

## CALL FOR TROOPS.

From the first I fully realized the importance of exact and comprehensive information as to the march of events, the trend of opinion, and particularly as to the movements and physical condition and needs of the homeless destitutes. A system was organized under Lieut. Col. John A. Lundeen, inspector-general, in which the city was divided into districts. Trained inspectors traversing them daily verbally spread the situation before me each evening. These full and intelligent reports made it possible for me to estimate the extent and importance of the situation, and especially to accurately foreshadow the unprecedented magnitude of future relief operations. Consulting with the commanding general of the Department of California, with my chief of staff and other competent officers, I was unanimously advised by them on April 23 that a force of 5,000 additional men was necessary to preclude possibility of unfavorable conditions. Had that number of troops been available they could have been utilized to great advantage, as subsequent events clearly indicated. I decided, however, to ask for 2,500 troops, with the intention of making the relief force entirely military, thus insuring at once efficiency, promptness, and ultimate economy by systemization and restriction. Although I was unaware that the transportation of these troops would be charged against the relief appropriation, yet no doubt exists that had they been promptly forwarded double the cost of their transportation would have been saved in food and relief supplies, which in the first emergency were scattered with a lavish generosity that continued in somewhat abated form until military control was complete. The exact terms of the joint resolution of Congress for relief purposes were officially known by me on April 28, to which day I necessarily acted on general information from the newspapers as to the conditions under which relief was sanctioned by law, if indeed at all. The Secretary of War was, however, kept fully informed of the line of operations adopted and followed by me.

## SELECTED DETAILED OFFICERS.

On assuming supervision of relief issues on April 29 the necessity of an additional force became more pressing than ever. It had not as yet been practicable for the War Department to start troops asked for by me six days previously. Meanwhile conditions had so changed that any satisfactory adjustment of affairs demanded the speediest possible reinforcements. Realizing that selected officers could be more quickly secured than complete organizations, it was decided to change the form of the requisition for additional troops. On April 29, therefore, I telegraphed to the Secretary of War that the situation could be handled with 1,500 troops additional, provided that 45 selected officers, men of administrative ability, sound judgment, and physical energy, could be sent to San Francisco as the framework of a relief organization. These were to consist of 5 field officers and 40 captains or first lieutenants, and in connection therewith it was insisted that men without force, experience, or tact would be worse than useless. In addition to these detailed officers, there were also sent, on my requisition, additional officers of the Medical, Subsistence, and Quartermaster's departments. Certain other officers of staff

departments and of the line who were present in San Francisco were pressed into service.

The entire force engaged on relief duty consisted of two general officers; the 1st and 14th Regiments of Cavalry; the 10th, 25th, 27th, 29th, 32d, 38th, 60th, 61st, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 70th, and 105th Companies of Coast Artillery; the 1st, 9th, and 24th Batteries of Field Artillery; the 11th Battalion of Field Artillery (17th and 18th Mountain Batteries); the 10th, 11th, 14th, 20th, and 22d Regiments of Infantry; Companies C and D of the Corps of Engineers; Companies A and B of the Hospital Corps; Companies A, E, and H of the Signal Corps, and 168 staff, detailed, and retired officers, among whom were selected representatives from every corps of the Army, including volunteers from the retired list. To these were added a large force from the Navy, consisting of a command of blue jackets, a battalion of marines, and a force of naval apprentices.

## CITIZENS' COMMITTEE.

This committee of 50, appointed by his honor the Mayor, was a body of extremely efficient men. Among them were ex-Mayor James D. Phelan, Horace Davis, M. H. De Young, J. F. Drum, G. W. McEnerney, W. F. Herrin, I. W. Hellman, H. E. Law, United States Judge W. W. Morrow, A. Pollok, Rudolph Spreckels, Collector of Port F. B. Stratton, and others, whose abilities and energies had been connected with the upbuilding of San Francisco. Now they gave their great powers of organization and administration in the way of counsel and activity on the most important questions connected with the relief work and restoration of normal conditions. They quickly organized, while the fire was still burning, a system of food relief, which was remarkably efficient, considering that it was administered by volunteers under conditions of confusion and chaos. Immediately on my return, under the chairmanship of Mayor Schmitz they met in my office for several days, in order to insure cooperation between the State, the municipal authorities, the people at large, and the army. At various times this conference was also attended by the Hon. Victor H. Metcalf, Secretary of Commerce and Labor; his excellency George C. Pardee, Governor of California; Mayor Mott, of Oakland; Dr. Edward T. Devine, special representative of the Red Cross; Mr. E. H. Harriman, and Gen. Frederick Funston. Policies and measures were often sharply discussed in executive session, but when a decision was reached the entire committee labored zealously and efficiently along the approved lines. Later the finance committee of the Citizens' Committee reorganized as a finance committee of the Red Cross, so as to insure most thorough cooperation with that relief organization.

