

History of the 8th Infantry Regiment, Company F, National Guard of California 1891-1895

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

Digitized by the History Office, Camp San Luis Obispo, 24 January 2015

Original document on file at the California State Library

COMPANY F

Company F, Eighth Infantry Regiment, Fifth Brigade (Formerly
Company F, Eighth Infantry Battalion)

Reference: Adjutant General's Files
Location: Oroville, Butte County
Organized October 17, 1891
Reconstituted October 31, 1891*
Consolidated and redesignated December 7, 1895**

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Warren Sexton, Captain	Oct. 17, 1891	Oct. 21, 1891
Henry D. Lausen, First Lieut.	Oct. 17, 1891	Oct. 21, 1891
<hr/>		
Warren Sexton, Captain (Re-elected Oct. 16, 1893)		
Thomas A. Atkinson, First Lieut.	Oct. 16, 1893	Nov. 29, 1893
<hr/>		
Joseph H. Gunby, Captain	Nov. 26, 1895	Dec. 6, 1895
Jefferson D. March, First Lieut.	Nov. 26, 1895	Dec. 6, 1895

Activities:

Company F was organized at Oroville, October 15, 1891, in response to a petition issued by a group of citizens, who desired a guard organization in their community. The company, although organized for sometime was not admitted into the National Guard until a vacancy occurred in the Guard. During October of 1891, two companies of the National Guard were consolidated which made an opening

-oOo-

*Adjutant General Report 1891-1892, page 40.
(The rank date of Colonel Park Henshaw, October 31, 1891, is to be used as the date Company F became attached to the Eighth Infantry Regiment.)

**Companies F and A, Eighth Infantry Regiment, Fifth Brigade consolidated and designated Company A, Twelfth Infantry Battalion, December 7, 1895. Two days later, December 9, Company A, Twelfth Battalion redesignated Company A, Second Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade.
Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, General Order Nos. 17, 18, pages 87, 88.

COMPANY F (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

for Company F. Colonel Park Henshaw and Warren Sexton of Oroville, were given special praise for the interest they manifested in securing a company for Oroville. This gave northern California a full regiment, which was the goal the military companies of that section had striven to attain. The mustering in of the unit on October 15, 1891, was a gala occasion as all brigade, regimental and company officers of the "Gallant Eight" were present. The ceremonies were witnessed by Adjutant General C. G. Allen of Governor H. H. Markham's staff and Lieutenant Colman of the United States Army.

Captain Warren Sexton was elected to command the newly organized company and served in that capacity for four years. Captain Sexton was eager to make this an outstanding company in regards to National Guard requirements and in this respect he received the fullest cooperation for the members. A report for the months of January, February and March 1892, based on the companies drill and attendance, rates Company F as having the highest average in the State. The Company's rating was 86.53 per cent and shared its honors with the Eighth Infantry Regiment to which it was attached. The Eighth Infantry Regiment was rated at 83.10 per cent, which was also the highest regimental average for the three months.

The first annual target practice that Company F participated in was during September of 1892. There were seven men that received Second Class medals and forty-one that qualified for Third Class. Company F not only made excellent ratings in target practice, but in attendance records as well, holding a 100 per cent record for 1892. As a result of the two annual regimental target shoots of 1892, the winning company of the Eighth Infantry Regiment was to be presented with a trophy known as the Engels Cup. Company F, much to the surprise of the older companies in the regiment, made the highest score. This record breaking event, took the honors from Company C, who had held the record for 1890 and 1891. After being presented with the trophy, Company F became the center of attraction in military circles. The trophy was held by the company but a short while, as many discussions arose as to Company F being entitled to the award. A statement was issued to the effect that Company F had won the highest score but once, and Company C had been the highest scoring company for two years previous. The trophy was therefore, presented to

-000-

*The Marysville Appeal, June 16, 1893, page 10, column 7.

2579 ✓

COMPANY F (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

Company C through default.*

An interesting Interstate Target Shoot was held in April 1893, in which twenty-five members of Company F competed with the same number of men from Carson City, Nevada. The competition was keen, Company F making a score of 994 against 964 made by the Carson City team. The highest individual score made by Company F was forty-four and the lowest, thirty-two. The scores for the Carson City team were forty-four high and thirty-three low. However, the average score for each team was, Company F, 39.76 and Carson City 38.56 per cent. After winning the contest by thirty points, Company F was adjudged as a crack company. The unit was the youngest company in the "Gallant" Eighth Regiment and was most deserving of all honors won at the match.** At the concluding annual target practice for 1893, Company F again came to the front by breaking all previous records. This time the company gave to American marksmen, a score which had never been equalled in the company shooting at 200 yards, thereby gaining the world's record. There was a great deal of envy among other organizations of the National Guard in regards to Company F topping all records in marksmanship. Company C of the First Infantry Regiment held the highest record in California for target shoots. Therefore, Company C challenged Company F to a target shoot in order to determine which was the better company. The match was arranged for and took place in December 1893. As a result, Company F was defeated by only two points. This was a disappointment to the Eighth Infantry Regiment, as one may note from the following article published in a Marysville paper shortly after the contest:***

