

History of the Company K, 2nd Infantry Regiment, National Guard of California 1895-1917

This history was completed in 1940 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in conjunction with the California National Guard and the California State Library.

Digitized by the History Office, Camp San Luis Obispo, 6 January 2015

Company K, Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade* (formerly Company F,
Sixth Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade)

Reference: Adjutant General's Files

Location: Fresno, Fresno County

Organized January 26, 1888

Reconstituted February 21, 1888**

Reconstituted December 9, 1895***

Reconstituted May 11, 1907****

Mustered into Federal Service June 27, 1916*****

Mustered out of Federal Service November 15, 1916+

Resumption of Service in the National Guard 1916++h

Mustered into Federal Service April 7, 1917+++

Redesignated September 24, 1917++++

-oOo-

- *On May 11, 1907, Company K was assigned to the Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade, formerly Second Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade.
- **Company K, formerly Company F, Sixth Infantry Battalion redesignated Company F, Sixth Infantry Regiment, February 21, 1888.
Adjutant General Report 1887-1888, General Order No. 6, page 272.
- ***Company F, Sixth Infantry Regiment redesignated Company F, Tenth Infantry Battalion, December 7, 1895. Two days later, December 9, Company F redesignated Company F redesignated Company F, Sixth Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade.
Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, General Order Nos. 17, 18, pages 87, 88.
- ****Company F Sixth Infantry Regiment redesignated Company K, Second Infantry Regiment, May 11, 1907.
Adjutant General Report 1907-1908, page 4.
- ** Company K as part of the Second Infantry Regiment mustered into Federal Service for duty on the Mexican Border, June 27, 1916.
Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 17.
- +Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 17.
- +General and Special Orders and Bulletins 1916, General Order No. 34, page 150.
- Company K, Second Infantry Regiment mustered into Federal Service April 7, 1917.
Outline History 184th Infantry Regiment, C.N. G. page 4.
File #314.7. Adjutant General's Office.
- Company K, Second Infantry Regiment was consolidated with Company C, Second Infantry Regiment and designated Company L, 159th Infantry Regiment September 24, 1917.
Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 22.

COMPANY K (Continued)

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Claude T. Spivey, Captain	Dec. 7, 1905	Feb. 6, 1906
L. A. Murrell, First Lieut. (Resigned July 1, 1908)	Dec. 7, 1905	Feb. 6, 1906
I. E. Wilson, Captain (Recommissioned April 19, 1909) (Promoted to Major, 2nd Infantry Oct. 28, 1911)	Nov. 12, 1908	Dec. 9, 1908
C. W. Kepley, First Lieut. (Recommissioned April 19, 1909) (Resigned July 25, 1910)	July 23, 1908	Sept. 11, 1908
Will Kelly, First Lieut.	Aug. 18, 1910	Sept. 17, 1910
Will Kelly, Captain	Jan. 25, 1912	Mar. 27, 1912
C. H. Fowler, First Lieut.	Jan. 25, 1912	Mar. 27, 1912
C. H. Fowler, Captain	Feb. 26, 1914	Apr. 7, 1914
Eugene Kahill, First Lieut. (Resigned Mar. 25, 1915)	Apr. 2, 1914	May 11, 1914
L. H. Heintz, First Lieut. (Resigned Feb. 7, 1917)	Apr. 15, 1915	May 10, 1915
Arthur H. Drew, First Lieut.	Mar. 28, 1917	Mar. 28, 1917

Activities:

Company K was organized on January 26, 1888, as Company F, Sixth Infantry Battalion, Third Brigade. The following month the company was attached to the Sixth Infantry Regiment, where it remained until the disbandment of the Sixth Infantry Regiment on May 10, 1907. The following day, May eleventh, Company F was redesignated Company K, Second Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade.

The first activity the company participated in after its reorganization was a Joint Army and Militia coast defense exercise held from July 5 to 20, 1907. Company K accompanied by Companies I, L and M, was sent to Fort Miley as supports to an Artillery Reserve, composed of companies C and H, also of the Second Infantry.

