7 STATE AND LOCAL RECORDS

Regimental Histories • Adjutant General Reports • Bounty Records
• Personal War Sketches

Since most regiments were organized by state, their recruitment and history records were collected and published by the respective states. These records can be just as valuable as federal records, though they may be harder to find.

State regiments were chronicled in four kinds of documents which are typically found in state archives and libraries:

- Regimental Histories
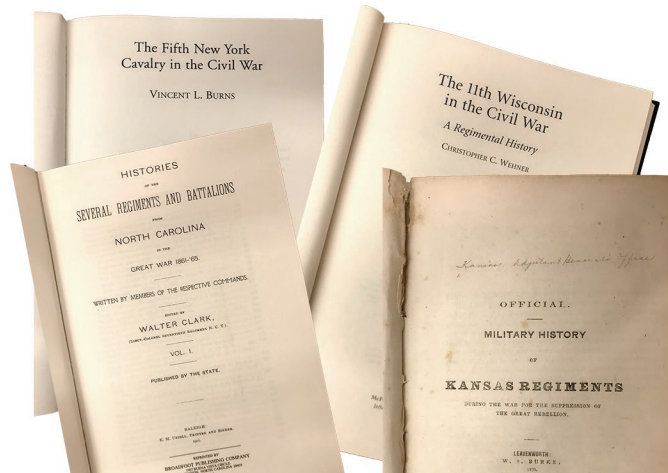- Adjutant General Reports
- Bounty Records
- Personal War Sketches

While each document covers history within a specific state, many times they can be found in archives across the country. The records created by individual states vary widely. Eastern states are more likely to have preserved their records, as they held a larger number of veterans who pushed for such preservation.

Only the Personal War Sketches book strictly cover G.A.R. members, though personal diaries and accounts of other soldiers have been published. The remaining three books or documents address unit and soldier activity during and at the end of the war, before the G.A.R. was formed. All can add detail and personal insight to the history of a veteran.

REGIMENTAL HISTORIES

Regimental histories are a fascinating compilation of regiment organization, campaigns, battles, and references to individual soldiers. While these are not specific to G.A.R. members, they offer details and sometimes personal insight into the life of the soldier before he became a member. Many times these were written by G.A.R. members and then handed to professional writers to finalize.

Each regimental history may cover detail differently as there was no standard method or format. Timothy J. Orr, author and Assistant Professor of History at Old Dominion University, aptly described a typical process in his excellent essay *Regimental Historie*s:

> Returning Union soldiers compiled their regiments' official papers and handed them to accomplished authors, typically men who had served in their regiment from its official muster-in to its final muster-out. Veteran-authors sifted through hundreds of pages of official correspondence, interweaving the play-by-play of Civil War military campaigns with the various untold tales, personal letters, diary entries, and anecdotes told by the survivors.[1]
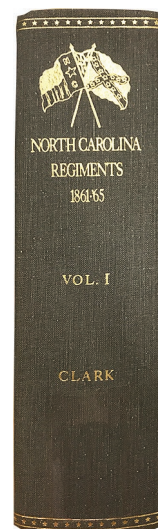
If you recall, a regiment was approximately 600-1,000 soldiers, usually recruited from a local area. Regimental histories are most likely found in states with a large number of regiments.

State	Regiments	State	Regiments	State	Regiments
Alabama	2 (5)	Maryland	30	Pennsylvania	260+
Arkansas	11 (7)	Massachusetts	101 (3)	Tennessee	38 (2)
California	13	Michigan	79 (1)	Texas	3
Connecticut	37	Minnesota	22	Vermont	22
Delaware	13	Mississippi	1 (8)	Virginia	132+
Florida	4	Missouri	76 (5)	West Virginia	29
Georgia	1	Nevada	2	Wisconsin	58
Illinois	199	New Hampshire	21	Colorado Terr.	6
Indiana	167	New Jersey	48	Dakota Terr.	1
Iowa	60	New York	162	Nebraska Terr.	4
Kansas	47	North Carolina	8	New Mexico Terr.	5
Kentucky	69	Ohio	220+	Washington Terr.	1
Louisiana		Oregon	2		

*Above regiments include infantry, cavalry, & artillery. Numbers in parentheses were colored state regiments converted to Federal regiments. Regiment count is subject to interpretation, as some were mustered for only 100 days, some never completed organization. In addition, there were many detached or independent infantry and cavalry companies, and artillery batteries. Data was compiled from various online databases and state agencies, and do not include militia or home guards.

Many regimental histories are found in libraries, historical societies, and online. There are no complete Federal resources of regimental histories, though the Library of Congress and National Archives may have some in their catalogs. Regimental history titles varied, making identification difficult. Here are examples, all which can be called *Regimental Histories*:

- *A History of the Ninth Regiment Illinois Volunteer Infantry*
- *The Tenth Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry 1861 - 1864*
- *History of the 101st Regiment, Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteer Infantry 1861-1865*
- *Campaigns and Battles of the Sixteenth Regiment, Tennessee Volunteers*

Example of bound Regimental Histories.

