

History of the Sarsfield Guard (San Francisco), National Guard of California 1868-1872

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SARSFIELD GUARD

(Continued)

Sarsfield Guard* Company F, Third Regiment Infantry, Second Brigade

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 5, File 3

Location: San Francisco, San Francisco County

Mustered in September 6, 1868

Mustered out May 27, 1872

Commanding Officers:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Charles C. O'Donnell, Captain	Aug. 6, 1868	Sept. 5, 1868
J. D. Cusheon, First Lieutenant	Aug. 6, 1868	Sept. 5, 1868
John D. Cusheon, Captain (Resigned May 2, 1871)	Dec. 4, 1869	Jan. 18, 1870
William B. Linehan, First Lieut.	Jan. 1, 1870	Jan. 18, 1870
James G. Browne, Captain	May 15, 1871	June 3, 1871
Michael Butler, First Lieutenant	Oct. 5, 1870	Nov. 8, 1870

Activities:

The Sarsfield Guard was organized at a meeting held in the Hall of the Mechanics Institute in San Francisco on September 6, 1868. The election of officers resulted in the selection of Charles C. O'Donnell as Captain, and J. D. Cusheon as First Lieutenant. The company had an enrollment of one hundred and six officers and privates.

Unfortunately friction soon developed between Captain O'Donnell and Lieutenant Cusheon. The ill feeling increased and was climaxed by the filing of charges against the Captain by Lieutenant Cusheon. The first charge was Incapacity--in that first, he was totally incapable of directing, drilling, parading or commanding his company, by reason of his limited knowledge of military tactics; second, that owing to his almost total ignorance of the usual routine of conducting the monetary affairs of his command, and his gross negligence and careless conduct appertaining thereto, the company found itself indebted to the amount of more than thirteen hundred dollars in about eight months' time. The second charge was Conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman-- in that on or about May 9, 1869, at Sausalito said Captain did conduct himself in a manner highly disgraceful as an officer and gentleman by ordering a detail of twelve men of his command to "fix bayonets", to take and hold possession of a gate to a public thoroughfare thereby, depriving citizens of their just right to pass through said gate to the public thoroughfare, that he (Captain Charles C. O'Donnell) at the same time, drew and brandished his sword and declared in a loud voice and boisterous manner that he'd be d_____d if any person should go through that gate unless they passed over his body, or words to .oOo.

*Company derived name of Sarsfield from the famed soldier, Patrick Sarsfield, Earl of Lucan, Ireland, who was a commanding officer in the English Army during the reign of Charles II and James II of England

Haight Light Horse Guard SARFIELD GUARD (Continued) Battalion, Second Brigade

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 5, File B

Activities: (Continued)

that effect; thereby instigating a disturbance and endangering the lives of the officers and men of his command, and bringing them into disreputable notice and ridicule in the city newspapers. On July 30, 1869, the Adjutant General ordered a court inquiry to be held to investigate the facts of the charges against Captain Charles O'Donnell.* No record of the result of the inquiry can be found, but the affair was practically closed when on November 23, 1869, Captain O'Donnell tendered his resignation as Captain of the Sarsfield Guard. Lieutenant Cusheon was then elected Captain of the company, which office he held until May 6, 1871, when he resigned, and Captain James G. Brown was elected to succeed him.

There are no further activities of the company recorded other than the regular drilling and usual parades that the unit participated in. It is assumed that the Sarsfield Guard was never the same after the trouble between Captain O'Donnell and Lieutenant Cusheon, as on May 21, 1872, in accordance with the decision of the Board of Location and Organization of the National Guard, the Sarsfield Guard was one of the companies selected to be honorably mustered out of the service of the State, as their enrollment of only forty-eight members in the company was below the membership standard required by law. Their muster out was completed on the twenty-seventh of May 1872, according to General Order No. 7.**

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Due to the lack of material on file, it is impossible to relate the activities of the Light Horse Guard during the four years they were in the service, but it is evident from a letter written by First Lieutenant Millar to the Governor in 1872, that the company was efficient and well officered. The reduction of the military force by the Legislature in 1872 as an economy measure, rendered it necessary to disband certain companies, one of which was the Light Horse Guard. First Lieutenant Millar, on behalf of the company asked for a reconsideration of the facts, and if the disbandment order could not be revoked, desired permission to retain

² *Adjutant General Report 1867-1869, Special Order No. 18, page 165.

**Adjutant General Report 1872-1873, page 89.