

**History of the California Naval Militia,
2nd Division (Company D, Naval
Battalion, National Guard of California)
1891-1917**

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SECOND DIVISION

Second Division, Naval Battalion (Formerly Company D)

Location: San Francisco, San Francisco County

Organized September 29, 1891

Enrolled in National Naval Volunteers May 3, 1917

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Louis H. Turner, Lt. Commander	Sept. 29, 1891	Sept. 29, 1891
Wm. E. Gunn, Lt. Jr. Grade	Dec. 9, 1891	Dec. 19, 1891
Theodore F. Tracy, Ensign Sr.	Sept. 29, 1891	Sept. 29, 1891
Wm. F. Burke, Ensign Sr.	Oct. 26, 1892	Nov. 15, 1892
C. M. St John, Ensign Jr.	Dec. 9, 1891	Dec. 19, 1891
Albert H. Elliot, Ensign Jr.	Oct. 3, 1893	Oct. 19, 1893
Wm. E. Gunn, Lt. Commander	Dec. 10, 1895	June 10, 1896
Wm. F. Burke, Lt. Jr. Grade	Jan. 7, 1896	Feb. 17, 1896
Albert H. Elliot, Lt. Jr. Grade	Oct. 27, 1896	Nov. 20, 1896
Joseph L. Emanuel, Ensign Sr.	Jan. 7, 1896	Feb. 17, 1896
Thos. S. Harloe, Ensign Jr.	Oct. 27, 1896	Nov. 30, 1896
Wm. E. Gunn, Lt. Commander	Dec. 10, 1895	Jan. 10, 1896
A.H. Elliot, Lt. Jr. Grade	Oct. 27, 1896	Nov. 30, 1896
Thos. S. Harloe, Ensign Sr.	Oct. 27, 1896	Nov. 30, 1896
Geo. E. Kammerer, Ensign Jr.	Nov. 30, 1897	Jan. 10, 1898
Thos. S. Harloe, Lt. Commander	Oct. 17, 1899	Nov. 29, 1899
Geo. E. Kammerer, Lt. Jr. Grade	Oct. 17, 1899	Nov. 29, 1899
John H. Burke, Ensign Sr.	Nov. 29, 1898	Jan. 31, 1899
James C. Kelly, Ensign Jr.	Oct. 17, 1899	Nov. 29, 1899
Thos. S. Harloe, Lt. Commander	Oct. 17, 1899	Nov. 29, 1899
Henry P. Smith, Lt. Jr. Grade	July 31, 1901	Aug. 21, 1901
John M. Corcoran, Ensign Sr.	Mar. 5, 1901	April 3, 1901
Joseph J. Brophy, Ensign Jr.	Jan. 14, 1902	Feb. 21, 1902
Daniel J. O'Hearn, Ensign Jr.	Mar. 29, 1904	June 13, 1904
Thos. S. Harloe, Lt. Commander	Oct. 17, 1899	Nov. 29, 1899
Alfred J. Fritz, Lt. Jr. Grade	Nov. 15, 1906	Dec. 8, 1906
Louis Ferrari, Ensign Sr.	Nov. 15, 1906	Dec. 8, 1906
Leo J. McMahon, Ensign Jr.	Nov. 15, 1906	Dec. 24, 1906
Thos S. Harloe, Lt. Commander	Oct. 17, 1899	April 26, 1909
Alfred J. Fritz, Lt. Jr. Grade	Nov. 15, 1906	April 26, 1909
Louis Ferrari, Lt. Jr. Grade	Apr. 20, 1911	June 5, 1911
Robt. L. Holm, Ensign Sr.	Apr. 20, 1911	June 5, 1911
Leo J. McMahon, Ensign Jr.	Nov. 15, 1906	Dec. 24, 1906

SECOND DIVISION (Continued)

Commanding Officers (Continued)

<u>NAME</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Thos. S. Harloe, Lt. Commander	Nov. 17, 1899	Dec. 5, 1913
Louis Ferrari, Lt. Jr. Grade	Apr. 20, 1911	June 5, 1911
Robt. L. Holm, Ensign Sr.	Apr. 20, 1911	June 5, 1911
Wm. J. Ashley, Ensign Jr.	Oct. 2, 1913	Oct. 10, 1913

