



# *Military Records*

Genealogical Research Series Pamphlet No. 3

**T**HIS PAMPHLET IS ONE IN A SERIES DESIGNED TO ASSIST THE GENEALOGICAL RESEARCHER in using the most pertinent of related federal, state, and local governmental records in the possession of the Illinois State Archives and its Illinois Regional Archives Depository (IRAD) system. Related state and federal records of military eligibility, service, benefit receipt (including veterans' home residence), and burial site location are the subjects of this pamphlet.

The State Archives welcomes visiting patrons as well as those persons wishing to contact its reference staff by mail, telephone, fax or email. The Archives will provide, if located, an uncertified and unofficial photocopy of a requested record. Because of limitations on staff research time, the Archives can do no more than two searches per inquiry. Send inquiries to: Illinois State Archives, Reference Unit, Norton Building, Springfield, IL 62756; Telephone: (217) 782-4682; Fax: (217) 524-3930; Email: [isareference@ilsos.net](mailto:isareference@ilsos.net)

## WAR VETERANS BURIALS (1774–1955)

*The Honor Roll of Veterans Buried in Illinois* (Springfield 1956) was published on the instructions of the General Assembly. It covers the years 1774–1955. Entries for Illinois servicemen who saw war service and who were buried in Illinois include the veteran's name, rank, service branch, war served in, unit or organization, date of death, cemetery name and county location, and occasionally the grave location within the cemetery. (The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs maintains a record of all Illinois war veterans buried after 1955. The researcher may write this office at 833 S. Spring St., P.O. Box 19432, Springfield, IL 62794-9432 for further information.)

### **RESEARCHING ON YOUR OWN**

The State Archives houses an index arranged alphabetically by veterans' surnames for the years 1774–1898. This index includes all the information found in the *Honor Roll* as well as dates of enlistment and discharge. For the years 1899–1955, the published *Honor Roll* is arranged alphabetically by county and then alphabetically by the names of cemeteries within counties. If the genealogist is unaware of the county of burial, Archives staff will contact the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs to request a search of that department's name indexes to the *Honor Roll* for the years 1899–1955.

### **MAIL, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET REQUESTS**

The Archives requires the veteran's complete name, war of service, date of death, and after 1898 the county where buried, for an effective search. For veterans of wars prior to 1899, a copy of the index card will be provided if one is located. If the veteran died after 1898 a copy from the published *Honor Roll* will be sent if located.

## REVOLUTIONARY WAR (1776–1783)

The State Archives has acquired from the National Archives the *Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files*, 1800–1900 (RS 955.001), on 898 rolls of microfilm. Applications include the veteran's name, rank, military unit, period of service, residence, birthplace, date of birth or age, and if the claim was based on need, a listing of property owned. For widows and heirs applications also include marriage date and place and the veteran's date and place of death. In these instances supporting documentation such as affidavits of witnesses, discharge papers, and marriage and birth certificates variously are included.

#### **RESEARCHING ON YOUR OWN**

The microfilm rolls of these files are arranged alphabetically by veterans' surname. If two or more veterans have the same name, files are further arranged either by the state residence of the veteran at the time he made the application, the veteran's branch of service, or the military unit in which the veteran served. A printed listing of the beginning and ending names on each roll of film is available to assist users.

#### **MAIL, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET REQUESTS**

Identify the conflict as the Revolutionary War and provide the veteran's complete name as well as the name of the state in which the veteran resided at the time he made the application. The appropriate file will be photocopied and sent if located.

## WAR OF 1812 (1812–1814)

#### **PUBLISHED SOURCES**

*Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois* (Springfield, vol. 9, 1902) concerns Illinois Territory residents who served in the army on the western frontier at the time of the War of 1812. It gives the soldier's name, rank, the name or number of his unit, and his enlistment term and, occasionally, place of enlistment. This publication was transcribed from federal records and is notoriously incomplete. It has been supplemented by additional listings in *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society* (Springfield 1904) and the *Illinois State Genealogical Society Quarterly* (vol. V, no. 3, fall 1973). All three of these secondary sources are available for use at the State Archives.

#### **WAR OF 1812 PENSION APPLICATION FILES INDEX (1871–ca. 1916)**

A copy of the National Archives record *War of 1812 Pension Application Files Index*, 1812–ca. 1916 (RS 955.002), contained on 102 rolls of microfilm, is located at the State Archives. Federal legislation passed in 1871 and 1878 provided War of 1812 veterans or their heirs pension benefits in addition to bounty land grants previously awarded. Index listings include the veteran's name, pension application and certificate numbers, bounty land warrant application number, and the name and/or number of the unit served in. This source is an index only. When entries are located, copies of application files can be obtained from the National Archives, Washington, D.C., 20408.

