

measure due when called into Federal service, was promoted to the rank of Major in the National Army on August 5 and ordered to Camp Kearney, California, as Assistant Chief of Staff of the 40th Division.

Captain Ellery W. Niles, Coast Artillery Corps, U. S. A., who had been detailed to this State as Inspector Instructor Coast Artillery Militia since April 6, 1915, was relieved from his assignment on July 10 and assigned to the 6th Provisional Regiment, Coast Artillery at Fort Adams, R. I. Captain Niles' thorough military training and instruction to the Coast Artillery companies was a large factor in enabling those organizations to enter the Federal service so well equipped for war duty.

Captain Samuel G. Shartle, Coast Artillery Corps, U. S. A., had been detailed to duty as Inspector Instructor and stationed at Portland since October 14, 1916, where he rendered valuable aid in instructing the Coast Artillery companies until they entered Federal service.

Judge Advocate General

Major Lucian W. Blanchard of Rumford, Judge Advocate General of the Governor's staff, having been called into Federal service and assigned to duty with the 86th Division at Camp Custer, Michigan, Arthur L. Thayer of Bangor was appointed Judge Advocate General with the rank of Major to date from October 9.

The Halifax Disaster

On the morning of December 6 a collision between the French Munition Ship Mont Blanc and the Belgian Relief Steamship Imo in Halifax Harbor caused a tremendous explosion and conflagration which virtually wiped out the northern section of the city and the village of Dartmouth resulting in the deaths of nearly fifteen hundred people and the injury of several thousand.

No formal request for aid had been received by Governor Milliken but learning through Massachusetts channels that surgical aid and supplies and bedding was most urgently needed, arrangements were at once made to dispatch a relief train to the stricken city.

In accordance with orders from the Governor, I left Augusta accompanied by Lester M. Hart, Private Secretary to the Governor, early on the morning of December 8 with a medical unit made up of the following officers of the Medical Corps of the National Guard: Major Gilbert M. Elliott of Brunswick, Chief Surgeon; First Lieutenants Frederick T. Hill of Waterville, Thomas A. Foster of Portland, William J. O'Connor of Au-

gusta and Harold W. Garcelon of Lewiston; also the following officers of the Medical Section, National Guard Reserve: First Lieutenants Elbridge G. A. Stetson of Brunswick, Joseph H. Murphy of Dexter, Justin S. Barker of Kennebunk, Ardenne A. Stott of Woolwich. Dr. D. B. Cragin and Dr. P. S. Merrill with five nurses joined the unit at Waterville. Later 1st Lieut. J. F. Cox of Bangor, Dr. J. B. Woods of Bangor and Dr. C. M. Thomas of Brewer joined the unit at Halifax.

Attached to our train in addition to the special pullman was a baggage car loaded with medical supplies, 2000 blankets and 1000 cots. Another carload of blankets and bedding, raised by citizens of Bangor and Penobscot County and a carload of Red Cross supplies, was added at Bangor. The supplies taken on at Bangor were in charge of W. A. Hennessy, Secretary of the Bangor Chamber of Commerce, and those taken from the military stores were in charge of Capt. William C. Goodwin of the Quartermaster's Department.

Immediately upon arrival at Halifax and pending the preparation of the hospital the members of the unit engaged in emergency surgical aid at temporary dressing stations.

The Halifax Woman's College building was assigned to the Maine unit for a hospital. This building had been partially unroofed and its windows blown out by the explosion but, under the efficient supervision of Major Elliott and Captain Goodwin, carpenters, masons, plumbers, electricians and materials were obtained and with the assistance of a detail of soldiers the snow was removed from the rooms and the building put in shape for occupancy. Seven wards with a total of two hundred beds, a dental room, emergency dressing room, dispensary and operating room were established and patients admitted within twenty-two hours after the building was turned over to us. Emergency dressing stations were also maintained on the borders of the devastated area. Canadian nurses were available for the hospital.

The supplies furnished by the military department which were not required for the hospital were distributed, together with such others as he was able to obtain in Halifax under Captain Goodwin's supervision, to needy sufferers entirely without red tape or State advertising, all that was required to insure prompt allotment being evidence of need.

The unit having been established for relief work, I returned from Halifax, the majority of the medical unit and quartermaster remaining on duty there until December 23 when the hospital was turned over to Capt. A. A. Goodman, U. S. Army, and they returned home.

The Maine medical unit rendered valuable aid to the Halifax sufferers and too much credit cannot be given to its members

who served so faithfully and efficiently. They responded promptly to all calls day and night, recognizing the fact that they were on an errand of mercy and relief and devoted themselves entirely to those duties.

The Halifax disaster demonstrated the urgent need of a complete mobile hospital unit which could be immediately dispatched to points requiring medical and surgical aid in an emergency. Physicians of high professional standing are available through the Medical Department of the National Guard for such a purpose and, at comparatively small expense, supplies and equipment for a mobile hospital could be provided together with a place of safe and convenient storage so that the complete unit would be instantly available for use in case of emergency where local agencies have been destroyed, as is frequently occasioned by disaster or epidemic.

Following is a detailed report showing the strength of the National Guard, roster, register of officers, reports of chiefs of staff corps and departments, etc.

GEORGE McL. PRESSON,
The Adjutant General.