Activities:

Company D of the Naval Battalion, consisting of sixty-nine men, was organized in San Francisco on the twenty-ninth of September 1891. Louis H. Turner was elected as Lieutenant Commander. Lieutenant Turner had received considerable instruction in seamanship from Lieutenant John J. Fitzgerald, a famous instructor in the United States Navy, and was well qualified for the position to which he had been elected. Immediately after perfecting their organization, the members of the new company proceeded to equip themselves with new regulation uniforms, which were paid for partly by the members of the organization and partly with funds raised by private subscription in San Francisco. Rifles, revolvers and other necessary equipment were furnished by the Navy Department.* The Navy Department also loaned the cruiser "Charleston" to the State for the use of the Battalion for drill and practice, and during the summer of 1892, a short cruise southward to Santa Cruz was made by the San Francisco companies.**

An admission fee of \$5.00 was charged each active member and monthly dues of \$1.00 were assessed. In addition, there was an honorary membership fee of \$50.00 per annum, and Company D had been fortunate in securing nine honorary members during the first year of its existence. Thus, the company was able to secure an armory with ample accommodations, including lockers and conveniences for the proper care of arms and equipment. From the viewpoint of financial responsibility as well as technical knowledge, Company D bid fair to become the outstanding organization of the battalion, as many of the members were yachtsmen, several of whom had made long sea voyages.***

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*Adjutant General's Report 1891-1892, page 10.

**Adjutant General's Report 1893-1894, page 4.

***Adjutant General's Report 1891-1892, Pages 179-180.

Activities: (Continued)

At an inspection held June 28, 1895, by Lieutenant Colonel N. T. James, National Guard of California, Company D made a very creditable showing and received a high rating.* The company participated in the reception given in San Francisco June 19, 1893, in honor of Vice President Stevenson; and also in the impressive civic and military parade at the opening of the Midwinter Fair at San Francisco, January 27, 1894, when the members appeared in bright new uniforms similar to those in use in the United States Navy.** Company D was the only unit of the Naval Battalion to participate in the ceremonies at the last rites for Major General W. H. Dimond in San Francisco June 24, 1896.***

Company D was called into active service of the State for the first time on the fifteenth of July, 1894, to assist the other branches of the State service in quelling disturbances and maintaining order during the great Railroad Strike of that year. This unit was detailed for duty on the waterfront in the city of Oakland and also performed guard and police duty in and about the railroad yards in that city. The company was dismissed from active service on the thirtieth of July, after having performed all duties required of them in a most satisfactory manner.****

In compliance with General Order No. 12 dated August 10, 1895, the nomenclature of the companies comprising the Naval Battalion was changed and Company D became the Second Gun Division. This change brought the names of the units of the Battalion into conformity with those which applied to similar organizations in the United States Navy.*****

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*Adjutant General's Report 1895-1896, Page 198.

**San Francisco Chronicle January 28, 1894. Page 1, columns 1, 7.

***San Francisco Chronicle June 25, 1896. Page 16, columns 1-6.

****Adjutant General's Report 1893-1894, Pages 231, 280.

*****Adjutant General's Report 1895-1896, Page 79.

Activities: (Continued)

The officers and men of the company took part in a short cruise of San Francisco Bay on board the monitor "Comanche" July 3 to July 11, 1897. This cruise, conducted solely by officers and men of the Battalion, had, in the opinion of Captain Turner, been productive of greater good to the divisions than any cruise they had yet taken.* After this short cruise was completed the "Comanche" was returned to the Navy Department at Mare Island and the U. S. S. "Marion" was shortly thereafter loaned to the State for the use of the San Francisco Division. The "Marion" not only afforded more room for deck drills, but also permitted the divisions to have their armories on board.**

