

By Stella Haverland Rouse

Although Santa Barbara's Spanish Civil War volunteers played what they considered a very menial part in the War of the Rebellion, they did serve in a necessary capacity in Southern California for a short time.

William H. Brewer, who was traveling at the time of the war's outbreak, making a geological survey of California under Josiah Joyce Whitney, tells in *Up and Down California* about hearing the news of the attack on Fort Sumter April 12 and 13, 1861. The "mail" with the news reached Brewer's camp at San Luis Obispo April 27, and probably by the next day Santa Barbarans knew that fighting had begun, but it was not until June 2, 1864 that the volunteer army was organized here.

Securing recruits from far-off California was somewhat of a problem. Washington leaders feared that drafting men from California might leave the state vulnerable to attack by Secessionists, and there were many Spaniards in the country who still resented the takeover of this western territory by the United States and were unwilling to fight. Most of the Santa Barbarans of the volunteer group, comprised of Spaniards, enlisted and were mustered into the army July 25 or 26, 1864. A few enlisted in August. There were ninety-nine members of Company C, First Battalion of Native Cavalry.

According to William A. Streeter's "Recollections of Historical Events in California, 1843-1878," Don Pablo de la Guerra "turned Union man for the sake of securing the office of District Judge." He was a leader in the community, so his relatives and friends enrolled to form a company like the ones which had been formed in Santa Clara and San Jose combined, in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Having been reared in the saddle, they needed no cavalry training as did many Yankee soldiers. Headquarters were in an adobe on Anacapa Street.

The men brought their own horses for more than a week's march to Los Angeles late in August. They reported to General Winfield Scott at Drum Barracks, Wilmington, September 2, where Major John C. Cremony was commander of the native California battalion. The men spoke little or no English, so 1st Sergeant Juan de la Guerra, who had attended the College seminary at Santa Ynez, was the interpreter. Officers of Company C were Captain Antonio Maria de la Guerra, 1st Lieutenant Santiago de la Guerra and 2nd Lieutenant Porfirio Jimeno de la Guerra. Antonio was a brother of Don Pablo; the officers were nephews of Antonio.

While the war may have had a glamorous appeal, the men were disappointed that they were kept in the Los Angeles area for a year. According to Santiago de la Guerra, they were "sent to San Pedro to guard the water tanks. We patrolled along the water front and guarded the shipping" for more than a year. Then they were sent to Arizona for several months as border guards. Their most exciting activity was a battle with four hundred Yaquis. After the surrender of General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox April 9, 1865, they went to Fort Yuma, Arizona Territory, then to Camp Lucas in Baja California. A steamer took them to San Francisco where they were mustered out April 2, 1866. Thompson and West's *History of Santa Barbara* says that Captain de la Guerra "returned with broken health incident to the exposure in the service," and O'Neill says that by 1874 he was blind. A big fiesta greeted them when they arrived in Santa Barbara by boat.



Captain Antonio Maria de la Guerra (seated) with family members S.B.H.S.

Among the Santa Barbara Volunteers were ten men not from this area who enlisted at Drum Barracks. Most of the men stayed with the company until their mustering out in San Francisco, April 2, 1866. Six were discharged earlier for disabilities; two died of consumption and four deserted.

The sergeants from Santa Barbara who endured to the end were Pedro Cota, Juan Carrillo, Vicente Garcia; Corporals were Miguel Pico, Jose de Jesus Calderon, Santiago Cantua, Ramon Pico, Abran Ayala, Antonio Rodriguez, Jesus Soto, Florencio Ofida, Bugler Rafael Pico and Bugler Ysmael Soto.

Privates were: J. de la Luz Arillanes, J. Vincente Arillanes, Ramon Ayala, Felipe Badillo, F. de Jesus Badillo, Francisco Cordero, Jose Antonio Cordero, Juan de Jesus Cordero, Loreto Corrales, Romaldo Cordero, Miguel Cota, Ramon Durazo, Clemente Espinosa; Joaquin Espinosa, Francisco Garcia, Jose Dolores Garcia, Jose Maria Garcia, (1st), Jose Maria Garcia, (2nd), Manuel Garcia, Manuel German, Miguel Gilber, Antonio Gomez, Diego Gutierrez, Leandro Juarez, Matias Lara, Bernardino Lopez, Ermenegildo Lopez, Francisco Lugo, Jose Lugo, Jesus Madruena, Carlos Morean, Pio Moreno, Antonio Olivas, Jose Victorino Olivas, Santiago Olivera, Nicolas Orellana, Vicente Ortega, Cleopas Ponce de Leon, Jose de Jesus Rodriguez, Pedro Rodriguez, Jose Antonio Romero, Pedro Romero, Juan de la Cruz Ruiz, Roman Samano, Francisco Saragosa, Juan Soto, Jose Valdes, Narcisco Valencia, Pablo Valencia, Jose Maria Valenzuela, Juan Valenzuela, and Pedro Vermudes. (Spelling is according to *Records of California Men in the War of Rebellion, 1861-1867.*)

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