#### **RESEARCHING ON YOUR OWN**

A card index at the State Archives accesses the three published sources cited above. Entries are arranged alphabetically by soldiers' surnames. It is useful to know a particular serviceman's unit name or number to differentiate like names. The researcher with internet access can consult a database of the War of 1812 veterans compiled from the *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois* at the Secretary of State's website: [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com).

In using the *Pension Application Files Index*, it is helpful to know the state the soldier resided in when he made his application and the name or number of the unit he served with. This information will differentiate like names. Copies of the application files themselves can be obtained from the National Archives.

#### **MAIL, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET REQUESTS**

Identify the conflict as the War of 1812 and provide the veteran's full name and, if possible, his unit's name or number. If located, a copy of the best available record of service will be provided. For a search of the *Pension Application Files Index* it is helpful if the state in which the veteran resided at the time he made his application is provided as well.

## BLACK HAWK WAR (1831–1832)

The State Archives record series 301.007, *Black Hawk War Records* (1832–1891, 1 cu. ft.), contains original muster rolls of Illinois volunteers as well as transcriptions of federal muster rolls prepared at a later date. Muster roll entries include the soldier's name, rank, date and length of enrollment, county residence, amount of pay due, and the number of traveling rations drawn. For mounted soldiers values of arms and equipment issued and descriptions of horses also are provided. Original muster rolls are arranged by brigade and federal rolls by county residence. Name access is provided by published sources. Ellen M. Whitney has compiled and edited *The Black Hawk War, 1831–1832: Illinois Volunteers in Collections of the State Historical Library*, XXXV (Springfield 1970). Alternative but less accurate name access is provided in Isaac H. Elliott's *Record of the Services of Illinois Soldiers in the Black Hawk War 1831–1832 and in the Mexican War 1846–1848* (Springfield 1902).

### RESEARCHING ON YOUR OWN

Start with the name index in the Whitney publication. This index is also available under the Archives at the Secretary of State's website, [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com). This will access the published abstract. From there efficient reference can be made to the original muster rolls or to the transcriptions of the federal rolls. If the Whitney publication proves unsatisfactory, the Elliott compilation should be consulted.

### MAIL, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET REQUESTS

Identify the conflict as the Black Hawk War and provide the veteran's complete name and, if known, his unit name or number and county of residence. A copy of the best available record of service will be provided if located.

## MEXICAN WAR (1846–1848)

The State Archives record series 301.008, *Mexican War Records* (1846–1890, 1 cu. ft.), contains original muster rolls of Illinois volunteers as well as transcriptions of federal muster rolls prepared at a later date. Muster roll entries include the soldier's name; rank; age; date, place and term of enrollment; name of the individual who enrolled the soldier; date last paid; paymaster's name; discharge date; amounts allowed for travel and subsistence following discharge; and values of horses and equipment. Original state muster rolls are arranged by brigade and federal rolls by county residence.

### RESEARCHING ON YOUR OWN

A published roster of Illinois soldiers who served in the Mexican War is found in Isaac H. Elliott's *Record of the Services of Illinois Soldiers in the Black Hawk War 1831–1832 and in the Mexican War 1846–1848* (Springfield 1902). This volume, indexed by a card file in the reference room at the State Archives, can also be accessed under the Archives at the Secretary of State website, [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com). First consult one of the indexes and then the entry in Elliott's published volume. From there the original muster rolls or the transcriptions of the federal rolls can be consulted.

### MAIL, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET REQUESTS

Identify the conflict as the Mexican War and provide the veteran's complete name and, if known, his unit number and county residence. A copy of the best available record of service will be provided if located.

# CIVIL WAR (1861–1865)

## **MUSTER ROLLS**

The State Archives record series 301.020, *Muster and Descriptive Rolls* (1861–1865, 89 vols.), includes for each soldier mustered into service his name, rank, regiment number, company letter, age, height, eye and hair colors, complexion, occupation, marital status, birthplace, and residence; date and place where mustered in; name of mustering officer; date and place of mustering out; name of mustering out officer; remarks concerning transfers, promotions and special duty; and indication of injury or death. Rolls are arranged by regiments and thereunder by companies. Abstracts of this record series are in the *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois* (Springfield, vols. 1–8, 1902). A name index to this published source is on catalog cards in the reference room at the State Archives. The researcher with internet access can also consult a database of the names found in the *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois* at the Secretary of State's website.

