

Locating Tinmouth's Civil War Sites

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Five years ago I started a modest project to determine whom from the little town of Tinmouth, Vermont served in the Union Army. Tinmouth is a hill town about fifteen miles southwest of Rutland, off all beaten tracks then and now. Its population in 1860 was 627, not too different from the 2010 population of 630. Yes, all one has to do is pull up the splendid Internet site, vermontcivilwar.org, click a few times, and Tinmouth's entries in the 1892 Revised Roster will be set out for you.¹ 53 men². The only trouble is that while the roster misleadingly gives each soldier's "place of residence", what it actually records is place of enlistment. Men could enlist anywhere, from the nearest town clerk's office to a recruiting office in San Francisco. My goal was to learn which of the town great-great-great grandfathers went off to war, not just who from wherever accepted the town's generous bounty to sign up here. And who from Tinmouth chose to sign up elsewhere? So more research was called for. A lot more, it turned out.

Two additional goals developed along the way. One was to learn who came home to stay, and what happened to those who did not. A second was the project by the Vermont Humanities Council and Howard Coffin to identify Civil War sites in Vermont. The definition of "Civil War site" is expanded far beyond battles, camps, supply depots, and other directly military activities, and also beyond formal monuments. It encompasses places where the state and people in every town supported the soldiers and the war effort. It further includes places connected with individual soldiers.

Obviously, there were no battles in Tinmouth; less obviously there were no war-supporting industries, no drill grounds, and no railroad stations the boys left from. Even our 1836 church, which served as both religious and civic meeting house and also as town office, burned down in 1968. So our sites would primarily be those connected with the soldiers themselves: among others, their homes, places of business, the schools they attended as boys, and their burial grounds. The identification of Tinmouth's Civil War sites, therefore, began with determining who served as a soldier.

This paper will explain how I pursued all those goals, in hopes that it will help researchers in other towns do the job in a lot less time than it took me.

¹ Revised Roster, prepared and published by Theodore Peck, Adjutant General of Vermont, in 1892. It is the official Vermont record showing who served in the 18 Vermont regiments and 3 artillery batteries. It also contains lists of men who served in other states, though only a few of them, black soldiers from Vermont, and even the six known Confederates from Vermont, along with details of casualties, discharges, and burial sites. It has been republished by the most recent Adjutant General, but is no longer available.

² There are 54 on the list, but one enlisted in the Spring of 1865 and was never assigned to a regiment or mustered in.

The first step was to locate the Tinmouth men who enlisted in Vermont regiments. Important definition: by "Tinmouth men" I mean men who grew up in Tinmouth, were living in Tinmouth when they enlisted, or came to Tinmouth after the war. This encompasses men who served in other states' regiments, or the Regular Army or the Navy. I used the Internet and a laptop computer for most of the work, both research and recording. The key web sites were vermontcivilwar.org, which has a searchable version of the 1892 Revised Roster, and the U.S. census (searchable for most years) as found on Heritagequestonline.com. The Civil War site is open to all. I used my Rutland Free Library card to access [heritagequest](http://heritagequest.com). The Vermont Historical Society once offered access to it, but does no longer. The census is also found on other sites, such as Ancestry.com, but so far as I know they all require payment. However, this is a description of the procedure I followed, not the many possible alternatives. I hope others will be able to improve on it.

The first thing I did was to prepare a table of soldiers, using the "town" list in the Revised Roster. It lists all the men who enlisted in Tinmouth, dates of enlistment, mustering in, and discharge, regiment and company served in, ranks and promotions, and casualties resignation (officers) for ill health and discharge (enlisted men and some officers) for disability. I used Microsoft Word, not because I like it - I prefer Word Perfect - but because the world is tied to it. Using Word's table feature allows the data to be sorted in different ways. An alphabetical table of soldiers is the easiest to work with, for example, but a table of soldiers by regiment, or by town of enlistment, or place of residence in the town are all useful. These can all be produced by sorting the following five columns, making fairly simple changes in some cases. For example a table by regiment is easy - sort on column two. Soldiers listings don't have to be entered in alphabetical order - just sort alphabetically on column 1 occasionally.

