Records Related to State and Local Militia

Compiled 2013 by J. Mark Lowe, CG, FUGA

Military organization of citizens for the purpose of local defense.

National Archives Resources

RG 168 - Records of the National Guard Bureau [NGB]
Finding Aids: Lucy E. Weidman, comp., "Preliminary Checklist of the Records of the National Guard Bureau and Its Predecessors, 1822-1941,"PC 33 (Jan. 1946); records of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, 1923-54, in Helene L. Bowen, Mary Joe Head, Jessie T. Midkiff, and Olive K. Liebman, comps., "Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Army Staff, 1939- ," NM 3 (1962).

Records Relating to the Militia Prior to the Passage of the Militia Act of 1903 (1822-1903)

An incomplete series of annual returns of militia and abstracts of returns submitted by the states, 1822- 1902. Correspondence dealing with inspection of state troops; and with ordnance, clothing, and personnel, 1885-1903. Account books, 1887-1902.

Records of the Militia Division

Correspondence, 1903-8, with record cards and index. Account books, 1903-8.

Records of the Division of Militia Affairs

Correspondence, 1908-16 (90 ft.), with record cards (42 ft.) and index (16 ft.). Quarterly reports of regular army sergeants assigned to National Guard units, 1908-16. Account books, 1908-16.

Records of the National Guard Bureau and its Predecessors, the Militia Bureau and the National Guard Bureau (War) (1916-74)

General correspondence, 1916-23, with index. Central decimal correspondence, 1922-62, and central correspondence ("TAFFS" arrangement), 1963 (513 ft.). Administrative decimal file, 1920-53. State Guard decimal correspondence, 1941-49, concerning state units organized in World War II to replace National Guard units called into federal service. Account books, 1916-42. History files of the Army National Guard Organization, 1949-63; and the Air National Guard Organization, 1949-69. Central subject file, 1964-74. Formerly security classified central subject file, 1964-71.

RG 24 - Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel

General records, 1891-1918. Index to correspondence, 1903-10. Letters sent, 1891-1911. Organization reports, 1913-15. Summaries of units' enrolled forces, 1915-16. Naval militia ratings' qualification certificates, July-December 1916. Allowance books, 1912-17.

RG 94 - Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's-1917
Finding Aids: Lucille H. Pendell and Elizabeth Bethel, comps., Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Adjutant General's Office, PI 17 (1949).

<u>Correspondence</u>

Correspondence and other records ("Post Revolutionary War Papers") documenting the service, pay, and supply of the regular and volunteer armies and the state militia troops, and the construction of military installations, 1784- 1815. Letters sent, 1800-89. Letters received, 1805-89, with registers, 1814-89, and indexes, 1812-89. Telegrams sent, 1864- 1904. Cablegrams sent, 1899-1912, and received, 1901-14. General correspondence ("Document File"), 1890-1917 (2,967 ft.), with record cards and an index. Records concerning the appointment and commissioning of Reserve Corps officers, 1917. Reports to the Secretary of War, 1825-70. Microfilm Publications: M182, M565, M566, M567, M619, M666, M689, M698, M711, M725, M904, M927, M983.

Records Related to State and Local Militia

Compiled 2013 by J. Mark Lowe, CG, FUGA

Orders, muster rolls, and returns

Manuscript and printed orders, 1792-1910 (315 ft.), including general, special, and field orders and circulars, with indexes, of the War Department; of armies, brigades, divisions, and corps; and of military divisions, departments, districts, and posts. Muster rolls of regular army organizations, 1784-1912 (1,278 ft.). Muster rolls of volunteer organizations, 1784-1901 (5,270 ft.), documenting service in war with the Northwest Indians (1790-95), Creek War (1813-14), other Indian wars (1811-58), Cherokee Removal (1835-38), War of 1812 (1812- 15), Mexican War (1846-48), Civil War (1861-65), Spanish-American War (1898), and Philippine Insurrection (1899-1901). Returns, 1790-1916 (1,575 ft.), of departments; territorial divisions, departments, and districts; military posts; and army commands in War of 1812, Mexican War, and Civil War. Station books, 1861- 1915, of troops, regular army officers and organizations, and volunteer officers. Strength reports of regular army and volunteer forces, 1890-1917. Microfilm Publications: M29, M617, M654, M665, M690, M691, M727, M728, M744, M851, M852, M1094, T1085, T1114, T1115.

