

"Co. H Had Its Beginning in Frizellburg"

Carroll County Times Article for March 21 1999

By Jay A. Graybeal

Carroll County members of the Maryland National Guard have served the state and the nation in two world wars. Local men were called up in June 1916 when Pancho Villa was active on the Border and war with Mexico seemed imminent. Duty on the Border prepared the men for service with the 29th Division during World War I. A new generation of guardsmen was called up for World War II and many participated in the Normandy invasion and the closing battles of the conflict.

Carroll County men formed a National Guard company shortly after the Civil War. The local press noted that the unit, designated as Co. A, 17th Infantry, M.N.G., was formed in 1867. The outfit did not last long, however, nor did a revived version of the pre-Civil War unit known as the Carroll Guards formed in 1879. A more permanent unit would not be organized until March 1899 when a group of Frizellburg men formed an infantry company. J. Leland Jordan described the formation of the Frizellburg Company in one of his regular history columns published in this paper during the 1937 Carroll County Centennial:

"Company H Had Its Beginning In Frizellburg March 20, 1899, was an important day in our neighboring community of Frizellburg, for it was on that day that the Carroll County Military company was organized. It was not until January 8, 1901, that it received its designation as Company H of the First Infantry, Maryland Militia. On the farm of David J. Roop, near by, were the greenhouses of the Sunny Side Floral Company, owned by H. Scott Roop. As was customary in small communities, the general store was the place of meeting for the men of near and far, but not so in Frizellburg. Now it so happened that John F. Auer had been placed in charge of this enterprise, and his employer expected much of him in the way of production and the propagation of plants and flowers which is quite customary in greenhouses. Auer had lately been employed as landscape manager at the State Hospital in Sykesville, but with him came another knowledge which was greater than that of growing things beautiful. He had previously been a member of the Bond Guards in Catonsville, Md.; of the Baltimore Light Infantry, later known as the 4th Infantry, Maryland Militia. Now the thing that strikes as being odd, is the fact that men would find their way to the greenhouses of a florist, and there spend their off hours swapping stories and discussing the important topics of the day, when they could have gathered at the place of more importance, the general store. Nevertheless, they were real men, despite the fact they preferred the odor of carnations and heliotrope. John Auer, with his military experience, was successful in persuading this group of young men in organizing a military company. At the first public meeting called on March 20, 1899, sixty-five names appeared on the application role. They immediately held an election and we give here the complete roster as of that date:

OFFICERS AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

John F. Auer, Captain

Abraham L. Williams, 1st Lt. Charles Maus, 4th Sgt.

Alfred S. Babylon, 2nd Lt. Frank H. Willet, 1st Corp.

Levi D. Maus, 1st Sgt. C. B. Reifsnider, 2nd Corp.

Truman Babylon, 2nd Sgt. L. N. Zahn, 3rd Corp.

Harry Singer, 3rd Sgt. Arthur Stevenson, 4th Corp.

PRIVATES

Edward Hubbs Harry J. Null Harry J. Babylon

L. O. Handley Joseph H. Hahn Charles M. Myerly
Clarence E. Harver Grant Yingling William L. Arnold
Samuel Tucker Frank Haifley Charles E. Sheen
William O. Brown Charles Witmer Allen Sellers
Harry D. Black Birnie Babylon George F. Feeser
Whitfield F. Sullivan John E. Eckard Harry F. Frock
H. C. Freeman Harry G. Myers Robert H. Bankard
G. J. Brown David F. Myers Denton Warehime
Franklin E. Harver Charles E. Fisher C. Edward Bish
John T. Haifley E. Ray Myers Charles F. Singer
Edward Hesson William Myers A. D. Leister
Edward J. Miller Curtis H. Brown John C. Koons
Charles Warehime Jesse Bloom J. R. Zile
Edgar E. Duttera Robert Frizell George A. Davis
Keener Dickensheets C. W. Rodkey Ernest Harbaugh
Charles Dickensheets Harry B. Rodkey Amos L. Fowble
Charles E. Eckard J. T. Haines David J. Haines

Considerable interest in the new company was shown by all members, and they immediately began their drills and the "practice of military tactics." The lack of a suitable building forced them to drill in the street of the town or in a nearby meadow. Funds were badly needed for the various items so essential to a military company, that they soon decided upon having their first "grand annual picnic." This was held on August 19 of that year, and from accounts attracted about 1500 people. A feature of the occasion was a parade and drill by the company and the Westminster Drum Corps. Both afternoon and night. An orchestra from Westminster "enlivened the event," \$104.06 were the gross earnings. Drills continued and in the course of a few weeks they had mastered many of the close order movements. Due to the lack of a regulation uniform they drilled for some months in white trousers and an ordinary dark coat. The officers were more fortunate, they having secured the official militia uniform. However, a little later (November), when funds were available, blue flannel trousers, a regulation hat and rifle were secured. On December 12 of the same year there appeared the following article in the American Sentinel: "The Carroll County Military Company of Frizellburg, Marched to this city [Westminster] on Friday afternoon, paraded the streets and gave exhibition drills at several points. For the short period in which the company has been organized its members went through the evolutions in a very creditable manner. The company was under the command of Captain Auer. the citizens of Westminster were so well pleased with the parade that numerous donations were made to the supper and bazaar now being held by the company at its armory in Frizellburg." During this time there were some changes in the personnel, a number of men withdrawing and others taking their place. Drills continued, and efforts on the part of the officers to have the company recognized as a unit of the Maryland Militia was put forth. Claude Tilden Smith of Westminster, had been urged to join with the company and through his efforts recognition was promised by the Adjutant General. Mrs. H. Scott Roop, a resident of this city, having the poetic urge, penned the following lines to her father-in-law, just about this time. We think it appropriate to include them here.

MY ROSES TO SOLDIERS HAVE GROWN

After years of attention, sad experiences and care,
Toiling mid bugs, and all pests of every kind and Nation:
With boilers and smoke stacks always out of repair,
"Twas the fate of the florist with high aspiration.

As time wore on, hopes seemed to be heightened,
Roses grew larger and larger in every old bed;
'Till all interested, seemed more enlightened
As to how to grow flowers that did not look dead.

But alas! when the stalks grew frailer and lanker,
And wiring to sticks was the only course to pursue,
"Twas then the place suggested the name "Hopes Anchor"
Which seemed very appropriate to all, even you."

The Frizellburg Company was designated Company H, First Maryland Infantry in January 1901, a designation it retained until the formation of the 29th Division in 1917. During the Great War, the infantrymen were issued machine guns and designated Co. C, 112th Machine Gun Battalion. During World War II, the unit served as Co. H, 115th Infantry Regiment and local men distinguished themselves on the Normandy beaches beginning the liberation of Europe from the Nazis. The men of "Co. H" had come a long way from the old parade field in Frizellburg.

Photo caption: The Frizellburg Company posed in civilian coats and hats and white trousers during the summer of 1899. The men were issued uniforms, arms and accouterments in February 1901. From a copy photograph in the Ed Haifley Collection, Historical Society of Carroll County, gift of Ed Haifley 1989.