

History of the California Naval Militia, 1st Engineer Division 1897-1917

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ENGINEER DIVISION

Engineer Division, Naval Militia of California

Location: San Francisco, San Francisco County

Organized August 30, 1897

Enrolled as National Naval Volunteers May 4, 1917

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
George R. Kingsland, Lt. Commander	Aug. 30, 1897	Oct. 16, 1897
Harry P. Gray, Lt. Jr. Grade	Aug. 30, 1897	Oct. 16, 1897
A. E. Williams, Lt. Jr. Grade	March 11, 1898	April 20, 1898
Geo. M. Merriman, Ensign Sr.	Aug. 30, 1897	Oct. 16, 1897
Wm. F. Bonney, Lt. Commander	Feb. 17, 1899	March 28, 1899
Frank Van Vleck, Lt. Jr. Grade	Feb. 17, 1899	June 3, 1899
Wm. Speck, Ensign Sr.	Feb. 17, 1899	March 28, 1899
Albert Poole, Ensign Jr.	Feb. 17, 1899	June 3, 1899
Frank Van Vleck, Lt. Commander	May 10, 1901	July 2, 1901
M.R. Costerisan, Lt. Jr. Grade	May 10, 1901	July 2, 1901
Wm. Speck, Ensign Sr. (Re-elected May 10, 1901)	Feb. 17, 1899	March 28, 1899
Melville C. Wilkinson, Ensign Jr.	May 10, 1901	July 2, 1901
Wm. Speck, Lt. Commander	July 28, 1904	Dec. 9, 1904
Alonzo H. Woodbine, Lt. Jr. Grade	July 28, 1904	Dec. 9, 1904
John Jardine, Lt. Jr. Grade	April 3, 1906	April 14, 1906
Edwin W. Tucker, Ensign Sr.	July 28, 1904	April 13, 1905
Harry R. Mannell, Ensign Jr.	July 28, 1904	Dec. 9, 1904
Wm. Speck, Lt. Commander	July 28, 1904	Sept. 30, 1907
John Jardine, Lt. Jr. Grade	Sept. 1, 1907	Sept. 30, 1907
Henry Leopold, Ensign Sr.	Sept. 1, 1907	Oct. 21, 1907
George E. Link, Ensign Jr.	Feb. 15, 1906	March 4, 1906
Wm. Speck, Lt. Commander	July 28, 1904	May 13, 1909
Henry A. Leopold, Lt. Jr. Grade	Oct. 13, 1908	Feb. 16, 1909
Wm. E. Hubbard, Ensign Sr.	Feb. 9, 1909	March 5, 1909
Charles S. Hendry, Ensign Jr.	March 25, 1908	May 13, 1909

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Henry A. Leopold, Lt. Commander	Dec. 11, 1913	Jan. 14, 1914
Charles S. Hendry, Lt. Jr. Grade	Dec. 11, 1913	Jan. 28, 1914
Wm. E. Hubbard, Ensign Sr.	Dec. 11, 1913	Jan. 28, 1914
E. A. Brainard, Ensign Jr.	Sept. 17, 1914	Dec. 21, 1914
Rudolph L. Haas, Ensign Jr.	April 9, 1917	April 17, 1917

ACTIVITIES:

The Engineer Division of the Naval Battalion, National Guard of California, with an enrolled membership of twenty-six, was organized in San Francisco August 30, 1897. The State had just secured the U.S.S. "Marion" for the use of the Naval Battalion and the new division established headquarters and had its armory on board the vessel.

Less than a year, after the Engineer Division was mustered into service of the State, came the call for volunteers to serve during the Spanish-American war and two officers and eighteen men of that division were enrolled in the United States Auxiliary Naval Forces and assigned to duty on board some of the converted tugs, patrolling the California coast.*

The membership of the Engineer Division had been increased by the enrollment of about thirty men at San Diego who made headquarters there. The men had their armory on board the U.S.S. "Pinta" which had been loaned to the State for use by the divisions of the Naval Battalion located in the southern part of the State. The officers and men of the Engineer Division stationed at San Diego were designated as the Pinta Detachment.

The first cruise in which the Engineer Division participated was made on board the U.S.S. "Badger" which sailed from San Francisco, September 5, 1899, and returned September 16. The cruise was made in two sections, the first section consisting of Headquarters Staff and the San Francisco and Eureka Divisions. The second section, or the so called southern cruise, which had on board the Headquarters Staff, Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara and San Diego Divisions and the Pinta Detachment of the Engineer Division, set sail September twentieth and returned September twenty-ninth.**

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*Adjutant General Report, 1899-1900, pages 7 and 52.

