Indiana and the Call for Volunteers, April, 1861

Joseph A. Parsons, Jr.*

"Charleston, April 12. The ball has opened. War is inaugurred." Thus began the telegram received and printed by the daily newspapers of Indiana on Saturday, April 13, 1861.1

Indiana could hardly have been less prepared for war than she was. For ten years the reports of the adjutant general had been filled with pleas for an effective militia law.2 After the Mexican War the military appealed to so few that there were no more than a half dozen active and organized militia units in the state in January, 1861. None of these had been organized before 1859 and their membership totaled less than five hundred men.3 The reports of the adjutant general bemoaned the fact that no accurate inventory could be made as there was no means of getting information from subordinate officers. No one seemed to know where the state arms, uniforms, and military equipment were or what condition they were in, least of all the adjutant general. In 1850 there were supposed to be fifty-five militia companies of all arms, but none made the required reports.4 Adjutant General S. D. Tomlinson asked time and time again for a more effective system and in 1855 his pleas to the legislature were seconded by Governor Joseph A. Wright.5 An act was passed in that year incorporating the militia units, but this proved to be no

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1 Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 13, 1861.
5 Indiana Senate Journal, 1855, pp. 33-34.
more than an addition to the former piecemeal and inept laws.  

On taking office in 1861, Governor Oliver P. Morton asked the legislature to pass a new militia law. This body responded with a statute which required that all arms in the hands of the state militia be turned in so the adjutant general would have some means of ascertaining the aggregate number of weapons in Indiana.  

This resulted in the collection of “3,436 small arms of sixteen different kinds, but of uniform inferiority” which state officials were trying to exchange with the federal government for new rifles when the war commenced in April. Governor Morton went to Washington in March to request five thousand arms but United States arsenals were unable to supply them.  

It might be noted that the inability of the federal government to supply arms to the states was blamed by Indianians on the perfidy of Secretary of War John B. Floyd.  

The military status of the state is well illustrated by the condition of Elkhart County, which reported that it had twenty old flintlock breech-loading muskets, twenty ramrods, ten cartridge boxes, four umbrellas, and 296 pocket pistols. “The muskets are very old, and entirely unfit for service; but the pocket pistols are perfect with the exception of corks.”  

Officials at Fort Wayne indicated that all arms there were of the flintlock musket style and that “after pulling trigger the soldier can take a chew of tobacco before the piece goes off.” Altogether there were less than five hundred stands of effective small arms and eight dismantled cannons owned by the state. The remainder of the state’s arms were of little or no military value.  

This almost complete lack of military preparedness was characteristic of the western states. Whitelaw Reid, journalist and later ardent expansionist, said:

In every state west of the Alleghanies [sic] the militia had fallen into undisguised contempt. The old-fashioned militia

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6 Laws of Indiana, 1855, p. 226.
7 Laws of Indiana, 1861, pp. 129-130.
10 Goshen Democrat, no date, quoted in Madison Daily Courier, April 26, 1861.
11 Fort Wayne Daily Sentinel, April 16, 1861.
musters had been given up; the subject had been abandoned as fit only to be the fertile theme for the ridicule of rising writers and witty stump orators. The cannon issued by the government were left for the uses of political parties on the occasion of mass meetings or victories at the polls. The small arms were scattered, rusty, and become worthless. In Chicago a novel drill had been an inducement for the organization of the Ellsworth Zouaves; and here and there through the West the young men of the city kept up a military company; but these were the exceptions. Popular prejudice against doing military duty was insurmountable, and no name for these exceptional organizations so struck the popular fancy as that of 'the Cornstalk Militia.'

When Captain George B. McClellan and Senator Jacob D. Cox inspected the Ohio arsenal in April, 1861, the latter reported:

We found a few boxes of smooth-bore muskets which had once been issued to militia companies and had been returned rusted and damaged. No belts, cartridge-boxes, or other accoutrements were with them. There were two or three smooth-bore brass fieldpieces, 6-pounders, which had been honeycombed by firing salutes, and of which the vents had been worn out, bushed and worn out again. In a heap in one corner lay a confused pile of mildewed harness which had been once used for artillery horses, but was now not worth carrying away. There had for many years been no money appropriated to buy military material or even to protect the little the state had. The Federal government had occasionally distributed some arms which were in the hands of the independent uniformed militia, and the arsenal was simply an empty storehouse. It did not take long to complete our inspection. At the door, as we were leaving the building, McClellan turned, and, looking back into its emptiness, remarked, half humorously and half sadly, 'A fine stock of munitions on which to begin a great war.'

When it is understood that Ohio was among the best prepared of the western states, the condition of Indiana can be better appreciated.

Nor was Indiana prepared politically to exert a concentrated effort for the war. Governor Oliver P. Morton was a young and untried member of a young and untried party. Furthermore, he had obtained his office by advancing from lieutenant governor when Governor Henry S. Lane resigned to take a seat in the United States Senate. For that reason and because he had bolted the Democratic party in 1854 he lacked the unqualified support or confidence of either party.

