

Chapter XVI

THE CIVIL WAR
SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR
WORLD WAR I

The Civil War

Following the fall of Fort Sumter, Fall River responded promptly to President Lincoln's call for volunteers, with a mass meeting in City Hall on April 19th, 1861. Hon. N. B. Borden presided, and ringing patriotic speeches were made by prominent citizens. Resolutions were adopted, asserting that "the government of the Union shall be sustained; that the city government be requested to appropriate \$10,000 in aid of those who may volunteer, and for the support of their families; and that each volunteer be paid the sum of twenty dollars per month from the city treasury, in addition to what is paid by the government".

On the Sunday ensuing, the clergymen of the city dwelt on the gravity of the situation that had arisen in national affairs, urging a general response to the President's call for men. Rev. Father Edward Murphy of St. Mary's Church was especially strong in exhorting the young men of his parish to hold themselves in readiness to bear arms if necessary. Recruiting of three companies of volunteers began without delay. Ultimately it was decided not to muster in one of these, and the organization was disbanded.

In accordance with the request of the mass meeting, the City Council, on April 24, appropriated \$10,000 for military purposes, providing payment to each volunteer of fifteen dollars for outfit on being mustered into service; and thereafter, for a period of not more than three months, fifteen dollars a month for the support of dependents. These payments were to be in addition to compensation received from the United States Government.

Recruiting went ahead actively under the enthusiastic leadership of City Marshal Chester W. Greene and Lieutenant John Cushing, who had seen service in the Mexican War. Each formed a company of volunteers.

On April 29 Mayor Edward P. Buffinton was requested to secure from the State authorities two hundred muskets for the two organizations. They were mustered into the United States service as three-year men (unless sooner relieved or discharged) on June 11th, forming Companies A and B of the Seventh Massachusetts Infantry Volunteers. The next day they left for the training grounds, Camp Old Colony, Taunton, which subsequently became the Agricultural Fair Grounds of that city. The regiment was commanded by Colonel Darius N. Couch of Taunton. City Marshal Greene, who had been chosen captain of one of the Fall River companies, was made lieutenant-colonel of the regiment. Included on the staff were Commissary Sergeant John B. Burt, Fall River, and Robert Sheehan, Fall River, as one of the principal musicians.

Commanding Company A was Captain David Hartwell Dyer (vice Greene, promoted), with Captain John Cushing in command of Company B. They left Fall River with a total of 161 men but only fifty-eight men returned June 20, 1864. On that date Captain Christopher C. Weston of Taunton commanded Company A and Captain James R. Mathewson of Taunton commanded Company B. The return was greeted by a warm ovation.

Among those enlisting as a private in Company A was former Mayor James Buffington, then a member of Congress, and forty-four years of age. He was discharged by order of the Secretary of War on August 24th, in order that he might continue his duties as Congressman, in which capacity he rendered invaluable service during the continuance of the war.

The Seventh Regiment saw some heavy fighting in the numerous battles of its long service. The first Fall River man to fall in action was Private Nathaniel S. Gerry of Company A. The first commissioned officer from Fall River to lay down his life was First Lieutenant Jesse D. Bullock of Company B, who died from wounds received at the battle of Fair Oaks. His body was sent to Fall River for burial.

In the fall of 1861 Company G of the Twenty-sixth Massachusetts Infantry Volunteers, three-years' men, was raised in Fall River. The regiment was mustered October 18th and rendezvoused at Camp Chase, Lowell, under command of Colonel Edward F. Jones of Pepperell. Captain Henry C. Wilcox commanded the Fall River Company, with James Brady, Jr., as first lieutenant. The regiment was stationed for a period of time in New Orleans, where Captain Wilcox, in December 1862, was promoted to be lieutenant colonel of the Third Regiment, Louisiana Native

Guards, which became the Seventy-Fifth U. S. Colored Infantry. He resigned the following February.

Lieutenant James Brady, Jr. succeeded him as Captain of Company G. The regiment was later transferred to Virginia. At the battle of Winchester, on September 19, 1864, Captain Brady was severely wounded and lost his left leg. He also sustained other wounds. His retirement from active service took place on December 31st.

