When Franklin Delano Roosevelt became president of the United States in 1933, his top priority was to lift the nation out of the Great Depression that had begun with the Wall Street Crash of October 1929. The main problem in 1933 was that the economy had pretty much become stagnant: the average person had no extra money so he or she didn’t buy any consumer goods; the factories that made consumer goods went out of business; the trucking companies that transported raw materials to the factories and goods to the consumer also went out of business; so the remedy seemed to be to put cash in people’s pockets, in any way possible. To accomplish this Roosevelt established a vast number of agencies and policies that collectively became known as the New Deal. Many of these were what we might call “make work” projects: the government hired artists to paint murals in post offices and other government buildings, writers to write the histories of states and cities, and unskilled laborers to build highways and limber camps that had never before been thought necessary. The main agency overseeing these projects was the Works Progress Administration or WPA. The American Legion, an organization founded after World War One to promote the rights of veterans, had already begun in 1930 to compile lists of all veterans buried in US cemeteries. The Legion used volunteers for this task, so the results were haphazard. In some cities and towns avid volunteers took to the job eagerly; in others almost nothing was done. The WPA took over this volunteer project and made it into a federal job, hiring people to compile the lists as part of the nationwide effort to put Americans to work. The method used was the Grave Registration Card; WPA employees in every town were hired to fill out these cards for every veteran buried in that municipality. The project continued throughout the 1930s and only ground to a stop, along with most of the WPA projects, when the American economy sprang into life at the start of World War Two. The Grave Registration Cards (or GRC) in Plymouth were stored carelessly for years but survived into the early 2000s, when it was decided to update and organize the information, to better serve the needs of historians, genealogists, and other interested parties. What seemed to be a simple matter turned into a fairly large undertaking, as it turns out the information on many of the GRCs was inaccurate. We don’t know precisely where the WPA staffers got the information they used to fill out the cards, but they often got the date of birth wrong, for example. Men who had signed up in a three month militia unit at the start of the Civil War, and a regular three year regiment later, reflected only the militia service on their cards; and so on. It took about six months of work to get the list derived from the cards into what we think is good condition: accurate to the point we can make it accurate, and left open where we simply don’t know the pertinent information. Attached are the results of the Civil War part of the project; by far the largest component. World War Two hadn’t started when the cards were filled out, and the majority of World War One veterans had not yet passed away. There are a small number of cards pertaining to the veterans of the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Spanish-American War, and we hope to get to those in good course. We accept full responsibility for any mistakes but also remind the reader that we were working with incomplete information over a century old.
PLYMOUTH CEMETERIES: Burial Hill, Braley Lane, Cedarville, Chiltonville, Manomet, Oak Grove, Russell Mills, Ship Pond, South Pond, Vine Hill.

All regiments were three-year regiments unless otherwise noted. All soldiers enlisted as privates unless otherwise noted.


ALLEN, Sherman. (1840-1923). Born: Plymouth, MA, 1840. Died: Plymouth, MA, March 28, 1923 (pneumonia). Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: shoemaker. Rank: acting master’s mate. Notes: Appointed acting master’s mate, United States Navy, March 21, 1862. Served on USS Powhatan in the South Atlantic Squadron. Naval appointment revoked October 6, 1862. Much confusion about service histories existed on the Grave Registration Cards between the two men named Sherman Allen; but we were able to straighten it out with a very high level of confidence. The 1915 Survivor’s listing confirmed the Sherman Allen who was still alive was the one in the US Navy. Chiltonville Cemetery Left of Middle Road Section 2.
ASHPORT, Albert. (1820-1870). Born: South Bridgewater, MA, 1820. Died: Plymouth, MA, May 8, 1870. Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: unknown. Rank: landsmen. Notes: Enlisted US Navy at Boston February 22, 1862 (credit Boston). Served USS Ohio (receiving ship), USS Constellation, USS St. Lawrence. Discharged February 21, 1865. GRC references additional Army service with I Company, 44 Massachusetts Militia Infantry Regiment, but he does not appear on the roster and this was a nine-month regiment that served while Ashport was in the USN. There was a Lemuel A. Ashport from South Bridgewater who served with I Company, 54 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment (colored); this may or may not be the same man. More likely a relative, as the listed ages are drastically different (the soldier was 18 in 1863 according to rolls) and, again, the periods of service coincide. I do not know the race of Albert Ashport. Vine Hills Cemetery, G.A.R. Lot.


BACHELDER M.D., John.  (1818-1876).  Born: Mason, NH, March 23, 1818.  Died: Plymouth, MA, October 28, 1876 (enlarged prostate).  Residence: Plymouth.  Occupation: physician.  Rank: Assistant surgeon.  Notes: State records do not confirm his military service and he is not listed in *Massachusetts Soldiers & Sailors*.  However, I found a detailed genealogical reference online (https://archive.org/stream/batchelderbatche00pier/batchelderbatche00pier_djvu.txt) that is clearly the same man.  He was born in Mason, New Hampshire (not North Carolina as seen on the grave registration card) on 3/23/1818.  Married Martha Swift Keene (born 1824) 9/30/1846 at Bourne, Massachusetts.  Attended and graduated Dartmouth College 1837-1841.  Received medical diploma from Massachusetts Medical Association in 1845.  Practiced medicine in the towns of Monument Village (now Bourne), Plymouth, and Marion.  According to this source he enlisted in the Union Army as an assistant surgeon just before the end of the war.  It is possible he served in a unit from another state or a United States Regular Army unit, or Veteran’s Reserve or the United States Colored Troops.  Conceivably even the USMC.  Died in Plymouth 10/28/1876.  From the website: “He had a large practice in Plymouth, was a fine scholar, a great reader, and a very great lover of music.”  There was a John Batchelder from Massachusetts who served in the US Navy 1864-1865 but it does not appear to be the same man as none of the details fit.  For one thing the sailor was a coal heaver, hardly a suitable job for a 46-year old qualified surgeon.  Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 372; Grave # 01.

BADGER, Charles D.  (1838-1867).  Born: Carver, MA, 1838.  Died: Plymouth, MA, June 11, 1867 (bombshell explosion in foundry).  Residence: Plymouth, Fall River.  Occupation: nailer.  Rank: private.  Notes: Enlisted 24 Unattached Massachusetts Militia Infantry Company, December 16, 1864.  Mustered out May 12, 1865.  Discrepancies exist between Charles and Edward Badger as they appeared on GRC and in *MS&S*.  In *MS&S* and *HoP* Charles is said to be 37 years old at time of enlistment, while Edward is 32; but according to GRC it was Edward who was four years older.  *HoP* has name Charles T. not Charles D. Badger.  The service dates (enlistment, discharge) on Charles’ GRC bear no relationship to any known service.  Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 81; Grave #01.


BATES, Benjamin F.  (1837-1867). Born: Plymouth, MA, 1837. Died: Plymouth, MA, 1867 (heart disease). Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: seaman. Rank: private. Notes: Enlisted E Company, 29 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, February 28, 1862. Re-enlisted March 31, 1864. Wounded and reported missing, Bethesda Church, Virginia, June 1, 1864 (HoP says he was wounded May 30; Battle of Bethesda Church is also known as the Battle of Totopotomoy Creek, and was part of the bloody Overland Campaign). Deserted from hospital, August 19, 1864. Burial Hill Cemetery, Benjamin Bates Lot, Section 2B.


