

History of the Troop D, Cavalry, National Guard of California 1895-1905

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Activities:

TROOP D CAVALRY

On March 26, 1893, Section 1918, of the State Political Code organized uniformed militia
 Troop D Cavalry, unattached, First Brigade
 Reference: Adjutant General's Files
 Location: Los Angeles, Los Angeles County
 Organized August 9, 1895
 Assigned August 15, 1905*

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
J. B. Lankershim, Captain (resigned May 27, 1896)	Aug. 9, 1895	Oct. 11, 1895
W. R. Teale, First Lieut. (resigned May 22, 1896)	Aug. 9, 1895	Oct. 11, 1895
Alfred Solan, Captain (resigned July 27, 1897)	Sept. 18, 1896	Oct. 12, 1896
C. H. Howland, First Lieut.	Sept. 18, 1896	Oct. 12, 1896
C. H. Howland, Captain	Sept. 21, 1897	Nov. 22, 1897
W. K. Fiske, First Lieut.	Sept. 21, 1897	Nov. 22, 1897
J. D. Fredericks, Captain	Oct. 27, 1899	Nov. 29, 1899
A. C. Freeman, First Lieut.	Jan. 12, 1900	Mar. 10, 1900
J. D. Fredericks, Captain (reelected Jan. 10, 1902)	_____	_____
A. C. Freeman, First Lieut. (reelected Oct. 18, 1901)	_____	_____
J. D. Fredericks, Captain (reelected Apr. 29, 1904)	_____	_____
E. W. Jones, First Lieut.	Jan. 29, 1904	Mar. 2, 1904

The major encampments in the above list are described in detail
 in detail. On August 15, 1905, Troop D assembled at their armory
 in Los Angeles at five A.M. The troop thirty-four strong, then
 marched from its headquarters to Santa Monica where a halt was
 made for mess and to rest the horses. Troop D's transportation
 wagons containing the quartermaster's and commissary outfit had
 left the armory Saturday August fifteen, with directions to proceed
 to Santa Monica Canyon and camp for the night, and thence

*Troop D Cavalry, unattached First Brigade redesignated Troop
 D, First Squadron of Cavalry, August 15, 1905.
 Adjutant General Report 1906, page 3.

TROOP D CAVALRY (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

On March 26, ¹⁸⁹⁵ (1896), Section 1912, of the State Political Code was amended to read as follows. The organized uniformed militia known as the National Guard shall not exceed 69 companies in all. Sixty of these companies shall be infantry or artillery, as the Board of Location may direct, and 5 companies of the Naval Battalion, and the other 4 companies shall be distributed to such arms of the service as the Board of Location may direct. By this reorganization, the 6 brigades, 9 regiment, and one battalion organizations were consolidated into 3 brigades, 5 regiments of infantry, one battalion of naval militia, and 4 unattached troops of cavalry, dispensing with about 150 commissioned officers.

On July 23, 1895, in order to comply with the act of the Legislature, General Order No. 11, was issued which stated that the application of citizens and residents of Los Angeles, desirous of organizing a troop of cavalry in the city having been approved by the Board of Location, Captain F. D. L. Carrington United States Army was to organize and muster in the troop. On August 9, 1895, the troop of cavalry known and designated as Troop D Cavalry unattached First Brigade was mustered into the service of the State ^{of} Los Angeles under the command of Captain J. B. Lankershim.

Troop D, in order to maintain a high standard of military efficiency attended many encampments, as enumerated in the following paragraph.

<u>Month</u>		<u>Place</u>	<u>Year</u>
Aug.	4 - 14	Santa Monica	1897
June	14 - 23	Santa Cruz	1901
Sept.	6 - 12	Long Beach	1902
Aug.	16 - 27	Russell's Ranch, Ventura County	1903
Aug.	13 - 26	Atascadero	1904

The major encampments in the above list are described in detail as follows: On August 16, 1903, Troop D assembled at their armory in Los Angeles at five A.M. The troop thirty-four strong, then marched from its headquarters at Santa Monica where a halt was made for mess and to rest the horses. Troop D's transportation wagons containing the quartermaster's and commissary outfit had left the armory Saturday August fifteen, with directions to proceed to Santa Monica Canyon and encamp for the night, and thence proceed up the coast to Arch Rock and Topanga Canyon, where it was intention of the troop to over take them.

TROOP D CAVALRY (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

Troop D arrived in the City of Santa Monica about noon August sixteen, having marched twenty miles. Captain J. D. Fredericks received information that the wagon train was stuck in the Santa Monica Canyon and unable to proceed further without additional horses. There was 4200 pounds to each team, two civilian teamsters in charge. After lunch the troop proceeded up the coast to Santa Monica Canyon and overtook the wagons, Captain Fredericks directed the wagon containing the commissary supplies to proceed on up the coast, detailing the first platoon to accompany them, and assist the wagon through difficult places. On the way the Captain overtook a boy driving a team of mules and employed him to go back and hitch on to the quartermasters wagon and with the assistance of the second platoon, follow as fast as possible. On reaching Topanga Canyon the first platoon pulled into the canyon and found water about dark. There they made their first camp, sending back the first team to assist the second. In the morning the troop broke camp and proceeded along the Venture and Los Angeles road.