Records relating to volunteers and volunteer organizations

Descriptive books, Mexican War, 1846-48. Regimental records, including descriptive rolls, order and letter books, and morning reports, of volunteer organizations, Civil War, 1861-65. Regimental and company books of volunteer organizations, Spanish-American War, 1898, and Philippine Insurrection, 1899-1901; and of the Puerto Rican Regiment, 1899- 1901. Registers of deceased volunteer soldiers, 1861-64. Histories of volunteer organizations, 1861-63. Registers of discharges, 1861-66.

Records relating to wars

Records of the War of 1812 relating to location, parole, and exchange of prisoners, 1812-15. Records concerning the Mexican War, including letters sent and received by officers, 1845-48; orders, 1845-48; and records of customhouses at San Francisco, CA, and at Matamoros, Tampico, and Vera Cruz, Mexico, 1847-48. Records relating to the Civil War, including U.S. Army generals' service reports, 1864-87; records relating to prisoners at Dry Tortugas, FL, 1863-71, and to Indian prisoners, 1860-65; case files of investigations of alleged fraudulent and subversive activities during the Civil War ("Turner-Baker Records"), 1861- 66; pardon petitions and related records (*Amnesty Papers*), 1865-66; and the greater part of a collection (*Generals' Papers and Books*) of official records and personal papers of various generals and other officers, 1813-1928. Correspondence and other records relating to the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection, 1898-1901. Microfilm Publications: M254, M719, M797, M1003, M1094.

Other records

Administrative precedent file (*Frech File*, compiled 1892-1917), ca. 1775-1917, with subject indexes and lists of subject headings. Statements of AGO organization, 1882- 1903. Accounts current, 1863-99. Record of disbursements, 1851- 62. Registers of AGO civilian clerks, 1861-72, 1881-82. Records relating to the Government Hospital for the Insane, including records of admission, 1862-1917; and registers of soldiers declared to be insane, 1853-1919, with index. Provost Fund records, including letters sent, 1864-81, and received, 1864-83; records of fines received, 1865-80; vouchers, 1865-79; and bills, memorandums, orders, and circulars, 1872-83. National Land Defense Board reports, 1907-15, with index. Reference aids and other special information files, 1790-1918. Microfilm Publications: T36.

Records of the Old Records Division

Reference files, ca. 1775-1917, consisting of a general file; a file compiled by clerk E.J. Tarr; and a file compiled by clerk R.C. Edmundson.

Precedent files of various divisions

Precedent files of the Correspondence Division, ca. 1775-1917, with subject indexes; the Correspondence and Examining Division (Digest File), 1861-1912; the Officers' Division

(portion of *Kohr File*), ca. 1775-1917; and the Appointment, Commission and Personnel, Returns, and Mail and Record Section (*Brinkerhoff File*), ca. 1775-1917.

Records of the Record and Pension Office of the War Department, 1784-1919

Correspondence relating to military service of volunteer soldiers (R and P Files), 1889-1904, with record cards and index. Service histories of units that served in the Volunteer Force of the U.S. Army during the Civil War (Record of Events Cards), 1861-65. Completed forms showing original records of military organizations from which information was compiled on cards (*carded*) by RPO, n.d. File of decisions concerning the compilation of military and medical records, 1892-1909. Interoffice memorandums regarding the compilation of medical records, maintained by the Medical Division, 1904-11, and its 7th Street Branch, 1891-1909. Microfilm Publications: M594, M686.

Compiled military service records

RPO examined muster rolls, monthly returns, descriptive books, and similar records in order to compile, on cards, a military service record for each soldier, from initial enrollment to termination of service. Cards relating to each soldier were filed in a jacket bearing his name. RPO used the compiled military service records to verify pension applicants' claims.