BENSON, George.  (1828-1909). Born: Plymouth, MA, June 23, 1828. Died: Plymouth, MA, October 5, 1909 (cancer). Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: nailer, iron worker. Rank: Private. Notes: Grave registration card is wrong as to unit and year of birth. The George Benson who served in I Company, 2 Massachusetts Infantry was from Boston and was killed in battle in Georgia in 1864. This Benson was


BRADFORD, George F. (c.1842-1898). Born: Plymouth, MA, circa 1842. Died: Taunton, MA, April 6, 1898 (pneumonia). Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: tin worker. Rank: Private. Notes: Enlisted E Company, 29 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, 5/18/1861. Went missing on active service during the Peninsula Campaign, Virginia, June 1862. Transferred 1/30/1864 to D Company, 36 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment. Mustered out 8/15/1864. The Peninsula Campaign involved a series of Confederate attacks that drove the Union Army away from Richmond and captured numbers of Union prisoners. No information on what happened to Private Bradford in this period or for the subsequent missing year. He may have been captured; he may have been wounded or sick, absent in hospital. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 660; Grave # 08.

lieutenant. Notes: Massachusetts Soldiers & Sailors has no record under this name or any variation (e.g. Lemuel Bradford Allen). Grave registration card contains no information as to dates of enlistment/discharge or unit assigned. The History of Plymouth, however, records that Lemuel Bradford was a Fourth Lieutenant in B Company, 3 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, the local Plymouth militia company (the Standish Guards). Also that Lt. Bradford was one of the men who responded when called to duty in April 1861. When the company arrived at Fort Monroe in Virginia, Regular Army officials (presumably the paymasters) refused to muster Bradford into the Volunteer Army, because regulations permitted only two lieutenants per company. As Bradford was a skilled iron worker, a deal was worked out whereby he was detailed to work in the fort’s foundry, for the three months his unit was on duty. Thus he was never officially mustered and does not appear on the rolls of the company, but he certainly held a militia commission and did productive work as an Army iron worker. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 225; Grave # 04.


BRAMHALL, Ellis Brewster. (1819-1865). Born: November 9, 1819. Died: January 29, 1865. Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: gentleman. Rank: Private. Married to Martha F. Gould Bramhall (1807-1905). Notes: Enlisted (three months) B Company (Standish Guards), 3rd Massachusetts Infantry Regiment 4/16/1861. Mustered out 7/22/1861. During his period of service his regiment was part of the garrison at Fort Monroe, Virginia. Grave registration card does not have date of death; this date and additional information was obtained from the Find-A-Grave website on 7/24/2016. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 587; Grave # 013.


Reserve Corps (see Glossary). Discharged 5/22/1864 (grave registration says 9/2/1864). Not to be confused with Benjamin Franklin Bumpus from Wareham, an ironworker who served with the 20th Massachusetts Infantry and was mortally wounded at Fredericksburg. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 71; Grave # 03.


CARPENTER, Edwin J. Howard.  (1840-1880).  Born: Templeton, MA, May 29, 1840.  Died: Plymouth, MA, April 13, 1880 (asthma, typhoid fever, pneumonia).  Residence: South Brookfield.  Occupation: shoemaker.  Rank: private.  Married Mary E. Paty, 22, in 1868.  Mary died 1886.  Notes: GRC says died of asthma on April 16, 1880; Plymouth Town records say he died of typhoid fever and pneumonia, grave stone says he died April 13, 1880. The only Carpenter in A Company, 15 Massachusetts Infantry, is Eugene H. Carpenter; service dates are the same as on GRC. Date of death and marriage information from Find-A-Grave website.  Edwin and Eugene may or may not be the same man.  Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 979 -Larch & Thistle Avenue; Grave #01.


CHANDLER, John B.  (1837-1899).  Born: Plymouth, MA, October 6, 1837.  Died: Plymouth, MA, July 12, 1899.  Residence: Plymouth.  Occupation: sailor.  Rank: coxswain.  Notes: Information on the GRC actually pertains to a John B Chandler from Carver.  The John B. Chandler form Plymouth who is buried here joined the Navy under the name James B. Chandler and was the recipient of the Medal of Honor.  Enlisted US Navy at Boston, November 28, 1861.  Served USS Ohio (receiving ship), USS Brooklyn, USS Richmond, USS Philadelphia.  Won the Medal of Honor while serving as coxswain on the USS Richmond.  Discharged November 29, 1864.  MOH request reads: “commended for coolness and good conduct in the action in Mobile Bay, in the morning and forenoon of August 5, 1864.  He deserves special notice for having come off the sick list and going to and remaining at his quarters during the entire action.”  MOH Citation reads: “Cool and courageous although he had just come off the sick list, Chandler rendered gallant service throughout the prolonged action as his ship maintained accurate fire against Fort Morgan and ships of the Confederacy despite extremely heavy return fire. He participated in the actions at Forts Jackson and St. Philip, with the Chalmette batteries, at the surrender of New Orleans and in the attacks on batteries below Vicksburg”.  Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 1191 Linden Avenue; Grave # 03.

New Bern, North Carolina, May 21, 1862. Nine year age discrepancy between GRC and muster rolls. Weight of evidence supports birth date of 1840 although 1831 is on GRC and 1850 (presumably a typo) on the Find-a-Grave website summary. Year of death may have been either 1880 (GRC) or 1889 (Find-a-Grave). Find-a-Grave also says he lived 1850-1889 but somehow died at the age of 49. Grave marker says 1840-1889, so we went with that Vine Hills Cemetery, G.A.R. Lot.


CHASE, George H. (1832-1913). Born: Plymouth, MA, 1832. Died: Plymouth, MA, July 5, 1913 (pneumonia). Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: soldier. Rank: private. Notes: Enlisted (three months) B Company (Standish Guards), 3rd Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, 4/16/1861. Mustered out 7/22/1861. Grade registration states he was I Company, 3rd Mass Infantry, but Mass Soldiers & Sailors confirms he was in B Company. Not to be confused with George H. Chase from Haverhill, of the 22nd Mass Infantry, who was killed at Gaines Mill, 1862. Then there is the matter of one George H. Chase, a musician in L Company, 3rd Mass Infantry, who was from New Bedford and who also served with 3rd Mass Heavy Artillery; and who is listed in state records as serving as a musician with the 1st New York Infantry Regiment 2/4/1862-8/14/1862. The registration card for the George H. Chase from Plymouth states he was with the 1st New York Infantry and it would appear likely that Mass Soldiers & Sailors is in error on this matter. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 686 Walnut Oak & Ivy; Grave # 05.


CRAPO, Francis E. See CRAHO, Francis E.


DEAN, Ichabod S. (1802-1883). Born: Taunton, MA, 1802. Died: Taunton, MA, December 27, 1883 (constipation). Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: laborer. Rank: unknown. Married Mary B. Dean. Notes: GRC contains information pertaining to the other Ichabod S. Dean, definitely a relative, probably his son. Many sources confuse the two men. Vut the combination of the 1880 census and 1915 survivor’s listing makes it clear that the military information belongs to the younger man. This does not mean the elder didn’t serve in some unknown capacity. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 871 -Chestnut & Sumac Avenue; Grave #02.


DOTEN, Edward. (1802-1888). Born: Plymouth, MA, 1802. Died: Plymouth, MA, December 2, 1888 (old age). Residence: unknown. Occupation: unknown. Rank: unknown. Notes: GRC states Doten was a member if I Company, 58 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, but the man of that name in that unit was a farmer from Middleboro who was at least 15-20 years younger than the man buried at Vine Hills. Other than that I can find no connection between the burial and the service. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 293 - Oak & Beech Avenue.


Reserve Corps 5/8/1864. Resigned and discharged with rank of Captain, 11 VRC, 9/20/1865. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 219; Grave #05.


EDDY, Seth W. (1837-1864). Born: Plymouth, MA, August 5, 1837. Died: Readville, MA, August 13, 1864 (chronic diarrhea). Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: shoemaker. Rank: corporal. Married Francis M. Campbell in 1858, one child. Notes: Enlisted H Company, 58 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, March 7, 1864. Died of illness in army hospital at Readville; Registration Card states place of death was “Camp Reoiler” but the camps at Readville were called Camp Meigs (the main one) and its predecessors, Camps Brigham and Massasoit (early camps, later discontinued). History of Plymouth gives exact date and cause of death. Burial Hill Cemetery, Seth Eddy Lot; Section 1-A.

ELLIOt, Samuel. (1801-1890). Born: Barnstable, NH, June 12, 1801. Died: Plymouth, MA, August 3, 1890. Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: laborer. Rank: private. Notes: Enlisted G Company, 28 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, October 29, 1861. Discharged for disability at Fort Columbus, New York, February 7, 1862. Age discrepancy of 19 years between GRC (1801) and MS&S (c.1820). Could the veteran be this man’s son? GRC has wrong regiment, 29 Infantry as opposed to 28 Infantry. HoP has wrong company (K as opposed to G). Last name also seen Eliot. Burial Hill Cemetery, Samuel Elliot Lot, Section 2B.


