

# **History of the Company L, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, National Guard of California 1895-1917**

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Company L, Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade\* (formerly Company G,  
Sixth Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade)

Reference: Adjutant General's Files

Location: Bakersfield, Kern County

Organized May 25, 1893

Reconstituted December 9, 1895\*\*

Reconstituted May 11, 1907\*\*\*

Mustered out May 22, 1916\*\*\*\*

Reorganized, mustered in and stationed Watsonville, May 22, 1916\*\*\*\*\*

Mustered into Federal service June 27, 1916†

Mustered out Of Federal service November 15, 1916‡

Resumption of service in the National Guard 1916‡‡

Called into Federal service March 26, 1917‡‡‡

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\*On May 11, 1907, Company L was assigned to the Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade, formerly Second Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade.

\*\*Company L, formerly Company G, Sixth Infantry Reg., Third Brigade redesignated Co. G, Tenth Battalion, Dec. 7, 1895. Two days later, Dec. 9, Company G, Tenth Battalion redesignated Co. G, Sixth Infantry Reg., Third Brigade.

Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, G.O. No. 17, 18, pages 87, 88.

\*\*\*Company G, Sixth Infantry Regiment redesignated Company L, Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade, May 11, 1907.

Adjutant General Report 1907-1908, page 4.

General and

\*\*\*\*General and Special Orders and Bulletins 1916, /Special Order No. 15, par. 11.

\*\*\*\*\*A new company organized in Watsonville and designated Company L, Second Infantry, May 22, 1916.

General and Special Orders and Bulletins 1916, Special Order No. 6, par. 17.

†Company L, as part of the Second Infantry 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, G.O. No. 34, page 150.

‡‡‡‡Company L, as part of the Second Infantry Regiment was called into Federal service during the World War, March 26, 1917.

Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 22.

COMPANY L (Continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
E. B. Duncan, Captain	Oct. 2, 1906	Nov. 15, 1906*
Edwin S. Kent, First Lieutenant (term expired)	Nov. 14, 1905	Jan. 3, 1906*
A. F. Nagle, First Lieutenant	Dec. 15, 1908	Jan. 22, 1909
E. B. Duncan, Captain (reelected Apr. 19, 1909) (resigned Apr. 24, 1911)	_____	_____
A. F. Nagle, First Lieutenant (reelected Apr. 19, 1909)	_____	_____
A. F. Nagle, Captain (resigned Aug. 11, 1913)	May 16, 1911	June 23, 1911
L. C. Beer, Captain	Aug. 26, 1913	Oct. 7, 1913
Gordon B. Slater, First Lieut. (resigned Feb. 8, 1915)	May 16, 1911	June 23, 1911
W. W. Martin, First Lieutenant	Mar. 16, 1915	Apr. 26, 1915
J. L. Hippeli, Captain (resigned Aug. 2, 1916)	May 22, 1916	June 5, 1916
W. J. Allison, First Lieutenant	May 22, 1916	June 5, 1916
W. J. Allison, Captain	Oct. 2, 1916	Oct. 4, 1916

**Activities:**

Company L, Second Infantry, stationed at Bakersfield, Kern County, was formerly Company G, Sixth Infantry Regiment organized in Bakersfield, May 25, 1893. On May 11, 1907, in order to comply with an act of Congress, and to the best interests of the service, the Sixth Infantry Regiment was mustered out of service and ceased to exist. Company G was transferred to the Second Infantry and designated Company L.

Company L, in order to become an efficient military organization and to receive instructions in the constantly improving science of modern warfare, attended many encampments from 1907 until the company was called into the World War. These Brigade, Regimental

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\*Captain Duncan and Lieutenant Kent retained their former commissions as of November 15, 1906, and January 3, 1906, respectively, when they commanded Company G, Sixth Infantry.

COMPANY L (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

and Joint Army and Militia Camps of Instruction are as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Month</u>
1907	Fort Miley	July 5 - 20
1908	Atascadero	Oct. 4 - 15
1909	Vallejo	Oct. 11 - 22
1910	Atascadero	Oct. 1 - 15
1912	San Francisco and vicinity	Aug. 11 - 21
1915	Fort Winfield Scott	Aug. 15 - 22

In the compulsory target practice held each year as required by law, Company L remained on an average with the other units of the National Guard, as shown by the following number of qualified marksmen.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Marksmen</u>
1907	29
1909	21
1910	17
1912	18
1915	19

The apparent decrease in the number of qualified shooters each consecutive year was due to the later stringent rules governing target practice and the introduction of new model firearms and ammunition.