Compiled military service records, with indexes, of soldiers who served in volunteer organizations enlisted for service during the post-Revolutionary War period, 1784-1811 (21,420 files), and in the War of 1812, 1812-15 (597,660 files); the Indian Wars, 1817-58 (89,760 files); the Mexican War, 1846-48 (103,500 files); and the Civil War (U.S. Army only), 1861-65 (4,503,025 files). Compiled military service records, with indexes, of soldiers who served in volunteer organizations enlisted for service in the Spanish-American War, 1898 (266,651 files) and the Philippine Insurrection, 1899-1901 (47,386 files), including the U.S. Volunteer Infantry, 1899-1901 (5,600 files), and the Puerto Rican Regiment, U.S. Volunteers, 1899-1901 (1,500 files).

Cards containing medical records and vital statistics

Carded medical records, showing name, rank, organization, complaint, name of admitting hospital, date of admittance, and other information on individuals in the following organizations: regular army, 1821-84, 1894-1912; Marine Corps, 1821-84; volunteer organizations, Mexican and Civil Wars, 1846- 65; gunboat and naval service, 1861-65; and Pioneer Corps, 1861- 65. Carded medical records of hospital stewards, noncommissioned staff officers, and musicians, 1821-84; contract and dental surgeons, 1898-1912; and civilians, 1894-1912. Carded birth records, 1884-1912; death records of civilians; 1884-1912; and marriage records of individuals married on army posts, 1884-1912.

Records relating to medical personnel

Records relating to medical officers and physicians, ca. 1820-1917. Contracts, pay accounts, returns, correspondence, and other records, 1839-1914, concerning volunteer, regular army, militia, and contract physicians; and nurses, matrons, hospital stewards, medical cadets, and other medical personnel.

Other medical records

Records of field hospitals, 1821-1912 (1,250 ft). Records relating to cholera, smallpox, and yellow fever epidemics, 1841-93. Hospital returns, 1814-15. Reports of sick and wounded, 1820-60, 1887-1912. Microfilm Publications: M823.

RG 98 - Records of United States Army Commands, 1784-1821

Finding Aids: Maizie Johnson and Sarah Powell, comps., "Preliminary Inventory of the Records of United States Army Commands, 1784-1821," NM 64 (1966).

Records of geographical commands, 1798-1813

U.S. Army under unified field command prior to June 14, 1798. From that date until May 14, 1800, Maj. Gen. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney commanded a district that embraced GA, TN, NC, SC, and VA, with Brig. Gen. James Wilkinson commanding troops in the north and west. After Pinckney's district was abolished, Wilkinson assumed command of the army and divided it into 11 geographical districts, with an informal alignment into western and eastern departments. Reorganized February 15, 1809, into Northern, Southern, and Western Military Districts. Southern and Western Districts consolidated as Southern Department, June 1810, and Northern District designated Northern Department.

Letters sent and received by Maj. Thomas Cushing, commanding Troops on the Mississippi, 1799-1800. Order book, General Pinckney's district, 1800. Orders and muster reports of an expedition to the international boundary between the United States and New Spain (Mexico), along the Sabine River, LA, 1806-7. Order book, Northern Department, 1812-13. Issuances, Southern Department, 1812-13.

Records of military districts, War of 1812

United States divided into 9 military districts by War Department General Order, March 19, 1813; increased to 10, July 2, 1814; reduced to 9 by consolidation of 4th and 10th Districts, January 1815. Military districts abolished, May 17, 1815, and superseded by 10 military departments, divided equally between Divisions of the North and South.

Discharge and furlough book and list of officers, 1st Military District, 1813-15. Order book, 2d Military District, 1814-15. Letters received, order books, courts-martial proceedings, registers of furloughs and discharges, lists of officers, and company returns, 3d Military District, 1813-15; and order book, Commander of the Defense of the City and Harbor of New York, 1812-13. Letters sent and issuances, 4th Military District, 1813-14; and issuances and reports of the adjutant and inspector general, 4th and 10th Military Districts (consolidated), 1815. General orders issued by Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton, commanding 5th Military District, April-May 1813. Letters sent and order books, 6th and 7th Military Districts, 1813-15. Letters sent, issuances, order books, and miscellaneous records of the 9th Military District and Right Wing (1st Division), Northern Army (under unified command), 1814-15; records of the Left Wing (2d Division), Northern Army, 1814; and consolidated order book, 4th Brigade of Detached Militia, 1812- 13, and District of Oswego, Sackett's Harbor, and Ogdensburg, 1813. Detail orders, 10th Military District, 1814.