During the war with Spain in 1898 and 1899, three commissioned officers and twenty-three enlisted men from the Second Division were called by the Federal Government to serve in the Auxiliary Naval Force of the United States Navy. These officers and men were granted leave of absence and furloughs for the duration of the war. Their duties during the period of enlistment consisted principally in manning converted tugs and doing patrol duty along the Pacific Coast; some were engaged in the United States Transport service.***

The Second Division with the other San Francisco Divisions and the Eureka Division participated in a practice cruise from September 5 to September 13, 1899. For this cruise the Navy Department had tendered the use of the U. S. S. "Badger".**** Another cruise was made from September 23 to September 29, 1901, on board the U. S.S. "Philadelphia", during which the officers and men received much valuable instruction.*****

An act of the Legislature, approved March 23, 1901, provided for the reorganization of the Naval Militia, which segregated it from the National Guard of California and provided that the organization thereafter be known and designated as the Naval Militia of California.*****

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- *Adjutant General's Report 1896-1898, Page 43.
- **Adjutant General's Report 1896-1898, Page 5.
- ***Adjutant General's Report 1899-1900, Pages 7, 52.
- ****Adjutant General's Report 1899-1900, Page 12.
- *****Adjutant General's Report 1901-1902, Page 150.
- *****Adjutant General's Report 1901-1902, Page 65.

Activities: (Continued)

The Second Division was again called into active service by the State on the eighteenth of April, 1906, to assist the civil authorities and regular troops in preserving order and distributing relief in San Francisco when that city was stricken by severe earthquake shocks, followed by a disastrous fire. This division was in active service from April eighteenth to May thirty-first, and performed all duties assigned to it in a creditable manner.*

On June 10, 1906, the United States Government formally turned over to the State the U. S. S. "Alert" in exchange for the practically unserviceable "Marion".** The "Alert" was at least a seaworthy vessel and the hope was entertained that its acquisition would be of material benefit in increasing the interest and efficiency of the Naval forces of the State. The Second Division, in company with the other units of the Naval Militia, cruised on board the "Alert" from San Francisco to the Catalina Islands in July 1907, and again in 1908. The cruise of 1909 on the same vessel was to San Diego and back.

As the U. S. S. "Alert" proved too small for the increasing needs of the Naval Militia, permission was obtained to return that ship to the United States Government and the "Marblehead", a more modern vessel and of greater tonnage, was substituted on March 21, 1910.*** Annual cruises were had on board the "Marblehead" in 1910, 1911 and 1912. The 1912 cruise was memorable because of the unprecedented record established by the gun crews of the Naval Militia in July of that year at Port Angels, Washington. At this practice 65 consecutive hits were made while the ship was traveling at a speed of eight knots per hour, thus establishing a new world's record. Annual cruises were again held on board the "Marblehead" in 1913, 1914, and 1915. A year later another exchange was effected when the U. S. S. "Oregon" was substituted for the "Marblehead" for the use of the divisions located in the central and northern part of the State. A cruise was had on board the latter vessel in 1916. Under the supervision of capable naval instructors detailed by the Navy Department at Washington, the Second Division as well as the other units of the sea forces of California forged rapidly ahead.

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*Adjutant General's Report 1906, Pages 6, 10.

**Adjutant General's Report 1906, Page 4.

***Adjutant General's Report 1909-1910, Page 6.

SECOND DIVISION (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

When the United States entered the World War the Naval Militia of California was one of the first organizations to be called. On April 6, 1917, Governor Wm. D. Stearns received a telegram from the Secretary of the Navy calling the Naval Battalion into the Federal Service. The several units were immediately ordered to assemble at their armories and the members were mustered in as "National Naval Volunteers", the Second Division furnishing fifty-one officers and men.* These officers and men were subsequently mobilized on board the "Oregon" and assigned to duty on vessels of the Pacific Fleet and were soon scattered throughout the civilized world.

Thus ends the history of Company D, the Second Division of the Naval Militia of California, which twenty-six years previously had so jubilantly entered the service of the State. The Naval Militia of California was never reorganized, but in its stead there is now a Naval Reserve, which is entirely under Federal control.

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*Adjutant General's Report 1914-1920, Page 29.