

# CIVIL WAR MUSTER

Certainly there are other ways of discovering the service record of a Civil War soldier than by examining muster rolls. Multi-volume sets of official records were published around the turn of the 20th century. Web pages on the Internet are searchable and printable.

But neither of these sources evokes a sense of time like the actual handwritten muster rolls created 150 years ago.

When a company was formally established, the captain

A portion of a muster roll for the 21st Iowa Infantry, which mustered out in August 1865.

*21<sup>st</sup> Infantry*  
*Field and Staff*  
**MUSTER-OUT ROLL, of Captain**  
 by *the President*  
 unless sooner discharged; from the  
 at  
*Recorded*

| NUMBER OF EACH GRADE. | NAMES.   |              | RANK.              | AGE.     |
|-----------------------|--|--------------|--------------------|----------|
|                       | PRESENT  | ABSENT.      |                    |          |
|                       | <small>(Privates in alphabetical order—the first christian name to be written in full length.)</small> |              |                    |          |
| <i>1</i>              | <i>Salus G. Row</i>  | <i>Quota</i> | <i>Serjt. Col.</i> | <i>2</i> |
| <i>1</i>              | <i>Hiram A. Hunt</i>   |              | <i>Adj'tant</i>    | <i>2</i> |
| <i>1</i>              | <i>James Hill</i>  |              | <i>Chaplain</i>    |          |

# ROLLS

... The Value in Caring for the Real Thing

21<sup>st</sup> Infantry.

**MUSTER-OUT ROLL**, of Captain David Graves  
 by the President at Dubuque  
 unless sooner discharged; from the 28<sup>th</sup> day of  
 at Dubuque Iowa, in the month of August

Recorded

| NUMBER OF EACH GRADE. | NAMES.<br>PRESENT AND ABSENT.<br><small>(Privates in alphabetical order—the first christian name to be written in full length.)</small> | RANK.               | AGE. | JOINED FOR SERVICE AND ENROLLED COMMENCEMENT OF FIRST |                |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------|------|---|----------------|
|                       |   |                     |      | WHEN.   | WHERE.         |
| 1                     | David Graves  | Capt                | 27   | July 29 <sup>th</sup> 1862                            | Dubuque Iowa   |
| 1                     | William W. Lorimer  | 1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. | 20   | Aug 21 <sup>st</sup> 1862                             | Dubuque Iowa   |
| 1                     | George G. Moser   | 2 <sup>d</sup> Lt.  | 25   | Aug 22 <sup>nd</sup> 1862                             | Dubuque Iowa   |
| 2                     | James Hill  | 1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. | 39   | Aug 9 <sup>th</sup> 1862                              | Cascade Iowa   |
| 2                     | Hiram Buel  | 2 <sup>d</sup> Lt.  | 29   | March 7 <sup>th</sup> 1864                            | Davenport Iowa |
| 3                     | Samuel Bates  | 2 <sup>d</sup> Lt.  | 24   | Aug 9 <sup>th</sup> 1862                              | Cascade Iowa   |
|                       |   |                     |      | Aug 21 <sup>st</sup> 1862                             | Cascade Iowa   |

# CIVIL WAR MUSTER ROLLS

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Certainly there are other ways of discovering the service record of a Civil War soldier than by examining muster rolls. Multi-volume sets of official records were published around the turn of the 20th century. Web pages on the Internet are searchable and printable. But neither of these sources evokes a sense of time like the actual handwritten muster rolls created 150 years ago. When a company was formally established, the captain

A portion of a muster roll for the 21st Iowa Infantry, which mustered out in August 1865.

*21<sup>st</sup> Infantry*  
*Field and Staff*  
**MUSTER-ROLL** of Captain *Reed*  
 by *the* *Quartermaster*, unless sooner discharged; from the *at* *Reed*

| NUMBER OF EACH GRADE. | NAMES.<br>PRESENT AND ABSENT.<br><small>(Privates in alphabetical order—the first christian name to be written in full length.)</small> | RANK.           | AGE.      |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------|-----------|
| 1                     | <i>John G. New</i>  | <i>Major</i>    | <i>38</i> |
| 1                     | <i>Wm. H. Hunt</i>  | <i>Captain</i>  | <i>31</i> |
| 1                     | <i>James Hill</i>   | <i>Sergeant</i> | <i>31</i> |

