

History of the 6th Infantry Regiment, National Guard of California 1888-1907

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SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT

Sixth Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade

Reference: Adjutant General's Files

Location: Stockton, San Joaquin County

Organized February 21, 1888*

Reconstituted December 9, 1895**

Mustered into Federal Service May 11, 1898***

Mustered out of Federal Service December 15, 1898+

Reorganized as Sixth Infantry Regiment April and May 1899++

Mustered out May 11, 1907+++

<u>Commanding Officers</u>			<u>Commission</u>
<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>		
Eugene Lehe, Colonel	Feb. 21, 1888		Mar. 26, 1888
John J. Nunan, Lieut. Colonel	Feb. 21, 1888		Mar. 26, 1888
Stuart S. Wright, Major	Nov. 23, 1887		Dec. 5, 1887++++
Frank E. Dunlap, Captain Adjutant (Removed Mar. 1, 1889)	Mar. 29, 1887		April 6, 1887++++
R. E. Murray, Captain Adjutant	Mar. 1, 1889		Mar. 12, 1889
Henry E. Snow, Major Surgeon	Jan. 25, 1889		Feb. 13, 1889

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*Adjutant General Report 1887-1888, page 3.

**The Sixth Infantry Regiment formed from the consolidation of the Ninth and Tenth Infantry Battalions, December 7, 1895. Two days later, December 9, the Ninth and Tenth Battalions were redesignated Sixth Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade.
Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, Special Order Nos. 17, 18, pages 87, 88.

***Sixth Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade mustered into Federal Service during the Spanish-American War May 11, 1898.
Adjutant General Report 1896-1898, page 8.

+Adjutant General Report 1899-1900, pages 5, 6.

++The Sixth Infantry Regiment re-entered the National Guard of California during April and May 1899.
Adjutant General Report 1899-1900, page 59.

+++Adjutant General Report 1907-1908, page 3.

++++Major S. S. Wright and Captain Adjutant Frank E. Dunlap retained their former commissions as of December 5, 1887, and April 6, 1887, respectively, when they were members of the Sixth Infantry Battalion, Third Brigade.

SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Commanding Officers (Continued)</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
John J. Nunan, Colonel		Dec. 13, 1892	Jan. 10, 1893
Stuart S. Wright, Lieut. Colonel		Dec. 13, 1892	Jan. 10, 1893
Colin Chisholm, Major		Dec. 13, 1892	Jan. 10, 1893
Charles H. Bulson, Major		July 4, 1893	July 29, 1893
Othello Scribner, Captain Adjutant		Aug. 18, 1891	Aug. 21, 1891
Francis M. Spongole, Major Surgeon		May 26, 1890	June 4, 1890
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John J. Nunan, Colonel			
(Re-elected 1896)			
(Retired 1897)			
Stuart S. Wright, Colonel		Feb. 15, 1897	Mar. 15, 1897
Stuart S. Wright, Lieut. Colonel			
(Re-elected 1896)			
(Promoted to Colonel)			
Colin Chisholm, Lieut. Colonel		Feb. 15, 1897	Mar. 15, 1897
(Retired)			
W. R. Johnson, Lieut. Colonel		Jan. 5, 1898	Feb. 19, 1898
Colin Chisholm, Major			
(Re-elected 1896)			
(Promoted to Lieut. Colonel)			
(Retired)			
Gus G. Grant, Major*		Dec. 23, 1895	Feb. 17, 1896
Richard K. Whitmore, Major*		Feb. 15, 1897	Mar. 1897
Othello Scribner, Captain Adjutant			
(Retired 1896)			
Philip N. Russell, Major Surgeon		Feb. 20, 1896	April 4, 1896
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William R. Johnson, Colonel		Sept. 30, 1899	Nov. 6, 1899
Gus G. Grant, Lieut. Colonel		Sept. 30, 1899	Nov. 6, 1899
(Died Mar. 28, 1903)			
Richard K. Whitmore, Lieut. Colonel		June 3, 1903	July 14, 1903
George W. Jones, Major		Sept. 30, 1899	Nov. 6, 1899
Richard K. Whitmore, Major			
(Re-elected May 18, 1901)			
(Promoted to Lieut. Colonel			
July 14, 1903)			
George W. Stewart, Major		July 10, 1901	July 24, 1901
David William Morris, Major		June 3, 1903	July 14, 1903
Frederick W. Ward, Captain Adjutant		Nov. 25, 1899	Oct. 19, 1901
Philip N. Russell, Major Surgeon			
(Re-elected Nov. 22, 1897)			

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*Majors Gus G. Grant and Richard K. Whitmore mustered in at San Francisco, May 10, 1898, as California Volunteers during the Spanish-American War.

SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Commanding Officers (Continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Richard K. Whitmore, Colonel	Oct. 7, 1903	Nov. 25, 1903
George W. Stewart, Lieut. Colonel	Oct. 7, 1903	Nov. 25, 1903
Edward Jones, Major (Re-elected July 14, 1906)	May 23, 1902	June 10, 1902
Paul M. Norbe, Major	Oct. 7, 1903	Nov. 25, 1903
Arthur S. Crites, Major	July 14, 1906	Aug. 17, 1906
Frederick W. Ward, Captain Adjutant (Resigned July 21, 1903)		
Lucas C. Beer, Captain Adjutant	June 8, 1903	Aug. 1, 1903
Philip N. Russell, Major Surgeon (Re-elected 1903)		

Activities:

Prior to December 1887, the Sixth Infantry Battalion was composed of four Companies, A and B of Stockton, D of Modesto and E of Visalia. Company E of Visalia was organized December 9, 1887, and Company F of Fresno January 25, 1888, and were attached to the battalion. These two additional units together with the four already in the battalion increased the numerical strength sufficiently to warrant a regimental organization. In accordance, the Sixth Infantry Regiment was organized February 21, 1888, and retained the same number of companies until 1893. During that year, Company G of Bakersfield and Company H of Merced organized and attached to the regiment in accordance with an act of the Legislature which authorized the mustering in of ten companies to the National Guard service. In 1900, Company I of Hanford was organized which increased the number of companies in the regiment to nine. The table on the following page indicates the number of companies and the various changes and designations in the units of the Sixth Infantry Regiment.

The first change in the regiment came in 1906 when Company B of Stockton was mustered out for inefficiency, having fallen below the required military standard. An election for field officers was held February 21, 1888, with Major D. S. Woods, Judge-Advocate of the Third Brigade presiding. Lieutenant-Colonel Eugene Lehe of Stockton was unanimously elected Colonel. Colonel Lehe was an officer with a splendid service record, having commenced his military career as a bugler in the United States Army in 1861 and had served in every capacity from bugler up to Colonel. He was Captain of Company A of Stockton for several years, was elected Major of the battalion of the two Stockton companies; promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel when the Sixth Infantry Battalion was increased to three and four companies; and was appointed Brigadier-General of the Third Brigade by Governor Bartlett. Colonel Lehe resigned from this latter commission after a few weeks service, for the more active position of Lieutenant-Colonel of the battalion. Captain John J. Nunan of Company B was elected Lieutenant-Colonel without a dissenting voice. Major Stuart S. Wright had received his commission November 23, 1887.

COMPANIES COMPOSING THE SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT, THIRD BRIGADE

1888-1907

A	B	C	D	E
Company A (formerly Company A, 6th Infantry Battalion) <u>1888</u>	Company B (formerly Company B, 6th Infantry Battalion) <u>1888</u>	Company C (formerly Company C, 6th Infantry Battalion) <u>1888</u>	Company D (formerly Company D, 6th Infantry Battalion) <u>1888</u>	Company E (formerly Company E, 6th Infantry Battalion) <u>1888</u>
F	G	H	I	Signal Corps
Company F (formerly Company F, 6th Infantry Battalion) <u>1888</u>	Company G <u>1893</u>	Company H <u>1893</u>	Company I <u>1900</u>	Signal Corps <u>1887</u>

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

SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

The regimental headquarters of the Sixth Infantry Regiment was located at Stockton, the Regimental Adjutant at Fresno, while the Regimental Sergeant Major was at Modesto. The wide separation of the Colonel from his assistants was the cause of much criticism during the existence of the regiment. The Inspection and Mustering Officers contended that this condition had a detrimental effect on the administration of the regiment, particularly in reference to the correspondence.

The Sixth Infantry Regiment participated in the annual encampments held through the years of the regiment's existence. The first camp attended was in 1889 when a general encampment of the entire Guard was held. Santa Cruz was the site chosen and the regiment remained in camp from the eleventh to the eighteenth of August. In 1891 Colonel Eugene Lehe commanded the regiment which consisted of 600 officers and men at "Camp Allen." Captain J. J. O'Connell, First Infantry, United States Army was detailed by the Secretary of War as Inspecting and Instructing officer. Captain O'Connell reported on the regiment as follows:*

"The rank and file of the Sixth Infantry Regiment was excellent, the men having been selected from the best and most intelligent citizens in the town and country in which the regiment was located. The military bearing of the men was remarkably fine and in harmony with the high order of intelligence and superior social standing. The regiment possessed a great advantage in having for its Adjutant a retired army officer who was not only efficient but interested in the welfare of the organization. The beneficial results of his tireless energy were very obvious in drills, guard duty, military etiquette and in the internal economy of companies of the regiment."

