

History of the 4th Company (former San Francisco Light Guard), Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California 1909-1917

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FOURTH COMPANY COAST ARTILLERY CORPS

2680

Fourth Company, Coast Artillery Corps, First Brigade (formerly San Francisco Light Guard)

Reference: Adjutant General's Files

Location: San Francisco, San Francisco County

Organized November 12, 1858

Reorganized March 26, 1880*

Reorganized and consolidated June 22, 1885**

Reconstituted December 9, 1895***

Mustered into Federal Service May 6, 1898****

Mustered out of Federal Service September 21, 1899*****

Re-entered National Guard November 29, 1899 X

Redesignated April 19, 1901 XX

Reconstituted May 11, 1907 XXX

Redesignated April 21, 1909 XXXX

Mustered into Federal Service August 23, 1917 XXXXX

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*Company F, formerly San Francisco Light Guard reorganized and designated Company F, First Infantry Regiment March 26, 1880. Adjutant General Report 1880, page 63. General Order # 12.

**Companies F and E First Infantry Regiment consolidated and designated Company F, First Infantry Regiment, June 22, 1885. Adjutant General Report 1885-1886, General Order # 36, page 113. (Note General Order # 36 is a misprint and should read Company F, instead of Company E.)

***Company F, formed from the consolidation of Batteries D and F, Second Artillery Regiment and designated Company F, First Infantry Regiment. December 9, 1895. Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, pages 86 and 88.

****Company F, as part of the First Infantry Regiment was mustered into Federal Service for duty during the Spanish-American War, May 6, 1898. Adjutant General Report 1899-1900, page 4.

*****Adjutant General Report 1899-1900, page 68. General Order # 11.

XCompany F, as part of the First Infantry re-entered the National Guard of California November 29, 1899. Adjutant General Report 1899-1900, page 79.

XXCompany F, redesignated Company A, First Battalion Coast Artillery, General Report 1901-1902, Adjutant General Report April 19, 1901.

XXXCompanies D and F, First Regiment of Infantry consolidated and designated Company M Fifth Infantry Regiment May 11, 1907. Adjutant General Report 1907-1908, page 4.

XXXXCompany M, Fifth Infantry Regiment redesignated Fourth Company, Coast Artillery Corps Apr. 21, 1909. General and Special Orders and Circulars 1909. General Order # 9, paragraph 2.

XXXXXFourth Company Coast Artillery Corps mustered into Federal Service for duty during the World War. August 23, 1917. Muster Roll, Fourth Co. First Coast Defense Command August, 1917. Adjutant General Files.

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
W. G. Hyde, Capt. (Promoted Major, May 14, 1911)	Feb. 13, 1908+	Apr. 21, 1909
R. E. Mittelstaedt, First Lieut. (Promoted Captain, Sixth Company, Coast Artillery Corps, July 27, 1909)	Aug. 13, 1908+	Apr. 21, 1909
V. S. Sutherland, First Lieut. (Resigned March 23, 1910)	Oct. 14, 1909	Nov. 26, 1909
Harold Lauderback, First Lieut.	May 12, 1910	June 8, 1910
Harold Lauderback, Capt. (Re-elected July 13, 1915) (Resigned January 18, 1917)	Aug. 3, 1911	Aug. 29, 1911
W. O. Jones, First Lieut. (Promoted Captain, Seventh Company, Coast Artillery Corps, March 26, 1912)	Aug. 3, 1911	Aug. 29, 1911
A. M. Foreman, First Lieut. (Resigned December 5, 1913)	May 23, 1912	May 31, 1912
C. B. Ohnemuller, First Lieut. (Promoted Captain, Third Company, Coast Artillery Corps, April 19, 1915)	July 28, 1914	Aug. 6, 1914
L. A. Purdy, First Lieut.	May 4, 1915	May 12, 1915
L. A. Purdy, Capt.	Aug. 3, 1917	Aug. 3, 1917
Theo. E. T. Haley, First Lieut.	Aug. 4, 1917	Aug. 4, 1917

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*Captain W. G. Hyde and Lieutenant R. E. Mittelstaedt retained their rank dates as of February 13, 1908, and August 13, 1908, respectively, when they commanded Company M, Fifth Infantry Regiment.