*21<sup>st</sup> Infantry*  
**MUSTER-ROLL** of Captain *James Greene*  
 by *the* *Quartermaster*, unless sooner discharged; from the *at* *Reed* *28<sup>th</sup>* day of *August* at *Quincy Iowa*

| NUMBER OF EACH GRADE. | NAMES.<br>PRESENT AND ABSENT.<br><small>(Privates in alphabetical order—the first christian name to be written in full length.)</small> | RANK.       | AGE.         | WHERE JOINED FOR SERVICE AND ENROLLED FOR COMMENCEMENT OF FIRST | WHERE              |
|-----------------------|---|-------------|--------------|---|--------------------|
| 1                     | <i>David Greene</i>   | <i>Capt</i> | <i>27</i>    | <i>July 29<sup>th</sup> 1862</i>                                | <i>Quincy Iowa</i> |
| 1                     | <i>William H. Lawrence</i>  |             | <i>27-30</i> | <i>Aug 21<sup>st</sup> 1862</i>                                 | <i>Quincy Iowa</i> |
| 1                     | <i>George G. Warner</i>   |             | <i>24-25</i> | <i>Aug 22<sup>nd</sup> 1862</i>                                 | <i>Quincy Iowa</i> |
| 1                     | <i>James Hill</i>   |             | <i>39</i>    | <i>Aug 9<sup>th</sup> 1862</i>                                  | <i>Quincy Iowa</i> |
| 1                     | <i>Horace Buel</i>  |             | <i>29</i>    | <i>March 7<sup>th</sup> 1864</i>                                | <i>Quincy Iowa</i> |
| 1                     | <i>Samuel Bates</i>   |             | <i>24</i>    | <i>Aug 9<sup>th</sup> 1862</i>                                  | <i>Quincy Iowa</i> |

| Died |                       |         |              |            |            |         |             |  |
|------|-----------------------|---------|--------------|------------|------------|---------|-------------|--|
| 1    | Anderson George W.    | May 21  | Aug 17 1862  | Quincy     | James Hill | 3 Years | Aug 23 1861 |  |
| 2    | Dean Luke D.          | May 24  | " "          | "          | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 3    | De. William George W. | Sept 30 | " 21         | "          | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 4    | Johnson William B.    | " 26    | " 16         | Quincy     | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 5    | August Peter P.       | Sept 31 | " 22         | "          | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 6    | Ballard Thomas W.     | " 21    | " 22         | "          | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 7    | Baker Edmund W.       | " 26    | " 22         | Quincy     | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 8    | Boyd John             | " 26    | " 22         | Quincy     | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 9    | Barnes Edward         | " 34    | Oct 25 1862  | Quincy     | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 10   | Battle Charles        | " 18    | Aug 15 1862  | Quincy     | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 11   | Brewer Henry L.       | " 18    | Sept 18 1862 | Washington | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 12   | Brown Robert          | " 24    | " 21         | Quincy     | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 13   | Dave Moore            | " 22    | Aug 15 1862  | Quincy     | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 14   | Dick James            | " 23    | " 22         | "          | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 15   | Emalle John           | " 28    | " 14         | Quincy     | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 16   | East Charles          | " 23    | " 21         | Quincy     | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 17   | Garrison William B.   | " 26    | " 10         | "          | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 18   | Garrison John B.      | " 36    | " 10         | "          | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 19   | Walker Joseph         | " 39    | " 18         | Quincy     | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 20   | Wheaton William B.    | " 18    | " 13         | Quincy     | "          | "       | " 23        |  |
| 21   | Wheeler George        | " 29    | " 22         | "          | "          | "       | " 23        |  |

1. General Service at original organization as 1st Regt. Ill. Cavalry during March in Washington Regt. May 23 1863  
 2. General Service at original organization as 1st Regt. Ill. Cavalry during June 5 1863 in Camp Regt. Washington Regt.  
 3. General Service at original organization as 1st Regt. Ill. Cavalry during March in Washington Regt. May 23 1863  
 4. General Service at original organization as private during 1st Regt. Ill. Cavalry during March in Washington Regt. May 23 1863  
 5. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 6. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 7. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 8. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 9. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 10. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 11. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 12. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 13. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 14. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 15. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 16. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 17. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 18. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 19. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 20. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863  
 21. General Service from Washington Regt. May 17 1863 from Washington Regt. May 17 1863

Soldiers and officers who died were listed at the end of muster-out rolls, with location, cause, and date of death given.

recorded basic information on his enlistees. This muster roll traveled with the company and was updated as the company changed in composition.