Captain Brady was appointed Collector of Customs for the port of Fall River in 1865, and retired in 1895. He was reappointed in 1900, and continued in that capacity until his death on February 2, 1909.

Again in the summer of 1862, on July 11th, a citizens' meeting was called. It recommended a city bounty of one hundred dollars for three-years' enlistments. In August, President Lincoln called for 300,000 nine-months' men. At a mass meeting on August 14 it was voted to raise money by subscription to add to each soldier's bounty, and to assist Rev. Elihu Grant in raising a company. On September 1st the city government voted a bounty of two hundred dollars for each volunteer for nine-months' service.

Rev. Mr. Grant, who had been pastor of the Brayton M. E. Church, and in his youth a cadet at West Point, formed Company C of the Third Regiment, Massachusetts Infantry Volunteers, and became its captain. Andrew R. Wright, subsequently for many years sheriff of Bristol County, helped recruit Company D, of which he was captain. These men were trained at Camp Joe Hooker, Lakeville.

The regiment, a successor to the original Third Regiment of three-months troops, early in 1861 was commanded by Colonel Silas P. Richmond of Freetown. Its Chaplain was Rev. Charles A. Snow, pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Fall River (now Temple Baptist Church), who had taken an active part in recruiting. Regimental service was in the Department of North Carolina. The Fall River companies were given a big demonstration on their return from service on June 17, 1863.

In the original Third Regiment, the "minute men" of 1861, was an officer, who although not of Fall River origin, had a long connection as a prominent business man of the city that entitles him to mention here. This was John M. Deane of Assonet, who in 1861 was a second lieutenant of Company D of the Third Regiment, known as the "Assonet Light Infantry", originally a militia outfit. In 1862, before the Fall River companies had joined the new Third Regiment, Lieutenant Deane had re-enlisted in the Twenty-Ninth Infantry, not a Bristol County organization. Serving for the remaining three years of the war he rose from the rank of second lieu-

tenant to major, attaining the latter title and being awarded a medal of honor for distinguished bravery in action at Forts Steadman and Haskell, Virginia, on March 25, 1865. The official account of his exploit states:

"This officer, observing an abandoned gun within Fort Haskell, called for volunteers, and under a heavy fire, worked the gun until the enemy's advancing line was routed".

Major Deane, though continuing to reside in Assonet, for many years carried on an extensive grocery business in Borden Block. He was one of the city's most successful merchants. Taking an active interest in the Grand Army of the Republic he rose to be commander of the Department of Massachusetts, and Mrs. Deane was State president of the Women's Relief Corps. Major Deane died September 2, 1914.

In the spring of 1864, the Fifty-Eighth Regiment, Massachusetts, Infantry Volunteers, was recruited for three-years service, if required. A large proportion of Companies F and G were raised in Fall River. Company F went out under command of Captain Thomas McFarland, who was killed in action at Cold Harbor June 3, 1864. First Lieutenant Charles D. Copeland was promoted to succeed him. Commanding Company G was Captain Samuel B. Hinckley. The regiment was in the advance towards Richmond, and suffered severely in officers and men. The command returned in the summer of 1865.

A number of unattached companies were formed in 1864 for home-guard service. Two were largely recruited in Fall River, both under command of Captain D. H. Dyer, formerly of the Seventh Regiment. The Fifth Unattached Company of Infantry was stationed in Boston from May 4 to August 2, 1864, and the Twenty-First Unattached Company served at Provincetown from August 11 to November 18, 1864.

The first draft involving Fall River men took place in New Bedford July 22, 1863, when 1,404 names of Fall River citizens were placed in the box, and 405 men were drawn. Subsequent drafts, held in Fall River in 1864, and the numbers drawn were: May 19th, eighty-two men; June 13th, sixty-three men; July 6th, twenty-four men; July 27th, twenty men; a total for the five drafts of 594 men.

With the outbreak of war the patriotic ladies of Fall River, on April 20, 1862, formed a sewing society, which continued until July, 1865, under the presidency of Mrs. Richard Borden. It was known as the Ladies' Committee. Regular sewing sessions were held. Shirts, socks, bandages, blankets and other articles were sent to the soldiers at the front, as well as

jellies, newspapers and books. A children's lint society was also formed to assist in this work.