13 Whitelaw Reid, Ohio in the War (Columbus, 1893), 1, 19.
14 Jacob D. Cox, Military Reminiscences of the Civil War (New York, 1905), I, 2.
In addition to political instability and military ineptness, Indiana was in no economic condition to finance a war. On February 11, 1861, there was on hand in the state treasury but $10,368, most of which was being held in special funds which could not be touched for military or general purposes. The only special fund from which money could be borrowed for these purposes had already been tapped to pay current expenses, notably to pay the salaries of the state legislators after the 1861 session. It is true that the new state constitution ratified in 1851 authorized the borrowing of money in case of war but it was doubted that funds could be obtained from private investors. The state’s bonds had not proved to be good investments, and further taxation would not be politically feasible unless the war proved very popular.

Even before receipt of the news of the firing on Fort Sumter, Governor Morton began to act with the surety and alacrity which was to characterize his administration. One of his first moves was to send a telegram to Lewis Wallace, lawyer and legislator of Crawfordsville, saying, “Sumter has been fired on. Come immediately.” Wallace was a veteran of the Mexican War who had organized and commanded the Montgomery Guards, one of the few trained militia units in the state. Although he was a Democrat, his war experience and his continued interest in things military made him one of the few men who were capable of serving as adjutant general at that time. Wallace was addressing a jury on Saturday, April 13, in the Clinton County Circuit Court when the message arrived. He left the court room without finishing his speech, rode ten miles to the nearest railroad station, and arrived in Indianapolis Sunday morning. There he accepted the position of adjutant general on condition that he later be appointed a colonel and given the command of his choice of regiments.

On the same day, Morton asked Colonel Thomas A. Morris to accept the post of quartermaster general and Isaiah Mansur that of commissary general. These four, Morton, Wallace, Morris, and Mansur, faced the enormous task of raising, training, feeding, and equipping thousands of troops. On the morn-
ing of their appointments, the last three had neither offices, clerks, funds, nor the authority necessary for their tasks.

On Monday morning, April 15, Governor Morton sent the following telegram:

To Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States:

On behalf of the State of Indiana, I tender to you, for the defense of the Nation, and to uphold the authority of the Government, ten thousand men.

(Signed,)

Oliver P. Morton,
Governor of Indiana.

On the same day President Lincoln issued his famous proclamation beginning:

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 invested by the Constitution and the laws, have thought fit to call forth the militia of the several States of the Union, to the aggregate number of seventy-five thousand, 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.

The details mentioned in the President's message were sent on the same day by Secretary of War Simon Cameron:

Sir:—Under the Act of Congress ‘for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, repel invasions,’ &c approved February 28, 1795, I have the honor to request your Excellency to cause to be immediately detached from the militia of your State, the quota designated in the table below, to serve as infantry, or riflemen, for the period of three months, unless sooner discharged.

Your Excellency will please communicate to me the time at or about which your quota will be expected at its rendezvous, as it will be met, as soon as practicable, by an officer or officers to be mustered into the service and pay of the United States. At the same time, the oath of fidelity to the United States will be administered to every officer and man.

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19 Ibid., 4.
20 Indiana Documentary Journal, 1862-1868, II, 809.
The mustering officer will be instructed to receive no man under the rank of commissioned officer, who is in years apparently over forty-five, or under eighteen, or who is not in physical strength and vigor.

Indiana’s quota included:

One Brigadier General; one Aid (a Captain); one Brigade Inspector (a Major); six Regiments; six Colonels; six Lieutenant-Colonels; six Majors; six Adjutants (Lieutenants); six Regimental Quarter Masters (Lieutenants); six Surgeons; six Surgeon's Mates; six Sergeant Majors; six Drum Majors; six Fife Majors; sixty Captains; sixty Lieutenants; sixty Ensigns; sixty Sergeants; sixty Corporals; sixty Drummers; sixty Fifers; three thousand eight hundred and forty privates. Total officers, two hundred and twenty-five. Total men, four thousand four hundred and fifty-eight. Aggregate, four thousand and six hundred and eighty-three.

The rendezvous for your State will be at Indianapolis.21

As soon as the proclamation of the President and the orders of the Secretary of War were received, Adjutant General Wallace published General Orders No. 1, dated April 15, 1861:

Attention is called to the following regulations adopted for the organization of the militia of Indiana:

1. Companies must number eighty-four, rank and file.
2. Each company must elect the following officers for commissions: One Captain; one First Lieutenant; one Second Lieutenant and one Third Lieutenant.
3. When formed and organized by the election of officers, the captain must report immediately to this office, sending names of officers, company roll, the exact locality of their muster, and the particular arm of service they have chosen—whether infantry, rifle, artillery or cavalry.
4. Notice of their acceptance will be immediately given by telegraph, or in the speediest possible manner; and when so notified, companies must hold themselves in readiness for instant march to the place of rendezvous.
5. Regiments will, if time permits it, be formed of companies from the same Congressional District. If time will not allow, companies will be assigned to regiments according to the date of their report, as above designated.
6. Respect for the five regiments sent from Indiana to the Mexican War, and the avoidance of historical confusion hereafter, require that regiments should be numbered in order, beginning with the sixth.
7. Companies not already uniformed will take no step about uniforming until they know the regiment they are attached to.

21 Ibid., 310.
Indiana and the Call for Volunteers, April, 1861

8. Arms will be distributed to accepted companies as soon as possible. If not distributed before marching to the place of rendezvous, patience must be exercised.