"There is no reason in the world why Company F could not have come out with flying colors, had the men but kept up their average. In one or two instances they completely lost their heads and the loss of points thereby was sufficient to defeat them. The range is a most miserable affair. The targets are all irregularly placed and the light upon them was bad. The number of me shooting at one time, also had a bad effect on some of our members, while it was

-000-

*The Marysville Appeal, June 16, 1893, page 10, column 7.

**The Marysville Appeal, April 14, 1893, page 1, column 5.

***For additional information concerning Company F in the Railroad Strike of 1894, refer to History of Eighth Infantry Regiment.

Activities: (continued)

just what the city men are used to. There is no doubt but that over a single target range, Company F would have been victorious. As it was, they were defeated, but by a margin, so close that their opponents have small cause for boasting. The percentages made by the teams were as follows: Company C, First Infantry of San Francisco, 81.6 plus and Company F, Eighth Infantry of Oroville, 79.6 plus."

A Divisional Encampment was held at Camp Columbus, Santa Cruz, during August 1892. Company F was encamped there with the Eighth Infantry Regiment from August seventh to August fourteenth, and participated in company and battalion drills. These more modern tactics in drills were used for the first time at the 1892 Encampment, and proved beneficial in acquainting the troops with operations aside from company drills.

The report of the annual inspection and muster of Company F, for 1894, shows that the Company upheld its high rating of several years previous. There were fifty-four men and three officers present at the inspection. The men presented a good appearance in campaign hats, leggins and field belts, and all exercises were well executed. The members had given special attention to "pointing and aiming drills" held in the Company's armory which proved to their advantage in target practice.

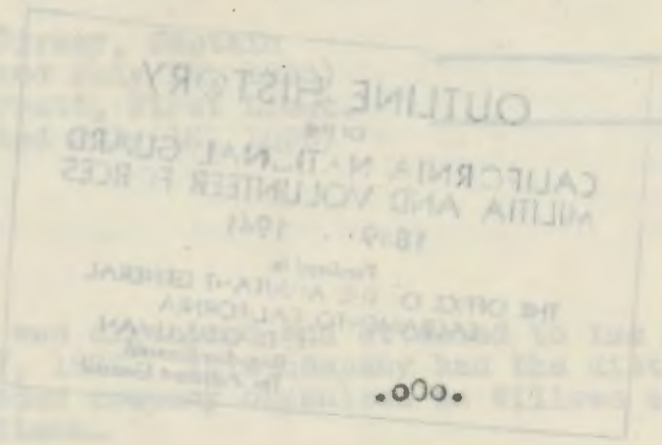
The last major activity Company F participated in prior to its redesignation in 1895, was the Railroad Strike of 1894. Colonel Park Henshaw, commanding the Eighth Infantry Regiment, was ordered to collect the troops of his command and intercept a group of strikers enroute from Dunsmuir to Sacramento. Company F was one of three companies that responded and just as the troops were in a position to achieve a victory, the Colonel received orders to withdraw his troops. This was done so as to eliminate any serious outbreak between the National Guard and strikers. Company F remained on strike duty until July thirtieth, at which time the troops were ordered back to their armory.*

.000.

*The Marysville Appeal, December 22, 1893, page 7, column 2.

Activities: (continued)

During the Strike it became apparent in military circles that a complete reorganization of the National Guard was necessary. The change went into effect December 7, 1895, when the Regiments were organized into Battalions. Company F consolidated with Company A and became Company A, Twelfth Battalion and remained so designated for two days when the Twelfth Battalion was reorganized into a regiment. By General Order No. 13, Company F was redesignated Company A, Second Infantry Regiment, Third Brigade.*



The subject of Company F entered the service of the National Guard in 1861. They were organized at San Francisco and during the war the company was attached to the 12th Infantry. The company was distinguished in many ways. A Springfield rifle shot was held during 1864, in which Private Thomas A. Johnson of Company F was one of the best in the First Class gold and Sergeant's medal. At the target shooting of 1865, Private Johnson again scored high. He was one of the best in the First Class gold medal. The company was well represented at all times and were awarded Second and Third Class medals.

The annual inspection and muster of Company F for 1894, was held at Vallejo on August twenty-ninth. The company was represented by

*Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, General Order No. 13, page 87.