

Maine Soldiers in the Civil War

By Russell C. Farnham, CG

At some point, genealogical researchers will be motivated to attack the many volumes of published material on the Civil War. It can be a challenge, depending upon how deep the researcher wishes to go in finding information about his ancestor. Some researchers may be content with the knowledge that "John Smith" served in various battles, was discharged, and returned home to raise his family. Others may have a more abiding interest in learning of the battles and units that the individuals served in, exactly where they took place, the strategy, the sickness, the traveling, the heroes, and most important, the detail that lays it all out (known in this business as the source). The source provides documented "proof" of service, but also serves to expand the "face" of the ancestor. A tale that was passed down (and possibly embellished) by generations now becomes very real, and is supported by factual, official source material from the United States government.

On April 22, 1861, General Order No. 6 was issued by Maine Governor and Commander-in-Chief Israel Washburn, Jr. Typically, the order was issued by his Adjutant General, John L. Hodsdon, and was addressed to Major Generals James H. Butler, 1st Division; William H. Titcomb, 2nd Division; and William Wirt Virgin, 3rd Division. The order directed that they enlist "TEN THOUSAND VOLUNTEERS, to be organized into Ten Regiments, without regard to present military districts, immediately enlisted and mustered into the active militia service of the State."

Each company was to consist of one captain, two lieutenants, four sergeants, four corporals, one fifer, one drummer, and not less than fifty nor more than eighty-five privates. Men below the rank of commissioned officer were not accepted if they were above forty-five or under eighteen years of age, or if they were not in good physical health. Interestingly, the order also stipulated "When practicable, you will detail a commissioned or non-commissioned officer to drill, discipline and instruct such recruits." ¹ The very broad wording of this order supports the urgent atmosphere and the popular notion that the majority of the soldiers left their farms, businesses, and families to serve with only the most limited training to prepare them for war.

The following represents the staff of the 1st Regiment, Maine Volunteers: ²

Nathaniel J. Jackson, Lewiston, Colonel
Albion Witham, Portland, Lieutenant Colonel
George G. Bailey, Portland, Major
James S. Fillebrown, Lewiston, Adjutant
William S. Dodge, Portland, Quartermaster
Wentworth P. Richardson, Portland, Surgeon
A.A.C. Williams, Brunswick, Assistant Surgeon
George Knox, Brunswick, Chaplain
Foster Randall, Lewiston, Sergeant Major
Stephen H. Manning, Brunswick, Quartermaster Sergeant
George J. Northrop, Portland, Hospital Steward
David Jones, Westbrook, Drum Major
Cyrus Freeman, Lewiston, Fife Major

The following soldiers were raised and mustered May 3, 1861 by Capt. J W Gardiner, for three months service at Portland, for service in Company "A," 1st Regt of Maine Volunteers, commanded by Capt. Tukey.

Rank	Name	Age	Residence
Captain	George W Tukey	44	Portland
Lieutenant	George H. Chadwell	30	do
Lieutenant	Charles L McAllister	28	do
Sergeant	John M. Beal	32	do
Sergeant	Alex. Bell	44	do
Sergeant	Perez B. Burnham	26	do

