

EIGHTH INFANTRY REGIMENT

Eighth Infantry Regiment, Fifth Brigade (formerly Eighth Infantry Battalion)

Reference: Adjutant General's Files
 Location: Chico, Butte County
 Organized February 15, 1890*
 Reconstituted October 31, 1891**
 Reconstituted December 9, 1895***

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Park Henshaw, Colonel	Oct. 31, 1891	Nov. 2, 1891
R. A. Gray, Lieut. Colonel	Oct. 31, 1891	Nov. 2, 1891
George B. Baldwin, Major (Resigned Dec. 5, 1894)	Oct. 31, 1891	Nov. 2, 1891
Marion Pirkey, Major	Oct. 31, 1895	Dec. 10, 1895
Oscar E. Graves, Major	Oct. 31, 1895	Dec. 10, 1895
Joseph H. Gunby, Captain Adjutant	Mar. 4, 1891	Mar. 11, 1891
Elmer E. Stone, Major Surgeon	May 24, 1892	June 9, 1892

Activities:

The Eighth Infantry Regiment was organized October 31, 1891, with the addition of the newly organized company at Oroville, to the five companies comprising the Eighth Infantry Battalion. The companies retained the same letter designation in the regiment as formerly used in the battalion. The number of companies in the regiment were increased by the organization of Company G of Willows, Glenn County, May 27, 1893. The table on the following page indicates the number of companies and the various changes and designations in the units of the Eighth Infantry Regiment. The Field Staff and non-commissioned Staff Officers numbered fifteen and the band also had fifteen members. Park Henshaw was elected Colonel and R. A. Gray of Colusa, Lieutenant-Colonel. Captain Baldwin of Company C, Eighth Infantry Battalion was elected Major. The officers were elected by ballot from the

-oOo-

*Adjutant General Report 1890, page 4.

**Adjutant General Report 1891-1892, General Order No. 17, page 88. (provides for organization of Eighth Infantry Regiment.)

Adjutant General Report 1891-1892, page 40. (The rank date of Colonel Park Henshaw, October 31, 1891, is to be used as the date of organization of Eighth Infantry Regiment.)

***Eighth Infantry Regiment designated Twelfth Infantry Battalion, December 7, 1895. Two days later, December 9, Twelfth Infantry Battalion redesignated Eighth Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade. Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, General Order Nos. 17, 18, pages 87, 88.

COMPANIES COMPOSING THE EIGHTH INFANTRY REGIMENT, FIFTH BRIGADE

1891 - 1895

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Company A (Formerly Chicco Guard unattached) <u>1891</u>	Company B (Formerly Colusa Guard unattached) <u>1891</u>	Company C (Formerly Company C, Eighth In- fantry Bat- tallion) <u>1891</u>	Company D (Formerly Company D, Eighth Infantry Battallion) <u>1891</u>	Company E (Formerly Company E, Eighth Infantry Battallion) <u>1891</u>	Company F (Formerly Company F, Eighth Infantry Battallion) <u>1891</u>	Company G <u>1892</u>

Note: The year dates in the table indicate the year the Companies were attached to the Eighth Infantry Regiment, Fifth Brigade.

EIGHTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

commissioned officers of the several companies. The Board of Examiners who examined the newly elected officers were composed of Adjutant General C. C. Allen, Brigadier-General J. W. B. Montgomery and Lieutenant-Colonel H. T. Batchelder. Preceding the election, Company A gave a very creditable exhibition drill which lasted about half an hour.*

The first month the regiment was in existence the returns show 349 members present for drills during the month, averaging an attendance of 81.25 per cent. By March 1892, the numerical strength had increased to 362 and the percentage present to 87.33 per cent. The Eighth Infantry Regiment with the above rating was credited with the highest rating of any regiment in the Guard for the month of March. In addition to the excellent monthly returns the regiment maintained an enviable record at the Annual Inspection and Muster throughout the regiment's existence. The following table shows the outstanding record made:

Year	Numerical strength	Percentage present	Average merit
1892	389	100	5.03
1893	389	100	5.56
1894	543	100	—

