

RECORD  
OF  
PENNSYLVANIA VOLUNTEERS,  
FOR  
THREE MONTHS' SERVICE,

Under the Call of the President of April 15, 1861, for Seventy-five Thousand Men.

Proclamation of the President of the United States, issued April 15, 1861.

WHEREAS, The laws of the United States have been for some time past, and now are opposed, and the execution thereof obstructed, in the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, by combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, or by the powers vested in the marshals by law; now, therefore, I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States, in virtue of the power in me vested by the Constitution and the laws, have thought fit to call forth, and hereby do call forth, the militia of the several States of the Union, to the aggregate number of 75,000, in order to suppress said combinations, and to cause the laws to be duly executed.

The details for this object will be immediately communicated to the State authorities through the War Department. I appeal to all loyal citizens to favor, facilitate, and aid this effort to maintain the honor, the integrity, and existence of our national Union, and the perpetuity of popular government, and to redress wrongs already long enough endured. I deem it proper to say that the first service assigned to the forces hereby called forth, will probably be to re-possess the forts, places, and property which have been seized from the Union; and in every event the utmost care will be observed, consistently with the objects aforesaid, to avoid any devastation, any destruction of, or interference with property, or any disturbance of peaceful citizens of any part of the country; and I hereby command the persons composing the combinations aforesaid, to disperse and retire peaceably to their respective abodes, within twenty days from this date.

Deeming that the present condition of public affairs presents an extraordinary occasion, I do, hereby, in virtue of the power in me vested by the Constitution, convene both Houses of Congress. The Senators and Representatives are, therefore, summoned to assemble at their respective chambers at twelve o'clock, noon, on Thursday, the fourth day of July next, then and there to consider and determine such measures as, in their wisdom, the public safety and interest may seem to demand.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

DONE at the city of Washington, this fifteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one, and of the independence of the United States the eighty-fifth.

BY THE PRESIDENT:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, *Secretary of State.*

## FIRST FIVE COMPANIES.

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**T**HE people of Pennsylvania, reluctant to believe that the political leaders of the South intended to inaugurate civil war, were gradually led, by the formal secession of several of the Southern States, to think that such an event was possible. The subsequent vigorous and imposing preparations made by the military forces of South Carolina, under the leadership of General Beauregard, to besiege and capture a starving garrison of sixty effective men, under Major Anderson, at Fort Sumter, had finally prepared the public mind for an attack, which promised so safe and successful a result to the besiegers.

On the morning of the 12th of April, 1861, the Executive of Pennsylvania received a telegram in these words: "The war is commenced. The batteries began firing at four o'clock this morning. Major Anderson replied, and a brisk cannonading commenced. This is reliable and has just come to the Associated Press. The vessels were not in sight."\* This startling intelligence, flashed along the lines of telegraph, across the Alleghenies, was soon heard in the remote corners of the Commonwealth. Threatnings and defiance, from Southern leaders, had long since ceased to intimidate; but when they fired upon the Flag, its import could not be mistaken. It meant war, and the appeal to arms was at once accepted by the masses of the North, however much they deprecated the alternative.

Three days later, on the 15th of April, the President of the United States issued his proclamation calling out the militia of the several States to the number of seventy-five thousand men. On the afternoon of the same day, the Secretary of War telegraphed to the Executive, that a call had been made on Pennsylvania for sixteen regiments. Two regiments were wanted within three days. A sudden dash upon the Capital was already strongly threatened. The city was entirely unprotected, and at the mercy of the assailants.

The President's call, accompanied by an appeal from the Executive, was telegraphed to every part of the Commonwealth, urging men to come forward, in companies and squads, with all possible dispatch, to the defence of the imperilled Capital. Aside from the city of Philadelphia, there were few militia companies fully armed and equipped; and of these, few contained even the minimum number of (32) men. As the intelligence, of the appeal for men, spread through the towns and villages of the interior, the officers of the few organized companies, hastily called their men together, and tendered their services to the Governor.

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\* Telegram, addressed to Gov. Curtin, from Philadelphia, by J. Morris Harding. *Telegrams received MS., Vol. 1, p. 1.*

Among the first thus promptly to respond, were the Ringgold Light Artillery, Captain M'Knight, of Reading; the Logan Guards, Captain Selheimer, of Lewistown; the Washington Artillery, Captain Wren, and the National Light Infantry, Captain McDonald, of Pottsville; and the Allen Rifles, Captain Yeager, of Allentown.

Early in January, 1861, the late Major General William H. Keim, with characteristic sagacity, had advised Captain M'Knight that the services of his company\* would probably soon be needed, and had counselled him to hold them in readiness for immediate service. Hence, from that time forward, frequent and almost daily drills were practiced. The dispatch, announcing the attack on Fort Sumter, found the company at drill at some distance from the city. The effect was electrical. All were impatient to move to the defence of the Flag.

The company was held in readiness, and, on the 16th of April, marching orders were received from Governor Curtin. On the afternoon of the same day, it moved by the Reading railroad to Harrisburg, where it arrived at eight o'clock in the evening. The company numbered one hundred and two men, fully armed and equipped as light artillery. On reporting at the Executive office, the Governor being absent in Washington, orders were sought from the Secretary of War, who telegraphed to push the company forward by the earliest train. This order, for prudential reasons, was almost immediately countermanded by the Secretary of the Commonwealth. †

The Logan Guards, ‡ of Lewistown, could muster but twenty-six members; but, on receipt of a telegram from Governor Curtin, dated April 16, accepting their services, and urging them to lose no time in moving, the drum-call was soon heard along the streets, and in less than an hour, one hundred and six

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\*THE RINGGOLD LIGHT ARTILLERY of Reading, a volunteer company, was organized and equipped in 1850, under James M'Knight, Captain. It was armed with four six-pounder brass field pieces and caissons, with full equipments of artilleryists, including sabres, and mustered over two hundred men. It was composed of good material, was well drilled, and was the pride of the city of Reading. It had participated in several volunteer encampments; one at Easton of a week's duration, where it was entertained by ex-Governor Reeder, and other leading citizens.

† HARRISBURG, April 16, 1861.

Captain James M'Knight:

DEAR SIR:—You will please delay your march to Washington until ordered by the Governor.  
Respectfully yours,

ELI SLIFER.

‡THE LOGAN GUARDS, a volunteer company, was organized by Major Daniel Eisenbise, inspector of the 2d brigade, 14th division, Pennsylvania militia. In the month of July, 1858, John B. Selheimer was elected Captain, and commissioned on the 7th of August. The company met for parade and drill about once a month, and participated in volunteer encampments at Lewistown in the fall of 1859, and at Huntingdon in 1860, both under command of Major General Wm. H. Keim. It participated in the ceremonies incident to the inauguration of Governor Curtin in January, 1861, and in the reception of Mr. Lincoln, President elect, on the 22d of February following.

At the close of the three months' service it was re-organized under Captain J. A. Mathews, and re-entered the service in the 46th regiment, Colonel Knipe, for three years, remaining as veterans to the close of the war, and participating in the campaigns of Banks, McClellan, Pope, Burnside, Hooker, and Sherman. The losses of the company, from all causes, during the war, were one hundred and eleven men; but so well did recruits come forward from the home neighborhood, as they were wanted, that at the close of the war, sixty-eight men and officers were mustered out as veteran volunteers, the rolls showing an aggregate membership of two hundred and forty-seven. The survivors of the organization participated in the flag reception, at Philadelphia, on the 4th of July, 1866, and were assigned to the right of the procession, by Major General Hancock, commanding officer of the day.