9. If practicable, an inspecting officer will be sent to such companies, notice being given of the time of his coming.

10. Accepted companies must not wait for arms, but begin their drilling immediately.

11. All communications touching arms, place of rendezvous, and organization, must be addressed to this office.

12. Notice of time and place of general rendezvous will be given in future orders.

These orders were issued on April 16 in conjunction with the governor’s proclamation which explained the emergency and called on the men of Indiana to form six regiments each with ten companies to be mustered into the federal service.

In the meantime, excitement and patriotic fervor reigned throughout the state. The populace poured into the county seats and principal towns. The rains had made the roads so muddy that the country people had not chosen to come to the towns for several weeks, much to the disgust of the business communities. Now they arrived in such great numbers as to make business impossible even if the townsmen had left the telegraph and newspaper offices long enough to attend to their business. In some towns there were “violent demonstrations” caused by differences of opinion over “national questions,” but, on the whole, public sentiment was in favor of the federal government’s actions.

Even the Democratic newspapers, such as the Indianapolis Sentinel, came to the support of the federal government. On April 13, the same day it printed the news of the firing on Fort Sumter, it had printed an article explaining the raising of a secession flag in Greensburg as the work of a small boy.

Solitary and alone he hoisted a piece of spotted calico, with seven paper stars upon it, from one of the towers of the courthouse, and as he expected, the irrepressibles went into spasms over it. To increase the indignation, a stranger... was passed off as a recruiting officer for the Southern army. That sell took, also. The Republicans talked about lynching

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22 Ibid., 311-312.
23 Ibid., 311.
24 Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 18, 1861.
25 Fort Wayne Daily Telegraph, April 16, 1861.
the 'rebel' officer, but his soldierly appearance repressed all demonstrations of a hostile character. And such are the facts which form the basis of the raw-head and bloody-bones article in the Journal of yesterday.26

This and other previous "unpatriotic and partisan" statements on the part of the Sentinel made it necessary for the police to make "exertions... to prevent a mob."27 Thereafter, the editor toned down his policies and sometimes sounded even more "rawheaded" and "bloody-boned" than some of the Republican papers. Occasionally, however, he slipped as on Tuesday, the sixteenth of April, when he called a man a "trampler of the law" because he drew a pistol and called a horsebuyer, who had "mildly" expressed his secessionist views, a "traitor."28 And on the seventeenth, he editorialized that there should be a united effort to stop the war and to examine the fruitlessness of the war, but he was to express any "unpatriotic and partisan" views "mildly" for some months.

Everywhere in the state mass meetings were held where resolutions were made to support the national administration, to form military companies, to subscribe funds to supply and equip the volunteers and to take care of their families. Most notable was the almost complete eradication of party lines at these meetings. Cambridge and Richmond were reported to be in an uproar with business entirely suspended.29 In Richmond, it was said that even the Quakers were turning out and a prominent Democrat promised to "wade through seas of blood to support the administration and the stars and stripes."30 At Tipton, a former Ohioan raised a secession flag on the courthouse flagpole and was severely manhandled before the mob accepted his explanation that the deed was done for "sport" and allowed him to flee south on the first train.31 From Lafayette came the news that "Firing of cannon, speeches, and music are the order of the day."32 Bells and drums, noisy meetings, and parades intruded on church services and a volunteer company was formed before breakfast Sunday morning in Renssalaer.33

26 Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, April 13, 1861.
27 Madison Daily Courier, April 15, 1861.
28 Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, April 16, 1861.
29 Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 18, 1861.
30 Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, April 16, 1861.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 16, 1861.
The organization of volunteer companies was the most characteristic activity in the towns and cities of Indiana. Military companies came into existence overnight captained by prominent local men. Typical of these captains was Jerry Sullivan of Madison who bade his Sunday school class goodbye on Sunday morning, hung the Stars and Stripes from a window of Columbian Hall on Monday morning, and announced he was forming a company. By Tuesday night it was more than full and on Wednesday morning he bought its members black caps in lieu of uniforms, herded them onto a train, and with the flag the Madison company had carried in Mexico, started to Indianapolis.44

The militia companies of Indianapolis, the City Greys and the National Guards, were filled up by Monday morning and three others paraded down Washington Street. Somehow the rumor had spread on Sunday that the Greys had disbanded for fear of being called into active service. Lieutenant R. S. Foster had a letter published in the Indianapolis papers denying this “base slander and libel.”45

Four recruiting offices were opened in Fort Wayne.46 Three companies plus a Home Guard unit were formed in addition to Captain Sullivan’s in Madison and all were filled by Monday night.47 A Kentuckian walked 120 miles to join one of them.48

There were many stories of such extreme patriotism in the papers and some were doubtless exaggerated. Sixty-eight year old John McCurtin, who had two sons in the Iroquois Guards of Jasper County, tried to volunteer. When rejected, he shaved his whiskers, trimmed his hair and dyed it jet black. His appearance was so transformed that he passed the recruiting officers and was sworn in.49 A ninety-two year old man from Pendleton managed to volunteer in a company from Madison and went with it to Indianapolis where he was rejected by medical officers. He was the father of twenty-four children and was termed “unusual in more

44 A. J. Grayson, History of the Sixth Indiana Regiment in the Three Months’ Campaign in Western Virginia (Madison, Indiana, 1876), 4.
45 Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 15, 1861.
46 Fort Wayne Daily Telegraph, April 18, 1861.
47 Madison Daily Courier, April 15, 1861.
48 Ibid., April 17, 1861.
49 Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 22, 1861.
ways than one" by the Indianapolis Journal. A seventy-eight year old veteran of the Thames broke down and cried when the company being formed in Spencer refused to take him.