Company L was primarily a military organization but they quite often engaged in the civic activities in Bakersfield. On May 30, 1907, the unit participated in the Memorial Day exercises and parade. The procession formed promptly according to the arrangements announced. Major Frank S. Rice, with his assistants, managed the crowd in a very efficient manner. The Assistant Marshals, most of whom were officers of the old Sixth Infantry Regiment, were mounted as were the police officers who headed the procession. Following in order named, were the old Sixth Infantry Band, Company L, Cadet Company A, Huribut Post and Confederate veterans, the Drum Corps, of the San Francisco aerie of Eagles, the State aerie officers and delegates, the Bakersfield aerie and citizens. The exercises at the cemetery were very simple, consisting entirely of the service laid down in the Grand Army ritual. The ritualistic service was carried out by Chaplain Metcalf, Post Commander Lowell and C. A. Maul. A salute was then fired over the graves by a squad of Company L and the decoration of the graves began.\*

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\*Bakersfield Echo, May 31, 1907, page 1, column 5.

COMPANY L (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

Again on May 30, 1909, the honored soldier dead in the Union cemetery, Bakersfield, were paid the annual tribute of deep respect and honor by their surviving comrades, the martial Guardsmen of the present generation, their surviving relatives and the patriotic youth. The ceremonies were taken part in by over thirty of the Grand Army Veterans, and as many members of Company L, in uniform, and many young people, the latter joining with the veterans in garlanding the tombs of the dead heroes with flowers in abundance, a majority of which came from the Tevis ranch at Stockdale. The veterans, under command of H. F. Condict, responded eloquently with the highly fitting rites of the Grand Army of the Republic. Concluding the ceremony, a salute to the dead was fired by Company L, under command of Captain Eugene B. Duncan.\*

On July 30, 1911, the new rifle range of the Fresno militia companies at Laton, was formally opened with a target contest in which members of Companies C and K, of Fresno, and Company M, of Hanford, took part. While the attendance at the shoot was somewhat smaller than was expected, interest in the affair did not lag at any time during the day, and one or two keen contests were staged. About one hundred people witnessed and participated in the various events. Captain A. F. Nagle, of Company L, was the only member of the Bakersfield company present, but he succeeded in getting his share of the honors, two first places. The revolver contest at a range of twenty-five yards, brought out a number of good shots, necessitating some fine shooting to determine the awards. Captain Nagle and Sergeant Fowler, of Fresno, tied for first place with perfect scores of twenty-five each, but the Captain won the shot that broke the tie.\*\*

On September 5, 6, 7, 1914, Company L held their own Camp of Instruction at Tehachapi. The company left Bakersfield on the Southern Pacific No. 8, at 10:45 P.M., September fourth, the company occupying one car which was cut out at Tehachapi, thus enabling the men to get a night's sleep. The first day in camp

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\*Bakersfield Echo, June 1, 1909, page 8, column 2.

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

COMPANY L (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

was devoted to squad and company drill, and instructions in advance guard. The afternoon was devoted to a lecture on internal guard duty and practice exemplification thereof, taking about three hours. Sunday forenoon was devoted to solution of the following problem.

General Situation

The San Joaquin Valley was in the hands of the Red Enemy who had destroyed the Western Pacific and Ogden route, of the Southern Pacific as far as the California-Nevada line and therefore Blue reinforcements can only be rushed from the east by the Santa Fe, Southern Pacific El Paso line and California-Nevada Aqueduct Railroads to the southern part of the State. The x-army corps was located near Mojave, headquarters at Mojave, and was awaiting reinforcements coming over the Aqueduct railroad and Santa Fe, before commencing offensive operations. The first division forms the advance guard, the vanguard thereof, being the First Brigade Organized Militia of California, said advance guard was composed of all arms of the service. Company L was part of the advance party and encamped at the town of Tehachapi.

Special Situation

Information is received from various sources that Red Troops have been seen on the White Wolf Grade moving toward Bealeville and also on the Caliente-Tehachapi. The commander of the Advance Guard decides to send the Seventh Regiment via Cummings Valley road to reconnoiter near Bealeville. Company L is ordered to ascertain the strength and composition of the Red Troops seen near Cable and Walong on the Tehachapi-Caliente road. Problem involved—Method of complying with above order in every detail.

Activities: (continued)

Solution

Company L moved from camp along the road south of the Southern Pacific right-of-way to semaphore 3598, where the commanding officer read the whole problem to the company, explaining to them the method in which the desired information was to be gathered; also determining limit of operations on both north and south and deciding upon rallying point on the Southern Pacific Railroad, where the men were to assemble upon the sounding of recall.

