George Swift Family c1905

- George and Carrie Swift
- Children
  - Carrie (b 1881)
  - Ida (b 1883)
  - Mary (b 1887)
  - George Jr (b 1895)
George Earl Swift  
(1848-1936)

At the age of 13, George joined the 3rd Minn. Reg. at Fort Snelling and served as a drummer boy throughout the Civil War. The 3rd Minn. was captured during the battle of Missionary Ridge. After an exchange of prisoners, he was placed in Co. F., 69th Ohio, which was part of Sherman’s March to the Sea.

Carrie Swift Craig  
Christmas, 1952
The beginning of the quest
Private John Boxell “…kept an eye on one of the drummer boys, thirteen-year-old George Stringer, who was, he said, about the size of his own son, Billy.” (p 61)
• Are George Swift and George Stringer the same person?
• Are George *Swift* and George *Stringer* the same person?

• How could George enlist at such a young age?
• Are George Swift and George Stringer the same person?

• How could George enlist at such a young age?

• How did he transfer from the Minnesota 3rd to the Ohio 69th DESERTER?
Family Genealogy (revisited)

• George Earl Swift was born in Boston, July 16, 1848
• George’s father drowned in 1848, before his son was born.
• George’s mother married William Stringer in 1850.
• They had children in Boston, St. Paul, and Minneapolis
• After the war, he was a professional musician until 1885, when he became a druggist; owned drugstores in Minneapolis, Osseo, and Robbinsdale until 1915.
Enlist at age 13?
Enlist at age 13?

• The family lived in St. Paul in 1861
Enlist at age 13?

- The family lived in St. Paul in 1861
- “My mother sent me after the cows. That was my evening job and I was getting tired of it.”
Enlist at age 13?

- The family lived in St. Paul in 1861
- “My mother sent me after the cows. That was my evening job and I was getting tired of it.
- “There was much talk of the war among the men and it had come to my ears every day. I had the urge to join the army. Because of my youth, I was not permitted to join a company.”
Enlist at age 13?

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• “My mother sent me after the cows. That was my evening job and I was getting tired of it.
• “There was much talk of the war among the men and it had come to my ears every day. I had the urge to join the army. Because of my youth, I was not permitted to join a company.
• “But that night I did not return to the cows. I got on a boat which was going downriver instead and I went to Fort Snelling. There I hung around the ‘old Minnesota Third,’ and after a few weeks found myself with Sherman’s army marching to the sea.”
Enlist at age 13?

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- “My mother sent me after the cows. That was my evening job and I was getting tired of it.
- “There was much talk of the war among the men and it had come to my ears every day. I had the urge to join the army. Because of my youth, I was not permitted to join a company.
- “But that night I did not return to the cows. I got on a boat which was going downriver instead and I went to Fort Snelling. There I hung around the ‘old Minnesota Third,’ and after a few weeks found myself with Sherman’s army marching to the sea.”

George Earl Swift
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• “My mother sent me after the cows. That was my evening job and I was getting tired of it.
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George Earl Swift
*Minneapolis Daily Star*
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• “But that night I did not return to the cows. I got on a boat which was going downriver instead and I went to Fort Snelling. There I hung around the ‘old Minnesota Third,’ and after a few weeks found myself with Sherman’s army marching to the sea.”

George Earl Swift
*Minneapolis Daily Star*
February 21, 1925
First Battle of Murfreesboro (July 13, 1862)
First Battle of Murfreesboro (July 13, 1862)

- North: 23rd Brigade. (900 men)
  - Protect Nashville and Chattanooga RR supporting troops moving south
  - Regiments from Minnesota, Michigan, and Tennessee. Calvary from Kentucky and Pennsylvania
  - Scattered around Murfreesboro
First Battle of Murfreesboro (July 13, 1862)

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First Battle of Murfreesboro (July 13, 1862)

- **North:** 23rd Brigade. (900 men)
  - Protect Nashville and Chattanooga RR supporting troops moving south
  - Regiments from **Minnesota**, Michigan, and Tennessee. Calvary from Kentucky and Pennsylvania
  - Scattered around Murfreesboro

- **South:** Cavalry Brigade under Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest (1400 men)
  - North surrendered after most units were overrun
    - Minnesotans responded with “amazement, regret and grief.”
Prisoner Exchange / Parole
Prisoner Exchange / Parole

• Lacking means for dealing with large numbers of captured troops early in the American Civil War, the Union and Confederate governments both relied on the traditional European system of parole and exchange of prisoners.