## **MILITARY CENSUSES**

The State Archives record series 301.029, *Military Censuses* (1861–1863, 7 vols. and 32.1 cu. ft.), is loosely arranged by county and then by township. State legislation passed in 1861 required township assessors to compile lists of able-bodied male residents between ages 18 and 45. Within townships were two categories of eligible young men. The voluntary militia consisted of those individuals who had organized themselves into companies and elected officers for the purpose of military enlistment. Voluntary militia lists give the soldier's name, residence, age, birthplace, occupation, and date and term of enlistment. The reserve militia, on the other hand, was composed of those eligible men who chose not to volunteer but who were liable to being drafted. Reserve militia lists generally provide names only. These lists were composed during 1861–1863.

The president called for 300,000 men to be inducted into military service with an order issued Aug. 4, 1862, and the War Department established regulations for the enrollment and drafting of these men. The resulting record was an 1862 federal census conducted by enrolling officers. Entries include name, age, birthplace, occupation, and frequent remarks concerning military assignment or exemption. Often included with township files are lists of volunteers and enlistment certificates. There is no name index to this record series.

## **INDEX TO THE COMPILED SERVICE RECORDS OF UNION ARMY VETERANS (1861–1865)**

The State Archives houses a copy of a National Archives record, *Index to the Compiled Service Records of Union Army Veterans*, 1861–1865 (RS 957.001), for Illinois on 101 rolls of microfilm. This name index provides the soldier's regiment number, company letter, and his rank when he both mustered in and mustered out. This record series is an index only. Entries provided here will enable you to obtain abstracted copies of ancestors' service records from the National Archives, Washington, D.C., 20408.

## **OFFICIAL RECORDS OF THE WAR OF THE REBELLION**

The State Archives holds copies of the publications, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (70 volumes) and *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion* (31 volumes). These compilations of the military archives of the Union and Confederacy contain official reports, correspondence, orders, returns and maps. Both publications have a general index that provides series and volume citations to the names of all individuals included in the papers. The researcher can then consult the index of the appropriate volume to examine the record in which the subject's name appears.

## **RESEARCHING ON YOUR OWN**

The card catalog index in the reference room at the State Archives and the Internet database provide access by name to the *Muster and Descriptive Rolls* (RS 301.020) as well as to the published *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois*. The *Muster Rolls* and the Adjutant General's published *Reports* in turn provide the residences of veterans. With this information you can access the *Military Censuses* (RS 301.029), which are arranged by county and then by township. The *Index to the Compiled Service Records of Union Army Veterans* enables you to obtain abstracted copies of service records from the National Archives, Washington, D.C., 20408. Patrons must ask at the reference desk for access to the indexes of the *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*.

#### **MAIL, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET REQUESTS**

Indicate the war as the Civil War and provide a complete name, regiment number and company letter. A copy of the best available service record will be sent if located. Archives staff do not search the *Military Censuses* for mail and telephone requests because of the large size and unindexed condition of this record series. If requested the Archives will search for an individual's name in the *Official Records*. The entire report in which the name appears will be copied.

## **SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR (1898–1899)**

#### **MUSTER OUT ROLLS**

The State Archives' most complete source of information on Illinois volunteers for the Spanish-American War is found in record series 301.089, *Muster Out Rolls* (1898–1899, 10 vols.). Rolls are arranged by regiment and thereunder by company. Entries for each soldier include the soldier's name, rank, date, and place and term of enrollment; name of enrolling officer; places of residence and discharge; and amounts of pay, travel, and reimbursement due. The original records have been duplicated in the four-volume set, *Adjutant General's Report Containing the Complete Muster Out Rolls of the Illinois Volunteers Who Served in the Spanish-American War, 1898–1899* (Springfield, 5 vols., 1902). This set is not indexed and is available in the reference room at the State Archives.

#### **MUSTER IN ROLLS**

The State Archives record series 301.087, *Muster In Rolls* (1898–1899, 3 vols. and 0.2 cu. ft.), also are arranged by regiment and then by company. Although not as comprehensive as the *Muster Out Rolls*, the *Muster In Rolls* include unique information, including age, birthplace, eye and hair color, complexion, height, marital status, occupation, and the name and address of the soldier's nearest relative.

#### **RESEARCHING ON YOUR OWN**

Consult a card catalog in the Archives' reference room or the database of Spanish-American War veterans located on the Secretary of State website. These indexes locate entries in another published source, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois* (Springfield, vol. 9, 1902). With this information, the *Muster Out Rolls* in their original and published forms can be referenced as can the *Muster In Rolls*, which are available only in their original form.

