

ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

Soldiers' Pay

By Bradley Smith, The University of Alabama

Resources

If you can read only one book

Author	Title. City: Publisher, Year.
U.S. War Department	<i>Revised Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1861. With a Full Index.</i> Philadelphia: George W. Childs, 1862.

Books and Articles

Author	Title. City: Publisher, Year. "Title," in Journal ##, no. # (Date): #.
Acken, Gregory	<i>Inside the Army of the Potomac: The Civil War Experience of Captain Francis Adams Donaldson.</i> Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1998, 197.
Dickinson, Henry C.	<i>Diary of Capt. Henry C. Dickinson, C. S. A.</i> Denver, CO: Press of The Williamson-Haffner Co., n.d., 1889, 76.
Jackson, Harry F. and Thomas F. O'Donnell	<i>Back Home in Oneida: Hermon Clarke and His Letters.</i> Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1965, 161.
Glatthaar, Joseph T.	<i>Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers.</i> Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990, 170-5.
Kohl, Lawrence and Margaret Richard, eds.	<i>Irish Green and Union Blue: The Civil War Letters of Peter Welsh Color Sergeant 28th Massachusetts Volunteers.</i> New York: Fordham University Press, 1986, 20.
Larson, Michael J. and John David Smith, eds.	<i>Dear Delia: The Civil War Letters of Captain Henry F. Young, Seventh</i>

	<i>Wisconsin Infantry, 1861-1864</i> . Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2019, 29.
Olcott, Mark and David Lear	<i>The Civil War Letters of Lewis Bissell: A History and Literature Curriculum</i> . Washington, D.C.: The Field School Educational Foundation Press, 1981, 75.
Redkey, Edwin S., ed.	<i>A Grand Army of Black Men: Letters from African-American Soldiers in the Union Army 1861–1865</i> . New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992, 235-6.
Smith, John David, ed.	<i>Black Soldiers in Blue: African American Troops in the Civil War Era</i> . Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 47-52.
Spalding, Kenena Hansen, ed.	<i>Tuf as a Boiled Owl: The Civil War Letters of Proctor Swallow, 7th Vermont Volunteer Regiment</i> . Bloomington, IN: Authorhouse, 2006, 17.
Wiley, Bell I.	<i>The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy</i> . Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1943, 196.
_____.	<i>The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union</i> . Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1952, 37-38, 48-49.

Organizations

Web Resources

Other Sources

Scholars

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Topic Précis

When men first rushed to volunteer in the United States and Confederate armies, a private's wage was \$11 per month—a relatively scanty sum which, for perhaps most enlisted men for the duration of the war, was in constant arrears several months at a time. Congress increased Federal soldiers' pay to \$13 per month in August 1861, and many soldiers also received state and federal bounties upon enlistment and for re-enlisting. Meanwhile, the Confederate government was far less generous in paying its troops and no pay raise would come to rebel soldiers until June 1864, when the Confederate dollar was already essentially worthless. Officers in both armies received considerably higher salaries than privates and non-commissioned officers, but were expected to furnish their own clothing, equipment and food. Pay in arrears produced widespread resentment in both armies, particularly when officers and soldiers found themselves indebted to sutlers, private sellers who supplied necessities and luxuries at exorbitant prices. Soldiers also occasionally suffered docked pay when issued clothing or accoutrements had to be replaced. These and other money matters were commonly discussed in correspondence between the soldiers and their families and whatever money a soldier had left to his name after the quartermaster's deductions and the sutler had settled with the paymaster, he usually sent home. There were a number of controversies over soldiers' pay, including the Confederate government's slashing of regimental chaplains' wages. Perhaps the biggest controversy involving soldier's pay was the Federal government's decision to pay Black soldiers laborers' wages of \$10, instead of the equal pay of \$13 and clothing allowance initially promised to Black volunteers—a decision reversed in the face of protests.
