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

On the 136 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 Pennsylvania. 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 Pennsylvania 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, lists of deserters, and rolls of men transferred; 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 Pennsylvania 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 Pennsylvania. 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 Enlistments 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-Alld
2	Alle-Ans
3	Ant-Az
4	B-Bam
5	Ban-Bars
6	Bart-Beat
7	Beau-Benm
8	Benn-Bh
9	Bi-Blak
10	Blam-Bon
11	Boo-Box
12	Boy-Brea
13	Breb-Brn
14	Bro-Brr
15	Bru-Burj
16	Burk-By
17	C-Cap
18	Car-Casp
19	Cass-Chr
20	Chu-Clo

21	Clu-Com
22	Con-Coo
23	Cop-Cral
24	Cram-Cro
25	Crs-Dam
26	Dan-Dav
27	Daw-Dem
28	Den-Did
29	Die-Dom
30	Don-Dov
31	Dow-Dunk
32	Dunl-Ec
33	Ed-El
34	Em-Eu
35	Ev-Fau
36	Fav-Fim
37	Fin-Fla
38	Fle-For
39	Fos-Frem
40	Fren-Fy
41	G-Gar
42	Gas-Gh
43	Gi
44	Gl-Got
45	Gou-Gref
46	Greg-Gry
47	Gu-Hai
48	Hak-Hank
49	Hanl-Harp
50	Harr-Has
51	Hat-Hec
52	Hed-Henm
53	Henn-Hh
54	Hi-Hip
55	Hir-Holl
56	Holm-Hot
57	Hou-Hug
58	Huh-Hy
59	I-Jem
60	Jen-Jom
61	Jon-Kar
62	Kas-Kek
63	Kel-Kene
64	Keng-Kh
65	Ki-Kis
66	Kit-Kon

67	Koo-Ky
68	L-Lat
69	Lau-Leh
70	Lei-Lez
71	Lh-Ln
72	Lo-Lov
73	Low-Ly
74	M-Manm
75	Mann-Mart
76	Maru-Maz
77	Mc-McCh
78	McCi-McCo
79	McCr-McE
80	McF-McH
81	McI-McLd
82	McLe-McV
83	McW-Mes
84	Met-Miller, H.
85	Miller, I.-Mily
86	Min-Mon
87	Moo-Morq
88	Morr-Mt
89	Mu-Mur
90	Mus-Neh
91	Nei-Nn
92	No-Oe
93	O'F-Ow
94	Ox-Pat
95	Pau-Pe
96	Pf-Pom
97	Pon-Pr
98	Pu-Rat
99	Rau-Reg
100	Reh-Rez
101	Rh-Rie
102	Rif-Robb
103	Robe-Rok
104	Rol-Roz
105	Ru-Sal
106	Sam-Sche
107	Schi-Schu
108	Schw-Sel
109	Sem-Shap
110	Shar-Sher
111	Shes-Shr
112	Shu-Si

113	Sk-Smith, G.
114	Smith, H.-Smy
115	Sn-Spa
116	Spe-Star
117	Stas-Steu
118	Stev-Stom
119	Ston-Stt
120	Stu-Swef
121	Sweg-Te
122	Th-Tir
123	Tis-Trr
124	Tru-Vanc
125	Van D-Vw
126	W-Wals
127	Walt-Wath
128	Watk-Weil
129	Weim-Wer
130	Wes-White
131	Whitf-Willh
132	Willi-Wilson, F.
133	Wilson, G.-Witf
134	With-Woo
135	Wor-Yom
136	Yon-Z