In many towns prominent clergymen, officials, and state representatives were among the first to sign the military rosters. A notable example was Mayor Will Cumbach of Greensburg who enlisted as a private in the first company formed in his town. At the same time, many men were allegedly forced to do their patriotic duty by their wives or sweethearts. The ladies of Cartersburg were reported to be saying to their men, "Go, or let me go."

All the printers in Cambridge City volunteered and the papers there had to close down their presses. Newspapers throughout the state were in a difficult position. At a time when they were trying to publish extras, were overwhelmed with telegrams concerning the war, and were faced with an unprecedented amount of news, their "printer boys" were volunteering. Almost every company had at least one newspaper employee in its ranks. The Sentinel boasted that it had supplied eight printers while the Republican and supposedly more militaristic and patriotic Journal had sent only six.

By Monday following the attack on Fort Sumter, the adjutant general's office, located temporarily in an anteroom off the governor's office, was besieged with telegrams and entreaties. By 3:30 P.M. of that day, the following companies had tendered their services: four from Indianapolis; two each from Madison, Terre Haute, and Lafayette; one each from Crawfordsville, Noblesville, Wabash, New Albany, Logansport, and Rising Sun. That evening three companies from Greencastle and one each from North Vernon and Lawrenceburg telegraphed their readiness to march. Knights-town supposedly "dropped its Quakerism," had a mass meeting on Sunday, organized a company, and asked for arms on Monday.

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40 Ibid., April 23, 1861.
41 Ibid., April 26, 1861.
42 Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, April 20, 1861.
43 Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 29, 1861.
44 Madison Daily Courier, April 20, 1861.
45 Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, April 26, 1861.
46 Ibid., April 19, 1861.
47 Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 16, 1861.
Indiana and the Call for Volunteers, April, 1861

The next week was sheer bedlam. Between the fifteenth and the twentieth, Terre Haute sent two companies of one hundred men each to Indianapolis, raised a cavalry unit of one hundred men and a German company of eighty. Four more companies were raised in Terre Haute on the eighteenth and nineteenth totaling three hundred men, and the city expected six hundred more volunteers during the next four days. Three citizens on business in the South were reported to have been drafted into the secessionist army, one boatload of merchandise was said to have been confiscated by southerners. There had been a public meeting every night. On the nineteenth the county commissioners had appropriated five thousand dollars and the citizens had subscribed four thousand dollars to aid the families of volunteers. The ladies made two hundred red flannel shirts for the Terre Haute volunteers.48

Such activity was common. A mass meeting in Hamilton County raised twenty-five thousand dollars for volunteers' families on the sixteenth in a few minutes.49 In Muncie twelve hundred dollars was raised that same day in twenty minutes. One farmer, lacking money, gave two hundred bushels of wheat.60 A man in Lawrenceburg gave five hundred dollars, another gave two thousand, while in Indianapolis another gave one thousand.61

The boys at the Deaf and Dumb Institute in Indianapolis bought material and the girls then spent two days making a flag measuring twenty by eleven feet. A thirty-foot pole was placed on the cupola of the main building and the flag was run up on the nineteenth after the superintendent recited "The Star Spangled Banner" and one of the students gave an address. The whole ceremony was conducted in sign language.62

From all indications the most riotous town was Fort Wayne. The Telegraph of that city reported on the twenty-second that there had been no disturbances due to the vigilance of the mayor who had stayed on the crowded streets almost day and night calming the people.63 That afternoon he

48 Vincennes Weekly Gazette, April 27, 1861.
49 Madison Daily Courier, April 22, 1861.
50 Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 19, 1861.
51 Ibid., April 20, 1861.
52 Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, April 20, 1861.
53 Fort Wayne Daily Telegraph, April 22, 1861.
must have relaxed his vigilance in an attempt to get some rest before seeing the Wayne Rifles off on the train at 2:00 A.M. the next morning. A group of men with tin horns and flags were parading the streets when two "Frenchmen" in an oxcart were unfortunate enough to appear in their line of march. The revellers tried to frighten the oxen, whereupon the Frenchmen climbed off the wagon to protect the animals and were promptly assaulted. When the brawl was broken up, one of the Frenchmen picked up the presumably lifeless body of his companion and drove off. The arrest of Nicholas Hicks was followed by a proclamation by the mayor to the effect that ten men in each ward were to form a police patrol each night to aid the police and that no liquor was to be sold after 9:00 P.M. The next day, the "dead" Frenchman was seen rolling logs, but the mayor's proclamation remained in effect.

The editor of the New Albany Ledger, commenting on the troubles in Fort Wayne and other towns, promised that:

our own community, situated as they are on what will, there is too much reason to fear, be soon the border, preserve their equanimity, and manifest little disposition to be carried away by the storm of passion which is now rocking the country to and fro.

He was wrong. A crowd made a dummy representing him and threatened to hang him in effigy for his sentiments.

