

Chapter Fifteen

CARRYING THE FLAG: 1882-1972

Monroe's military record has been especially bright throughout the Nation's wars and times of trouble requiring the best, and often ultimate, service and sacrifice, as well as inspired leadership.

The Black Hawk War in 1832 came too soon for any local participation beyond apprehensive flight from marauding Indians by early settlers in the Clarno, Cadiz and Exeter areas. One later prominent Monroe citizen, however, Dr. W.B. Monroe Sr., did manage to follow the Flag in that strange campaign, at the ripe age of 14, as a Mineral Point resident.

Later, the Mexican War, fought mainly by Regular Army troops, only touched this community lightly, as was the case for most frontier communities in 1846-48.

But, then the Civil War came along, it found Monroe and Green County more than ready. It also eventually revealed Monroe to be a town emulating Galena in its contributions of generals and other fine leaders in that fight to preserve the Union. (Details of the Civil War story already have been outlined in a previous chapter, "The War Years.")

It might be well, however, to list again the names of those generals who reflected credit on Green County for their roles in that War. Monroe contributed two: Gen. Francis H. West, fighting commander of the 31st Wisconsin whose brigade helped Gen. Sherman drive north to final victory in the War's last big battle; and Gen. James Bintliff, commander of the 38th Wisconsin and attached units which broke Petersburg's defenses in 1865, leading to the fall

of Richmond and surrender at Appomattox.

The other brevet brigadier general was Martin Flood of the Brooklyn and Exeter area who stayed on for postwar service.

Although he did not achieve star rank during the War, Edwin E. Bryant of Monroe was a field grade officer in many of the greatest Civil War battles and went on to become Wisconsin adjutant general in 1868-71 and 1878-81. Dr. F.W. Byers, who came to Monroe after the War, also rose to brigadier-general rank as Wisconsin surgeon-general after the National Guard was organized in the 1880s.

For purposes of this chapter, however, the military story begins March 28, 1882, when the Monroe City Guards unit was organized. It became Company H of the First Wisconsin Regiment a month later, on April 26.

Capt. Samuel Lewis was commanding officer and later became colonel in command of the First Wisconsin. S. P. Schadel was first lieutenant; Andrew (or Charles) Arnott, second lieutenant; J.D. Dunwiddie, first sergeant; D.A. Stearns, second sergeant, and C.S. Young, fifth sergeant. The latter is included because he went on to become First Wisconsin lieutenant colonel in the 1890s.

For a time, Co. H drilled in Armory quarters on the second floor of the present Bauman Hardware store. Later, it moved across the corner to upstairs quarters at the Goetz building site.

Monroe's Co. H quickly became a leading unit in the First Regiment and played host to its troops at an impressive Memorial Day service and parade here in 1884. Pleased regimental staff officers expressed their admiration by electing Capt. Lewis as major that afternoon, advancing Lt. Schadel to Co. H command.

Two years later, Gov. Jeremiah Rusk called Co. H and several other units to duty in Milwaukee to quell the 1886 riot violence stemming from strikes

by rolling mill and railroad workers. That tour was marked by minor activity and the troops returned home with no "war stories" to tell the townspeople.

Again, in 1898, after the battleship "Main" was blown up in Havana harbor, Co. H men were ready for what they hoped would be "real action." The first Regiment headquarters was located in Monroe at that time, with Col. Schadel in command. C. S. Young had advanced to second in command and D.A. Stearns was a major. Rev. Charles E. Varney of the First Universalist Church was chaplain and Dr. F.W. Byers, surgeon-general.

Company H, commanded by Capt. F.F. West, left for Camp Harvey, Milwaukee, April 28 and volunteered for Spanish-American War duty. It was released the same day from state service and mustered into the Army. The company arrived in Camp Cuba Libre, Jacksonville, Fla., May 23 to begin a long, frustrating wait for shipment to Cuba.

It appeared, however, that the Navy, the "regulars" and a few volunteer units such as the Roosevelt Rough Riders were handling the Spanish very well, without need for further help. Company H's only battle was with boredom and typhoid fever resulting from poor sanitation in camp.

Many of the troops became deathly ill, two of them--Appleton Taft of Monticello and Andrew Nelson of Browntown--dying at camp. A third Co. H man, Alfred D. Murry of Brodhead, died of typhoid after being brought home when the unit returned to Monroe September 11 on a 30-day leave. Two other men, George Walker and John D. Germann of Monroe, took ill with typhoid after they came home. Frank Shriner and Ames Durgin had been "smuggled" home on stretchers by Co. H members.