Troop D made camp that night on Russells ranch on the Malibu Creek. Captain Fredericks decided to make this his permanent camp, and the troop made themselves as comfortable as the extremely hot weather would permit. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday were devoted to the ordinary camp routine with a mounted drill in the forenoon of each day. Wednesday, August nineteen, Captain Fredericks sent out three small scouting parties on foot, carrying sufficient provisions to last until Thursday night, with orders to prospect for water and bring in an account and description of the territory over which they traveled, sending them in specific directions, the object being to ascertain what was necessary for men to carry when absent from base of supplies for the length of time, and under the conditions ordinarily found in mountain travelling. The provisions the men carried were a dozen hard tacks each, enough coffee for three meals a small handful of raisins, small piece of chocolate and one pound of canned meat per man. This was found sufficient, men returned in good condition, and suffered no inconvenience. This trip was preparatory to sending the entire troop out in squads later.

Thursday night at ten o'clock Captain Fredericks received orders by a carrier from Brigadier-General C. F. Last to report to Major Ducat at Chatsworth Park at nine A.M. the next morning for inspection. This gave the troop no time to prepare for inspection

TROOP D CAVALRY (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

and necessitated a forced march of twenty-seven miles before nine A.M. It also made it imperative that the troop should travel as light as possible in order that they could make the trip by the time specified necessitating their travelling without blankets, which further necessitated their returning the same day. About the same ration was issued to each man for this trip as was issued to the men who went into the mountains, the quantity of course being less. Troop D reached Chatsworth Park the next morning Friday August twenty-first, at ten A.M. the horses and men in good condition. The troop went into camp there under some shade trees until one P.M. when the troop was inspected. The thermometer registered 98° in Chatsworth that day.

The greatest difficulty encountered in the march was the dust which made it necessary to divide the troop into squads of four men each and leave an interval of two or three hundred yards between squads, otherwise the rear portion of the troop would have succumbed very early in the march. Troop D left Chatsworth Park at four P.M. for return to camp and arrived in camp that night at nine-thirty P.M., making in the neighborhood of sixty miles that day. Every horse and man was fit for duty the next morning. Saturday and Sunday the usual camp routine and drills were carried out.

Monday August twenty-fourth, Captain Fredericks divided the entire troop into squads under non-commissioned officers, issuing about the same ration as previously described, and giving each an objective point or territory, in the mountains, with instructions to return Tuesday evening. All returned in good condition with the exception of one party under the command of Sergeant Bennett, they returned Wednesday at noon in good condition and suffered no inconvenience from the ration or the trip generally. Thursday the troop started their return to Los Angeles, camping that night on the Los Angeles river north of Cahuenga Pass. Troop D arrived at their armory in Los Angeles about noon Friday, August twenty-eighth.

From August 13 to 28, 1904, Troop D attended the first of a series of joint army and militia camps of Instruction held at Atascadero. Troop D entrained at Los Angeles on August twelfth. The troop loaded their horses in stock cars, from twenty to twenty-two in a car. They had no stalls built in the cars as on previous occasions, but loaded them in head and tail. Troop D arrived at Atascadero early the following day. The facilities there for detrainning the horses were very good, being a long platform on a level with the car doors, which was much better than the cattle chutes. There was no particular incident, either in the loading or unloading except that all of the men kept busy all of the time, which enabled them to finish their work rapidly.

TROOP D CAVALRY (Continued)

Activities: (continued) TROOP D CAVALRY (Continued)

As to the part taken by Troop D in the maneuvers and problems, they were arduously engaged all the time. Being a part of the Ninth United States Cavalry, they participated with them in all exercises. On account of the small body of cavalry, and perhaps on account of the terrain the only occupations of the troops was that of reconnoissance, security and information and mounted infantry. In Troop D's first engagement they acted as the advance party in an advance guard, meeting with a like formation composed of regulars. This was the nearest to an independent command which the commander of the troop had during the maneuvers. Although the troop was commanded by the umpire, Captain Fassett, Captain Fredericks was able after a few days experience to see how he could have accomplished much more had the opportunity been given him later in the exercises. Troop D was frequently assigned as escort to flying artillery, and in that work, they seemed to be able to render more service than in any other position aside from securing information of the enemy.