An outstanding feature of the regimental encampment which was held at Santa Cruz from August 6 to 14, 1892, was that the companies, for the first time, were attired in campaign uniform. These uniforms in addition to conforming with the military regulations, added greatly to the comfort and appearance of the men. During the encampment Governor H. H. Markham and Admiral Irwin, United States Navy, reviewed the troops. A second regimental encampment was held at Stockton for eight days in June 1894. This period of time was set aside for better knowledge of drill and discipline. That the Sixth Infantry benefited from camp

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*Adjutant General Report 1891-1892, page 167.

SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

training was evident from a comparison of the time it took to answer the reveille call at the 1891 and 1897 encampments. During the former camp, forty minutes elapsed between the sounding of the assembly and the time when the Adjutant of the Sixth Infantry received his final report from the company commanders. Whereas, at Camp Budd in 1897, six companies out of eight were in the line at the sounding of the assembly and the last report received by the Adjutant did not exceed ten minutes after the call.*

Merced was the site chosen for the regimental camp in 1902. The activities participated in consisted of company, battalion and regimental drills in both the extended and close order, guard duty, regimental parades, reviews and guard mounts each day; and on one day a problem in minor tactics was solved in a very satisfactory manner. The principle reason for the small average attendance of 54.43 per cent was due to the fact that the majority of the men were working in the harvest fields in the valley. Discipline in the camp was excellent, but five were arrested for minor offenses on the last night in camp. The regiment spent considerably less money than was set aside for the expense of the encampment, and Colonel W. R. Johnson recommended that the difference be equally distributed to the several companies in lieu of the personal expenses incurred by them.

The last encampment attended by the regiment before being mustered out was at Camp Atascadero in August 1904. This encampment of joint maneuvers with the regulars was held in accordance with the "Dick" Militia Act. The Sixth Infantry Regiment was composed of thirty-seven officers and 309 men under command of Colonel R. K. Whitmore. Colonel Whitmore reported that the command acquitted themselves in a very creditable manner, despite the fact that the work involved in the problems was entirely new to most of the enlisted men.

The Sixth Infantry Regiment was called July 3, 1894, for duty in connection with the Railroad Strike. Companies A and B of Stockton, under command of Major C. H. Bulson, arrived in Sacramento on the morning of July Fourth. The two companies remained on duty in Sacramento from July Fourth to July fifteenth, and at Dunsmuir from July fifteenth to July twenty-fifth. Lieutenant-Colonel S. S. Wright was ordered to assemble Companies E, F, and G for duty at Sumner, Kern County. The activities of the regiment during the Strike consisted of guarding trains, roundhouse, depot and bridges and searching property for concealed fire arms. Colonel J. J. Nunan, commander

SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

of the Sixth Infantry during the Strike, won for himself high commendation for his able and efficient work throughout the Strike controversy. Brigadier-General M. W. Muller reported that the members of the companies were worthy of special mention for the manner in which discipline was maintained and for the prompt and cheerful manner in which all orders were obeyed.

During the Railroad Strike, the need of a complete reorganization of the National Guard was apparent. Consequently, on December 7, 1895, the Guard was organized into twelve battalions and remained so for two days when it was reduced to five regiments of infantry. In accordance with the recommendations of the Board of Location and Organization on December seventh, the Sixth Infantry Regiment was consolidated into two battalions of four companies each. Two days later the battalions were again organized into the Sixth Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade. One of the conditions corrected was that many of the officers of high rank were eliminated which relieved the Guard from being "top heavy." The National Guard from the period of organization had too many commanding officers in comparison with the number of enlisted men. However, the officers and men of the Sixth Infantry Regiment disapproved of Colonel J. J. Nunan being deprived of his command, contending that in as much as the regiment underwent no change during the reorganization that there was no cause for Colonel Nunan's removal.* Despite the protest, however, an election was held December twenty-third, when Colonel Nunan was again re-elected to his previous post. He continued in this capacity until his retirement February 4, 1897.

