

History of the 15th Separate Company, Infantry, California National Guard 1918-1921

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(LOS ANGELES)

Fifteenth Separate Company, Infantry, California National Guard

Reference: Adjutant General's Files

Location: Los Angeles, Los Angeles County

Mustered in July 25, 1918*

Redesignated July 22, 1919**

Detached August 16, 1919***

Redesignated November 1, 1920****

Redesignated August 23, 1921*****

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Arthur L. Anderson, Captain (resigned June 19, 1920)	July 11, 1918	July 17, 1918
William J. Cross, First Lieut. (resigned Nov. 28, 1919)	Aug. 30, 1918	Sept. 10, 1918
Ray Kerst, First Lieutenant (resigned Dec. 28, 1920)	Jan. 20, 1920	Feb. 20, 1920
George R. Kigley, Captain	Dec. 2, 1920	Dec. 13, 1920
Arthur C. Pfaffle, First Lieut. (resigned July 8, 1921)	May 12, 1921	May 20, 1921
Henry C. Newton, First Lieut.	July 8, 1921	July 9, 1921

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*Fifteenth Separate Company, Infantry, California National Guard, mustered into the service of the State, July 25, 1918.
General and Special Orders and Bulletins 1918, General Order No. 6, par. 1, page 15.

**Fifteenth Separate Company, redesignated Company E, First Separate Battalion Infantry, July 22, 1919.
General and Special Orders 1919, General Order No. 7, par. 2, page 12.

***Company E, First Separate Battalion Infantry, detached and unassigned, August 16, 1919.
General and Special Orders 1919, General Order No. 10, par. 1(A), page 17.

****Company E, unattached, redesignated Company E, Second Separate Battalion Infantry, November 1, 1920.
General and Special Orders 1920, General Order No. 14, page 27.

*****Company E, Second Separate Battalion Infantry, redesignated Company E, 160th Infantry Regiment, August 23, 1921.
General and Special Orders 1921, General Order No. 15, page 31.

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FIFTEENTH SEPARATE COMPANY (Continued)

(LOS ANGELES)

Activities:

The Fifteenth Separate Company was organized in Los Angeles and mustered in as a unit of the California National Guard on July 25, 1918. Arthur L. Anderson was the first Captain of the company and William J. Cross their First Lieutenant. The Fifteenth Company proved to be one of the few companies organized during the World War, that survived, despite the fact that the Federal Government was continually drafting its members or they were enlisting voluntarily in the Regular Army. Only by constant recruiting could any unit in the California National Guard remain in existence, during that time.

Perhaps the first military duty of the Fifteenth Company was to perform guard duty at the Liberty Fair, held in Los Angeles from December 4 to December 16, 1918, at Exposition Park. The object of the Fair was to create post-war activity in agriculture, commerce and industry, and it was believed that it would be the first of many similar annual Fairs for Southern California. The Fair opened with a big military parade in Los Angeles, and at Exposition Park, a flag raising ceremony was conducted in the afternoon.*

The first anniversary of the signing of the Armistice was the occasion for a mammoth celebration in Los Angeles on November 11, 1919. From a Los Angeles correspondent the following article was taken:

"Upon the scroll that tells the story of America's conquest over the enemies of democracy; the scroll that is written with the blood of dying men and the tears of American mothers; a year of peace was recorded at Exposition Park yesterday afternoon, when more than fifty thousand citizens of Los Angeles paid a solemn and impressive tribute to the mothers and sons who had sacrificed their hearts and their lives upon the Altar of Liberty. Los Angeles did not forget. Although a year of peace on earth had brought happiness back to the little cottage on the hillside and the mansion on the boulevard, the scenes that were revealed at the dawning of November 11, 1918, had not been erased from the minds of those who

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*Los Angeles Herald, December 9, 1918, page 11, column 2.

