

History of the Company A (Oakland Home Guard), 5th Infantry Regiment, National Guard of California 1885-1917

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COMPANY A

Company A, Fifth Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade (formerly Oakland Home Guard)

Reference: Adjutant General's Files

Location: Oakland, Alameda County

Organized September 1, 1861

Reorganized December 30, 1879*

Reconstituted August 1, 1885**

Reconstituted December 9, 1895***

Mustered into Federal Service June 28, 1916****

Mustered out of Federal Service October 7, 1916*

Resumption of service in the National Guard 1916**

Mustered into Federal service April 8, 1917***

Redesignated September 24, 1917****

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*Company A, formerly Oakland Home Guard, redesignated Company A, Fifth Infantry Battalion, Second Brigade, December 30, 1879.
Adjutant General Report 1880, Special Orders No. 38, 40, page 72.

**Company A, Fifth Infantry Battalion designated Company A, Fifth Infantry Regiment, August 1, 1885. Headquarter Papers, Second Brigade, Special Order No. 44, July 30, 1885.

***Company A, Fifth Infantry Regiment redesignated Company A, Seventh Battalion, December 7, 1895. Two days later, December 9, Company A, Seventh Battalion designated Company A, Fifth Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade.
Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, General Orders No. 17, 18, pages 86, 88.

****Company A, as part of the Fifth Infantry Regiment mustered into Federal service for duty on the Mexican Border, June 28, 1916.
Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 18.

*Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 18.

**General and Special Orders and Bulletins 1916, General Order No. 34, page 150.

***Company A, as part of the Fifth Infantry Regiment was mustered into Federal Service for duty during the World War, April 8, 1917. History 159th Infantry Regiment C.N.G. File 314.7 Adjutant General Office.

****Company A, Fifth Infantry Regiment consolidated with Company I, Fifth Infantry Regiment and designated Company A, 159th Infantry Regiment, 40th Division.
Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 22.

COMPANY A (Continued)

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Name	Rank	Commission
Gilbert B. Daniels, Captain (resigned May 25, 1886)	Apr. 2, 1885	Apr. 17, 1885*
John A. C. Macdonald, First Lieutenant	Apr. 30, 1885	June 8, 1885*
J. B. Lauck, Captain	Aug. 26, 1886	Oct. 16, 1886
B. Y. Morris, First Lieutenant	June 10, 1886	Aug. 18, 1886
J. B. Lauck, Captain (reelected Aug. 30, 1888)		
George C. Pardee, First Lieut.	May 24, 1888	June 14, 1888
George C. Pardee, Captain	Aug. 8, 1889	Sept. 28, 1889
Albert L. Smith, First Lieut.	Aug. 8, 1889	Sept. 28, 1889
Albert L. Smith, Captain	Oct. 9, 1890	Oct. 30, 1890
B. Y. Morris, First Lieut.	Oct. 9, 1890	Nov. 10, 1890
Chas. T. Poulter, Captain	Nov. 10, 1892	Dec. 10, 1892
Isidore L. Cavasso, First Lieut.	Nov. 10, 1892	June 10, 1893
Chas. T. Poulter, Captain (reelected Nov. 15, 1894)		
Isidore L. Cavasso, First Lieut. (reelected Nov. 15, 1894)		
(resigned May 31, 1895)		
Walter J. Petersen, First Lieut.	Aug. 12, 1895	Oct. 11, 1895
(resigned Jan. 7, 1896)		
Chas. T. Poulter, Captain (reelected Nov. 12, 1896)		
Edwin G. Hunt, First Lieut.	Jan. 27, 1896	Mar. 3, 1896
Chas. T. Poulter, Captain (reelected Nov. 10, 1898)		
Edwin G. Hunt, First Lieut. (reelected Mar. 14, 1898)		

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*Captain G. B. Daniels and First Lieutenant J. A. C. Macdonald retained their former commissions as of April 17, 1885, and June 8, 1885 respectively, when they commanded Company A, Fifth Infantry Battalion.

