

History of the 2nd (Irish) Infantry Regiment, California Militia and National Guard of California 1862-1881

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Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade
 Reference: Adjutant General's Files
 Location: San Francisco, San Francisco County
 Organized December 9, 1862
 Mustered out July 21, 1866*
 Reconstituted August 23, 1866**
 Reconstituted June 1, 1881***

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Thomas N. Cazneau, Colonel	Dec. 9, 1862	Dec. 16, 1862
M. C. Smith, Lieut. Colonel	Dec. 9, 1862	Dec. 16, 1862
M. C. Smith, Colonel	Mar. 23, 1864	May 16, 1864
George T. Knox, Lieut. Colonel (Resigned Aug. 13, 1864)	April 16, 1864	May 16, 1864
James F. Hyde, Lieut. Colonel	Oct. 17, 1864	Oct. 18, 1864
William Barton, Major	Mar. 23, 1864	May 16, 1864
Charles F. Smyth, Major	April 16, 1864	May 16, 1864
Thomas Callan, First Lieut. Adjutant	April 16, 1865	June 7, 1865
J. M. Murphy, First Lieut. Surgeon	April 16, 1865	June 7, 1865
M. C. Smith, Colonel (Re-elected April 24, 1865)	_____	_____
James F. Hyde, Lieut. Colonel (Re-elected April 24, 1865) (Resigned Dec. 9, 1865)	_____	_____
Martin Tarpey, Lieut. Colonel	_____	_____
R. F. Ryan, Major (Resigned Nov. 15, 1865)	April 24, 1865	April 28, 1865
M. C. Bateman, Major	_____	_____
Thomas Callan, First Lieut. (Re-elected April 24, 1865) Adjutant	_____	_____
J. N. Sharkey, Surgeon	April 16, 1865	June 7, 1865

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*Second Infantry Regiment mustered out July 21, 1866.
Historical Record Second Brigade 1861-1869, page 87.

**First Artillery Regiment redesignated Second Infantry Regiment,
 August 23, 1866.
Historical Record Second Brigade 1861-1869, page 207.

***Second Infantry Regiment redesignated Second Artillery Regiment,
 June 1, 1881,
 Adjutant General Report 1881-1882, General Order No. 11, page 81.

Commanding Officers (Continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
John W. McKenzie, Colonel	April 3, 1863	April 2, 1866
James Brown, Lieut. Colonel (Term expired)	July 15, 1864	April 2, 1866
James P. Stover, Lieut. Colonel	Sept. 27, 1866	Oct. 2, 1866
John Stratman, Major	April 2, 1863	April 2, 1866
H. H. Thrall, First Lieut. Adjutant	April 3, 1864	Dec. 17, 1866
James Murphy, Surgeon	Jan. 15, 1864	Dec. 17, 1866
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John W. McKenzie, Colonel (Re-elected June 24, 1871) (Resigned July 28, 1874)		
John McComb, Lieut. Colonel	Sept. 16, 1867	Oct. 30, 1867
Peter Lesser, Major (Resigned Sept. 7, 1870)	Aug. 2, 1869	Oct. 14, 1869
E. Irving Smith, First Lieut. Adjutant	May 11, 1868	Oct. 18, 1871
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John McComb, Colonel (Promoted to Brigadier-General Second Brigade) (Nov. 23, 1875)	Nov. 12, 1874	Nov. 28, 1874
Harvey Lake, Lieut. Colonel (Resigned Jan. 15, 1876)	Nov. 12, 1874	Nov. 28, 1874
Harvey Lake, Major (Promoted to Lieut. Colonel Nov. 12, 1874)	Sept. 20, 1870	July 1, 1871
Henry H. Thrall, Major (Promoted to Lieut. Colonel Feb. 15, 1876)	Nov. 12, 1874	Nov. 28, 1874
Henry H. Thrall, First Lieut. (Promoted to Adjutant Major) (Nov. 12, 1874)	June 12, 1874	June 27, 1874
R. H. Savage, First Lieut. Adjutant	Nov. 23, 1874	Dec. 10, 1874
Edwin J. Fraser, First Lieut. Surgeon	July 30, 1874	Aug. 10, 1874
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Richard H. Savage, Colonel (Resigned Sept. 1, 1876)	Jan. 11, 1876	Jan. 15, 1876
Henry H. Thrall, Lieut. Colonel	Feb. 15, 1876	April 14, 1876
James A. Laven, Major	Feb. 15, 1876	April 14, 1876
Frederick W. Pierce, First (Term expired) Lieut. Adjutant	May 5, 1875	May 20, 1875
L. P. Ford, First Lieut (Resigned Adjutant Aug. 3, 1877)	Jan. 24, 1876	Feb. 11, 1876
Edwin P. Fraser, First Lieut. Surgeon	July 30, 1874	June 24, 1875