• A prisoner who was on parole promised not to fight again until his name was "exchanged" for a similar man on the other side. Then both of them could rejoin their units. While awaiting exchange, prisoners were briefly confined to permanent camps.

• The exchange system broke down in mid-1863 when the Confederacy refused to treat captured black prisoners as equal to white prisoners.

Wikipedia on Civil War Prison Camps
Minnesota 3rd Infantry After Murfreesboro

• “Paroled” to Benton Barracks, Missouri (St. Louis)
Minnesota 3rd Infantry After Murfreesboro

• “Paroled” to Benton Barracks, Missouri (St. Louis)

• Route:
  • March to Nashville
  • Train to Louisville
  • Steamboat to St. Louis
Minnesota 3rd Infantry After Murfreesboro

• “Paroled” to Benton Barracks, Missouri (St. Louis)

• Route:
  • March to Nashville
  • Train to Louisville
  • Steamboat to St. Louis

• Nashville under Garrison Control of Ohio 69th
  • Minnesotans there for “about a week”
  • Asked to help defend the city and provide sentry duty
  • Soldiers felt “honor bound” to refuse
  • George enlists with Ohio
Ohio 69th Roster

- George’s Enlistment details
- August 1, 1862
  - 19 days after Murfreesboro
  - 16 days after his 14th birthday

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Date of Entering the Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jared P. Miller</td>
<td>Corporal</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Oct. 14, 1861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Richey</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Sept. 15, 1861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Tucker</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Oct. 16, 1861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse W. Havens</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Dec. 9, 1861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Schmidtman</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Oct. 21, 1861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John J. Simmons</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Nov. 18, 1861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander House</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Spangler</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Feb. 22, 1864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George W. Brown</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Feb. 26, 1864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip Diefenbach</td>
<td>Musician</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Oct. 14, 1861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George E. Stringer</td>
<td>do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archibald Gasperi</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Feb. 28, 1864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rakor, Henry</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jan. 3, 1864</td>
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Replaces injured drummer.

<table>
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<th>Names</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Date of Entering the Service</th>
<th>Period of Service</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Tucker</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Oct. 16, 1861</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>Appointed Corporal March 5, 1864; killed June 3, 1864, in action at Pumpkin Vine Creek, Ga.; veteran.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Schmidtmann</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Oct. 21, 1861</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>Appointed Corporal March 5, 1864; killed Sept. 1, 1864, in battle of Johnson’s, Ga.; veteran.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John J. Simmons</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Nov. 18, 1861</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>Appointed Corporal March 5, 1864; killed March 19, 1865, in battle of Bentonville, N. C.; veteran.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander House</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Spangler</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Feb. 22, 1864</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>Appointed Corporal Jan. 3, 1865; mustered out with company July 17, 1865.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George W. Brown</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Feb. 26, 1864</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>Appointed Corporal May 11, 1865; mustered out with company July 17, 1865.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Musician</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Oct. 14, 1861</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George E. Stringer</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NAME OF SOLDIER:</td>
<td>Stringer, G. E.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-----------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Widow, Minor,</td>
<td>Smith, Mary E.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SERVICE:</td>
<td>F 69 Ohio Inf</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTORNEY:</td>
<td>Gray, William</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASS:</td>
<td>Invalid, Widow, Minor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPLICATION NO.</td>
<td>1042034</td>
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<tr>
<td>CERTIFICATE NO.</td>
<td>1137789</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>STATE FROM WHICH FILED</td>
<td>Missisippi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1891 Pension Application

• National Archives
1891 Pension Application

- National Archives
- US Civil War Pension Files
1891 Pension Application

- National Archives
- US Civil War Pension Files
- Same information in Minnesota Pension Files
1891 Pension Application

- National Archives
- US Civil War Pension Files
- Same information in Minnesota Pension Files
- 1936 Obituary lists Ohio service, nothing about Minnesota
Why switch to Ohio 69th?
Why switch to Ohio 69th?