Spanish-American War

At the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in April 1898, there were in Fall River two companies of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia,— Battery M, First Heavy Artillery, and Company F (Sixth Division), Naval Brigade. Enlistments from State militia organizations for the national service were the first to be accepted by the Federal Government. Because of the brief duration of the war it was unnecessary to call for general recruiting of volunteers.

The Naval Brigade men were the first to enter active service. Saturday, April 16, all were detailed for duty. A detachment was at once ordered to proceed to League Island Navy Yard to aid in outfitting U. S. S. "Lehigh", one of the old type monitors, for service off the New England coast. This detail was in charge of Lieutenant (J. G.) William H. Beattie. The "Lehigh" made her headquarters at Boston, for patrol duty along the coast as far south as Provincetown. Her crew comprised members of various Naval Brigade units.

The membership of Company F at the time embraced a group of well known young men, not a few of whom subsequently became prominent in Fall River life.

Orders were received by Lieutenant (Chief) George R. H. Buffinton, commanding Company F, to take a detachment to New York to report aboard U. S. S. "Prairie". Forty petty officers and men left Fall River on April 23d, and were joined in New York by a hundred officers and men from other companies of the brigade. They were the first to report for duty at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Cruiser "Prairie", to which they were assigned, was a converted steamer of the Morgan Line. More than fifty per cent of the men aboard her were of the Massachusetts Naval Brigade. Captain Charles J. Train, U. S. N., was commander. George R. H. Buffinton was a lieutenant, and Ensign Richard P. Borden was watch officer. Lieutenant Buffinton subsequently was detailed to the ram "Katahdin" at Provincetown.

A detachment of three signalmen, under command of Ensign Charles N. Borden, was sent to Highland Light, Cape Cod.

Meanwhile the heavy artillerymen of Battery M, under Captain Sierra L. Braley, were sent to Fort Warren, Boston harbor, where, with the remainder of the command, they were mustered into the United States

service on April 26, and were the first militia regiment of any state to respond to the call to arms. A portion of the regiment continued in the defense of Boston harbor through the duration of the war. Several batteries were assigned to Fort Rodman, New Bedford, for harbor duty there, under command of Lieutenant Colonel Charles B. Woodman of Fall River.

Captain Braley was the senior battery commander in the regiment. His career in military service covered more than thirty-five years, including three years' duty in the Civil War, from which he was mustered out as second lieutenant. In December, 1866, he was commissioned first lieutenant of Company D, Third Infantry, M. V. M., and was subsequently promoted to captain and regimental adjutant. After the disbandment of the command in 1876 he was quartermaster of the Third Battalion of Infantry. In December 1876, he organized Company M of the First Infantry Regiment of Militia and was commissioned captain, retaining the command after the regiment was reorganized as a heavy artillery force. He resigned on January 1, 1899.

The cruising ground of U. S. S. "Prairie" was from Provincetown to Delaware Breakwater. Subsequently the ship was ordered to the scene of war activities. After being on the Cuban blockade at Havana, Gibara and Guantanamo, she was sent to San Juan, Porto Rico, which surrendered before the American naval force was ready to attack. At Ponce the "Prairie" floated three grounded transports. Proceeding to Santiago, Cuba, she took off three hundred sick soldiers for transport to Montauk Point, Long Island, where she ran aground, and the sick men were landed through the surf. Only on one occasion did the "Prairie" take part in actual fighting. She shelled a blockade runner during the battle of Mariel, off Havana. In this engagement a small Spanish gunboat was sunk by a missile from one of the "Prairie's" six-inch guns, the shot being aimed by Chief Boat-swain's Mate Lynward French of Fall River.

Toward the close of the war the "Prairie" was ordered to Fall River, where a complimentary banquet was tendered the officers at the Quequechan Club, and thence proceeded to Philadelphia. The men were discharged from the navy at the Boston Navy Yard in September. Battery M was mustered out at Framingham, Massachusetts, in November.

A man whose deeds have added luster to the repute of our city is John J. Doran. For his act of heroism the Navy Department awarded him a medal of honor and in 1939 gave his name to a destroyer. The local John J. Doran school and the local camp of the United Spanish War Veterans bear his name.