Heavy Artillery, September 2, 1863. Mustered out September 3, 1865. Burial Hill Cemetery Walter Finney Lot, Section 2-B.


**FRASIER, Albert. (1829-1903?).** Born: Raynham, MA, December 23, 1829. Died: Plymouth, MA, August 27, 1903 (cancer). Residence: Sheffield. Occupation: farmer. Rank: private. Married Eliza Jane Seavey (1831-1879) in 1857. Notes: The only Albert Frasier listed as serving for Massachusetts is a man from Sheffield, who died of disease (according to MS&S) at Baltimore, MD, July 15, 1865, at the age of 19. The dates of service entry to K Company, 5 Massachusetts Cavalry (Colored) Regiment (April 12, 1864), and his discharge are the same on the GRC, but the GRC states he lived until 1903. Unable to reconcile these discrepancies. Not mentioned in HoP. It is possible that the man who died in 1903 (born 1829) was the father of the man who died in 1865 (born 1846). My guess is that the notation saying he died in 1865 is just an error. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 606.


GURNEY, William H. (1842-1893). Born: Wareham, MA, 1842. Died: Whitman, MA, June 30, 1893. Residence: Abington. Occupation: cutter. Rank: private. Notes: Service information on GRC is all wrong; it applies to Captain William H. Gurney, who is buried in Whitman, Massachusetts. This individual is Private William H. Gurney (both men lived in North Abington); have corrected service information. Captain Gurney was probably Private Gurney’s father or uncle. Enlisted (100 days) A Company, 60 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, July 14, 1864. Mustered out November 30, 1864. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 282; Grave #01.


HALL, John F. (1837-1913). Born: Plymouth, MA, April 22, 1837. Died: Plymouth, MA, May 15, 1913 (angina pectoris). Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: teamster. Rank: private. Notes: Enlisted E Company, 29 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, May 18, 1861. Discharged for disability January 9, 1863, at Fredericksburg, Virginia. Private Hall was wounded by the accidental bursting of Union cannon February 11, 1862. Due to the state of metallurgy at the time such accidents were not uncommon; in fact even the best cannon barrels were rated to survive just 1,000 firings. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 829 -Sumac Avenue, East Half.


HARRISON, Alexander M. (1829-1881). Born: New Haven, CT, May 27, 1829. Died: Plymouth, MA, January 11, 1881. Residence: unknown. Occupation: unknown. Rank: unknown. Notes: No service record found; card blank in those areas. There was an Alexander Harrison from Boston who deserted from the USN in Spain, 1862, but I have nothing to connect him with this entry. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 447; Grave #01.


Abby Jane (1821-1885). Notes: Enlisted as corporal, B Company, 12 Maine Infantry Regiment, November 16, 1861. Mustered out in Portland, Maine, December 7, 1864. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 549; Grave #06.


the records with the other Charles H. Howland from Plymouth, as well as a man with the same name from New Bedford. After much research I am 90% confident I have the service record straight. Forget the GRC’s, they are completely tangled. The key is the biography available on Find-a-grave for the man born in 1826, coupled with the 1890 census appendix on Civil War veterans that clearly identifies the other Howland as the man in the navy. Buried Chiltonville Cemetery, Lot 2D.


HOXIE, William H. (1831-1899). Born: Plymouth, MA, 1831. Died: Chiltonville, MA, March 5, 1899 (lightning strike). Residence: Plymouth/Chiltonville. Occupation: deacon. Rank: unknown. Notes: Hoxie’s Grave Registration Card notes that a marker was placed on his grave by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. However, no information is recorded on the card concerning his military unit or dates or other details of service. On March 5, 1899, Mr. Hoxie was ringing the bells at the Chiltonville Congregational Church when the building was struck by lightning. Hoxie was killed, the steeple and front of the church were destroyed, but there was no fire. There were two New England men named William H. Hoxie who served with Union forces. The first, from Pittsfield, Maine, served with the 1 Maine Cavalry regiment 1861-1865, but is almost certainly the William H. Hoxie (1841-1903) buried in Pittsfield; the 1890 census appendix for Civil War veterans confirms this. The second joined the Navy as an acting master’s mate in 1862, giving his residence only as Massachusetts, but resigned before the year was out. He served with the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron aboard the USS Maratanza. No further information; no evidence the sailor and the reverend were the same man. Chiltonville Cemetery, in front of Hoxie Monument, Section 1.

HOYT, John F. (1811-1888). Born: Plymouth, MA, March 5, 1811. Died: Plymouth, MA, September 15, 1888 (illness). Residence: unknown. Occupation: unknown. Rank: unknown. Notes: The service data on the GRC corresponds to a John F. Hoyt from Groveland, MA, a town 75 miles from Plymouth, where our Mr. Hoyt was born and died. Further, the soldier from Groveland was listed as 33 years old when he enlisted; Mr. Hoyt from Plymouth would have been 51. Without further evidence it is impossible to support the contention that they are the same man. Incidentally, the GRC says Hoyt served with 3 Infantry; the Groveland man served with 3 Heavy Artillery. A complicating factor is the existence of Plymouth’s John F. Hoyt, Jr., who served with the 32 Mass Infantry. The key to the mystery might lay in the fact that Hoyt, Jr., has no GRC, even though he definitely existed and served in the war and is buried in Plymouth. All I can speculate is that his information was mixed up with that of
his father; in other words, they should have filled out a GRC for Junior and not for the older man. Without definite knowledge of how the cards were researched originally it is impossible to prove, but that is the only explanation that makes sense to me. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 264; Grave #03.


KASPEN, William. (1837-1922). Born: Hollitz, Bohemia, August 3, 1837. Died: Chicago, IL, November 1, 1922. Residence: Kingston. Occupation: baker. Rank: sergeant. Notes: Dates of birth and death on GRC (1814-1879) seem to be for the soldier’s father; dates given here from other state records. I do not know if the man who died in Chicago was buried in Plymouth, or if it was the father and his son’s military service history became attached by mistake. GRC also gives surname as KAPSER. Enlisted (nine months) I Company, 4 Massachusetts Militia Regiment, September 23, 1862. Promoted Sergeant September 23, 1862. Wounded at Battle of Port Hudson, Louisiana, June 14, 1863. Mustered out August 28, 1863. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 546 -Central Avenue.


KENDALL, Julia P. (1825-1874). Born: 1825. Died: 1874. Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: unknown. Rank: nurse. Notes: Nurse with Union Army 1862-1865; signed up June 1862. Worked at Union Hotel Hospital, Georgetown, DC. Nurses were paid $12 per month and received a daily ration. About 12,000 female nurses served the Federal forces, although only about half or less were employed by the military; many worked for the quasi-civilian US Sanitary Commission. Daughter of Reverend James Kendall, pastor of First Parish Church. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 533; Grave #03.


Notes: Enlisted (nine months) A Company, 45 Massachusetts Militia Infantry Regiment, September 15, 1862. Mustered out July 7, 1863. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 360; Grave #11.


LYNCH, James. (1836-1867). Born: Maine, 1836. Died: Plymouth, MA, April 17, 1867 (drowning). Residence: unknown. Occupation: unknown. Rank: unknown. Notes: Many men with this name served in Massachusetts units during the Civil War; not enough information is given on the Registration Card to properly identify this soldier. There were at least two of the same approximate age who enlisted from the South Shore: James Lynch,27, of North Bridgewater, who served with H Company, 2 Massachusetts Infantry (his occupation is listed as ‘boottreer’ one who cleans and dresses the upper portions of shoes); and James Lynch, 30, of North Abington, a shoemaker who served with G Company, 12 Massachusetts Infantry, and was posted missing at both Second Bull Run and Gettysburg but survived the war. Manomet Cemetery, Lynch Lot -1B; Grave #01.


