb. 20 the regiment relieved the French 9th. Infantry Division and took over their trenches. The Germans evidently knew that green troops had moved in because activity (artillery and small arms fire) immediately picked up when the regiment took over. At this time 1st. Lt. Otto K. Buder was in command of Co. C.

The regiment held some 7 kilometers of front line and constantly shifted its several companies so as not to overburden any one. Actually this was a training period for the Division but some casualties were sustained. During June about one half of the regiment had trench fever which greatly decreased the efficiency of the outfit.

July 8 an observation patrol was made into enemy territory at night. 2nd. Lt. James M. Wilson, who had been a Sgt. in Co. C. and was now a Battalion scout officer, led the patrol. Upon returning to his own lines, Lt. Wilson found two of his men missing. He crept back into No Man's Land, found one man in a shell hole and once more started back to his lines. He was severely hit but fortunately did get back with his man. For this, he was given the Distinguished Service Cross and made a member of the Legion of Honor. A week later a shell struck a Co. C. dug-out and 4 men were killed.

On July 18 the Division prepared to move out of the Alsace sector. On July 20 the 1st. Bn. of the regiment entrained for another unknown destination but rumor had it to be Chateau Thierry which was an active front. They went through Paris and on July 25 arrived at Verberie. By truck they moved into Chateau Thierry on July 25 which
is on the Marne River. Spirits and general morale were extremely high because the Germans had now begun to retreat.

Sunday at 3:00 P.M., July 28, the regiment began to move to the front some 11 kilometers east. The route was through St. Pere, Beauvardes and Feret de Fere. It was a night march and the green troops gave many false gas alarms. The reason for this was because of the scent of burning gun powder which enemy artillery, in addition to allied, was producing. They bivouaced 3 kilometers from the front, in the face of a terrific barrage of artillery.

Co. C. suffered no casualties although the regiment did. On July 30, orders came for the regiment to take over the front line. Although the regiment was unaware of it, the 126th was now participating in the Aisne Marne offensive or the 2nd. battle of the Marne.

This attack had begun on July 18 after a unsuccessful attack by the Germans on July 15. The Allies were prepared for this attack so on the third day after the attack, they counterattacked. By July 27 the line had been pushed back to the north bank of the Marne river and by July 28 to the Ourcq river region. The Americans were holding the center position of the front with the 3rd. and 28th. Infantry divisions which on July 30 were relieved. There place was taken by the 32nd. and 42nd. Infantry divisions.

The regiment thus in the next ten days drove east to the Vesle river and Fismes. The drive was one of hardship and privation. The field kitchens hadn't arrived so the regiment went without hot rations for 8 days, living only on the well known army canned or packaged rations. Aug. 1, the regiment went "over the top" for the first time in taking hill 212. 1st. Lt. Ray E. Bostwick of Co. C. was killed at Jomblets Woods in the attack. On Aug. 7, the regiment was relieved and had a rest period in the Du Pelger Woods. Records then showed that in the past offensive, Co. C. had lost one officer,
13 enlisted men and 61 wounded. From Aug. 7 to Aug. 11 they rested. After those dates another period of training began.

On Aug. 24 the regiment moved out from its area to Croutoy near Soissons to join General Mangin's 10th. French Army in the Oise Aisne offensive. Again the regiment was to act as shock troops. At Juvigny then on Aug. 27, the regiment took over the front.

No sooner had it taken up positions when orders came down to attack. The Germans were forced back but countered on Aug 28. Thereupon on the following day the allies once more attacked and took Juvigny on Aug. 30. Two days later the division, which had been the only U. S. division to participate in the attack, was relieved.

The regiment then moved to the Joinville rest area and remained there until Sept. 17, at which time it went toward the Verdun sector. Now the regiment was to participate in the Meuse Argonne offensive which was one of the largest in the history of the United States. The attack had started Sept. 14 but the 126th didn't get into it until Sept. 29 at Montfaucon Woods. It was in the 2nd. phase of the offensive on Oct. 4 that the regiment was active.