## RELIEF OPERATIONS IN SAN FRANCISCO.

The most important duty devolving upon the army apart from the stopping of the fire was the formation and administration of an adequate system of relief for the homeless and destitute people in San Francisco. For the first few days the conditions were such that fully 350,000 persons had to be fed. San Francisco is particularly a city where food supplies are obtained from day to day, and the destruction of all the wholesale and large retail stores in the city left its inhabitants practically without food other than that provided by

the army or brought from neighboring towns, and even these transfers were accomplished with extreme difficulty owing to the entire absence of local transportation. Conditions can not be better emphasized than by the statement to me by a very prominent business man, a millionaire, that he was obliged to obtain his food for several days from the relief supplies, his family waiting their turn in line.

Although the Citizens' Relief Committee had organized an emergent volunteer system, yet it speedily realized that the proper maintenance and operation was beyond its power. I was asked on April 23, the first day, by the Mayor to take over this work, which I declined to do on the grounds that such action would be unwarranted by law. I added, however, that I would personally and officially assume any and all responsibilities if he could convince me that such a course was a civic duty imperatively demanded to prevent public suffering. The next day, April 24, a conference was held in my office and the situation thoroughly discussed. The Mayor, the Citizens' Committee, the national and local representatives of the Red Cross and the commanding general of the Department of California were present. They, one and all, unanimously advised me that the conditions were so urgent and desperate as in their opinion made it an imperative public duty for the army to assume charge of the issue of food supplies. They were informed that neither officers nor men were available in sufficient numbers to efficiently administer such service or even to exercise an effective supervision. As they considered effect of Federal control indispensable, I finally consented to take over the system within forty-eight hours, by noon of Thursday, April 26. This decision was made with the expectation that the 2,500 troops asked for on April 23 would be supplied, as I contemplated the entire operation of relief supplies by officers and men of the army independent of volunteers. It was clear that such a system would lessen the drain upon relief funds and supplies, which had assumed such proportions as threatened to exhaust the treasury and deplete the storehouses within a very brief period. This work was begun with two officers, Maj. C. A. Devol, quartermaster, in charge of transportation, and Maj. C. R. Krauthoff, commissary, in charge of food supplies. From these two officers grew up, as personnel became available, a force which, operating at first about 177 stations, finally aggregated 64 officers and over 500 enlisted men. Within twenty-four hours I was astounded by the report, based on estimates, that about 325,000 persons had been supplied food the first day. This number appeared incredible, but later developments indicate that it was practically correct, as will be shown later. Further details as to transportation, subsistence, and administration appear under later headings.

#### MILITARY DISTRICTS.

It was necessary to distribute the military forces in such manner as first to protect the mint and other Federal buildings; secondly, banks serving as national depositories, etc., and third, so that any calls from the Mayor or the police department for assistance to preserve public order could be promptly met. For this purpose there were continued or established six military districts, whose commanders were as follows:

- First district: Col. Charles Morris, Artillery Corps.
- Second district: Maj. G. W. McIver, 4th Infantry.
- Third district: Col. Marion P. Maus, 20th Infantry (relieved May 10 by Col. Alfred Reynolds, 22d Infantry).
- Fourth district: Brig. Gen. John A. Koster, National Guard of California (not under command of the army).
- Fifth district: Col. Albert L. Myer, 11th Infantry.
- Sixth district: Col. J. A. Irons, 14th Infantry.

These troops were for a brief period under the direct orders of the division commander, and even later, when they were returned to the control of the commanding general, Department of California, it became necessary in emergencies to communicate directly with them. Touch was also kept through the inspectors of the division staff, who daily visited the various headquarters, and also their daily reports to the commanding general, Department of California, which were forwarded to the division commander.

The management, control, and discipline of the troops were excellent, there being but two instances reported in which any enlisted men were charged with grave misconduct. The reports in these cases were transmitted to the commanding general, Department of California, for trial on general charges. Fortunately neither misconduct had serious results.

The most important duties were those devolving upon Colonel Maus, who guarded the business center in the burned district, and Lieutenant-Colonel Irons in the Mission and Potrero districts. The latter, in addition to an enormous number of destitutes, was contiguous to San Mateo County, where flagrant disregard of the proprieties of the occasion was shown by open saloons. This situation naturally forced more or less intoxicated persons upon the districts. However, by tact and vigilance, no serious disorders arose. Major McIver, in the Golden Gate Park district, was brought into direct contact with more than 4,000 destitutes, whose care and sanitation were long under his intelligent and efficient supervision.

The division reserve at the Presidio was in turn commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Irons; Maj. H. C. Benson, 14th Cavalry; Col. Alfred Reynolds, 22d Infantry, and Col. M. B. Hughes, 1st Cavalry.

#### GENERAL PLAN OF RELIEF OPERATIONS.

To satisfactorily administer relief operations of such magnitude, especially with an inadequate personnel and uncertain supplies, it was of primary importance to formulate and publish a systematic plan of operations, which was done on the day that the army assumed charge of this duty. This plan (published in General Orders, No. 18, April 29, hereto attached) divided the city into seven civil sections whose operations are described under "Relief food distribution."

The administrative work was organized in four divisions, as follows:

1. System of relief food distribution.
2. Receipt, storage, and distribution in bulk of all stores.
3. Providing food supplies and filling approved requisitions.
4. Providing supplies other than subsistence and filling approved requisitions.