Fortunately, the war ended before the furlough did. Company H's adventure had been disappointing as well as deadly.

Congressman Henry Allen Cooper of Racine tried to assuage some of that letdown by obtaining a rapid-fire Spanish gun from Admiral Cervera's fleet at

Santiago to be used as a monument here. It stands today at the entrance of Recreation Park, largely unnoticed by today's pool users.

Company H was restored to state service in 1899 with M.C. Durst as captain, and in 1904-05 Capt. F.F. West returned to command.

One immediate result of Co. H's Spanish-American War service was an appeal on the part of the veterans, with the blessing of O.F. Pinney GAR Post members, for a "proper" Armory to demonstrate Monroe and Green County leadership in the First Wisconsin Regiment.

The sponsors formed a Monroe Armory Association and launched a public fund drive since state finances were not available. The money was subscribed without trouble, although it was necessary to organize the Green County Soldiers League, for legal purposes, to handle the pledges and notes.

Work began in 1901 at the southwest corner of 9th Street and 18th Avenue on a large brick structure, designed on standard U.S. military "fortress" lines. The new Armory was dedicated April 3, 1902, with a gala public program, Grand Ball and colorful military ceremonies.

That Armory provided Monroe with a new location for civic and social affairs, supplementing Turner Hall's traditional role. Stage shows and concerts, however, continued at the latter hall. The Armory also served as the town's athletic center, with a roller skating rink on the main floor and a bowling alley in the lower level. When the basketball rage reached Monroe and Green County, all major games, high school and semi-pro contests, were played at the Armory.

Armory notes eventually were paid down to a modest balance which the State picked up when it took over the building some years later. Over a period of 72 years, this structure served the Green County community well and for a time was a regimental headquarters after Col. Oscar A. Molderhauer took command of the 128th Infantry in 1947. The building, replaced with a modern

facility at the south edge of Monroe in 1974, was purchased and razed by the Commercial Bank that same year.

Meanwhile, in 1911, Capt. B.M. Frees, onetime commander of Co. H, 38th Wisconsin, had written Capt. N.B. Treat offering \$10,000 for a Soldiers Monument on Monroe's Courthouse Square. Frees and Treat were friends and fellow natives of Orono, Maine. Capt. Frees specified the gift should be handled, anonymously, through O.F. Pinney GAR Post and that the likeness of Sgt. William R. Hawkins of Clarno, Co. H member killed in the storming of Fort Mahone at Petersburg, Va., in 1865, should be used in modeling the statue's face.

A former Monroe resident, Capt. Frees had become a wealthy operator of lumber yards in Missouri, Minnesota and Nebraska after the Civil War. He was on hand May 30, 1913, for Memorial Day services when the monument was unveiled by Grace Thorpe and his contribution was made public. Fred T. Odell was captain of local Co. H participating in that ceremony.

When Pancho Villa's rebel-bandit raiders struck across the Mexican Border at Columbus, N.M., in 1916, killing many American nationals, President Woodrow Wilson on March 10 ordered the Army to capture or kill Villa, even if it meant invading Mexican territory.

Five days later, Company H members were warned to expect a call to Mexican Border duty. That news was welcomed by the troops, still vexed over the unit's non-active role in the Spanish-American War. On March 24, 1916, Capt. A.E. Mitchell, commander since December, 1915, was ordered to recruit Co. H to full strength.

Entraining June 30, 1916, the troops headed for Camp Douglas, Wis. Weeks of drilling followed before the Wisconsin units left for San Antonio. Co. H men had departed, from here and from Camp Douglas, in a happy mood, hopeful of service in the field this time. However, upon arrival at San Antonio, the

local troops were confronted with another situation of waiting and more waiting. Drilling was monotonous, hot and sticky as it stretched into the winter.

Gen. John J. Pershing's expeditionary force pursuing Villa had aroused reaction by Gen. Venustiano Carranza, president of Mexico, who demanded that the Americans leave. Gen. Pershing finally obliged, on orders from President Wilson, but not before he had scattered Villa's forces and the Navy had captured Vera Cruz in a combined sea and land operation.

So, once more Co. H men folded their tents and boarded the train for home, arriving at Fort Sheridan, Ill., January 19, 1917, for dismissal and the trip back to Monroe. It had been another disappointment, but only briefly. In April, the company was to find itself back in federal service for World War I, destined for more than enough action and opportunity to prove itself.