Records of the Division of the North

Established May 17, 1815, with headquarters at Brownsville, NY. Abolished in the reorganization of the field army into Eastern and Western Departments, May 1821. Consisted of 1st-5th Military Departments.

Letters sent, 1818-21. Order books, 1815-21. Register of officers, 1815. Consolidated order book, 1st and 3d Military Departments, 1818-21. Order books and discharge registers, 3d Military Department, 1815-19. Order book, 4th Military Department, 1815-19. Letters sent, order books, and discharge registers, 5th Military Department, 1815-21.

Records of the Division of the South

Established May 17, 1815, with headquarters at Nashville, TN. Abolished in the reorganization of the field army into Eastern and Western Departments, May 1821. Consisted of 6th- 10th Military Departments.

Letters sent and order books, 1815-21. Letters sent, 1817-21, and order books, 8th Military Department, 1815-19. Letter book, Maj. Gen. Edmund P. Gaines, 1814 (9th and 4th Military Districts), 1815 (7th Military District), and 1817-19 (Division of the South, 7th Military Department, and Post of Fernandina, East Florida).

See also: Order book, 9th Military Department, June 1819- June 1821, in Records of the Western Division and Department, RG 393, Records of U.S. Army Continental Commands, 1821-1920.

Records of army posts

Records of Castle Island (Fort Independence), Boston, MA, consisting of an order book, 1786-87, and garrison records, 1803-15. Order book, Fort Johnston, NC, 1795-1811. Order books and provision returns, garrison at New Orleans, 1806-16.

Records of Army Units

Records of artillery units

Order and company books, Regiment of Light Artillery, 1808-21; 1st Regiment, 1803-15; 2d and 3d Regiments, 1812-15; and Corps of Artillery, 1814-22.

Records of infantry units

Inspection return, American Regiment of Foot, May 1784. Company and order books, 1st Regiment, 1785-88; 3d Regiment, 1796-1802; 1st-7th Regiments, 1802-15; 9th-14th, 16th, 18th, 20th-23d, 25th-27th, 30th-35th, 37th, 38th, 40th-43d, 45th, and 46th Regiments, 1812-15; Maj. Zebulon M. Pike's Consolidated Regiment, 1805-11; and 1st, 3d, 7th, and 8th Regiments, 1815-21.

Records of other units

Records of the Legion of the United States, consisting of orders, 1792-93, and enlisted returns, 1789-92. Company and order books, 1st and 3d Regiments of Riflemen, 1812- 15. Company books, Regiment of Light Dragoons, 1812-15.

RG 156 - Records of the Office of the Chief of Ordnance

Records relating to ordnance property

Contracts, 1812-68, 1883-1910. Statements of purchases, 1861-67. Registers of contracts, orders, applications, proposals, and purchases, 1861-1918. Production studies and analyses, 1917-39. Miscellaneous records relating to the arming and equipping of the militia, 1808-53. Ledgers and journals of ordnance and ordnance stores issued to the militia, 1811-1914, with gaps. Quarterly summary statements of ordnance and ordnance stores on hand at ordnance installations, 1813-41, with gaps; at forts and batteries, 1838-53, 1862-64; at armories, arsenals, and depots, 1862-63, 1867; and in the hands of regular army and volunteer regiments, 1862-76, with gaps. Monthly statements of ordnance stores on hand at ordnance depots, 1890; and at arsenals, 1897-1902, with gaps. Statements of ordnance stock on hand at arsenals and depots, 1920-29. Digests of decisions and regulations relating to property accountability, 1875-1916. Journals, registers, and correspondence relating to the disposition of ordnance property, 1864-1914. Microfilm Publications: M1281.

Fiscal records

Estimates, 1816-1908, and statements, 1812-1904, of appropriations. Ledgers, 1822-35, 1861-93, 1895-1902, 1917-21. Registers and requisitions of funds, 1862-1913. Statements of expenditures, 1825-40, 1850-61. Registers of disbursements, 1897- 1904. Monthly statements of receipts and disbursements, 1904-11. Records relating to money accounts, 1817-1905, 1917-20, 1937-38.