The members of Company K, along with members of the other companies, received some valuable instruction while encamped at Fort Miley, and making a pleasure trip of it as well. The following article taken from a local newspaper, gives an idea of the daily accomplishments:*

-000-

*The Fresno Republican, July 18, 1907, page 12, column 4.

COMPANY K (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

Saturday, July 13

Taking observation; finding elevations range etc., under the instruction of the 64th Coast Artillery. Saturday afternoon - drill on disappearing guns; 3:00 P.M., everyone issued a pass until Monday morning at 5:45.

Monday, July 15, A.M.

Call to arms, the capturing by the National Guard of Fort Winfield Scott. Thirty-eight "tin soldiers" captured the fort and over 300 men by surprising them with rapid fire guns, capturing them and making the gunners fire on their own men.

Tuesday, July 16, P.M.

The deafening roar of the cannons can be heard for miles. We are hurling 1040 pound projectiles at targets at a range of five and six miles, taking 268 pounds of prismatic power, the highest explosive known to discharge them from 12 inch disappearing guns. The projectile travels at the rate of 2500 feet per second, with a pressure of 37,000 pounds to the square inch, as the shell is leaving the cannon, and you can bet there are lots of broken windows around this country. It costs the United States Three hundred and forty dollars per shot to fire one of the 12 inch guns we are using.

We are having a good time and enjoying camp life. We have an ideal camping place on a high cliff overlooking the Golden Gate and the Pacific. The salt breezes are making us feel great. We are certainly fed well, and have fine sleeping quarters for a camp. Our companions, the 64th Regulars, are surely the finest set of fellows one could meet and we have some grand old times together. We go down to the Cliff House, as we are only camped about one-quarter of a mile from there, and we have some fine times on the beach.

The members of Company H and Company C, which was also from Fresno, returned home on the afternoon of the twentieth. They were all well and in good condition. Almost without dissent, they pronounced the encampment as one of the best ever held.

COMPANY K (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

Captain C. T. Spivey of Company K did not return with the troops, having stayed over to go to San Jose. Captain C. W. Spears of Company C, however, voiced the same opinion as the troops, and also stated:*

"It could not have been better. The instruction we received was something great and we certainly had a good time. The men learned more than ever before, especially about the coast defense.

A valuable feature of the encampment was the coming in contact with the Regulars. Not only did the officers obtain some of the benefit of the regular officer's experience, but the association of the Privates with the "non-coms" and Privates was highly beneficial."

Encampments were supposedly annual requirements, although there were occasional years when sufficient funds were not available for that purpose. The following list shows the respective years Company K participated in encampments prior to entering the World War in 1917:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>MONTH</u>
1907	Fort Miley	Aug. 15 - 22
1908	Atascadero	Oct. 4 - 15
1909	Vallejo	Oct. 10 - 22
1910	Atascadero	Oct. 3 - 12
1912	San Francisco	Aug. 11 - 21
1915	Fort Scott	Aug. 15 - 22

Rifle practice was also an important feature in the military training of the National Guardsmen. The members of Company K, however, were not fortunate enough in having a rifle range of their own where they could hold small arms practice until the year of 1911. The unit, never the less, maintained a fair rating in this military requirement throughout the years it was in existence.

At the opening of their newly acquired rifle range at Laton, a contest was held in which three companies participated. Aside from Company K, there was Company C, also from Fresno and Company M of Hanford. Captain Nagle of Company L was the only member present from the Bakersfield company. While the attendance

-000-

*The Fresno Republican, July 21, 1907, page 12, column 5.

COMPANY K (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

was somewhat smaller than expected, interest in the affair did not lag at any time during the day, and one or two keen contests took place. There were about 100 people who witnessed and participated in the various events.