Capt. Mitchell and his men were billeted at the Armory from July 15, 1917, until Camp Douglas was ready for Wisconsin troops. One of the biggest send-offs in Monroe military history marked the departure of 162 Company H men by train August 5. Charles R. Kohli had been promoted to first lieutenant when Fred Heer was obliged to resign his commission at the last moment.

In September, 1917, Co. H left Camp Douglas for Fort MacArthur at Waco, Texas, where the Wisconsin troops were organized into the new 32nd Infantry Division. Intensive training started and additional men from other areas brought into Co. H's ranks, via the draft and recruiting, before the 32nd was shipped overseas soon after the first of the year.

Arriving in France in February, 1918, Co. H, now attached to the 127th Infantry, and other 32nd units underwent further battle training. The 32nd then moved to the Alsace sector which was fairly quiet except for sporadic exchange of fire with the Germans. Early in July, 1918, the 32nd Division, anxious for action, was shifted west to the Aisne-Marne area, joining the furious offensive launched by combined Allied forces.

Going into the front line July 30 at Ourcq, Co. H participated in capture of Cierges, Bellevue Farm and the Bois de la Planchette, relieving the embattled 3rd U.S. (Regular) Division. The 32nd resumed attack August 1 in the Chateau Thierry sector, capturing Fismes and crossing the Vesle as the Germans began falling back in face of the Allied thrusts.

After a brief rest in the Soissons area, as Gen. Pershing's March, 1919, commendation to the 32nd Division relates: "On August 28, it again entered the line and launched attacks which resulted in the capture of Juvigny at the cost of severe casualties. During the Meuse-Argonne offensive, the 32nd Division entered the line September 30 and by its persistence in that sector it penetrated the Kreimhilde Stellung, taking Romagne and following the enemy to the northeastern edge of the Bois de Bantheville. On November 8, the Division took up the pursuit of the enemy east of the Meuse until the time when hostilities were suspended (November 11)."

All of this remarkable record, of course, was achieved only at great sacrifice. In the July 31-August 1 action, Sgt. Glen R. Zilmer, 22, was the first Monroe man to die of his wounds. When the local American Legion Post No. 84 was organized in September, 1919, it was named for Sgt. Zilmer.

In all, 56 members of Co. H were killed in action or died of wounds. Eighteen of these were from the Monroe area while a total of 30 Green County men, out of the 842 who served in World War I, lost their lives. Twenty-seven were Army, two Navy and one Marine Corps. Cecil Jones Veterans of Foreigns Wars Post No. 2312 was named for that lone Marine from Monroe when it was organized April, 1939.

Scores were seriously wounded as Co. H helped the 32nd Division win its name of "Les Terribles," as the troops were called by their admiring French allies. Among the wounded were former Postmaster John J. Burkhard, Capt. Charles R. Kohli (who had succeeded Maj. Mitchell, detached for Paris duty)

and Ralph A. Lindsay, all in the Meuse-Argonne drive.

Lindsay's vivid memories of Company H's World War record were published in a graphic article by the "Monroe Evening Times" March 24, 1976. He had seen Sgt. Zilmer hit by German fire and also recalled that Burkhard was wounded on the same day that Lindsay was struck. Fifteen Co. H men were wounded at that time and six men killed by the same shell.

During its six months under fire on five fronts, the 32nd Division lost 14,000 killed, wounded and missing. Its men were the first Americans on German soil (in the Alsace sector) and the only American forces fighting in Gen. Mangin's famed 10th French Army in the Oisne-Aisne offensive. After the Armistice, the 32nd marched with the Third Army to the Rhine and occupied a sector in the Coblenz bridgehead for several months before returning home in 1919.

While Company H was winning its bittersweet laurels, a Monroe officer, Maj. Gen. Charles G. Treat, was commanding American troops in Italy in what proved to be a swift, highly successful campaign to knock Austrian forces out of the War.

Gen. Treat, born in Orono, Maine, December 30, 1859, was only a few months old when his parents, the J.B. Treats, moved to Monroe. He was graduated from Monroe High School in 1878 and from West point in 1882, as an artillery officer. During the Spanish-American War, he served in the Santiago campaign and became provost marshal in Havana as acting major.