When a company disbanded and its soldiers were discharged, the company captain prepared a muster-out roll, with additional information on promotions and reenlistments; military engagements and duties; imprisonment and release; injuries, illnesses, deaths, and sometimes place of burial. The creation and maintenance of the Union army's muster rolls were outlined in a manual of military regulations, and each muster-out roll emphasized that "every man whose name is on previous rolls, must be accounted for."

The importance of the muster-out rolls was not lost on state and federal officials. At the time the rolls were completed, multiple sets were created for each company. For the most part, the origi-

nal records stayed with company commanders and were often found among their personal effects after they had died. Other sets were sent to the War Department in Washington; one was eventually used to create the Compiled Military Service Records for validating applications for pensions and other veterans' benefits. Additional sets were sent to the capitals of the states where the companies had been formed and eventually transferred to state archives and historical societies. Here at the State Historical Society of Iowa, the muster rolls are part of the Iowa Adjutant General Records in the State Archives in our Des Moines center.

Muster-out rolls are actually large ledger sheets, many of them nearly a square yard in dimension; others are about 11" x 17". Over the decades, due to heavy use by researchers and the acidity of the paper, the muster rolls have become extremely brittle and fragile. To slow the process of aging and deterioration—and

## Died

|    |                     |                       |    |             |              |            |         |             |
|----|---------------------|-----------------------|----|-------------|--------------|------------|---------|-------------|
| 1  | Anderson George W   | 1 <sup>st</sup> Sergt | 21 | Aug 21 1862 | Cascade Iowa | James Hill | 3 Years | Aug 23 1862 |
| 2  | Dean Curtis G       | Serjt                 | 24 | " 9 "       | " "          | " "        | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 3  | McCadden George W   | Capt                  | 39 | " 21 "      | " "          | " "        | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 4  | Habins William B    | "                     | 26 | " 16 "      | Dubuque "    | D Greaves  | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 5  | Angel John W        | Private               | 31 | " 22 "      | " "          | " "        | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 6  | Britton Henry W     | "                     | 21 | " 22 "      | " "          | " "        | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 7  | Bolton Edwin W      | "                     | 26 | " 22 "      | Cascade "    | James Hill | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 8  | Boydlin Martin      | "                     | 20 | " 29 "      | Dubuque "    | D Greaves  | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 9  | Bowditch Eliza      | "                     | 37 | Feb 24 1864 | Saxton "     | Capt Adams | 3 "     | Feb 25 1864 |
| 10 | Bottle Charles      | "                     | 18 | Aug 15 1862 | Cascade "    | James Hill | 3 "     | Aug 23 1862 |
| 11 | Brewer Henry J      | "                     | 18 | Feb 18 1864 | Washington " | Capt Adams | 3 "     | Feb 18 1864 |
| 12 | Brewer Herbert W    | "                     | 20 | " 27 "      | Delhi "      | " "        | 3 "     | " 27 "      |
| 13 | Dane Theodore       | "                     | 22 | Aug 15 1862 | Cascade "    | James Hill | 3 "     | Aug 23 1862 |
| 14 | Dick James          | "                     | 23 | " 22 "      | " "          | " "        | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 15 | Engall John         | "                     | 28 | " 14 "      | Dubuque "    | D Greaves  | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 16 | Elliott Charles     | "                     | 23 | " 21 "      | Cascade "    | James Hill | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 17 | Goodrich William A  | "                     | 20 | " 10 "      | " "          | " "        | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 18 | Goodrich John H     | "                     | 36 | " 10 "      | " "          | " "        | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 19 | Gilbert Joseph      | "                     | 39 | " 18 "      | Dubuque "    | D Greaves  | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 20 | Hutchins Martin L   | "                     | 18 | " 13 "      | Cascade "    | James Hill | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 21 | Humphill Greenberry | "                     | 29 | " 22 "      | " "          | " "        | 3 "     | " 23 "      |
| 22 | Leis Robert         | "                     | 18 | " 18 "      | " "          | " "        | 3 "     | " 23 "      |

