History of the Honey Lake Rangers,
California Militia/National Guard of
California
1864-1868

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

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Honey Lake Rangers, Unattached, Fifth Brigade
Reference: Dead Office File, Row 4, File 1
Location: Susanville, Lassen County
Mustered in July 20, 1864
Mustered out June 30, 1868

Commanding Officers

Name                                        Rank               Commission
Frank Drake, Captain                       July 20, 1864        Sept. 28, 1864
William H. Naileigh, First Lieut.          July 20, 1864        Sept. 28, 1864

Frank Drake, Captain
(Re-elected July 31, 1865)

William H. Naileigh, First Lieut.
(Re-elected July 31, 1865)

A. A. Smith, Captain
Nov. 6, 1864
(Re-elected Nov. 6, 1866)

William H. Naileigh, First Lieut.
Nov. 18, 1864

Activities:

On July 4, 1864, a petition signed by fifty-six citizens of Lassen
County, requesting that the necessary legal steps be taken to
organize a company of State Militia, was presented to the Honorable
I. J. Harvey, County Judge of that County. All legal formalities
were complied with and the company, designated as the Honey Lake
Rangers, was organized and mustered into the service of the State,
on the twentieth day of July 1864 as a company of Cavalry.

The organization was named after Honey Lake and the famous Honey
Lake Valley, in the south-eastern part of Lassen County, where
during the late fifties and the early sixties there were serious
disputes over the State boundary line and considerable trouble
with the Indians of the Washoe, Pah-Wee and Pit River tribes.*

About four months subsequent to its organization, arms and equip-
ment were received and the company became active in drill and
target practice. The members established a considerable reputation
as marksmen. Although not called into active service, the enroll-
ment held up well until 1866 when the membership was reduced to

*History of Plumas, Lassen and Sierra Counties, California—Fariss
and Smith, 1882, page 378.
Activities: (Continued)

forty-two men. Under the new militia regulations of 1866 when the military forces became known as the National Guard, this company of Cavalry was reorganized on November sixth, and was designated as Company A, Honey Lake Rangers, Fifth Brigade. An election of officers was held at this reorganization meeting, and A. A. Smith, County Clerk of Lassen County, succeeded Frank Drake as Captain. First Lieutenant William H. Naileigh was re-elected to his office. According to the records, this was the last election held by the company. Apparently the reorganization meeting failed in its purpose of stimulating new interest, as there are no further records giving information of the activities the company may have participated in.

On May 23, 1868, Adjutant General James M. Allen issued Special Order No. 35, ordering Brigadier General J. C. Roley to muster the Honey Lake Rangers out of the State service, which order was complied with on June 30, 1868.*

There was scant information on file relative to the activities of the Tittel Zouaves during the two years they were in the service. However, at the time of organization which was during the War of the Rebellion, many volunteer companies were mustered into the Militia to provide protection for the citizens against the Seccessionists and to prevent such an invasion would the necessity arise. With the conclusion of the War it was not necessary to maintain such a volunteer force, and in consequence the Military authorities then determined upon any measure to reduce the State Militia. The Army Order No. 211, Location and Organization of Volunteer Militia, directed all companies to be retained in service or disbandment in accordance with their importance to defense purposes. The Tittel Zouaves were among the number of companies recommended for disbandment and were mustered out of service July 31, 1864.

There was general dissatisfaction among the officers commanding the Sixth Regiment, Second Brigade, over the treatment by the officers of the Seventh (Irish) Infantry Regiment, which were paid in full for all claims presented while the German Regiment claims were refused. The commanding officer of all their disbandment had been ordered because their political views were not in sympathy with former Governor Loe's administration during