

**History of the California Naval Militia,
1st Division (Company C, Naval
Battalion, National Guard of California)
1891-1917**

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, 23 January 2015

FIRST DIVISION

First Division, Naval Battalion (Formerly Company C)*

Location: San Francisco, San Francisco County

Organized September 3, 1891

Enrolled in National Naval Volunteers May 3, 1917

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
C. A. Douglas, Lt. Commander	Sept. 28, 1891	Sept. 28, 1891
Fred L. Rockwood, Lt. Jr. Grade	Sept. 28, 1891	Sept. 28, 1891
Ewald J. Schneider, Lt. Jr. Grade	Nov. 15, 1892	Jan. 10, 1893
F. H. Stahle, Ensign Sr.	Jan. 16, 1892	Feb. 1, 1892
Edward E. Manseau, Ensign Jr.	Nov. 15, 1892	Jan. 10, 1893
C. A. Douglas, Lt. Commander (Resigned July 14, 1896)	Sept. 28, 1891	Nov. 5, 1895
Edward E. Manseau, Lt. Jr. Grade	April 3, 1894	May 25, 1894
A. H. Heney, Ensign Sr.	April 3, 1894	May 25, 1894
Guy C. Calden, Ensign Jr.	April 4, 1894	May 22, 1894
Cecil C. Dennis, Lt. Commander	April 4, 1894	May 22, 1894
Guy C. Calden, Lt. Jr. Grade	April 4, 1894	June 23, 1896
A. H. Heney, Ensign Sr.	April 3, 1894	April 14, 1896
Chas. A. Gould, Ensign Jr.	April 14, 1896	June 23, 1896
Cecil C. Dennis, Lt. Commander	April 4, 1894	Oct. 27, 1896
Joseph L. Emanuel, Lt. Jr. Grade	Sept. 28, 1897	Oct. 16, 1897
Wm. G. Morrison, Ensign Sr.	Oct. 12, 1897	Nov. 22, 1897
Henry C. Peterson, Ensign Jr.	June 29, 1897	Sept. 1, 1897
Cecil C. Dennis, Lt. Commander	April 4, 1894	Oct. 27, 1896
Wm. G. Morrison, Lt. Jr. Grade	Oct. 17, 1899	Nov. 29, 1899
John F. Murphy, Ensign Sr.	Oct. 17, 1899	Nov. 29, 1899
Henry C. Peterson, Ensign Jr.	June 29, 1897	Sept. 1, 1897
Wm. G. Morrison, Lt. Commander	Feb. 27, 1900	April 6, 1900
Henry C. Peterson, Lt. Jr. Grade	Feb. 27, 1900	April 6, 1900
John F. Murphy, Ensign Sr.	Oct. 17, 1899	Nov. 29, 1899
Quan F. Smith, Ensign Jr.	Feb. 27, 1900	April 6, 1900

.oOo.

*Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, General Order No. 12, page 79.

FIRST DIVISION (Continued)