The increased numerical strength between the 1893 and 1894 Inspection was due to the mustering in of Company G of Willows. Colonel Park Henshaw, commander of the Eighth Infantry, commended the Captain of the different companies for their support in enabling the regiment to have the enviable record of a 100 per cent attendance at the annual Inspection and Muster during 1892. In his remarks he contended it was necessary to continue to practice and drill to retain the position they then held. It was the Colonel's ambition to have the Eighth Infantry Regiment qualify for the honors of representing the National Guard of California in the military display to be held at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. Two of the provisions of eligibility for the attending members were three months previous training experience and the necessity of six companies reporting with at least fifty men and three officers. Inasmuch as the trip would not cost the participants any money and transportation and subsistence would be furnished, Colonel Henshaw exhorted the company commanders to recruit their

-000-

*Chico Weekly Chronicle-Record, November 7, 1891, page 1, column 4.

EIGHTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

companies to at least seventy members and to practice diligently to have the honor of attending. Although a bill was introduced for an appropriation by the Legislature, it did not pass and the Eighth Infantry was not able to attend the Exposition.*

Before attending the Divisional Encampment at Santa Cruz in 1892, the Eighth Infantry Regiment on June seventeenth held a battalion drill in Marysville. The visitors were entertained at breakfast in the U. S. Hotel. At 10:00 A.M., the six companies of the regiment assembled at the Armory and marched to the open ground south of Arcadian Park. Among the following officers present were Brigadier-General Montgomery; Majors H. V. Reardon of Oroville; and F. H. Greeley of Marysville; Colonel Park Henshaw of Chico; Lieutenant-Colonel Gray of Colusa; Major Elmer E. Stone; Lieutenant W. H. Parks; Chief musician, L. Neubarth of Chico; and Lieutenant Cone of Red Bluff, members of the Colonel's staff. All the cross-order battalion formations were executed in a very satisfactory manner, considering that it was the first time that the officers and men had an opportunity of practicing this drill as a battalion since the drill regulations were changed. Major Baldwin was in command and reported that the drill was exceedingly well performed. The order was given to break ranks at twelve o'clock at the completion of the drill. At 1:30 P.M., the visitors were entertained at a banquet at the New Western Hotel. After the banquet an adjournment was taken and part of the crowd went to the rifle range and others to the ball ground. The officer's school of tactics took place at the Pavilion at 4:30 P.M. The last visitor left for Colusa at nine o'clock. The companies were unanimous in their praise for the hospitable reception received from Company C.**

A Divisional Encampment was held at Santa Cruz, August sixth to fourteenth, and was designated Camp Columbus. The Eighth Infantry Regiment, together with the First Artillery Regiment and the Tenth Infantry comprised the First Provisional Brigade. Colonel Park Henshaw was in command of the Eighth Infantry during the Camp of Instruction and was credited with having a model regiment. The discipline was excellent for a new organization and the regiment

-000-

*Marysville Appeal, January 13, 1893, page 4, column 2.

**Marysville Appeal, June 17, 1892, page 4, column 4.

EIGHTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

had an efficient body of officers on its staff. The efficiency of the Regiment was most remarkable inasmuch as the Companies were all located in different towns which made drilling together a difficult feat. Lieutenant Colonel R. A. Gray, of Colusa and Major George B. Baldwin, of Marysville were especially popular with the men of the First Provisional Brigade to which the Eighth Infantry Regiment was attached. The Eighth Infantry was in part responsible for the camp of the First Provisional Brigade being pointed out as an example of cleanliness and order. Due to the constant supervision of the regimental and brigade surgeons, there was little sickness among the men. The camp of the Brigade was patterned after that of the Regular Army, no decorations being allowed day or night. The quarters of the Eighth Infantry Regiment being devoid of decoration, contrasted sharply with the San Francisco and Sacramento companies whose quarters resembled Chinatown rather than a soldier's camp. The city companies had carpets, bureaus, and, to use the terms of the news item of that period, were rigged out with gewgaws and trappings.*

Due to the good record, the First Provisional Brigade was given the right of line in camp and on parade and also during the sham battle it was given the most prominent position. The higher degree of efficiency attained by the Regiment during the encampment was attributed to the fact that General Dimond was in charge of affairs. The General's determination to make this division encampment a purely military affair was successful, from the various officer's reports. The officers and men contending that they had a clearer idea of what was required of them in military activities after attending the encampment, than previously. The Camp of Instruction was far superior to any encampment held in previous years. Captain Thomas H. Barry of the Regular Army had been appointed by the War Department as Inspector of the camp and was tireless in his efforts to further the interests of the Guard.**

The Regimental colors of the companies were draped in mourning for thirty days as a tribute to the memory of Brigadier-General J. W. Freeze, late commander of the Sixth Brigade, who died September 18, 1892. General Freeze entered the Federal Service as a Private

.000.

