

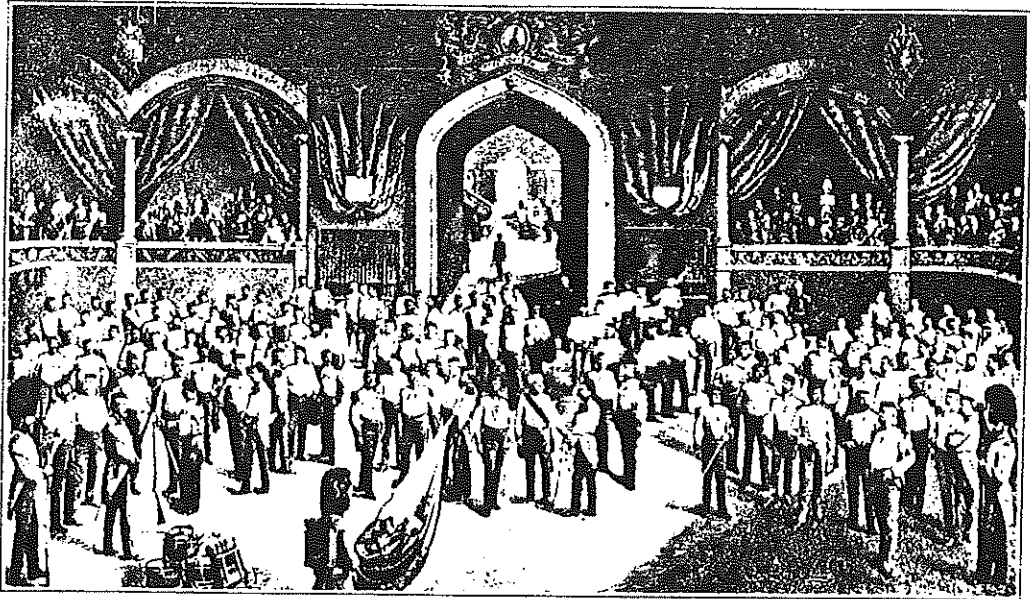


STORY OF THE OLD GUARD

By Lieut. Jason Meth

*"As that solid square stood on Waterloo's bill,
May this white-coated company stand,
A bulwark of honor—a breastwork of truth—
Our hearts stamped with loyalty's brand."*

GEO. HOEY.



OLD GUARD—CITY OF NEW YORK

Assembly for Parade

THIS is a story of two famous companies which later became a famous battalion. To get a clear view of their background it is necessary to look into the times when they were organized.

The period was shortly after the War of 1812, when the United States of America was beginning its phenomenal growth. John Quincy Adams had defeated General Andrew Jackson for the Presidency and had already served his term. Henry Clay was the Speaker of the House and Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun were the moving spirits in Congress.



Population, wealth and national feeling were advancing with leaps and bounds. An immense export and import trade, which increased our shipping and ocean commerce, caused the government to build a fairly good-sized Navy and the famous clipper ships were being built in great quantity.

Pirates flourished, preying upon merchant vessels. The story of the Algerian buccaneers and the Barbary Coast, as well as the exploits of Stephen Decatur, fascinated young boys and sent them to sea.

The American Privateers had turned to lawful commerce, but a few were still engaged in the nefarious African Slave Trade.

The Spanish Colonies in America were securing their independence by revolution. The great European statesmen, Metternich of Austria, and Talleyrand of France, had united royalty against liberalism by the creation of the Holy Alliance and sought to interfere in Spanish America.

The Monroe Doctrine (1823) had been issued by President James Monroe and stopped the meddling of the Holy Alliance; it also brought England to our side and aligned it with the United States for the first time.

George IV was now King of England, and in France, Charles X replaced Napoleon, who had departed this life but a few years before.

The Battle of Waterloo and the triumph of Wellington, as well as Napoleon's imprisonment at St. Helena, were still recent events.

In our own country, the last decade of rapid industrial development had brought into prominence, problems of urban life and municipal government, which were new and appeared hopelessly beyond solution.

In New York City, then, as now, the metropolis of the country, the growth of the city was phenomenal. The population was increasing so that it was hardly possible to keep pace with the inpouring of strangers.

More than three thousand buildings were under way in 1825. Most of these houses were built so cheaply and hastily that several fell down while in the course of construction; others were torn down by order of the authorities.

In the neighborhood of Canal Street, a new city stood on what had been, a few years before, meadows and swamps. Broadway was the main road and led to the wild country north of Tenth Street where the gentlemen went hunting for snipe, rabbits, woodcock and occasionally a fox.

There were many swampy marshes, meadows, primeval streams and water courses which graced the countryside. Even in the city proper, the houses were scattered and were surrounded by large grounds. The occupation of quite a number of the inhabitants was farming.

The typical New York gentleman of this time was dressed in a blue coat with gilt buttons, white or buff waistcoat with gold buttons, knee breeches of buckskin, buckles and top boots. Wellington boots (introduced and so termed after the Battle of Waterloo) prevailed. These were cut high, with tassels at the tops and were worn outside of the pantaloons. Shirt collars were very full, and the cravats were black or white and stiffened with wool, horsehair or hog's bristles; to the bosom of the shirts were attached low down pleated frills. For full dress, men wore knee breeches with gold buckles, black silk stockings and pumps.

Ladies wore long dresses almost touching the floor, with lots of lace and frills,



and Leghorn bonnets with long ribbons; on the forehead many wore at the sides, false hair called frizettes and all wore high and broad tortoise-shell combs. Fur muffs of the full dimensions of a ten-gallon keg were generally worn in cold weather.

Philip Hone, famous for his diary, was the Mayor of the City and De Witt Clinton, the builder of the Erie Canal, was the Governor of the State.

The Mayor was then elected by the Aldermen who served as General Sessions judges, two at a time, while the city departments were administered by private citizens, without pay.

The peace of the City was kept in the daytime by constables and at night, by the watch.

The military system in existence at this time was a very odd one. The Federal Government maintained a small Regular Army which was busily engaged on frontier duty. The States had general and very vague policies with reference to their militia.

In the State of New York, the military law then in effect was Chapter 254 of the Laws of 1823, which provided * * * "that each and every free able-bodied white male citizen, between 18 and 45 years of age, shall be a member of the militia; that every citizen enrolled in such militia, shall within six months, provide himself with a good musket or firelock, a sufficient bayonet and belt, two spare flints and a knapsack, a pouch, with a box therein, to contain not less than 24 cartridges suited to the bore of his musket or firelock, each cartridge to contain a proper quantity of powder and ball; or with a good rifle, knapsack, shot pouch, and powder horn, twenty balls suited to the bore of his rifle, and a quarter of a pound of powder; and shall appear so armed, accoutred and provided, when called out to exercise, or into service," * * *

The entire State was divided into regimental districts, each of which contained a number of regiments of militia which were neither uniformed nor equipped.

Regular drills were neither had nor required, except that on one or two occasions during the year, the men were required by law to assemble at a designated common for drill.

These were almost always shameful travesties in the sight of the military man, and served only to indicate the great need for a more definite and more effective militia policy.

The colonels of these un-uniformed regiments were men of prominence who found it a convenience to have a military title. With few exceptions, none of the officers had the slightest idea of tactics or drills.

The only visible indications of defense were in the few forts which were located on the southernmost shores of Manhattan Island.

Fort Clinton, later known as Castle Garden, and now the Aquarium, was located two hundred feet from the shore and connected to the Battery by a bridge. This was the most important fortification. Others were the "Red Fort" at the foot of Hubert Street, and the "White Fort" at the foot of Gansevoort Street.

None of them were in use from a military point of view and served some community purpose other than defense.

