

# **History of the LaPorte Guard, California Militia/National Guard of California 1863-1868**

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LA PORTE GUARD

La Porte Guard, Unattached, Fourth Brigade.

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 4, File 1

Location: La Porte, Sierra (Now Plumas) County

Mustered in June 23, 1863

Mustered out June 22, 1868

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
S. H. Alley, Captain (Resigned June 12, 1864)	June 23, 1863	July 11, 1863
S. S. Russell, First Lieut.	June 23, 1863	July 11, 1863
S. S. Russell, Captain (Elected Aug. 3, 1864)	Aug. 4, 1864	Aug. 15, 1864
Guy P. Arnold, First Lieut.	Sept. 24, 1864	Oct. 8, 1864
S. S. Russell, Captain (Re-elected Aug. 2, 1865)	_____	_____
Cornelius Lowery, First Lieut. (Elected June 7, 1865)	May 17, 1865	June 17, 1865
S. S. Russell, Captain (Re-elected Dec. 6, 1866)	_____	_____
M. Tranor, First Lieut.	Dec. 6, 1866	Dec. 26, 1866

Activities:

In 1863 when the movement to organize a military company in La Porte was started, the town lay within the boundary limits of Sierra County, but in 1866 the La Porte district was by Legislative enactment, taken from Sierra County and annexed to Plumas County.\*

On May 14, 1863, a petition signed by eighty citizens of La Porte was presented to the County Judge of Sierra County, requesting permission to organize a company of militia. The request was granted and the organization of the La Porte Guard was perfected on June twenty-third of that year. The company was promptly mustered into the State Service, provided with the regulation arms and equipment and soon became an active energetic military unit. Drill and target practice was held regularly and the Guard soon attained a high degree of efficiency.

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\*History of Plumas, Lassen, and Sierra Counties, Fariss & Smith, 1882, page 292.

Activities: (Continued)

In June 1864 a petition from the company was presented to Major C. V. Hubbard who was in command of the Fourth Infantry Battalion, Fourth Brigade, asking that the company be attached to his command. This request was granted and the company became attached to the Fourth Infantry Battalion as Company E, on June twenty-sixth. The La Porte Guard was reorganized under the Military Law of 1866, and on July twenty-fourth the unit was mustered into the Fifth Brigade, National Guard of California. The company membership had fallen to about fifty men at the time of reorganization, but soon began to increase finally reaching seventy-one members.

Although it was not called on for active military service during the Rebellion, the company nevertheless maintained its organization, held its membership and was accredited with being one of the best and most efficient companies in the National Guard.

In 1868 the decision was made by the State officials to materially reduce the existing force of the National Guard. The military tax had been reduced and there was no immediate need for the maintenance of a large force. Also as many of the companies were located far in the interior where they were entirely unnecessary, the units were ordered mustered out. The La Porte Guard (unattached) was mustered out by Brigadier-General J. C. Roley, on June 22, 1868, pursuant to Special Order 35, dated May twenty-third of that year.

The members adopted the name of Trueman Head Rifles to show honor to one of California's most prominent frontiersmen, who was more generally known under the euphonious title of "California Joe." Mr. Head had been active in many Indian battles, had served in the Union Army as a sharpshooter, and in later years because of his vast knowledge of Indian warfare, he was appointed by General Custer to act as Chief of Scouts for the United States Cavalry which was composed of several regiments.\*

\*Famous Frontiersmen, Pioneers, and Scouts by E. C. Cattermole, A. B.--W. H. Harrison, Jr. Publisher, 1886, page 493.