Finding Aid to the City Guard, Company B, First Regiment of Infantry, Second Brigade, National Guard of California Records, 1854-1915

Finding aid prepared by Tom Carey
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
100 Larkin Street
San Francisco, CA, 94102
(415) 557-4567
info@sfpl.org
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Title: City Guard, Company B, First Regiment of Infantry, Second Brigade, National Guard of California Records,
Date (inclusive): 1854-1915
Date (bulk): 1854-1882
Collection Identifier: SFH 56
Physical Description: 2 boxes and 1 oversize volume (2.2 cubic feet)
Contributing Institution: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
100 Larkin Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 557-4567
info@sfpl.org
Abstract: Minute books, membership rolls, account books, correspondence, printed material and ephemera for this state militia unit.
Physical Location: The collection is stored onsite.
Language of Materials: Collection materials are in English.
Access
The collection is open for research.
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], City Guard, Company B, First Regiment of Infantry, Second Brigade, National Guard of California Records, (SFH 56), San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
Provenance
This collection was obtained by the San Francisco Public Library in 1966 from the Alta California Bookstore, Berkeley. The Bookstore’s owner, John Swingle, had purchased the collection from Sven Skaar of Nevada City, California. Skaar had purchased the collection from Carmen Perrenot, a niece of Alexander McCulloch, Captain, who had custody of the City Guard’s records.
Related Materials
Researchers are also encouraged to see: City Guard, Company B, First Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade, National Guard of California Collection: San Francisco, Calif., 1873-1879, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA, and San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1856 Records, The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.
General Note
For a published history of this state militia unit, see: The "City Guard": A History of Company "B" (San Francisco: Filmer-Rollins Electrotype, 1895).
Conservation Note
Volumes were transferred to acid-free folders.
Historical Note
Organized March 31, 1854, the City Guard was composed partly of men from the First California Guard, "originally organized as a train of artillery, and exercised in the standing gun drill, besides drilling with muskets," which had existed since 1849. In early 1854, many of the members decided on the formation of a new organization, the First California Guard having changed to a horse battery, and members disliking the manner of command of their new captain, but desiring to retain the old form of organization. At their meeting of March 31, 1854, the members of the newly formed City Guard elected officers, and John A. Clark was made Captain.
On May 14, 1856 James P. Casey shot Evening Bulletin editor James King of William, reacting to the Bulletin story reporting Casey’s ballot stuffing in the recent supervisorial election. A large crowd, intent on revenge for the deadly wounding of King, moved on the jail, where Casey had taken refuge. The City Guard came there to protect Casey from the mob. However, not long after, the Guard's arms were removed from the Armory by Sheriff Scannell and Lt. Col. West, under orders of Major General Sherman of the California State Militia. When the Guard’s demand that the arms be returned was refused, they voted unanimously to disband at their May 16 meeting. The same day, the ex-members met to organize an independent military organization called the “Independent City Guard,” which subsequently was furnished with arms by the...
civilians who supported it. Individual members of the organization became involved with the new Vigilance Committee, one as Grand Marshal and many others, in its ranks.

Having a sufficient number of members, the Independent City Guard was reorganized March 11, 1859 under state law, again as a volunteer militia unit called the City Guard. This corps was attached to the Second Brigade, Second Division of the California State Militia. Some time in 1861 the City Guard became Company B of the First Regiment of Infantry of the National Guard of California. The City Guard played a part in keeping order following the destruction of the 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco, but would be mustered out May 10, 1907.

Scope and Content
The collection reflects this organization’s evolution from one San Francisco unit of the state militia, 1854, to autonomous and unregulated militia unit in May 1856, and finally back to a regulated state militia unit in the California National Guard, beginning 1859. Significant portions of this collection include Minutes from 1856 meetings, documenting the City Guard’s activities during the term of the second Committee of Vigilance. There is but brief mention of the City Guard’s role in quelling the July 1877 anti-Chinese riots. Folder 2/3 includes material shedding light on the City Guard’s role in establishing order in San Francisco following the April 18, 1906 earthquake, including an account of the unit’s activities, probably written by Captain Alexander McCulloch, as well as payrolls and an inventory of Armory property destroyed. There is some documentation of the mustering out of another local unit, Company A, commanded by Cecil H. Carcass.

Arrangement
The collection is arranged by record type.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
City Guard (San Francisco, Calif.).
Independent City Guard (San Francisco, Calif.).
Criminal justice, Administration of--California--San Francisco--History-19th century
San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1856

| Box 1, Folder 1 | Minutes, March 31, 1854 - May 16, 1856 |
| Box 1, Folder 2 | Minutes, May 16, 1856 - June 26, 1865 |
| Box 1, Folder 3 | Minutes, March 7, 1870 - March 28, 1872 |
| Box 1, Folder 4 | Minutes, October 9, 1873 - March 30, 1882 |
| Box 2, Folder 1 | Roll of Members, 1856-1861 |
| Box 2, Folder 2 | Account book, May 22, 1906 - May 6, 1907 |
| Box 2, Folder 3 | Correspondence, pay rolls, muster roll, invoices, ephemera 1901-1915 |
| Box 2, Folder 4 | Firing Regulations for Small Arms for the United States Army, 1904 |
| Box 1 | Register, Co. B First Infantry, circa 1881-1906 |