COMPANY A (Continued)

<u>Commanding Officers</u>		
<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Edwin G. Hunt, Captain	Apr. 26, 1900	June 18, 1900
John C. Ellis, First Lieutenant	Apr. 26, 1900	June 18, 1900
Edwin G. Hunt, Captain (reelected May 29, 1902)	_____	_____
F. W. H. Petersen, First Lieut.	May 29, 1902	July 26, 1902
Edwin G. Hunt, Captain (reelected June 23, 1904)	_____	_____
F. W. H. Petersen, First Lieut. (reelected June 23, 1904)	_____	_____
F. W. H. Petersen, Captain	Sept. 14, 1905	Oct. 18, 1905
F. L. Chapman, First Lieut.	Sept. 14, 1905	Oct. 21, 1905
F. L. Chapman, Captain	Nov. 7, 1907	Nov. 30, 1907
James Guy Brown, First Lieut. (resigned May 14, 1908)	Nov. 7, 1907	Nov. 30, 1907
A. J. Wagner, First Lieut.	June 25, 1908	Aug. 3, 1908
F. L. Chapman, Captain (reelected Apr. 26, 1909)	_____	_____
A. J. Wagner, First Lieut. (reelected Aug. 17, 1909) (resigned Aug. 17, 1910)	_____	_____
C. J. Orton, First Lieut.	Sept. 8, 1910	Sept. 22, 1910
C. J. Orton, Captain (resigned Feb. 4, 1911)	Sept. 28, 1911	Oct. 24, 1911
Edwin H. Carr, First Lieut.	Sept. 28, 1911	Oct. 26, 1911
Edwin H. Carr, Captain	Feb. 20, 1913	Apr. 12, 1913
J. C. Bowden, First Lieut. (resigned June 5, 1913)	Feb. 20, 1913	Apr. 12, 1913
Guy W. Hassler, First Lieut.	June 26, 1913	July 3, 1913
Silas H. Hanson, Captain	Mar. 16, 1915	Mar. 18, 1915
Harold H. Hearfield, First Lieut.	June 26, 1916	June 26, 1916

COMPANY A (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

The history of Company A, Fifth Infantry Regiment as a unit in the National Guard of California, covers a period of seventy-six years of unbroken service. This narrative covers the period of its entrance into the newly organized Fifth Infantry Regiment on August 1, 1885, until its redesignation as Company A, 159th Infantry Regiment in 1917, upon its entrance into the United States Army for duty during the World War. At no time was this unit ever disbanded or consolidated with any other unit of the National Guard. Also the unit has always retained the designating letter A, when in the First Infantry in 1869, the Fifth Infantry in 1885, and the 159th Infantry at present.

The first inspection of Company A in the Fifth Regiment was on July 1, 1886, and was conducted by Inspector Lieutenant-Colonel T. H. Allen. Colonel Allen reported the discipline of Company A as fair, instruction and military appearance good, arms and other property in fine condition with an "A No. One" armory. Ten years later, Charles Jansen, Inspector, stated that,

"Company A's Armory of two rooms and one storeroom was not conveniently arranged. State property well taken care of, records excellent, finances \$13.50 on hand. Rent \$50.00 a month, also \$30.00 a month salary for armorer. Drill night Thursday. Officer's meeting once a month, non-commissioned officer's meeting once a month. 75% present at inspection. Company formed on time, formation was good, men were steady in ranks. Company drill was good. Manual good. Company is a fine body of men and made a good appearance. Lieutenants and non-commissioned officers well instructed. Captain Poulter is a good and efficient officer."*

After an elapse of eleven years in 1907, Company A was inspected by Colonel Thomas Wilhelm, United States Army, who reported Company A in the following condition.

The armory was a wooden building, well arranged for military purposes. Target practice held once a month during the target season. Gallery practice held frequently. Very little instruction given in first aid methods, and

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*Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, page 162.

COMPANY A (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

no first aid packages were on hand. The physical appearance and character of this company good. The officers and men are zealous and efficient. The required number of drills in the armory were held and the company also had thirty days of active service at the time of the earthquake in April 1906, also two short practice marches with a good percentage of attendance. The percentage of attendance at inspection and muster was 91.66.