In Shelbyville a volunteer named John Vanpelt went into a grocery owned by John Frakes, a Southern sympathizer. Frakes ordered Vanpelt out saying he would serve no volunteers. When Vanpelt refused to leave, Frakes drew a pistol and shot the volunteer in the thigh. The Indianapolis Sentinel's words are interesting in view of its recent lack of ardor for the war: "The demon who shot him. . . has managed to make his escape [or the mob would have] hung him higher than Haman ever hung."

Exciting and fast-moving as events were over the state, the center of activities was Indianapolis which was rapidly

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54 Ibid., April 23, 1861.
55 Ibid., April 24, 1861.
56 Ibid., April 24, 1861.
57 Ibid., April 18, 1861.
58 Ibid., April 23, 1861.
changing from a city of peace to an armed camp. On April 17 the *Sentinel* said:

In the military department, which is quite an extensive one now, matters took a business turn... and order is rapidly being created out of excitement and confusion. The different armories were open and recruiting went on. The two Zouave companies drilled nearly all day on the street, and the sound of martial music was heard from the severel [sic] rendezvous of the troops. Our city was like a garrison town.59

The day before, Governor Morton and Adjutant General Wallace secured the State Fair grounds on the north side of the city and the two Indianapolis companies, the Greys and the Guards, moved into the new camp which became Camp Morton. The order which had been promised was soon shattered. The adjutant general and his assistant, Fred Knefler, former Marion County clerk, were flooded all day Monday and Tuesday by telegrams. The following are a small part of them:

Muncie, April 17. We leave here immediately.
Lebanon, April 17. We will be fully organized tomorrow.
Terre Haute, April 17. My company will be ready to march in a few hours.
Crawfordsville, April 17. Forty men will leave here at six o'clock this evening via Lafayette.
Cambridge City, April 17. The company will be out tomorrow noon.
Madison, April 16. Company will be on hand Thursday morning. Got full number and good size.
Wabash, April 17. Muster roll of 86 men to be sent tomorrow.
Lafayette, April 17. Capt. Miller's complete; ready at a moment's warning; one and probably two more companies will be ready tomorrow.
Lafayette, April 17. Capt. Miller's company just started for Indianapolis.
Terre Haute, April 16. We are ready at a call; are we accepted?
Muncie, April 16. The Delaware Guards tender their services. I will be down this afternoon with the papers.
North Vernon, April 15. Company complete by 8:00 p.m. Can we be received in the first requisition?
South Bend, April 17. Continental Cadets are full. Will you accept them?

59 Ibid., April 17, 1861.
Terre Haute, April 17. My company will leave here tomorrow.\\footnote{Ibid., April 18, 1861.}

Cambridge City, April 17. Cambridge City in an uproar. Business entirely suspended. Our company will be in Indianapolis on the noon train.\\footnote{Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 18, 1861.}

Such telegrams continued to pour in from all over the state Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday offering companies, asking for a place in the proposed Zouave Regiment (which Wallace planned to make his own after completing his duties as adjutant general), asking for transportation, announcing times of arrival, and so on.\\footnote{Wallace, Autobiography, I, 261.}

Morton, Wallace, Mansur, and Morris, and their aides, faced the almost impossible task of receiving, quartering, feeding, arming, and equipping the horde of men who were on the move toward Indianapolis. The most important job was to make the State Fair grounds serve as a military camp. Using the troops on hand and civilians, Morris converted the horse and cattle stalls into barracks, raised hundreds of tents, and made Camp Morton ready in the short space of two days. On April 16 Wallace received a letter signed by Lucinda K. Morton, Kate Bullard, Mrs. E. H. Bates, Caroline Coburn, and Cordelia Wallace offering the services of the women of Indianapolis to aid in the procurement of blankets and clothing. Wallace answered by telling them they could help in supplying blankets, bed clothing, surgical appliances, lint, and bandages. In addition, Wallace wrote in a manner foreshadowing his later literary accomplishments that mother's care and sister's nursing were in even greater demand. At 9:00 A.M., Wednesday, April 17, the ladies met and on the next morning load after load of quilts, blankets, and comforts flowed into the quartermaster stores at the camp.\\footnote{Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, April 18-19, 1861.}

Fortunately balmy spring weather prevailed, for the companies began arriving before these preparations could be completed. A company from Lafayette came in on the train Tuesday evening, and one from Madison arrived during the early morning hours Wednesday. On their heels came companies from Delaware County, Lafayette, Terre Haute, Rich-
mond, Cambridge City, Lawrenceburg, and Crawfordsville. From then on, the confusion was too great for the newspapers of Indianapolis and they lost count. All they could be sure of was that eighteen hundred men were in the camp by nightfall Wednesday. The press of incoming troops by that evening was such that some stayed overnight in the hotels and many of the volunteers who stayed at the Bates House and the Palmer House thought soldiering was to be an easy life.

The trip to Indianapolis had not been without its excitement and accidents. The volunteers had left their homes after parades, feasts, and fond farewells. They were greeted by crowds, bands, and the firing of cannon and blacksmith’s anvils at towns through which they passed. The gaiety of the occasion was marred by tragedy at Greenwood when a cannon fired to salute the Madison company burst in the midst of the crowd. A small boy was killed when he was thrown one hundred yards, the top of his head shot away, and ten people were wounded.

