

# **History of the Washington Rifles, California Militia 1864**

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WASHINGTON RIFLES

Washington Rifles, Second Brigade

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 7, File 2

Location: Tomales, Marin County

Mustered in January 16, 1864

Mustered out June ---- 1864

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
John Keys, Captain	Jan. 16, 1864	Feb. 25, 1864
R.L. Woodworth, First Lieut.	Jan. 16, 1864	Feb. 25, 1864

Activities:

The Washington Rifles, Tomales, was organized January 16, 1864. As a result of a vote taken at the meeting, the corps was to be an infantry unit. An election of officers was held at the same meeting with John Keys elected Captain and R. L. Woodworth, First Lieutenant. The company was organized in accordance with the wishes of the residents of Marin County who desired to be prepared to do their part in quelling the Rebellion and to protect their homes against an invasion. The safety of the nation was imperiled, at this time, by the repeated threats of the foreign Powers to enter the then existing controversy.\*

Although the Washington Rifles were a loyal and enthusiastic company at organization, it is assumed the difficulty in obtaining arms and accoutrements was instrumental in the loss of interest by the members. This difficulty was due to the Federal Government's need of arms for the troops during the War of the Rebellion. On this occasion the shortage of arms had a disastrous effect on the newly organized corps, the company being considered virtually disbanded by Captain Keys. In a letter July 15, 1864, to Adjutant General Smiley, Captain Keys explained the majority of the members had moved out of the County.

\*Copy of original Roll on file with organization papers, Adjutant General's Office.