

# **History of the Battery F (former Sarsfield Grenadier Guard), 1<sup>st</sup> Artillery Regiment, National Guard of California 1881-1893**

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BATTERY G

Battery G, First Artillery Regiment, Fourth Brigade (formerly  
Sarsfield Grenadier Guard)

Reference: Adjutant General's Files

Location: Sacramento, Sacramento County

Organized July 29, 1870

Reorganized March 19, 1880\*

Reconstituted July 1, 1893\*\*

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
T. W. Sheehan, Captain (Re-elected Feb. 2, 1880) (Promoted to Colonel, First Artillery Regiment, 1881)	Jan. 24, 1879	Feb. 7, 1879***
John P. Dalton, First Lieut. (Re-elected Feb. 2, 1880) (Promoted to Captain 1881)	Feb. 6, 1878	Feb. 16, 1878***
John P. Dalton, Captain	Nov. 21, 1881	Dec. 6, 1881
Harry W. Rivett, First Lieut.	Dec. 19, 1881	Jan. 4, 1882
Clinton L. White, Captain	June 18, 1883	June 22, 1883
Harry W. Rivett, First Lieut. (Re-elected 1883) (Term expired Jan. 4, 1884)		
Maurice H. Sheehan, First Lieut.	Jan. 14, 1884	Feb. 1, 1884
Thomas B. Hall, Captain	June 29, 1885	July 30, 1885
Maurice H. Sheehan, First Lieut. (Re-elected Jan. 25, 1886)		

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\*Battery G, formerly Sarsfield Grenadier Guard redesignated  
Battery G, First Artillery Regiment, Fourth Brigade, March 19,  
1880.

Adjutant General Report 1880, Special Order No. 19, page 76.

\*\*Battery G redesignated Company G, Second Infantry Regiment,  
Fourth Brigade, July 1, 1893.

Adjutant General Report 1893-1894, General Order No. 7, page 97.

\*\*\*Captain Sheehan and Lieutenant Dalton retained their former  
rank and commission as of January 24, and February 7, 1879,  
and February 6, and February 16, 1878, respectively, when they  
commanded the Sarsfield Grenadier Guard, Fourth Brigade.

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Thomas B. Hall, Captain (Re-elected July 11, 1887)	_____	_____
Maurice H. Sheehan, First Lieut. (Term expired Jan. 16, 1888)	_____	_____
Edward Sheehan, First Lieut. (Resigned June 14, 1889)	Jan. 16, 1888	Feb. 3, 1888
Thomas B. Hall, Captain (Re-elected July 1, 1889)	_____	_____
Maurice H. Sheehan, First Lieut.	July 1, 1889	July 30, 1889
Thomas B. Hall, Captain (Re-elected July 1, 1891)	_____	_____
Albert E. Stearns, First Lieut.	June 29, 1891	July 10, 1891

Activities:

The companies of the First Infantry Battalion and Sacramento Light Artillery, unattached, were consolidated into a full Battalion March 19, 1880, and each unit classified by a letter, dropping their former proper names. Battery G previously had been the Sarsfield Grenadier Guard of Sacramento, and by the above order was thereafter to be designated Battery G, First Artillery Regiment, Fourth Brigade. The change was in accordance with the wishes of both commands and was done for a two fold purpose. First, to increase the spirit of discipline and soldierly bearing among the officers and privates, and secondly, to produce a greater interest among the citizens toward the National Guard. The batteries were only nominally artillery being armed and drilled as infantry and differing solely in dress. The difference necessitated a change in the trimmings of the uniforms from blue to red.\* By November of that year the corps was fully outfitted in full dress and fatigue uniforms of artillery design. In 1888 at the time the entire National Guard was uniformed Battery G received their allotment of fifty-seven new uniforms.\*\* A few days previous to the reorganization Battery G, then the Sarsfield Grenadier Guard, had received a requisition of arms consisting of one Gatling gun and appendages, three revolvers

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\*Sacramento Bee, March 20, 1880, page 3, column 2.

\*\*For further details regarding the reorganization of the National Guard, 1880, refer to History of Battery A, First Artillery Regiment, Fourth Brigade.

