

**History of the Columbia Guard,
California Militia (1863-1866) and San
Francisco Guard, National Guard of
California (1866-1868)
1863-1868**

This history was completed in 1940 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in conjunction with the California National Guard and the California State Library.

Digitized by the History Office, Camp San Luis Obispo, 16 January 2015

COLUMBIAN GUARD

(SAN FRANCISCO GUARD)

Activities: (Continued)

Columbian Guard, Company D, First Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade
 Reference: Dead Office File, Row 7, File 3
 Location: San Francisco, San Francisco County
 Mustered in May 8, 1863
 Mustered out November 3, 1869

<u>Commanding Officers</u>			
<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>		<u>Commission</u>
William C. Johnson, Captain (Resigned Sept. 30, 1863)	May 8, 1863		June 12, 1863
J. V. McElwee, Captain (Re-elected May 3, 1864) (Resigned June 21, 1864)	Oct. 2, 1863		Oct. 31, 1863
M. Mills, First Lieut. (Resigned Oct. 26, 1863)	May 8, 1863		June 12, 1863
William C. Johnson, First Lieut. (Re-elected May 3, 1864)	Oct. 2, 1863		Oct. 31, 1863
George Humphrey, Captain (Resigned 1864)	Oct. 4, 1864		Dec. 8, 1864
J. V. McElwee, Captain	Dec. 6, 1864		Dec. 11, 1864
William C. Johnson, First Lieut. (Re-elected Dec. 6, 1864)			
J. V. McElwee, Captain (Re-elected May 2, 1865) (Resigned Nov. 20, 1866)			
Henry Cooper, First Lieut.	May 2, 1865		May 20, 1865
Edwin Lewis, Captain (Resigned April 8, 1868)	Nov. 27, 1866		Jan. 12, 1867
J. V. McElwee, Captain	Sept. 1, 1867		Mar. 28, 1868
William C. Johnson, First Lieut. (Resigned April 8, 1868)	May 1, 1866		Nov. 7, 1866
Ransford O. Sheldon, First Lieut.	Mar. 28, 1868		Sept. 21, 1868

Activities:

The Columbian Guard, a company of infantry organized in San Francisco, May 8, 1863, was mustered in as a unit of the Santa Militia on the same date, and attached to the First Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade, and designated as Company D. The company received its arms and equipment early in September 1863, and attended the Second Brigade Encampment at Camp Allen, Alameda County, in October of the same year, where, although lacking experience and training, they made a very creditable showing.

*Adjutant General Report 1867-1869, page 159.

COLUMBIAN GUARD (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

During the years 1864 and 1865 the company was active in drill and target practice and participated in several public parades. On August 21, 1866, the company reorganized under the new Military Law of that year as the San Francisco Guard, Company D, First Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade, National Guard of California. During 1867 and 1868 the activities of the company were limited to routine drill and practice and an occasional appearance in public parade.

The State Legislature at its 1867-1868 session amended the Military Law of the State in the interest of economy, it being apparent that the commonwealth did not demand so large a military force as then existed, and as a consequence the military force reduced to sixty companies in all.

The San Francisco Guard had become somewhat negligent and had failed to comply with military regulations, for which reasons the company was included in the list of companies to be mustered out of the State service. Consequently on the third of November, 1869, the organization was discontinued and the company was mustered out under Special Order No. 31 of that year.*

-000-

Activities:

The Suisun Cavalry, Company B, was organized May 11, 1863, with Headquarters at Suisun City, Solano County. The arms consisting of sabres and pistols were not received until November 19, 1863. This delay caused Captain Richardson much concern as his company was losing interest, and he feared as a result the unit's ranks would be greatly reduced. A Bond of \$3,000 was filed to cover the costs of arms and accoutrements.

This company had high military ambitions and were a credit to their officers by their demonstration of efficiency during the spring encampment of 1865 at Suisun City. There were several companies and about two hundred and fifty men took part in this affair which was held for the purpose of drill and military instruction.

Under the Military Law of 1866, the corps was reorganized December 20, 1866, and the name was changed to Suisun Light

*Adjutant General Report 1867-1869, page 169.