Commanding officers (Continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Thos. B.W. Leland, Lt. Commander	July 23, 1901	August 21, 1901
Carl Schilling, Lt. Jr. Grade	March 18, 1902	May 16, 1902
John F. Murphy, Ensign Sr.	Oct. 17, 1899	Nov. 29, 1899
John J. Foley, Ensign Jr.	July 29, 1902	Aug. 22, 1902
Carl Schilling, Lt. Commander	July 28, 1903	Sept. 28, 1903
John A. McGee, Lt. Jr. Grade	July 28, 1903	Sept. 28, 1903
Emanuel Mosbacher, Ensign Sr.	Nov. 22, 1904	Jan. 25, 1905
John F. Foley, Ensign Jr.	July 29, 1902	Aug. 22, 1902
John A. McGee, Lt. Commander	April 4, 1905	May 29, 1905
Walter E. Conlin, Lt. Jr Grade	April 3, 1906	April 14, 1906
Emanuel Mosbacher, Ensign Sr.	Nov. 22, 1904	Jan. 25, 1905
Irving C. Allen, Ensign Jr.	March 18, 1907	April 9, 1907
John A. McGee, Lt. Commander	April 4, 1905	April 26, 1909
Wm. P. Conbu, Lt. Jr. Grade	Feb. 11, 1901	April 26, 1909
Emanuel Mosbocher, Ensign Sr.	Nov. 22, 1904	April 26, 1909
Leslie H. Knox, Ensign Jr.	March 4, 1909	April 26, 1909
Wm. C. Fooze, Ensign Jr.	Feb. 2, 1911	Feb. 14, 1911
John A. McGee, Lt. Commander	April 4, 1905	Dec. 5, 1913
Wm. P. Conbu, Lt. Jr. Grade	Feb. 11, 1909	Dec. 5, 1913
Wm. C. Fooze, Lt. Jr. Grade	May 27, 1915	June 3, 1915
R. J. A. Stern, Ensign Sr.	Jan. 22, 1914	March 13, 1914
Julian A. Ducray, Ensign Jr.	May 27, 1915	June 3, 1915
Julian A. Ducray, Lt. Commander	Jan 25, 1917	Feb. 8, 1917
Wm. C. Fooze, Lt. Jr. Grade	May 27, 1913	June 3, 1915
R. J. A. Stern, Ensign Sr.	Jan. 22, 1914	March 13, 1914
Lyman Edmunds, Ensign Jr.	April 8, 1917	April 9, 1917

ACTIVITIES:

Company C of the Naval Battalion was organized and mustered into the service of the State on the third of September 1891. After the organization was perfected it was discovered that the enrolled membership of the company was less than the minimum required by law. The entire proceedings of the meeting had to be ratified at a later date after more signatures had been secured.* This was

.oOo.

*San Francisco Chronicle, Sept. 4, 1891, page 8, column 3.

done during a meeting held September twenty-eighth, when the proceedings of the meeting of September third were ratified and became effective.*

This company was composed entirely of members of various yacht clubs and rowing associations of San Francisco who were financially well to do. Active interest was manifested by the members in drills on board the old "U.S.S. Charleston" and in the summer of 1892, Company C joined the other San Francisco companies of the Battalion in a short cruise to Santa Cruz.

Under command of Lieutenant Commander Douglas, the company participated in a reception for Vice-President Stevenson on the occasion of his visit to San Francisco, June 19, 1893. On January 27, 1894, the company took part in the great civic and military parade at the opening of the Midwinter Fair in San Francisco.** In the summer of 1895, Company C, together with other companies of the Naval Battalion, were permitted to cruise on board the United States Cruiser "Olympia" and again 1896, they had the privilege of drilling on board United States Ships "Philadelphia" and "Monodnock".***

On July 10, 1894, the company was called into active State service, in connection with the Railroad Strike of that year. This was the first company of the Naval Battalion to be called out. Under Lieutenant Commander John A. Douglas, the unit was ordered to San Jose where they reported to Lieutenant Colonel A. K. Whitton, of the Fifth Infantry Regiment. No serious disturbance occurred at San Jose and the only duties performed by Company C was that of guard duty at the Southern Pacific railroad yards and depot.

On the fifteenth of July, Lieutenant Douglas received orders to report with his command at Division Headquarters in San Francisco. Upon arrival there, Company C was ordered to report to Colonel Wm. MacDonald, at Oakland, where the unit remained guarding the waterfront and railroad yards until August eighth, when the men were dismissed. Lieutenant Douglas and his men acquitted themselves creditably while in active service and were highly commended by Major General Dimond for their prompt and efficient service during the disturbance.****

Section III of General Order No. 12, dated August 10, 1895, ordering changes in the nomenclature of the various companies of the Naval Battalion provided that Company C be hereafter known and designated as the First Gun Division, of the Naval Battalion,

.oOo.

*San Francisco Chronicle, Sept. 29, 1891, page 12, column 3.