BATTERY G (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

Smith and Wesson caliber 45 for the use of the officers and ten gun slings. The other arms consisted of:

- 61 Springfield rifles
- 61 bayonets
- 110 bayonets scabbards and belts
- 60 cartridge boxes and plates
- 60 cartridge boxes, belts and plates
- 110 waist belts
- 110 waist belt plates
- 50 gun slings

A Special Order was issued November 26, 1881, authorizing the transfer of the Gatling gun in the possession of Battery G to Battery B, First Artillery Regiment.\*

An election had been held the January preceding the formation of the Artillery Regiment, and the same officers continued in command of Battery G up to November 1881, when Captain T. W. Sheehan was promoted to the rank of Colonel and First Lieutenant John P. Dalton, was promoted to the Captaincy of the company vacated by Colonel Sheehan. Brigadier-General John F. Sheehan, received his appointment January 15, 1880, and assumed command of the Fourth Brigade to which regiment Battery G was attached four days later, and much credit is due to him for his untiring efforts in increasing the efficiency of the units under his command. This was demonstrated in the increased interest and pride in the regimental organization by the officers and members of the Fourth Brigade.

Major C. H. Hubbard, Inspection officer recommended a large armory for Battery G, at the annual inspection and muster of the unit November 22, 1880. This condition was not corrected, however, until 1882 when the regimental armory situated on the southwest corner of Sixth and I Street was dedicated. The old Franklin School Building had been purchased and remodelled into suitable quarters. Battery G for the same consideration of money as formerly expended for rent a month shared the new armory and benefited greatly from the improved accommodations.\*\*

In 1883 the Board of Location and Organization reduced the allowance of Battery G together with the remaining batteries of the First Artillery Regiment to \$100 a month. The regiment had

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\*Adjutant General Report 1881-1882, Special Order No. 88, page 120.

\*\*Adjutant General Report 1881-1882, page 140.

Activities: (Continued)

previously been receiving \$125 a month and \$25.00 extra for each additional gun over one, and the Board believed this was an unjust discrimination in their favor as against the Second Artillery Regiment and other infantry companies in the State.\*

Battery G played an important role in the maintenance of law and order during the riot caused by the shooting of a prominent and highly esteemed citizen, Mr. James Lansing of Sacramento, April 10, 1882. Raten the assassin had a quarrel with a man named Eriekson the day before, and meeting him in front of Lansing's Hotel on the day of the fatal accident, unsuccessfully attempted to shoot it out with Eriekson. A crowd assembled and quickly gave chase, and when Raten ran down the alley in the rear of Mr. Lansing's Hotel, Mr. Lansing gave chase and was shot by the infuriated man before he had gone 100 feet. At the time of Mr. Lansing's death the following day, threats of lynching were heard on every side and the municipal authorities realizing the intensity of public feeling called on the military authorities for assistance. Battery G together with Battery A was authorized by Special Order No. 4, April eleventh to assemble in their barracks and stand by ready for service when called. During early evening a crowd was gathering in the vicinity of the jail and an attack was expected momentarily. Battery G was ordered to the prison at 9:15 P.M., remaining under arms for sometime while guards were posted to keep the crowd back. The crowd gradually followed Mayor John D. Brown's advice and went home, although to prevent a raid in the night a guard was maintained. A number of members of Battery G were among the number to keep guard at the County Jail each night, for the week following the prisoner's arrest until the excitement had calmed down.\*\*

A former member of the Sarsfield Grenadier Guard had been dishonorably discharged, although he claimed he had never received any notification. Captain Sheehan, June 9, 1881, transmitted Private Eugene Shea's letter explaining the circumstances of his absence from the city to Adjutant General S. W. Backus, with the recommendation a pardon be granted, but that he be only re-instated in the company with the members consent. The case was referred to Governor Perkins, who granted the pardon

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\*Adjutant General Report 1883-1884, page 8.

\*\*For further details concerning the Raten Affair, refer to History of Battery A, First Artillery Regiment, Fourth Brigade.

BATTERY G (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

but stipulating that Private Shea must have the company's approval before reinstatement.

The battery held weekly drills and particular attention was given to target practice. Battalion drills were also participated in frequently. The drills were generally well attended and of great benefit not only in the way of maneuvers, but in disciplining the men and stimulating healthy competition between the various companies.

The inspection of Battery G was held November 22, 1880, which report indicated the corps having a cash balance on hand of \$285.41. This financial condition was unusual for a new or reorganized company, especially when the change of uniform necessitated considerable expense. Major C. H. Hubbard, inspecting officer, remarked 'that the corps was in very good condition with arms well cared for and State property in good repair'.

