

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DEPARTMENT
STATE OF WASHINGTON
Office of The Adjutant General
Camp Murray, Tacoma 33, Washington

1 June 1961

FORWARD BY THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

In October, 1885, Adjutant General Rossell G. O'Brien submitted the first known Biennial Report to Governor Watson C. Squire in accordance with laws enacted by the Legislative Assembly of Washington Territory at its previous session. Since that time, it has been assumed by almost everyone concerned that this was the beginning of the National Guard of Washington. Prior to 1955, histories, brief sketches and even a "Year Book" were published. However, in each instance, the story began in 1884 and used almost exclusively, information from the first and succeeding Biennial Reports for our official history.

Since 1956, our historian, has through painstaking and meticulous research found and collected thousands of documents and letters dealing with the Washington Territorial Militia as far back as 1854. While it is true that the Militia in the early days of the Territory was for the most part unorganized, the fact remains that these elements, when they were organized, were the forerunners of our present National Guard, whose history we inherit.

As a result of this collection of Indian and Civil War records, plus a collection of other records, transcribed from other official documents which were unavailable to this Department, it is now felt that the true and complete story of our Territorial Militia and Washington National Guard can finally be told in its entirety for the first time. A very brief sketch of these discoveries was used in our 1957 "Year Book", in our "Brief History" and in "The Camp Murray Story".

Due to the limitation of funds available for publishing such a voluminous history, it has been decided to publish it in mimeograph form in approximately seven volumes over an extended period of time. In this manner, our historian can concentrate on one volume at a time and at some future date, they can be consolidated and be republished in illustrated book form. In the meantime, these volumes should be retained when received and bound together to tell our story.

This Volume, the first of the series, pertains to the heritage of the National Guard and covers Militia in Ancient Times, during the Mideival and Colonial Periods, and down through Oregon Provisional Government and Territorial periods to the beginning of the Militia in Washington Territory. With this background, the reader should better understand the reasons for the existence of the National Guard and the important role it plays in both the service of the State and the Federal Government as presented in the Volumes which are to follow.

GEORGE M. HASKETT
Major General, Wash ARNG
The Adjutant General