Promptness at roll-call and exercises, good 89.5 %. Discipline, very good 97%. Military appearance, very good 97%. Condition of arms, excellent 100%. Condition of equipment, excellent 100%. Condition of clothing, very good 92.5%. Condition of records, very good 94%. Company movements, very good 92%. Manual of arms and other exercises, very good 90%. General average 94.56%.

Company A of the Fifth Infantry was not an outstanding company at target practice. In 1887, the unit was the third highest company in the National Guard having made a score of 32.67 per cent. After 1887, there are no company comparative records, although medal men were listed each year. In 1891, Company A had three Second Class men and twelve Third Class. Four years later, 1895, Company A increased the number to eleven Second Class and fourteen Third Class men. Fifteen years later, Company A averaged about the same, twenty-one medal men. The years 1913 and 1915 saw the number of medal men drop to 4 each.

The first encampment attended by Company A, Fifth Infantry Regiment was an encampment of the entire division of the National Guard at Santa Cruz. Their next was a brigade encampment held at Healdsburg in 1887, and another brigade encampment was held four years later, 1891 at Santa Cruz. Six regimental encampments were held by the Fifth Infantry Regiment during its existence as such. The first was in 1889 at Santa Cruz and again in 1897. In 1901, another regimental encampment was held at Santa Cruz, in 1902 at Ukiah and Seabright 1909 and 1910.

In 1904, the first Joint National Guard and Regular Army Encampment was held at Atascadero. In 1907 and 1908, Company A participated in joint maneuvers with the Regulars again. In 1912, Company A with the Fifth Infantry Regiment took part once more in the extensive military maneuvers held in the vicinity of

COMPANY A (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

Salinas and South San Francisco by the militia and army. At all these encampments, Company A proved its worth as a member of the National Guard. Aside from the larger camps mentioned above, Company A held over-night encampments with their battalion and frequently by company alone. An idea of the activities of a practice march can be obtained from a few extracts from the report of Captain Leon L. Francis, of Company A, on February 22, 23, 1908. On the morning of the twenty-second, two officers and thirty enlisted men with camping equipment left the armory at eight o'clock A.M., for Moraga Valley, a distance of about nine miles from the armory. The unit marched north on Broadway to Moraga Valley road, a distance of two miles, where the first halt of ten minutes was taken. March was resumed easterly on Moraga Valley road and upon reaching a defile in the hills, disposition was made for the security and information of the company, the entire company being deployed as advance guard with flankers for the protection of an imaginary main body. The march was continued slowly for three miles when a halt was made and instruction in out-post duty was given by the officers. The company then reformed at 10:15 A.M., the march was resumed southerly on Moraga road, about one-sixth of the company being deployed as advance guard for its protection. The men arrived at the camp site at 11:30 o'clock A.M. The camp was called "Camp Gillett" in honor of the Commander-in-Chief.

Wall tents were promptly pitched and arms and equipment placed within them. A guard was placed over the water supply and orders issued as to how it should be used for drinking, cooking and washing purposes. The program for the rest of the day is as follows:

February 22, 1908

12:00 Noon	Mess
1:00 P.M.,	Guard mount.
2:30 P.M.,	First call for estimating distance drill.
2:40 P.M.,	Company assembled including reliefs of guard off duty, and under command of Captain L. C. Francis, was marched about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of camp from which position three points were estimated in the manner prescribed in, Small Arms Firing Regulations, 1906. Some very close and accurate estimating was done by about 20% of the company and much interest was manifested by the men.

COMPANY A (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

3:30 P.M., Company returned to camp.
4:00 P.M., First call for signal drill.
4:10 P.M., Company assembled and instructions given in the use of the Myers Code (daylight signaling.)
5:40 P.M., Guard and company stood retreat as colors were lowered and honors were rendered by officers and men in the prescribed manner.
6:00 P.M., Mess
7:20 P.M., First call for night signal drill.
7:30 P.M., Assembly of company and details of the guard off duty. One detail under a non-commissioned officer was sent out with instruction to take a position on an adjoining hill. Second detail took a position near camp. Instruction was then given in Myers Code, lanterns being used. A great interest was taken in this drill and the men not familiar with the code, learning quite rapidly.
8:30 P.M., Recall
9:45 P.M., Call to quarters.
10:00 P.M., Taps

February 23, 1908

The next morning the usual camp routine was performed of first call, reveille, roll call, mess, fatigue and inspection of quarters.

