

# **History of the 7<sup>th</sup> Separate Company, Infantry, California National Guard 1918-1918**

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SEVENTH SEPARATE COMPANY

(VISALIA)

Seventh Separate Company, Infantry, California National Guard

Reference: Adjutant General's Office

Location: Visalia, Tulare County

Mustered in January 30, 1918\*

Mustered out February 18, 1919\*\*

Commanding Officers

| <u>Name</u>                    | <u>Rank</u>   | <u>Commission</u> |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Norman C. Wolff, Captain       | Jan. 30, 1918 | Feb. 13, 1918     |
| Arthur M. Becker, First Lieut. | Jan. 30, 1918 | Feb. 13, 1918     |

**Activities:**

The Seventh Separate Company was organized at Visalia and mustered into the service of the State on January 30, 1918. Norman C. Wolff was selected as Captain, and Arthur M. Becker as First Lieutenant. From a Visalia correspondent the following excerpts are taken:

"Visalia has organized a second National Guard company. Not content with having sent away what was the largest company in the State at that time, and with having furnished half the men for a machine gun company as well as easily supplying the draft with its full quota, and reporting the enlistment of nearly two hundred others; Visalia, with the aid of surrounding communities; notably Woodlake, Exeter, and Sultana, rallied enough men to form another company. The mustering in scene was one of patriotic fervor, and it was believed the new company would equal the first unit sent from Visalia, and which held several records in State organizations. Sergeant Carey, on duty in Fresno recruiting for the British Army, was present and related some incidents of the fighting 'over there'. Sergeant Carey, having been wounded in the war, had recently come to this country on furlough for recruiting duty. His recital was unusually interesting and thorough".\*\*\*

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\*Seventh Separate Company designated Company G, and mustered into State Service, January 30, 1918.

Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 116.

\*\*Seventh Separate Company mustered out of State Service, February 18, 1919.

General and Special Orders 1919, page 6.

\*\*\*The Visalia Delta, January 31, 1918, page 1, column 2.

SEVENTH SEPARATE COMPANY (Continued)

(VISALIA)

Activities: (Continued)

Four months later the Seventh Separate Company participated in the Memorial Day parade and exercises in Visalia. The ceremonies were very impressive. All business in the city, official and private, came to a standstill, that the observance of the day might be universal. The ceremonies were very appropriate and started with a procession from the Municipal Auditorium to the cemetery, with fife and drum corps leadership and with veterans of other wars in the ranks of the marchers, the Seventh Separate Company of Visalia, the high school cadet companies, all in uniforms, boys and girls of the grammar school chorus, women's auxiliaries to the veteran orders and many automobiles. The well-kept graves at the cemetery presented a neat appearance and the services there were simple and most impressive. The exercises began with the beautiful ritual service of the G. A. R. under direction of Captain J. C. Beal. Then followed the decoration of the old soldier's monument by the members of the Women's Relief Corps. The complete musical program was splendidly carried out, the singing by the grammar school children having been especially appealing. Benediction was pronounced by Reverend Clyde P. Metcalf, and the sounding of 'taps' ended the morning services.\*

The same fate that eventually led to the mustering out of nearly all of the Separate Companies which were organized during the World War was working havoc with the Seventh Separate Company. Finally the enlistments and drafts into the Federal Service weakened the unit so that it was considered impossible to bring the membership back to the minimum required by the War Department; so on February 18, 1919, the Seventh Separate Company of Visalia was mustered out of the State Service. The unit had been in existence one year and nineteen days, and during the war had acted as a preliminary training unit for the United States Army, in that it trained and drilled men who later were called into Federal Service.

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\*The Visalia Delta, May 31, 1918, page 1, column 4.