Captain and Assistant Quartermaster, United States Volunteers, April 7, 1864. Mustered out October 30, 1865. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 511; Grave #05.


MELLEN, Albert. (c.1839-1902). Born: Warsaw, IL, c.1839. Died: New York, December 3, 1902 (heart disease). Residence: Charlestown, West Roxbury. Occupation: musician. Rank: musician second class, band leader. Notes: Information is not absolutely confirmed. There were only three known soldiers with the name Albert Mellen who served in the Union Army; two were from Massachusetts. The third was from New York and served in the 176 New York Infantry Regiment 1862-1863. One of the Massachusetts men was from Middleboro, and served with 18 Massachusetts Infantry, but died a POW at Andersonville in May 1864. The only other contender was the musician whose information we have used here. Enlisted Regimental Band, 11 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, June 27, 1861. Discharged at Harrison’s Landing, Virginia, August 8, 1862. Enlisted as Musician, Second Class, USV, with Brigade Band of 2 Brigade, 1 Division, 2 Army Corps, Army of the Potomac, December 22, 1863. Mustered out as Band Leader June 30, 1865, Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 80; Grave #01.


20 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, August 18, 1861. Discharged for disability December 16, 1861. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 522 -Oak, Walnut & Beech Avenue; Grave #01.


PERKINS, Charles H. (1831-1884). Born: Plymouth, MA, 1831. Died: Plymouth, MA, March 4, 1884 (illness). Residence: unknown. Occupation: unknown. Rank: unknown. Notes: A number of men with this name served in Massachusetts units and unable to match this soldier up with anyone entry. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 974-Walnut & Larch Avenue; Grave #02 or #05.


(three months) B Company (Standish Guards), 3 Massachusetts Militia Infantry Regiment, April 16, 1861. On average, nowadays about 90 people die each day in the US from automobile-related accidents. While 1915 might seem early in automotive history, as early as 1899 26 deaths were reported nationwide. That number had reached 6,779 by 1915, about half the current rate. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 975, Grave #1.


RAYMOND, Henry J. (c.1817-1876). Born: c.1817. Died: Plymouth, MA, August 20, 1876 (illness). Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: seaman. Rank: private. Notes: Registration Card gives place of birth as “Weston Isl”; there is a town called Weston in Massachusetts, there is also a section of Westwood, MA, called Islington, which used to be a town and still has its own post office. Enlisted E Company, 32


RICHMOND, William H. (1814-1864). Born: Plymouth, MA, June 3, 1814. Died: Plymouth, MA, January 14, 1864 (train accident). Residence: unknown. Occupation: railroad yard man. Rank: unknown. Married Ellen Richmond; at least four children. Notes: Cannot find any record of service. On Wednesday evening, January 13, 1864, Mr. Richmond was working at the railroad depot at South Abington, hooking up and unhooking cars for the Old Colony & NP Railroad. He slipped on the ice and fell under a moving train, nearly severing his leg. Brought home to Plymouth, doctors tried to save him by amputating the leg, but he died the following day. GRC has wrong date of birth and death (1861 instead of 1864). See newspaper articles appended to Find-a-Grave website. Burial Hill Cemetery, William Richmond Lot, Section 1B.


ROBBINS, Francis C. (1848-1866). Born: Plymouth, MA, 1848. Died: Plymouth, MA, June 14, 1866 (disease of spine). Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: clerk. Rank: private. Notes: Enlisted (one year) 20 Unattached Massachusetts Militia Infantry Company, November 19, 1864. Mustered out June 29, 1865. Private Robbins may have lied about his age to enlist, as army records state he was 18 while the
Registration Card allows he would have been 15 or 16. Burial Hill Cemetery Thomas S. Robbins Lot, Section 2-B.


**RUSSELL, Nathaniel. (1801-1875).** Born: December 18, 1801. Died: February 16, 1875. Residence: unknown. Occupation: unknown. Rank: unknown. Notes: According to surviving records, there were three men with the name Nathaniel (or Nathan) Russell who fought for Massachusetts during the Civil War. Registration Card states he served with F Company, 13 Massachusetts Infantry, but the man who served in that unit, a carpenter from Feltonville (Hudson) MA, was mustered in at the age of 28, not 63 as per the GRC. The other two men were also young and from communities other than Plymouth. GRC states he enlisted with F Company, 13 Mass Infantry, January 2, 1864; discharged July 4, 1864. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 436; Grave #11.


SHAW, Alberto M.  (c.1829-1896). Born: c.1829. Died: Boston, MA, November 28, 1896 (heart disease). Residence: Charlestown. Occupation: cigar maker. Rank: private. Notes: Enlisted (nine months) as ALBERT SHAW, A Company, 5 Massachusetts Militia Infantry Regiment, August 30, 1862. Mustered out July 2, 1863. May also be a link with ALBERT SHAW from Middleboro who served with 18 Mass Infantry Regiment; but that man is listed as about 12 years younger. Service information on the GRC corresponded only to the man from Charlestown. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 409; Grave A.


disability at Washington, DC, May 30, 1865. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 717 - Maple Avenue; Grave # 02.


**TAYLOR, George G. (1812-1886).** Born: England, 1812. Died: Plymouth, MA, March 7, 1886 (old age). Residence: Blackstone, Rutland. Occupation: shoemaker. Rank: private. Notes: Enlisted I Company, 2 Rhode Island Infantry Regiment, June 6, 1861. Discharged for disability October 19, 1862. Drafted into I Company, 12 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, July 13, 1863. Transferred to I Company, 39 Massachusetts Infantry, June 25, 1864. Mustered out May 25, 1865. Possible ID error: Ages are very much contrasted; GRC says he was 51 in 1863, MS&S says he was 21. But information re: enlistments and transfer are the same in both sources. I believe that the 18912 birthdate is a typo for 1842, but that doesn’t explain how he died from old age at 44. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 972 - Oak & Larch Avenue; Grave # 02.

to Sergeant. Transferred May 1, 1865, to 8 Company, VRC, 2 Battalion. Discharged for disability August 14, 1865 with rank of sergeant. Unit and dates of service on GRC are wrong. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 811.


**THOMAS, Frank A. (1833-1862).** Born: 1833. Died: Camp Hamilton, Fort Monroe, Virginia, September 14, 1862 (disease). Residence: Plymouth. Occupation: shoemaker. Rank: private. History of Plymouth states he was unmarried; but he is buried with his wife, Mary Bullard Thomas (1832-1882). They were married in 1853. Notes: Enlisted E Company, 29 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, May 18, 1861. Died in service. Also seen Francis A. Thomas. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 449; Grave #05.

**THOMAS, Joseph B. (1837-1911).** Born: Lincolnville, ME, March 15, 1837. Died: Whitman, MA, March 31, 1911 (myocarditis). Residence: Morrill, Maine. Occupation: unknown. Rank: sergeant. Notes: Enlisted (nine months) as Sergeant A Company, 26 Maine Infantry Regiment, October 11, 1862. Mustered out August 17, 1863. Living in Whitman at time of 1890 census. The town where this man was born was not named after Abraham Lincoln, in fact it seems to have been chartered under that name as early as 1802. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 2120 -Beech Avenue.


**THOMAS, William. See DUNHAM, William.**


Company, 4 Massachusetts Cavalry Regiment, July 4, 1864. Mustered out November 13, 1865. Cavalry, not infantry as stated on GRC. Russell Mills Cemetery, Vaughan Lot # 01.


Captain, L Company, 16 Illinois Cavalry, April 16, 1863. Taken prisoner by Confederate forces at Jonesville, Virginia, January 3, 1864. Confinned as a POW at Macon, Georgia. Discharged May 15, 1865. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 406; Grave #03.

