

# **History of the Emmet Life Guard, California Militia/ National Guard of California 1862-1881**

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EMMET LIFE GUARD

(EMMET GUARD)

Emmet Life Guard, Company H, Second (Irish) Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 5, File 2

Location: San Francisco, San Francisco County

Mustered in November 18, 1862

Mustered out June 1, 1881

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Michael Coonan, Captain	Nov. 18, 1862	Nov. 20, 1862
Patrick Reading, First Lieut.	Nov. 18, 1862	Nov. 20, 1862
Michael Coonan, Captain (Reelected Nov. 1863)	_____	_____
Patrick Reading, First Lieut. (Reelected Nov. 1863)	_____	_____
Michael, Coonan, Captain (Reelected Nov. 4, 1864)	_____	_____
Thomas O'Neil, First Lieut.	Nov. 4, 1864	Nov. 4, 1864
Thomas O'Neil, Captain	Nov. 3, 1865	Nov. 13, 1865
Robert Cleary, First Lieut.	Nov. 3, 1865	Nov. 13, 1865
Thomas O'Neil, Captain (Reelected Nov. 1866)	_____	_____
Robert Cleary, First Lieut. (Reelected Nov. 1866)	_____	_____
Robert Cleary, Captain	May 15, 1868	May 20, 1870
John F. Murphy, First Lieut.	May 15, 1868	May 20, 1870
Robert Cleary, Captain (Reelected 1870)	_____	_____
Jeremiah J. Collins, First Lieut.	May 16, 1870	May 20, 1870
Robert Cleary, Captain (Reelected May 16, 1872)	_____	_____
James G. Hayden, First Lieut.	May 16, 1872	June 19, 1872
Robert Cleary, Captain (Reelected May 7, 1874)	_____	_____
Cornelius Sullivan, First Lieut. (Resigned April 15, 1875)	May 7, 1874	May 15, 1874
Francis P. O'Keefe, First Lieut.	April 29, 1875	May 6, 1875
Robert Cleary, Captain (Reelected May 18, 1876)	_____	_____
Matthew Conlin, First Lieut.	April 26, 1877	May 15, 1877

Commanding Officers (continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Robert Cleary, Captain (Reelected May 30, 1878)		
John C. Healy, First Lieut.	July 30, 1879	Sept. 8, 1879
Robert Cleary, Captain (Reelected May 19, 1880)		
Matthew Conlin, First Lieut.	May 19, 1880	June 9, 1880

Activities:

The Emmet Life Guard was organized in San Francisco, November 18, 1862, by an order of the County Judge as provided by law, and in compliance with a petition signed by fifty-five citizens who were residents of the city and county of San Francisco. The company was at once mustered into the State Militia as Company H, Second (Irish) Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade. The company quickly supplied themselves with the regular equipment. The arms and accoutrements were furnished by the State, but the uniforms and hats were purchased by the individual members of the company. Their regimental attire was of the same design as those worn by other companies of the Second (Irish) Regiment, consisting of United States Army coats faced with green, red trousers and Regulation Army hats, with a green feather.

The Emmet Guard soon won a reputation for zeal and activity by frequent and thorough drill and target practice, participating in parades and other public appearances. In September 1863 the unit attended the ten day Encampment of the Second Brigade at Alameda, where the troops were highly applauded for the tactical skill evinced in the execution of intricate maneuvers in drill and parade, and also for their soldierly appearance. In 1864 and 1865 the company continued to be active, appearing in many parades and acting as military escort on several occasions.

Under the Military Law of 1866, which affected practically the entire military organization of the State, the Emmet Life Guard was mustered out of service on July 24, 1866, under Special Order No. 3 of that year.\* The company reorganized immediately under the same command, changed its name to Emmet Guard and on May 12, 1868, was mustered into the service of the State as Company E, attached to the First Infantry (Irish) Battalion, Second Brigade, National Guard of California; under Special Orders No. 26 and No. 28, 1868. \*\* In 1870 a movement was commenced to

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\*Adjutant General Report 1865-1867, page 91.

\*\*Adjutant General Report 1867-1869, pages 141 and 142.

EMMET LIFE GUARD (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

reorganize the First Infantry Battalion to which the Emmet Guard was attached and on February 24, 1871, under Special Order No. 8 that Battalion was discontinued as a military organization and companies attached thereto were transferred to a new organization to be known as the Third Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade, National Guard of California.

After its reorganization this company saw little active service until 1876 when the entire Second Brigade was under arms in San Francisco, due to the threatened disturbances in that city by a faction in sympathy with strikers in cities of Eastern States, the ill-feeling having been directed against the Oriental population in particular. The troops of the Second Brigade were placed under arms in October 1876 and July 1877, but were called out on only one occasion, July 29, 1877, when they were on police duty for several hours. The disturbance soon quieted down without resulting in serious consequences and the troops were dismissed. The companies under arms during this disturbance, one of which was the Emmet Guard acquitted themselves creditably. They were quick to respond to orders, observed the rules of discipline strictly and were highly commended by their commanding officers for their soldierly conduct.

After quiet was restored in San Francisco the troops returned to their regular routine duties during 1878, 1879, and 1880, appearing frequently in parades and acting as military escorts when occasion demanded.

The State Legislature at the session of 1879 and 1880, enacted new laws changing and amending the Military Code of California to such extent that it was deemed expedient to reorganize the entire National Guard and establish a new military system for the State.\* About a year later on June 1, 1881, Company E (formerly Emmet Guard) was disbanded in accordance with General Order No. 11, issued June 1, 1881.

eviction. These writs of restitution were issued when Mr. Baillache sued the settlers on his ranch to avoid the Statute of Limitations. The trouble had been simmering over a period of years and the court's action in 1856 confirming the Land Titles in favor of Baillache and his wife caused the dispute to reach a climax. The Settlers joined together and prepared to resist the Sheriff and his posse which resulted in the necessity of the military force being called out. It is assumed after the successful manner in which the militia handled the situation,

\*Adjutant General Report 1880, page 65.

\*Letter from Sheriff Bowles of Santa Rosa to Governor Ireland Stanford, July 17, 1862, letter on file State Archives, State Capitol.