Treat was appointed West Point commandant of the corps in 1901 after a brief tour as artillery instructor, and also was named later as acting chief of the Army War College. Gen. Treat was seventh ranking Army officer when World War I broke out. He lost out to Gen. Pershing, hero of the Mexican Expedition, for command of the American Expeditionary Force in France, being chosen instead to head U.S. forces in Italy. He retired in 1925 after holding

various high peacetime commands.

Another distinguished Monroe figure in World War I was Rear Admiral Nathan C. Twining, Annapolis graduate and son of Prof. Nathan Crook Twining. A Navy ordnance expert and designer of special purpose guns, Twining served with Admiral Sampson's fleet at Santiago in 1898 and also joined Maj. Treat on special duty in Havana after victory.

When World War I started, Admiral Twining was named chief of staff for the American fleet commanded by Admiral W.S. Sims in European waters, later serving as naval attache in London. Admiral Twining, who invented the Navy's first anti-aircraft gun, prototype for all such U.S. weapons perfected before World War II, died July 4, 1924, soon after retirement.

Referring to Co.H's First World War record, a special note on Capt. A. E. Mitchell (later temporary major) belongs in this account. Mitchell's military career began as a boy in South Dakota with K Troop, 8th Cavalry, in 1897. He went to Cuba with the 8th Cavalry in 1898 and remained there 16 months.

A good part of Co. H's fine battle service occurred under Capt. Mitchell's command. He then was called to Paris for duty which was terminated abruptly when Germany surrendered November 11, 1918.

Capt. Mitchell was en route to the U.S. in 1919 when he received a ship-board wireless message from Monroe offering him the post of sheriff if he could obtain early release from service. Sheriff Matt E. Solbraa, father of the present (1976) sheriff, had been killed, along with two others, in a gun battle with a mentally deranged veteran near Monticello.

Mitchell, known as "Cap" for the rest of his life, hurried home to accept appointment and then was elected to a full two-year term. In December, 1921, Mitchell took part, along with federal agents, in the biggest local Prohibition era raid on bootleggers which rounded up a Chicago group north of Monroe.

Later, he served as assistant Monroe police chief until he retired in

July, 1945.

After World War I, the local Guard unit was reorganized as Co. K, 128th Infantry Regiment, with Capt. Charles A. Schindler commanding. Delbert Cook, LaVerne Deal and Oscar A. Moldenhauer also served as captains of Co. K through the years until its entrance into federal service in 1940. Capt. Roy Zinser and Capt. Rodney Block then headed the unit until it moved into World War II action in New Guinea.