Commanding Officers (Continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
William R. Smedberg, Colonel	Oct. 13, 1876	Oct. 16, 1876
Henry H. Thrall, Lieut. Colonel (Continued in Office)		
Frederick W. Pierce, Major	June 27, 1876	May 31, 1878
Francis W. Bacon, First Lieut. (Elected Capt. Adjutant of Company F, 2nd Inf.)	Aug. 13, 1877	Aug. 13, 1877
Thomas T. Taylor, First Lieut. (Resigned Adjutant June 26, 1878)	April 3, 1878	May 31, 1878
William R. Smedberg, Colonel (Re-elected Oct. 14, 1880)		
Harry T. Hammond, Lieut. Colonel	Mar. 11, 1880	April 5, 1880
James E. Hughes, Major	Mar. 10, 1881	May 7, 1881
William Downie, First Lieut. Adjutant	Nov. 26, 1879	Dec. 3, 1879
Edwin P. Fraser, Major Surgeon	April 28, 1880	May 11, 1880

activities:

The Second Infantry Regiment was organized on December 9, 1862. As the First Infantry Battalion expanded until it became the First Infantry Regiment in 1861, so the Second Infantry Battalion soon developed into the Second Infantry Regiment. History records that the Second Battalion met in the hall of the Montgomery Guard on December 9, 1862, and accepted the Emmet Life Guard as Company H to complete the regimental organization. The other companies were the Montgomery Guard, Company A; McMahon Guard, Company B; Shields Guard, Company C; Wolfe Tone Guard, Company D; Mesgher Guard, Company E; Emmet Rifles, Company F; and Benicia Guard, Company G. Major William Harney presided at the meeting and Adjutant Gallan acted as secretary. Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Cazneau, of the Second Infantry Battalion, was elected Colonel of the new regiment, Major M. C. Smith was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel. Adjutant Gallan was nominated for Major of the new organization, but declined and the office was left vacant until a later date.

A few months before being formed into a regiment the Irish Second Battalion had been re-uniformed in a costume of United States Army; coats, faced with green, red pants, and United States regulation hats with green feathers.*

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*San Francisco Daily Herald, March 2, 1862, page 3, column 2.

Activities: (Continued)

The Second Regiment was known as the Irish Regiment because its members were nearly all from Ireland or of Irish parentage. The organization drilled faithfully for three and one-half years and became a very efficient regiment, then had the misfortune to be mustered out of the National Guard in 1866. At the close of the Civil War in 1865, the California National Guard consisted of 165 militia companies, totaling 8,250 men. Obviously that was too large a group of citizen soldiery for peace time purposes. The State Legislature, April 2, 1866, adopted a law reducing the number of companies in the National Guard. The measure was adopted as one of economy. The new law required that the organization was not to exceed eighty companies, segregated as follows: sixty-four Infantry, twelve Cavalry, and four Artillery. A Board of Location and Organization was established, to consist of the Commander-in-Chief, Major General, Adjutant General, and the Brigadier of each brigade. The Board was authorized to transfer, attach, or disband companies; reorganize the regiments or battalions as public interest might require.