7:40 A.M., First call for drill.
8:00 A.M., Assembly. Company was deployed in extended order, drill being under command of Lieutenant Wagner.
8:30 A.M., Captain Francis took command and gave instruction in loadings and firings. Next, a drill in attack and defense was held which proved very interesting.
11:00 A.M., Recall was sounded.
11:30 A.M., Mess
12:00 Noon Tents were struck, sinks, latrines and camp thoroughly policed.
12:30 P.M., The return march to the armory.

Captain Francis reported in conclusion that no men were reported sick and that no straggling took place on the march, but thought that if another day or two of camp life would have found many of the men of the company with feet in bad condition for want of proper shoes. He earnestly requested the issuance of proper footwear before the annual encampment.

Activities: (continued)

Practice marches and over-night encampments were credited to the National Guard units at the time of their inspection by the United States mustering and inspection officers. It is very apparent that a camp and march like the one just described would be extremely beneficial to any company of citizen soldiers. The Federal Government also encouraged the holding of battalion encampments of three or four companies under command of a major. They were similiar to the company march and camps, only on a larger scale.

While on the subject of camp life it would be well to relate some of the guard and camp life of Company A, while in the service of the civil authorities. The first is in connection with the railroad strike in July 1894. Regardless of personal convictions and sympathies, the Guardsman is duty bound to preserve order during labor trouble, or violent mass action of any kind. The same is true in calamities such as fire, earthquake and flood.

Company A, therefore was ordered to assemble in their armory on July Fourth 1894, during the railroad strike, and wait for further instructions. On July fifth, Company A was relieved of duty until further notice. One week later, July twelfth, Company A was again ordered to report for duty at their armory in Oakland. On Monday morning, July sixteenth, Company A was ordered to Port Costa, Contra Costa County. The situation at Port Costa was such that Company A could not carry on very long without some assistance as the entire command was doing guard duty and could plan very little relief. On July seventeenth, Company G, of Alameda, joined Company A at Port Costa, followed the next day by Major J. F. Hayes as commanding officer. On July twentieth, Company A was ordered to Alameda Point, where they remained until July twenty-third, when the unit was dismissed from further duty during the railroad strike.*

Their next call for assistance came during the confusion and distress caused by the San Francisco Earthquake of April 18, 1906. At ten o'clock A.M., on that eventful day, Company A established a camp in the City Hall Park in Oakland on orders of Governor George C. Pardee. From April eighteenth to May seventh, Company A

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*For additional information of the activities regarding Company A, during the Railroad Strike, refer to the National Guard and the Railroad Strike, 1894.
Adjutant General's Office.

COMPANY A (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

remained on duty in Oakland under the command of Major E. G. Hunt, Fifth Infantry Regiment. The duty performed by Company A consisted of maintaining order at refugee camps, supply depots, and assisting the local police, especially at night time escorting supply wagons and other similar duties.

Six years went by without any further call for duty during emergencies. Then on July 10, 1913, Company A was ordered to Mill Valley to assist in controlling a brush fire on Mt. Tamalpias, that suddenly threatened Mill Valley, Ross Valley, and other small communities situated on the mountain side. Citizens, sailors, marines, regulars, and eight companies of the Fifth Infantry Regiment spent four strenuous days checking the fire and bringing it under control.*

Three years later, June 28, 1916, Company A, as part of the Fifth Infantry Regiment was mustered into the Federal service for duty along the Mexican Border. No fighting by the National Guardsmen took place while stationed at the border. Company A was stationed at Nogales, Arizona until the latter part of September, when they were returned to Sacramento and mustered out of Federal service on October 7, 1916.

Before closing the last chapter in the history of Company A while in the Fifth Infantry Regiment, a few of the memorial services, parades and social activities of the unit will be enumerated. Only a few can be given however. Funerals of noted persons will be related first. The first of such was that of Senator George Hearst on March 15, 1891. Few people receive such lavish honors as that bestowed on the departed Senator. For two days and nights, a military guard was maintained over the remains as they laid in state at Grace Episcopal Church. In solemn pomp the body was escorted to Laurel Hill cemetery where the remains of journalist, miner and financier were placed in a vault.