A system of receiving the troops which was continued throughout the war was put into operation in Indianapolis. Two independent home guard units and a fife and drum corps had been organized there; Lew Wallace pressed them into service. He kept one of them on duty at the railroad station at all times. An independent artillery company offered its services and each train was met with an artillery salute and martial music. Each newly arrived company was escorted through the packed and cheering throngs by one of the elegantly uniformed independent companies to the southeast corner of the State House. There Governor Morton or some other personage made a speech. Adjutant General Wallace administered the oath of allegiance and made a short speech which usually ended with the words, “You are no longer citizens, but soldiers.” Many of the volunteers needed this admonition as some believed they had volunteered for a free trip to Washington and a three-month vacation. They were then marched to Camp Morton, fed, and assigned to their tents or cattle

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64 Ibid., April 19, 1861.
65 Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 19, 1861.
66 Grayson, History of the Sixth Indiana Regiment, 6.
67 Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, April 19, 1861.
69 Grayson, History of the Sixth Indiana Regiment, 6.
stalls. With troops coming in so rapidly, it was not always possible to receive them at Camp Morton with the promptness and efficiency shown in the city. Some had to wait many long and hungry hours before being fed$^{16}$ and many received blankets which were too thin for comfort.$^{17}$ However, the three-month volunteers were not to suffer long. As soon as their friends in their home towns heard their first complaints, huge quantities of bedding, clothing, and food were sent to them. If anything, they soon became too well supplied.

Paramount to all else was the problem of financing the new army. City and county commissioners appropriated and individuals subscribed vast sums to pay for equipping and feeding the volunteers and to care for their families. The banking firm of Winslow and Lanier placed twenty-five thousand dollars at the disposal of Governor Morton.$^{18}$ But the cost of equipping and maintaining a force for any length of time would require more than could be raised without legislative action. On April 18 Governor Morton called the Indiana General Assembly to meet on April 24.$^{19}$ Without a doubt, this was one of the most unusual meetings of the Indiana legislature. In the House of Representatives, a Republican was nominated for speaker by a Democrat; a Democrat was nominated for clerk by a Republican; and both were elected unanimously as were all officers of both House and Senate.$^{20}$ The governor’s message asked for one million dollars for arms, munitions, and the militia, for an effective militia law, for a law defining treason, and for a law suspending the debts of volunteers.$^{21}$ Only on the last two was there any dissension; on none was there any party division.$^{22}$

Under the act of May 1, money was made available to provide for the procurement of “first-class arms, artillery, cavalry and infantry equipments and munitions of war, making

$^{16}$ Fort Wayne Daily Telegraph, April 24, 1861.
$^{17}$ Grayson, History of the Sixth Indiana Regiment, 7.
$^{18}$ Catherine Merrill, The Soldier of Indiana in the War for the Union (2 vols., Indianapolis, 1869), I, 12; Report of the Adjutant General, I, 6. Lanier, a native of Madison, made this loan and others later as a patriotic gesture which, in the end, it proved to be. The loan was not completely repaid until the twentieth century.
$^{19}$ Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 24, 1861.
$^{20}$ Indiana Senate Journal, Special Session, 1861, pp. 7-9; Indiana House Journal, Special Session, 1861, pp. 9-10.
$^{21}$ Indiana Senate Journal, Special Session, 1861, pp. 21-25.
$^{22}$ Ibid., 48, 86, 112, 243.
the necessary appropriations therefor, and authorizing the Governor to borrow money. . . for twenty thousand men." Calvin Fletcher, Sr., was sent east to arrange for the purchase of arms and equipment. He was unsuccessful so his son, Miles J. Fletcher, the state superintendent of public instruction, was sent on a similar mission with similar results. Applications were made to the federal government and to General McClellan, commander of the Western Division, for arms and cannon to protect the Ohio River towns of New Albany, Jeffersonville, Madison, and Lawrenceburg. The only result was the receipt of two pieces of artillery for New Albany. Governor Morton then commissioned Robert Dale Owen as agent of the state "to visit the Eastern States and Europe in order to purchase arms. . . not to extend beyond six thousand rifles and rifled muskets, and one thousand carbines." Owen was so successful in his mission that by February, 1862, he had purchased thirty thousand English Enfield rifles, 2,731 carbines, 751 revolvers, and 797 cavalry sabres. Owen's success came too late for the three-month volunteers but Morton was somehow able to procure the most recent rifles from the federal government for their use. When Indiana troops passed through Ohio in June, the Ohio newspapers raised a storm of protest against their state government. "No Ohio regiments have such arms. Whose fault is it?"

With the arms problem disposed of, it remained necessary to find the ammunition which the federal government was unable to supply. It could scarcely supply the troops in the East. As a temporary expedient, Governor Morton asked Captain Herman Sturm to undertake the manufacture of ammunition for the three-month troops. On April 27 land was acquired on Market Street facing the north entrance of the State House. Volunteers from the Eleventh Regiment served as laborers in the arsenal the first few days but were soon relieved. By Monday, June 17, eighty men and sixteen women were working full time manufacturing grape, cannister,

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81 *Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel*, June 15, 1861.
shells, six-pound balls, and Minie bullets "ready for ramming."\textsuperscript{83}