Sergeant	Simeon B. Wiggin	36	do
Corporal	Charles A. Chellis	32	do
Corporal	James Berry	45	do
Corporal	Charles H. Scott	22	do
Corporal	Benjamin F. Witham	25	do
Musician	William H. Sewell	34	do
Musician	Joseph H. Graham	22	Fall River
Private	George M. Adams	26	Westbrook
do	John R. Begg	19	Portland
do	Davis C. Bowker	35	do
do	John E. Barnard	34	do
do	Thomas Barry	19	C. Elizabeth
do	Freeman N. Boynton	22	do
do	John B. Bowie	22	Portland
do	John F. Copp	20	do
do	John F. Collins	22	Philadelphia
do	Benjamin S. Cushman	18	Portland
do	Thaddeus W. Coolbroth	21	do
do	Charles B. Chamberlain	18	C. Elizabeth
do	Edmund W. Dyer	22	do
do	John Green	31	Portland
do	Stephen H. Guptill	21	Fryeburg
do	Rufus W. Hyde	33	Portland
do	Webb Hall	30	do
do	Nils A. Hanson	23	do
do	Henry D. Hall	27	
do	Charles L. Holbrook	19	Starks
do	Thomas Hanley	19	Cumberland
do	Edward J. Hockley	23	Portland
do	Charles E. Illsley	23	Harrison
do	George S. Jordan	21	C. Elizabeth
do	Andrew B. Jordan	23	do
do	Frank S. Kennard	21	
do	Merritt A. Kennard	19	
do	William Lovitt	21	C. Elizabeth
do	James Lovitt	19	do
do	Edward R. Lincoln	22	Portland
do	John H. Munsey	23	do
do	George H. McKenney	23	do
do	Angus McDonald	27	do
do	Albion Murray	21	Westbrook
do	Charles P. Norton	21	Portland
do	Charles H. Newell	20	do
do	Charles H. Osgood	26	East Boston
do	John B. Pike	31	Portland
do	Tobias Pillsbury 2d	20	C. Elizabeth
do	Albert H. Purinton	23	Portland
do	Frank G. Rich	26	do
do	George H. Ross	21	
do	Edward Roach	29	do
do	Albert W. Smith	25	do
do	Thomas W. Soule	27	do

do	George Strong	32	do
do	Charles W. Stockman	24	do
do	Daniel W. Stackpole	24	do
do	George W. Swett	20	Gorham
do	John B. Swett	23	Portland
do	Albert H. Swett	21	do
do	George L. Stevens	27	Westbrook
do	Edw. G. Schoonmaker	22	Cleveland
do	George R. W. Thaxter	22	Portland
do	William D. Tyrrell	23	C. Elizabeth
do	Samuel O. Waterhouse	22	Portland
do	Edward P. Wyer	29	do
do	Oliver G. Whitten	26	do
do	Benjamin F. Whitten	39	do
do	John Witham		
do	Albert S. Watts	22	N. Gloucester
do	Henry E. Willard	23	C. Elizabeth
do	Alvan S. Wilson	19	Portland
do	Alfred R. Wormwood	21	N. Gloucester

An appendix contained in the same volume provides more personal detail of individuals, such as their name; age; residence; marital status; date mustered into service; the date of death, imprisonment, and discharge, if applicable; place of illness, if applicable, and remarks. Not all of the information is complete for each individual, but the range of information that is available in these volumes is evident. The following are selected excerpts: ³

- Private Jeremiah C. Gilman, age 20, was of Milo, single, and was mustered into service 28 May 1861, in Company D, 2nd Inf. Regt. He was wounded at Bull Run, and died November 1861 at Richmond, VA.
- Corporal Lewis R. Haskell, age 25, was also of Milo, single, and also mustered into service 28 May 1861, also in Company D, 2nd Inf. Regt. He was taken prisoner at Richmond Va., on 21 July.
- Sergeant Stephen D. Millett, age 38, married of Milo, was mustered into service on 28 May 1861, and was promoted to 2d Lieutenant 2 Oct. He may have served with a brother, also Sergeant, Samuel V. Millett, age 43, married, also of Milo who was discharged 4 Oct with a disability.

In addition to the published volumes relating to the service of individuals, there are other military records that can provide still further information about our ancestors.