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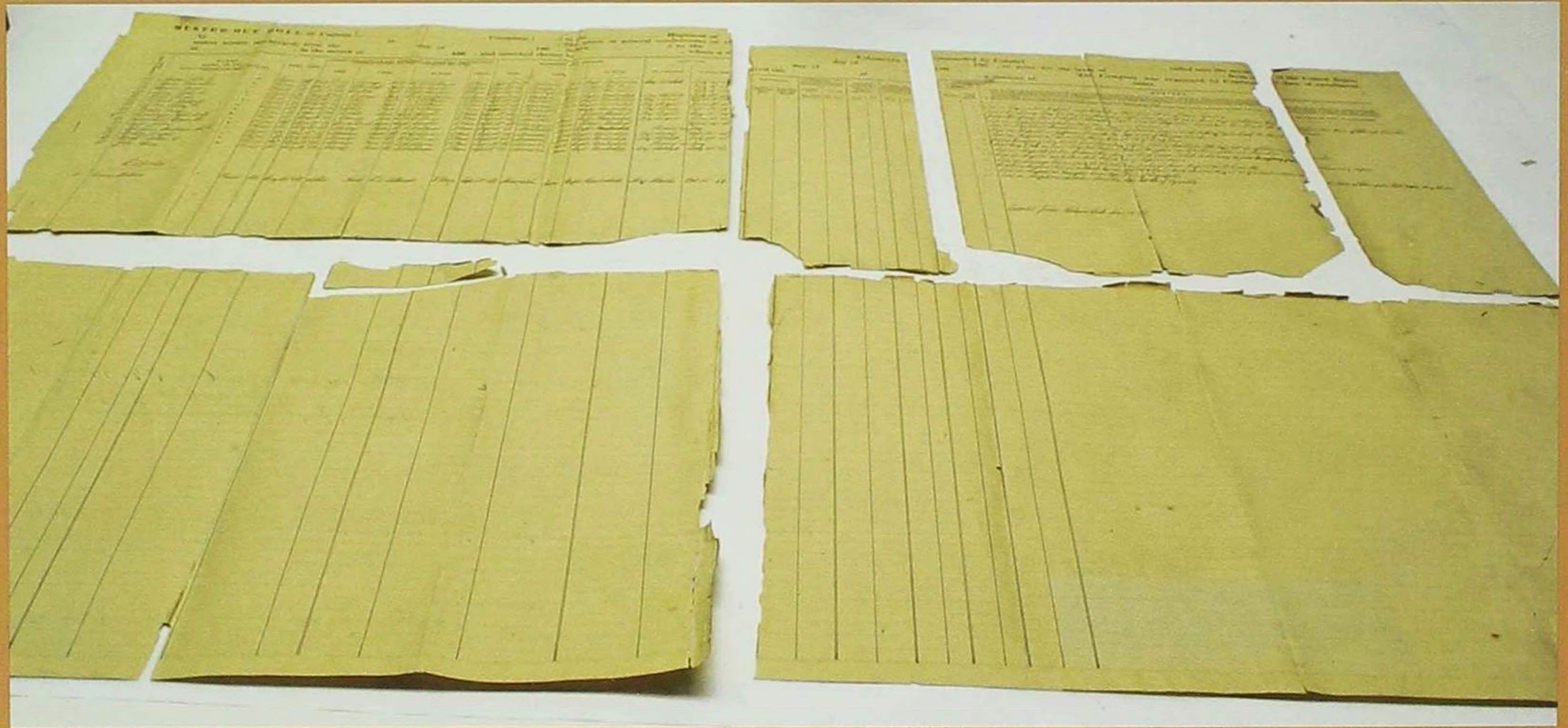
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- ✓ Entered service at original organization as 1<sup>st</sup> sergt. Was killed during assault on Vicksburg Miss. May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1863
- ✓ Entered service at original organization as sergt. Died from wounds June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1863 in Enemy Hosp. Vicksburg Miss.
- ✓ Entered service at original organization as Corp. Was killed during assault on Vicksburg Miss. May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1863
- ✓ Entered service at original organization as private Promoted to Corp. Sept. 17<sup>th</sup> 1863 Died in Hosp. New Orleans La. May 25<sup>th</sup> 1865
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Died at Memphis Tenn. July 1<sup>st</sup> 1863 from Wounds Rec. at Black River Miss. May 17<sup>th</sup> 1863
- ✓ Private from Enrollment was killed in action at Black River Bridge Miss. May 17<sup>th</sup> 1863
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Died in Regt. Hosp. of Lung fever at St. Genevieve Mo. March 22<sup>nd</sup> 1863
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Died in Hosp. of Typhoid fever at Houston Mo. Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> 1863
- ✓ Joined a Recruit April 11<sup>th</sup> 1864 died in Hosp. of Int. fever New Orleans La. Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> 1864
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Died in Hosp. of Illness at Salem Mo. Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> 1862
- ✓ Assigned a Recruit - Died while on way to Co. in Hosp. at ~~St. Louis~~ La. May 14<sup>th</sup> 1864
- ✓ Joined a Recruit April 11<sup>th</sup> 1864 died in Hosp. of Typhoid fever at New Orleans La. June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1864
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Died of Chronic Diarrhoea at Pella Mo. July 11<sup>th</sup> 1863
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Died in Hosp. Bear of Vicksburg Miss. May 29<sup>th</sup> 1863 of Wounds Rec. May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1863
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Killed during assault on Vicksburg Miss. May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1863
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Died in Hosp. of Illness at Vicksburg Miss. Aug. 9<sup>th</sup> 1863
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Died in Regt. Hosp. of Lung fever at Iron Mountain Mo. March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1863
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Died in Hosp. of Sun Stroke at Bear of Vicksburg Miss. June 4<sup>th</sup> 1863
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Died Dubuque Iowa of Chronic Diarrhoea Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> 1863
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Was killed during assault on Vicksburg Miss. May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1863
- ✓ Private from Enrollment - Died in Hosp. at Bear of Vicksburg Miss. June 9<sup>th</sup> 1863 from Wounds Rec. May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1863.