The Legislature realizing the necessity of annual encampments made partial provision for the payment of expenses incidental to the different commands attending. The First Artillery Regiment attended the encampment at Alameda, for eight days in 1880 and Captain Sheehan's remarks are quoted to indicate the success of the outing. The Camp of Instruction at Alameda was of special advantage to the company. Greater steadiness being observed after the encampment, and the men received an insight in the duties of a soldier which was impossible to obtain except in such Camps of Instruction or in actual service. The result of the week's camp life showed such improvement in military routine that the practicability and advisability of these assemblages proved a necessity, and provision was made for annual Camps of Instruction thereafter. During 1881 Battery G attended the encampment held at Ismert's Grove, Nevada County, and the year following at San Rafael. One of the activities that Battery G participated in during the Camp of Instruction at Ismert's Grove, was the rifle practice shooting at the required distance of 200 yards in conjunction with the competition for the Veteran Trophy.\*

The encampment of July 15, 1885, was outstanding for the fact it was the first ever held of the entire National Guard of the State. Battery G and the other batteries of the First Artillery Regiment, together with the First Provisional regiment of six unassigned companies were under the direct command of Brigadier-General John T. Carey. The site chosen was Santa Cruz, and the

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\*Daily Alta California, August 1, 1881, page 1, column 5.

Activities: (Continued)

camp was located along the base of a high range of wooded hills with a large field for battalion and brigade evolutions. It was easily reached from all parts of the State by rail and steamer and was only a mile to the beach where sea bathing was indulged in. The mildness of the climate permitted drills and exercises to be held any hour of the day without discomfort or danger to the health of the troops. Battery G arrived during the night of the fifteenth and spent the next day getting settled in camp. It being Sunday divine service was celebrated. On Monday the regular routine of drills, parades, and other duties of camp commenced, and was carried on with little deviation to the end of the encampment.

Battery G in military appearance and soldierly bearing was equal to any and showed careful training. The battery derived lasting benefits from this outing, for the encampments of so many commands offers more advantages than a camp of a single regimental unit--duty is more attractive, a friendly rivalry is stimulated among the different organizations and the troops become accustomed to operating together. Camp duty is an essential factor of good military instruction for reliable soldiers cannot be made by armory instruction and street parades.\* One particularly interesting feature of the encampment attended by the First Artillery Regiment in 1890, and for which the men received heavy criticism by the Inspection officers was their unmilitary conduct in having their wives and families in camp for the eight days, living and quartering in the camp at the expense of the State.

The year following the men who were accompanied by their wives and children, presumably made other arrangements for their vacation as the reports fail to mention any controversy over this issue. The Camp of Instruction in 1891 was to be held at Santa Cruz, on the grounds facing the city formerly occupied by the Eighth Battalion and was named Camp Murray for the Assistant Adjutant General. The camp was laid out in the following manner: Regimental Headquarters faced an avenue eighty feet wide and a dance pavilion 36" x 50'. The field officers street was forty feet wide, also that of the line officers and company streets were fifty feet with ten tents to a street in the latter. A few days previous to the day on which the regiment was to leave, the Sacramento Record-Union ran an editorial appeal to the employers of the Guardsman

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\*Adjutant General Report 1885-1886, page 127.

Activities: (Continued)

which reads as follows:

"The Camp of Instruction is to be held at the seaside, where the ozone of the ocean breeze may most invigorate the men; it will rest them, though the duties are exacting; it will freshen them, though its disciplinary demands are heavy. By all means let the men go, and give them God speed in the going."

The appeal was met whole heartedly and the regiment to which Battery C was attached left with full ranks for the camp. The trip was made by train and after nine hours enroute the company reached Santa Cruz early in the morning. Everything had been done for the mens' comfort, sleeping accommodations had been provided on the train and breakfast was served as soon as they arrived at their destination. The train went by Benicia to the Oakland Mole, through Niles and San Jose then to Santa Cruz. Brigadier-General W. T. Sheehan, visited the camp on Wednesday following the beginning of the outing. Captain John J. O'Connell, First United States Infantry, had been detailed by the Secretary of War to report to the Commander-in-Chief for duty as inspecting and instructing officer.

Captain O'Connell reported on the excellent behavior of the regiment and the promptness with which orders were obeyed. Officers and men performed their duty with alacrity and to the best of their ability. Battery G and the other units were credited with a vast improvement over the former year in guard duty, skirmish, drill, and military courtesy. Sentinels performed their task cheerfully and with a commendable degree of accuracy. There was good work done in battalion and skirmish drills subject, however, to the following exceptions. Distances were at fault, lines broken, in some instances the men were huddled together in a heap or scattered with large intervening gaps, generally the step was too short and little or no attempt was made at correcting errors by the file closers.\*

The last encampment that Battery G participated in before being transferred to the Second Infantry was at Camp Columbus, Santa Cruz, August 6, 1892, so named for the Fourth Centennial of the discovery of our country. Major General W. H. Dimond, was the commander of the Division of the National Guard while the First Artillery Regiment to which Battery G was attached was commanded by Brigadier-General T. W. Sheehan. The outstanding feature of this outing was that it was to be conducted for purely

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\*San Francisco Call, August 10, 1891, page 3, column 1.