The Board of Location and Organization decided that for strategic reasons the Second and Third Infantry Regiments were to be mustered out. Accordingly on July 21, 1866, the Second Infantry Regiment was mustered out of the National Guard.* About a month later the First Artillery Regiment was reconstituted and designated Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade. A great deal of ill-feeling developed among the members of both the Irish Second and the German Third Regiments. Apparently in several eastern states the authorities were opposed to organizations composed exclusively of persons of foreign birth, contending that since this was their adopted country all should be Americans, especially in all matters pertaining to the military organization. It was charged that politics had led the Board of Location and Organization to disband the so called Irish and German Regiments.**

When the Second Regiment was mustered out in July 1866, they continued as an independent organization. While the former

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*Historical Records of Second Brigade, 1861-1869. Adjutant General's Office. page 87.

**San Francisco Bulletin, July 16, 1866, page 3, column 4.

Activities: (continued)

Irish Regiment did not re-enter the National Guard as the Second Infantry, four of the original eight companies were organized into the First Infantry Battalion, Second Brigade in 1868, and later became the Third Infantry Regiment.

During the existence of the Second Infantry Regiment, 1866 to 1881, there were ten new companies attached to the organization replacing units that had been mustered out or detached. In 1870, the Franklin Light Infantry was detached from the Second and attached to the First Infantry Regiment and the Live Oak Zouaves was attached to the regiment as Company C; in 1871, the Live Oak Zouaves became unattached, and in November 1871 the San Francisco Fusileers was attached as Company C. In 1868 the Liberty Guard was mustered out and on May 22, 1868, the Germania Rifles became Company D in the place of the former company. On February 26, 1878, the Steuben Guard, Company E was consolidated with the Veteran Guard Company B, and was redesignated as Company B. On August 22, 1872, the Vallejo Rifles, Company F became unattached and on March 18, 1878, a new company formed in San Francisco was mustered in as Company F. The Eureka Guard Company G was mustered out on July 19, 1869, and in June 1870 the Frisbie Guard was attached to the regiment as Company G. On June 10, 1872, the Frisbie Guard was mustered out and it was April 8, 1878, when a newly organized Company G was mustered in. On July 1, 1878, the Union Guard Company A was detached from the Regiment and no new company took its place. Company B of the Second Infantry Regiment was redesignated as Company E, Second Regiment on April 1, 1880, leaving a vacancy in Company B. The vacancy in Companies A and B was not filled until the reorganization of the Second Infantry Regiment into the Second Artillery Regiment on June 1, 1881. The table on the following page indicates the number of companies and the various changes and designations of the units comprising the Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade.

The only serious disturbance that required the services of the Second Infantry Regiment was during the turbulent days of the late seventies when labor organizations began a determined effort to restrict the immigration of the Chinese "Coolie" laborers into this country. On the tenth of November 1877, the agitation grew and went beyond the control of the civil authorities. The Second Infantry Regiment was placed under arms at the request of the Mayor of San Francisco who feared the agitation would lead to serious rioting. The troops remained under arms for nine days and then were dismissed. A similar situation

COMPANIES COMPOSING THE SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT, SECOND BRIGADE

1862-1881

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Montgomery Guard <u>1862</u>	McMahon Guard <u>1862</u>	Shields Guard <u>1862</u>	Wolfe Tone Guard <u>1862</u>	Meagher Guard <u>1862</u>	Emmet Rifles <u>1862</u>	Benicia Guard <u>1862</u>	Emmet Life Guard <u>1862</u>
Union Guard <u>1866</u>	Veteran Guard <u>1866</u>	Franklin Light Infantry <u>1866</u>	Liberty Guard <u>1866</u>	McClellan Guard <u>1866</u>	McKenzie Guard <u>1866</u>	Eureka Guard <u>1866</u>	San Fran- cisco Cadets <u>1866</u>
	Company B <u>1878</u>	Live Oak Zouaves <u>1870</u>	Germania Rifles <u>1868</u>	Steuben Guard <u>1869</u>	Vallejo Rifles <u>1870</u>	Frisbie Guard <u>1870</u>	
		San Fran- cisco Fusileers <u>1871</u>		Company E (formerly Company B 2nd Infan- try) <u>1880</u>	Company F <u>1878</u>	Company G <u>1878</u>	