Compiled Military Service Records: Each individual who served during the Civil War had a Compiled Military Service Record (CMSR) for each regiment in which he served. The Civil War section of the National Archives website describes it in detail: "The CMSR contains basic information about the soldier's military career, and it is the first source the researcher should consult. The CMSR is an envelope (a jacket) containing one or more cards. These cards typically indicate that the soldier was present or absent during a certain period of time. Other cards may indicate the date of enlistment and discharge, amount of bounty paid him, and other information such as wounds received during battle or hospitalization for injury or illness. The soldier's place of birth may be indicated; if foreign born, only the country is stated. The CMSR may contain an internal jacket for so-called 'personal papers' of various kinds. [Note] however that the CMSR rarely indicates battles in which a soldier fought; that information must be derived from other sources." ⁴

Pension Records: Most Union soldiers or widows or minor children applied for a pension. In other cases, a dependent father or mother would apply. There are 544 rolls of film that are indexed and available for viewing through the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) (T288, General Index to Pension Files 1861-1934). These records can be accessed in person at the National Archives (700 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC 20408-0001). No prior arrangement is necessary. Copies of records are available by mail, by using NATF Form 85 (Pension) and NATF Form 86 (CMSR) for each soldier. The forms can be requested by sending an email that includes your name and address, form number, and number of copies requested to <mailto:inquire@nara.gov> or by writing to:

National Archives and Records Administration
Attn: NWDT1
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20408-0001

The National Archives and Records Administration also has a branch office at the Frederick C. Murphy Federal Center, (380 Trapelo Road, Waltham, Mass., 02452-6399; phone [781] 647-8104; email: waltham.center@nara.gov). It serves the New England states, and is open Monday, Tuesday, and Friday from 8 a.m to 4:30 p.m, and Wednesday and Thursday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. No original records are pulled after 4 p.m. Civil War Pension records are not available at this branch, but there are a host of New England records available there, and researchers are best advised to call first.

Records of Events: Information about a soldier's war activities can be deduced from the activities of each company. These were compiled from the original muster rolls and returns, and vary in content. Some give day-by-day narratives of a company's activities. They rarely name individuals. The records of Union regiments are reproduced on microfilm (225 rolls, M594, Compiled Records Showing Service of Military Units in Volunteer Union Organizations). Confederate regiments are reproduced in 74 rolls (M861, Compiled Records Showing Service of Military Units in Confederate Organizations). These rolls are arranged by state, by regiment and by company, and are being published as *Supplement to the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 51 volumes (Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1994-97).

Most states have published volumes of material that show infinite detail about those who served from their state. There are six volumes issued by the Maine Adjutant General that provide much detail about the individuals who served from that state:

- *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of State of Maine*, for the Year ending December 31, 1861
- *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of State of Maine*, for the Year ending December 31, 1862
- *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of State of Maine*, for the Year ending December 31, 1863
- *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of State of Maine*, for the Year 1864 and 1865, Vol 1.
- *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of State of Maine*, for the Year 1864 and 1865, Vol 2.
- *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of State of Maine*, for the Year ending December 31, 1866.

Unfortunately, these annual reports are difficult to navigate, owing to the lack of an index. It is therefore absolutely essential that researchers know the military organization of the person being researched. The alternative is to spend hours pouring over these four-inch thick volumes. Even that may never yield the name of an ancestor because he may appear in another volume, or in the same volume but in a different company to which he may have been transferred. The state of Maine recognized this, and issued a supplement⁵ containing five different indices. Of particular note is the initial index of *Volunteers in Maine and U.S. Organizations*:

Volunteers from April 1861 to 1 Jan 1863

Volunteers from 1 Jan 1863 to the close of the war

The other more singular reference is of *Persons Drafted, Furnished Substitutes in 1863*. Two remaining indices are of individuals: *Transferred and omitted* [and] *Additional*. These provide a smoother transition into the earlier volumes and should permit more rapid identification of ancestors.

¹ Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Maine for the year ending December 31, 1861 (Augusta: Stevens & Sayward, printers to the state, 1862):81.

². Ibid, 52-53.

³. Ibid, Appendix D:10.

⁴. <http://www.nara.gov/genealogy/civilwar.html>.

⁵. Supplement to the Annual Reports of the Adjutant General of the State of Maine for the years 1861, 62, 63, 64, 65, and 1866 (Augusta: Stevens & Sayward, printers to the state, 1867).