Soldier's Name	Military Record	Casualty?	Where from?	Comments
Last name, rank, first name, roster age. Rank is highest achieved in service. Roster age is age at mustering in.	Regiment/Compny Dates enlisted, mustered in, and mustered out. Dates of promotions (all this is in the Revised Roster entry).	Describe the occurrence, including death, wounds, capture, parole, and desertion, with dates. (Also in the Revised Roster) Include resignations and discharges for health, disability, or wounds.	Town. If from Tinmouth, describe where (house owner and location in the 19th Century; current address if available.).	Data such as parents, if known, date of birth and death, where buried, unusual facts ("invented emery wheel", for Capt Gilbert Hart, 2 USSS/H.) Cemetery lists for each regiment are in the vermontcivilwar.org web site

Entering data in this table regularly as you find it precludes the ordeal of riffling through pages of written notes, only to find you didn't write down something you were sure you'd remember - and didn't. I printed out the Revised Roster for Tinmouth, to avoid jumping back and forth between computer files in preparing this first cut at the table. In connection with a broader project, still incomplete, relating Tinmouth enlistments to events in the town, state, and nationally, I originally entered the men in order of

enlistment. Ironically, the first man to enlist was not in the Tinmouth census. I later worked out that he was from Manchester! He might well have been a hired man on a Tinmouth farm when he enlisted in May, 1861, but was not on June 1, 1860.

Then I went to the 1860 census on Heritagequestonline.com, and searched each name on the Tinmouth roster for a Tinmouth residence. After entering the soldier's name, the first display shows the number of people by that name in each county. Naturally I started with Rutland County. The next display gives name, age, birthplace by state, and town in Rutland County. Here comes a major mystery. Only some of the names in the census are searchable on Heritage. The head of the household's name is in full, but everyone else in the household of the same name gets ditto marks for a last name. The computer program doesn't read names with ditto marks for a last name. When the desired name didn't turn up, I tried searching on older people in Tinmouth - 40's and older, male or female, with the same last name. Soldiers were mostly young men, especially in 1861-62. Often they lived at home and helped work the farm. They would be listed with ditto marks, as part of the family. Hired men living with their employer, as a great many of them were, had their names listed in full.

Another problem was the "John Smith" problem: common names. This was more of a problem later, in searching for names in other towns, and a huge one in searching the entire roster. There are 42 John Smith's in the roster and 73 in the 1863 Vermont census (none, as it happens, in Tinmouth). The problem won't go away, but matching ages was often helpful. Neither census ages nor roster ages are gospel, though, as I found that a match within 2 years or so was usually close enough - especially when I remembered to add the appropriate number of years between the census and enlistment. A 14 year old in 1860 is 18, and of military age, sometime in 1864. In 1861 and 1862, much younger men managed to enlist. A 14 year old enlisted in the 9th Vermont from Tinmouth - and died in parole camp in Chicago only five weeks after mustering in.

For maximum effect I used the Beers Rutland County Atlas map of Tinmouth (1869) and the Tinmouth section of Scott's 1854 map of Rutland County in connection with my census search. Both of these are available at libraries, and can be purchased on CD-ROM³. They show houses by owner, though they don't show the names of tenant farmers. Beers shows the rented house, but lists its owner by his initials. In the next phase - finding sites - the maps are essential. The census by itself will tell very little about where in the town people lived.

Now I had a pretty good list of Tinmouth men who enlisted in Tinmouth. I had picked up some good data showing who some of the non-Tinmouth men were in the process of searching, too. I entered the non-Tinmouth men's data tentatively in the list, but I put off a serious "outsider" effort until later. My next step was to find out who from Tinmouth enlisted elsewhere. I used two techniques to find men who enlisted elsewhere. First, I "browsed" through Tinmouth, that is, I read the census taker's sheets in order. I "followed" him with the 1869 Beers Atlas map of Tinmouth. I made a list of all

³ Old Maps, P.O. Box 54, West Chesterfield, NH 03466

the men 16-44 in 1860. They were the most likely to enlist from 1861 to 1864. While military age was 18-45, not a lot of men over 40 enlisted. If they were drafted, but paid "commutation" (\$300 to get out of serving) the roster would usually list them. I ran this list against the roster, and was able to confirm that eight had enlisted in nearby towns. It was easy to decide that Phineas Paul, who enlisted in Wells, five miles from his farm, was from Tinmouth. There was no other Phineas Paul in the entire U.S. census - or in the Union Army, for that matter. But a number of 22 year old farm laborers who seemed like prime candidates for the Army stubbornly resisted turning up on the Roster.

