

History of the 144th Field Artillery, 2nd Battalion, California National Guard 1936-1939

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HEADQUARTERS SECOND BATTALION

144TH FIELD ARTILLERY

Headquarters Second Battalion, 144th Field Artillery, Calif. National Guard
Reference: Adjutant General Files
Location: Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara County
Organized April 16, 1936*
Demobilized July 1, 1936**
Reconstituted July 1, 1936***

Majors

Commanding Officers

Name

Rank

Commission

Ralph W. Coane, Major

Apr. 10, 1936

Apr. 15, 1936

(Trans. from Hdqtrs 2nd Btn,
196th F. A., July 1, 1936)

Captain Adjutants

Harold M. Davis, 1st Lieut.

Apr. 10, 1936

Apr. 15, 1936

(Trans. from Hdqtrs 2nd Btn, 196th F. A.
in lieu of Capt. Adj., July 1, 1936)
(Promoted Captain March 5, 1937)

Harold M. Davis, Captain

Mar. 5, 1937

Mar. 5, 1937

(Reassigned as Adj. Capt., Hdqtrs 2nd
Btn. 144th F. A., Mar. 6, 1937)
(Trans. to Inactive N. G., June 21, 1938)

First Lieutenants

George W. Stevens, First Lieut.

Apr. 10, 1936

Apr. 15, 1936

(Trans. from Hdqtrs 2nd Btn. 196th
F. A., July 1, 1936)
(Trans. to Hdqtrs Bty & Combat Tr., 2nd
Btn., 144th F. A. Lieu of Capt. Jan. 2, 1938)

Robert W. Purvis, 1st Lieut.

June 6, 1936

June 6, 1938

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*A new Company organized at Santa Barbara and designated Headquarters
Second Battalion, 196th Field Artillery, April 16, 1936. General Order
No. 10, dated April 17, 1936. Adjutant General Office.

**Headquarters Second Battalion demobilized July 1, 1936. General Order No.
20, dated June 18, 1936. Adjutant General Office.

***A new Company organized at Santa Barbara and designated Headquarters
Second Battalion, 144th Field Artillery, July 1, 1936. General Order No.
20, dated June 18, 1936. Adjutant General Office.

HEADQUARTERS SECOND BATTALION (Continued)

Second Lieutenants

Commanding Officers (continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Harry V. Smeltzer, 2nd Lieut. (Trans. from Bty C, 196th F. A. July 1, 1936) (Trans. to unassigned list Apr. 19, 1938)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936
Robert W. Purvis, 2nd Lieut. (Trans. from Bty C, Jan. 17, 1938) (Promoted 1st Lieut. June 6, 1938)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936
Donald M. Stewart, 2nd Lieut. (Trans. from Bty C, 144th F. A. June 6, 1938)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936.

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MEDICAL DEPARTMENT DETACHMENT

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Medical Department Detachment, Second Battalion, 144th Field Artillery, Calif. Nat. Guard

Reference: Adjutant General Files
Location: Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara County
Organized May 28, 1936*
Demobilized July 1, 1936**
Reconstituted July 1, 1936***

Captains

COMMANDING OFFICERS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Charles A. Preuss, Capt. (Trans. from med Dept. Detachment, 2nd Btn, 196 " . A July 1, 1936)	May 4, 1936	May 4, 1936

*A new Company organized at Santa Barbara and designated Medical Department Detachment, 196th Field Artillery May 28, 1936. General Order No. 17, dated May 29, 1936. Adjutant General Office.

**Medical Department Detachment, Second Battalion, 196th Field Artillery demobilized July 1, 1936. General Order No. 20, dated June 18, 1936. Adjutant General Office.

***A new Company organized at Santa Barbara and designated Medical Department Detachment, 144th Field Artillery July 1, 1936. General Order No. 20, dated, June 18, 1936. Adjutant General Office.