The attacks were measured in yards since the Krauts held tenaciously to every knoll. On Sept. 9 the order to again attack was given and by the end of the day, one of the strongest defensive areas for the enemy (Kriemhilde Stellung) was within striking distance. Before this objective was taken, on Oct. 11, the Division was relieved. By Oct. 14, the area still hadn't been taken so the Division was put back on the line. That night Kriemhilde Stellung fell, which was the last fortified position between the Meuse and the Argonne.

The regiment then rolled on and by Oct. 17, Bantherville Woods was taken. Oct. 20 found the regiment moving back to Bois du Emont and Montfaucon Woods was to be the rest camp.

On Nov. 1 a general attack began and the 32nd. Division was held
in reserve to the 3rd. Corps. Three days later the regiment moved to Bois de Rappes and remained there until Nov. 9. By this time the German Army had been fought to a standstill and only 30 divisions remained which were all understrength and fatigued. On Nov. 9 the regiment moved to support the 5th. Division. It took a front line position on the right flank of the 5th. Division. Orders were given for the regiment to attack on the night of Nov. 11; so preparations were made.

Although it was rumored that the enemy was asking for peace, the tempo of battle increased. The morning of Nov. 11 was no exception and enemy activity was very heavy. At 9:00 A.M. orders came in that hostilities were to cease at 11:00 A.M. — a mere two hours away. Nobody actually believed this order but still all anticipated the hour as a matter of curiosity. At 10:30 A.M. the Germans unleashed a heavy barrage of artillery. This kept up with ever increased fury, with added American artillery activity, until exactly 11:00 A.M. At that moment, the firing stopped— and the war was over.

Hun treachery was still suspected and therefore no celebrations followed, although the Germans did celebrate by shooting flares into the sky at night. On Nov. 13 the division heard that it had been selected to cross the Rhine and occupy Coblenz. The march began on Nov. 17 and by Dec. 1, Luxembourg had been crossed and the regiment entered Prussia. No longer did civilians greet them kindly but only cold stares met them. The Rhine was crossed at Urmitz on Dec. 13. Thus on Dec. 15, the Coblenz bridgehead had been established and Co. C. was billeted at Ober-Honnefeld.

With the war over, once more the regiment went into training. Thereupon, the regiment spent Christmas in Germany, as it would also spend January, February and March of 1919. All that was done
was to train, pull guard and play ball. Early in April word was received that the Division was going home. Thus on April 19, the regiment entrained on those famous "40 and 8s" and started on its trip to Brest. It arrived at Brest on April 22 and settled down in Camp Pontenezen while awaiting transportation across the Atlantic.

The regiment boarded the "Francis J. Luckenback", which was a small merchant freighter on April 28. Late in the afternoon the regiment, aboard ship left the continent which it had so bravely fought upon. It reached Boston on May 14 and the regiment then went to Camp Devens. Co.C. on May 18 entrained for Detroit where it paraded in the streets. Later the Co. came to Kalamazoo and paraded but by May 21 it had arrived at Camp Custer. On the following day, May 22,1919, the men of Co. C. were mustered out of the federal service.133

Once again, as the National Guard act of 1916 stipulated, it was necessary to bring Co. C. up to strength and have it accepted and have it accepted as a part of the Michigan National Guard. This was accomplished a little over a year after it had been mustered out of the federal service. On Aug. 7,1920 the Co. was issued uniforms, arms and accoutrements and was accepted into the Michigan National Guard as Co. C. Its officers were Capt. Claude M. Shook, 1st. Lt. Norman Long, 2nd. Lt. William Owen (a member of the 126th. regiment overseas) and 1st. Sgt. Mike Doornbos. Henceforth Co. C. was now apart of the 126th. Michigan Infantry Regiment, keeping the same regimental number it had had in federal service during the World War.134

Co. C., now, as after each other war, settled down to a peacetime existence. Since 1873 when the Michigan National Guard was actually organized, the Guard had evolved to a highly efficient military force. During peacetime the Guard was at home to quell local
disturbances but its authority actually came from the National Army. Thus the routine of Co.C began once more with its weekly Monday night drill and instruction sessions and its annual encampments. The procedure had evolved itself so efficiently that the period from 1920 to 1936 consisted only of meetings, encampments and new officers. The permanent home of Co. C. was the armory at Kalamazoo and the permanent encampment ground was at Grayling. The encampments again took place in August and July of 1921. The only exceptional note in the maneuver was that a special training cycle was given to the officers. Thereafter and to the summer of 1936, the annual encampments were held at Grayling. \(^{135}\)