WALCOTT, George H. (c.1834-1903). Born: Greene, Maine. Died: November 1, 1903. Residence: Chicago. Occupation: unknown. Rank: corporal. Notes: Not listed in Massachusetts Soldiers & Sailors. Registration card states served Chicago Board of Trade Battery. National Park Service records confirm that George H. Walcott (also seen Wolcott) served as corporal in Chicago Board of Trade Battery, Illinois Light Artillery. Possibly the same man (Walcott/Wolcott) was a private in G Company, 23 Illinois Infantry Regiment. The Chicago Board of Trade Battery existed 1862-1865 and was the only Flying Horse Artillery Battery with the Union Western armies. According to a memorial book published by the battery’s surviving members circa 1900, Walcott (Wolcott) enlisted as a private July 23, 1862, at age 28. Promoted Corporal August 1862. Mustered out July 3, 1865. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 406; Grave #07.


Missing In Action after Second Battle of Fredericksburg, May 3, 1863. Promoted to Sergeant. Mustered out June 24, 1864. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 75 1/2 -Dell Avenue; Grave #05.

WESGATE, Levi M. (1811-1887). Born: Plymouth, MA, 1811. Died: TOGUS, Chelsea, ME, September 30, 1887 (illness). Residence: unknown. Occupation: unknown. Rank: private. Notes: GRC is in error when states he was a member of the 4 Maine Regiment. Actually he served with the #4 Battery, Maine Light Artillery. Died at TOGUS, the rest home for old soldiers in southern Maine. Apparently married to Emily Mahurin (Mehurin?). No additional information. Vine Hills Cemetery Lot # 1209 1/2 -Linden & Oak Avenue; Grave #01.


WRIGHT, Samuel C. (1842-1906). Born: Plympton, MA, September 29, 1842. Died: Plympton, MA, July 6, 1906 (heart disease). Residence: Plympton. Occupation: farmer. Rank: sergeant. Notes: Enlisted E Company, 29 Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, May 18 1861. Wounded at Battle of White Oak Swamp, Virginia (Seven Day’s Battles), June 30, 1862 (struck in head by piece of cannon ball). Wounded at Battle of Antietam, Maryland, September 17, 1862 (shot in knee). Re-enlisted as Corporal January 1, 1864. Wounded at Bethesda Church, Virginia, June 3, 1864 (shot in left arm). Badly injured when run down by a mule team, October 1863. Wounded at the Battle of the Crater, Petersburg, Virginia, July 30, 1864 (shot through the right eye; originally reported dead). Promoted to Sergeant. Discharged due to wounds February 3, 1865. Awarded MEDAL OF HONOR on January 29, 1896, for actions during the Battle of Antietam. Citation reads: “Voluntarily advanced under a destructive fire and removed a defense which would have impeded the contemplated charge.” In other words, despite heavy Rebel fire he ran out alone to break down a fence that was preventing Union forces from attacking. Postwar Commander of G.A.R. Post #76 in Plymouth. Also worked as a storekeeper in Plympton and US Customs Officer in Boston. Oak Grove Cemetery Lot # 254; Grave #01. Photo available.


APPENDIX ONE.
Glossary & Notes.

ACTING. The term “acting” when used in Union naval rank (acting master’s mate, acting lieutenant-commander, et cetera) did not mean temporary or unofficial. Rather it meant what the word ‘volunteer’ meant in the Union Army: that the individual had received a commission as part of the volunteer forces raised to fight the war, and was not part of the Regular Navy establishment.

AGE OF SOLDIER. The age on the Registration Card and the age on other records, especially Massachusetts Soldiers & Sailors, almost never match exactly; in some cases they are way off, in other cases fairly close, but they are almost never accurate. One could argue the original records should be most accurate, as they were collected at the time and not from memory years later; alternatively, one could argue the Registration Cards should be given priority consideration, as they were compiled with the help of family members instead of some anonymous company clerk. I tend to credit whoever gives an actual date. Bear in mind it was common for both very young and very old soldiers to lie about their age in order to enlist.

In many other cases I believe that bad handwriting is the culprit, and the person filling out the GRC wrote a “1” instead of “4”, as there are quite a few soldiers who were born in the 1840s (based on other sources) but are shown on the GRC as having been born in the 1810s.

Two other sources (in some cases) that appear to have superior accuracy are the book History of Plymouth and the Find-A-Grave website, especially when the latter contains a photograph of the actual gravestone.

It should be noted also that Civil War armies, while containing men both much younger and much older than modern armies, tended to be made up of very young men. It has been estimated that nearly a quarter of those who served in the Federal forces were 16 or younger when they first enlisted.

CAUSE OF DEATH is what was written on the Grave Registration Card, the author of which presumably retrieved the information from relatives of the deceased or prior records. Thus many entries contain diagnoses that are obsolete and sound strange to modern ears. A few examples:

- **Bowel consumption** is inflammation and ulceration of the intestines caused by tuberculosis.
- **Catarrh** is an inflammation of any mucous membrane, i.e. brain, stomach, lungs. Especially, in American usage, excessive secretion from nose or nasal passages; in Britain, influenza-like symptoms.
- **Consumption** is tuberculosis.
- **Grippe** is influenza or ‘epidemic catarrh’.
- **Mortification** is gangrene or necrosis. Think “flesh-eating bacteria.”
- **Phthisis** is tuberculosis.

In rare instances we were able to augment the information on the Cards with information from other sources, often the Internet but also from books.

CHELSEA. A fairly large number of veterans died in the city of Chelsea, just north of Boston, more than you’d expect from a South Shore community like Plymouth. The reason for this is that the state established the Old Soldier’s Home in Chelsea in 1882, a charity ward for indigent and seriously ill veterans. It is still in operation today.
ENLISTMENTS. Unless other noted, all enlistments were for three years. It is interesting to note that the men who enlisted in three year regiments in 1861 were usually allowed to leave the service after the expiration of their allotted time in 1864. This was despite a military situation in which every man (especially experienced soldiers) was desperately needed in the ranks; and in stark contrast to more modern wars (including Iraq and Afghanistan), in which periods of service were arbitrarily lengthened and prolonged by the government, in many cases for years (the so-called Stop-Loss policy). It can assuredly be argued that the US government of the 1860s acted more honorably in these affairs than its successor government of the 1990s and 2000s: and it certainly cannot be argued that the need for such an involuntary extension of military service was greater in Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo than it was at the time of Gettysburg and Chickamauga.

EXCHANGED. The two sides, North and South, frequently exchanged prisoners-of-war, especially during the early years of the conflict. A schedule was worked out wherein one general could be exchanged for approximately forty privates; official commissions would meet between the lines periodically and work out the details. This helped both sides avoid the burden of caring for prisoners, and served humanitarian purposes as well. The system broke down frequently during the war, especially towards the end, largely for two reasons. First, the South refused to exchange captured black soldiers, considering them not soldiers but escaped slaves. The North, of course, took the position a soldier was a soldier, and refused to exchange anyone so long as black Union soldiers were excluded from the system. Second, General Grant realized the Union Army could replace its lost troops, while the Confederacy could not. Therefore it was in the interests of the North to refuse exchanges (finding any excuse possible) and thus avoid or delay returning fighting men to the Confederacy. Union soldiers suffering desperately in hellish prisons such as Andersonville and Salisbury understood Grant’s reasoning but naturally took the position that Grant’s humanitarian obligations towards his own men should outweigh tactical considerations.

FIND-A-GRAVE. Website that documents tombstones and burials throughout the United States; invaluable for accurate dates and family relationships.

GRAVE REGISTRATION CARDS. (GRC). Cards filled out during the 1930s as part of an effort to catalog the gravesites of all US veterans. Originally a volunteer program on the part of the American legion, it was taken over by the Works Progress Administration as part of the New Deal to provide jobs at the local level. It was discontinued around the start of the Second World War. The main source material here in Massachusetts seems to have been the 9-volume Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, & Marines in the Civil War.

The cards themselves are valuable historical documents, albeit not always accurate in the details. Among common errors are the wrong unit listed, only partial units listed, the wrong date of birth, and confusion between men of the same name. In this Plymouth project we have attempted to verify and, where warranted, correct the information on the cards using other existing records and sources.

GRC. Grave Registration Card.