In order to facilitate communications between the various squads on the skirmish line, all sergeants and squad leaders were instructed to blow their whistles five times, which was determined on as being recall. A point was sent forward, also flankers to both north and south, with instructions to deploy in such manner to visualize communication at all times. Deployment was made at three places, scouts north of the railroad track, one near the road running under the Southern Pacific, reported seeing hostile cavalry near the Station Cable. The third squad of scouts to the south of railroad track, reported having been unable to see any hostile forces at any time. The commanding officer determined that the report as to the troops between Walong and Cable did not warrant any further investigation and recall was sounded. The non-commissioned officers made their report in proper form. After resting before returning to camp, about 10:00 A.M., the men were instructed in scouting and the use of cover, using blank cartridges, firing upon outlined hostile forces. This instruction took about an hour and forty-five minutes, return to camp was then made. The afternoon could not be devoted to any lecture as a good part of the men participated in the quenching of heavy brush fire at about five miles northwest of Tehachapi.

COMPANY L (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

The following day, Company L undertook the task of solving a second military problem.

General Situation

Information is received that a machine gun detachment is harassing the company's outposts on the Tehachapi-Old Town road. This hostile machine gun detachment is located somewhere near the Segar Ranch.

Solution

Company L was ordered to find this hostile detachment and silence them. The company marched from their camp along the road south of Tehachapi to intersection 60, of road running west, when they followed this road, throwing out a thin skirmish line as Advance Guard, instructing them to observe along the hills to the south until they could find the location of the hostile detachment. They were seen about 3,000 yards from the point of observation in a small canyon almost due south of the Segar Ranch. The whole company was deployed, instructed to make use of cover until an advance of about 500 yards had been made. The estimation of distance at this halt varied from 2,900 yards to 2,000. The commanding officer decided to determine the actual range by bracketing volleys. First volley at 2,700 yards proved to be too high, the next volley at 2,100 yards too low, volleys at 2,350 yards showed hits. This was determined to be the proper range. Advance was made by rushes, the men firing at will, and absolute fire control obtained during this practice. The company advanced as stated before, until a distance of 400 yards from the targets had been reached, when the signal to cease firing was given.



COMPANY L (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

The target consisted of 4 boards, 5½ feet above ground, 24 inches wide and 24 inches apart. 480 shots were fired and 34 hits found upon the target, 29 of which were clear hits, 5 ricochets. The best firing was done at the effective ranges. After about fifteen minutes rest, the company returned to camp.

Company L was well behaved during the whole camp and the commanding officer had no occasion whatever to reprimand the enlisted men. It was regretted that the camp could not have been held for the rest of the week, as there was no doubt it was of considerable benefit to the command.

From 1910 there was a steady decrease in the membership of Company L, which the commanding officers were unable to stop. On March 13, 1916, when Captain H. A. Hanigan, 22nd Infantry, United States Army, inspector and instructor to the California National Guard, made his inspection of the company, he recommended that Company L be mustered out of service. On March 22, 1916, twenty-two public officials and citizens, of Bakersfield, sent the following petition to Adjutant-General C. W. Thomas, Jr.

"We, the undersigned public officials and citizens of the City of Bakersfield, have been advised that Company L is to be mustered out of the service of the State, unless assurance is given that an effective organization can be reconstructed. It is realized that this company has had a precarious existence during the past few years and it is sincerely regretted that it has become necessary for Captain Hanigan to make an adverse report of its standing. Believing that an effective organization can be evolved, provided it has the united moral and active support of the community at large, we pledge ourselves to that purpose. It is our intention to effect a systematic membership campaign and inject new life into the company. By our continued patronage, we shall endeavor to do our part toward keeping Company L, in a state of proficiency at all times."

The citizens of Bakersfield were unable, however, to recruit sufficient members to bring the company up to the prescribed minimum and on May 22, 1916, Company L was mustered out of the

COMPANY L (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

service of the State. On May 22, 1916, a company of militia, organized at Watsonville, was accepted into the service of the State and designated Company L, Second.

On June 27, 1916, Company L, as part of the Second Infantry was mustered into Federal Service at Sacramento, for duty on the Mexican Border. Company L together with the other units of the regiment, entrained for Nogales, Arizona, June thirtieth, arriving there July third. The Second Infantry did not engage in active service doing only guard and patrol duty until October twenty-third, when they entrained for Los Angeles. Upon arrival in Los Angeles, the Second Infantry encamped at Exposition Park until November 15, 1916, when they were mustered out of Federal service.

Four months later on March 26, 1917, Company L was again called into Federal service for duty during the World War, and attached to the 160th Infantry.\* Company L, Second Infantry Regiment suffered a fate similar to Company and was broken up and its members apportioned to Companies E, F, G and H, 160th Infantry Regiment.

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\*Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 22.