

# **History of the 7<sup>th</sup> Company, Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California 1909-1917**

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SEVENTH COMPANY COAST ARTILLERY CORPS

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Seventh Company, Coast Artillery Corps, First Brigade

Reference: Adjutant General's Files

Location: San Francisco, San Francisco County

Mustered in July 28, 1909\*

Mustered into Federal Services and redesignated August 27, 1917\*\*

| <u>Name</u>  | <u>Rank</u>   | <u>Commission</u> |
|--|---------------|-------------------|
| A. R. Farless, Capt.<br>(resigned Aug. 31, 1910)                     | June 25, 1909 | Aug. 23, 1909     |
| R. V. Woods, First Lieut.<br>(resigned Aug. 8, 1910)                 | June 28, 1909 | Aug. 23, 1909     |
| H. G. McKannay, Capt.<br>(resigned Mar. 13, 1912)                    | Mar. 29, 1911 | May 1, 1911       |
| V. G. Little, First Lieut.<br>(resigned Nov. 1, 1912)                | May 14, 1912  | May 31, 1912      |
| W. O. Jones, Capt.<br>(deceased Sept. 20, 1913)                      | May 26, 1912  | Apr. 18, 1912     |
| R. V. Woods, Capt.<br>(resigned Apr. 22, 1915)                       | Nov. 18, 1913 | Dec. 18, 1912     |
| E. G. Schaupp, First Lieut.<br>(resigned June 17, 1915)              | Jan. 1, 1913  | Jan. 28, 1913     |
| R. E. Dineley, Capt.   | May 3, 1915   | May 12, 1915      |
| P. J. Weinhagen, First Lieut.<br>(transferred to Staff June 9, 1917) | Feb. 28, 1916 | Mar. 16, 1916     |
| J. B. Oliver, First Lieut.   | Aug. 2, 1917  | Aug. 2, 1917      |

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\*Seventh Company, Coast Artillery Corps mustered in July 28, 1909.  
General and Special Orders and Circulars 1909.  
General Order No. 19, Par. 3.

\*\*Seventh Company, Coast Artillery Corps mustered into Federal Service,  
August 27, 1917. Muster Roll, Seventh Company, First Coast Defense  
Command, August 1917. Adjutant General Files.

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SEVENTH COMPANY COAST ARTILLERY CORPS (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

From the heading "Record of Events" of the July 1909, monthly return of Seventh Company, Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California the following introduction to the history of the unit will be taken:

"On Wednesday July 28, 1909, the Company was mustered into service as Seventh Company, Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California by Major H. G. Mathewson, Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California in the armory at 1548 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, in compliance with Special Order No. 5, Adjutant General's Office, dated July 1, 1909. Officers present in addition to Mustering Officers were: Colonel C. L. Hewes, Captain F. S. Emmal, Captain A. F. Schenck and Captain A. R. Farless. Officers elected by Company Captain, A. R. Farless, First Lieutenant, R. V. Woods, Second Lieutenant, J. G. Little. Company by-laws were then adopted."

Approximately five weeks after having been mustered in, the Seventh Company attended their first annual encampment at the Presidio in San Francisco, September 4 to 18, 1909. The accomplishments of the new unit while in camp are described in the reports of Ashley R. Farless Captain, and John G. Little, Second Lieutenant of the Seventh Company, Captain Farless stated:

"The company having been mustered into the service only a short time before (on July twenty-eighth), it was with considerable difficulty that the necessary preparations were made for the encampment, in the matters of equipping and training the men, and arranging for them to be allowed an additional vacation at the beginning of the fall season. At 9:30 A.M. September fourth the command marched from their armory, 1548 Van Ness Avenue, to Fort Winfield Scott, Presidio, arriving there at 10:45 A.M. In addition to the many minor details of administration falling to the lot of a company commander at all times, I saw that my men were instructed in the duties pertaining to transportation and care of property, making and breaking camp, sanitation, guard and fatigue duties, care of arms, shelter tent pitching, trench digging, infantry drill, drill at the ten inch breech loading rifle, disappearing carriage, plotting room, range station, etc. There were several night drills, sub-caliber firing by the command on two mornings of the second week, and two rounds service ammunition were fired at a target nearly 6,000 yards range the afternoon prior to breaking camp. Several of the men took

SEVENTH COMPANY COAST ARTILLERY CORPS (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

up signaling under direction of the First Sergeant. Considering the lack of previous experience, the work of the men of this command was commendable. Under the direction of Captain H. R. Casey, Coast Artillery Corps, United States Army, I had charge of the blending of four service charges preparatory to the firing above mentioned. Under instructions from the same officer I recorded the test made by the ordnance machinest of Gun No. two, Battery Cranston, for level, elevating gear, sight standard, etc., and measuring rotating bands of projectiles. To Captain Casey is also due the credit for the successful result of our artillery instruction. He was thorough, patient and painstaking, and the zeal displayed by him in his work showed that we had as an instructor an officer who appreciated the value of a well trained organized Militia. The courtesy shown to me by all officers and men of the Regular establishment with whom I came in contact was all that could have been desired, and would seem to indicate that the old prejudice which once existed against State troops was rapidly disappearing."