HDS. Historical Data Systems. Duxbury, MA, company that maintains a superb website (CivilWarData) which, among many other things, includes a comprehensive roster of nearly all Civil War soldiers.
HEAVY ARTILLERY. The Northern states Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Delaware (1 company) and Rhode Island all raised regiments of so-called Heavy Artillery to use as garrison troops in fortresses and to man the big guns during sieges. It soon transpired that the Union Army had far too many Heavy Artillery soldiers and far too few combat infantrymen, and as the war went on and casualties rose the Heavy Artillery units were used more and more as regular infantry and even as shock troops. After coming east in 1864 General Grant readily tapped the Heavy Artillery around Washington DC as a source of replacements for his massive infantry casualties. In some instances men were transferred from the Heavy Artillery to the Infantry. In others, the Heavy Artillery Regiment itself was simply given a refresher course in infantry combat and sent to the battlefield. Some of these regiments took enormous casualties while fighting as riflemen. The men of the HA prided themselves on being able to perform two important functions (fight as infantry and operate specialized siege artillery) but the rest of the Army tended to think it an excellent joke that men who had believed they would be sitting safely in some fort for the duration of the war were now exposed to the risks of deadly combat.

HISTORY OF PLYMOUTH. Book published 1885, written by William T. Davis, containing much valuable personal information on Plymouth soldiers in the Revolution, War of 1812, Mexican War, and Civil War. Often at odds with the Grave Registration Cards.

HoP. Refers to the book History of Plymouth, by William T. Davis, 1885.

MS&S. Refers to Massachusetts Soldiers & Sailors, a nine-volume roster of state men who served in the Civil War, published in the 1930s. Not perfect, but compiled from the actual military records and an essential reference.

MUSICIANS. Civil war units were authorized a certain number of musicians. At the beginning of the war each regiment was authorized a band of 24 musicians, although the number actually recruited varied greatly from regiment to regiment. Due to manpower considerations the regimental bands were soon seen to be redundant and in July of 1862 they were replaced with brigade bands (a brigade typically consisted of three to six regiments) by act of Congress. While the regimental bands had been officially disbanded, many simply recruited the bandsmen into the infantry, where they would fight during battles and pull picket duty but play in an unofficial capacity when not in or near combat. Other regiments hired local bands or formed semi-official bands and paid for them either out of collections among the officers or from regimental funds. Music was far more important to the Civil War army than it is now, and not only for morale purposes. Orders were routinely given via bugle calls and drum calls. It has been estimated that approximately 2.5% of the Union army consisted of musicians, mostly under the age of 18. By far most of the youngest members of the Civil War armies, both North and South, were drummer boys. Musicians took their chances on the battlefield along with everybody else, and suffered many casualties. When not playing, army musicians also aided the war effort by performing such tasks as cooking, guarding prisoners, and assisting with the wounded, especially as stretcher-bearers. At least one Union general (William Hazen of Ohio) reported that the musicians were far better at removing the wounded from the battlefield than the official ambulance corps. There are numerous instances on record where musicians actually performed surgery, with results at least comparable to those of actual surgeons.
MUSTERED/ MUSTERED OUT. Civil war soldiers were typically mustered into the service with their unit a week or so after their enlistment. This meant taking the oath of allegiance and officially becoming a member of a military organization under the authority of the United States Federal Government.

When a unit was mustered out, generally at the expiration of its term of service or at the end of the war, the soldiers were relieved of their obligations to the service. It is considered by many historians the equivalent of an honorable discharge. They returned their government equipment and settled their accounts with the paymaster; this could mean substantial back pay, the “back half” of bonuses, or, if the unlucky soldier was charged with losing equipment, a serious debt. Regiments were typically mustered out close to the original home, or mustering, place of the unit, although there were many exceptions.

NAVAL RANKS. These were different than they are now and were derived heavily from British Royal Navy practice. At the top of the shipboard hierarchy was the Captain, who held virtually unlimited power in his hands so long as the warship was at sea. The first tier of officers under the Captain consisted of the Senior Wardroom Officers: Naval Lieutenants, the Captain of Marines, and the Master or Sailing Master. Next in authority were the Junior Wardroom Officers: Lieutenants of Marines, the Purser, the Chaplain, and the Surgeon. Directly beneath them were the Standing Officers: Boatswain, Carpenter, and Gunner. They were called standing officers because they, like the sailing master, were permanently assigned to the ship, being responsible for upkeep and repairs. Then came the Midshipmen, who were considered Cockpit Officers. Subordinate to them were the Cockpit Mates: the Master’s Mates and the Surgeon’s Mates.

Senior Petty Officers were the armorer, rope-maker, caulker, masters-at-arms, and the carpenter’s mate. Petty Officers consisted of the yeomen, the coxswain, sergeants, quartermasters, caulker’s mate, armorer’s mate, gunner’s mate, sail-maker, and the corporals-at-arms. Junior Petty Officers were the cook, the cooper, quartermaster’s mates, gunsmith, quarter gunners, sail-maker’s mate, and the carpenter’s crew.

Of the above the following were considered commissioned officers: the Captain, Naval Lieutenants, the Captain and Lieutenants of Marines, the Master, the Purser, the Surgeon, and the Chaplain. They held a commission from the government.

The boatswain, the gunner, the carpenter, the armorer, the rope-maker, the caulker, the cooper, the master-at-arms, and the sail-maker were considered warrant officers. In lieu of a commission, they held a warrant for their rank.

Petty officers were seamen who were certified or “rated” to perform a specific specialized duty. Seamen (the bulk of the crew) were divided into Able Seamen and Ordinary Seamen. There was an additional rating called Landsman for the unskilled recruit.

OCCUPATIONS, OLD.

Brakeman. In the early days of the railroads, the brakeman had to set brakes on each individual car of the train. It was an exceedingly dangerous job, requiring as it did the brakeman to walk along the tops of the cars in all types of weather. The postwar evolution of through brakes and continuous brakes eventually rendered the duties obsolete. Nowadays the job title remains but the duties are essentially those of an assistant conductor or yard worker.

Cordwainer. Occupation of the nineteenth century; because of the prefix cord, many people assume a cordwainer had something to do with making rope, but that is not so: a cordwainer was a craftsman who
manufactured new shoes and boots from new leather. This differentiated him from the cobbler, who technically was involved in the repair of shoes, not the manufacture.

**Currier.** Not a misprint for ‘courier’. A currier was a craftsman who dressed and colored (“curried”) leather.

**Duck Weaver.** At least one man (Leander M. Vaughan) is listed as a duck weaver (also as a seaman). I do not know for certain what that term meant, but I can hazard a guess. Cotton duck is a type of tightly-woven fabric, lighter than normal canvas and heavier than sail cloth, so I assume the trade has something to do with the manufacture of same.

**Wire drawer.** Manufactured metal wire by pulling hot metal through dies.

**PAROLED.** Both sides often paroled prisoners, especially officers but also enlisted men, after their capture. The paroled men agreed in writing not to take up arms until they were properly exchanged for an enemy prisoner. Paroled Confederates returned home to wait for the news of their exchange; Union parolees were sent to special parole camps in the North, a highly unpopular move designed to ensure their return to duty upon exchange. The Union frequently issued orders to its men not to sign paroles but these orders were just as frequently ignored. Like other methods used to ameliorate POW conditions, the parole system began to fail during the war over the South’s refusal to recognize Black US soldiers as legitimate prisoners-of-war.

On many occasions the paroling of prisoners worked to the advantage of the victor. Grant agreed to parole the almost 30,000 rebel prisoners taken at Vicksburg not only because it helped convince the Confederate General Pemberton to surrender, but also because he could not easily spare the men to escort all those prisoners to POW camps in the North. He also calculated that the defeated Confederates would weaken morale when they got home and told their family and friends how bad conditions actually were at the front. Grant came to regret his decision, however, when some of the Southern soldiers he had paroled at Vicksburg were captured again at Chattanooga without ever having been exchanged. The South claimed it was due to a clerical error, but, coupled with the Confederacy’s refusal to recognize Union soldiers who were former slaves as legitimate combatants, and Grant’s reluctance to provide the South with more men during a war of attrition, this effectively ended parole and exchange until it was too late to matter much in 1865.