HEADQUARTERS BATTERY AND COMBAT TRAIN

Headquarters Battery and Combat Train, 144th Field Artillery Calif. Nat. Guard
Reference: Adjutant General Files
Location: Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara County
Organized April 15, 1936*
Demobilized July 1, 1936**
Reconstituted July 1, 1936***

<u>Captains</u>	<u>Commanding Officers</u>	<u>Commission</u>
<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	
Henry C. Coles, Captain (Trans. from Hdqtrs Bty & Combat Tr., 196th F. A., July 1, 1936) (Trans. to Bty C, 144th F. A. Jan. 2, 1938)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936
George W. Stevens, 1st Lieut. (Trans. from Hdqtrs 2nd Btn, 144th F. A. Jan. 2, 1938) (In lieu of Captain Jan. 2, 1938) (Promoted Captain, June 6, 1938)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936
George W. Stevens, Captain	June 6, 1938	June 6, 1938
<u>First Lieutenants</u>		
John R. Watson, 1st Lieut. (Trans. from Hdqtrs Bty & Combat Tr. 196th F. A. July 1, 1936) (Trans. to Bty C, July 1, 1936)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936
William F. Luton, 2nd Lieut. (Trans. from Hdqtrs 2nd Btn, 196th F. A. in lieu of 1st Lt., July 1, 1936) (Trans. to Inactive N. G., Nov. 1, 1937)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936
<u>Second Lieutenants</u>		
Donald A Bruce, 2nd Lieut. (Trans. from Hdqtrs Bty & Combat Tr., 2nd Btn, 196th F. A., July 1, 1936) (Resigned Nov. 24, 1936)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936

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- *A new Company organized at Santa Barbara and designated Headquarters Battery and Combat Train, 196th Field Artillery April 15, 1936. General Order No. 10, dated April 17, 1936. Adjutant General Office.
- **Headquarters Battery and Combat Train, 196th Field Artillery demobilized July 1, 1936. General Order # 20, dated June 18, 1936. Adjutant General Office.
- ***A new Company organized at Santa Barbara and designated Headquarters Battery and Combat Train, 144th Field Artillery, July 1, 1936. General Order No. 20, dated June 18, 1936. Adjutant General Office.

BATTERY C, 144TH FIELD ARTILLERY

14840

Battery C, 144th Field Artillery, California National Guard

Reference: Adjutant General Files

Location: Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara County

Organized August 4, 1917*

Mustered into Federal Service Aug. 5, 1917**

Redesignated October 24, 1917***

Demobilized February 6, 1919****

Reorganized May 27, 1930*****

Redesignated April 14, 1936*****

Demobilized July 1, 1936e

Reconstituted July 1, 1936ee

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*Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 115.

**Battery C, Second Field Artillery mustered into Federal Service August 5, 1917. Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, pages 21 and 22.

***Battery C, Second Field Artillery redesignated Battery C, 144th Regiment of Field Artillery October 24, 1917. Adjutant General Office. Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 22.

****Battery C, 144th Regiment of Field Artillery demobilized February 6, 1919. Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 24.

*****A new Company organized at Santa Barbara and designated Battery E, 143rd Field Artillery May 27, 1930. Adjutant General Report 1928-1930, page 20.

*****Battery ^d, 143rd Field Artillery redesignated Battery C, 196th Field Artillery April 14, 1936. General Order No. 9, dated April 9, 1936. Adjutant General Office.

eBattery C, Second Battalion, 196th Field Artillery demobilized July 1, 1936. General Order No. 20, dated June 18, 1936. Adjutant General Office.

eeA new Company organized at Santa Barbara and designated Battery C, 144th Field Artillery, July 1, 1936. General Order No. 20, dated June 18, 1936. Adjutant General Office.

