

History of the Placerville City Guard, California Militia/National Guard of California 1863-1880

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, 13 January 2015

PLACERVILLE CITY GUARD (Continued)

Placerville City Guard, Company B, Second Infantry Battalion, Fourth Brigade
 Placerville, being situated in the seat of the mining industry, the Chinese.

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 3, File 8

Location: Placerville, Eldorado County

Mustered in August 24, 1863

Reorganized March 19, 1880*

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
James J. Green, Captain (Resigned Jan. 5, 1864)	Aug. 24, 1863	Sept. 8, 1863
Alexander Hunter, Captain (Resigned 1864)	Feb. 20, 1864	Mar. 10, 1864
John J. Boop, First Lieut.	Aug. 24, 1863	Sept. 8, 1863
John J. Boop, Captain	Aug. 24, 1864	Sept. 9, 1864
George W. Wray, First Lieut.	Aug. 24, 1864	Sept. 9, 1864
John Holmes, First Lieut.	Aug. 4, 1865	Aug. 26, 1865
John J. Boop, Captain (Re-elected July 31, 1866)		
John Holmes, First Lieut. (Re-elected July 31, 1866)		
John J. Boop, Captain (Re-elected July 7, 1868)		
Aaron Bell, First Lieut.	July 7, 1868	Dec. 9, 1868
William Wiltse, First Lieut.	Aug. 3, 1869	Aug. 14, 1869
William Wiltse, Captain	Sept. 3, 1870	Sept. 10, 1870
John Antone, First Lieut.	Sept. 3, 1870	Sept. 10, 1870
William Wiltse, Captain (Re-elected Oct. 26, 1872)		
Oswald Hardie, First Lieut.	Oct. 26, 1872	Jan. 8, 1873
William Wiltse, Captain (Re-elected Dec. 12, 1874)		
John Peters, First Lieut.	Dec. 12, 1874	Jan. 16, 1875
George F. McDonald, First Lieut.	Apr. 11, 1876	May 4, 1876
George F. McDonald, Captain	Jan. 29, 1877	Feb. 20, 1877
Peter Vignant, First Lieut.	Jan. 29, 1877	Feb. 20, 1877
J. E. Dean, Captain	Jan. 28, 1879	Feb. 10, 1879
A. W. Marces, First Lieut.	Jan. 28, 1879	Feb. 10, 1879

-oOo-

*Placerville City Guard reorganized and designated Battery D, First Artillery Regiment, Fourth Brigade, March 19, 1880. Adjutant General Report 1880, Special Order No. 19, Page 76.

PLACERVILLE CITY GUARD (Continued)

Activities:

Placerville, being situated in the seat of the mining industry, was populated by many nationalities, including the Chinese. The racial difficulties combined with the greed for gold caused many disturbances and often times murders. These conditions called for a protection of the citizenry by a military force. Therefore, an official meeting was called by Judge Johnson of Eldorado County, on the twenty-fourth of August 1863, for the purpose of organizing a volunteer company of militia. The results were the formation of the Placerville City Guard and the election of James Green as Captain and John Boop as First Lieutenant. These officers received their commissions on September 8, 1863, with a request to qualify for same and notify the Adjutant General.

The first activity this company engaged in was to attend a Camp of Instruction on September 19, 1863, held at Camp Kibbe, near the town of Washington in Yolo County. Sixteen men attended, and they were uniformed in light blue blouses and dark trousers with regulation caps. Previous to this Camp of Instruction the company had not been supplied with arms and accoutrements of their own, therefore, it was necessary for the government to furnish them with such while at Camp Kibbe. The men were given military drill while stationed there and exercises were established and directed upon a basis of utility for active service. The new companies such as this one, received valuable instruction which helped them to progress rapidly.

On November 17, 1863, the Placerville City Guard received their arms and thereafter weekly drills were held. The members took a great interest in these military drills as they wished to be in readiness should the United States need their services.

Captain Green resigned from his command on January 5, 1864, as he was appointed commissary of the State Prison at San Quentin where he made his residence. A meeting was held February twentieth at which time Alexander Hunter was elected Captain to fill the vacancy caused by Captain Green's resignation. The Bond for the uniforms had at this time expired and a new Bond was required, which was issued June 17, 1864.