I checked the town rosters of all the adjacent towns for similar family names. Since units, particularly infantry companies, were somewhat local, I also read the rosters of two companies partly raised by Tinmouth officers in Tinmouth and nearby towns, again seeking familiar names. A man who grew up in Tinmouth might enlist in the town where he was working, but join a unit with his life-long friends. These two actions took a lot of time searching, but yielded very little. There were too many men with the same name and similar age to be sure.

I also ran the less common names on the National Park Service Soldiers and Sailors database (nps.gov; look for soldiers and sailors system) to see if any turned up in other states. The information on that site is sparse, giving only name and regiment. However, many other states have searchable rosters that give a lot more information. Regrettably, New York isn't one of them. I am sure that there were Tinmouth men who enlisted in Hampton, Granville, or Whitehall, N.Y, all of which are within a few miles of Tinmouth. Once I found a likely candidate on the NPS system, and found from the state system where the man enlisted from, I checked the census. I looked for the telltale "VT" birthplace, a matching age, children with the same names as possible Vermont grandparents, and any other clue I could come up with.

Then I went at it in the other direction. I searched the census for the names of the 18 soldiers on the Tinmouth roster whom I hadn't found in Tinmouth. This search wasn't limited to Rutland County, or even Vermont. It was somewhat fruitful, in that I fairly accurately identified 8, and five more with less confidence. One turned up in a Rutland boarding house. I spent considerable time probing the census trying to find likely matches for the remaining ones. I also did a lot of back and forth with the Roster. As with any census search, it was a matter of looking for clues to verify that I had the right John Smith. The cemetery list in the Revised Roster, set out by regiment on the vermontcivilwar.org web site, was often useful in pointing the way to the soldier's residence when he enlisted. That's how I found the Manchester man who was the first to enlist in Tinmouth. He died within a few months after mustering in, and was buried in Manchester. I looked in the census and there he was, living with his parents, his last name in ditto marks, in Manchester in 1860.

The census seemed to miss a lot of people (see below) so sometimes I'd have to hazard a guess that when a man from Tinmouth had the same unusual last name as a man who enlisted from a nearby town that the "Tinmouth" man was originally from that town. There are not a lot of Van Guilders in this area, for example, so I felt reasonably

confident in determining that Frederick Van Guilder, who enlisted in Tinmouth late in the war, was related to another Van Guilder who enlisted from Danby, the next town. So I put him down as being from Danby, though he enlisted in Tinmouth.

At about this time I did something I should have done earlier: I "browsed" the 1850 Tinmouth census. It isn't searchable by name, but you can read the census taker's forms.⁴ I found some boys of 1850 who might have been soldiers in 1863 - and, indeed, some turned up after repeating the steps I had previously taken. I also looked at school rosters, which are well preserved in Tinmouth. It was sad to read the elegant script of the 18-year old school mistress, listing all the scholars who attended her school that term. Inevitably I'd find little boys whom I knew would die of wounds and disease in the Army, or spend a lifetime in poor health after the War ended. But it did help tease out a few more names.

I also looked at the genealogies our local historical society journal, the *Tinmouth Channel*, has published over the years. There proved a useful source of information about men who served from other states - Michigan, Iowa, New York, and Kansas, since genealogies usually mentioned a man's wartime service.

As I was driving by the Tinmouth cemetery, I was reminded to check the list of Civil War veterans buried there. Five of them had moved to town after their Army service was over, and I had overlooked two of them. The war was the biggest event in the lives of many of its survivors, and they were proud of their part in it and of the unit they served in. Typically their gravestones would say something like "Co. B, 9th Vt Vol. Inf". The cemetery list led me to a man whose blacksmith father died in 1856. His mother, who became a servant in the house of a more prosperous family, apparently farmed him out to his uncle in Gill, MA. I found him in the 1860 census working two farms down from his uncle. He served in the 27th Mass as a musician and in the 38th United States Colored Troops as a supply sergeant. (He is not shown in the census as colored, however.) After the war he came home to die. According to his gravestone, he died January 7, 1866, aged 26.

