

History of Field Hospital Company No. 1, National Guard of California 1913-1917

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Field Hospital Company Number 1

Reference: Adjutant General's Files

Location: Los Angeles, Los Angeles County

Mustered in January 1, 1913*

Mustered into Federal Service June 30, 1916**

Mustered out of Federal Service October 31, 1916***

Resumption of Service in the National Guard 1918****

Mustered into Federal Service and redesignated August 21, 1917*****

Redesignated October 13, 1917x

575
1076

Commanding Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
Charles W. Decker, Major (Assigned to Field Hosp. Co. No. 1, Jan. 1, 1913)	Nov. 26, 1909+	Jan. 7, 1910
George P. Waller, Jr., First Lieut.	Jan. 16, 1913	Jan. 28, 1913
John E. Colloran, First Lieut. (Resigned December 14, 1914)	Jan. 16, 1913	Jan. 28, 1913
E. M. Clinton, First Lieutenant (Assigned to Field Hosp. Co. No. 1, January 18, 1913)	Apr. 25, 1912	May 20, 1912
F.E. Lettice, First Lieutenant (Resigned July 6, 1914)	Feb. 28, 1913	May 3, 1913
Harlan Shoemaker, Captain (Resigned January 17, 1917)	July 1, 1915	July 1, 1915
E. A. Newton, First Lieuteant (Resigned May 22, 1916)	July 1, 1915	July 1, 1915
Frank H. Chase, First Lieutenant (Assigned to Field Hosp. Co. No. 1, June 6, 1916)	May 23, 1916	May 26, 1916
Elmer R. Pascoe, First Lieut.	June 19, 1916	June 27, 1916

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*Field Hospital Co. No. 1, organized Jan. 1, 1913.
Adjutant General Report 1910-1914, page 9.

**Field Hospital Co. No. 1, mustered into Federal Service for duty on the
Mexican Border, June 30, 1916. Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, p. 14.

***Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 14.

****General and Special Orders 1916, G. O. No. 34, page 150.

*****Field Hospital Co. #1 mustered into Federal Service for duty during the
World War August 21, 1917 Muster Roll Field Hospital Company No. 1,
Adjutant General Files.

xField Hosp. Co. No. 1 redesignated 157th Field Hosp. Co. 115th Sanitary
Train, 40th Division, Oct. 13, 1917. Adjutant General Report 1914-1920,
page 22.

‡Major Decker retained his former rank as of November 26, 1910, when he
was attached to the Medical Corps.

1077

FIELD HOSPITAL COMPANY NUMBER 1 (Continued)

<u>Commanding Officers</u> (Continued)			
<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>		<u>Commission</u>
F. B. Marek, First Lieutenant	June 24, 1916		June 27, 1916
George P. Waller, Captain (Resigned November 29, 1916)	Feb. 14, 1916		Feb. 18, 1916
David C. Farnsworth, First Lieut.	June 26, 1917		July 2, 1917
Egbert E. Moody, First Lieutenant	July 30, 1917		July 31, 1917

Activities:

Field Hospital Company Number 1 was organized and mustered into the service of the State, January 1, 1913, with Major C. W. Decker in command. Lieutenant Edwin M. Clinton was assigned to the unit on January 18, 1913. The first company muster roll shows an enrollment of nineteen men and four officers. The unit met each Monday evening, beginning March 1, 1913, for drill and instruction.

Prior to 1913, the Medical Department was one of the weak spots in the California National Guard. Although the personnel of the Medical and Hospital Corps was highly efficient and well equipped, the State law was such that these organizations could not be placed on a Regular Army basis. No wagon transportation was provided and the corps encountered difficulties in obtaining proper vehicles to move from place to place during a marching campaign.

The surgeons, although staff officers, were recommended by the commanding officers of the regiments, and these recommendations were subject to change by any incoming regimental commander. However, the State Legislature, in 1913, enacted a law which changed the method of procedure, and the Medical Corps was placed on a basis similar to that of the Regular Army. With the reorganization of the Medical Corps, which prompted the organization of Field Hospital Company Number 1, and Ambulance Company Number 1,* it was felt that the California National Guard would be able to properly care for their sick and wounded in the field.**

The unit progressed rapidly, and proved to be an important addition to the National Guard. Aside from lectures pertaining to hygiene, first aid, etc., the members of Field Hospital Company Number 1 were also drilled as a company of infantry, and received instruction in handling the wagons used in transportation.

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*For further details refer to History of Ambulance Company Number 1.

**Adjutant General Report 1910-1914, page 22.

FIELD HOSPITAL COMPANY NUMBER 1 (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

The company return for the month of June 1913 gives a very good description of the activities of the unit during that month, and shows how thoroughly these troops were drilled. The record of events reads as follows:

- June 2 Practical work with wagons under instruction of Sergeant Stott.
- June 9 Litter drill by Lieutenant Clinton. Instruction in Military honors by Sergeant Ostrander.
- June 16 Lecture on Sanitary Troops by Major Decker.
- June 23 Lecture on organization and duties of the Field Hospital by Major Decker.
- June 30 Drill with men in heavy marching order by Sergeant Ostrander. Inspection by Major Decker.

The first activity of the unit aside from routine duties took place on May 30, 1913, when the company participated in the observance of Memorial Day in Los Angeles.

In July of the same year, a detachment of three officers and nine men from Field Hospital Company Number 1 attended an encampment at Santa Cruz where they participated in the Camp of Instruction from July 5 to July 17, 1913, inclusive. Most of the duties performed by the troops in this branch of the National Guard Service were quite different from those performed by other branches of the service. The Field Hospital Company proved to the various other units encamped, that in time of war, they would render valuable service in bringing the sick and wounded from the battlefields to the hospitals, where they would be cared for by skilled Medical Corps officers and highly trained men.

When the troops of the National Guard were ordered to the Mexican Border in June 1916, Field Hospital Company Number 1 was one of the many units called into Federal Service. Within twenty-four hours after the call for troops, all commanding officers had reported their organizations ready to entrain for the mobilization camp. The staff and commanding officers were ordered into service at once, and proceeded to prepare the mobilization camp at State Fair Grounds in Sacramento. There were six officers and sixty-eight men in Field Hospital Company Number 1, when the unit was mustered into Federal Service for duty at the Mexican Border. These men were held in

1079

FIELD HOSPITAL COMPANY NUMBER 1 (Continued)

Activities: (Continued)

readiness at the mobilization camp until June thirtieth, when they were ordered to Nogales, Arizona.

Although the unit was not active as a hospital company while stationed on the Mexican Border, the men were kept busy performing guard and patrol duty during the four months they were in the Federal Service. Field Hospital Company Number 1 did not remain at one point during that period, but was transferred from time to time to various points near the border. The company returned to Los Angeles, and was mustered out of Federal Service on October 31, 1916.*

Upon returning to their home station, Field Hospital Company Number 1 proceeded to make practical use of the knowledge acquired while on duty at the Border.

Although there were no wounded to be cared for while on duty at the border, the unit encountered many types of illness among the four thousand troops stationed there.

The following year, 1917, Field Hospital Company Number 1 was again called into Federal Service when, on March twenty-sixth of that year, a state of war was declared to exist between the United States and the Imperial German Government. The company was almost immediately in readiness to assist, but it was not until August fifth that the unit was mustered into Federal Service for overseas duty. Field Hospital Company Number 1 was then redesignated as 157th Field Hospital Company, and attached to the 115th Sanitary Train, 40th Division.**

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*Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, page 14.

**Adjutant General Report 1914-1920, pages 21 and 22.