Another election of officers was held on August 24, 1864, at the armory of the Placerville City Guard, to fill the vacancy caused by Captain Hunter's resignation. The meeting was carried on under the supervision of Samuel B. Cooley as Judge and F. A. Hornblower as secretary. John Boop was unanimously elected Captain and George Wray as First Lieutenant.

PLACERVILLE CITY GUARD (Continued)

PLACERVILLE CITY GUARD (Continued)

Activities:

A summer encampment was held in 1878 at the Fair Grounds, by offering inducements to the military companies attending the Fair, by the citizens of Sacramento and the State Agricultural Society. This brought many companies of National Guard to the four day session to compete in the drill and rifle shooting contests. The Placerville City Guard competed in both contests. No prizes were awarded the company as their rifle shooting was poor due to the fact the company had never been able to practice, having no available range until the latter part of 1878.

The Fourth of July celebration at Placerville held during that year, was a scene of many military activities, and independent military companies from a number of sections were invited to parade. The Placerville City Guard made a splendid showing, although there were only fifty-seven men representing the company, as uniforms had not been issued the full company of seventy men.

A letter written by Lieutenant Vignant of this company, to C. A. Clunie, commanding the Fourth Brigade, October 17, 1876, indicated there was a misunderstanding of monetary affairs relative to the unit between the Lieutenant and Captain McDonald. The accusations of Lieutenant Vignant were to the effect that Captain McDonald had obtained three months leave of absence and taken with him \$170 of the company's funds, as well as borrowing \$225 from a loan office (in the name of the company). These charges were not all true according to Captain McDonald, as when word reached him of the affair he replied at once accounting for all company funds and money that had been previously entrusted to him. Rather than have these false charges against him, he asked for a military hearing. The Captain stated there was a shortage of \$50 between himself and the company treasurer which would be met satisfactorily before his resignation from the unit. Captain McDonald was under the impression these charges were formed by a few of the members who desired his resignation. It was assumed the difficulty was cleared and met the approval of all concerned, as there was no further record of the affair on file and Captain McDonald resigned upon completion of his term.

From the date of organization until July 23, 1866, this company was known as the Placerville City Guard, Second Battalion Infantry, Company B. It was reorganized on that date and designated as Company B, Placerville City Guard, Fourth Infantry Regiment, National Guard of California. Pursuant to Special Order No. 7 in

Alleghany Guard, Company D, First Division, Fourth Brigade.*

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 4, File 5

Activities: Alleghany, Sierra County
Registered in August 29, 1863

1872, it was transferred to the Fourth Infantry Regiment, Fourth Brigade as Company D. On March 31, 1877, per Special Order No. 5, the company was transferred to Company D, First Battalion of Infantry. By an Act of the Legislature of 1880, this company was attached to the First Artillery Regiment, Fourth Brigade as Company D, and for further information concerning this unit refer to Battery D of the First Artillery Regiment, Fourth Brigade.

(Re-elected Jan. 28, 1865)
Martin V. Clute, First Lieutenant

(Re-elected Jan. 28, 1865)
CALIFORNIA MILITIA AND VOLUNTEER FORCES

Activities:

Alleghany, Sierra County settlement situated in territory where much mining was done. In April 1853 a tunnel for mining was built through Alleghany Tunnel, and the settlement that sprang up around it carried the same name, and the first Post Office was established in December 1857. In the summer of 1858 the first "pay strike" in the Union Quartz Mine was organized when four men took out \$11,800 in six days.**

The town received new vitality with the increased population due to the new "strike," necessitating activities for the men during their hours of rest and relaxation. Agitation was started for a militia company to be located in Alleghany, not alone for the idea of readiness for military service for the community, but to provide the men with an activity that would give them companionship with their fellow workers. S. B. Davidson, County Judge of Sierra County, appointed John H. Clute as Inspector and authorized him to enroll names for a volunteer organization. Judge Davidson called a meeting to be held in the Post Office on Saturday evening at seven o'clock P. M. August 29, 1863, for the election and discussion of routine business. The officers elected at this meeting were: James V. McCormick, Captain; and Martin V. Clute, First Lieutenant. Both of these officers were re-elected on January 28, 1865.

.oOo.

*Listed in the Military Roster of the Adjutant General Report 1863, page 111, as Infantry Company, unattached.

**History of Sierra, Plumas and Lassen Counties, California, Farias and Smith, 1882, pages 473 and 475.