**Adjutant General Report, 1899-1900, pages 110-117.

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The Naval Battalion was segregated from the National Guard April 1, 1901, by General Order No. 4, in accordance with an act of the Legislature and was thereafter known and designated as the Naval Militia of California.* This reorganization did not effect the several divisions of the Naval Force of the State.

Approximately five months following this reorganization a cruise along the southern California coast on board the U.S.S. "Philadelphia", September twenty-third to October seventeenth was enjoyed by the entire Engineer Division.** This cruise was considered the most instructive and beneficial in which the Naval Militia had participated up to that time.

The years 1902, 1903 and 1904 were without incident of special interest in the Engineer Division, only the regular drills and an occasional parade having been held. From March 13 to 27, 1905, the officers and men of the Pinta Detachment, to the number of thirty-nine, were given a practice cruise under supervision of officers of the United States Navy on board the United States ships "Chicago", "Bemington", "Wyoming" and "Perry". The detachment was divided, and a few men assigned to duty on each of these vessels; the duties of the men were changed daily and they were thus given an opportunity to become familiar with the various duties aboard ship.***

About a year later, both the "Marion" and "Pinta" Detachments of the Engineer Division were called for active duty in San Francisco. On the morning of April 18, 1906, that city experienced a severe earthquake shock which was followed by a disastrous fire and it became necessary to call practically all the State forces. The Engineer Division was on duty there from April twenty-third to May fifteenth assisting the Civil Authorities, the National Guard and Regular troops in preserving order, assisting the injured and distributing relief.****

General Order No. 12, dated May 11, 1907, directed that from May 10, 1907, the First and Second Detachments of the Engineer Division, Naval Militia of California, be known and designated respectively as First Engineer Division, located at San Francisco, and Second Engineer Division located at Los Angeles. The First Engineer Division continued on, under the old Engineer Division organizations,

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*Adjutant General Report, 1901-1902, page 4.

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

***Adjutant General Report, 1904-1905, page 92.

****Adjutant General Report, 1906, pages 6 to 10.

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the same officers remaining in command. However, it became necessary for the Second Engineer Division to organize and elect officers.*

Immediately after the Second Engineer Division was organized it was reconstituted as a Deck Division and designated as the Seventh Division of the Naval Militia. As there then remained but one Engineer Division in the Naval Militia, the designation "First Division" was no longer necessary and a request was made that they be permitted to resume the title under which they were originally organized.

General Order No. 18, dated August 19, 1907, provided that on and after September 1, 1907 the First Engineer Division, Naval Militia of California, located at San Francisco, should be known and designated as the "Engineer Division", Naval Militia of California, and that the officers then on duty with the First Engineer Division continue on duty with the new division until their successors be elected and qualified.**

Two officers and twenty-five men of the First Engineer Division participated in a cruise on board the U.S.S. "Alert" to Avalon, Santa Catalina Island, June 30, to July 14, 1907.*** Four officers and thirty-five men of the Engineer Division participated in another cruise to the same place in July 1908, and in July 1909, two officers and thirty-five men of the Division joined in a cruise along the California coast.**** The U.S.S. "Alert", proving too small to meet the requirements of the Naval Militia was, with permission of the Navy Department, returned to the Government March 21, 1910. In exchange the U.S.S. "Marblehead" was a comparatively modern *vessel of more tonnage and with accommodations for a much larger crew than the "Alert" could accommodate.***** From 1910 to 1915 annual practice cruises were had on board the "Marblehead" to Puget Sound Point and steady progress was made by the Engineer Division and also by the other divisions of the Naval Militia.*****

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*General and Special Orders and Circulars, 1907. General Order No. 12, page 4.

**General and Special Orders and Circulars, 1907. General Order No. 18, page 1.

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

****Adjutant General Report 1909-1910, pages 65, 67.

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

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

*of its Naval Forces. The "Marblehead" was a comparatively modern

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The Naval Force of the State had outgrown the "Marblehead" and in 1916 the Navy Department assigned the U.S.S. "Oregon" to the San Francisco station for use by the San Francisco, Eureka and Santa Cruz Divisions.* A practice cruise was had on the "Oregon", July 15 to 29, 1916, on what was the longest, and also the last cruise of the Naval Militia of this State. The cruise extended to Sitka, Alaska, covering nearly three thousand miles on the trip.**

All the divisions of the Naval Militia of California were called into the Federal Service on the sixth of April 1917. The United States had entered into the World War and pursuant to orders from the Secretary of the Navy four officers and fifty-three enlisted men of the Engineer Division were enrolled as National Naval Volunteers on the fourth of May 1917. These officers and men were subsequently mobilized at Mare Island and were detailed for duty on board various war vessels and at stations throughout the United States.***

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

**Cruises of the "Oregon", by Commander Geo. W. Williams on file, Adjutant General office, pages 3-10.

***Adjutant General Report, 1914-1920, pages 21,29.