JOHN J. DORAN

His exploit occurred when on May 11, 1898, off Cienfuegos in Cuba, three warships were ordered each to send a boatload of sailors to destroy a cable which was laid from that city to Madrid. Doran was coxswain in the boat of the SS "Marblehead" and was one of six of its fourteen men who were wounded (his hip shattered) at the inception of his exploit, which had been undertaken under heavy artillery and rapid gun fire from the Spaniards who were protecting the cable. Without disclosing his injury Doran continued to work at the cutting of both cables. Upon recovering from his wound he was given the rank of master-at-arms, the highest rating an enlisted man could at that time hold. He died on board his vessel in Santiago Harbor, February 16, 1904.

Chief Boatswain's Mate Lynward French of the "Prairie", who died of disease at Guantanamo, was the only Fall River lad who lost his life in this war.

As an outgrowth of the interest engendered by the war a second division of the Naval Brigade, M. V. M., Company I, was formed in Fall River in May 1898. It was maintained as a reserve company. William B. Edgar was chief. Ensign Richard P. Borden, U. S. N., became lieutenant (J. G.), and subsequently was lieutenant (chief) in command of the company. Ensign William B. Edgar served throughout the war as Ensign on the U. S. S. Catskill. During the World War he served first at the Boston Navy Yard with the rank of Captain, and then was made commandant at the Naval Training Station in Hingham. At the close of the war he served as a trustee of the Naval Hospital in Chelsea.

Captain George R. H. Buffinton was one of the original members of Company F, Naval Brigade in 1892, with which he continued after his service in the Spanish-American War. In 1900 he was made captain commanding the brigade, serving until 1907, when he retired with rank of rear admiral. Mr. Buffinton was for several years business manager of the Fall River Globe, and for a long period managing owner and publisher of the Fall River Herald.

In commemoration of the service of the Fall River men in the war of 1898 a monument was erected by the United Spanish War Veterans at the junction of Plymouth Avenue and Pleasant Street. Approximately two hundred Fall River men served in this war.

World War I

Because of the belief that the United States ultimately would enter the war against Germany (1914-1918) Committees on Preparedness were

formed in various cities before this country joined in the conflict. The committee in Fall River was headed by Robert C. Davis, chairman, with Mayor James H. Kay as chairman of the executive committee. Prior to the declaration of war by Congress on April 6, 1917, it is estimated that fully 150 men from Fall River had enlisted in the regular army.

On April 6, the Eighth Deck Division and the Third Engineer Division, Naval Battalion, of the Massachusetts militia, were ordered out, and left at once for Boston Navy Yard. Lieutenant Clinton M. Smith was chief of the Eighth Division, and Lieutenant Herbert A. Sullivan chief of the Engineer Division. The Eighth was assigned to U. S. S. "Kearsarge", while the Engineers' force was broken up and groups were distributed where needed. Many from these Naval Brigade contingents saw service on American ships that reinforced the British fleet in the North Sea.

It was not until July 25, 1917 that the Twelfth Company, Coast Artillery Corps, Massachusetts National Guard (successor to old Battery M, First Heavy Artillery, M. V. M.), was mobilized for duty at the State Armory. On July 28, escorted by a large parade, the company, commanded by Captain Thomas J. Clifford, entrained at the Fall River station for Fort Heath. The night before, together with a group of drafted men, they had attended a solemn Military service at St. Mary's Cathedral, where Right Rev. Monsignor James E. Cassidy, V. G., delivered a stirring address. Members of this company served overseas in artillery units of the Yankee (Twenty-Sixth Division). Major Harry A. Skinner of the Coast Artillery Regiment, formerly Captain of the Twelfth Company, commanded a battalion in the 55th and 56th Artillery regiments overseas. He saw forty-four years of military service, having entered the former Company M as a private in May, 1896, and passing through all ranks was subsequently Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel of the 241st Coast Artillery, National Guard, serving in the latter capacity from 1934 until his retirement at the age limit, May 11, 1940. He re-entered the State service as Brigadier General of the Third Brigade in 1940. He retired on October 31, 1942.