**San Francisco Chronicle, Jan. 28, 1894, page 1, columns 1 to 7.

***Adjutant General Report 1895-1896, page 5.

****Adjutant General Report 1893-1894, pages 231, 267, 277, 288 and 289.

National Guard of California.*

The officers and men of the Division participated in a cruise off San Francisco Bay on board the Monitor "Comanche" July 3 to July 11, 1897, after which the "Comanche" was returned to the Naval authorities at Mare Island. Soon afterwards the "U.S.S. Marion" was secured from the Navy Department for the use of the Divisions located in the central and northern part of the State. Battalion headquarters were established on board the "Marion" and the ship was also used by the First Division as an armory.**

During the Spanish-American War the First Division of the Naval Battalion volunteered its services. One commissioned officer and fourteen enlisted men from the Division entered the Auxiliary Force of the United States Navy. A few of these men were used in manning some of the converted tugs, doing patrol duty along the coast of this State and others were placed in the United States transport service. Leaves of absence and furloughs for the duration of the war were granted to officers and men who enlisted in the Federal service.*** There is no record showing when these volunteers were discharged from the United States Navy Auxiliary Force, or when they reported for further duty in the Naval Battalion; but a few of them were still in the United States transport service on the first of September 1900.****

On June 21, 1899, the Navy Department tendered the use of the "U.S.S. Badger" for a practice cruise of the State Naval Militia and two officers and seventeen men of the First Division took advantage of the opportunity offered. They unhooked at San Francisco the morning of September fifth and returned to that port September thirteenth. The officers and men of the division were enthusiastic in their praise of the officers and crew of the "Badger" for their painstaking efforts in instructing the State Naval men.*****

The First Division, together with the other Divisions of the Naval Militia assembled for a cruise and drill on board the "U.S.S. Philadelphia" beginning September 23, 1901, leaving San Francisco on that date. The "Philadelphia" proceeded southward to Santa Rosa Island where they remained one day and returned to San Francisco, arriving there September twenty-ninth. The officers and men of the Division expressed their appreciation and thanks for the courteous treatment accorded them while on board the "Philadelphia", and were unanimous in their opinion that the cruise had been a most profitable one.*****

.oOo.

*Adjutant General Report, 1895-1896, page 79.

**Adjutant General Report, 1896-1898, page 5.

***Adjutant General Report, 1899-1900, pages 52 and 56.

****Adjutant General Report, 1899-1900, page 7.

*****Adjutant General Report, 1899-1900, page 117.

*****Adjutant General Report, 1901-1902, pages 150-151.

The years 1902, 1903, 1904 and 1905 passed without incident requiring special mention. The Division continued to drill and practice on board the "Marion" and apparently made steady progress in efficiency and discipline.* However in 1906, the Naval Militia of California was again called into active service on the eighteenth of April to assist the civil authorities in the cities of the San Francisco Bay district and particularly in the city and county of San Francisco, during the conflagration which followed the earthquake in that city. The duties assigned to the Militiamen were to assist the Regular Troops in preserving order caring for the injured, distributing supplies, clearing away debris and performing such other duties as were necessary. For the purpose of systematizing the work in hand, the State troops on duty in San Francisco were divided and organized as the First and Second Provisional Brigades. These Provisional Organizations were entirely unrelated to any National guard organization, and were formed without reference to the location of any of the units before they were called into the active service of the State.

The First Division, Naval Militia of California, was attached to the Second Provisional Brigade under command of Brigadier General John A. Koster and was stationed at San Francisco from April eighteenth to May thirty-first. The officers and men of the Division performed the duties assigned to them in an efficient and conscientious manner and were highly deserving of the praise they received for their work.**

A more suitable training ship was secured for the State Naval forces on July 10, 1906, when the "U.S.S. Alert" was formally turned over to the State in exchange for the antiquated "U.S.S. Marion". The "Alert", although a comparatively small vessel, was at least seaworthy and afforded the Naval Militia a much needed opportunity for more frequent cruises at sea.

Four officers and thirty-two men of the First Division, approximately one-half of the Division embarked at Sausalito, California, on board the "U.S.S. Alert" at two-thirty A.M., June 30, 1907, for the annual cruise. It was necessary to limit the number of officers and men taken on the cruise on account of the limited accommodations on board the "Alert". The course was southerly, via Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara, Venice and San Diego to Avalon, Catalina Island, where the ship remained until July eighth, when the return trip was begun, touching at Venice and San Diego to Avalon, Catalina Island, where the ship remained until July eighth, when the return trip was begun, touching at Venice, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz and arriving at Sausalito, July fourteenth. The Division officers were required daily to fix the position of the ship for which duty they were qualified, having taken a course in navigation at their own expense under the guidance of a graduate of the United States Naval Academy. Much foggy weather and a moderate gale was encountered during the trip and these conditions were welcomed; affording as

.oOo.