Personnel records

Monthly strength returns, 1831-1911. Registers of officers, 1812-31, and officers assigned to colleges, 1890- 1900. Military service histories of ordnance officers, 1832-1922; ordnance officers called to duty in World War I, 1917-22; and ordnance officers serving in the American Expeditionary Forces, 1919. Registers of enlistments in and discharges from the Ordnance Corps, 1832-1907. Miscellaneous registers relating to ordnance sergeants, 1887-1918.

Other records

Registers of letters received relating to inventions, 1812-70, with index. Letters sent relating to the Woodbridge Gun, 1889-90. Records relating to the Christie Tank, 1920-29. Reports, 1826-71, and registers, 1812-70, relating to experiments. Notes relating to experimental stores and equipment, 1901-2. Bimonthly reports of modifications, experiments, and tests, 1902-13. Records relating to mineral lands, 1821-60. Inspection reports and registers, 1826-1918. Claims registers, 1846-93, with index. Correspondence concerning a claim of Bethlehem Steel Corporation

employees, 1920-39. Exhibits supporting claims of the Savage Arms Company, 1919, and the Winchester Repeating Arms Company, 1924. Records of the Field Director of Ammunition Plants, 1942-46.

RG 217 - Records of the Accounting Officers of the Department of the Treasury

Records of the Paymaster, Ordnance, and Medical Division

Abstract of officers' accounts, 1788. List of accounts settled by the accountant for the War Department, 1833. Register of warrants issued and redeemed, 1796-1815. Registers of paymasters' accounts, 1865-1911. Record of paymasters' settlements, 1861-83. Paymasters' abstracts, 1861-82. Register of settled accounts of disbursing officers. 1868-85. Registers of payments to army units, 1813-96. Roster of officers and regular army units serving in the Mexican War, 1845-50. Records of bounty due recruits, 1795-96. Registers of payments to discharged soldiers, 1863-65; and colored troops, 1863-68. Abstracts, 1817- 20, and registers of payments to officers, 1862-65, with index. Records of payments to paroled and exchanged prisoners, 1863-65; prisoners of war, 1863-65; and the Cuban army, 1899. Record of militia officers' pay at camps and garrison schools, 1911-16. Registers of draft rendezvous accounts, 1864-65, with index. Ledgers of money deposited, 1864-65. Registers of deposits by soldiers, 1875-80; and of local bounty certificates, 1866-79. Hospital blotter, 1815-17. Registers of paymasters' settlements for hospitals and other units, 1861-1904. Registers of payments to officers in charge of hospitals and other units, 1855-67, and to surgeons and acting assistant surgeons, 1898-1908. Registers of payments to civil employees, 1835-41; and to officers in military reconstruction districts, 1867-69. Record of payment to employees in military reconstruction districts, 1869-71. Register of payments and record of expenses of the military district of Texas, 1867-71. Letters sent by Charles E. Morse, secretary for civil affairs in the headquarters for the military reconstruction district of Texas, 1870. Register of payments to witnesses and others, 1893-96.

Records of the Archives Division

Paymasters' accounts, 1777-81. Account book for expenses of Capt. Aaron Ogden's company of the 1st New Jersey Regiment, 1782. Indexes to letters and settled claims for Revolutionary War service, 1828-35. Audit reports on Revolutionary War claims, 1828-35, with register. Settled accounts for Revolutionary War claims, 1828-31. Vouchers for payments of Revolutionary War claims, 1829-34, with register, 1831-34. Claims filed by Revolutionary War veterans, 1828-35. Registers of pay certificates issued in settlement of Revolutionary War claims, 1829-35. Audit reports on military accounts and claims, 1795-1817. Settled accounts of army paymasters, 1815-61 (2,060 ft.). Muster rolls and payrolls, 1815- 66 (625 ft.). Selected original muster rolls and payrolls, 1861- 67 (313 ft.), with registers. Settled accounts and claims, 1817- 94 (1,850 ft.). Settled Indian accounts and claims, 1794-1894 (3,600 ft.). Claims settled under the Chickasaw Treaty, 1833-71. Cotton and cottonseed case files, 1918-20. Rosters of California and Texas volunteers in the Mexican War, 1846-48. Registers and records relating to pay of volunteer, special, and militia units during the Civil War, 1861-71. Registers and record of payments to officers and enlisted men from volunteer units, 1836-73. Index to officers of volunteer units, ca. 1861-65. Selected list of personnel of volunteer military units, ca. 1863-65.