FOURTH COMPANY, COAST ARTILLERY CORPS (Continued)

Activities:

Fourth Company, Coast Artillery Corps was the second oldest unit in the Coast Artillery Corps, having been organized on November 12, 1858 in San Francisco, under the designation of San Francisco Light Guard. When the First Infantry Regiment was organized in 1861 the Light Guard became a unit in that organization and for forty-six years remained in that regiment. When the historic First Infantry Regiment was mustered out in 1907, Company D, First Infantry Regiment was consolidated with Company F, transferred to the Fifth Infantry Regiment, and designated Company M. Two years later on April 24, 1909, Company M was transferred to the newly organized Coast Artillery Corps as Fourth Company. At that date the history of the Fourth Company actually begins.

Fourth Company was one of the four companies of the Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California to participate in the first annual encampment at the Presidio on September 4 to 18 inclusive in 1909. That encampment proved to be the beginning of real co-operation between the Federal and National Guard troops which resulted in the National Guardsmen really becoming a first line defense for manning the big guns that protect the San Francisco harbor. The report of the officers of the Fourth Company is short and to the point. Captain W. G. Hyde's first report was as follows:

"In compliance with instructions I have the honor to submit the following report of duties performed by this company during joint artillery maneuvers, held at Presidio of San Francisco, September 4 to 18, 1909, inclusive. The company left their armory September 4, 1909, at nine-thirty A. M. with two commissioned officers and thirty-five men and proceeded to the Presidio where camp was established. The command performed all duties required by General Order No. 10, the men were particularly interested in sub-caliber practice, and made creditable scores. Unfortunately, on account of the condition of Gun Number Two, Battery Lancaster to which my company was assigned, was unable to fire the two service charges, permission of the ordnance officer to fire having been refused. I would recommend that the time of encampment be reduced to ten days; that the same be held during May or June, and that a reasonably long notice be given to enable the officers and men to arrange for their vacations during the per- of the maneuvers."

The following items are taken from the report of Second Lieutenant V. L. Sutherland, Fourth Company, National Guard of California:

"Left armory at nine A. M. September fourth, marched to the Presidio where camp was established adjacent

FOURTH COMPANY, COAST ARTILLERY CORPS (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

to Battery Cranston. Performed usual duties of Lieutenant in infantry drill, close and extended order, and acted as Officer of the Day. I received instruction relative to ten inch and twelve inch guns from Captain Casey, United States Army. This instruction was chiefly theoretical, and I believe the men received more benefit from their training at the guns because of the fact that they had more actual practice in the primary stations, plotting rooms and in manipulating the guns. I would recommend that all officers be given more actual practice in working the instruments in primary stations and plotting rooms and in handling the guns."

No reports of the commanding officers of Fourth Company for the encampment of June 11 to 18, 1910, inclusive, are available. However, a summary report by Captain Alexander T. Schenck, Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California gives some idea as to how the Artillery Corps were taking advantage of their opportunities. The Captain's comments were:

"I consider the camp of instruction a success in every detail and the officers and men took great interest in every duty they were called upon to do. In view of the fact that this Corps has only been in the service a little over a year, it makes it more remarkable how much ground they covered during the short period they were in camp. In these few remarks, it must be mentioned, had not the officers and enlisted men of the regular service taken a personal interest in our work we would not have received half the instructions we did because all were working every moment of the time."

The Fourth Company went into camp at the Presidio again on July 15 to 22, 1911, inclusive. The only company report of the encampment that can be found is that of Second Lieutenant W. Orville Jones, of Fourth Company. Lieutenant Jones' report deals mostly with quartermaster details to which duty he was assigned. Leaving out the quartermaster part of his report, it reads as follows:

"As stated above, I was assigned to the Fourth Company for Artillery Drill and I have nothing but words of high praise for the men of this company, all of whom worked hard and were very enthusiastic in the performance of their duties. This was the largest company in camp and had their complete range, gun and Reserve Sections, the members of which were very efficient; and

FOURTH COMPANY, COAST ARTILLERY CORPS (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

it was not necessary to draw men from other companies to complete their section to man the gun. On the contrary other companies were continually drawing men from the Fourth Company to help man the guns, and as a consequence, when it came turn for the Fourth Company to drill with the guns, several men were tired out from working with another company. In future, I think something should be done to eliminate this. I would suggest that next year, if a company has its complete manning details, it be assigned to a gun by itself; and that if two or more companies have not complete manning details, they be consolidated for artillery drill and assigned to a gun, instead of placing a strong company and a weak one on the same gun and having the men from the strong company completely tired out by doing double drill duty and filling positions for the weak company in order to help them make a record, which would be used against their own company in establishing efficiency. It was necessary also for the Fourth Company to lend their gun pointer to other companies in actual service practice and all of his shots were hits. This should also be taken into consideration in figuring percentages for general efficiency.