The strength of the Co. now was 66 men and 3 officers. In the spring of 1923, Lt. Glenn Walker became acting commanding officer of the Co. \(^{136}\) In Dec. of 1925 a public notice to inform guardsmen of their status. Although the nation was at peace, members of the Guard were compelled to attend drill every Monday under court martial law. \(^{137}\) From this can be seen that in a peace period, as before, the Guard became a "has been" and interest in it was almost lost. Thus a campaign of enlisting men was maintained continually in peacetime. "The duration of enlistment is 3 years. If a former service man, the enlistment can be 1 year if not over one third of the Co. is composed of 1 year enlistments. If Guard duties interfere with civilian duties, a discharge from the Guard is easily obtained. As to responsibility of individual guardsman, it consists of weekly drill, annual encampment periods, state call or federal call. For each day of drill the federal government pays the following: Pvt.-$1.00, Cpl.-$1.15, Sgt.-$1.40, S/Sgt.$1.80, and 1st. Sgt. $2.80. The federal government furnished Regular Army men to assist in training, issues uniforms and equipment and maintains this pay rate during the summer encampment. In addition, the state pays
during the encampment and during any emergency that might arise." In 1927, the 1st. Sgt. was Sherwood S. Garrett who held that rank until 1938. During the Hoover Administration, in a general trend to economize, the strength of the Co. was dropped to 60 men and 3 officers.

As was said before, the period from 1920 to 1936 was a very stable one for Co. C. but by 1936, world affairs were once more concerning themselves with war. It was in 1936 that the Insurgents in Spain rebelled against the Spanish government and it was seen with interest how Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy supported the Insurgent Franco. Also at this time the Imperial Japanese Government held huge war games in the Pacific and the official word was that "the presumed enemies were the Soviet Union and the United States." Of course the people of the United States had no idea of war but still in the summer of 1936, the 2nd. Army Maneuvers were held in August. It consisted of National Guard units from Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana. In addition Regular Army outfits (an armored force from Fort Knox, Kentucky) participated. This took the place of the encampment at Grayling and was held in the Allegan-Custer Area. This area extended from Allegan to Gun and Pine Lakes, thence southward to Camp Custer. The troops were organized tactically into two forces, the Reds and the Blues and actual wartime conditions were simulated. The Maneuver ended Aug. 20. The officers of Co. C. at this time were Capt. Glenn Walker, 1st. Lt. William Fitzgerald and 2nd. Lt. Arthur Don Bush.

The following year, 1937, was one of activity for the Guard. At that time industrial strife was great in the automobile industry. The Flint plant of General Motors had been on strike and eventually local officials were unable to maintain peace. On January 15, Governor Murphy ordered some 3300 men of the Michigan National Guard to Flint for riot duty. Co. C. had been alerted three days before
this time and immediately went to Flint under command of Capt. Walker. The Co. was quartered at Longfellow school and maintained a continual guard of the Buick plant. This amounted to 24 hours on duty and 24 hours off duty but according to Captain Walker, no one got more than 5 hours of sleep at any one time. At one time the mobs attempted to mob the plant and through the men of Co. C. this action was prevented. For this action, the Co. was given commendation.

The following year was one of peaceful activity for the Co. and also was the encampment at Grayling in August of 1939. But just a few days after this affair, the world was once more inflamed in war.

On Sept. 1, 1939, Adolph Hitler, after peaceably taking Austria and Czechoslovakia, announced to the world that his huge German war machine was now rolling across Poland. Europe was at war. Two days later it was the combined forces of Germany, Italy and allies against Great Britain and France. Once more the United States attempted to remain neutral but once the United States, morally if not physically supported Great Britain. It was not long before the British cause appeared to be the cause of America and soon, American ships were being attacked by Germany.

