



# Preparedness: Military Maneuvers, 1941

**T**he Army faced many challenges in training millions of new soldiers beginning in 1941, especially a lack of weapons and supplies. The 27th ID received only enough M1 Garand rifles to equip one-quarter of its infantry units, forcing soldiers to share weapons during basic training. Field Artillery lacked adequate ranges and could only train using .37mm guns until more tracks of land opened up, allowing for the use of larger guns in early February 1941.

In six months, the Army ranks swelled from 630,000 in December 1940 to 1.4 million in May 1941, providing the War Department the manpower to plan and conduct large scale war games. The 27th ID participated in the Tennessee Maneuvers from May to June and the Louisiana-Arkansas Maneuvers from August to September 1941 involving nearly 400,000 troops. Sergeant Nicolas H. Grinaldo, a member of the 105th Infantry from Troy, New York, remembered marching sixty miles in three days with full field equipment during the maneuvers. "You didn't dare take your shoes off at night, because that one night that we did take our shoes off, they called a forced march, and nobody could get their damned shoes back on because their feet were so swollen."

The maneuvers allowed the Army to test strategies and

tactics on a large scale. In one exercise, during the Tennessee Maneuvers, Major General George Patton's 2nd Armored Division pushed back conventionally-armed defenders but failed to achieve a spectacular victory. Also, the maneuvers revealed reconnaissance and troop supply problems that had to be fixed.



*A machine gun company of the 27th ID prepares to fire an M1917 Browning, .30 caliber machine gun during basic training at Fort McClellan, Alabama, 1940-1941. New York State Military Museum*



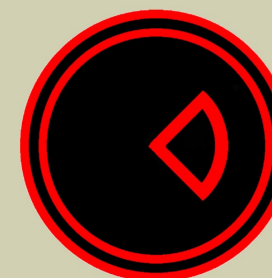
*An M3 Lee Medium Tank crew drives past a company of mounted cavalrymen during the Louisiana-Arkansas Maneuvers, 1941. New York State Military Museum*



*Soldiers from a 27th ID field artillery regiment practice with an M1897 75mm towed gun, Fort McClellan, Alabama, 1940. New York State Military Museum*



*Soldiers from one of the 27th ID's field artillery regiments set up a towed artillery gun during the Tennessee Maneuvers, June 1941. New York State Military Museum*



*First pattern insignia, 27th Division, 1918. Inside the 27th Division insignia are seven stars that depict the Orion constellation, a tribute to Major General John F. O'Ryan (1874-1961), commander of the 27th Division during World War I. The red letters inside the circle form the monogram "NYD," for "New York Division."*