Indianapolis, with companies arriving every day, was rapidly becoming an army town. Not less than twenty made their appearance on April 22.\textsuperscript{84} As Camp Morton began to be packed with volunteer companies, there was also a steady stream of visitors. The hack fare from downtown was ten cents and the journey must have been worth every cent of it to the thousands of curious townsfolk who were enraptured by the sight of the marching and camp life. The masses of visitors so reduced the efficiency of the training and so imposed on the privacy of the volunteers that Colonel Joseph J. Reynolds closed the camp to visitors on Sundays and allowed no passes for the troops. From all reports, the soldiers seemed relieved to have a day to themselves when they could bathe, shave, and drill without an audience.\textsuperscript{85}

Camp Morton was a park-like area of about thirty-five acres. Exhibition halls and long rows of livestock stalls had been enclosed and fitted with bunks for about three thousand men. Visitors were allowed to come and go through the southwest gateway. To the right was the Fair Secretary's office which was being used as Colonel Reynolds' headquarters. The Committee House in the center had been appropriated by Quartermaster General Morris and the medical inspectors of the federal army. The Manufacturers' Exhibition Hall farther to the east was filled with troops, and the dining hall was the commissary store under Colonel Mansur. On the west side of the grounds there was a double row of cattle stalls with each stall fitted out to house six men. Major attractions of these quarters were the signs hung out by the volunteers: "Washing and Ironing," "Bates House," "Cupping and Bleeding," "Dress Making," "Artesian Well—Great Bore," "Hair Dressing," etc. The horse stables along the north side of the camp were occupied in the same manner as the cattle barns but it was reported that there were fewer signs. The guardhouse was in the newest of the Fair buildings, the Treasurer's Office.\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{83} Indianapolis \textit{Daily State Sentinel}, June 15, 1861.
\textsuperscript{84} Indianapolis \textit{Daily Journal}, April 23, 1861.
\textsuperscript{85} Indianapolis \textit{Daily State Sentinel}, April 27, 1861.
\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Ibid.}, April 22, 1861.
The greatest disadvantage of the camp was the lack of an open field adequate for drilling a unit larger than a company. An additional deterrent to drill was that rains did not drain off the grounds and days passed when the volunteers were forced to be inactive due to mud and pools of standing water. The problem of space was especially important for the Zouave Regiment for its drill was closely related to what in modern terminology is known as extended order drill. Emphasis was placed on company-sized combat formations with troops well spread out, attacks and movements on the run, and commands and orders with whistles, bugles, and hand signals. For that reason, and because it was the regiment he had chosen to command, Colonel Wallace moved it to the Bellefontaine Car Shops on April 24.87

Cooking was done in groups of four or five men who picked up their rations each day. This system of feeding was customary in all armies at that time and was probably not as unsatisfactory as it sounds to those accustomed to modern army messes. However, one soldier at Camp Morton wrote, "We like everything here but the cooking and absence of dishwashing; such cooking and smearing—ragless and soapless. I always believed that, without the ladies, men were accomplished hogs, now I know it."88 However, complaints about food are ever present in military organizations and such reports are only to be expected. At any rate, there were no cases of starvation or epidemics. If anything, food was too plentiful. The vast amounts bought from sutlers and received from parents and friends eventually had to be regulated in the interests of discipline and physical training. The chief problem seems to have been that the people of Indiana expected nothing but the best for their volunteers in the early days of the war. On May 1 the Madison Courier stirred up a hornet's nest when it published the following item: "It has been discovered that the coffee supplied to the soldiers at Camp Morton is adulterated with chicory. Punish the Commissary."

Immediately charges of "stinking sour meat" and "chicory and burnt beans" were raised.89

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88 Madison Daily Courier, May 1, 1861.
89 Ibid.
90 Ibid., June 26, 1861.
20 Indiana Magazine of History

coffee did prove to be adulterated but the commissary general pointed out that coffee which the suppliers themselves ground at that time was always adulterated and that green coffee would have been supplied had the troops been able to roast and grind their own.\(^1\) The eventual outcome was the forced resignation of Isaiah Mansur on May 29 after a legislative investigating committee voted 70 to 0 to remove him.\(^2\) (The worst of the charges were later proved false and the fault probably lay rather with the troops and suppliers than with the commissary general.) Six months later, when the realities of camp life were better known, it is probable that no complaint would have been raised.\(^3\)

One of the chief forms of recreation at the camp was to provide what was known as the Sons of Malta Initiation for unwary visitors. The object was to spread a canvas on the ground and when an unsuspecting stranger stepped on it, to rush forward, grab the edges, and toss the victim into the air.\(^4\) The favorite subjects were the “ladies of easy virtue” who, according to some, were tossed again and again until they promised to leave the camp and not return.\(^5\)

Power Hall at the Fair grounds was turned into a hospital. Here Drs. John S. Bobbs and A. D. Gall inspected the incoming volunteers. Rejection must have sounded like words of doom to judge by the reaction of those who were turned down; the passing of the examination brought forth shouts of joy from the lucky volunteer.\(^6\) A rumor of poisoned wells and oranges was dramatically proven false when the doctors ate and drank samples of the questioned items in order to prevent a near-panic. As it was, the mob had already destroyed twenty to thirty dollars' worth of oranges when it rushed the stand of the peddler who sold them.\(^7\)

By April 24 there were 111 companies, fifty-one more than the sixty required. This total varies, for after the sixty were chosen, members of the other companies were given the choice of volunteering for three years or going home. This