RG 233 - Records of the United States House of Representatives

Records of the Armed Services Committee and its Predecessors

Minute books, docket books, petitions, memorials, committee papers, and bill files of the following committees and subcommittees:

Militia Committee, 3 ft. (1835-1911) 24th-67th Congresses

Records Related to State and Local Militia

Compiled 2013 by J. Mark Lowe, CG, FUGA

Finding Aids: George P. Perros, comp., Preliminary Inventory of Records of the Military Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives Relating to an Investigation of the War Department, 1934-36, PI 80 (1955).

Guide to the Records of the U.S. House of Representatives at the National Archives, 1789-1989
Chapter 4. Records of the Armed Services Committee and Its Predecessors: Committee on the Militia, 1835-1911

Article I, section 8, of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the power "to provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions," and to provide for "organizing, arming, and disciplining" the militia. The States retained the power to appoint the officers of the militia and the authority to train the militia according to the congressionally-mandated regimen of discipline. The Constitution (Article II, section 2), designated the President of the United States as the Commander-in-Chief of the aggregate militia forces of the States when they were called upon to support the Regular Army and Navy.

On May 8, 1792, Congress passed the Militia Act authorizing the States to enroll and organize for military service all able-bodied free white citizens between the ages of 18 and 45. The War of 1812 exposed serious deficiencies in the performance of the militia forces, and in 1815, Richard H. Wilde of Georgia proposed that a standing Committee on the Militia be established. 1 The House rejected his proposal and continued to use select committees to deal with militia affairs on an ad hoc basis for the next 20 years.

The standing Committee on the Militia was created on December 10, 1815, with jurisdiction over miscellaneous aspects of the militia organization and operation in the several States and the District of Columbia. The Committee's jurisdiction included fostering greater efficiency in the militia units, encouraging rifle practice, reorganizing the militia, and issuing armaments to the militia units and later to the National Guard or voluntary militia units that replaced them.

The committee was not terminated until 1911 although it had exercised little influence after the passage of the Dick Military Act of January 31, 1903. That law, combined with other concurrent military reforms, integrated the National Guard organizations in the States with the Regular Army, largely eliminating the need for direct congressional supervision of the implementation of the now obsolete 1792 militia law. After 1911, the House Military Affairs committee assumed the functions and powers that had formerly been in the jurisdiction of the Militia Committee.

Records of the Committee on the Militia, 24th-67th Congresses (1835-1911)

Record Type	Volume	Congresses (Dates)
Minute Books	9 vols.	45th (1877-79), 49th (1885-87), 51st-52d (1889-93), 54th-56th (1895-1901), 60th-61st (1907-11)
Docket Books	11 vols.	39th-41st (1865-71), 44th-46th (1875-81), 49th (1885-87), 51st-52d (1889-93), 54th-56th (1895-1901), 60th-61st (1907-11)
Petitions and Memorials	8 in.	22d (1831-33), 26th-27th (1839-43), 29th (1845-47), 32d (1853-55), 35th (1857-59), 45th-49th 1877-89, 53d-56th (1893-1901),

		60th-61st (1907-11)
Committee Papers	11in.	16th (1819-21), 19th (1825-27), 25th-26th (1837-41), 28th-29th (1843-47), 39th-41st (1865-71), 44th-46th (1875-81), 48th-49th (1883-87), 51st-56th (1889-1901), 60th-61st (1907-11)
Bill Files	2 in.	58th (1903-05), 60th (1907-09)

Committee Records

This committee did not produce an extensive collection of records, primarily because of its limited jurisdiction and the continuing validity of the 1792 Militia Act--a law which underwent only minor revisions from its passage until 1903. The minute books contain the proceedings of a relatively small number of the committee meetings during the Congresses that convened in the 1880's and 1890's because the committee had trouble forming quorums. The committee clerk in 1886 noted, for example, that the absenteeism of committee members contributed to “a dismal failure” at a scheduled meeting. A few of the books contain copies of committee hearings, proposed bills, and newspaper editorials concerning the committee's work. The docket books are also quite incomplete; they give the name of the bill or petition, the action taken, and occasional remarks on legislation.