This was the state of affairs when one summer day, in the year 1825, a schooner arrived from Boston and made fast to one of the wharfs in Brooklyn, located at what is now Columbia Heights. She bore a company of splendidly uniformed troops, fully



supplied with camp equipage. They landed, marched a short distance to a square and quickly pitched their tents.

This was the famous Boston Light Infantry known more familiarly as the "Boston Tigers," come to New York, to visit the City. It was an independent company of Massachusetts Militia composed of the best citizens of the Hub City. The encampment was the most imposing sight seen in Brooklyn since Revolutionary times and the news spread like wildfire. From all sides, people flocked to Columbia Heights to view the spectacle.

A delegation of officials from the City of New York crossed the East River by ferryboat and arrived at the Tigers' camp. They exchanged courtesies with the officers of the Boston company and formally invited them to visit New York City and partake of its hospitalities.

The Tigers accepted and made the laborious crossing by ferry to the Battery where they formed and marched to City Hall Park. Here, an exhibition drill was given, in infantry and light infantry tactics, both by word of command and by the sound of a bugle.

This was something never seen before in the City. The drill was the most perfect and the appearance of the men faultless. Some of the spectators who had been up the Hudson River Valley and had seen the cadets at the then comparatively new military academy at West Point, compared the "Tigers" with the cadets.

The crowd which attended the drill was tremendous in size and resplendent in holiday array; it gave the Boston strangers a great ovation. Many of the un-uniformed militia officers were in the crowd and gazed with curiosity upon the unusual sight. Among them was a gentleman observing the proceedings very intently. This was Colonel William W. Tompkins, who was in command of the 106th un-uniformed militia regiment.

When the Boston troops had returned to their camp, Colonel Tompkins walked to his home deep in thought.

Shortly after this, Colonel Tompkins and his Lieutenant Colonel, Hay Stevens, resigned from the 106th Regiment and began to recruit for an independent, uniformed and equipped Light Infantry Company. They announced that it was their intention to organize a corps similar to the Boston Tigers; that only gentlemen of the best families, who would be amenable to the strictest of discipline and the greatest precision in drill, would be accepted.

So successful was this plan, that in a short time they had the required number of the best young citizens. They organized under the title of the "*Tompkins Blues*," named for the ex-Governor of the State and ex-Vice-President of the United States, Daniel D. Tompkins, who was the grandfather of Colonel Tompkins. Colonel Tompkins was elected Captain, Hay Stevens was elected Lieutenant, and Jonathan D. Stevenson, Ensign; all were duly commissioned. These gentlemen in later years occupied conspicuous places both in the State Militia and in the United States Army.

The members of the company purchased their own uniforms and equipments and the State furnished the muskets. Their Armory was at Wooster Street near Canal and was the first Armory for volunteers in the City.

The uniform of the corps was a coat and trousers of dark blue with silver bell buttons and trimmings, and cap with white pompon.

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Colonel Tompkins was a graduate of West Point. He served as a Lieutenant in the War of 1812. In the Mexican War, later, he was a Captain in the Tenth United States Infantry, and in the Florida War he held the same rank in the Second Dragoons.

Under his charge, the *Tompkins Blues* created a great furor and became famous in drill and discipline.

The "*New York Spy*," a popular weekly of those times, on September 1, 1827, speaking of a trip of the corps made to Middletown, Connecticut, says:

"We are at a loss to express ourselves as to the soldier-like conduct of the Blues in accompanying their Captain to a man (as volunteers) on the tempestuous day they set out, and trust it will furnish the other companies of our city, a good example, that 'fair weather soldiers' ought not to be the order of the day; and to Captain Tompkins it must furnish a convincing proof of the attachment of his men, and their determination through his exertions and those of his officers, to arrive at the acme of military discipline."

The same paper, on March 29, 1828, reporting a drill of the corps on Washington Parade Ground, wrote:

"The firings were for the first time performed by bugle signals; and it was the finest exhibition of military tactics we have ever seen in the Militia or the regular corps of the U. S. Army.

"Captain Tompkins merits the highest encomiums for the strict military discipline which he has introduced in his corps; and we do not hesitate pronouncing it the largest and best corps of Light Infantry in the State. This is the opinion of several of our Militia Officers and many other distinguished individuals."

The company became the military model of the day. Many other similar companies were organized and made rapid progress, accelerated by friendly rivalry. Students of our militia system have often referred to these companies as the foundation upon which our modern National Guard was created.

In 1830, Captain Tompkins became Colonel of the Fourteenth Regiment. He resigned from the *Tompkins Blues*, but before doing so found another enthusiast like himself, a young Virginian, Captain Edward Vincent, who agreed to accept the captaincy. He was elected on June 16, 1830, and became one of the most celebrated commanders of a flank company.

At about this time, as these independent companies were formed, they became the flank companies of un-uniformed militia regiments.

The *Tompkins Blues* had been parading with the Third Regiment of Artillery (later the 8th Regiment and now the 258th C. A.) up to about 1830, but now became the Flank Company A of the 106th Regiment, 62nd Brigade, New York State Infantry.

In 1831, the company decided upon a change of uniform. After a long discussion they adopted a red coat with blue trimming, blue trousers, white web cross and body belts and glazed leather infantry caps, blazing star in front, horse-hair plume and brass chin scale-strap. It is said that the hat was extremely heavy.

When they made their first appearance in the new uniform, early the following year, they created great excitement and quite some criticism, but this was overcome.

The company was now being popularly called and referred to as the *New York*



Light Guard, and on August 14, 1833, the name was officially adopted by the corps at a regular meeting.

On June 14, 1833, an independent company was formed by Captain William M. McArdle, which was named the *Pulaski Cadets*. They wore a dark-blue uniform, with red trimmings and white belts. In a very short time this company became the principal rival of the *Light Guard*.

"Scott's Tactics" was the instruction book used, and the muskets were the old flint-locks, weighing fourteen pounds. The commands in the manual familiarly heard were, "load in twelve times," "open pan," "handle cartridge," "prime," "shut pan," and "cast about."

In the Fall of the year 1839, an election was ordered in the *Light Guard* for a non-commissioned officer to fill a vacancy. Such elections were very exciting affairs because the competition was keen. This election in particular, was a very important event because of the rivalry between two members, David D. Hart and Thomas N. Cazneau. Hart was elected and Cazneau withdrew from the *Light Guard* and proceeded to form a new organization. Shortly after he had assembled a group he approached Captain McArdle with a view of consolidating with the *Pulaski Cadets*. The proposal was put before the Cadets and the result was the formation of the "*New York City Guard*," which took the charter of the *Pulaski Cadets*. William M. McArdle was elected Captain; Thomas N. Cazneau, first lieutenant; S. D. Morrison, second lieutenant; James Mason, third lieutenant; and F. F. Burrirt, fourth lieutenant.

The quarters of the *City Guard* were now located on Crosby Street near Broadway. The "Apollo Rooms" located at 410 Broadway, served as quarters for the *Light Guard* until June 11, 1842, when the company moved to their new Armory known as "Lafayette Hall," located at 595 Broadway. This remained the Armory of the *Light Guard* until 1867.

In 1840, the *City Guard* was assigned to the 222nd Regiment as Company "B."

In 1844, the *Light Guard* determined again upon a change of uniform, and adopted the since famous white coat, blue facings, bearskin shako with tassels, blue trousers and black patent leather cross and body belts. This uniform is the same as now worn by the *Old Guard*.

The *Light Guard* made its first appearance, 85 strong, in this uniform, on June 21, 1845, upon the occasion of its visit to Fort Hamilton, L. I.

When the company filed out of the Armory at Lafayette Hall on that day, the excitement and crowd was tremendous.

