

History of the Coulterville Guard, California Militia 1864-1866

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COULTERVILLE RIFLES

Coulterville Rifles, Third Brigade

Reference: Dead Office File, Row 4, File 5

Location: Coulterville, Mariposa County

Mustered in February 27, 1864

Mustered out July 16, 1866

Commanding Officers:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Commission</u>
J. W. Smith, Captain (Resigned November 4, 1864)	Feb. 27, 1864	Mar. 16, 1864
J. H. Worth, First Lieutenant (Resigned November 4, 1864)	Feb. 27, 1864	Mar. 16, 1864
Joseph Leeson, Captain	Dec. 31, 1864	Jan. 16, 1865
Daniel Reen, First Lieutenant	Dec. 31, 1864	Jan. 16, 1865

Activities:

A petition signed by several persons all residents of Coulterville, Mariposa County, was presented to County Judge L. F. Jones, requesting that he appoint some person to preside over the meeting to form a volunteer military company. Judge Jones appointed S. A. Scott as the man to superintend the meeting and on February 27, 1864, the company known as the Coulterville Rifles was organized with J. W. Smith as Captain. This company was composed of fifty of the most loyal Union men to be found in Mariposa County during the Civil War, and the members did much to check any Secessionist activities in that County. Captain Smith and First Lieutenant Worth resigned on November 4, 1864, to be mustered into the United States Army for service.

Incompleteness of the files prevents giving an accurate history of this company. In 1866, however, the military system of the State was changed. The military force was reduced not to exceed eighty companies in all. The uniform troops of the State were to be designated as the National Guard of California.

The State Legislature created a Board of Location and Organization having the power to disband or reorganize companies with reference to military needs.* The Board recommended that the Coulterville Rifles be mustered out of service which was done, July 16, 1866.

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Although the Coulterville Rifles were a patriotic company with a high efficiency, they were organized during a period of extreme necessity and were disbanded July 23, 1866, under the Military Law of that year. Under this ruling the Board of Location and Organization disbanded and mustered out of the National Guard companies found unnecessary as to their location in regard to defense purposes. The California Grenadiers came

*California Statutes 1865-1866, ChapterDXLI, Page 722.