"This company was the first at the guns the night a call to arms was sounded. We served a strenuous week at the camp and it seems inadvisable to me to do two weeks work in one. Not only were the men worked hard and deprived of spare time for themselves for athletic purposes, etc., (which might work against attendance at future encampments), but we were not able to complete the work mapped out for us.

"Each company was required to fire three service shots, half of them did not do so, each company was to fire 300 sub-caliber, only an average of 25 shots per company were fired. It is recommended that next year the encampment be for two weeks, if possible, in order that the work may be properly performed and it would be more satisfactory to all concerned. Further, we are an artillery organization and taking into consideration the short time we have for actual practice at the guns, I think it would be well to drop all infantry work while in camp and devote our time to artillery. The

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Activities: (Continued)

companies have plenty of time through the year to devote to infantry work, and instruction in actual gun practice is what we need. In closing I wish to speak of the uniform courtesy and help rendered us by the officers of the regular establishment. Lack of space prevents my mentioning them all by name but every officer of the regular army on duty with us, did everything in his power to aid and assist in making the camp a big success, and our every wish seemed to be anticipated by them."

One thing noticeable in every report of the officers of the Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California, was that all spoke highly of the splendid co-operation and courtesy of the regular army officers. It is easy to see that friction or ill feeling between the two branches of the military forces of the National Guard and the regulars would be disastrous to the successful training of the National Guardsmen in the use of the Coast defense guns.

The next encampment was for a period of two weeks, June 1 to 15, 1912, at the Presidio. Besides the usual drill at the big guns, the Coast Artillery took part in night maneuvers that involved the defense of the harbor of San Francisco and the Peninsula from an attacking foe.

Other encampments at the Presidio were held on July 5 to 19, 1913; and May 15 to 29, 1915. The year 1916 found the Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California, manning the forts without any assistance from the Regular troops.

Besides the artillery encampments at the Presidio, Fourth Company participated in several overnight camps. On May 30 to June 1, 1913, the Coast Artillery Corps joined with five companies of the Fifth Infantry Regiment and Company B, Signal Corps in maneuvers in Marin County. Their problem was to defend the Marin County shore from an imaginary foe that had landed at Bolinas Bay. The marching, camping, and meeting conditions similar to actual warfare, proved very beneficial to all the troops participating.

Although trained as artillery, the Artillery Corps also drilled as infantry. As infantry men on the rifle range, Fourth Company did not rate high, in comparison with other units in the Corps. In 1910 Fourth Company ranked fifth; in 1912 and 1913, sixth; in 1914, ninth and in 1916 was tied with Eighth Company for tenth position. This rating was based on the scores made by the Coast Artillery Corps, and the number of members making scores that entitled them to medals for their marksmanship.

Fourth Company took part in a large number of parades and celebrations

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FOURTH COMPANY, COAST ARTILLERY CORPS (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

in San Francisco. A few of the most important ones follow: The visit of President Howard P. Taft on October 14, 1911; two Fortola celebrations, one on October 19, 1909 and the other October 22, 1913; the parade for the "Ball of All Nations" May 2, 1914; parade for the reception of the Liberty Bell at the Panama Pacific International Exposition; on July 22, 1915, as escort for Ex-President Theodore Roosevelt during his visit to the Fair; and on October 4, 1916, a parade for the "Path of Gold" celebration.*

OUTLINE HISTORY

The Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California, was not called into Federal Service during the disturbance along the Mexican Border in 1916.

The Fourth Company was called into the Federal Service as part of the First Coast Defense Command and redesignated Twenty-Fourth Company, Coast Defense Command on August 5, 1917.

*For further information concerning the parade of the Fourth Company, refer to History of Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California. Adjutant General's Office.