To test the efficiency of the reorganization of the National Guard, an Emergency Call was issued on March 6, 1896, ordering the companies to report to their respective armories. The Sixth Infantry Regiment received their call at 3:00 P. M., on the sixth through Brigadier-General Muller from headquarters at Fresno to appear in their armories prepared for field service by 8:00 P.M. The equipment was to consist of light marching uniforms, with blankets slung over the shoulder and canteen and haversack hung by the side. The demonstration was to illustrate the promptitude with which the Guardsmen could be mobilized on short notice to repel an invasion or quell a riot should the occasion arise. Colonel J. J. Nunan reported the Sixth Infantry Regiment made a splendid showing, the companies responding before the allotted time with well filled ranks. Those who did not answer the roll

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*San Francisco Examiner, December 16, 1895, page 2, column 3.

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SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

call were either sick, out of town, or unavoidably prevented from being present. Several of the men were unable to enter the ranks on account of illness but "showed up" at the armory to lend their support.*

The Legislature of 1887 appropriated \$3,500.00 for the promotion of target practice which was half the amount allowed by law. The Sixth Infantry Regiment having been organized early in 1888 benefited from this appropriation. The military authorities decided to use part of the amount for the purchase of State decorations to be awarded to those making a certain percentage. The law required that practice shoots be held annually in September. A circular bronze medal with a bear's head in the center, with suitable inscriptions around the margin and on the back was adopted. To denote the standing the soldier had attained during the year the words "Sharpshooter," "Rifleman," or "Marksman" was inscribed on the gold, silver or bronze bars which was attached to the medal. The percentage required to entitle the soldier to one of the decorations was purposely placed low, in order to encourage those who had not given much attention to target practice. The Sixth Infantry Regiment as part of the Third Brigade received a portion of the 5,000 rounds of ammunition allowed by the Federal Government for emergency purposes. The regiment also received their allotment of the 3,000 McKeever cartridge boxes, with waist belts and bayonet scabbards which had been requisitioned from the United States Government.

In 1889 the system of holding target practice was changed by a Legislative Act. Under this ruling two days practice a year was required instead of one; each officer and enlisted man being required to fire ten shots, as an inducement for the men to come out and take part in both day's practice, a prize consisting of a silver medal struck with a die similar to what the State decoration for "Marksmanship" was made with, was awarded. The medal was also to have a pin and ribbon attached, and other additional ornamentations.

The system of theoretical instruction and gallery practice, as outlined in the regulations governing the National Guard of California which was issued in 1889, greatly improved the target practice scores. The Sixth Infantry Regiment had two members who scored over 80 in the 1892 practices and were entitled to medals for Second-class "Marksmanship," while 102 met the Third-class

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*Stockton Evening Mail, March 6, 1896, page 1, column 3.

SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

requirements. In 1894 Major C. Chisholm of the Staff with a score of 84, received the Second-class medal as did eleven members of the various companies attached to the regiment. Five of the staff during the same year scored Third-class honors and 104 members of the companies also netted Third-class medals. From this summary an improvement in shooting over the preceding year is apparent. A greater improvement was noted in the reports for the following year when one of the staff with a score of 90 was in the First-class and four made the Second-class. Twenty-one members of the different companies also made the Second-class. Three of the staff were in the Third-class and 140 from the companies made the Third-class for that year. During the period from 1896 to 1898, the distance of ranges had been increased from 200 yard ranges to 300 and 500 yards. Practical results had also been realized from skirmish firing at silhouette targets. The cost of reloading the ammunition had been reduced from \$17.50 to \$12.00 per thousand.

In 1901 the firing regulations for small arms was changed. The most important change was in the adoption of the figure targets as used by the United States Army instead of the Blunt target previously used. The following year even more stringent requirements were necessary for qualification for target shooting. Difficulty was experienced in promoting target practice due to insufficient appropriation by the Legislature. Previous to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, the number of rounds required to be used by each man firing with the rifle was increased from twenty to sixty-five and for those firing with a revolver from twenty to forty. This ruling increased the amount of ammunition to be used more than three times the former amount for which no appropriation had been made. With the passage of the "Dick" Militia Law in 1903 the Springfield rifles caliber 45, owned by the National Guard, were exchanged for the regular 30 caliber United States magazine rifle. The exchange was responsible for the lowered scores in target practice and the exchange also necessitated different ranges. The United States Government required that the National Guard have sufficient practice in the use of the new arms to enable them to shoot with a fair degree of accuracy at from 200 to 1,000 yards. In 1902, the firing regulations for small arms was amended. The classification for those firing with a rifle was as follows:

A distinguished Sharpshooter had to make							
a total annual score at the three ranges of 200							
Riflemen	"	"	"	"	"	"	160
Marksmen	"	"	"	"	"	"	130

SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

The National Rifle Match held at Sea Girt, New Jersey, August 24 to September 2, 1905, was an incentive for diligent practice by the Guardsmen during that year. There is no record on file of the Sixth Infantry Regiment participating and it is assumed that after the Spanish-American War that the regiments interest in target practice had deteriorated.