In 1847, the *City Guard* followed suit and also changed its uniform to one resembling that of the *Light Guard*. It adopted the white coat and bearskin shako, but the trousers were white and the trimmings red. The first appearance was upon the occasion of a visit to Jersey City and likewise created a furore.

There were then so many independent military companies in the City, which on division parades presented such a kaleidoscopic appearance that the military authorities suggested that a number of regiments be formed, to be entirely composed of the most celebrated companies then existing. The suggestion was further made that the regiments adopt a regimental uniform for regimental functions and that the individual companies retain their own uniform for company and independent functions.



The idea met with common approval and two regiments were formed. The *City Guard* became the First Company in the Eleventh Regiment, which was largely composed of independent companies whose members were of German descent.

On May 6, 1847, the 12th Regiment was formed with Henry G. Stebbins as Colonel and John Jacob Astor as Lieutenant Colonel. The *Light Guard* became the Flank Company "A" of this new regiment. The other companies were equally as famous and the rivalry, though friendly, was intense.

In May, 1849, there occurred an incident in this city which was the first real test of the efficiency of the militia. William C. Macready, the tragedian, began an engagement at the Astor Place Opera House with *Macbeth*. Edwin Forrest, his bitter rival, then announced the same play for the same evening at the Broadway Theatre. This did not tend to diminish the bitterness of Forrest's partisans, who resented any rivalry of their favorite, and whose feelings were further inflamed by reports that during a recent visit to England, Forrest had been treated in an offensive manner through the envious influence of Macready. They therefore organized a party to attend the Opera House, cause a riot, and drive Macready from the stage. They accomplished this very effectively.

Macready would have resigned his engagement but was persuaded to continue by the urgency of an "open letter" addressed to him by some of our most prominent citizens, deploring the riot and praying that he remain to give the better class of the community a chance to manifest their approval of him and their detestation of the riotous proceedings.

He assented and on May 10th appeared for a performance. Forrest posted the same play for the same night; his adherents issued notices, organized meetings, published inflammatory circulars and planned to take possession of the Opera House by storm. A mob of several thousand gathered in Astor Place and made a general attack upon the Police, who were soon overcome. The mob then stormed the building and battered in the doors and windows. At this point the Seventh Regiment, which had been held in waiting, marched up, preceded by cavalry, cleared Eighth Street and occupied Astor Place. The horse troop was routed by an attack of cobblestones which were lying about to be used in paving the street, and Colonel Duryee (afterwards a member of the Old Guard) then ordered his men to load with ball. The Riot Act was proclaimed by Recorder Tallmadge, but without effect.

The attack with the cobblestones increased in ferocity and Sheriff John J. V. Westervelt requested a volley which was deemed unavoidable. The gallant Seventh, one hundred and forty-one of whom were wounded by the mob's fierce attack, responded with several volleys. Thirty-four of the mob and spectators were killed and twenty-six were wounded before the mob was dispersed.

The next day was worse than the first and the entire 1st Division was called out by General Sanford. The *Light Guard* and the *City Guard* were both in the thickest of the fray which had spread and grown in magnitude. At one time, the attack upon the *City Guard* was so severe that they were ordered to load and the Recorder proclaimed that another shower of stones would bring out lead in return. Fortunately, the troops restored order and the city became quiet and orderly again.

It was a trying time, which tested the militia, and served to gain for it the confidence and gratitude of all law-abiding citizens.



The Twelfth Regiment, of which the *Light Guard* was a part, prospered under Colonel Stebbins until about the year 1854, when the Colonel resigned. Captain Richard French, who had been the captain of Company "F," "Lafayette Fusileers," in the same regiment, was elected to succeed Colonel Stebbins.

Colonel French, however, proved to be very unpopular with his companies because of his unreasonable and arbitrary disposition and the 12th suffered a decline. The *Light Guard*, in particular, found it very difficult to serve under him by reason of his hostile attitude, which it is said, was brought about by his having been socially slighted by some of the *Light Guard* members.

The company found it necessary to make a change to another regiment and with this end in view, a request was made to be transferred to the 55th Regiment of Artillery. An interesting story is told in connection with this transfer. Colonel French was very much opposed to it and resisted it officially, while the more influential members of the *Light Guard* exerted great political pressure to bring about the change.

In line with his antagonistic attitude, Colonel French frequently ordered the *Light Guard* out to extra drills. The Company responded punctually, despite this unfair treatment, because Captain Vincent did not wish the *Light Guard* to be drawn into an official controversy. The efforts to secure the change were redoubled.

In September, 1855, upon the occasion of one of these drills, which took place on Tompkins Square, Colonel French stood about with a very happy, self-satisfied air and directed the exercises. The experience was more trying than ever, but the *Light Guard* grimly carried on. While they were thus engaged, a messenger arrived with papers for Captain Vincent. The Captain stopped the drill, read the papers, saluted Colonel French and marched the company back to the Armory at Lafayette Hall. The consternation of Colonel French was increased when he learned later the reason for the *Light Guard's* withdrawal. The papers which Captain Vincent received were orders which transferred the *Light Guard* to the 55th Regiment as Company "I" of that command.

The 55th Regiment was then known as the "Garde-Lafayette" and was composed almost entirely of companies whose members were of French extraction. Its commander was the popular Colonel Eugene Le Gal.

In the *City Guard*, many changes were also taking place at this time. In 1853, Captain McArdle resigned and on July 7, 1853, Lt. Thomas T. Ferris was elected Captain. He served as commandant for about three years and was succeeded by Captain Nicholas B. LaBau on February 14, 1856.

The following year Captain William H. Hallick was elected and succeeded Captain LaBau.

While Captain Hallick was in command of the *City Guard*, the Company made an important change. In the Fall of 1857 it was transferred to the 55th Regiment of Artillery and became Company "G" of that regiment.

The 55th Regiment fared very well but the two companies soon found their position rather awkward in an almost totally French regiment and both requested another change.

At a meeting held by the members of the *Light Guard* on August 23, 1858, a



resolution was passed to retire from the 55th Regiment and to apply for the vacant letter of Company "A," 71st Regiment.

Colonel Abraham Vosburgh of the 71st helped the matter along and on September 16, 1858, the order making the change was published just in time to include the *Light Guard* in an expedition with the 71st, to Staten Island on what became known as the "Sepoy" or Quarantine War.

There was located at that time in Staten Island, a large hospital area covered with many buildings; it was used by the authorities for treatment of patients with contagious diseases. This group of institutions was very unpopular in its general locality and the people considered it "a pest and a nuisance of the most odious character."

After a long period of protest against its further maintenance with no response from the authorities, the people became infuriated and formed into a mob which set fire to the hospital buildings. The local police could not cope with the mob and the Metropolitan police sent from New York could do no better. The fire burned for many days and threatened shipping in the Bay.

Governor John A. King issued a proclamation declaring the County of Richmond in a state of insurrection and requested a military force to be sent there.

In October the 71st was sent out to take its turn at the seat of trouble and stayed two weeks guarding property and patrolling the stricken area.

In 1859, the 9th Regiment was disbanded and the right wing of the 55th Regiment consisting of three companies, one of which was the *City Guard*, Company "G," applied for permission to withdraw from that regiment, and assume the number of the disbanded organization.

A great deal of pressure was brought to bear upon the State authorities to accomplish this change. Alexander Henriques of the *City Guard* was the chairman of the committee appointed to urge upon the Adjutant General, the necessity of the change, and after several weeks of persistent effort the request was granted and on June 25, 1859, the new 9th Regiment was formed with Michael M. Van Beuren as Colonel, Captain Thomas T. Ferris as Lieutenant Colonel and Captain William H. Hallick as Major.