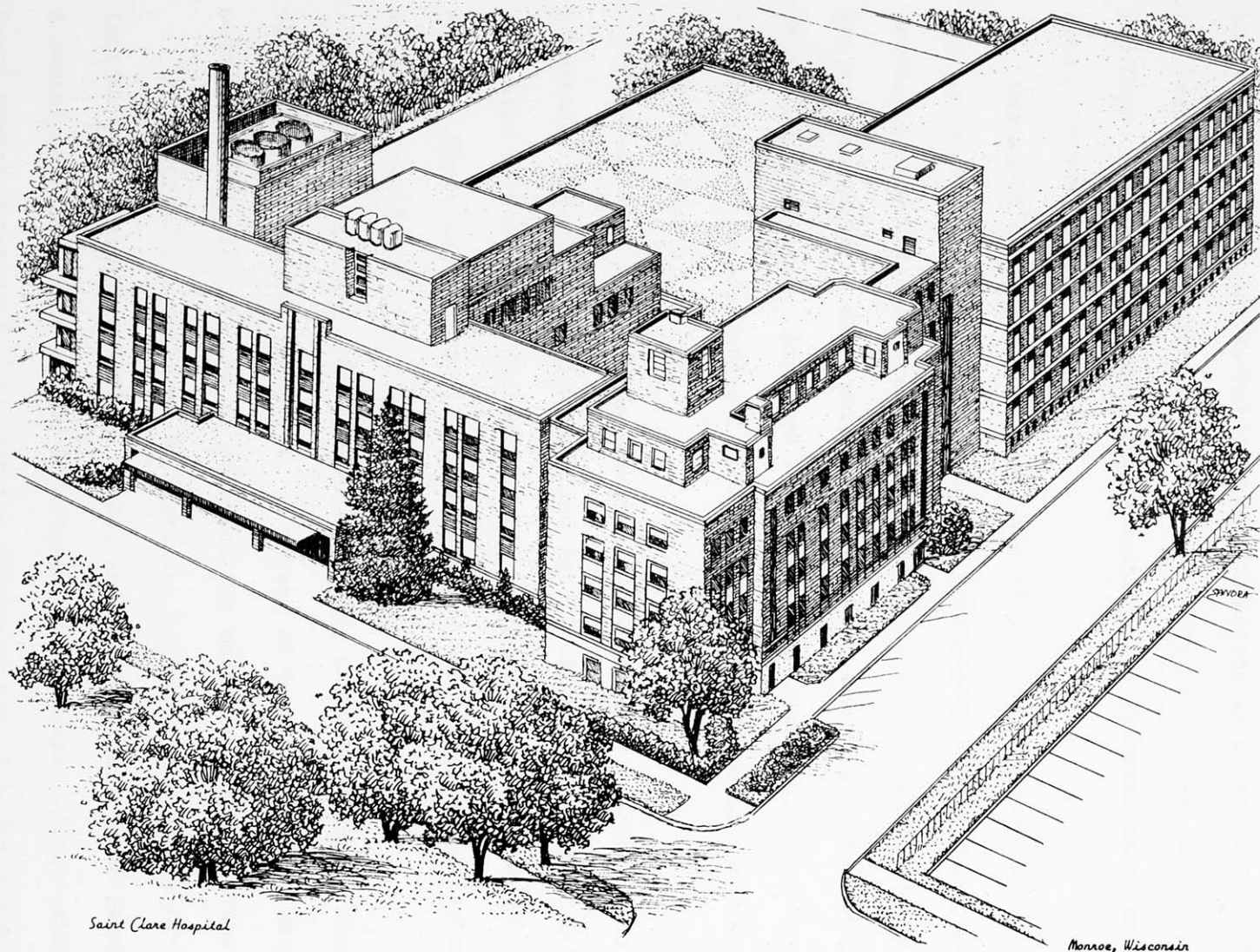
Company K's five years of World War II service, three of them under fire, were as outstanding as the record of its predecessor, Co. H. The latter, of course, achieved its remarkable fighting success in a brief, six-month span but both emerged from their wars as among the top and most decorated companies of the 32nd Division. That Red Arrow Division also was to win recognition for the most commendations and medals for bravery and meritorious service in the Pacific Theater.

Four of Co. K's original members, Sgt. Jacob P. Gerber, Sgt. Walter Zimmerman, Pfc. Raymond E. Matzke and Sgt. Donald S. Beach, died in the Buna offensive in New Guinea during November and December, 1942. One of its commanders, Capt. Lester Mooney from Kansas, also was killed in the Saidor battle in February, 1944.

Mustered into the Army October 21, 1940, Co. K had started its year of training at Camp Beauregard, La. A throng of more than 2,000 was on hand when the three officers and 95 enlisted men entrained for Louisiana.

Moved to Camp Livingston in February, 1941, the 32nd underwent reorganization and intensive training. Late, in the fall, Co. K was detached for a combat team and sent to the Carolinas for maneuvers. After the raid on Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941, put the Nation at war with Japan and Germany, many Co. K men came home for their final furlough at Christmas.

(Monroe's first casualty of World War II, Seaman 2/C David J. Riley,



DEDICATED TO CARE OF THE AILING AND INJURED - This drawing shows the greatly expanded St. Clare Hospital, operated by the Congregation of St. Agnes, with its modern facilities and equipment planned to meet every challenge of today for care of the ill and treatment of accident and disaster victims. The first four-story section (left) was ready in May, 1939, and the addition to the north completed by May, 1951. Ground was broken in 1969 for the largest project, which included the six-floor wing (right rear) and complete remodeling and modernizing of the 1939 and 1951 sections.

23, was killed in that Pearl Harbor attack when Japanese bombs struck the battleship "Oklahoma." The American Legion honored his memory by renaming Post No. 48 "Zilmer-Riley" for the first two men to die in the two world wars. Seaman Riley, an orphan from the Juda area, was working in Monroe when he enlisted in the Navy.)

Company K was among the 32nd units sent to Fort Devens, Mass., in February, 1942, for possible shipment to Europe. Instead, the men were ordered west by train to Fort Ord, Calif. From there, the 32nd troops were shipped overseas in April to Australia.

More rugged combat training followed until September, 1942, when Capt. Block and his men were flown to New Guinea. They and other 32nd units joined the battle there to push the Japanese back from the coast. With victory at Buna, the 32nd helped turn the tide in the Pacific war and Co. K won acclaim as a first-class fighting unit.