BATTERY C, 144TH FIELD ARTILLERY (Continued)

<u>Captains</u>	<u>Commanding Officers</u>	
<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Harold O. Welch, Captain (Trans. from Bty C, 196th F. A. July 1, 1936) (Trans. to I. N. G., Dec 31, 1937)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936
Henry C. Coles, Captain (Trans. from Hdqtrs Bty & Combat Tr., Jan. 2, 1938)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936
<u>First Lieutenants</u>		
John R. Watson, First Lieut. (Trans. from Hdqtrs Bty & Combat Tr., July 1, 1936)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936
<u>Second Lieutenants</u>		
Harry Smeltzer, Second Lieut. (Trans. from Bty C, 196th F. A. July 1, 1936) (Trans. to Hdqtrs Btn July 1, 1936)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936
Donald M. Stewart, Second Lieut. (Trans. from Bty C, 196th F. A. July 1, 1936) (Trans. to Hdqtrs 2nd Btn, 144th F. A. June 6, 1938)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936
Robert W. Purvis, 2nd Lieut. (Trans. from 196th F.A., July 1, 1936) (Trans. to Hdqtrs, 2nd Btn, Jan. 17, 1938)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 15, 1936

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BATTERY D, 144TH FIELD ARTILLERY

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Battery D, 144th Field Artillery, California National Guard

Reference: Adjutant General's Files

Location: Ventura, Ventura County

Organized August 4, 1917*

Mustered into Federal Service August 5, 1917**

Redesignated October 24, 1917***

Demobilized February 6, 1919****

Reorganized April 16, 1936*****

Demobilized July 1, 1936*****

Reconstituted July 1, 1936e

Captains

Commanding Officers

Name

Rank

Commission

Bernard M. Gallagher, Captain
(Trans., from Bty D, 196th F. A.
July 1, 1936)
(Resigned Apr. 24, 1937)

Apr. 10, 1936

Apr. 10, 1936

Ralph E. Cole, First Lieut.
(Reassigned in lieu of Captain
Apr. 25, 1937)
(Promoted Captain May 20, 1937)

Apr. 10, 1936

Apr. 16, 1936

Ralph E. Cole, Captain

May 20, 1937

May 20, 1937

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*Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 115.

**Battery D, Second Field Artillery, mustered into Federal Service for duty in the World War, August 5, 1917. Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, pages 21 and 22.

***Battery D, Second Filed Artillery redesignated Battery D, 144th Regiment of Field Artillery, October 24, 1917. History of the California National Guard during the World War. Adjutant General's Office.

****Battery D, 144th Regiment of Field Artillery demobilized February 6, 1919. Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 24.

*****A new Company organized at Ventura and designated Battery D, 196th Field Artillery April 16, 1936. General Order No. 10, dated April 17, 1936. Adjutant General's Office.

*****Battery D, 196th Field Artillery demobilized July 1, 1936. General Order No. 20, dated June 18, 1936. Adjutant General's Office.

eA new Company organized at Ventura and designated Battery C, 144th Filed Artillery July 1, 1936. General Order No. 20, dated June 18, 1936. Adjutant General's Office.

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First LieutenantsCommanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Ralph E. Cole, First Lieut. (Trans. from Bty D, 196th F. A., July 1, 1936) (In lieu of Captain Apr. 25, 1937)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 16, 1936

Second Lieutenants

Rufus M. McConnell, 2nd Lieut. (Trans. from Battery D, 196th Field Artillery, July 1, 1936)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 16, 1936
Glenn G. Moore, 2nd Lieut., (Trans. from Bty D, 196th F. A., July 1, 1936)	Apr. 10, 1936	Apr. 16, 1936

Activities:

The Second Field Artillery was organized August 4, 1917, and termed the "Grizzlies" as it was the only California regiment composed entirely of local troops. There were many notables among its members and it was placed under command of Stewart E White, a well known author. Captain White and Lieutenant Colonel Thornwell Mul- lally were the first two members of the "Grizzlies" to take the oath of the National Guard. The Regiment was mustered into Federal Service August 5, 1917, for duty during the World War. On October 24, 1917, the troops arrived at Camp Kearney where the Second Field Artillery was redesignated 144th Field Artillery. The 144th Field Artillery was sent to France and was assigned to a position but the signing of the Armistice prevented the regiment from taking that position.

