

History of the Little York Union Guard, California Militia/National Guard of California 1863-1867

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LITTLE YORK UNION GUARD

Activities: (Continued)

Little York Union Guard, Company C,* First Division, Fourth Brigade

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 3, File 7

Location: You Bet, Nevada County

Mustered in June 23, 1863

Mustered out December 19, 1867**

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
George H. Atkins, Captain	June 23, 1863	July 11, 1863
James Todkill, First Lieut.	June 23, 1863	July 11, 1863
John Dahle, First Lieut.	Sept. 8, 1863	Oct. 31, 1863
George H. Atkins, Captain (Re-elected June 6, 1864)	_____	_____
John Dahle, First Lieut. (Re-elected June 6, 1864)	_____	_____
George H. Atkins, Captain (Re-elected 1865)	_____	_____
S. G. Lewis, First Lieut.	May 27, 1865	June 7, 1865
William Curville, Captain	Aug. 25, 1866	Sept. 6, 1866
Arthur Keeler, First Lieut.	Aug. 25, 1866	Sept. 6, 1866

Activities:

You Bet, Nevada County, home of the Little York Union Guard,*** was given its name in a humorous manner by some of its early residents. This small settlement was full of patriotic fervor during the War of the Rebellion, therefore, seventy-two of the residents petitioned Judge A. C. Niles of Nevada County, to give his permission for the organizing of a volunteer military company. On the twelfth of June 1863, Judge Niles appointed Edward Williams to open the enrollment book for the volunteers' names, at the same time calling a meeting to be held in Dall's Saloon at You Bet on Tuesday, June 23, 1863, at "Seven and one-half o'clock". This legal notice was properly posted by Inspector Williams and a copy of the same attached to the organization papers filed in the Adjutant General's Office. This company was reorganized on August 7, 1866, and became a part of the Fifth Battalion of Infantry of the Fourth Brigade, and was designated as Company C, Little York Union Guard. This change was necessary when the militia of the State was reorganized into the National Guard of California.

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*Designated as Company C under reorganization of 1866.

**Adjutant General Report 1867-1869, Special Order No 24, page 130.

***The Guard took the name of their company from the town of Little York--near which it was located as it was composed of residents from both Little York and You Bet mining settlements.

LITTLE YORK UNION GUARD (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

George H. Atkins and James Todkill were elected Captain and First Lieutenant respectively of the newly organized company which was designated as the Little York Union Guard, an unattached infantry company. Lieutenant Todkill, however, remained in office only a short time, as he moved from the State in August 1863, and upon his resignation John Dahle was elected as First Lieutenant.

The four commissioned officers were re-elected June 6, 1864, then in October of the same year the Senior Second Lieutenant resigned his commission to enlist in Company D, Seventh Infantry. Captain Atkins forwarded the resignation to Governor Low for approval with the notation that he (Captain Atkins) "was very sorry to lose Lieutenant Allen, but the Lieutenant was anxious for more active service than the company organization afforded, and he, (Captain Atkins) could not but approve the Lieutenant's course." Lieutenant Allen's resignation was accepted and he served as First Lieutenant of Company D, Seventh Infantry, Edwin Darling, one of the privates, went into Company I, of the Seventh Infantry as Second Lieutenant and several other members of the Little York Union Guard enlisted in several California Volunteer companies. Private John Whittig who enlisted in Company I, of the Seventh Infantry was killed by Indians at Skull Valley on the twenty-first of July 1865.* The drummer and the fifer of the corps were among those who enlisted in the service of the United States thus leaving the unit without musicians for the time being.

Shortly after completion of the organization the company requisitioned Adjutant-General Kibbe for a supply of arms and uniforms. When communicating with the General about the uniforms, Captain Atkins informed General Kibbe, "That the company desired a full uniform, also for the officers, the complete outfit for respective grades, provided the State appropriation would cover the expense as far as their ratio per man, the balance they would send when informed of the balance due." In requesting swords for the officers, the company wished to be supplied with swords for use rather than ornamentation, as the corps was financially unable to stand the expense for display, and only desired equipment that was good and substantial. Times were hard, most of the men were poor and many had families to support. The company had been organized because the exigencies of the times seemed to call for such an organization and the men wished to place themselves in a situation ready to render effective service if called upon.