Activities: (Continued)

military instruction and not for display. The main purpose was to enable the units attending to discover their possible deficiencies and shortcomings and to correct the same, thereby taking advantage of the short time available for these instructions. The routine as laid down by the Special Orders were rigidly carried out resulting in a marked and profitable improvement at the end of the allotted time. Some of the more important orders affecting Battery G were as follows:

1. To secure uniformity and a formation conforming to the new drill regulations, each Regiment was equally divided into two battalions for drill purposes.
2. A color line was established each day in the regimental camps with sentinels posted and all persons in the military service crossing the color line were requested to salute the colors.
3. Persons not connected with the National Guard were not permitted in camp after tattoo. All exercises were to be done in undress or campaign uniforms which was a practical idea and added materially to the men's comfort.

The camp was formally opened August seventh by the firing of the National Salute at reveille and with the firing of the first gun the flag was raised and the bands present played the National airs. Each succeeding day one gun was fired daily at reveille and retreat. The raising of the flag at reveille and lowering at retreat was under the supervision of the officer of the Guard at Division Headquarters. Battery G profited substantially from the close proximity of the First Infantry Regiment, United States Army Regulars under the command of Colonel William R. Shafter. They set a fine example and cooperated in every way with the National Guard forces. The activities of the unit while in camp were participation in regimental dress parade, battalion formations and skirmish drills. On the day camp closed August thirteenth Governor Markham, accompanied by Admiral Irwin, United States Navy, reviewed the troops which consisted of the National Guard Division, the First Infantry, United States Army, the marines and sailors of the cruiser's "Charleston" and "Boston" and three companies of the Naval Battalion.

Target practice as a compulsory measure was held annually, but as the men were required to fire only five or ten shots it was considered insufficient practice by Adjutant General George B. Cosby. To offset this handicap the General recommended that armory practice be encouraged by commanding officers. By using the service rifles with reduced charges, regulated to the distance,

## BATTERY G (Continued)

### Activities: (Continued)

the soldier would become accustomed to the weight and trigger pull of his rifle. The result from such practice, as a manner of instruction, would be to enable the members participating to be handy in the use of their arms and to hold their sight steadily on the object while pulling the trigger. Colonel Sheehan commanding the First Artillery Regiment to which Battery G was attached recognized the wisdom of the Adjutant General's remarks, and the interest that he and his officers took had far reaching results among the members of the corps. A good range was secured and targets built, and with the ensuing practice many of the officers and men became excellent shots. Part of the \$3,500 appropriation allowed by the Legislature in 1887 and 1888 was used to purchase State Decorations to be awarded to those making a certain percentage at the annual target practice.\*

Thirty-eight members of Battery G took part in the target practice held in September 1887, rating 42.62 per cent. Out of this number two were sharpshooters belonging to the First-class having a percentage of ninety or over, and were each awarded a medal with a gold bar attached. Lieutenant John Miller, one of the gold bar winners was Inspector of Rifle Practice for the First Artillery. Fifteen took Second-class honors having over 80 per cent and were entitled to the medals with silver bars. Fifteen of the other members were in the Third-class rating between 50 per cent and 80 per cent and received medals with the bronze bar. Five were disqualified and the remaining members made below 25 per cent and were placed in the Fourth-class.

In 1890 the system of holding target practice annually was changed to semi-annually, and to induce the men to come out for the both days practice prizes were offered for the first day's work. A special medal was awarded to the member of each organization making the best score. More attention had been given to short range firing as the National Guard's chief activities would be in quelling riots and preserving peace. Officers were advised that while encouraging the successful shots not to discourage the less efficient, for a company composed of fair shots were of more value in time of need than a company with a few expert shots.

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\*For further details regarding Target Practice regulations, refer to History of Battery A, First Artillery Regiment, Fourth Brigade.

## Activities: (Continued)

Battery G paraded on the days required by law namely February twenty-second, Memorial Day, Independence Day and the Fourth of July and on the days set aside for target practices. One of the outstanding parades in the company's early existence was on the occasion of the laying of the corner stone of the Garfield Monument in San Francisco, August 24, 1883. Battery G as one of the Sacramento companies went down for the ceremonies and was under the command of Colonel Sheehan. Leaving Sacramento on the 6:10 A. M. train and connecting with the ferry-boat they arrived in the city by ten o'clock, as the military took its place in line and marched to Golden Gate Park. After the ceremonies Battery G with the other units were given a lunch, and tendered the use of the armory belonging to the Third Infantry for sleeping purposes.\* The battery had taken part in the ceremonies paying homage to President Garfield at the time of his death September 19, 1881. Their armory had been draped in mourning for thirty days and the officers were required to wear the usual badge of mourning for a like period.