The *City Guard* became Company "C" in the new regiment and the captaincy being vacant, an election was held on July 20, 1859, and Mansfield Lovell became Captain. He was a West Point graduate, well schooled in the military art and an enterprising commandant. Soon after his election, he wrote to the Adjutant-General pointing out to him that ships were now being propelled by steam and consequently made great distances in a short time; that in the event of a War, enemy ships would reach our shores very quickly and attack us swiftly. He pointed out that coast defense had become very important and suggested that the *City Guard* be authorized to train at Fort Hamilton in the use of coast artillery. After a time, the Captain's suggestion was approved and the idea carried out very successfully. This visionary step was responsible for the formation, later, of the various coast artillery regiments in our State militia.

The outlook throughout the country was growing darker every day and the shadow being cast by the approaching Civil War crept slowly forward. Captain Lovell was a Southerner and dreaded the approaching strife. He conceived the idea



of asserting brotherhood and good will as a preventative of war and invited North, on behalf of the *City Guard*, the Republican Blues of Savannah, Ga.

They arrived in July, 1860, and were entertained and feted by the company and by many of the prominent people of this city. At a banquet given to the visitors, their commandant, Captain John W. Anderson responded in a speech as follows:

"Brethren and soldiers of the *New York City Guard*: The Republican Blues, through their captain, return you their warm, their true, their sincere thanks; we shall never forget your kindness. Your names shall ever be associated with ours as Brothers; and we hope that we may have the opportunity of convincing you that we really do love you."

Alexander Henriques, replying for Captain Lovell said, "Gentlemen of the Blues: You have, in common with us, partaken of the crystal fount of friendship; you have been actuated by the same motives that have actuated us in receiving you. This is no miracle; it is the undercurrent of the national consanguinity which never shall, which never can, be perverted as long as patriots exist at the North and at the South; and this same feeling of good fellowship towards the South exists in the Northwest and at the East."

On July 25, 1860, the visitors left. On their baggage was a sign, "No North, No East, No South, No West."

But friendship and peace between the North and the South was not to be. The splendid gesture made by the *City Guard* went unnoticed in the increasing breach between the two sections of our country.

The entire land bristled with hate, bitterness and tense excitement. John Brown was hanged at Harper's Ferry by infuriated Southerners and Fort Sumter was fired upon and surrendered.

On April 15, 1861, President Lincoln issued his Proclamation calling for 75,000 militiamen to serve three months.

Captain Lovell resigned his commission and went South where he was soon made a Confederate Major General and placed in command of the Department of New Orleans. He had a brilliant military record having served for many years in the Regular Army and having seen service in the Mexican War in which he had been severely wounded at the storming of the City of Mexico on September 14, 1847.

The Captain of the *Light Guard* since January 20, 1858, had been John R. Garland, also a West Pointer and a Southerner. He also resigned and went South.

Both companies now entered the great conflict, the *Light Guard* as Company "A" of the 71st Regiment and the *City Guard* as Company "C" of the Ninth Regiment.

The *Light Guard* left the State under orders, on April 21, 1861, en route for Washington; on the third of May, 1861, it was mustered in the United States service for a period of three months, with David D. Hart as its new Captain. It was stationed at the Navy Yard when the Nation's Capitol was in danger and also performed guard duty at the Annapostia Bridge.

While stationed at the Navy Yard, the company was frequently visited by President Lincoln who attended, with many other distinguished guests, the many social functions which the company held even in the war zone.

On May 29th the company left for Alexandria, Va., and took part in seizing this city. On the 31st of May and on June 1st, the enemy was engaged at Acquia



Creek. On June 19th the company returned to the Navy Yard and on the 21st it celebrated its 35th Anniversary. On June 27th it participated in the attack on Matthias Point and on July 21st it took part in the famous battle of Bull Run. In this battle Captain Hart was severely wounded and a number of other casualties were suffered by the company. On July 26, it returned to New York and was mustered out of the Federal service on July 30th.

In May 1862, another call was made for the New York militia and the 71st Regiment responded again. The *Light Guard* left with the regiment, this time under command of Captain William G. Tompkins who had taken the place of Captain Hart on December 14, 1861. Captain Tompkins was the son of Colonel William W. Tompkins, the founder of the company in 1826. Under him, the company was sent to Fort De Russey, near Tennytown, D. C., and manned a battery of seven guns in defense of the Capitol. On September 1, it returned to New York again and was mustered out the next day.

On June 16, 1863, the company was again on its way South for another three months duty. This time it took part in the bloody Gettysburg Campaign and in the attacks on Kingston, Pa., and Oyster Point near Harrisburg, Pa. It suffered many casualties both by loss in battle and by disease.

On July 18th, the company returned to New York just in time to take part in quelling the terrible Draft riots which terrorized the City.

Mobs of rowdies had taken advantage of the absence of the military forces of the City to rob and plunder. Many buildings were set on fire and firemen were prevented from responding. The situation was very grave and order was only restored after the entire 1st Division of militia had been called out to rout the mob. There were many people killed and wounded and the property damage was tremendous. The *Light Guard* was in the midst of the riot, wherever there was need for its quick response, and conducted itself most creditably.

The *City Guard* had entered the Civil War on May 27, 1861, when the 9th Regiment left for Washington, to be mustered in on June 8, 1861, for three years' service as a volunteer regiment. The 9th Regiment was renamed the 83rd New York Volunteers on December 7, 1861, and as such, fought through the war until it was mustered out on June 23, 1864.

The *City Guard* took part in the following battles and engagements:

- Harper's Ferry, Va., July 4, 1861.
- Cedar Mountain, Va., August 9, 1862.
- Thoroughfare Gap, Va., August 28, 1862.
- 2nd Bull Run, Va., August 30, 1862.
- Antietam, Md., September 17, 1862.
- Fredericksburg, Va., December 11-15, 1862.
- Fitzhugh's Crossing, Va., April 29-30, 1863.
- Chancellorsville, Va., May 1-4, 1863.
- Gettysburg, Pa., July 1-4, 1863.
- Mine Run, Va., November 28, 1863.
- Wilderness, Va., May 5-7, 1864.
- Laurel Hill, Va., May 8, 1864.
- Spottsylvania, Va., May 9-13, 1864.
- Bethesda Church and Cold Harbor, Va., June 1-4, 1864.



When Captain Lovell resigned, Lt. Charles E. Prescott took command of the *City Guard* and on May 29, 1861, was elected Captain.

He served with the company until June 16, 1862, when he resigned to become Colonel of the 132nd New York Volunteers and his place was then taken by Captain James H. Stevens who was elected on the same day on which Captain Prescott resigned.

Captain Stevens was wounded at the Battle of Fredericksburg on December 13, 1862, and discharged and the company was then left in command of Lt. Cyrus C. Hubbard.

On October 1, 1863, Lt. Hubbard became the captain of the company and continued as such until it was mustered out on June 23, 1864.

Those of the *City Guard* who stayed home and were not able to serve at the front, formed a new company which was to take the place of the *City Guard* during its war service. It was known as *Company "C", City Guard, 9th Regiment, N.Y.N.G.*, and was commanded by Captain John P. Newkirk.

Many officers who served with great valor and distinction owed their promotion to the training they received as members of the *Light Guard* and *City Guard*. Nearly all of the pre-war members of these two companies became commissioned officers.

Both companies sustained severe losses in the number of killed and wounded and lost many men through the ravages of disease.

Among the things that passed with the Civil War, not to return, was the volunteer military company.

In order to effect a survival of the two companies, Major George W. McLean, a former Lieutenant in the *Light Guard*, proposed a merger of the two companies into a battalion.