In the spring of 2007 our grade school did a Living History project, re-enacting Tinmouth Old Home Day of 1905. Although the town had dwindled to 404 people by 1905, it was prosperous and active. It was so proud of its Old Home Day that it had the speeches printed in a little booklet. The speakers included the governor and the Congressman, and a Rutland lawyer of Tinmouth descent who spoke about the town's history. In it he listed 33 Tinmouth men who had come home from the war "broken in health". Two of the names were completely unfamiliar! I ran down one with fair confidence, but the other name simply isn't listed on either the Vermont or the NPS roster. There were two of that name in the 1860 census, both unmarried and 21 - prime military age. They were also found in several later censuses. Both lived not far away in New York State. I don't doubt that a Duane Hall served somewhere, and impaired his health, but who was he?

⁴ I'd like to have done 1840, but Tinmouth wasn't included in Heritagequest's searchable towns for 1840.

One more step, and a very prosperous one, is still incomplete. The pension files in the National Archives in Washington, DC, or a gold mine of information about soldiers. By 1915 a large percentage of the men had at least applied for a pension, and the records still exist. Pensions were granted for varying reasons over the years. If a man went home with only one leg he got his \$8 a month promptly (much more for officers). After the war he might have to show he was unable to perform manual labor, that his disability was the result of wartime service and not acquired subsequently, or that he was destitute. Only in 1908 did the Pension Bureau stop requiring former officers, now lawyers or storekeepers, to show that they could not perform manual labor. If over 65 a pension was awarded. Many well-off former officers received pensions in this fashion. In the pension file are details of the man's service, his life after the war, source of his disability, and so on. Starting in the 1890's he had to provide a timeline of his life. It showed me that a couple of men whom I had listed as "out of town" had actually been working on Tinmouth farms when they enlisted.

Now I had a pretty good list of Tinmouth men, and a list of 18 others of whom some had been identified. Some, especially after 1863, can't be identified at all. There is at least one man who I thought was a fraud. He deserted in New York City seven days after his regiment was mustered in.⁵ There may be others, but young men moved around a lot, even then. If they lived in a city boarding house they were easy for the census to miss. One thing I learned about the census, especially in trying to track soldiers after the war: it missed a lot of people in the 19th century! One decade there might be 20 William Donaldson's in the entire United States, of all ages from 3 to 99. The next census would have none! Yet the one after that would have a dozen. This search process will never yield perfection. There will always remain men who enlisted in Tinmouth that can't be tied to any address, and Tinmouth men who served elsewhere that will never appear on the screen.

Tracking down the post-war homes of Tinmouth soldiers was only marginally productive. Of the 77-81 Tinmouth men who served, over fifty of whom lived in Tinmouth or nearby when they enlisted, only 14 are found in the 1870 Tinmouth census. Only eight are buried here, plus five who came after the war. I found some of the others with fair confidence, but this part of the study has to be labeled "incomplete".

I learned a few things about Vermont soldiers from this project. First, in a rural town like Tinmouth they were mostly "farm laborers", either working at home or "working out" as hired men. To my surprise, the sons of prosperous families often turned up living and working on other men's farms. Of the men who were living in Tinmouth, 26 were

⁵ He turned out to be a Tinmouth farmhand, all right, but he enlisted under a false name (William Grace). After deserting in Brooklyn he enlisted in the Navy for a year as William Gray, re-enlisting a year later. He missed his ship after ten months and decided that it wasn't worth his while to finish up his Navy career. He enlisted in a New York infantry regiment as John Riley, probably receiving a substantial bonus. After the war he received a pension as Riley, and even lived for some years in a veteran's home. Only in 1917 was he unmasked, when the Middletown Springs Postmaster became suspicious that "William Grace" was asking for "John Riley's" pension check. Benjamin Hall was thus un-masked, and lost his pension. But a New York Congressman succeeded in getting him one by private bill, to relieve Washington County, New York, from supporting the now-destitute man.