Regimental History Access

Internet Archive

This is one of the best archives of old books, journals, and histories on any subject. In the search box, enter *[State] Regimental History* to start, with *State* being the one you are interested in. Use other search criteria similar to the examples above.

https://archive.org/details/texts

HathiTrust

Many regimental histories are archived here. Search for *Regimental History.*

https://www.hathitrust.org/

Higginson Book Company, LLC

Higginson offers over 600 reprints of Civil War rosters and regimental histories. Use this as an index to search for a title in a library or historical society. If the book is not in your local library and it is from your state, suggest the library acquire a copy.

https://higginsonbooks.com/collections/civil-war

John Banks Civil War Blog

This page links to over 200 individual regimental histories on Internet Archive.

http://john-banks.blogspot.com/p/regimental-histories.html

Library of Congress (LOC)

Narrow your search to *Books/Printed Material* in the drop-down box and then enter *Regimental History* in the search box. If a book is located, it may not be available online; however, note the title and search in other sources.

https://loc.gov/

Libraries, Historical Societies, State Archives

Search these organizations using your *state* and *regiment history*. If a book is not in your library's holdings, use the Inter-Library Loan program to find an available copy.

General Internet Search

Use a search engine to conduct a general search using a variety of combinations of your *state* and *regiment history*, and a specific regiment name/number.

War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records . . .

The U.S. Military Academy states "T*he War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, is the principal body of official orders and correspondence that document the course of military operations in all theaters of the American Civil War."[3]

This 130-Volume set contains the Official Records (O.R.) of regimental operations, creating a raw compilation of regimental histories. It is available in many libraries and on the internet. Cornell University Library created a research-friendly webpage that includes each volume number, the states included, and the time period covered. Use the "Search in this text" feature to find a specific regiment. This extensive compilation is also available on HathiTrust.

http://collections.library.cornell.edu/moa_new/waro.html

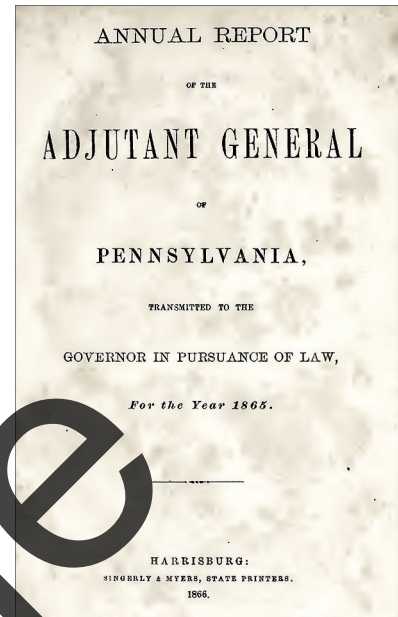**https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000625514**

ADJUTANT GENERAL REPORTS

An Adjutant General (AG) is a state's top military commander. In modern times, they generally are in charge of a state's National Guard. However, during the Civil War, state AGs shared command of state regiments with the Federal government, which also had an Adjutant General. A 2013 U.S. Army report titled *A Short History of the U.S. Army Adjutant General's Corps* described the relationships as:

> During the War Between the States the [Federal] Adjutant General's Department shared the task of mobilizing troops with the Adjutant General from each of the respective states. State militias were still under the authority of the state governors. Under this system, the Federal Government issued calls for troops, but the Governors and their Adjutant Generals were responsible for recruiting and initially equipping the troops until they were mustered into service. State Adjutant Generals kept records of each citizen who served in Civil War armies.[2]

When the war ended, the regiment was returned to state command and discharged, but not before a thorough report was compiled by the state Adjutant General.

These reports hold similar information as some regimental histories, though with fewer personal stories. However, these reports may include campaigns reports and rosters of men such as this Pennsylvania report of 1865. *Adjutant General Reports* are almost always found in state archives and libraries, though some may be found in the National Archives, Smithsonian, and some online services.

1865 Pennsylvania Adjutant General Report lists soldiers in a regiment, along with useful details.

Adjutant General Report Record Access

State Archives, Historical Societies, and Local Libraries
See Chapter Eight, State Resources, for listings.

Internet Archives
Includes an extensive collection of state AG Reports. Include the following search terms, to restrict returns to the Civil War era: *1865 Adjutant General Report*. Otherwise all reports through modern times will be returned. Also, use 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864 in separate searches. Including a state name will reduce returns further.

https://archive.org/details/texts

Bounty Records

To ensure enough troops were available to fight the Civil War, the Federal Government set soldier quotas for each state. These quotas were then assigned by the state to cities, towns, and townships based on population.

These quotas were satisfied in four manners.

- Instilling volunteers with patriotism.
- Enticing recruits with bounties or cash bonuses.
- Paying a substitute to take one's place.
- And finally, a conscription (draft) was introduced.

The volunteer method initially worked as Union over-confidence created a feeling that rebellious Confederates would melt away when confronted. Such was not the case.

Two of the options, bounty and draft, were fraught with inconsistencies from state to state, even town to town. In short, the bounty system became a mess, rife with fraud.

Creative posters flooded the streets with enticements to join the Army for any number of reasons—usually bounty money.
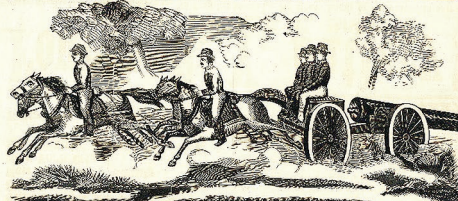
There were federal bounties, state bounties, county bounties, township bounties, and city bounties. Sometimes a town bounties competed with adjoining town and county bounties.

The Fourth N.Y. Battery (at right) even offered a bounty from the Sixth (Congressional) District. These uncoordinated practices led some recruits to shop around for the best deal.

There was also a problem with *bounty jumpers*. Some ne'er-do-wells would join a unit that offered upfront cash bounties, then they never showed up or deserted to another part of the country and pulled the scam again, many times over.

These complications, along with the lack of central record keeping, make finding bounty records difficult and sometimes impossible.

Bounty posters this page from Archive.org
https://archive.org/details/CivilWarPosters