Although the popular feeling of the nation was not heated nor anxious for war, the general consensus of opinion felt that war would probably engulf the United States also. In the summer of 1940 the men of Co. C. heard rumors that there was a possibility of being called into federal service. On August 11, the annual encampment was held but this time it was for a period of 30 days of intensive training at Camp Mc Coy, Wisconsin. Many felt that while the outfit was at Camp Mc Coy it would be mustered into the federal service. Such was not the case and Co. C. returned to Kalamazoo still in the service of the state.
On Oct. 15, 1940, Governor Dickerson issued the order for the mobilization of Co. C. The order was received by Capt. Glenn Walker and it instructed him to mobilize his Co. preparatory to being mustered into the federal service. The duration of service was to be a period of training for one year. The men remained at the armory from Oct. 15 until they left. On Oct. 18, 1940 the men of Co. C. were mustered into the Army of the United States at the armory in Kalamazoo. Five days later, Oct. 23, Co. C. left on the Michigan Central Railroad for Camp Beauregard, Louisiana and late that night Co. C. arrived at Camp Beauregard. Amid much bustle of organization, Co. C. with other Michigan National Guard units began its one year training period. During the Christmas season of 1940, about one half of the Co. was given furloughs and returned to Kalamazoo for a few days rest from the arduous training in Louisiana.

Upon return from furlough, the Co. once more began training. When the Co. had been called into federal service, it had again become a part of the 126th. Infantry Regiment which was in the 32nd. Infantry Division. Thus training was given along regimental and divisional lines. In April of 1941 the regiment was transferred to Camp Livingston, Louisiana and at this time additional men, brought into the Army by Selective Service, were added. Then with the Co., regiment and division brought up to strength, field maneuvers were begun. From April on, although the Co. was stationed at Camp Livingston, the major portion of training was spent in the field. This took the Co. throughout Louisiana and portions of Texas.

On May 1, 1941, Capt. Glenn Walker was transferred out, because of age requirements, and Arthur Don Bush assumed command of Co. C.
Although the United States was not at war, the morale of the men was high and as a general rule, they all felt that war was imminent at any moment and that their training as soldiers was not time wasted. When the one year enlistment period was up, it was extended and field training of Co. C. went on. In the latter part of November, Capt. Bush was given a leave and Lt. George Reed temporarily assumed command of Co. C.152

And then it happened. When news of Pearl Harbor reached the men in Co. C., they were ready for war. Their training had been complete and their morale was more than ever fortified to enter into battle. Col. Geersma, commander of the regiment, had told the men the cold hard facts on what to expect in battle— that it would be a hard, cruel war to the end.153

So once again, Co. C. went off to war to protect the union—to add another gallant page of history to its 82 years of existence and to once more bring fame to the militiamen of Kalamazoo—Kalamazoo's own Co. C.

The End

Note

Unfortunately, source material regarding the history of Co. C. during World War II had not become available at the time of writing. In general, the Co. fought in the South Western Pacific Theatre of war and sustained heavy casualties throughout the war. At the end of the war, the Co. was de-activated and once more the state began to bring the Co. up to strength. The date of acceptance for Co. C. into the Michigan National Guard has been set for February 7, 1947.
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| 8-- | Kalamazoo Gazette, p. 3, June 16, 1835. |
| 9-- | Red Book of Michigan, p. 36. |
| 10-- | Ibid, p. 86. |
| 14-- | Kalamazoo Gazette, p. 2, Sept. 27, 1840. |
| 15-- | Red Book of Michigan, p. 87. |
| 16-- | Kalamazoo Gazette, p. 2, Jan. 11, 1840. |
| 24-- | Kalamazoo Gazette, p. 3, June 13, 1859. |
| 26-- | Ibid, p. 43. |
| 27-- | Red Book of Michigan, p. 148-152. |
| 28-- | Kalamazoo Gazette, p. 3, Jan. 18, 1861. |
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| 32-- | Red Book of Michigan, p. 151. |
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| 34-- | Ibid, p. 2. |
| 36-- | Kalamazoo Gazette, p. 2, May 12, 1861. |
| 37-- | Michigan Volunteers in the Civil War, p. 2. |
| 38-- | Kalamazoo Gazette, p. 3, May 17, 1861. |
| 39-- | Michigan Volunteers in the Civil War, p. 3. |
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