After rest camp back in Australia and another drastic reorganization, Co. K returned to action in September, 1943, for the Saidor battle against the Japanese 18th Army, sharing in the credit for blocking the Japanese breakout from the Wewak trap at Aitape.

When the Leyte campaign opened in the Philippines, Co. K moved in with the 32nd Division and later participated in liberation of Manila with the Luzon drive. From Manila, the 32nd units were sent to Japan following the August, 1945, surrender. When rotation leaves started, Co. K was down to 17 original members.

In October, 1945, the 32nd Division was brought back to the U.S. and disbanded. Company K returned home just five years almost to the day after beginning its "year of training."

More than 2,000 Green County men and women served in World War II on all fronts. Forty men from the county and immediate adjoining communities lost

their lives in action or in war related incidents, such as training mishaps and deaths in Japanese prison camps. Illnesses and other accidents took another eight lives. Of the 40 action deaths, 21 of the victims were from Monroe.

Another generation of the fighting Twinings compiled fine records in World War II, one of them Maj. Gen. Nathan F. Twining, son of C.W. Twining, commanding the 13th, 15th and 20th Air Forces in both the European and Pacific Theaters.

Gen. Twining, who left Monroe in 1913 when the family moved to Portland, Ore., had served briefly in the Oregon National Guard before being appointed to West Point. His accelerated class was sent overseas in 1918, too late to get into action before the Armistice. Twining's class then returned to West Point for another six months before graduation. Choosing the Army Air Corps, Twining advanced rapidly and was aide to Gen. H.H. Arnold, Air Corps chief, when World War II started.

While commanding the 13th Air Force in the Pacific, Gen. Twining, his chief of staff and 12 crewmen were reported missing in February, 1943, after their Flying Fortress crashed in the Coral Sea. His brother, Maj. Edward Twining, attached to the 13th, directed the search and insisted that it be continued after headquarters had given up. Gen. Twining and his men were rescued after five days and six nights afloat in a raft.

After recuperation, Twining was given command of the 15th Air Force in Italy, taking over for Lt. Gen. James Doolittle. He was commanding the 15th when it made the Ploesti oil field bombing raids which cut off vital supplies for the German forces. That successful raid was one of the most costly of the European War in the number of men and planes lost.

Following the victory in Europe, Gen. Twining was flown back to the Pacific, taking command of the 20th Air Force for the final fire bomb raids on Japan and the atomic bomb drops on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In October, 1947,

Lt. Gen. Twining became head of the Alaskan Defense Command. He returned to the Pentagon three years later as Air Force vice chief of staff with four-star rank.

After serving as Air Force chief of staff, Gen. Twining was named in 1956 as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Nation's top military leader. He retired October 1, 1960, three months after his visit here July 4, 1960, to dedicate Twining Park named in his honor.

His brother, Merrill B. Twining was a fighting Marine Corps officer in World War II, credited with being the first Marine to "draw blood" in the Guadalcanal Campaign when he shot down a Japanese plane. After the War, Col. Twining was Marine Corps chief of staff on Hawaii and then served in command posts at the camp Pendleton, Calif., and Quantico, Va., training schools,

During the Korean conflict, Maj. Gen. Merrill Twining commanded a Marine division for several months before illness and surgery caused his return to the U.S. He again served at Pendleton and commanded the Quantico training center before becoming deputy Marine Corps commandant at the Pentagon. Passed over for promotion to the top Marine Corps post, Lt. Gen. Twining, along with several other high Marine officers, retired in August, 1959, with four-star rank.

A third brother, Navy Capt. Robert Twining, also had a distinguished career but retired after being refused promotion at the end of the War for medical reasons. He then taught engineering at Drexel Institute, Philadelphia, for many years.

Another Monroe man who won star rank after war service, was Maj. Gen. Don S. Wenger, son of Samuel J. and Effie Wenger. He was graduated in 1928 from Monroe High School and then the University of Wisconsin and Marquette Medical School.

In February, 1940, Dr. Wenger entered the Army, serving in various

assignments before going to Europe as commander of the 124th Evacuation Hospital. In the final, furious battles, including the Bulge counterattack and Ruhr pocket offensive, Wenger's 124th unit cared for men of the 86th Infantry and 82nd Airborne Divisions.

After the War, Dr. Wenger headed the 90th General Hospital at Munich before transferring to the Air Force in 1947. He held high consultant posts with the USAF surgeon-general's department before becoming attending surgeon for the Nation's Astronauts at Cape Canaveral and later chief surgical consultant for the space programs.

