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INDEX TO COMPILED SERVICE RECORDS OF  
VOLUNTEER UNION SOLDIERS WHO SERVED IN  
ORGANIZATIONS FROM THE STATE OF  
ILLINOIS

On the 101 rolls of this microfilm publication is reproduced an alphabetical card index to the compiled service records of volunteer Union soldiers belonging to units from the State of Illinois. Each index card gives the name of a soldier, his rank, and the unit in which he served. There are cross-references for names that appeared in the records under more than one spelling and for service in more than one unit or organization.

The supposedly correct name of a volunteer Union soldier from Illinois may not appear in the index for several reasons. First, he may have served in a unit from another State or in the Regular Army. Second, he may have served under a different name or used a different spelling of his name. Third, a proper record of his service may not have been made; or, if made, it may have been lost or destroyed in the confusion that often attended the initial mobilization, subsequent military operations, and disbandment of troops. Fourth, the references to the soldier in the original records may have been so vague that it was not practicable to determine his correct name or the unit in which he served.

The compiled service records to which the index applies consist of a jacket-envelope for each soldier, labeled with his name and containing (1) card abstracts of entries relating to the soldier in the original muster rolls, returns, hospital rolls, descriptive books, and Lists of deserters; and (2) the originals of any papers relating solely to the particular soldier. A typical example of a compiled service record is filmed at the beginning of the index.

The compiled service records of soldiers belonging to units from the State of Illinois are arranged according to an organizational breakdown ending with the regiment or the independent battalion or company. Under each unit the service records are arranged alphabetically by surname. Unless the unit in which a soldier served is known, his compiled service record can be located only through the use of an index, such as the one reproduced here, which gives the name of the unit in which he served.

The compilation of service records of Union soldiers was begun in 1890 under the direction of Capt. Fred C. Ainsworth, head of the Record and Pension Division of the War Department. The abstracts made from the original records were verified by a separate operation of comparison, and great care was taken to ensure that the abstracts and the indexes were accurate.

Reproductions of specific compiled service records corresponding to entries in the index here reproduced may be obtained from the National Archives for a fee. Requests for such reproductions should give the name of the State, the regiment or battalion, and the company for each soldier, exactly as shown in the index.

The index here reproduced and the compiled service records to which it relates are part of Record Group 94, Records of The Adjutant General's Office.

The National Archives has other records that may contain information about Union soldiers from Illinois. Other series of compiled service records of volunteer soldiers are (1) an alphabetical series of records of Union staff officers, (2) medical records of volunteer Union and Mexican War soldiers, and (3) records of non-State organizations, such as the U. S. Sharp Shooters, the Signal Corps, the U. S. Colored Troops, and the Veterans Reserve Corps. Information relating to soldiers who served in the Regular Army is recorded in Registers of Enlistment's in the U. S. Army, 1798-1914 (reproduced as Microcopy 233), and in other records of The Adjutant General's Office. If an application for a pension was made, additional information about the soldier may be among the pension application files of the Veterans Administration in Record Group 15. Supposed Union military service is sometimes shown by the records to have been civilian service as a scout, guide, or spy. Evidence of such service may be among the records of the Provost Marshal General in Record Group 110.

## CONTENTS

<u>Roll</u>	<u>Index Range</u>
1	A-Alle
2	Allf-Aro
3	Arp-Bai
4	Bak-Baro
5	Barr-Beb
6	Bec-Beq
7	Ber-Blai
8	Blak-Bor
9	Bos-Bras
10	Brat-Brou

11	Brow-Buc
12	Bud-Bus
13	But-Can
14	Cap-Cat
15	Cau-Ch
16	Ci-C1
17	Co-Com
18	Con-Cor
19	Cos-Crm
20	Cro-Cz
21	D-Dav
22	Daw-Des
23	Det-Dom
24	Don-Dud
25	Due-Ea
26	Eb-E1
27	Em-Ez
28	F-Fim
29	Fin-Fop
30	For-Frg
31	Fri-Gaq
32	Gar-Gik
33	Gil-Gon
34	Goo-Gred
35	Gree-Gs
36	Gu-Hall
37	Halm-Harl
38	Harm-Hav
39	Haw-Hem
40	Hen-Hic
41	Hid-Hof
42	Hog- Hot
43	Hou - Hul
44	Hum - I
45	J - Johnq
46	Johns - Jonk
47	Jons - Kek
48	Kel- Ker
49	Kes - Kj
50	K1- Lac
51	Lad- Lau
52	Lav- Let
53	Leu- Ll
54	Lo- Lum

55	Lun- Mam
56	Man-Mas
57	Mat - McCi
58	McCl - McD
59	McE - McK
60	McL- Meh
61	Mei- Milk
62	Mill - M11
64	Morg - Mum
65	Mun- Ned
66	Nee - Ni
67	No - Oh
68	Oi- Oz
69	P - Pax
70	Pay - Pe
71	Pf - Poh
72	P o - Pt
73	Pu - Rav
74	Raw- Rem
75	Ren- Rik
76	Ril- Roc
77	Rod- Roz
78	Rr - San
79	Sap- Schr
80	Schs - Sew
81	Sex- She
82	Shf - Sil
83	Sim - Smith, C.
84	Smith, D. - Smy
85	Sn- Ss
86	Sta- Steu
87	Stev- Stra
88	Stre- Swa
89	Swe- Ter
90	Tes- Til
91	Tim- Ts
92	Tu- Vang
93	Vanh - Waf
94	Wag - Ward
95	Ware - Weh
96	Wei - Whed
97	Whee - Wif
98	Wig - Willo
99	Willr - Wiz

100	Wn - Wr
101	Wu- Z