**PICKET DUTY.** When a Civil War army settled down, whether for the night or for an entire season, it put out a line of so-called ‘pickets’, small (up to 50 or so men) outposts situated between the resting army and the enemy. They were to give early warning in case of an enemy attack, and to discourage infiltrators through the lines. Although fair game under the laws of war, pickets were traditionally spared hostile attention unless a major battle was about to take place. In the latter case the attacker’s pickets would typically warn the defender’s men about the oncoming attack so they could get out of the way. In many cases, and in stark contrast to twentieth century practice, higher authorities actually issued orders not to harass the other side’s pickets. For a sniper to kill a man on picket duty was considered closer to murder than to legitimate warfare, as all it did was kill a common soldier without affecting the balance of power in any way (visiting senior officers were sometimes an exception). Especially in areas where the armies had settled down for a long time, traffic and communication between opposing pickets was common. The men would trade newspapers, play cards, and swap personal items in short supply on one side or the other (Southern tobacco for Northern coffee was a very common trade). This fraternization was not only tolerated but often encouraged as a way to supply one’s men with creature comforts. When an attack was imminent, the men on picket duty would often
warn each other that hostilities were about to commence: “Keep your head down, Yankee, we’ll be coming through in the morning.”

PLYMOUTH RESIDENTS, WARTIME CONTRIBUTION OF. Existing records are incomplete and often don’t mention where a soldier lived, but the information currently available supports the following statistics.
Plymouth was officially credited with having provided 658 soldiers and 109 naval officers and men, but these figures presumably multiple enlistments of the same individual.
Actual number of Individual Plymouth Residents who served in the war: 482 enlisted or commissioned, 3 drafted, total 485.
Killed in action or died of wounds: 19 (3.9%).
Died as POW: 7 (1.4%).
Died of disease: 30 (6.2%).
Total mortality in service: 56 (11.6%).
Discharged for disability: 103 (21%).
Deserters: 11 (2.3%).

RECEIVING SHIP. When a recruit joined the US Navy he was sent to a receiving ship, where he was issued his hammock, sea bag, and uniform. No civilian clothing was allowed in the Navy. While aboard the receiving ship (for a few days or a few weeks) he would learn the naval way of life: how to salute, talk to officers, rudiments of duty, elementary weapons handling, and how to take care of his equipment. When a regular warship needed sailors (either when it was starting out or to replace losses) it would call on the receiving ship and take the appropriate number of men. The receiving ships themselves were typically very old sailing ships that were no longer fully fit for sea duty and were anchored at the various northern navy yards and used as, basically, floating dormitories.

SHARPSHOOTERS. Massachusetts raised several units of so-called sharpshooters. These men wore distinct uniforms (usually green) and were trained in skirmishing tactics. They typically wielded special equipment, such as breech-loading rifles (so they could load while in a prone position) and telescopic scopes. The most famous Northern unit was Berdan’s Sharpshooters. Massachusetts raised two companies of sharpshooters.

TOGUS. Federal Veteran’s establishment in Chelsea, Kennebec County, Maine, the first of its kind operated by the national government. Established in 1866, the official name was the National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (after 1872, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers). Up to nearly three thousand men at a time (maximum occupancy was 2,800 in 1904) signed over their pension in order to live at Togus under conditions of near-military discipline. Buildings and facilities on the grounds included a theater, soap factory, shoe factory, harness factory, library, fire station, sawmill, butcher shop, bakery, cattle farm, produce farm, brickyard, general store, blacksmith shop, a G.A.R. post, and a brig or guardhouse. Most men lived in dormitories but some were allowed to build private cottages.

UNION ARMY. It is easy to get confused as to somebody’s precise military status during the Civil War. What is called the Union or Federal (or Northern or Yankee) Army was really several different organizations. The original nucleus was the peacetime army, called the Regular Army. This was a small service, and promotions were quite slow. The Regular Army consisted of 19 infantry regiments, 6
cavalry regiments, and 5 artillery regiments. US Army ranks are usually followed by the initials USA (e.g. Colonel USA).

Due to the expanded need for troops a second US Army, the Volunteer Army, was created. In the Volunteer Army promotion could be quite swift. Volunteer Army ranks are usually followed by the initials USV (e.g. Colonel USV). Each state also had its own militia units.

The Union also raised 102 regiments (plus 18 companies) of United States Colored Infantry, 6 regiments of United States Colored Cavalry, 11 regiments (and 4 batteries) of United States Colored Heavy Artillery, and 10 batteries of United States Colored Light Artillery.

The Federal government also recruited 6 regiments of volunteers (mainly ex-Confederate POWs) that were not assigned to any particular State, and were called United States Volunteer Infantry, and 10 regiments of Veteran Volunteer Infantry.

All of these organizations came to an estimated equivalent of 2,047 regiments in the Union Army. It should be noted that the same system - two parallel armies, the Regular Army and the Volunteer Army - was used in subsequent wars including World War Two. When Dwight David Eisenhower, for example, was appointed Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in North Africa in November 1942, he held the rank of Lieutenant-General in the Volunteer Army (Army of the United States), but was still just a Colonel in the Regular Army. He was not promoted to Major-General of the Regular Army until August, 1943.

Typically an officer’s rank in the Volunteer Army far surpassed his rank in the Regular Army (if he even had one). This was done, obviously, so the Regular Army wouldn’t be stuck with 500 generals and 50 captains after the war was over. The notorious George Armstrong Custer finished the Civil War as a Major-General USV; as soon as hostilities were over he reverted to his normal rank of Captain USA, taking at the same time an enormous cut in pay (although in society situations he was still entitled to be called General). In addition to their USA and USV ranks many officers also had militia ranks in one or more states. It was quite possible for a man to be a Regular Army major, a Volunteer Army brigadier-general, a major-general of Ohio militia, and a colonel of Indiana militia. You could even be a general in the state militia and a private in the volunteer army.

There was also a system of ranks called brevet ranks, which was quite complicated and beyond the scope of this glossary. Suffice to say a brevet was an honorary promotion to a higher rank and something of the equivalent of a modern decoration, a way of recognizing superior achievement or bravery. A Captain who performed a valiant act could be promoted to Brevet Major, while still retaining his substantive rank of Captain. In certain hard-to-define circumstances an officer was entitled to actually use his brevet rank in the field instead of his actual rank. Entire books were written on the subject, and it has been plausibly claimed that nobody ever completely understood all the vagaries of brevet rank and its consequences. At the end of the war in March 1865 President Lincoln showed his appreciation to his officers by promoting hundreds of field and staff officers to brevet general rank.

**VETERAN’S RESERVE CORPS.** Originally called the Invalid Corps, the VRC was a special branch of the US Army designed to provide an opportunity for service for soldiers who had become partially disabled in the pursuit of their duty and had not completely recovered from their wounds, but were still considered useful. They guarded prisoner-of-war camps, provided security for railroads, depots, and storehouses, even garrisoned Northern forts that were considered unlikely to be attacked, thus freeing up able-bodied men for more active service.

The structure of the VRC was unusual. The men of the Corps were assigned to one of two battalions, the First and the Second. The First Battalion was about twice the size of the Second, the assignment theoretically being made on degree of physical impairment. Men of the First Battalion were supposed to
be fit enough to perform most duties; men assigned to the Second Battalion, typically soldiers who had lost a hand or an arm, were projected to serve mainly as hospital orderlies and hospital guards. The categories overlapped, however, and there were several well-documented instances wherein Second Battalion men grabbed rifles and fought in the front line during emergency situations.

The VRC was further divided into Regiments, each theoretically containing a certain number of companies from the First Battalion (usually six) and the Second (usually four). The original name, Invalid Corps, was abandoned due to the resentment of the soldiers concerned. At that time Army property that was condemned as useless was stamped “Ic”. This coincidence quickly generated the nickname Condemned Yankees for the early members of the Invalid Corps. It is easy to understand the source of their resentment.
APPENDIX TWO.

Union soldiers & sailors who 1) were credited to Plymouth, 2) who died during the war, and 3) but are not known to be buried in Plymouth.