Gen. Wenger came home to Monroe in 1965 to be Grand Marshal of the Cheese Days parade and to renew old friendships with former classmates and others.

When he retired in 1966, Gen. Wenger was chief consultant for professional services to the USAF surgeon-general. He then practiced surgery for a time on an Annapolis hospital staff before "retiring" again. Gen. Wenger and his family reside in the Washington area.

With reorganization of the 32nd Division as a state unit in May, 1947, Capt. W.E. Deininger took command of Co. K. Col. Oscar Moldenhauer, who had transferred to the 28th Division at Camp Livingston in 1942 and then to the Army Service Forces in charge of equipping units going overseas, was named to command the 128th Infantry Regiment. Once more, the Monroe Armory became regimental headquarters.

(During Co. K's absence for War service, a State Guard unit had been organized here to stand by for possible home front needs. Fortunately, no such problems arose, but its men were deserving of special tribute for their faithful training and readiness to serve.)

Company K was not called for service in the unexpected United Nations "police action" to stop the Communist invasion of South Korea in June, 1950. Instead, the Pentagon used the draft, recall of World War II Reservists and

recruiting to beef up American forces under command of Gen. Douglas MacArthur. Many in all three categories from this area served in that grim conflict.

Thirty-nine from the four-county region around Monroe lost their lives in the Korean fighting which continued into 1953. Five of those who died were from Monroe, one each from Juda and Brodhead and 17 from the immediate area. Six died in accidents while in uniformed forces during the Korean War, in the country and in Germany.

Two Monroe men were repatriated from Red prison camps after the 1953 ceasefire and one from Blanchardville. The latter, unfortunately, was killed in an automobile accident only 19 days after returning home.

No more military demands for possible war service were made on local residents until the unique callup of Co. B (which had succeeded Co. K in another 32nd Division reorganization) during the 1961-62 "Berlin Wall" crisis. Capt. Dwight Coplien, late Monroe police chief, was in command of the 112 Co. B men who left here Sunday, October 15, 1961, for Fort Lewis, Wash.

The 32nd Division callup was part of a selective mobilization of National Guard units taken into federal service on orders of President John F. Kennedy. The nation's regular standing forces also went on full alert against the threat of possible Soviet action to take over Berlin, a cold war of nerves which lasted for nearly a year.

Partly through local sponsorship during the 1961 Christmas holiday period, many Monroe and Green County Co. B men were able to return here on special leave. They were welcomed at the Armory late on a snowy night by a large crowd of relatives and other interested citizens for their short stay.

In January, 1962, the 32nd Division began intensive training at Fort Lewis. With the easing of the crisis, however, a farewell review of 32nd units was held July 18, 1962, and the troops left Fort Lewis for home August 3.