In 1867 the members of the *Light Guard* held a joint meeting with the *City Guard* and the proposal was submitted and accepted. The original muster rolls were then turned over to Major McLean and the battalion organization began. A bill was then drawn and introduced in the State Legislature to incorporate the two companies as the "*Old Guard of the City of New York*".

On April 22, 1868, this bill known as Chapter 284 of the Laws of 1868, was signed by Governor Fenton and became a law. Major George W. McLean was elected commandant with the rank of Major.

A period of great activity now began. The two companies which had been bitter rivals heretofore, were now united to make the new battalion the talk of the entire country. How well they succeeded, has been demonstrated by the increasing fame and prominence which the organization achieved year after year.

The Command was divided into two companies, "A" and "B", each commanded by a captain. The major appointed his staff from the members of the battalion.

The *Light Guard* uniform adopted in 1844, was retained as the uniform of the *Old Guard* and continues as such to this day, never to be changed.

The *Light Guard* had been giving an annual Military Ball since its very inception, held on the last Friday in January of each year, and the *Old Guard* continued this traditional annual reception, which now became known as the *Old Guard Ball*.

Another celebration which became an annual event and is held every year on April 22nd, is *Anniversary Day*.



On April 19, 1882, Chapter 88 of the Laws of 1882, was passed by the Legislature. It provided that *only veterans* of the *Light Guard* or *City Guard*, National Guard, Regular Army, Navy or Volunteer Forces, were eligible to membership in the battalion, and gave the organization a new status, that of a VETERAN BATTALION OF STATE MILITIA.

During the years which formed the second half of the nineteenth century, the *Old Guard* rose to great fame and prestige. It came to be known over the wide world for its hospitality, patriotism and social functions as well as for numbering in its ranks, the representatives of the best families of New York.

In far off Alaska and at the Western frontier posts, Regular Army men and their women folks turned their thoughts to New York and the *Old Guard Ball* whenever they felt lonesome, and things were much too quiet.

The *Old Guard* played an active part in the Spanish American War. Hardly had the ink on the President's Proclamation calling for 125,000 volunteers become dry, before the *Old Guard Armory* presented a scene of bustling activity and excitement. Its officers and members met in consultation, and amid great enthusiasm, it was decided to raise and equip a regiment of volunteers.

At the Battery, City Hall Square, Union Square, and Madison Square, recruiting booths were at once erected and the *Old Guard* began the work of organizing. The intention of the *Old Guard* and its fame spread far and wide and the rush of recruits to enlist under its banner was unprecedented.

In one week no less than 5,000 names had been subscribed to enrollment papers, and instead of one regiment, the *Old Guard* found itself parent of five, consisting of as fine a body of men as ever wore a uniform.

Arrangements were perfected to officer and equip the five regiments and to turn them over to the Government, but the determination of the President to accept only members of the National Guard from the various States to supply the quota of volunteers needed, frustrated the patriotic endeavors of the *Old Guard* and the five regiments were never called into service as an offering from New York's most noted veteran battalion, although a majority of the men whose names were inscribed upon the enrollment rolls enlisted in other regiments and did honorable and faithful service.

The *Old Guard* continued its interesting and absorbing functions and affairs, adding honor and glory to the City of New York. When the United States conceived its modern idea of preparedness, by inaugurating the Plattsburg businessmen's training camps for officers in 1916, nearly all of the *Old Guard* members responded and obtained commissions in the reserve.

When the World War came on April 6, 1917, it found many of the members of the battalion in active service in all branches of the service.

The various National Guard regiments were mustered into Federal service and sent to various training camps throughout the country. To avoid leaving the city in a defenseless state as had been the case during the Civil War, with the resulting Draft Riots, the Governor of the State ordered the organization of a State force to take the place of the National Guard.

It was proposed that the *Old Guard* and the Veteran Corps of Artillery recruit their membership to large numbers and take over in a measure, the local defense of



the city. It was not difficult to enroll men who were not accepted by the Federal authorities for service and the task was rapidly accomplished.

The idea of organizing the New York Guard during the absence of the guardsmen, met with such wide approval that every National Guard regiment which had left was replaced in short order and armed, trained and equipped for militia duty.

Every able-bodied man who could not enlist in the United States Army or who was waiting for his turn to be called upon, enlisted in the New York Guard. Because of this wonderful response, the *Old Guard* was once more relieved from active service although fully equipped, armed and uniformed in olive drab, ready for duty.

It took part, however, in the many different tasks assigned to it during the great conflict. The *Old Guard* raised vast sums of money in its Liberty Loan drive campaigns. It took part in all the official functions which took place and paraded three and four times a week in the interest of various phases of war work.

The battalion was constantly occupied drilling, parading and working and the newspaper files of the period bear witness to its many patriotic services.

Since the World War has ended the *Old Guard* has been carrying on as ever, in peacetime attending to its duties, a symbol of New York and a power for patriotism and National Defense.

Since 1868 the Old Guard has had only seven commandants. Herewith is presented a brief sketch of the six past commandants:





Major
GEORGE WASHINGTON McLEAN
 Major, Old Guard
April 22, 1868, to February 13, 1893

Born in New York City on June 16, 1822. Became a member of the *New York Light Guard* in June, 1841. He was educated in the Columbia Grammar School and Academy and went into business when still a young man. He served in the *Light Guard* until the Civil War, having risen to a Lieutenantcy after service in each grade. During the Civil War he was stationed in Washington, D. C.

When the War was over he devoted his entire attention to forming a battalion by consolidating the *City Guard* with the *Light Guard*. He was elected the first Major of the new battalion which became known as the *Old Guard of the City of New York*.

In 1876, Major McLean organized the *Centennial Legion*, a confederation

of independent and chartered commands from the thirteen original states, which is today, a great organization perpetuating the fame and glory of the well-known ancient commands.

In business life Major McLean was connected with the Ohio Life and Trust Company and for many years was the President of the Stock Exchange. He also held public office in New York City, having been the Commissioner of Street Cleaning and the Receiver of Taxes.

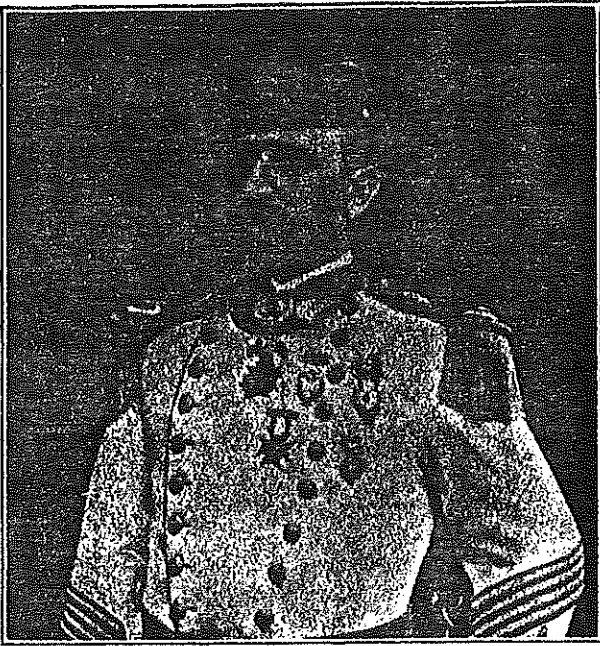
He was a prominent Mason and a member of the St. Nicholas, Manhattan and New York Yacht Clubs. The Major died on February 13, 1893, while commanding the *Old Guard*, and his passing was mourned by thousands of friends.

