

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.

The officers in charge of these four divisions transacted business direct with each other and with outside applicants, so as to insure an efficient and prompt service. The officers in charge of the seven civil sections previously enumerated were charged not only with coordinating the work, but also with instituting methods to prevent dishonesty and wastage, to eliminate impostors, and to reduce the relief stations as to number and personnel. They were also to carefully instruct their subordinates as to requisition methods, to restrain lavish issues of food, and to exercise discretion in giving articles of special diet to children, women, and the sick.

The stations from which food was issued were so located as to facilitate prompt relief and in such numbers as to afford speedy delivery. The supervision of these numerous stations was through daily examination by division inspectors, supplemented by occasional conferences of issuing officers with the chairmen of the relief sections. Rigid economy was not only enjoined, but the irresponsible use of relief funds, which had previously proceeded on individual judgment, was forbidden. All officers were required to make requisitions, with a brief statement of needs, and to present them in person or by authorized representatives to an officer designated by division headquarters so as to expedite business and restrict wastage. Expenditures in advance of allotments were strictly prohibited. Officers in charge of supply departments were required to report the condition of stores under headings of those actually received to date, those reported in transit, and those issued daily, whether to stations under army control in the city or to towns outside of San Francisco.

Meanwhile a permanent relief ration was fixed, which in nutritive value corresponded to about three-quarters of the ration for an enlisted man of the Army. Such ration was enforced from May 1, the issues being of articles named or proper equivalent substitutes. The needs of infants, invalids, and nursing women were recognized by the issue of special diet when prescribed. Prior to the fixing of this ration food in great variety and excessive quantities was issued so long as supplies lasted to every applicant without questioning.

#### CENTRALIZATION OF FUNDS AND AUTHORITY.

Among the conditions, on resuming command, which made the most effective work impossible, was the extensive decentralization of funds and authority. When, on April 27, the work of relief was undertaken, there was not a dollar, as far as Government funds were in question, under the immediate control of the division commander. The Citizens' Committee assured me, however, that any expenditures incurred would be met from funds at their disposal; a most satisfactory and generous offer of assistance, but which it was clearly foreseen would entail embarrassment and criticism. Official advices were received that the appropriation of two and one-half millions, under joint resolutions of Congress, had already been overdrawn in the form of allotments and in the value of issues made from the stores on hand.

The depot quartermaster, the depot commissary, the medical supply officer, and the chief signal officer were amply supplied with funds which were being spent independent of any local authority,

though these officers were willing to furnish supplies which the division commander might request. In addition, the surgeon in charge of the General Hospital, the surgeon at Fort Mason, and probably others were incurring indebtedness without any supervision by, or any authority from, the division commander, assuming correctly that their accounts would be paid either by the United States or out of the Red Cross relief funds. It was evident that the continuance of such methods would necessarily impair the efficiency of the service by incurring irresponsibility and division.

The confused condition of affairs was such on May 4 that the status of the disbursements and indebtedness of relief funds was impossible of determination. On representation to the Secretary of War, he authorized, on May 5, a centralization of funds and a supervisory control of expenditures. This largely corrected useless and extravagant expenses, although they continued to some extent. An appeal was made over the division commander's head for expenditures not absolutely necessary for relief purposes. Such action was later coupled by a declination of one officer to pay accounts unless each one was specifically ordered by the division commander. This resulted in the centralization of all the funds under one officer, a course whose wisdom has been fully emphasized by present experiences. Under similar future emergencies, a like centralization should be made at the beginning and not near the end of the work. There was then available for expenditure by the division commander in San Francisco such sums as could be obtained by turning back to the United States unused supplies, which could be credited at their money value. Through the medium of Major Devol there were collected and transferred to the general quartermaster's depot, supplies to the value of \$266,812.07. Restrictions were made on expenditures of other bureaus, and there were added to this amount unexpended sums from the Medical Department of \$97,200.89, from the Subsistence Department of \$14,354.68, and from the Signal Corps of \$1,036.88, aggregating in all \$112,592.45. From this amount there was expended up to July 18 by Major Devol, in whose hands these funds were centralized, the sum of \$224,634.08, thus leaving an apparent balance of \$114,770.44 [\$154,770.44?], against which there are outstanding authorizations of \$79,832.60, which may be slightly increased by later orders.

#### METHODS OF EXPENDITURE.

In addition to verbal instructions to such disbursing officers as were under the control of the division commander, a regular inspection of all money accounts relating to relief funds appropriated by Congress was made by Lieut. Col. John P. Wisser, Artillery Corps, acting inspector-general. Colonel Wisser reports on July 12, 1906, that the accuracy of the vouchers was verified and the legality of the expenditures determined in each and every case. He stated that suitable methods for protecting the interests of the Government were followed in making purchases, particularly since May 1, 1906. While extreme difficulties attending the making of purchases and the obtaining of services in San Francisco since April 18 caused all actions to be necessarily of an "emergency" character, yet proper inspections of materials were made when possible, and well-known