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FIFTEENTH SEPARATE COMPANY (Continued)

(LOS ANGELES)

Activities: (Continued)

were fortunate enough to be able to crowd within the gates of Exposition Park. A year ago; along the Meuse; the heavens looked down upon soldier masses grappling in the mud of a ravaged country, while at home mothers spent sleepless nights in prayer. Yesterday; mothers and sons, arm in arm, rejoiced with the multitude on the first anniversary of peace. So immense was the crowd at Exposition Park that human voice failed to penetrate to its outer fringe. Assembled in the grandstand were the service men and a massed chorus of one thousand community singers. In the speakers' rostrum were the Governor of California, William D. Stephens, Mayor Meredith P. Snyder, Los Angeles and representatives of the army, navy, and the women war workers. Massed in front of the speakers, stood stalwart soldiers of twelve allied nations, garbed in the uniforms of their native countries and bearing aloft their national colors. Mounted upon an Altar of Victory, in the rear of the speakers' rostrum, were the four graces, 'America, Patriotism, Service and Loyalty', symbolized by four pretty girls, three of them garbed in flowing white robes and the fourth attired in service uniform. Governor Stephens was the orator of the day, and was introduced by Mayor Snyder. Mayor Snyder's son paid the supreme sacrifice on the battlefields of France, and like many others who wore gold stars, their joy was tempered with sorrow".*

The Fifteenth Separate Company took part in the Armistice Day parade which was held in the morning, as well as the exercises at Exposition Park.

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*The Los Angeles Times, November 12, 1919, page 17, column 1.

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FIFTEENTH SEPARATE COMPANY (Continued)

(LOS ANGELES)

Activities: (Continued)

About a year and a half later, on May 28 and May 29, 1921, the Fifteenth Company furnished part of the guard of honor at a special memorial service held in conjunction with the funeral of Sergeant Morris Lynchik. The Sergeant was killed in action at Ypres, and his remains brought home for burial. The body was placed in Pershing Square where it was to lie in state until May twenty-ninth. Thirty-nine men and one commissioned officer of the Fifteenth Separate Company acted as guard of honor. The casket, carried on the shoulders of the men of the 27th Division who were with Sergeant Lynchik when he made the supreme sacrifice to his country, was placed with solemn military ceremony on the bier beside the speaker's stand in Pershing Square.

On May twenty-ninth, ranks again were formed in a huge funeral cortege in honor of all the soldier dead, symbolized by this one American. Members of the various war veteran organizations conducted an impressive burial service for Sergeant Morris Lynchik. The Liberty band played patriotic airs beside the flag-draped bier to begin the services. Mrs. Elsie Selvy sang several patriotic numbers, after which Mayor M. P. Snyder of Los Angeles, delivered an oration. At the conclusion of the mayor's talk, Chaplain Doddan and Rabbi Moses Rosenthal read the burial services. Following this, the funeral cortege was formed. Twelve large veteran organizations, together with detachments of soldiers and sailors, made up the procession, which proceeded to Rosedale cemetery, where the burial took place with full military honors.*

The Fifteenth Separate Company attended two annual encampments before it entered the 160th Infantry Regiment. The first of these was held at Santa Cruz, September 12 to September 27, 1920. The camp was under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Haron D. Coburn, United States Army, and all instructors at the encampment were United States Army officers.**

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*Los Angeles Herald, May 30, 1921, page 1, column 4.

**San Francisco Chronicle, September 12, 1920, page 50, column 6.

FIFTEENTH SEPARATE COMPANY (Continued)

(LOS ANGELES)

Activities: (Continued)

The second encampment was held at Yosemite National Park, July 11 to July 26, 1921. The camp was located on the old Camp Ahwanee grounds below the village of Yosemite. Colonel H. D. Coburn, United States Army, was again in charge of the camp, and needless to say, the instruction they received greatly increased the efficiency of the Guardsmen.*

About a month later, the Fifteenth Separate Company became one of the units required to complete the organization of the 160th Infantry Regiment. On August 23, 1921, Company E, Second Separate Battalion Infantry became Company E, 160th Infantry Regiment, California National Guard.

The history of the organization of the 160th Infantry Regiment, California National Guard, is given in the report of the Adjutant General, California National Guard, for the year 1921-1922, page 114.

The commanding officer, Sixteenth Separate Company, Infantry, California National Guard, Riverside, California, having officially advised this office that, after careful investigation, he is of the opinion that there is not sufficient interest in Riverside to properly maintain a company of the California National Guard, and that not only is the interest lacking in men who must necessarily form the organization itself, but also the business men and community in general have not sufficient desire in the matter to give the company the necessary support, and the company commander having officially requested that the organization be mustered out of the service of the state, the said Sixteenth Company, Infantry, California National Guard, is hereby mustered out of the service of the state, on July 13, 1921.

*Los Angeles Times, July 13, 1921, page 6, column 5.