History of the Union Guard
(Copperopolis), California
Militia/National Guard of California
1864-1868

This history was completed in 1940 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in conjunction with the California National Guard and the California State Library.

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UNION GUARD

Union Guard, unattached, Third Brigade
Reference: Dead Office File, Row 3, File 2
Location: Copperopolis, Calaveras County
Mustered in August 30, 1864
Mustered out January 31, 1868

Commanding Officers

Name                                Rank    Commission
James Oliphant, Captain             Aug. 30, 1864 Sept. 9, 1864
William Pike, First Lieut.          Aug. 30, 1864 Sept. 9, 1864
William Pike, Captain*              
(Elected 1866)                       
(Resigned Dec. 16, 1866)             
James Kendall, First Lieut.*         
(Resigned June 14, 1867)             
Thomas W. Chaloner, First Lieut.     Dec. 16, 1866 Dec. 28, 1866
George A. Carlon, First Lieut.      June 30, 1867 July 23, 1867

Activities:

The Union Guard was organized August 30, 1864, at Copperopolis, Calaveras County. The location of the town in the mining vicinity was such that the citizens felt that military protection was necessary. A foreign element composed of Mexicans and Chileans moved from place to place, following the opening of mining claims. They were of a treacherous nature and carried on a campaign of general lawlessness, terrorizing the settlers. Also Indian hostilities frequently occurred during those years.

The necessary Bond was filed and the company's arms were received in October 1864. They were shipped by way of Stockton and arrived in good condition. In November, Captain James Oliphant sent in his request to the Brigadier-General for eighty uniforms and twenty additional stand of arms. The company built their own armory, which was constructed of brick and was fire proof, at a cost of $8,000. This was a heavy burden financially for the newly organized corps and Captain Oliphant was anxious for the State to bear the expense of the above mentioned uniforms. He also requested copies of the Military Law. This unit gave every indication of becoming an

*Officers are listed in records but no rank or commission dates appear. Historical Record, Third Brigade, 1864-1866, page 114.
Activities: (Continued)

efficient and well officered company.

Under the Military Law of 1866, the Union Guard was one of the companies recommended by Brigadier-General George S. Evans, to remain in the military service of the State, and was reorganized as an unattached company July 30, 1866, with sixty-two men as members. A Bond for $2,600 was posted at the time.

A disastrous fire September 1867 destroyed the company's books and vouchers and some of the equipment, and in as much as the Union Guard was mustered out of service January 31, 1868, it is assumed the unit lost interest after the fire, as with the prevailing peaceful times the need of military protection was not required. The arms and accoutrements belonging to the State were repossessed April twenty-ninth and stored in Ford Hardy's Building, Copperopolis.