nal records stayed with company commanders and were often found among their personal effects after they had died. Other sets were sent to the War Department in Washington; one was eventually used to create the Compiled Military Service Records for validating applications for pensions and other veterans' benefits. Additional sets were sent to the capitals of the states where the companies had been formed and eventually transferred to state archives and historical societies. Here at the State Historical Society of Iowa, the muster rolls are part of the Iowa Adjutant General Records in the State Archives in our Des Moines center.

Muster-out rolls are actually large ledger sheets, many of them nearly a square yard in dimension; others are about 11"x17". Over the decades, due to heavy use by researchers and the acidity of the paper, the muster rolls have become extremely brittle and fragile. To slow the process of aging and deterioration—and



Above: Fortunately, not all of the muster rolls are this damaged. Most paper after 1850, including muster rolls, was made of highly acidic wood pulp rather than rags. Over time, the muster rolls have turned brittle and deteriorated along the folds. These pieces will be reconnected and additional conservation measures taken.



To remove creases, the conservator dampens them with cotton swabs and then weights them down.



Thin but strong Japanese paper and wheat paste are used for repairing tears and reattaching fragments.



Surface dirt is removed with a dry, non-abrasive sponge made of natural rubber.



An alkaline solution is applied by brush or spray to neutralize destructive acids and extend the life of the document.

to preserve them as the authentic documents that they are—work has begun on conserving some 500 muster-out rolls, only a portion of the entire collection. This work is possible thanks to an appropriation from the Iowa General Assembly, proceeds from the sale of *Profiles of Valor* by Dennis Black and published by the State Historical Society of Iowa—and because of the technical skills, materials, and equipment in SHSI's paper conservation lab in the Iowa City center.

**C**onserving the muster rolls takes time, skill, and a steady hand. (The steps are described on the left.) When the work is completed on a muster roll, it is encapsulated in Mylar, a clear polyester film that protects the document and allows handling.

Once safeguarded for generations to come, the muster rolls will continue to bear witness to the men in a company and their commitment to the nation and to each other. For every individual listed, the roll reveals the contours of his years in service. Although the information is brief and basic, the handwritten words hint at the courage, stamina, suffering, and life-changing experiences of a Civil War soldier.

—by Timothy Walch,  
Iowa Heritage Illustrated volunteer

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## Where to begin researching Iowa Civil War service records

- An excellent place to start is the six-volume *Roster and Record of Iowa Soldiers in the War of the Rebellion: Together with Historical Sketches of Volunteer Organizations, 1861–1866*. This source includes information from official records, including muster-out rolls, and is available in the Des Moines and Iowa City libraries of the State Historical Society of Iowa.
- To see what kinds of Civil War resources are available at the State Historical Society, visit [www.iowaHistory.org](http://www.iowaHistory.org) and scroll down under "Collections." The Adjutant General Records and Grand Army of the Republic Collection are particularly rich in Civil War resources. (While on the home page, be sure to check out SHSI's museum collections online and the Iowa Battle Flags Project.) SHSI librarians and archivists are eager to help.
- For an online version of *Roster and Record of Iowa Soldiers*, visit: [www.iagenweb.org/civilwar/books/logan.htm](http://www.iagenweb.org/civilwar/books/logan.htm). Click on "Rosters."
- For information on 6.3 million Union and Confederate soldiers, visit [www.itd.nps.gov/cwss](http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss).
- For veterans records at the National Archives, visit [www.nara.gov/veterans](http://www.nara.gov/veterans).