The big event of the day was the free for all rifle target shooting at 200 yards. Militiamen and civilians took part in this, using the three ranges the entire day. Lieutenant Will Kelly of Company K, won first honors with a score of 22, only after a hard contest with Private Swiggett of the same company. The revolver contest at a range of 25 yards, brought out a number of good shots and necessitated some fine shooting to determine the awards. Sergeant C. H. Fowler of Company K, and Captain Nagle of Bakersfield tied for first place with perfect scores of 25 each, but Captain Nagle won the shot that broke the tie.*

Aside from the regular routine of military duties, Company K participated in many parades, and social functions. On April 30, 1910, a parade was held in conjunction with the Raisin Day festival at Fresno in which Company K participated. The queen of the festival made her entry into the city amid the glare of red fire and the shouting of an applauding crowd. The grand illuminated procession which the queen headed, wound its way through the business streets of Fresno for an hour. A fair haired girl, surrounded by four little maids in robes as spotless as her own, the queen presented a figure truly regal, as she was borne through the throngs of tens of thousands of her subjects.

Before her marched crowded ranks of fighting men; behind her came drummers, musicians, an array of subjects in decorated automobiles, Native sons in Mexican garb, mounted Redman, artistic floats, and a galaxy of her truest subjects among whom was "the masker," filled with the carnival spirit and the joy of serving his Queen. Five mounted police cleared the way for the procession which was kept constantly in the lurid glare of the red fire.

Directly following the police escort came Major E. Jones riding with Chief aide J. D. Morgan and Chief of the First Division, W. F. Toomey. Next in line was Company K and C, both of Fresno. The members of Company K and C were executing "squads left turn" and "squads right turn," with the precision of regular troops.

-000-

*The Fresno Republican, July 31, 1911, page 10, column 1.

COMPANY K (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

All company officers were mounted, giving them a splendid military appearance. This unit was closely followed by the Queen who was borne aloft on a really modern throne, a pretty automobile mounted on a large truck which was covered with vines and brilliantly lighted. The remaining units of the parade were every bit as spectacular as the first, and the members of Company K felt greatly honored in participating in such a grand celebration.*

The members of Company K held a brilliant celebration during the evening of January 27, 1916, in commemoration of the twenty-eighth anniversary of their company. The unit had been known as Company K since May 11, 1907, although its organization dates back to January 26, 1888, when the company was known as Company F, Sixth Infantry Regiment.

The celebration, sponsored by Companies C and K of Fresno was given in the New Armory Hall, which was also dedicated at the same time invitations were sent out to more than 500 guests of whom Brigadier-General Charles W. Thomas was the guest of honor. The music was furnished by the band composed of members of Companies K and C. A short program was given before the dancing started, which was as follows:**

Overture by the Fresno Military Band.

Address by H. E. Wilkinson.

Piano selection by Gordon Brentland.

Address on "The National Guard," by General Thomas and a cornet duet by Private Henry W. Call and Musician Herbet Fast.

A detail of men from Companies K and C gave an exhibition of Guard mounting which was followed by an exhibition dance by Professor Steffes and Miss Tombs.

The members of Company K were not always engaged in activities of a social nature. One night of every week was spent in drilling, an encampment of approximately fifteen days was held nearly every year and target shoots were held twice a year. This continuous

-c0o-

*The Fresno Republican, January 27, 1916, page 5, column 4.

**The Fresno Republican, January 28, 1916, page 6, column 2.

Activities: (Continued)

military routine prepared the troops to answer any call to arms. When Governor Hiram W. Johnson received a call from the President on June 18, 1916, for troops to be sent to the Mexican Border, the California Guardsmen were immediately directed to assemble in their armories and establish camp. The mobilization camp established at the State Fair Grounds, in Sacramento, was completed within a few days. Company K, under command of Captain Claude Fowler, was mustered into the Federal Service on June 27, 1916.

On June thirtieth, the unit left for Nogales, Arizona, where they arrived on July 3, 1916. Company K did not see active service, although they were on continuous guard and patrol duty until October 23, 1916, when the entire Second Regiment was sent to Exposition Park in Los Angeles. Company K remained there until November fifteenth at which time it was mustered out of Federal Service and returned to Fresno.

This unit was again mustered into Federal Service on April 7, 1917, for duty in the World War.** Company K consolidated with Company C, Second Infantry and formed Company L, 159th Infantry.* For further information concerning the activities of this unit refer to the history of Company L, 160th Infantry, 40th Division.

-oOo-

*Adjutant General Report 1920-1926, page 30.

**Outline History 184th Infantry Regiment, C.N.G. page 4. File 314.7. Adjutant General Files.