• Tired of chores at home?
Why switch to Ohio 69th?

• Tired of chores at home?
• Disappointed with Minnesota loss?
Why switch to Ohio 69th?

• Tired of chores at home?
• Disappointed with Minnesota loss?
• Move to a winner?
Why switch to Ohio 69th?

• Tired of chores at home?
• Disappointed with Minnesota loss?
• Move to a winner?
• Formalize enlistment?
Why switch to Ohio 69th?

• Tired of chores at home?
• Disappointed with Minnesota loss?
• Move to a winner?
• Formalize enlistment?
• Seek more Adventure?
Adventures with Ohio 69th
Adventures with Ohio 69th

• Battle of Stones River (12/31/62 to 1/2/63)
Adventures with Ohio 69th

• Battle of Stones River (12/31/62 to 1/2/63)
• Battle of Missionary Ridge (11/25/63)
Adventures with Ohio 69th

• Battle of Stones River (12/31/62 to 1/2/63)
• Battle of Missionary Ridge (11/25/63)
• March on Atlanta (May 1864. Atlanta falls in August)
Adventures with Ohio 69th

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- Battle of Missionary Ridge (11/25/63)
- March on Atlanta (May 1864. Atlanta falls in August)
- Battle of Savannah (December 1864)
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- Battle of Stones River (12/31/62 to 1/2/63)
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• Grand Review of the Armies, Washington DC (May 23-24, 1865)
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- March on Atlanta (May 1864. Atlanta falls in August)
- Battle of Savannah (December 1864)
- Carolinas Campaign (Jan – April 1865)
- Grand Review of the Armies, Washington DC (May 23-24, 1865)

- George “Mustered out June 5, 1865, at Washington D.C., by order of the War Department,” six weeks short of his 17th birthday
October 1908, he traveled to Hamilton Ohio to participate in the 29th Annual Reunion of the 69th Regiment.
Looking Back

October 1908, he traveled to Hamilton Ohio to participate in the 29th Annual Reunion of the 69th Regiment.

“Sometimes a soldier carried the drum of a tired boy and on one or two occasions carried the boy himself for short distances when it just seemed he couldn’t go on.”

_Minneapolis Journal, February 27, 1929_
Sources

1. Carrie Swift Craig Family Genealogy, 1952
2. Fitzgerald’s book on the 3rd Minnesota in the Civil War
3. Stones River National Battlefield (phone)
4. Minnesota History Center (consultation/visit)
5. National Archives pension files
6. State Infantry records
   a) Ohio Civil War Central website
   b) Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars, 1891
8. Local Archives
   a) Hennepin County Library Special Collections
   b) Robbinsdale Historical Society
9. Lake Crystal Cemetery
Robbinsdale Drugstore

- 4157 West Broadway
- “the Swift girls will deliver your order”
- 1893 Village’s first telephone
- Village post-office/postmaster
- Another store on Bryant N & Broadway in Minneapolis
George E Swift

Undated. Probably taken years later
Theodore Read
Theodore Read

Born 11 April 1835
Athens Ohio
Theodore Read

Born 11 April 1835
Athens Ohio

Died 6 April 1865
Appomattox High Bridge
Prince Edward County, Virginia
My relationship to Theodore Read
My relationship to Theodore Read

[Image]

Eliot Swan → Katherine Craig
Craig Swan
My relationship to Theodore Read

Hugh Craig — Jessie McIlveen
Eliot Swan — Katherine Craig
Craig Swan
My relationship to Theodore Read