\(^1\) Indianapolis Daily Journal, May 2, 1861.
\(^2\) Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, May 30, 1861.
\(^3\) Report of the Adjutant General, I, 453-454.
\(^4\) Vincennes Weekly Gazette, May 4, 1861.
\(^5\) Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, April 26, 1861.
\(^6\) Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 23, 1861.
\(^7\) Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, April 25, 1861.
resulted in a continuous inflow of volunteers for the three-year service and an outflow of those who were unwilling or unable to serve for so long a period. In addition, great confusion had resulted over the number of men in each company. Most had arrived with one hundred or more enlisted men and all had to be reduced to seventy-four before acceptance into the federal service. The excess number in the companies was absorbed by physical rejections, the organization of new companies, and in a few cases, the return of the volunteers to their homes after the original excitement had worn off and before the company had been brought into the service. Governor Morton, realizing that the extra companies would eventually be needed, held them in camp on his own authority and asked the federal government to authorize four regiments in addition to the six already requested. This far-sighted action prevented a great deal of trouble, expense, and delay a short time later.

By April 27 all six of the three-month regiments were fully organized and had been mustered by Major Thomas J. Wood as the First Brigade, Indiana Volunteers, Brigadier General Thomas A. Morris commanding. The regimental commanders were:

Sixth, Colonel Thomas T. Crittenden
Seventh, Colonel Ebenezer Dumont
Eighth, Colonel William P. Benton
Ninth, Colonel Robert H. Milroy
Tenth, Colonel Joseph J. Reynolds
Eleventh, Colonel Lewis Wallace.

Each regiment was composed of ten companies of seventy-four enlisted men and three officers. Generally speaking, these regiments, due to an estimated five hundred men with former military training in their ranks, were more easily and rapidly trained than most of the later regiments raised in the state.

Colonel Wallace, in accordance with the earlier arrangement made with the governor, resigned as adjutant general and was given his choice of regiments. Not only did he choose his regiment but he chose the companies which were to be in it, being careful to pick those which were previously

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98 Foulke, Oliver P. Morton, I, 118; Report of the Adjutant General, I, 7, 11.
organized militia units with previous training. The Eleventh began to train immediately in the strange and colorful Zouave drill. Wallace dressed his men in uniforms of the exotic style peculiar to Zouaves but of a grey color rather than the splendid reds and blues more common to that type of unit.\textsuperscript{100}

Indianapolis had its troubles during this time of intense war fever, excitement, and military efforts. On April 24 there were 4,500 soldiers in addition to the legislature and the masses of followers of the two groups. The city was soon beset by pickpockets, rowdies, prostitutes, and over-zealous celebrants unaccustomed to freedom, the war spirit, and alcohol. Pickpockets practiced their profession even on the incoming volunteers who were standing in ranks taking the oath of allegiance.\textsuperscript{101} There was at least one fight on the streets each day and the number of runaway horses frightened by the bands and cannons increased.\textsuperscript{102} The most persistent problem was that of a few disorderly houses of ill-fame. Each ward in the city held public meetings to discuss ways and means of removing undesirable citizens and, in some instances, succeeded.\textsuperscript{103}

In the camp, the six regiments were beginning to cry for action. On May 9 the Eleventh marched to the Terre Haute depot and embarked for Evansville\textsuperscript{104} where, to their disgust, they were given the unZouavelike duty of searching boats on the river. On May 29 the Seventh and Ninth regiments departed for Western Virginia\textsuperscript{105} and the Sixth followed the next day.\textsuperscript{106} The Eighth and Tenth moved to a new camp east of Indianapolis to get away from the lures of the city while waiting for orders.\textsuperscript{107} The Eleventh passed through Indianapolis on their way to Western Virginia on June 6.\textsuperscript{108} On June 19 the Eighth and Tenth followed.\textsuperscript{109}

To follow the military exploits of the six Indiana regiments in Western Virginia is beyond the scope of this article.

\textsuperscript{100} Indianapolis \textit{Daily Journal}, April 30, 1861.
\textsuperscript{101} Wallace, \textit{Autobiography}, I, 267-274.
\textsuperscript{102} Indianapolis \textit{Daily State Sentinel}, April 20, 1861.
\textsuperscript{103} \textit{Ibid.}, April 24 and 25, 1861.
\textsuperscript{104} \textit{Ibid.}, May 10, 1861.
\textsuperscript{105} \textit{Ibid.}, May 29, 1861.
\textsuperscript{106} \textit{Ibid.}, May 30, 1861.
\textsuperscript{107} \textit{Ibid.}, June 1, 1861.
\textsuperscript{108} \textit{Ibid.}, June 8, 1861.
\textsuperscript{109} \textit{Ibid.}, June 20, 1861.
Their actions at Philippi (the first battle of the war), Laurel Hill, Carrick's Ford, Rich Mountain, Romney, and Kelley's Island were minor engagements, soon overshadowed by the greater battles of the war. However, these opening actions were almost the only battles the Northern armies were to win for some time to come. The numbers of killed and wounded in the three-month volunteer regiments were small (less than thirty killed) but these men had learned war was not the picnic many had expected. When they came home late in July they

straggled along up the street as fast as they could. Greetings resounded along the line, while anxious women, in carriages and on foot, seized their sons and hurried them off. The returned volunteers looked like veterans... able to stand the hardships of another campaign; their hair shaggy, their beards ragged and dusty, their uniforms completely worn out.110

They were ready to fight a war—and so was Indiana.