Colonel THOMAS E. SLOAN
 Major, Old Guard

April 22, 1893, to April 22, 1897

Born in 1842 in Boston, Mass. Enlisted on April 19, 1861, in the 1st Massachusetts Volunteers and was mustered in on May 25, 1861. Served as a Captain on the Staff of General "Fighting Joe" Hooker, during the Peninsular Campaign. He was later Brevetted Major and served on the Staff of General Horatio Wright and General Joseph Hambleu. He was wounded at Williamsburg on May 25, 1862, and later at Gettysburg. Elected to membership in the *Old Guard* on June 2, 1885, and rose through the various grades to senior Captain. On March 15, 1893, he was elected Major of the *Old Guard* and served for four years. During that time he was commissioned a Colonel by Governor Fowler and served on his Staff. Colonel Sloan was a very prominent lawyer and capitalist. For many years he was identified with the National Express Company. He was a well known member of the Manhattan, Colonial, Lawyers, Brooklyn and Algonquin Clubs. He died on June 23, 1901.





Colonel S. ELLIS BRIGGS

Major, Old Guard

April 22, 1897, to November 28, 1905

April 22, 1909, to April 22, 1914

Born January 3, 1850, in New York City. Attended the White Plains Military Academy from June, 1862, to June, 1865, graduating as Cadet Major. He joined the 22nd Regiment, N. G. N. Y., August 29, 1865; commissioned Second Lieutenant, December, 1869; First Lieutenant, January, 1870; commanded Company "A," 22nd Regiment, in the Orange riots, July 12, 1871; commissioned Captain, January, 1874; resigned, September, 1876, but continued service in the ranks until March, 1882; elected Colonel of the 22nd Regiment Veteran Corps, September, 1885. He was elected a member of the *Old Guard*, October 3, 1893. On March 17, 1897, he was elected Major of the *Old Guard* and served until November 28, 1905, when he resigned. On March 17, 1909, he was again elected Major of the *Old Guard* and served for six more years as commandant.

On October 1, 1921, Colonel Briggs passed away in New York City.

Brigadier General JOHN T. CUTTING

Major, Old Guard

November 28, 1905, to April 22, 1907

Born on September 17th, 1848, in Westport, New York, where he spent his early years and received his education. When the Civil War broke out he joined a local regiment and served for nearly two years until he was disabled and discharged. When he recovered, he re-enlisted in the Chicago Board of Trade Battery and served until the close of the War.

General Cutting then joined the California National Guard and served in every rank, rising finally to be Brigadier General in command of the 2nd Brigade. He retired as such in 1891, to accept a seat in Congress, to which he was elected from San Francisco and which he occupied for several terms. He was elected a member of the *Old Guard* on January 30th, 1899, and served in all grades until elected Major of the *Old Guard* on November 28th, 1905, which office he held until April 22nd 1907.

He died on November 24th, 1911, at Toronto, Canada, while visiting there for a few days.





Major CHARLES ALBERT STADLER

Major, Old Guard

April 22, 1907, to April 22, 1909

Born July 15, 1848, at Genmershein, Bavaria, and came to this country with his parents in 1850. Served for 14 years in the 55th Regiment and also took part in the Indian Wars. He was elected a member of the *Old Guard* on April 2, 1889, and rose through various grades to Captain. On March 20, 1907, he was elected Major of the *Old Guard* and served for two years as commandant.

He served two terms in the State Senate of New York from 1888 to 1891. For ten years after that he was a member of the State Executive Committee. He was a member of the Army and Navy Club, Manhattan Club, Lotos Club and the Liederkrantz and Arion Societies. On May 4, 1928, he died at his winter home in Fort Myers, Fla., where he had been living since he retired from business.

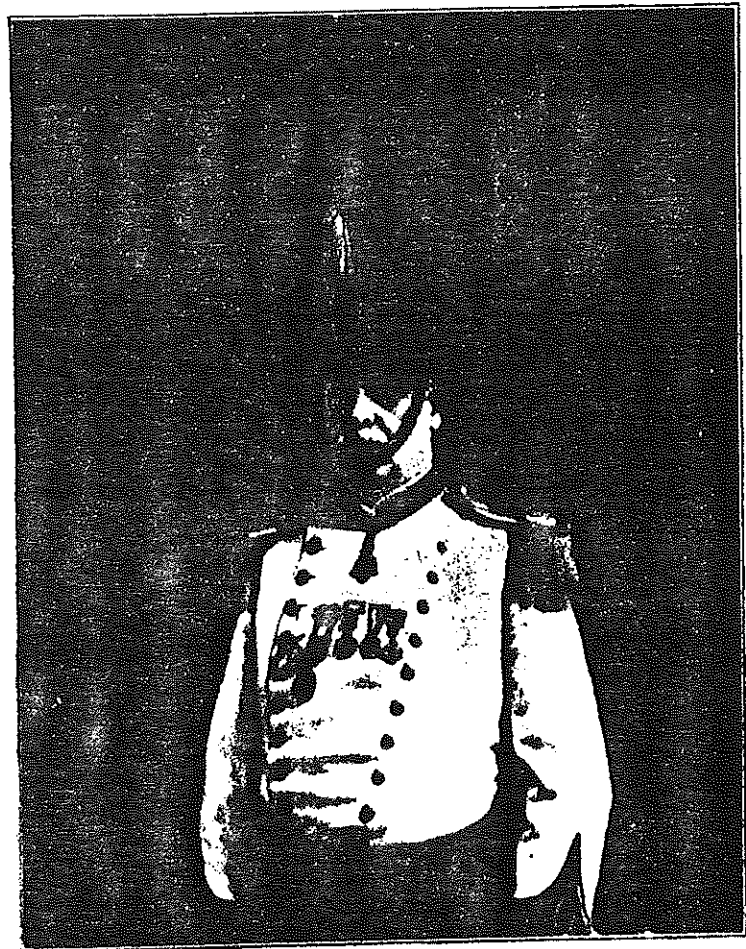
Brigadier General ARDOLPH I. KLINE

Major, Old Guard

April 22, 1914, to April 22, 1918

Born February 21, 1858, in Sussex County, N. J. Enlisted as a private in the 14th Infantry, N. Y. N. G., in 1876, and rose through various grades and ranks to Lieutenant Colonel of the regiment. During the Spanish American War he commanded the 14th Infantry, New York Volunteers, and saw service in Florida. On July 26, 1901, he was commissioned a Brigadier General by Brevet. General Kline became a member of the *Old Guard* on January 2, 1906, and was elected Major on March 18, 1914, serving four years as commandant. On February 27, 1925, he became a Life Member of the *Old Guard*.

He served a term as President of the National Guard Association of the State of New York, was a member of Lafayette Camp, Sons of Veterans, and the 14th Regiment Camp of the United Spanish War Veterans.





THE present status of the *Old Guard of the City of New York* is that of an independent military command existing under and by virtue of its ancient rights and privileges.

Under the present tables of organization, it is not included as a unit of the active National Guard of this State, but is nevertheless included in and as a part of, the State's "military forces."

Up to about the year 1883, the *Old Guard* was part and parcel of the National Guard. When the United States Army acquired control of the National Guard of the various states and extended Federal recognition to the various militia units considered necessary for active service under the requirement of National defense plans, the *Old Guard* and other similar units assumed their present status of independent militia.

Membership in the *Old Guard* is not by enlistment but by election and a member may resign at will. Its officers are elected annually and are commissioned by the Governor of the State upon approval of the Adjutant-General. The officers and members of the Battalion are also exempt from performing jury duty in the State courts.

The organization is subject to the orders of the Governor in case of emergency or necessity, to aid the National Guard or Naval Militia in quelling invasion, insurrection, riot or breach of the peace, provided the officers and members when so called upon, first sign and execute and deliver through their commanding officer to the officer to whom it is ordered to report, a form of enlistment in form to be prescribed by the Governor in regulation or orders, for a term not less than thirty days nor more than ninety days at one time.