Alice Read — John Henderson Craig

Hugh Craig — Jessie McIlveen

Eliot Swan — Katherine Craig

Craig Swan
My relationship to Theodore Read

Theodore Read -> Alice Read

John Henderson Craig

Hugh Craig -> Jessie McKlveen

Eliot Swan -> Katherine Craig

Craig Swan
My relationship to Theodore Read

Daniel Read — Alice Brice

Theodore Read  Alice Read — John Henderson Craig

Hugh Craig — Jessie McLlveen

Eliot Swan — Katherine Craig

Craig Swan
Family

Heirlooms
Family

Heirlooms
Family Heirlooms
Theodore Read - Timeline
Theodore Read - Timeline

1854 Graduated Indiana University
Theodore Read  -  Timeline

1854  Graduated Indiana University
      Prosecutor, Bloomington, Indiana
Theodore Read  -  Timeline

1854  Graduated Indiana University
      Prosecutor, Bloomington, Indiana
      Department of Interior, Washington, DC
Theodore Read - Timeline

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       Prosecutor, Bloomington, Indiana
       Department of Interior, Washington, DC

1860  Attorney, Paris, Illinois
Theodore Read  -  Timeline

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      Prosecutor, Bloomington, Indiana
      Department of Interior, Washington, DC

1860  Attorney, Paris, Illinois

April 1861  Three month enlistment
           8th Illinois Infantry regiment
Theodore Read - Timeline

1854  Graduated Indiana University
      Prosecutor, Bloomington, Indiana
      Department of Interior, Washington, DC

1860  Attorney, Paris, Illinois

April 1861  Three month enlistment
           8th Illinois Infantry regiment

October 1861  Commissioned Assistant Adjutant General
              with rank of Captain
Washington
Oct 24, 1861

Sir,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your communication from the War Department, of the 24th instant, informing me of my appointment as Assistant Adjutant General of Volunteers into the service of the United States. I accept gratefully the appointment extended to me, and request return to your office my official oath properly filled up, subscribed and attested.

In obedience to the requirement of your Office I have also to state that I have been in the State of Ohio, and twenty-six years of age; my residence at that time being in Illinois. I have reported to Gen. B. F. Banks for orders.

Very Respectfully,

[Signature]

Deputy Surgeon U.S.A. Theodore Bear
Read accepts Commission, October 1861

and encloses signed Oath of Office
Read accepts Commission, October 1861

and encloses signed Oath of Office

---

Washinton

Oct. 27, 1861

Dear:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a communication from the War Department, of the 24th instant, informing me of my appointment as Assistant Adjutant General of Volunteer forces in the service of Captains of the States of the United States. I accept the appointment, and pray that I may be of service to my Country. I herewith inclose an attached letter from a friend to the effect that I may be able to use your influence to secure an appointment. I am also to state that I was born in the State of Ohio, and have resided there for a number of years prior to the late revolution. I have been appointed to join the volunteer forces for active service. Very respectfully,

[Signature]

[Name]

---

Do solemnly swear, or affirm, that I will bear true allegiance to the United States of America, and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies or opposers whatever:

[Signature]

[Name]

Sworn to and subscribed before me,

at Washington, D.C.,
this 55th day of October, 1861.
When promoted in August 1864 the Oath of Office had become a more elaborate document.
When promoted in August 1864 the Oath of Office had become a more elaborate document.
When promoted in August 1864, the Oath of Office had become a more elaborate document.
Siege of Yorktown
April 1862
Seven Days Battle
June 1862
Second Battle of Bull Run
Manassas
August 1862
Fredericksburg
December 1862
Chancellorsville
May 1863
Letter from Daniel Read

Some time in October 1802, he became a 4th Lt of the 1st Division, 6th Army Corps (Sedgwick's) the instant change of rank, and service, he shook until 23rd May 1803, in the battle of Chancellorsville (rather on the Black River, farther from Fredericksburg) he received a terrible wound from a shell, which carried away the acromion processes and detached muscle of the left shoulder, and mangled a large surface. The surgeons wrote me that not one man in fifty would have survived this wound, and that "this fierce man was not more to the fine constitution and perfect bodily habits than to the self-control and the power of his will in sustaining himself under the endurance of pain".