The cavalry operated under very great difficulties in this encampment, because of the nature of the country, it being thoroughly unsuited to cavalry maneuvers, but afforded an excellent opportunity for individual development on the part of the troopers and non-commissioned officers. Troop D broke encampment on August twenty-sixth, without any incidents worthy of mention and entrained for Los Angeles, arriving there at midnight.

Under the military laws of the State target practice was required to be held once each year by the various companies. During the ten years Troop D was an unattached unit they had an unusually low percentage of qualified marksmen. In 1896, the troop had eleven qualified men with the use of the rifle. In 1902, Troop D had twenty-one qualified marksmen with the revolver, and twenty-three in 1903. In 1905, the last year the troop was an unattached company, they had sixteen qualified men with the revolver.

On the night of August 16, 1895, a meeting of the new Troop D was held at the armory in Los Angeles. During the first part of the evening the troop was put through a drill by First Sergeant James Thompson, after which they met in one of the company's parlors and various business was considered. The meeting was presided over by Captain Lankershim, who announced the following appointments in addition to those made at the last meeting, First Sergeant James Thompson, Quartermaster E. E. Maxwell, and Sergeant John and Alfred Solano. The matter of selecting a regular night for drill each week was discussed. Some were in

TROOP D CAVALRY (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

favor of changing from Friday, the present one, but it was finally decided to let it remain until the majority of the troop could select some evening more agreeable. The subject of uniforms was also introduced. Nearly every one was in favor of having the suits made in Los Angeles, but the matter was finally referred to the committee on By-Laws.*

In 1896, Lieutenant-Colonel John C. Currier, Division Inspector, of the National Guard of California, inspected the companies of the First Brigade, his report on Troop D was as follows.

"Troop D was first inspected, and presented rather an unsatisfactory appearance. They showed lack of discipline and knowledge of duties, and carelessness in their company movements and exercise; their arms and equipments, however, were in good condition; possibly there was some excuse for their appearance, owing to the fact that the inspection was taken during the "Fiesta" week in Los Angeles, and the Captain being absent at the time. The muster rolls were improperly made out, were returned for correction and much delay was experienced in recovering them. Since the day of inspection both the Captain and First Lieutenant have resigned. I am of the opinion that unless immediate steps are taken by this company to improve its condition it should be mustered out, as the money can be expended to greater advantage in those organizations take greater pride and interest in the service."

Captain Alfred Solano and Lieutenant C. H. Howland were elected commanding officers of Troop D, to take the places of Captain Lankershim and Lieutenant W. R. Teale who resigned and an immediate improvement was noted in the troop. One of the first orders issued by Captain Solano was that all members, especially new one's to be constant in their attendance at drills. A Delinquency Committee was appointed to strickly enforce all fines and other penalties prescribed by the By-Laws. The Captain also stated that in the future those selected to fill the non-commissioned officers would be subjected to an examination as to their fitness for the position before an order appointing them was issued. Should the examination not be passed satisfactorily another man would be chosen.

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*Los Angeles Herald. August 17, 1895. page 7, Column 4.

TROOP D CAVALRY (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

The examination for promotion to Corporal would include School of the Soldier, School of the Trooper, Manual of the Pistol and Carbine Saber Exercises, duties of sentinel and corporal of the Guard, movements in extended order, mounted and dismounted, duties as squad leader, camp duties, bivouac, honors to be paid by sentinels and guard, and the care and treatment of the horse. The examination for promotion from Corporal to Sergeant would include all of the above and in addition to this the duties of First Sergeant, Chief of Platoon, Sergeant of the Guard, Sergeant Major, and such other matters from the Rules and Regulations of the National Guard as maybe considered necessary, including the duties of Sergeants as outlined by the "Red Book", and some of the military statutes of the State.

On November 14, 1896, and unusual, and consequently a severe test was put upon the National Guard, to prove the efficiency of the State militia in replying to an emergency call. In conformity with orders from division headquarters, Brigadier-General C. F. Last, about eleven A.M. issued orders to officers of his brigade to assemble the troops at three P.M. at their respective armories. This was issued to the captains of each company in this terse form, signed by Colonel J. R. Berry: "Assemble command, heavy marching order, blankets ball cartridges, one days rations, at armory three P.M." This order caused much confusion among the Guardsmen. Messengers were sent out by bicycle and horse to notify the members of each company and that they did well was shown by the roll call, when nearly every member responded.

Companies A, C and F, Seventh Infantry, Signal Corps, and Troop D of Los Angeles, Company D of Pomona, Company L of Santa Ana, Company I of Pasadena, all of the Seventh Infantry, would march to a point a mile south and half a mile east to Ramona Convent, about nine miles from Los Angeles and there bivouac. The following day Troop D and the companies of the Seventh Infantry passed the day in going through war maneuvers under rigorous rules. The soldiers were given various drills, as though they were actually in the field of war with an enemy in sight. The showing of Troop D in this emergency drill was excellent, forty members having responded to the call.*

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*Los Angeles Herald November 15, 1896, page 4, column 1.