Note: The year dates in the table indicate the year the companies were attached to the Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade.

occurred on January 16, 1878, and again the Second Infantry Regiment and the entire Second Brigade was called to arms for a period of eleven days, before being dismissed.*

The only regimental inspection reports available are for the years of 1878, 1879 and 1880. The records show that this regiment led all three regiments in attendance for the three years. The same source gives the number of men in the Second Regiment in 1879 as 384 for the six companies then in the organization. In 1880 the ranks had increased to a total of 604 for the six units in the regiment.**

The report on target practice in 1880 revealed that the Second Regiment made the poorest showing of the three regiments then composing the Second Brigade.*** The large number of new recruits probably account for the poor rating, as in 1877 the National Guard of California entered a rifle team in the Interstate Military Match held at Creedmoor, New York, composed of five men from the Second Infantry. The team was sent east and won the contest, and the return of the victorious rifle team to San Francisco was the occasion for a parade of the Second Brigade, followed by a reception held in the First Regiment's Armory on New Montgomery Street. Captain William H. Brockhoff of Company D, Second Infantry Regiment was presented with a beautiful and neatly arranged tray of flowers in honor of his record as the crack shot of the team.****

Aside from the usual holiday parades such as Washington's Birthday, Independence Day, Admission Day, field days and reviews, the Second Regiment took part in many special parades. One of the most important of those was when President Rutherford B. Hayes visited San Francisco on September 9, 1880. The Second

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*Adjutant General Report 1877-1879, page 76.

**Adjutant General Report 1877-1879, page 74.
Adjutant General Report 1880, page 89.

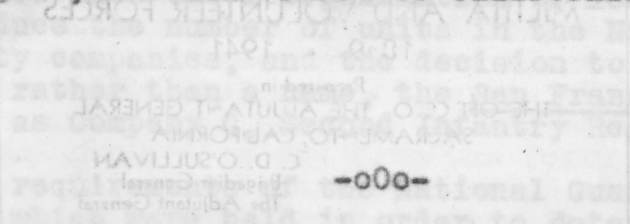
***Adjutant General Report 1880, page 36.

****San Francisco Examiner, October 4, 1877, page 3, column 5.

Brigade paraded and passed in review before the Chief Executive, who complimented Brigadier-General John McComb of the Second Brigade, on the splendid display of the troops under his command.*

Although no definite date could be obtained regarding encampments held by the Second Infantry Regiment, Adjutant General P. F. Walsh stated in his biennial report of August 1, 1879, that nearly every command in the National Guard had gone into camp from two to four days during that year.

The six units in the Second Infantry Regiment continued to improve in efficiency until June 1, 1881, when the Board of Location and Organization decided to reorganize the Second Infantry Regiment into the Second Artillery Regiment, Second Brigade, thereby, bringing to a close the history of the Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade, National Guard of California.**



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...discipline and military appearance. Therefore, on June 14, 1880, the unit was inspected by Major Fred G. Smith, Inspector of the Second Brigade. The unit was armed with United States regulation Springfield rifles, caliber 45. These guns were in good condition, which shows they had been properly cared for. Company C and the First Infantry regiment were uniformed alike. Both companies were equal in every respect to the military appearance of the regulars.

*Company C, Second Infantry Regiment, San Francisco Fusiliers, organized November 1877, was designated as Battery C, Second Artillery, Second Brigade, when the entire Second Infantry was transferred to the Second Brigade, Second Brigade.

*Adjutant General Report 1880, page 82.

**Adjutant General Report 1881-1882, General Order No. 11, Par. 4, page 81.

...respective, when they exchanged the San Francisco Fusiliers, Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade.

***Adjutant General Report 1880, General Order No. 13, page 83.

***Adjutant General Report 1880, page 87.