On April 23, 1898, the President issued a call for troops of volunteer for the Spanish-American War. The Sixth Infantry Regiment with eight companies was mustered into service at San Francisco May 11, 1898. Lieutenant-Colonel William R. Johnson was in command of the regiment which numbered 672 officers and men. The regiment went into camp at the Presidio until June 14, 1898, when headquarters and Companies C and G were ordered to take station at Benicia Barracks. On June tenth, Company F went into camp at Santa Cruz, guarding the California Powder Works. On June ninth, Company A went on duty at Alcatraz Island; the other companies going to Fort Point, San Francisco. The entire regiment was concentrated at Fort Point, September tenth, and on October eleventh was furloughed for one month, and mustered out December 15, 1898. During the term of service the regiment lost three men by disease and one by suicide. In compliance with the Act of the Legislature approved March 21, 1899, the companies of the Sixth Infantry Regiment had re-entered the National Guard before the 150 day limit had expired and were entitled to the military allowance from the State.* The Sixth Infantry Regiment was allowed one ring inscribed "Spanish-American War 1898" on the pike of their National Colors as a reward for meritorious service in the war.

The accumulation of ammunition while the companies were engaged in the United States Volunteer service was a valuable asset to the Guard. This supply was used advantageously for the target practices for two years following the war.

The average percentage of attendance and numerical strength of the Sixth Infantry Regiment over the existence of the regiment was as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage of Attendance</u>	<u>Strength</u>
1889	73.01	490
1890	72.16	513
1894	89.03	447
1897		512
1902		535
1904		488
1906	-000-	518

*Adjutant General Report 1899-1900, General Order No. 6, pages 58, 59.

SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

From a survey of the Inspection Reports, it is noted that during the regiment's history the discipline of the Field Staff and Band was excellent, instruction good, military appearance excellent as well as the condition and care of the arms and other property. The Regimental Staff also maintained a high average of members present at the annual Inspections and Muster. The regiment reached the peak of its numerical strength in 1902 which was soon after Company I of Hanford was organized and attached to the regiment. In 1904, the number had dropped to 488, but that the commanding officers made a valiant effort to recuperate the command to its former strength was evident from the 1906 Inspection Report which showed 518 on the rolls. However, with the mustering out of Company B later in 1906, the regiment's efficiency rapidly diminished.

The "Dick" Militia Act which became a law January 21, 1903, was responsible for many changes in the National Guard. One of the provisions of the Act was the inspection of the companies by an officer of the Regular Army detailed by the Secretary of War. The allowance from the Federal Government depended upon the report of this inspection. In accordance with the new law in 1904, joint maneuvers with the United States troops at Atascadero, San Luis Obispo County, were held by the National Guard. Major General Arthur Macarthur, commander of Pacific Division, United States Army, was in charge. The result of this encampment brought to light the defects of the organization of the Guard and the companies that could not meet with the rigid inspection requirements were mustered out. The object of the "Dick" Militia Act was to have the National Guard conform as nearly as possible to that of the Regular Army.

The last major activity participated in by the regiment prior to being mustered out of service was the Earthquake of April 1906, in San Francisco. The Sixth Infantry Regiment, consisting of nine companies, were ordered to the scene on April twentieth and remained on duty until May nineteenth. During that time, the regiment assisted the civil authorities in conjunction with the regular troops in preserving order in both the burned and unburned districts. The Sixth Infantry Regiment was commended for their conduct and performance of duties during the catastrophe.

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SIXTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

Three companies of the Sixth Infantry Regiment were found below the standard of efficiency at the annual inspection in 1907. The mustering out of these companies together with the company mustered out the previous year was the direct cause for the disbandment of the regiment. On the recommendation of the Board of Location and Organization the Sixth Infantry Regiment ceased to exist May 11, 1907.* The five remaining companies were transferred and redesignated as units of the Second Infantry, Third Brigade.

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*Adjutant General Report 1907-1908, page 3.