



## ***Military Service in the Florida Seminole Wars, 1817–1858***

The Florida Seminole Wars comprised three early 19th-century military conflicts between the U.S. Army and various groups of southeastern Native Americans—including Creeks, Yamasees, and Miccosukees—known collectively as the Seminoles. The First Seminole War occurred in 1817–18; the Second Seminole War, usually regarded as the principal Seminole conflict, 1835–42; and the Third Seminole War, 1855–58. All three wars centered on control of land use in the Florida panhandle and the ultimate submission of the Seminoles to the Indian removal policies of the Federal Government. Volunteer militia from neighboring states, including Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, and Tennessee, fought along side the Regular Army.

### **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 generally show when a soldier joined a unit and if he was present when the unit was mustered.

Only the CMSRs for Florida volunteers have been microfilmed. All other service records for the Seminole Wars are only available in textual form.

\_\_\_M629, *Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During Indian Wars and Disturbances, 1815–1858*. 42 rolls. DP. Alphabetical index gives soldier's name, rank, unit, and war or disturbance they served in.

\_\_\_M245, *Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the Florida War in Organizations from the State of Alabama*. 1 roll. DP. Arranged alphabetically by name.

\_\_\_M239, *Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the Florida War in Organizations from the State of Louisiana*. 1 roll. DP. Arranged alphabetically by name.

\_\_\_M241, *Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the War of 1837–1838 in Organizations from the State of Louisiana*. 1 roll. DP. Arranged alphabetically by name.

\_\_\_M1086, *Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Florida During the Florida Indian Wars, 1835–1858*, 63 rolls, DP. Organized by war, then by unit, and then alphabetically by surname.

### **Service in the Regular Army**

The War Department did not create compiled military service records (CMSRs) for Regular Army enlisted soldiers. To piece together a soldier's military service, begin by looking at the following microfilm publication.

\_\_\_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.

For more information, see the following reference reports:

- *Officers in the Regular Army, 1789–1916*
- *Enlisted Service in the Regular Army, 1789–1914*

## **Pensions**

Pension applications and records of pension payments for veterans, their widows, and heirs are based on service in the armed forces of the United States. These files can contain supporting documents such as narratives of events during service, marriage certificates, birth records, death certificates, family letters, statements from witnesses and affidavits.

A veteran's pension file can include his rank, place of residence, age or date of birth, and time of service. A widow's application can also include her place of residence, her maiden name, the date and place of marriage, the date and place of her husband's death, and the names of children under 16. A child's or heir's file contains information about both the veteran and the widow, as well as the child's place of residence, date of birth, and the date and place of the widow's death.

These records have not been filmed, and in some cases pensions with C and XC numbers must be requested from the Veterans Administration.

## **Indexes**

\_\_\_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.

\_\_\_T318, *Index to Indian War Pension Files, 1892–1926*. 12 rolls. Arranged alphabetically. This card index relates to service in the Indian campaigns, 1817–1898. It gives the name of the veteran, name and type of dependent, service dates, application numbers, certificate numbers for approved claims, and the state from where the claim was made.

## **Remarried Widows**

Some widows drew pensions from the service of multiple husbands. In this case the pension application information for all soldiers is usually included in a single file, under the surname of the most recent husband. The index includes the name of the claimant, the name of the soldier and his service (unit), and the pension number.

\_\_\_M1784, *Index to Pension Application Files of Remarried Widows Based on Service in the War of 1812, Indian Wars, Mexican War, and Regular Army Before 1861*. 1 roll. DP. Arranged alphabetically by the widow's surname. Widows could draw pensions for the service of two or more soldiers.

### **Other Records**

Additional records relating to the Seminole wars created by military departments including Headquarters, Troops in Florida (1854–56), and Headquarters, Department of Florida (1856–58), are in Record Group 393, Records of U.S. Army Continental Commands, 1821–1920. They include maps, summaries of reports, endorsements, letters sent and received, orders and special orders, monthly departmental returns, and post returns. Records of related divisions and departments, including the Western Division and Department, 1820–54; the Eastern Division and Department, 1817–61; the 5th Military Department, 1842–52; and records of the various posts, camps, and garrisons located in Florida, including those of Fort Brooke and Fort Myers, are also available. Some of these records are available on microfilm, but most only exist in textual form. In Record Group 391, Records of U.S. Regular Army Mobile Units, 1821–1942, are records of Regular Army units stationed in Florida, some of which cover 1854–58.

\_\_\_M1084, *Letters Sent, Registers of Letters Received, and Letters Received by Headquarters, Troops in Florida, and Headquarters, Department of Florida, 1850–1858*. 10 rolls. DP. Arranged by type of record, then chronologically.

\_\_\_M1090, *Memoir of Reconnaissances with Maps During the Florida Campaign, Apr. 1854–Feb. 1858*. 1 roll. DP. Arranged chronologically by date of report; accompanying maps are arranged with their corresponding reports.

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