*Marysville Appeal, August 19, 1892, page 5, column 3.

**Marysville Appeal, August 19, 1892, page 2, column 5.

EIGHTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

in the Seventh Maine Volunteer Infantry, April 1861 during the War of the Rebellion. He was promoted to the rank of Major, First Maine Cavalry and was honorably mustered out of service 1865. General Freeze entered the National Guard Service March 15, 1871, as a Private in the Eureka Guard and had been an active and useful member of the Guard. The officers were also required to wear the usual badge of mourning. The colors were again draped for the passing of Brigadier-General Richard H. Orton who passed away January 8, 1894.

The returns for target practice over the last three years the regiment was in existence were as follows:

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class
1893	4	20	106
1894	23	71	175
1895	23	112	185

While there was a marked improvement in the scores, the credit was not entirely due to the increased efficiency along this branch of military science. Company G, with a membership of seventy, entered the service May 27, 1893, and as the company from organization had taken a marked interest in target practice, their entry into the regiment greatly assisted the Eighth Infantry in retaining its previous high scores.

In 1894, Inspector G. W. McIver, First Lieutenant, Seventh United States Infantry, recommended that the old helmets and dress coats in possession of the companies be sold and the proceeds applied to the purchase of ammunition for target practice. The Eighth Infantry Regiment had 344 dress coats and 349 helmets in this class to be sold.

The one major activity participated in by the Eighth Infantry Regiment was the Railroad Strike in 1894. The disturbances extended from the Oregon line to San Diego involving nearly every railroad. In response to Major General Dimond's telegraphic orders of July 4, 1894, to intercept and arrest strikers enroute from Dunsmuir to Sacramento, Colonel Park Henshaw issued orders to the different companies in his command to report for duty. Companies B of Colusa and G of Willows, Company A of Chico and Company F of Oroville (the latter two units were then in Chico taking part in the Fourth of July celebration) were ordered to assemble their men immediately.

EIGHTH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

Companies A, F and G reported for duty within an hour; Company B, two hours later. Twenty rounds of reloaded ammunition were issued to troops in Chico. A rail was removed from the track one mile north of Chico and a danger signal displayed some distance beyond. Companies A and F were ordered to deploy along the line of Chico Creek, one on the east and the other on the west of the road. A twelve pound Parrott gun, which had been used in the parade, was ordered loaded with eight and one-half pounds of blasting powder and twenty-five pounds of one ounce lead bullets and other projectiles. The gun was placed in a position on the curve of the road which commanded the track for fully one-half mile. The 2000 rounds of ammunition stored in the armory of Company F was later divided among the units of the regiment. In accordance with orders which rescinded the former orders, the track was repaired and the strikers allowed to pass. The companies of the regiment remained on duty until July thirtieth and were stationed at different points throughout the State. Their activities consisted of guard duty at Sacramento, and duty in the mountains.*

During the activities of the Railroad Strike, a need for a complete reorganization of the National Guard was apparent. The most important result of the reorganization was that many of the top officers were placed on the retired list. This corrected a situation that had long existed in the Guard, namely "that the service was top-heavy with commanding officers." On December 7, 1895, General Order No. 17 was issued reducing the National Guard to battalions. The Eighth Infantry Regiment became the Twelfth Battalion, Third Brigade in accordance with this order. Companies A and F were consolidated and designated Company A, Twelfth Battalion; Companies B, C, and E were redesignated B, D, and H, Twelfth Battalion and Companies D and G, Eighth Infantry were mustered out of service. Two days later the Twelfth Battalion comprising the National Guard was organized into five regiments; the units maintaining the same designation they had in the battalion. The Twelfth Battalion together with the Eleventh Battalion were consolidated and redesignated the Second Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade, December 9, 1895.**

-o0o-

*For Additional information, refer to the National Guard and the Railroad Strike 1894. Adjutant General's Office. Adjutant General Report 1893-1894, page 263.

**Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, General Order Nos. 17, 18, pages 87, 88.