Although some Guard units were alerted again in October, 1962, during

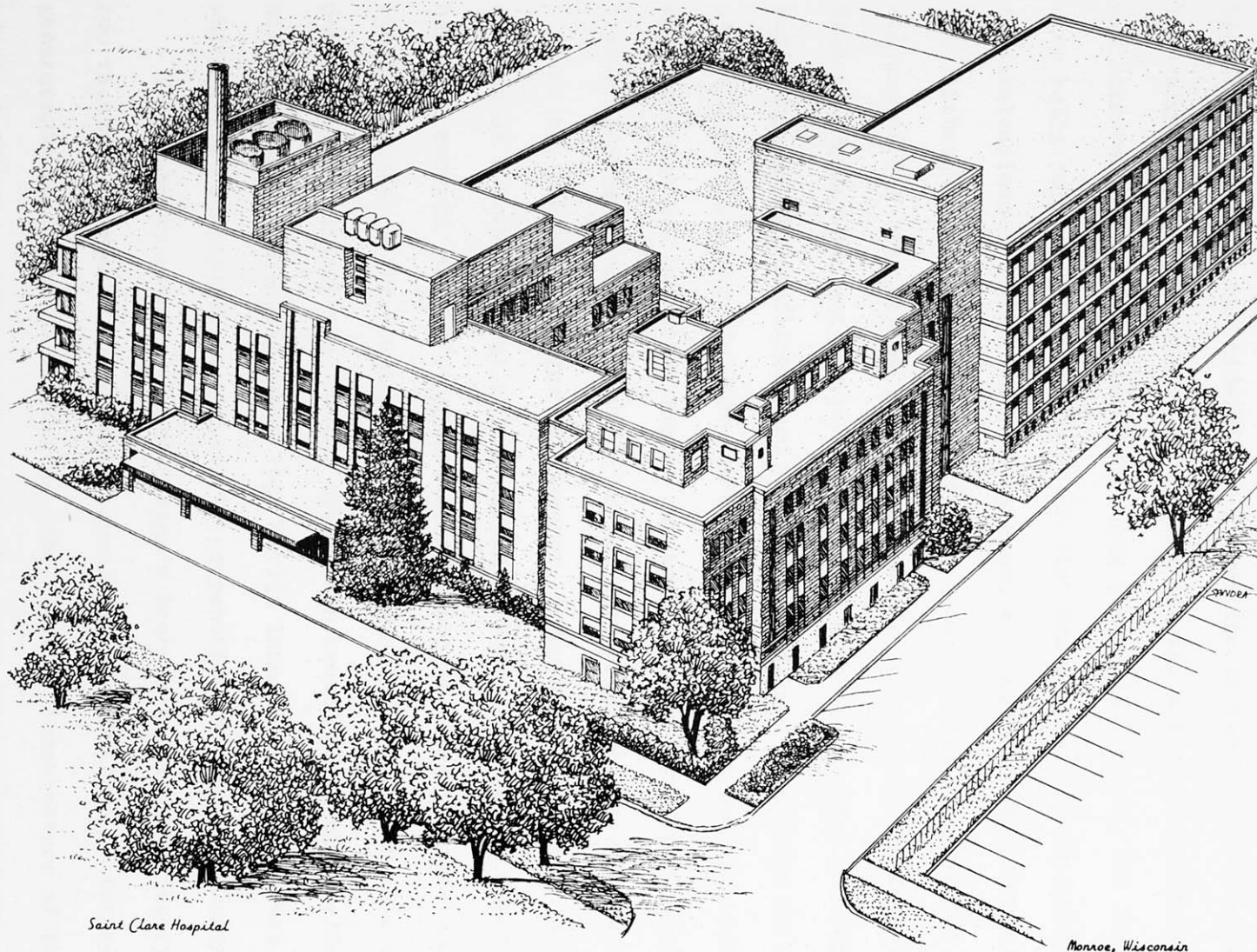
the Soviet missile showdown in Cuba, the issue was settled before another callup, except for some Air Guard squadrons and Navy Reservists.

Another foreign conflict, this one initially of little interest locally, began developing in the mid-1960s. It was the United States involvement in Indochina, seeking to support South Viet in its efforts to combat invasion and takeover by the Communist Viet Cong guerrilla forces. The latter soon were being supported openly by North Viet Nam regular forces driving south in a relentless campaign directed by Hanoi's Ho Chi Minh government.

Although American "advisory" forces grew rapidly to a peak of 550,000 men and 46,000 were killed in the long war few could understand, casualties from this area were not heavy. Only eight Green County men died in action during this savage conflict, even though the draft and recruiting put a steady stream into the forces in Viet Nam until mid-1972. Only two of those killed were from Monroe. Two other Monroe men and four more from Green County died from accidents or illnesses while in service during the Viet Nam War.

As the fighting dragged on, however, it had a serious impact on the attitudes of a broad segment of the people at home. Monroe and Green County, happily, escaped most of the violent reaction manifest on campuses and in other sections of the country. Nevertheless, a great many in this area expressed open criticism and bitter opposition toward those they believed had mistakenly and needlessly drawn the Nation into a deadly adventure in Asia which could accomplish no purpose to compensate for the heavy sacrifices.

This unhappy episode in the Nation's honorable military history, still too recent to be evaluated properly, should not be permitted by future Monroe generations to lessen in any degree the grateful remembrance of the great patriotism and sacrifice performed by this community's men and women in the uniformed services since 1861-65. Theirs is a wonderful roll of honor deserving of the highest memorial tribute their townspeople are capable of bestowing.



DEDICATED TO CARE OF THE AILING AND INJURED - This drawing shows the greatly expanded St. Clare Hospital, operated by the Congregation of St. Agnes, with its modern facilities and equipment planned to meet every challenge of today for care of the ill and treatment of accident and disaster victims. The first four-story section (left) was ready in May, 1939, and the addition to the north completed by May, 1951. Ground was broken in 1969 for the largest project, which included the six-floor wing (right rear) and complete remodeling and modernizing of the 1939 and 1951 sections.