All members of the organization, when called into service of the State, are equipped and paid by the State and obey the orders of the Governor, as though a part of the National Guard of the State.

Custom and usage has made the *Old Guard* the personal military bodyguard of the Governor of the State. The organization escorts him whenever called upon to do so.

At gubernatorial inaugurations, the *Old Guard* takes part as his escort and guard, and generally, in all ceremonies, acts in accordance with his wishes or requirements.

The Battalion owns its own Armory, which is located at 307 West 91st Street, New York City. It is a five-story building which is in all respects a clubhouse.

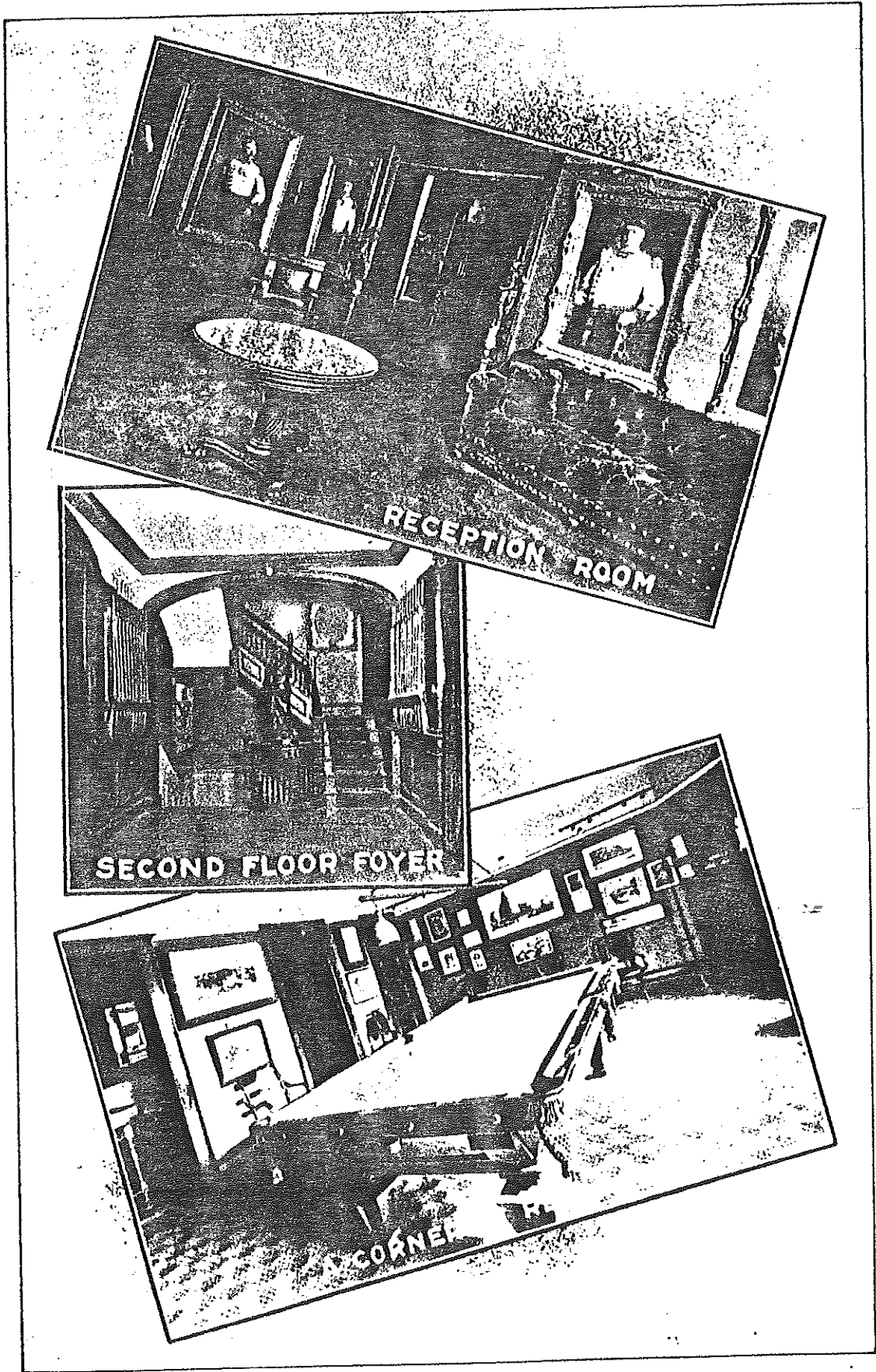
The street floor has a large foyer with a coal-burning fireplace, and the armorer's quarters. Upon the next floor is the reception room in which are hung the paintings of the past commandants. On this floor is also the meeting room, which is elaborately furnished and decorated. Between the two rooms, there is a foyer room in which is hung a very famous panoramic photograph of the Battalion. It is eight feet square and was taken in 1885. Only one man of all those shown, survives today; he is Captain Benjamin F. Moore who has been a member of the *Old Guard* for the past fifty years.

Going up to the next floor we find on the right, the commandant's office, which also contains the desks of officers who are members of his staff. This is the Battalion headquarters whence comes the administration of the unit.



HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

307 WEST 91ST STREET



RECEPTION ROOM

SECOND FLOOR FOYER

CORNER



In the front part of the building on this floor, is the library. This room is a veritable museum and contains an excellent military and literary library collection. There are also many rare and valuable books and papers.

The room contains many priceless letters and autographs as well as many complete sets of ancient periodicals. The minutes of meetings of the *Light Guard* since 1826, and the *City Guard* since 1833, in the handwriting of the then secretaries, are also in this library. There are also about twenty-five scrap books which contain newspaper clippings and other printed references to the organization, since the year 1825. So closely is the history of the *Old Guard*, a history of the City, that these scraps virtually form a history of the City of New York.

The next floor contains two pocket billiard tables and a card room which are in frequent use. On Saturday afternoons there is a perennial contest here which causes considerable excitement.

The top story of the building contains the lockers of the members in which are kept the uniforms and equipment. The cellar is quite an important place, too, because it contains a pistol range upon which members may practice on Saturday afternoons.

The entire wall space of the Armory is taken up with historic paintings, pictures, framed papers and trophies. These undoubtedly make the finest military collection extant.

Besides, there are objects of great sentimental value, such as the glass cases containing the uniforms and equipments of Captain Edward Vincent, the *Light Guard* commandant in 1830; the large collection of muskets, guns, sabres, swords and other ancient weapons; the beautiful punch bowl from which drank General George Washington, Governor De Witt Clinton, General Lafayette, General Andrew Jackson, Sam Houston, Charles Kean, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, President Martin Van Buren, Thomas S. Hamblin, Harry and Tom Placide, James T. Brady, Stephen Douglas, John Brougham, Edwin Forest, Tyrone Power, James Wallack and a host of other famous men.