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Activities: (continued) TROOP D CAVALRY (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

On March 16, 1898, Troop D attended the funeral ceremony of Major-General W. S. Rosecrans retired Civil War General. At the conclusion of the mass held at the cathedral on Main Street, Bishop Montgomery delivered a brief sermon. The procession then left the cathedral, without any delay, break or halt. Preceding the hearse were Brigadier-General C. F. Last and staff, then followed Troop D under command of Captain C. H. Howland, the Seventh Infantry Band with muffled drums. Then came the Signal Corps under Captain Lawrence, all members in full uniform.*

On April 21, 1898, the United States declared war with Spain. During the next three months forty-eight companies of the California National Guard were mustered into Federal Service for duty. Troop D for some unknown reason was not mustered into Federal Service as a unit, but several members of the troop joined Troop F of the United States Cavalry. In 1899, the State Legislature enacted a law giving to the companies and members of the National Guard who mustered into the service of the United States the privilege of reporting back to the Guard with credit for continuous service. The Legislature stipulated, however, that they must report back for duty within one hundred-fifty days after being mustered out of Federal Service.

On December 1, 1899, Captain Howland in a communication to Adjutant-General W. H. Seamans stated that several members of his troop who had entered the Volunteer Service of the United States, for the Spanish-American War, had reported back for duty according to General Order No. 11, series of 1899. These men being members of an unattached Troop, and not having entered the Volunteer Service with their own organization, it was found absolutely necessary, in order to keep Troop D up to the standard of efficiency, to have them discharged.

According to the Act of Legislature, approved March 21, 1899, these men should have credit for their term of service, but on account of their having been discharged from the National Guard, at the time they left to enter the Volunteer Service, Captain Howland could see no way of applying the order to their case without first having the said discharged rescinded and it appeared to be only just that a special ruling be made to cover their several cases. Adjutant-General Seamans rescinded the discharge of private William M. Morgan, the only member of Troop D to enter Federal Service with a California National Guard regiment.

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*Los Angeles Herald November 15, 1896, page 4, column 1.

Activities: (continued)

Troop D, on May 8, 1903, paraded in Los Angeles in honor of President Theodore Roosevelt's visit to the city. President Roosevelt arrived at La Grande depot promptly at one P.M. Upon alighting from his car he was greeted by the cheers of the Terrera and Cleveland Grays, drawn up in line on the platform, and of the people packed into a dense mass beyond the station limits. After shaking hands with the gentlemen of the reception committee the President was escorted to a carriage. At the signal the procession started between lines of people who crowded the entire distance up First Street to Main and from there to the Westminster Hotel. The parade was led by the troops of the Seventh Infantry, and Troop D, under command of Captain J. D. Fredericks. The Signal Corps followed preceding a Platoon of Police. Colonel Diss "Teddys Terrors" marched near the curb on each side of the carriages as a guard of honor. In addition to the Rough Riders a corps of secret service men kept close to the President's carriage.*

From July 4 to 15, 1905, Troop D engaged in a forced march and camp. The following is a report of their activities.

July 4

Troop D under command of Captain J. D. Fredericks, left Los Angeles, mounted at four P.M. for Pasadena, where they arrived at seven P.M. distance traveled nine miles.

July 5

Left Pasadena at six A.M. for Pomona, arriving there six P.M. distance traveled thirty-three miles. Horses and men in good condition.

July 6

Left Pomona at six A.M. for Riverside, arriving there six P.M. distance traveled thirty-three miles.

July 7

Left Riverside at six A.M. for Hemet, arriving there seven-thirty P.M. distance traveled thirty-four miles. Men and horse in fair condition. Heat intense, 122° on Mereno desert.

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*Los Angeles Herald May 9, 1903, page 1, column 3.

TROOP D CAVALRY (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

- July 8 Left Hemet at six A.M. for Idyllwild, arriving there at four-thirty P.M. distance traveled seventeen miles.
- July 9 Sunday no drill. Inspection of equipment at nine P.M.
- July 10 Drill in close order, mounted also as skirmishers and foragers, attack and defense of wagon train.
- July 11 Maneuvers in attack and defense of a position held by dismounted men.
- July 12 No drills, inspection of equipment in morning. Started for Los Angeles at three-thirty P.M. The troop returned by the same route previously described, arriving in Los Angeles July fifteenth, at four P.M. Total distance traveled two hundred fifty-nine miles.

On August 15, 1905, one month after Troop D took part in the forced march and camp, Troop A, B, C and D Cavalry were organized into a squadron of cavalry in accordance with the provisions of Sections 1927 and 1933, of the State Political Code. For further information concerning the activities of Troop D refer to the History of Troop D First Squadron of Cavalry, National Guard of California.