

# **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.

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

HONEY LAKE RANGERS

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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
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	Nov. 18, 1864
William H. Naileigh, First Lieut. (Re-elected Nov. 6, 1866)	_____	_____

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 equipment 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 enrollment held up well until 1866 when the membership was reduced to

.000.

\*History of Plumas, Lassen and Sierra Counties, California--Fariss and Smith, 1882, page 378.

HONEY LAKE RANGERS (Continued)

## 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 Secessionists and be prepared to repel an invasion should the necessity arise. With the termination of the War it was not necessary to maintain such a large military force, and in consequence the Military Law of 1864 was passed as a primary measure to reduce the State Militia to a minimum. Location and Organization was .ooOo. companies to be retained in service or disbanded 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, 1868.

There was general dissatisfaction among the officers commanding the Sixth Regiment, Second Brigade, regarding the treatment of the officers of the (Irish) Infantry Regiment received payment in full for all claims submitted while the German Regiment claims were refused. The commanding officers felt their disbandment had been ordered because their political views were not in sympathy with former Governor Low's administration during