hired men; 14 were working on a family farm, two were running a farm for an aging relative, and 7 who can't be tied to a specific house or farm were probably farm laborers also. Most were in their early twenties, though even in little Tinmouth the age range of voluntary enlistments was 14-45. Most were not married - only five were in 1860, though probably others married before and after enlisting. None owned farms, and only three appear to have been tenant farmers. The farm owners didn't enlist, and the three who were drafted paid \$300 commutation. One cheese factory owner even paid commutation for his hired man. The three married tenant farmers who enlisted may have been attracted by the bonuses, which would put them some way towards buying a farm after the war. Our 45-year old, a farm laborer with five children, became a storekeeper in Tinmouth right after the war. Two of his grown sons also served in the Union Army, one in his company of the 10th Vermont. As for the rest of them: one was a physician, though it's not clear where he practiced; two were college students; and seven can't be located exactly. The physician may have learned his trade in the Army, as a hospital steward an assistant surgeon, but he served as Surgeon of the 6th Vermont and was a physician in Minneapolis in 1910.

Identifying Civil War Sites in Tinmouth

Now to Phase Two: identifying our Civil War sites. Again I made a table, but I started this one by transferring the data in my fourth column, which gave some information about the man's pre-war address, into the first column. Then I numbered them in the order that a visitor entering town from the East (Route 7 in Wallingford, 3 miles from the Tinmouth town line) would encounter them.

Site	Location	Soldier ⁶	Comments
3. Judah Rounds house (1869)	North East Road. Cellar hole; now cellar hole (probably field entrance with old sheds, but behind the shed) near Game Preserve clubhouse.	Cpl Henry Mattocks, 1 USSS/F; KIA Spottsylvania	buried in Cuttingsville
5. J.W. Noble house(1869),	North East Road, first on right north of 140.	George Phillips, 7/I	Brother of Ephraim and Dr. Edwin Phillips

⁶ The third column contains most of the data from the third and fourth columns of the previous table. The fourth is similar to the previous fifth column.

In identifying sites I used the 1869 Beers map, and identified each house by its 1869 owner or, where possible, renter. The Beers map is fairly complete, reasonably accurate, and fairly clear - in short, it's the best we have. The second column gives the location in modern terms, including the current official road name. (A later iteration will have the mail box address, if any.) Forty three of the sites are farmhouses where soldiers worked, either before or after the war. I spent a lot of time going back and forth with the 1870 and 1860 censuses and the map to try to determine where each farm was. By 1869 a handful of rich men had each bought up several farms formerly worked by owners. The Beers map shows the farm house location, but only gives the owner's initials. Determining who worked those farms is hard, and perhaps some of my results are inexact. Some of the new plutocrats worked their multiple farms with their own employees, but I think most of those farms were leased. I ended up with seven Tinmouth men for whom I could not identify a related site.⁷ Some farms (J.W. Noble, above, for instance) were related to as many as three soldiers. I treated both soldier's family home farms and their places of work as related Civil War sites.

This gave me forty-two sites. **Twenty six of them are still standing!** One is falling down, though. The rest are mostly identifiable cellar holes, or at least there's a clump of trees and brush in the apparent location. We have photos of some of those houses before they burned or were torn down.

I included nine sites that related to the soldiers as members of the community. **Seven of the nine are still standing in one form or another.** These included the postmaster's house, which was also the post office and a store in 1860; the store that now serves as town office⁸, the parsonage, and the cemetery with its 13 Civil War veteran's grave stones (plus two who paid commutation). Three school buildings from 1860 still exist, though only one is on its original site. Two more school sites where the buildings have disappeared are included in our total. All of them educated boys who became soldiers.

We have a total of 53 sites, then, and 33 are there to be seen today.

In Tinmouth the bulk of the effort went into an exhaustive study of "who served." The sites came after that, though in 2007 it was not always easy to identify the place where a man lived or worked before he became a soldier. Larger communities may find this much effort impossible. At the same time, they may have better sources, such as a local newspaper, to help them find home front sites in addition to sites connected only to a soldier or two. In a larger town even a sampling of the soldiers in the town roster may still yield a plethora of sites. But it is very satisfying to be able to say, "I found as many as I could."

⁷ Three came from the 1863 Militia Roll, and so were presumably living in town when they enlisted, but I can't tell where. .

⁸ The front section of the store, which is the town clerk's office, was built soon after the war. The rear section, now the town library, was a store at the time of the Civil War, It may have been built as the town meeting house in 1791.