

History of the Siskiyou Guard, National Guard of California 1876-1879

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SISKIYOU GUARD

Siskiyou Guard, Unattached, Fifth Brigade

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 5, File 5

Location: Yreka, Siskiyou County

Mustered in March 25, 1876

Mustered out February 10, 1879

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
John V. Brown, Captain (Resigned July 7, 1877)	March 25, 1876	April 19, 1876
Charles Clodi, First Lieut. (Resigned Sept. 18, 1876)	March 25, 1876	April 19, 1876
Henry Langford Tickner, First Lieut.	Oct. 16, 1876	Nov. 20, 1876

Activities:

On January 7, 1876, the residents of Siskiyou County petitioned Governor Irwin for a National Guard company, stating that 'Siskiyou County had not for years been allowed a company of the guard, and that their needs of armament were greater than those of other counties who had heretofore enjoyed the State bounty in that respect. That within the County borders there were remnants of several tribes of Indians (some of whom had been hostile during the last few years), yet there was no military company within ten days march, and in case of emergency no available aid.' This petition requested His Excellency to authorize the organization of a military company at Yreka which would be accepted, numbered and named as a company of the National Guard of the State of California. Approximately one hundred and thirty-nine names were signed to the petition.**

In response to that action Adjutant-General P. F. Walsh issued Special Order No. 6, which gave authority to Brigadier-General Charles Cadwalder, commander of the Fifth Brigade, to issue all orders necessary which included the appointing of some person who resided in the County to organize the company. David Ream

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*Adjutant General Report, 1875-1877, page 48, lists the First and Second Lieutenants, but the Captaincy vacant.

**Petition on file State Archives, State Capitol. where Captain Brown was appointed on Feb. 26, 1876, that preparations were being made for the coming Fourth of July Celebration. As their arms had been received it is presumed

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*Adjutant General Report, 1875-1877, page 6.

**Adjutant General Report, 1877-1878, page 33.

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SISKIYOU GUARD (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

was appointed to organize and preside at the election of officers for the new unit. The notice advertising the call for the meeting was properly printed on March 13, 1876, as was attested to by Robert Nixon the printer and publisher of the Yreka Journal, a weekly newspaper published in Yreka, Siskiyou County. The organization meeting was held at the Court House on Saturday evening, March twenty-fifth of the same year at 7:30 o'clock. Sixty-six men enrolled themselves at this time and the election of officers was held. John V. Brown was elected Captain and Charles Clodi as First Lieutenant. The volunteers adopted the name of Siskiyou Guard and combined with the Chico Guard formed the Fifth Brigade. This company was the youngest company in the State during 1876.

Charles Clodi, First Lieutenant communicated with Adjutant General Walsh from Etna Mills on September fourteenth, wherein he tendered his resignation. Henry Langford Tickner was elected to fill the vacancy of First Lieutenant. Then on July 7, 1877, Captain Brown tendered his resignation and also was located and engaged in business at Etna Mills. There was no record of an election to fill the command of the Captain and it is evident that the loss of an aggressive leader caused the company to become disinterested and lax in their military capacity. Through the efforts of Captain Brown the corps had been issued a stand of fifty-five arms valued at \$2,000 which they received on August 3, 1876. The Adjutant General's Report of August 1, 1877, stated the unit was equipped with muzzle loading Springfield rifles, but was not completely uniformed, although it was creating a fund for that purpose.* Later \$827.50 was allotted to the company out of the military fund for the years 1876 and 1877, and it is assumed that this amount was used toward the uniforms and arms. The arms were returned to the State Arsenal on May 13, 1879, after the corps had disbanded. The Annual Return (Table D) of September 9, 1878 gave the numerical strength of the Siskiyou Guard as seventy, which included one Captain, one First and Second Lieutenants and fourteen non-commissioned officers and musicians.**

The few papers on file do not contain any information regarding the activities that the company participated in, other than where Captain Brown mentioned in his letter of June 26, 1876, that preparations were being made for the coming Fourth of July Celebration. As their arms had been received it is presumed

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*Adjutant General Report, 1875-1877, page 6.

**Adjutant General Report, 1877-1879, page 33.

Activities: (Continued)

that the company did participate in the festivities. It is evident that no serious trouble with the hostile Indians was encountered and the inactiveness experienced by this company, together with the loss of their aggressive leader, Captain Brown, the members agreed that it was advisable to disband the unit. Mr. Ream, the gentleman who had been authorized to organize the company, communicated with General Foote on January 20, 1879, informing the General "That he (D. Ream) after some delay, had succeeded in obtaining the conclusion that the Siskiyou Guard had desired to disorganize". He also included in his letter a statement that 'Although the company was disbanding, he (D. Ream) hoped this action would not prevent the Adjutant-General from visiting them again, assuring the General they would be pleased to give him the reception worthy of his position.' Mr. Ream sent a list of articles contained in the boxes to be returned to the State, explaining 'That he could not obtain a complete check-up on the supplies, as the former armorer had moved to Oregon and none of the other members knew anything about the supplies, and that the packed boxes would be shipped as soon as road conditions permitted.' A notation on the list filed states that the box of three hundred rounds of ammunition was missing upon arrival.

The Siskiyou Guard, after a short and apparently eventless existence, was formally mustered out of service, pursuant to Special Order No. 6, February 10, 1879.

The application of the citizens and residents of Eureka, Humboldt County, for organizing a company of Infantry was approved by Governor William Irwin. Brigadier General J. G. Wall, commander of the Sixth Brigade, appointed Major P. H. Ryan, to organize the company according to the provisions of the militia code. The company designated and known as the Eureka Guard organized in Eureka, Humboldt County, March 15, 1879, under the command of Captain Alexander Campbell, and mustered into State Service as an unattached company of the Sixth Brigade.

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