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*Record of California Men in the War of Rebellion 1861-1867, page 792.

LITTLE YORK UNION GUARD (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

Fifty stand of arms were furnished the company and the Captain was informed by Adjutant-General Kibbe that Fatigue Dress would answer for the coming encampment. Uniforms were received later and the State appropriation of \$300 was received and expended to pay for the uniforms on April 2, 1864. On April sixth Captain Atkins reported to the Adjutant-General that his company was duly uniformed and had complied with the provisions of the militia laws of the State. The company had some difficulty in the arms supplied them, as Captain Atkins reported on March 20, 1865, "While one of the Sergeants was handling a gun it had burst near the muzzle, and about four inches was cut off, although it was still serviceable. Another gun which had been lost at Camp Kibbe had not been recovered, and it was felt that it was probably taken by mistake from the stacks in front of the guard house." When the settlers of Walloupe (a corruption of Guadalupe) discovered that the district of You Bet across Birdseye Canyon was richer in mineral deposits than the ridge on which Walloupa was built, the buildings were moved over to the new location. The old hotel, one of the buildings so transferred, was converted into an armory for the use of the Little York Union Guard. New arms had been requisitioned for in 1866, but Captain Curville communicated with Headquarters later requesting that the arms and equipment, which were due the company, be retained in the State Arsenal as circumstances rendered it inexpedient for them to draw the full complement. Possibly the Captain sensed the fact that his company was losing ground and he did not wish to have the responsibility of the new equipment on his hands after the company was disbanded.

The arms were received in time to enable the corps to attend the Encampment held at Camp Kibbe (formerly known as Oak Knoll) which was located near Sacramento. Captain Atkins had forty-four men with him and being a newly organized unit of the militia the men received a splendid military training from the ten days of instruction. The members of the corps wore blouses of dark blue and the regulation caps as a part of their uniform for the Encampment. The subsistence for the company was reported as follows:

Meat	556	lbs.
Bread	322	loaves
Vegetables	626	lbs.
Beans	35	lbs.
Butter	62	lbs.
Pork	30	lbs.
Sugar	106	lbs.
Coffee	30	lbs.
Tea	5	lbs.
Syrup	2	gal.
Vinegar	2 3/4	gal.

LITTLE YORK UNION GUARD (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 4, File 1
 Location: La Porte, Sierra (Now Plumas) County
 Mustered in 23, 1863
 Mustered out 22, 1868

Salt	5	lbs.
Pepper	6	cans
Pickles	4	gal.
Candles	6	boxes
Rice	24	lbs.
Soap	6	lbs.

Mention was made of a celebration which was held at Grass Valley on the fourth of July 1865 in the company's papers, but there was no other record of the unit taking part in the affair. The Nevada City and Grass Valley companies had an exceptionally fine rifle range, and as the Fifth Battalion of Infantry was composed of companies located in this section of the country, it is assumed that there was considerable companionship between the various units, giving the men an opportunity to perfect their military training and still provide a pleasant relaxation from their daily toil.

The mining districts of the State at this time were inhabited by a more or less transient population, and even though the company was well equipped both in arms and uniforms after the close of the War of the Rebellion patriotic fervor subsided to such an extent that the National Guard units suffered a relapse in membership. Captain Curville reported to Colonel Knowlton, commanding the Fifth Battalion (December 1867) "That it was impossible to reorganize his company. Everything belonging to the State was boxed awaiting further orders, and the mustering out roll was already turned in." The Adjutant General's Report of 1867 recorded the Little York Union Guard as one of several companies listed in Special Order No. 24, December 19, 1867, to be mustered out. Brigadier-General Howell, Fourth Brigade, was detailed to muster out the companies of his Brigade and settle all accounts between the same and the State in such manner as he deemed advisable and for the best interests of the Service.

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 -oOo-ained a high degree of efficiency.

*History of Plumas, Lassen, and Sierra Counties, Pariss & Smith, 1868, page 232.