During the encampment of June 11 to 18, inclusive, 1910, Captain Farless was absent on account of business duties, First Lieutenant Woods was on leave of absence and command of the company devolved upon Second Lieutenant John G. Little. Lieutenant Little's report was as follows:

"In compliance with Article No. 10, General Order No. 5, National Guard of California. I have the honor to report that during the joint Coast Defense exercises at the Presidio of San Francisco June 11 to 18 inclusive 1910, I commanded the Seventh Company Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California during the entire interval. My duties consisted in the ordinary routine duties of a company commander in the Coast Artillery Corps, in connection with the following exercises; artillery drill, subcaliber target practice, and target practice with full service charge with ten inch disappearing rifle, blending of powder, measuring and weighing of shot, plotting and recording record of shots, together with the usual infantry exercises, such as close order drill, dress parade, normal attack, advance and rear guard etc. I found these exercises highly instructive to myself and noticed with extreme pleasure the interest and aptitude shown by the men of my command. I feel

SEVENTH COMPANY COAST ARTILLERY CORPS (Continued)

## Activities: (continued)

that the interest and enthusiasm of the men present at the encampment has been increased more than one hundred per cent by this one week encampment at the guns."

A remark made by Major A. W. Chase, Coast Artillery Corps, United States Army, in his field inspection report to the War Department on the encampment of the following year 1911, concerning Lieutenant Little will be added to this history. His remark was as follows:

"The range sections all did exceptionally well, and the work of Lieutenant John G. Little was excellent in every respect. I would like to have him in my fire command."

The report of Second Lieutenant Little concerning the encampment of 1911 states as follows:

"Alternating with a Lieutenant of the Sixth Company I had charge of the plotting room work for the Third, Fourth, Sixth, and Seventh Companies at Battery Cranston for all artillery work. I noted with pleasure the efficiency and aptitude of the Chief Plotters, Azimuth Setters and Range and Deflection Board of all of these Companies, but found extreme annoyance with some of the telephone men furnished who seemed utterly incapable of receiving and transmitting messages intelligently. I suggest that all company commanders be instructed to select telephone operators with the greatest care, train them thoroughly in their duties, and under no circumstances to detail second rate men for these positions."

For the same encampment held July 15 to 22, 1911. Lieutenant R. V. Woods, as commanding officer of Seventh Company stated:

"This command, in addition to its regular artillery exercises attended night drill at gun No. two of Battery Cranston to which we were regularly assigned under Major Hyde. At subcaliber practice thirty-four rounds were fired, all of which averaged well and the single practice service shot fired was about right for range but slightly out for deflection. Too much cannot be said of the assistance and courtesies rendered by the Regular army officers as instructor. I found the commissary to be all that could be desired. My men had an excellent mess at all times and were very comfortable. They were well pleased with the work and many expressed regret at so short an encampment."

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SEVENTH COMPANY COAST ARTILLERY CORPS (Continued)

Activities: (continued)

Encampments were held each year up to and including 1916. Each year saw improvements made and the efficiency of the Coast Artillery was increased. In 1916, the Forts overlooking the entrance to San Francisco Harbor were under the command of the Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California, and the seven years experience at the Presidio in previous years was reflected in the splendid way in which the camp was conducted.

Although the Artillery Corps was an artillery unit, they also drilled as infantry units. They not only knew how to manipulate the big coast defense guns, but also were familiar with the rifle of the infantry.

Three of the five years records available on target practice were favorable to the Seventh Company. In 1912 they were first in the Artillery Corps with thirty-four of the members holding medals. Again in 1914 they were first with thirty-two medal men, and in 1916 they were third with twenty-two medal men. This record is based on the number of men in each company that held a medal for high scores.

The number of parades participated in by the Seventh Company were many. Besides the usual holiday parades, the unit took part in the following special parades: Two Portola celebrations, One on October 19, 1909, and one on October 22, 1913, the parade and reception tendered to President William Howard Taft on October 14, 1911, and the Ball of All Nations, May 2, 1914, parade as escort to the arrival and transfer of the Liberty Bell to the Panama Pacific International Exposition on July 17, 1915, also as guard for ex-President Theodore Roosevelt on July 21, 1915, and the "Path of Gold" parade on October 4, 1916.\*

In the spring of 1917 the United States entered the World War. The Seventh Company was mustered into Federal Service, August 5, 1917, for duty in the World War and was redesignated Twenty-Seventh Company, First Coast Defense Command.

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\*For further information regarding parades refer to History of the Coast Artillery Corps, National Guard of California. Adjutant General's Office.