#### **MAIL, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET REQUESTS**

Indicate the war as the Spanish-American War and provide the veteran's complete name, regiment number and company letter. A copy of the best available record of service will be sent if located.

## **WORLD WAR I (1917–1918)**

#### **DRAFT REGISTRATION CARDS**

The State Archives houses a copy of the Illinois portion of the federal record, *World War I Draft Registration Cards*, 1917–1919 (RS 956.001), on 324 rolls of microfilm. A total of 1,559,586 Illinois men between the ages of 18 and 45 registered with the Selective Service System during the course of this war. Entries for each registrant variously include name, address, date and place of birth, age, race, citizenship status, occupation, name and address of employer, name and relationship of dependent relative, marital status, claim of draft exemption, name and address of nearest relative, and record of prior service. Also included are reports on physical condition, including height, build, eye and hair color, presence of baldness, and the nature of any physical disabilities. There is no indication if the registrant did or did not enter military service.

#### **RESEARCHING ON YOUR OWN**

Cards are arranged by county, then by draft board jurisdictional area, and thereunder alphabetically by registrants' surnames. If the registrant resided in Chicago, the street address is needed to locate the applicable draft board. Archives reference staff can provide maps of draft board boundaries for Chicago.

**MAIL, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET REQUESTS**

Request a search of this record series and provide the ancestor's complete name, county of residence and, for Chicago, a street address. Copies of registration cards will be sent if located.

**ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS DATABASE**

Records of living World War I veterans are maintained by the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Please write the office at 833 S. Spring St., P.O. Box 19432, Springfield, IL 62794-9432. Include the veteran's name, war of service and, if known, serial number. The only information available as public record is a veteran's branch and dates of service. (Please consult the prior section on Veterans Burials for information on deceased veterans.)

**NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER**

Information on living and deceased World War I veterans also may be located by writing the National Personnel Records Center, 1 Archives Dr., St. Louis, MO 63138. This office requires the veteran's name, war and branch of service and, if possible, Social Security or serial number for a records search. For living veterans, releasable information is restricted to a person's unit, location of service, schools attended, and awards and decorations.

## WORLD WAR II (1941–1945), KOREAN WAR (1950–1953), AND VIETNAM WAR (1959–1973)

The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs database is available for researching living veterans of World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. Write this office at 833 S. Spring St., P.O. Box 19432, Springfield, IL 62794-9432. Include the veteran's name, war of service and, if known, serial number. The only information available as public record is a veteran's branch and dates of service. (Please consult the section on Veterans Burials for information on deceased veterans.)

The National Personnel Records Center will provide information upon written request on living and deceased veterans. This office requires the veteran's name, war and branch of service, and, if possible, Social Security or serial number for a records search. For living veterans, information is restricted to a person's unit, location of service, schools attended, and awards and decorations. This office's address is 1 Archives Dr., St. Louis, MO 63138.

## STATE AND FEDERAL VETERANS' HOMES (1887–1967)

**ILLINOIS VETERANS' HOME (1887–1967)**

The state of Illinois first assumed responsibility for the care of honorably discharged and disabled Civil War veterans in 1885 when the Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Home (later the Illinois Veterans' Home) at Quincy was authorized by the General Assembly. Over the years veterans of all wars became eligible for admission. Beginning in 1903, qualified wives and daughters of veterans also were admitted.

**VETERANS' ADMISSION RECORD**

The State Archives record series 259.001, *Veterans' Admission Record* (1887–1967, 51 vols.), includes for each veteran admitted his name, registration number and county and town residence; pension amount; the regiment and the company served in; and dated notes on admission, readmission, furloughs, discharge and death.

**VETERANS' CASE FILES**

The State Archives record series 259.002, *Veterans' Case Files* (1887 – ca. 1983, 214.5 cu. ft.), frequently documents deceased male residents and includes an admission application showing the veteran's name, age, birthplace, residence, physical features and enlistment record; a description of disabilities; a hospital surgeon's report; death certificate; will; inventory of personal affects; and related correspondence. Case files on female residents (i.e., wives, mothers and daughters of veterans) are occasionally included in the series beginning in 1908 and on a regular basis after the 1963 closure of the Illinois Soldiers' Widows' Home at Wilmington. Beginning in 1919, files include such items as medical examination reports, record of hospitalizations, clothing record, statements regarding dependents, naturalization certificates and disability vouchers. Starting around 1970, files occasionally include financial information concerning outstanding balances owed to the home after the death of a veteran or his wife.