Petitions and memorials comprise a large part of the extant records of the committee. They demonstrate the widespread and continuing interest of the committee members, State politicians, members of local military organizations, and concerned citizens in maintaining a strong State militia system to obviate the establishment of a large, standing Regular Army.

The bulk of the petitions, however, deals with the subject of revising the 1792 Militia Act to improve the organization, training, and equipping of the State militia forces. To many, a particularly objectionable feature of the 1792 law was its provision to enroll all able-bodied citizens between the ages of 18 and 45. Memorialists frequently called for a change in the law. A Connecticut State Militia officers' committee in January 1832 demanded a reduction in the prescribed period of enrollment, pointing out: “The call upon Minors is resented by the avarice of parents and Masters, and the last few years, of the present period of service, is irksome to those, who are military subjects” (22A-G14.1). Another memorial from the 1832 Pennsylvania Military Convention denounced the “burthensome and inefficient” military system created by the 1792 act.

For the rest of the 19th century, petitions continued to emphasize the need to improve the militia in order to increase the effectiveness of *Citizens-Soldiers* as opposed to “slave mercenary soldiers,” as one Vermont State Militia delegation put the matter in 1839 (25A-G12.1). Miscellaneous petitions submitted to the committee include requests from Harper & Brothers, Publishers, of New York, and from a Philadelphia bookseller, to secure a Government contract to publish and issue to the militia copies of Gen. Winfield S. Scott's book, Infantry Tactics (26A-G12.1); prayers from State militia organizations for Government assistance in procuring military equipment and stores (26A-G12.1, 46A-H15.2); and petitions seeking recognition and appropriations for National Guard units (46A- H15.1, 54A-H21.1, 60A-H24.1). In 1881, the National Guard Association of the United States submitted a petition pointing out the absurdity of continued support for the obsolete 1792 militia law which, if enforced, would produce a militia of nearly 7 million men. The Association urged recognition of the volunteer militia organizations comprising the National Guard as the Nation's only militia force (47A- H14.1).

Committee papers consist mainly of copies of bills, reports, and other documents relating to the committee's jurisdiction as well as resolutions submitted to the committee from State legislatures and military organizations. Also, among the committee papers are scattered files of correspondence among committee members, War Department officials, militia officers, and public servants and private individuals in the States. These include an exchange of letters between various committee members and Samuel Colt, the inventor, concerning the committee's favorable consideration of Colt's waterproof cartridges and its subsequent recommendation of their use (28A-D18.1). Other subjects raised in the correspondence include the settlement of pay claims of Mississippi militia officers (29A-D12.1), the proposed 1867 national militia bill (39A-F16.1), and the 1911 pay bill (61A-F35.1). The committee papers also contain abstracts of the militia force, prepared and submitted to Congress by the Secretary of War, 1875-95 (44A-F21.1, 45A-F22.1, 49A-F22.1, 53A-F28.1). Available, as well, are resolutions from State legislatures--including Vermont, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Illinois--and militia organizations calling upon various State representations in Congress to support passage of bills to improve militia organization (22A-G14.1).

1 Annals of the Congress of the United States, 14th Cong., 1st sess., Dec. 7, 1815, p. 380.

Page URL: http://www.archives.gov/legislative/guide/house/chapter-04-militia.html

RG 46 - Records of the United States Senate

Records of Committees Relating to Defense

Correspondence, reports, hearings, transcripts, claims, petitions and memorials, resolutions, minutes, dockets, legislative and investigative case files, nomination files, and Presidential messages and communications, and other records of the following committees and subcommittees:

Militia Committee, 3 in. (1816-57) 14th-35th Congresses

RG 92 - Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General

Records relating to claims

Letters sent and received, 1864-90, with partial indexes. Claims registers, 1839-1914, with partial indexes. Case files, 1861-1914. Annual reports of the Claims Branch, 1878-86. Weekly and monthly reports of QM claims agents, 1883-85. Correspondence, minutes, and other records of claim boards, including a board to investigate claims against the Florida militia, 1841; the California Claims Board, 1847-55; and various Civil War and Spanish-American War claims boards, 1861-67, 1900- 1.

Select Bibliography

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