It was not until after the middle of June that he was able to come to the homes of his parents in the city, and it was then sooner than he should have come in the condition of his wound. In July he was obliged to submit to a painful surgical operation for the removal of detached pieces of bone. After this operation he declined taking chloroform, and, without a groan or the movement of a muscle on his part, a gash of three inches in length made out into influence and produced part of the flesh. The surgeon declared he had never seen in a long experience such power of will in resisting pain. After this operation he displayed much less pain and was done growing impatient for duty.
Letter from Daniel Read

Some time in October 1863. In the late winter at Coffee Camp, Georgia, he received Shrapnel in the right arm and small wound in the left hip, made in the battle of Missionary Ridge, in the Great North west. During this service he was exposed to terrible weather from a snow storm, while on the march, the weather being very cold, and to severe exposure of the hip and shoulder, was maiming a large surface. The surgeon wrote me that not one man in fifty would have survived this wound, and that "this type was due not to the fine one situation and perfect bodily habits than to the self-control and the power of the will in sustaining himself under the endurance of pain."

He was without a guide in the movement of a battle or the face of these men in his own line, and connected with the contumacious part of the back. Despite the rigor, he had never in a long experience lacked power of will in enduring pain. With this strength, he repaired much loss from some severe wounds received from July 1st.
The 14th of July 1802. In the 9th of October of the 1st Division of the 7th Regiment, Captain C. (name illegible) the medical surgeon, return to the Red Cross, with the orders of the 1st Division, to remove a detached piece of bone, which caused much pain and distress to the patient. The patient wrote on the 24th of August to return him, expressing the deep appreciation of the wound. In July he was obliged to submit to a painful surgical operation for the removal of detached piece of bone. For this operation he declined taking chloroform, and without a groan or the movement of a muscle in his face, as much as three inches in length was cut into inflamed and sensitive part of the flesh. Dr. Henry the surgeon, declared he had never in a long experience, seen a man of his age in so much pain, but after this operation he suffered much less pain and was able to return to duty.
Battle of the Wilderness
May 1864
Cold Harbor
June 1864
Theodore marries
Theodore marries
Mary Vincent

19 October 1864
Appottamox River

Map of the Appomattox River with markers for Appomattox and Richmond.
High Bridge over the Appomattox River

Lithograph by Edward Beyer, 1857
High Bridge over Appomattox River

Photo by T. H. O’Sullivan
Library of Congress
High Bridge
over
Appomattox River

Photo by
T. H. O’Sullivan
Library of Congress
Battle of High Bridge  

4th Massachusetts Cavalry

by Mortimer Lamb
High Bridge today
Read Family plot

Forest Hill Cemetery - Madison, Wisconsin
General Theodore Read
late
the Adjutant General of the Army of the James
fell 6th of April, 1865,
in his 29th year,
near the Appomattox Bridge, where, with less than three regiments, he
met and held in check Lee's Army, attempting a retreat
through that pass; and by the Spartan-like sacrifice
of himself and heroic band, contributed
essentially to the surrender
which followed.

He enlisted a private, was soon
Asst. Adjutant General, serving as such
of a Brigade, of a Division, of the 10th, 18th, and 24th
corps, and at his death, of the Army of the James; participating
in the various campaigns and battles of the Potomac, being three times
wounded. He was a lawyer, and eloquent as a speaker and writer.
Early professing his Christian faith, he illustrated in
his brief life the noblest virtues of man, and
died a Patriot-Hero.
References

Family Heirlooms
Commission, uniform buttons, Grants Memoirs

Web Resources
Fold3 - military documents, images and other materials available through many local libraries or private subscription
Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, William Hinton, 1871
Theodore Read, Memorial by Col J. W. Foster, Bloomington Republic, May 27, 1865
Battle of High Bridge, Wikipedia
Report of the Proceedings of The First Triennial Reunion of the Army of the James, 1868
Indiana University: Its History from 1820, when Founded, to 1890, by Theophilus A. Wylie, 1890 ,pp 208-209

Inter-Library Loan
General Theodore Read, undated manuscript by J.G. Salsman