When Major General George B. McClellan, the courageous soldier and distinguished citizen passed away in 1885, his memory was respected by a similar demonstration in honor of his military achievements.\*\* Vice-President Thomas A. Hendricks, untimely death December 1885 was another occasion for the battery to share with the other commands regrets, and as a token of respect the armory was draped in mourning.

Battery G was on escort duty during President Benjamin J. Harrison's, visit to Sacramento in 1891.\*\*\* The battery also had a prominent part in the Turn-Bezirk parade and reception when the organization visited Sacramento in June of that year. The First Artillery Regiment to which Battery G was attached, under command of Colonel J. W. Guthrie, the Hussars under Captain Schumacher, the Sacramento Turn Verein and various other German societies, together with Mayor Comstock and City Trustees Conklin and McLaughlin were waiting when the train pulled in to greet the visiting society. The visitors numbered several hundred and presented a pleasing appearance in their

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\*Sacramento Bee, August 23, 1883, page 5, column 2.

\*\*Adjutant General Report 1885-1886, page 83.

\*\*\*For further details of President Benjamin J. Harrison's visit to Sacramento, refer to History of Battery A, First Artillery Regiment, Fourth Brigade.

Activities: (Continued)

regulation Turner uniforms and broad hats. Most of the Vereins carried torchlights. A platoon of mounted police were first in the line of march followed by the First Artillery Regiment band and companies of the regiment who were present with well filled ranks. After which came the carriages containing the Mayor and Trustees, President Lothammer of the Sacramento Turners, and officials of the Bezirk. Grand Marshall Ruhstaller, and his aids followed by the Hussars' band and the Hussars were next in line, and after them came the Turn-Vereins and drum corps. It was a spectacular sight as some of the marchers carried Japanese lanterns, other torches and roman candles, while the line kept in step with the lively tunes played by the bands; and all the time the air was alive with shooting stars of various colors and long serpentine rockets. After the visiting Turn-Bezirks reached the hall and were banqueted, the military and bands went downstairs where a like spread awaited them.\*

One of the last activities Battery G exercised a part in before being transferred to the Second Infantry was when the unit acted as escort to the Grand Army Republic on Memorial Day 1892. The 24th Anniversary of Memorial Day was appropriately observed in Sacramento. The flags were at half-mast throughout the city and the business houses closed their doors for the day. It was evident from the large crowd assembled that every one was out to witness the ceremonies with the Grand Army Veterans taking the most active part and being assisted materially by the military, citizens and municipal authorities. The decorating of the soldiers plot was done by committees of ladies from the various Relief Corps. The procession was led by a platoon of police headed by Chief of Police Rodgers and Captain Bradley. Next came the First Artillery band and then the First Artillery Regiment who turned out with full ranks presenting their customary trim appearance. The Grand Army Veterans marching in their respective posts and to the music furnished by a drum and fife corps came after the cannons in the line of march. Following the old soldiers were the Sons of Veterans and then a long line of carriages containing notables of the day and prominent citizens. When the exercises at the Grand Army Republic plot were completed, the military marched back of their respective posts.\*\*

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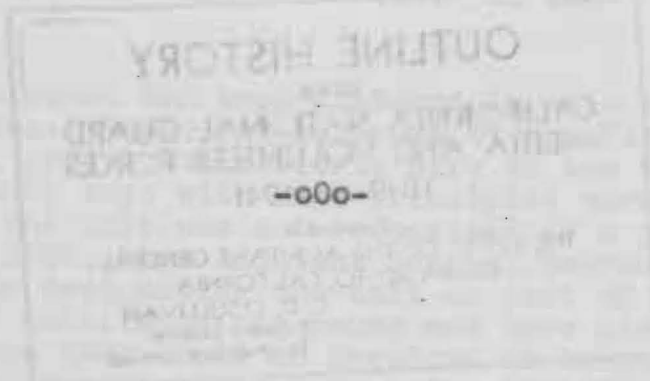
\*Sacramento Record-Union, June 22, 1891, page 3, column 3.

\*\*Sacramento Union, May 31, 1892, page 3, column 1.

BATTERY G (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

In accordance with the recommendation of the Board of Location and Organization the First Artillery Regiment was transferred to the Second Infantry Regiment, Fourth Brigade, July 1, 1893. Battery G as part of this regiment was transferred to the Second Infantry and designated thereafter as Company G, Second Infantry, Fourth Brigade.\*



\*Adjutant General Report 1893-1894, General Order No. 7, page 97.