On January twenty-second of the same year, Company A participated in services in San Francisco on the returning of the remains of King Kalakaua, of Hawaii, to his home in the Islands.

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*Oakland Enquirer, July 11, 1913, page 2, columns 4, 5, 6, 7.

Activities: (continued)

The King came to the United States a few weeks previous, hoping to regain his lost health.

On January 12, 1902, Company A took part in the funeral procession of Adjutant-General W. H. Seamans, National Guard of California, who died in Washington, D.C., while there on official business. The service was under the supervision of the George H. Thomas Post, Grand Army of the Republic, of which General Seamans was a member. The ritual observed the simple but very impressive ceremony of the Grand Army of the Republic. The Adjutant-General's body was borne to the cemetery at the Presidio, San Francisco where after a brief prayer, a firing squad gave a farewell salute and the bugler sounded taps. Another of California's Adjutant-Generals to pass away while holding office was Brigadier-General E. A. Forbes who died on June 18, 1915. Two days later, Company A participated in the funeral services for the departed General in San Francisco.

Again on September 19, 1901, Company A participated in memorial services for William McKinley, who had been assassinated. Similar services were held throughout the United States. In Oakland, the carriage in which the President had been driven through the streets of Oakland a few months previous, was used as the nucleus for the parade. It was the only vehicle in the procession and drawn by six black horses. It was the most imposing yet gloomy cortege to ever march the streets of Oakland. All business activities in Oakland ceased and solemn respect was paid to the martyred President.*

Another ceremony that was memorial in character was the unveiling of the monument erected in memory of the sinking of the Battleship Maine in Havana harbor in 1898. A torpedo port casting taken from the ill-fated Maine was the main feature of the monument. The torpedo case was awarded to Oakland by the Navy Department on the earnest solicitation of Senator Perkins, Congressman Knowland, the Park Commissioners and members of the Spanish-American veteran organizations. The ceremony started with a parade in which Company A took part. The exercises at the unveiling opened with music by the United States Navy Band.

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*Oakland Enquirer, September 19, 1901, page 2, columns 1, 2, 3.

Activities: (continued)

Then followed an address by B. A. Forsterer, department commander of the Spanish War Veterans, who recalled briefly the disaster which attended the Maine, and the horrible fate which many of the men aboard her, met. He requested that the Maine be remembered, not in a spirit of vengeance, but in a spirit of patriotism that would always be tempered with sympathy, yet would take to the field and fight in defense of the United States and its institutions. A poem by comrade H. O. Huber had a thrilling effect on the audience. Another speech by Major R. J. Faneuf followed the reading of the poem. Next came the invocation by Reverend J. P. McQuaide, past Chaplain Spanish War Veterans, which was ardent and tender. Then F. F. Spooner, a survivor of the Maine, gently drew the veil which lay over the monument.*

Not all the parades that Company A participated in were solemn. One of their first parades was on July 5, 1886, in celebration of the 110th Anniversary of American Independence. On April 25, 1891, Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States visited San Francisco and Company A journeyed to San Francisco to help swell the military in the parade in honor of the Nation's Chief Executive.

Then ten years later on May 14, 1901, another President visited San Francisco when William McKinley was guest of the city. An unusually large number of people waited for hours to get a glimpse of their Chief Executive. An estimated 75,000 people attempted to hear the President when he spoke at the Ferry Building. Unknown to that audience was the fact that an assassin's bullet would forever silence the voice they were so anxious to hear that day.**

Just two years later, May 14, 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt, while touring the United States, visited San Francisco. Again Company A crossed San Francisco Bay to join in a gigantic military parade in honor of the President. In May 1911, President William Howard Taft visited San Francisco. On the fourteenth, another military parade was held as part of the program for his reception.

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*Oakland Enquirer, February 17, 1913, page 1, columns 2, and 3; page 2, column 3.

