



Regular and Volunteer United States Military Service Between the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812

The National Archives holds records relating to the United States regular and volunteer military service between the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. Regular military forces are also known as standing military forces. Volunteers served for short terms of service during a specific war and usually did not make a career of the military.

Service in the Regular Army

___M233, *Registers of Enlistments in the United States Army, 1798–1914*. 81 rolls. DP. Arranged chronologically and then alphabetically by the first letter of the soldier's surname. These records were created from enlistment papers, muster rolls, and other sources. With the exception of pensions, these records may be the only source on enlisted men during the 19th century. The registers may show when and where the soldier enlisted, the period of enlistment, the place of birth, the age at enlistment, civilian occupation, a physical description, and the unit to which he was assigned.

___M1856, *Discharge Certificates and Miscellaneous Records Relating to the Discharge of Soldiers from the Regular Army, 1792–1815*. 6 rolls. DP. Arranged by regiment, company, and then alphabetically by surname. The descriptive pamphlet has an alphabetical listing of the soldiers' names. These records relate exclusively to the discharge of soldiers from the regular army; no militiamen or volunteers are included. Most of the discharges date from 1812 to 1815, but a few date from the 1790s. These files may include a certificate of discharge, a descriptive list, a certificate of death, or a pay voucher.

Compiled Military Service Records (CMSRs)

In the 1890s, the Department of War used numerous sources, such as muster rolls, descriptive rolls, and pay rolls to create compiled military service records (CMSRs). These records generally show when a soldier joined a unit and if he was present when the unit was mustered.

___M694, *Index to Compiled Military Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served from 1784–1811*. 9 rolls. DP. Arranged alphabetically by the soldiers surname.

___M905, *Compiled Military Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served from 1784 to 1811*. 32 rolls. DP. Arranged by unit and then alphabetically by the soldier's surname.

Abstracts of Service Records for Naval Officers

These records relate to Navy and Marine Corps officers, some noncommissioned officers, and a few professors and teachers at the U.S. Naval Academy. A typical entry shows the name of the officer, the date of his appointment, the date and nature of changes in his rank, and, where pertinent, the date and nature of the termination of his service.

___M330, *Abstracts of Service Records of Naval Officers ("Records of Officers")*, 1798–1893. 19 rolls. Arranged chronologically.

Muster Rolls

A muster roll is a list of all troops present on parade or otherwise accounted for on the day of muster or review of troops. Musters were held to count the number of soldiers assigned to a unit and to inspect their arms and equipment. Information found on muster rolls may be helpful in identifying officers and enlisted men.

___T1118, *Muster Rolls of the U.S. Marine Corps, 1798–1892*. 123 rolls. Arranged chronologically.

___T1085, *Muster Rolls and Payrolls of Militia and Regular Army Organizations in The Battle of Tippecanoe, November 1811*. 1 roll.

Pensions

___T316, *Old War Index to Pension Files, 1815–1926*. 7 rolls. Arranged alphabetically by the claimant's surname. This series indexes claims based on disability or death for primarily regular army, navy, and marine corps service. The cards show the name of veteran; the name and type of dependent, if any; unit; application numbers, certificate numbers and in some cases file numbers; and the state from which the claim was made.

Other Records

___M688, *U.S. Military Academy Cadet Application Papers, 1805–1866*. 242 rolls. DP. Arranged chronologically. These records consist of unbound papers that may include letters from the applicants requesting an appointment, letters of recommendation, War Department notifications, and letters of acceptance from the candidates. An alphabetical index is located on roll 1.

___M273, *Records of General Courts-Martial and Courts of Inquiry of the Navy Department, 1799–1867*. 198 rolls. DP. Arranged chronologically. These records usually include the name of the sailor charged; his rating, ship or station, and other service information; the alleged offense; the place and date of trial; and the sentence. Roll 1 contains an index for the years prior to the War of 1812.

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