### **WOMEN'S CASE FILES**

The State Archives record series 259.004, *Women's Case Files* (1910–1940, 4 cu. ft.), covers veterans' dependent women who were admitted to the Quincy facility. They include admission applications that list the woman's name, county and town residence, and dated notes on admission, readmission, furloughs, discharge and death. Also listed is the name, rank, regiment and company of the veteran whose benefits allowed the woman to be admitted. If that veteran also was admitted, his registration number is given.

### **RESEARCHING ON YOUR OWN**

Consult a card catalog index for the period March 1887–September 1916, and a printed index for the years 1935 - ca. 1983. These sources are available in the Archives' reference room. These name indexes reference resident case file numbers. The Veterans' Admission Record, Veterans' Case Files and Women's Case Files all are arranged by case file number. The March 1887–September 1916 index was principally compiled from the first-16th Biennial Reports of the Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, and is also available online at the Secretary of State's website: [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com). The index for 1935–1983 is not presently available online. The Archives has no index for admissions between September 1916 and 1935; however, file numbers from that period can be obtained from The Illinois Veterans' Home, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, 1707 N. 12th St., Quincy, IL 62301. If the resident was the spouse of a veteran it may be necessary to consult both the veteran's name and spouse's name to locate a given file number because some entries were combined..

### **MAIL, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET REQUESTS**

Indicate which record series to be searched and provide the ancestor's complete name and the approximate dates of residence. A copy of the most complete record found will be sent if located.

### **ILLINOIS SOLDIERS' WIDOWS' HOME (1896–1960)**

The Illinois Soldiers' Widows' Home at Wilmington was authorized by the General Assembly in 1895. The purpose of this home was to care for the indigent mothers, wives, widows and daughters of honorably discharged Illinois veterans. It was closed in 1963, at which time all its residents were transferred to the Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Home in Quincy.

The State Archives record series 260.001, *Admission Files* (1896–1960, 10 cu. ft.), has significant value for genealogists. Files contain applications for admission, supplementary documentation of eligibility and related correspondence. Admission applications include: certificate of identification; certificate of the applicant's physical condition; and a notarized statement that lists the woman's name, age, height, race, birthplace, birth date, occupation, the woman's relationship to the veteran, marriage date if the applicant was a veteran's wife, date of the veteran's death, war in which the veteran fought, the veteran's dates and places of enrollment and discharge, his rank, his regiment and company, his cause for discharge, the applicant's pension amount and value of property owned, the number and ages of the applicant's living children, and the name, address and relationship to the applicant of the person to be notified in the case of the applicant's illness or death. Supplementary documents include birth, marriage and discharge certificates; certificates of service; pension statements; and statements of inheritance.

### **RESEARCHING ON YOUR OWN**

These files are arranged alphabetically by residents' surnames. Archives staff can retrieve an appropriate file if given a resident's complete name and approximate period of residence.

### **MAIL, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET REQUESTS**

Indicate that this particular record series should be searched. An ancestor's complete name and the approximate time of residence should be provided. A copy of a resident's file will be furnished if located.

### **DANVILLE NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS (1898–1934)**

The federal government opened the Danville National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers in the summer of 1898, the ninth such facility nationwide. It continues operations today under the U.S. Veterans' Administration. The State Archives has a copy of the National Archives record *Register of Members*, 1898–1934 (RS 955.003), on 32 rolls of microfilm. Included for each resident is the veteran's name, resident number, rank, regiment and company, dates and places of enlistment

and discharge, cause of discharge, nature of disability when admitted, state of birth, age, height, complexion, hair and eye color, indication of literacy, religion, occupation, marital status, state and town of residence, nearest relative's name and address, dates of readmissions, dates of transfers, dates of discharges, pension certificate number, date and cause of death, grave location, and personal effects inventory.

**RESEARCHING ON YOUR OWN**

The index to the Danville home registers is made up of two microfilm rolls. Each index entry is arranged in approximate alphabetical order by first few letters of residents' surnames, then numerically by residents' registration numbers thereunder. Entries also include admission dates. The 32 microfilm rolls of register entries are arranged numerically by registration number, which corresponds to the approximate chronological order of residents' admission dates to the facility.

**MAIL, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET REQUESTS**

State that this record series is to be searched, and provide the ancestor's complete name and approximate admission date. A copy of the appropriate entry will be sent, if located.

***WWW.CYBERDRIVEILLINOIS.COM***