While patriotic citizens everywhere were volunteering for army and navy service, the government decided to raise the greater portion of the men needed by means of the selective draft system, preliminary to which all men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty were required to register for enrollment on June 5, 1917. In Fall River 10,473 men registered, of whom 2624 claimed no exemption. Native-born and declarants numbered 6613; aliens, 3829; alien enemies, ten; colored, twenty-one; sole support of dependent relatives, 3766. The city was divided into four districts for

drafting purposes, and draft boards were appointed, who drew registrants by lot, decided on exemptions, and attended to all details of certifying men for service. The recruits thus raised were sent away in large groups, generally detailed to Camp Devens, at Ayer, Massachusetts, to receive training to qualify them for overseas service, although many were sent to various other concentration camps and forts. On joining the American Expeditionary Force they were assigned to different divisions. Many of those from Fall River served in France with the Yankee (Twenty-Sixth Division). No accurate figures are available as to the number of men furnished by Fall River, but it is estimated there were more than 5000. Of the casualties it has been said: "There are close to 200 names upon Fall River's honor roll, as a solemn memorial of patriotic service and of the supreme sacrifice of Fall River's sons".

In September, 1918, under an amendment to the selective draft law, a new enrollment was made, disclosing 14,485 men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years liable for military duty. As the war ended within two months, none of these were sent overseas.

Whenever a group of drafted men left the city for their various points of rendezvous it was customary to organize a parade to escort them to the railroad station, where they were loudly cheered on their departure. The largest parade of this nature, under command of Colonel William H. Beattie, was on September 7, 1917, when 690 drafted men were given a heartfelt farewell.

To take the place of the National Guard units during the war period, a State Guard was organized. Of this organization Fall River had four companies in the Seventeenth Regiment, which was under command of Colonel William H. Beattie of this city. On return to duty of the National Guard companies at the conclusion of the war the State Guard was discontinued.

Fall River contributed lavishly of money as well as men for the maintenance of the war. In the five liberty and victory loan campaigns, under the direction of various leaders, Fall River subscriptions totalled \$32,166,700. In addition, in numerous other drives, approximately \$1,200,000 was raised. Edward S. Adams was chairman of the committee on war savings stamps, sales of which brought in large returns.

A large group of women formed a local branch of the Special Aid Society for American Preparedness, which functioned from April 24, 1916 to Armistice Day, November 11, 1918. Maximum enrollment was 600. Miss Anna H. Borden was president. The work was distributed among

five departments: Economic cookery, Red Cross institution, surgical dressings, hospital equipments, and girls' training camps. A considerable sum was contributed for aviation. The Special Aid Society embraced the Women's Liberty Loan Committee, and the Fall River unit of the Women's Committee of the Council of National Defense.

The Catholic Women's Service League was organized with Mrs. Michael F. Sullivan as president, and made many articles which were sent to the soldiers and sailors. The materials were paid for through the generosity of the Knights of Columbus.

Other organizations which were of great assistance in the war work were the Fall River Chapter of the Red Cross and the Junior Auxiliary, the War Camp Community Service, and the War Library Committee. No city surpassed Fall River in zeal and loyalty, and none, in proportion to size and resources, in results attained.

Richard P. Borden of this city, a veteran of the Spanish-American War, served the Government for about twenty months as a "Dollar-a-year Man". He was attached to the General Staff of the army in Washington, as a member of the Medical Section of the Council of National Defense, and performed a vast amount of work. Their function was to pass upon the requirements and location of military and naval hospitals throughout the country. Mr. Borden¹ was given a commission as major, U. S. A. He has been for a number of years president of the Fall River Union Hospital, which he has served with great ability and zeal.

By the middle of March, 1941, the time of the author's demise, it was becoming more and more apparent that this country would again be involved in a world conflict. At that time the newspaper headlines indicated a shaping up of policy:—

"AMERICA MOVES TO MEET ENGLAND'S PRESSING NEEDS."

"WE INTEND TO PROTECT FREE INSTITUTIONS."

"DICTATORS WARNED."

In Congress a \$7,000,000,000 British aid bill was under consideration and a statement was made in the House of Representatives, that "America is ready to fight to protect her institutions of democracy and freedom."

¹ Died September 23, 1942.