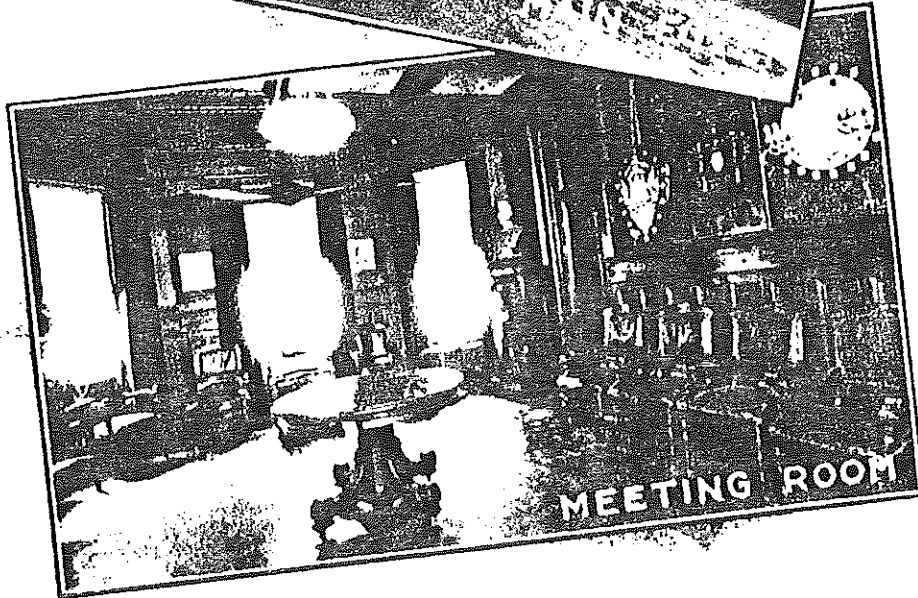
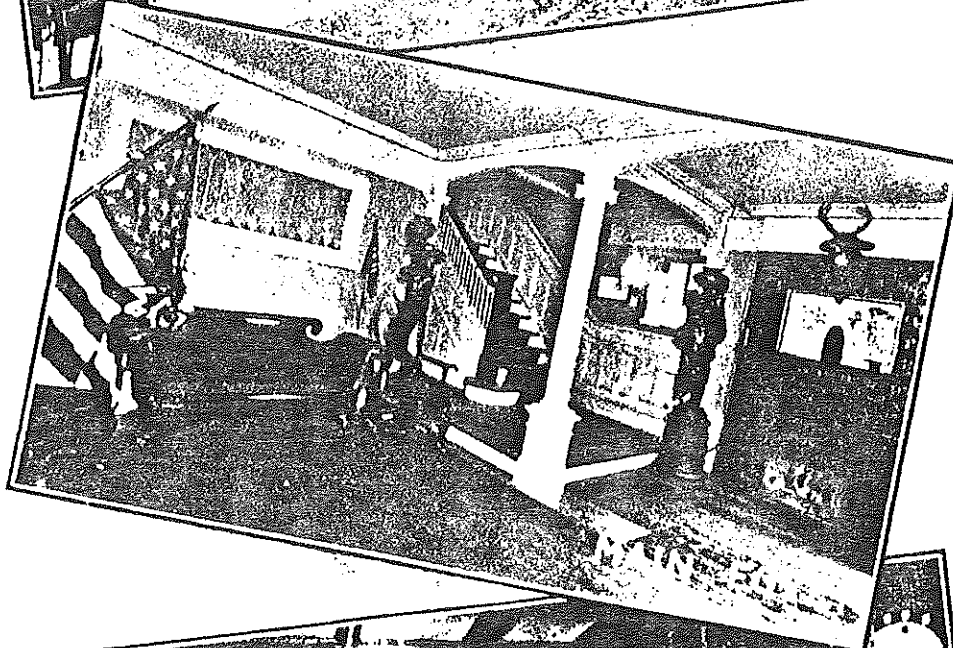
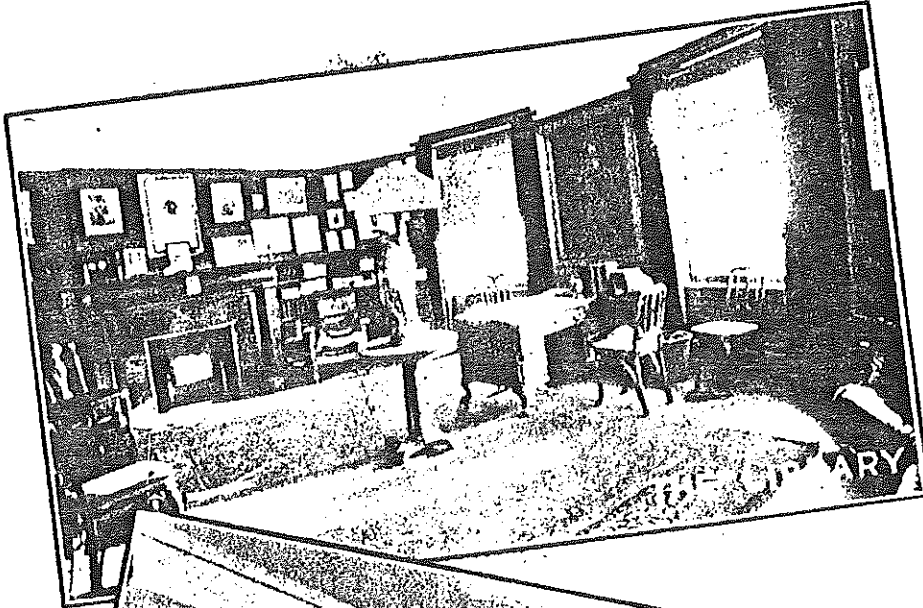
The Battalion has a busy schedule of events which keeps the members constantly interested. On the last Friday in January, each year, the organization holds the famous *Old Guard Ball* which has become known throughout the world. This is the outstanding social military event of the year and is attended by over five thousand people.

During the year the Entertainment Committee provides beefsteak and venison dinners, informal dances, smokers and collations.

Business meetings are held every first Tuesday of the month and are followed by a collation. The annual meeting when elections for officers are held, is in March and the annual *Anniversary Day* is observed on April 22nd each year.

On this day the Battalion assembles and forms in Battalion formation at a designated parade ground and the oath of office is then administered to the new officers by the Governor or the Adjutant General, who also presents them with their commissions.

Next comes a parade to the church in which services are to be held. For many years the band and the companies acting as military escort for this Parade have been





from the 16th Infantry U.S.A., on Governors Island. After the church services the Battalion parades to some prominent hotel where the members and guests take part in an elaborate dinner.

On April 6th each year, which is now known as *Army Day*, the Battalion parades in honor of the Regular Army.

Decoration Day finds the *Old Guard* acting as escort to the Grand Army of the Republic and in line opposite the reviewing stand at the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument on Riverside Drive.

In June every year, the Battalion spends a week shooting on the rifle range at Sea Girt, N. J., by invitation of the Governor of New Jersey. The members come down for the entire week or as many days as convenient and compete for many valuable prizes.

The rifle team of the *Old Guard* competes annually in various veteran matches as well as in an annual rifle and pistol match with the West Point Cadets.

In November the colors of the *Old Guard* take part in the *Massing of the Colors*. The standards carried by the Battalion are the National colors, State colors, City flag, *Old Guard* colors and the Centennial Legion flag.

Incidentally, the *Old Guard* is the only military unit authorized by a city ordinance to carry the official city flag of the City of New York.

The Battalion has numerous friends throughout the country and frequently enjoys the hospitality of other military units of the *Centennial Legion* of which the *Old Guard* is a member corps and a founder. A number of trips are made to other cities on invitation, to participate in important historical and military events. At these functions the *Old Guard* takes a prominent part and is always royally feted and entertained afterwards.

There are many other interesting phases in the life of an *Old Guardsman*, too many to be enumerated here.

To qualify for membership in the *Old Guard*, a man must have had military service with an honorable discharge in peacetime or war, in the United States Army, Navy or Marine Corps or National Guard of any State. Those who are at present in service are also eligible for membership. He must be a man of good character and reputation, and must be approved by the membership committee before his name is presented for ballot.

Gentlemen who desire to apply for membership in the Battalion should write to the Chairman, Membership Committee at He
will respond to all inquiries and render further information.