The regiment returned to the United States and on February 6, 1919, was demobilized. Seventeen years elapsed before any thought was again given to the 144th Field Artillery. In 1936, the war-time regiment was reconstituted thus bringing again into history the name of the World War "Grizzlies". There were several changes, however, in the new 144th Field Artillery, mainly: The armament would be like that of the 250th Coast Artillery and not Howitzer Artillery equipment; it would be part of the army or G. H. Q. reserve troops, not part of the 40th Division, and the 155 G. P. F's would be the principal armament and that such armament would not likely ever be part of the organizationalequipment of the Combat division.*

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*California Guardsman August 1936, page 16.

BATTERY D, 144TH FIELD ARTILLERY (Continued)

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Activities: (Continued)

The Second Battalion, organized in Santa Barbara and Ventura, was first designated as the Second Battalion, 196th Field Artillery. The able commanding officer, Major Ralph W. Coane, was formerly the battery commander of the efficient Santa Barbara Battery of the 143rd Field Artillery. On July 1, 1936, this battalion of the 196th Field Artillery was redesignated Second Battalion, 144th Field Artillery and was completed with Headquarters Battery and Combat Train at Santa Barbara; Battery C, Santa Barbara; Battery D, Ventura; and Medical Department Detachment, Second Battalion at Santa Barbara.

The Armory for the 144th Field Artillery was constructed in Santa Barbara and covered half a block. It has a drill floor 90 by 130 feet, with a large stage at one end and seating capacity for three hundred persons at the other end. Along one side of the drill hall are locker rooms, supply rooms and enlisted men's club rooms. The administration offices are contained in a wing extending from the main building. There is a court yard approximately 150 by 250 feet between the main building and the gun sheds which is used for drill purposes. The Armory was a Works Progress Administration Project and cost in the neighborhood of \$150,000.00.

The most efficient battery in the Second Battalion of the 144th Field Artillery for the years 1936-1937 was Headquarters Battery and Combat Train commanded by Captain Henry C. Coles. The Battalion received The Battalion Commander's Trophy presented by Major Ralph W. Coane. It is a perpetual award and the proficiency of the battery in every phase of the work during armory drill period and also the summer camp period was taken into consideration in awarding the trophy.

"The following specific activities were considered in selecting the most efficient battery:

1. Enlisted strength throughout the year.
2. Percentage of attendance at drills during armory period.
3. Percentage of attendance during camp period.
4. Ratings at bi-monthly inspections in all departments.
5. Ratings at field inspections.
6. Conduct of the organization in the field march and discipline, general knowledge of duties, department, dress, and promptness at drills. Spirit shown in the performance of difficult and distasteful jobs, such as K. P. etc.
7. Personal appearance of officers and enlisted men during armory drill and during field training periods.
8. Technical knowledge of both commissioned and non commissioned officers.
9. Leadership displayed by commissioned and non commissioned officers."

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*California Guardsman October 1937, page 23, column 1.

BATTERY D, 144TH FIELD ARTILLERY (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

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The 144th Field Artillery led all the other units and regiments of the California National Guard in drill attendance for the years 1936, 1937, and 1938. This efficient Regiment deserves our respect and admiration and it is ably living up to its World War nickname of "Grizzlies."

Personnel	Assignment	Start	End
Louis A.	Apr. 20, 1936	Apr. 27, 1936
...
...

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The 144th ambulance company was organized April 27, 1936, and Captain Louis A. ... was assigned to command the unit. In September 25, 1936, the company held its first public drill in Hasty Park, Long Beach, where a large number of spectators attended the occasion.

The Long Beach units of the California National Guard, consisting of the Light Ambulance Company, the 115th National Engineer, Battery F, Mechanics and the ... Company of the 231st Coast Artillery, held their annual drill October 12, 1936, and an enjoyable time was reported by all who attended the affair. The ... of the Light Ambulance Company, Captain Louis A. ... and ... of the ... by being presented with his ten year service medal. ... of the 231st Coast Artillery, presented the medal and ... Captain ... on his long service in the California National Guard. Captain ... was formerly with the 231st Coast Artillery Company.