

West Virginia Department of Public Safety Pay and Muster Roll Database

Summary

The database consists of original, signed pay and muster roll vouchers for West Virginia Department of Public Safety (now State Police) field units from September 1919 through December 1924. Enlisted personnel were formed into lettered companies early in 1920. The two companies authorized by the Creative Act of 1919 were expanded to four by 1921 legislative amendments.

Note: Vouchers are missing for Company D for November-December 1922.

Provenance

The set was part of a box of materials about to be disposed of during the cleanup of the old West Virginia Medical Examiner's Office (now WVSP Information Services) at 701 Jefferson Road, South Charleston. No one has yet located the files for July-August 1919, if indeed they still exist.

The box was fortuitously saved circa April 2011, was stored at the Academy Archives in Institute, and was transferred to the West Virginia State Archives in November 2015.

Description

The database consists of scanned (jpeg) images of separate 9½" X 4" voucher envelopes bearing voucher number, date, treasury check number and payment totals, along with the title Department of Public Safety, and spaces for enter payee name and purposes. Twenty-two payment categories (i.e., salaries, uniforms, laundry, horses, medical, motor cars, etc.), and blanks for other purposes, are listed down the length of the envelope.

Within each envelope is a 12-page document designated Muster and Pay Roll. The document measures 11"x 8½," and is designed to fold into three panels for storage in the voucher envelope.

- a. The cover page contains completion and filing instructions, along with blanks for entering voucher number, total payment, unit (company) designation, periods covered, and date of payment.
- b. The second page is headed "Form No. 10-D.P.S, Muster and Pay Roll, Department of Public Safety, West Virginia," with lines for entering captain's name, company designation, station, and inclusive dates. It includes what might be termed the company "command group," with entries for officer and noncommissioned officer personnel. The page is ruled into four columns headed No. of each grade, Names (Present and Absent),

Rank, Date of Continuous Service Enlistment, and various other detailed entries. The Rank column parallels the rank structure specified in § 5 of the Creative Act and its amendment, with preprinted headings for a captain, a lieutenant, a first sergeant and up to four sergeants—but with headings for 8 rather than the statutory 4 corporals.

- c. Page 3 consists of ruled columns for pay, deductions, net pay, receipt signature, and Remarks. The latter was used to record a variety of actions such as basis for payment, fines, discharge date and reassignments.
- d. Pages 4-9 carry similar column headings with a single printed Private heading followed by ditto marks (“), with 70 printed entries. The maximum number of Privates allowed per company by statute was 55 (Creative Act, § 5 and 1921 amendment).
- e. Pages 10-11 are headed Changes Since Last Pay Roll, and are ruled into columns for names, cause, enlistment and expiration of enlistment/discharge dates, and remarks.
Note: These pages were not filled in consistently. New recruit, discharge, reenlistment and other personnel actions one would expect to see here were often recorded on the above-mentioned pages across from individual names. Most often these pages were blank, but I scanned page 10 of *every* payroll document to ensure no action was overlooked. This was the *only* blank page that I routinely scanned.
- f. Page 12 contains certification, approval, signature and date blocks for the company commander and superintendent.

Creation

At the request of First Sergeant Jay C. Powers I scanned each of these documents into image (jpeg) format and returned the original documents to him. The resulting database consists of nearly 270 folders containing over 2,035 files, and totalling nearly 9 GB. There are two significant limitations: data are is not broken down to sub-patrol (currently called “detachment”) level, and there are no data on headquarters staffing.

Technical Notes

- a. Image numbers were automatically assigned by the scanner I used, an Epson Perfection V33.
- b. In those when I had to rescan an image, the sequence number was sometimes broken or I assigned a number or numbers to avoid confusion. Therefore, lack of perfect sequence numeration does not indicate a problem.

Scanned and compiled by: Merle T. Cole, 27 August 2015