

History of the Steuben Guard, California Militia/National Guard of California 1864-1866, 1868-1879

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STEUBEN GUARD

Steuben Guard, Company E, Sixth Infantry Regiment, (German Battalion) Second Brigade

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 5, File 5
 Location: San Francisco, San Francisco County
 Mustered in March 3, 1864; November 11, 1869
 Mustered out July 23, 1866; 1879

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Charles Wochatz, Captain	Mar. 4, 1864	Mar. 10, 1864
Charles E. Lohr, First Lieut.	Mar. 4, 1864	Mar. 10, 1864
Charles Wochatz, Captain (Re-elected Mar. 4, 1865)		
Emil Hartman, First Lieut.	Mar. 4, 1865	Mar. 14, 1865
Charles Wochatz, Captain	Nov. 11, 1869	Nov. 18, 1869
Frederick Wickenhauser, First Lieut.	Nov. 11, 1869	Nov. 18, 1869
Charles Wochatz, Captain (Re-elected Nov. 9, 1871)		
Frederick Wickenhauser, First Lieut.		
(Re-elected Nov. 9, 1871)		
Charles Wochatz, Captain (Re-elected Nov. 11, 1873)		
Frederick Wickenhauser, First Lieut.		
(Re-elected Nov. 11, 1873)		
Charles Wochatz, Captain (Re-elected Nov. 11, 1875)		
Frederick Wickenhauser, First Lieut.		
(Re-elected Nov. 11, 1875)		

Activities:

The Steuben Guard was one of several companies organized in the San Francisco territory during the War of the Rebellion for home protection, and also to keep the State Militia up to the required standard. Little is known of the unit's activities other than that the organization occurred March 3, 1864, and the corps was attached to the Sixth Infantry Regiment, (German Battalion) Second Brigade. The company enjoyed a large membership, having in their possession sixty stand of arms and were uniformed according to regulation.

STEUBEN GUARD (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

There is no doubt that this company was composed of loyal, active and patriotic men, ready for any emergency. However, under the Military Law of 1866 in accordance with the First Section of the law which prescribed that companies due to their location with reference to military defense were ordered to disband on the recommendation of the Board of Location and Organization, the Steuben Guard, Company E was mustered out of the service July 23, 1866.

The entire German Battalion was mustered out on this date and caused much unfavorable comment among the commanding officers of the Battalion, and also the German population of the city, who felt assured the mustering out Order was caused by the clashing of the company's political views with former Governor Low's administration. However, they were willing to forego that issue but requested Governor Haight in 1868 to review the facts and make remuneration for the different companies' claims in the Battalion. These claims had been presented in 1866, but no allowances were made for them, although the Irish Regiment had similar claims and expenses which were paid in full. It is assumed Governor Haight made a satisfactory settlement, for no further evidence is on file relating to the controversy.*

The Steuben Guard continued as an independent company for three years until November 11, 1869, when the unit was again mustered in to the National Guard and redesignated Company E, Second Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade. Captain Charles Wochatz and Lieutenant Frederick Wickenhauser were still in command of the company and remained in command during the entire period of the company's existence. Captain Wochatz had already proved his efficiency having been in command of a former organization also known as the Steuben Guard during the years of 1864 to 1866. A Bond for \$2000.00 was posted June 11, 1870, and later in June of that year sixty stand of arms were received from the State Armory at Sacramento from aboard the steamer "Capital". In 1870, a fire destroyed Mozart Hall on Post Street in San Francisco burning part of the company's arms. However, these arms were later replaced.

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*Letter from Commanding Officers of the Sixth Regiment Battalion to Governor Haight, August 1868, on file State Archives, State Capitol.

STEUBEN GUARD (Continued)

SAN FRANCISCO TIRALLEURS

Activities: (Continued)

Adjutant General Thomas N. Cazneau, in his Report of May 4, 1871, lists the Steuben Guard as one of the most outstanding companies of the National Guard, stating "their discipline and soldierly bearing were above reproach, and that great credit is due them for the spirit and zeal which characterized them in all their military proceedings."

The company held target practice for four consecutive years at Schutzen Park, Alameda, and the fifth year at Warner's View which is presumably near San Francisco. The last target practice recorded was in 1876, at Camp Schofield near San Rafael. These events were always well attended and much good was derived from the practice.

P. F. Walsh, Adjutant General, issued Special Order No. 3, February 26, 1878, whereby the Steuben Guard, Company E, and the Thompson Rifles, Company B of the Second Infantry were to be consolidated. Each of these units were liable for disbandment, but the Adjutant General felt that this would be an injustice in as much as the companies in question had always complied with the law. The new company was to be composed of enlisted men of each corps and to receive credit for the time already served. The commissioned officers of Companies B and E were honorably mustered out. However, the officers and members of the Steuben Guard were opposed to the consolidation measure and drew up a Resolution March 5, 1879, unanimously deciding to continue as an independent unit. Therefore, the Steuben Guard upon refusal to consider consolidation with Company B, was mustered out of service in the latter part of 1879.*

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*Derived from French word meaning "sharpshooter".

**Historical Record of the National Guard, Second Brigade, 1861-1868, page 142.

2 *Adjutant General Report 1877-1879, page 72.