A substantial number of Plymouth men who fought for the Union, and who died during the war, were not buried in Plymouth cemeteries. Given the state of transportation and the primitive means of physical preservation this is perhaps not surprising. The following list is derived from Davis’s History of Plymouth, pages 114-117. It is not as complete in all respects as the main list, and we’ve made no attempt to verify the information, as History of Plymouth is substantially more accurate than the Grave Registration Cards.


DUNHAM, Robert. (?-?). Naval recruit, died whereabouts and cause unknown.


PUGH, Thomas.  (1833-1865).  Born: Baltimore, Maryland, 1833.  Died: At sea, November 18, 1865.  Rank: private.  Notes: 5 Massachusetts Cavalry Regiment (Colored).  Died at sea while his regiment was being transported home from Texas after the war.  Probably born a slave. Married, four children.


APPENDIX THREE.

Persons of interest. Graves in Plymouth cemeteries that might be of special interest to historians and others researching the American Civil War. See main listing for locations.

CODE:
A/A - African-American (known or probable).
AWOL - deserter.
DOD - died on duty (disease or other causes, but not by enemy action).
KIA - Killed in action.
MED - Doctor or hospital steward.
MoH - Medal of Honor recipient.
NURSE - nurse.
OFF - commissioned officer.
POW - prisoner of war.
REV - clergy.
WIA - Wounded in action.
KEARSARGE - crew member on the Kearsarge.

ALEXANDER, John K.  KIA.
ALEXANDER, William B.  OFF (CPT).
ALLEN, Charles B.  A/A.
ALLEN, Sherman.  OFF (acting master’s mate, USN).
ATWOOD, Thomas B.  OFF (2LT).
BACHELDER, John.  MED.
BARNES, George W.  DOD.
BARNES, Winslow B.  OFF (acting ensign, USN).
BARTLETT, Cornelius.  OFF (acting ensign USN).
BARTLETT, Victor A.  POW, DOD.
BATES, Benjamin F.  WIA, AWOL.
BESSE, Benjamin B.  WIA.
BLACKMER, John.  MED.
BOSWORTH, Herbert P.  POW, DOD.
BRADFORD, Lemuel Allen.  OFF (4LT).
BRALEY, John Edward.  WIA.
BRIGGS, Henry W.  OFF (1LT).
BROWN, Jonathan W.  A-A.
BURGESS, Nathaniel A.  KIA, OFF (1LT).
BUTTERS, Willie R.  WIA.
BYRNES, Arthur S.  OFF (1LT).
CHANDLER, John B.  MoH.
CHURCHILL, John Frank.  OFF (USN acting ensign).
CHURCHILL, Winslow.  WIA.
CHURCHILL, Zenas.  WIA.
COLLINGWOOD, John B.  OFF (1LT), DOD.
COLLINGWOOD, Joseph. OFF (CPT), DOD.
COLLINGWOOD, Thomas. POW, DOD.
CONGDON, William. DOD.
DAVIS, Francis E. OFF (2LT).
DEAN, Ichabod S. WIA.
DEAN, Josiah V. POW.
DOTEN, Charles Carroll. OFF (CPT).
DOTEN, Samuel H. OFF (CPT -brevet MAJ).
DOUGLAS, Roswell Sargent. OFF (1LT).
DREW, Charles H. OFF (CPT).
DREW, Josiah R. OFF (1LT).
DUNHAM, Robert H. DOD.
EDDY, Allen P. WIA.
EDDY, Seth W. DOD.
FINNEY, Alfred C. DOD.
FINNEY, Elkanah C. OFF (acting master’s mate, USN).
FINNEY, Robert. OFF (acting master’s mate, USN).
FISH, George H. WIA.
FRASIER, Albert. A-A.
FULLER, Josiah C. OFF (CPT).
FULLER, Theodore S. POW (Andersonville), DOD.
GIBBS, Thomas H. DOD.
GODDARD, Benjamin F. OFF (CPT).
GOODWIN, Amos. A-A.
GOODWIN, Frank. OFF (1LT).
GOODWIN, Nathaniel. OFF (acting lieutenant-commander, USN).
GRAY, William H. WIA.
GREEN, Gustavus C. WIA.
HALL, Edwin F. KIA.
HALL, George A. A-A.
HALL, John F. WIA.
HARMON, Alpheus K. OFF (CPT), WIA.
HATHAWAY, William N. DOD.
HAYDEN, Thomas W. DOD.
HEDGE, William. OFF (1LT).
HOLMES, Charles H. WIA.
HOLMES, Frederic. OFF (2LT), KIA.
HOLMES, Orrin D. KIA.
HOWLAND, Charles H. OFF (acting master’s mate, USN).
HOWLAND, Charles H. OFF (1LT, regimental quartermaster).
HOWLAND, Lemuel C. OFF (acting master’s mate, USN).
HOXIE, William H. REV.
JACKSON, William Hall. OFF (CPT).
JENKS, Horace A. OFF (2LT), DOD.
JOHNSON, Frank A. OFF (CPT).
KASPER, William. WIA.
KEITH, Israel. KEARSARGE (purportedly).
KENDALL, Julia P. NURSE.
KNAPP, Frederick Newman. REV.
LANMAN, Hiram J. POW.
LEACH, Phineas. OFF (acting master, USN).
LEWIS, James E. WIA.
LOVELL, Amaziah. WIA.
LYLE, George. A-A.
MANTER, John D. DOD.
MASON, Albert. OFF (CPT).
MASON, Charles. OFF (CPT).
MAYO, Thomas A. OFF (2LT). KIA.
McLAUGHLIN, Robert. AWOL.
MORRISSEY, John. OFF (MAJ).
MORSE, Charles P. AWOL.
MORTON, Gideon E. KIA.
MORTON, Lemuel Brown. KIA.
NICKERSON, William T. POW.
PAGE, James W. WIA.
PATTEE, William H. OFF (3LT).
PATY, Seth W. WIA.
PECKHAM, George T. DOD.
PERKINS, Charles A. S. OFF (1LT).
PERKINS, Isaac H. KIA.
PERRY, Alonzo H. WIA.
PHINNEY, Alvin. OFF (acting volunteer lieutenant, USN).
PHINNEY, Edward F. OFF (CPT).
RAYMOND, George A. KEARSARGE.
RICH, Alonzo G. WIA.
ROBBINS, Albert R. DOD.
ROBBINS, Edward Lyman. OFF (2LT).
ROBBINS, Morton. POW.
ROBBINS, William Spencer. WIA.
ROGERS, Hiram B. POW.
RUSSELL, Andrew Howland. OFF (COL).
RYAN, Thomas. WIA.
RYDER, Herbert Martin. OFF (acting third assistant engineer, USN).
SAUNDERS, Thomas S. DOD.
SEARS, Amasa. OFF (acting master (USN).
SEARS, Horatio N. WIA.
SEARS, Otis. WIA.
SHANNON, John. OFF (2LT), POW, WIA.
SHAW, William H. WIA, DOD.
SHERMAN, Winslow B. POW.
SPAULDING, A. H. POW.
STODDARD, Charles B. OFF (CPT, assistant quartermaster).
SWIFT, George W.  WIA, POW.
SWIFT, William Reeves.  WIA.
TAYLOR, John F.  WIA, POW.
TEMPLE, George.  POW.
THOMAS, Linus B.  WIA.
THURBER, James D.  OFF (CPT, brevet MAJ), WIA.
TURNER, E. Stevens.  OFF (acting master, USN), DOD.
TURNER, Frank W.  OFF (acting master’s mate, USN).
WADSWORTH, Charles E.  POW.
WADSWORTH, George.  DOD.
WALCOTT, Edward.  Aka WOLCOTT.  OFF (CPT).
WEBSTER, John W.  POW.
WHITE, Isaac B.  OFF (CPT).
WHITMORE, Benjamin.  POW.
WHITMORE, Henry C.  OFF (acting ensign, USN).
WISWELL, Pauline.  NURSE.
WISWELL, Rebecca.  NURSE.
WOOD, George F.  MED.
WRIGHT, Samuel C.  MoH, WIA.