**San Francisco Examiner, May 15, 1901, pages 1 - 3.

Activities: (continued)

Besides the parades on the thirtieth of May of each year in which Company A and the local Grand Army of the Republic Post joined in honoring their deceased members, Company A participated in three Grand Army of the Republic encampment parades. The first was on August 3, 1886, at the twentieth annual encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic in San Francisco.* The second encampment was in August 1903, and again on the eighteenth, Company A joined in a parade in honor of the boys of '61. The third was on April 22, 1910, at which date the ranks of the Grand Army of the Republic were beginning to show the effect of time, as many who had attended previous encampments were missing.

A few additional special parades will be mentioned here. One was the occasion of the visit of the Atlantic fleet in San Francisco on May 7, 1908. Brigadier-General J. A. Koster, National Guard of California was grand marshall of the parade which proved to be an unusually large one. Every available soldier at the Presidio and the forts was in line, and a provisional regiment, the Fifth Infantry Regiment, Signal Corps and Naval Reserves of the National Guard of California was also in the parade. "Fighting Bob Evans," commanding the Atlantic Fleet was the recipient of tremendous applause all along the line of march.** Again on May 9, 1908, which was Oakland's day to honor the fleet and its commander, also Secretary of the Navy, Victor H. Metcalf, Company A, as part of the Fifth Infantry paraded in Oakland.

On September ninth, Company A frequently paraded in honor of the admission of California into the Union. On September 9, 1900, the Fiftieth Anniversary was celebrated with a big military and civic parade in San Francisco in which the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West were in charge. Regulars, Sailors and National Guardsmen furnished the military division of the parade, while fraternal organizations and floats comprised the remainder of the procession. Thirteen years later, in honor of California's admission to the Union, Company A again paraded with the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West. This time the parade was held in Oakland, and an estimated 20,000

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*San Francisco Chronicle, August 4, 1886, page 1, columns 1 - 9.

**San Francisco Examiner, May 8, 1908, pages 1, 4.

Activities: (continued)

people marched in the procession.

The Fourth of July usually was the occasion for Company A to parade. Frequently the unit visited and celebrated in some neighboring city, but on July Fourth 1915, Company A and the other units of the Fifth Infantry Regiment combined to give to the City of Oakland a splendid contribution in its Independence day parade. One correspondent stated that soldiers, sailors, bands, and floats, Grand Army Veterans and Knights Templar, noted men and women in decorated autos and marching organizations of every kind were in line. Oakland and Alameda County resources were pictured in brilliant floats. Pretty girls represented different sections of the city in beribboned and beflowered auto and barge floats. Altogether it was one of Oakland's most unique parades.*

Very few social activities are recorded concerning Company A. On February 9, 1899, Company A entertained many members of the former Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Regiments of the California Volunteers at a regular meeting. Company A as a unit, did not enter the Spanish-American War in 1898 with the other companies of the Fifth Regiment. No reason was given as to why Company A was one of the few companies that did not enter the Federal service at that time. On February 21, 1899, Company A held their third reunion of former members of the company. The getting together of the old members and the new members of a military company is always interesting and profitable to all concerned.

On February 19, 1912, a fire destroyed the armory of Companies A and F, Fifth Infantry Regiment in Oakland. Most of the equipment of the companies was badly damaged or destroyed. The origin of the fire could not be ascertained.

And now for the closing chapter of the history of Company A, Fifth Infantry Regiment. It begins with the calling of Company A, as part of the Fifth Infantry Regiment into the Federal service for duty during the World War on March 26, 1917. The unit was

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*Oakland Tribune, July 5, 1915. page 1, column 3, and 4.

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Activities: (continued)

ordered to guard duty protecting property of factories, railroads, munition supply agencies from sabotage by enemies of allies associated with this country.

The latter part of August, Company A was ordered to Camp Kearney, Linda Vista, California, where after further rigid inspection and recruiting, Company A, Fifth Infantry Regiment was consolidated with Company I, Fifth Infantry Regiment, redesignated Company A, 159th Infantry on September 24, 1917.* For additional information concerning the activities of this unit, refer to History of Company A, 159th Infantry, 40th Division.

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*Adjutant General Report 1920-1926, page 24.