

U.S. Armed Forces

Santa Cruz Yesterdays



BOYS IN BLUE AT CAMP WATERMAN, 1890

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

Wearing uniform caps and campaign hats reminiscent of Civil War days, the pictured group of "boys in blue" is Company F, 5th Infantry Regiment, National Guard of California, taken in front of their headquarters here during annual encampment, August 16-24, 1890, at Camp Waterman.

In earlier days and up to only a comparatively few years ago, military encampments were frequent here. The National Guard groups, drawn largely from the San Francisco bay area, were annual visitors in the nineties.

Barrett Tract

Location was often Russell ranch later known for years as the Barrett Tract, extending between Evergreen and Encinal streets, west of River street. On a portion of the site is today's Harvey West stadium. Northward is the site of the "famous" and still-remembered "Battle of Tripe Hill," a lively sham battle during an encampment

here in 1885.

The unit shown appears complete with a pair of drummers (in front row), a youthful uniformed probable mascot, and even a negro cook!

Fifth Infantry occupied a position to left of brigade headquarters which was considered the best location in camp. It was cooler, and some of the tents were even spread beneath redwood trees, which gave shelter from the warm sun.

The colors of the brigade flew from an 80-foot flagpole near the headquarters of General John T. Cutting. Back of this was located the brigade "mess rooms."

Governor-To-Be

Company F was from Oakland, with J. F. Hayes as Captain. First Lieutenant was E. G. Hunt and Second Lieutenant, George H. Wethern. George C. Pardee of Oakland, a few years later elected Governor of California, was Captain of Company A in the same

regiment.

Friday, August 22, was one of the great days of the 1890 camp, for it marked the visit and review by California's Governor Waterman, for whom the camp was named. The governor was accompanied by Major-General Dimond. They were given the fifteen-gun salute and the Fifth Regiment band played.

Another highlight was the sham battle the last day before camp broke up. In the late afternoon an attack was made on an imaginary foe by the whole command. Volley after volley of firing was sent forth from the infantry, while the deep roar of the light battery interspersed the sharp crack of musketry, with a resounding echo from the hills.

Governor Waterman and his staff watched the skirmish and sham battle from his carriage.

Today's local unit of the Guard, by coincidence, is also "Co. F."