*Adjutant General Report, 1905, page 5.

**Adjutant General Report, 1906, pages 10, 63 and 64.

they did, opportunity for additional instructive experiences in naval tactics.*

In 1908, another cruise was had on board the "Alert" in which three officers and thirty--seven men of the First Division participated. The ship sailed from Sausalito June twenty-eighth, at one-twenty A.M. The course was southward via Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara, San Pedro and San Diego to Avalon where they arrived July third. The return trip was begun at twelve-thirty, A.M. July fifth, and the cruise ended at Sausalito, August twelfth. Considerable dissatisfaction was expressed with the "Alert" because of lack of speed and the fact that only about one-third of the force could be accommodated on board. During this cruise, there were times, when stormy weather was encountered, and the progress was retarded to as low as two knots per hour.**

Again in 1909 the "Alert" was utilized on a southern cruise in which four officers and twenty--eight men of the First Division participated. On July Fourth, the "Alert" sailed from Sausalito for San Diego via Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara and San Pedro, returning to Sausalito July eighteenth. Considerable rough weather was encountered on the return trip, but the officers and men of the Militia had by this time become expert in handling the old "Alert" and no difficulty was experienced. However, as before, progress slowed down to two knots per hour when strong wind and heavy seas were encountered. An appeal was made by the Lieutenant Commander for a larger and faster boat for his command*** and as a result, application was again made to the Navy Department for permission to return the "U.S.S. Alert" to the Government and this was granted and an exchange for the "U.S.S. Marblehead" was accomplished March 21, 1910. The "Marblehead" was larger and faster than any ship heretofore assigned to this State, and was the first modern protected cruiser to be placed at the disposal of the Naval Militia of California.****

With competent instructors from the Navy Department and better facilities for cruising and practice, the organization made rapid progress and in July 1912, the gun crews of the "Marblehead," under the official inspection of Lieutenant Barthallow, U.S.N. performed at Port Angeles, Washington, what was claimed to be the best shooting ever done in the world by any gun crews of any navy. The record was a brilliant one and the members of the First Division were highly elated because of the part they had in the performance.*****

Practice cruises in which the First Division participated were held each succeeding year, but the 1912 record in target practice was

.oOo.

*Adjutant General Report, 1907-1908, pages 53, 54.

**Adjutant General Report, 1909-1910, pages 65, 66.

***Adjutant General Report, 1909-1910, pages 67, 68.

****Adjutant General Report, 1909-1910, page 5.

*****Adjutant General Report 1910-1914, pages 24, 26, 28 and 30.

FIRST DIVISION (Continued)

not surpassed. The Naval Militia continued to make splended progress during the years 1913 to 1916. The cruiser "Marblehead" was outgrown early in 1916 and the "U.S.S. Oregon" was assigned to the San Francisco station, for the use of the Division stationed in the central and northern part of the State.

From a group of enthusiastic young boatmen who had organized the original Company C in 1891, the First Division had, under the guidance of the Navy Department, developed into a confident and capable group of seamen and gunners. That the Federal Government felt assured of the ability of these men was demonstrated when on April 6, 1917, the United States entered the World War and Governor Wm. D. Stephens received a telegram from the Secretary of the Navy calling the Naval Militia of California into Federal Service. As a result three officers and thirty-eight enlisted men of the First Division were included in the mobilization on board the "U.S.S. Oregon" and enrolled in the National Naval Volunteers. Officers and men were assigned to duty on the Atlantic coast and some of them saw service in various parts of the World.*

The Naval Militia of California was not reorganized after the World War and the enrollment of its members into Federal Service in 1917 brought an end to this organization.

.oOo.

*Adjutant General Report, 1914-1920, page 29.