

## Information Sheet

**R**      **Carnahan, Robert Huston.**  
**627**      **Letter, 1861.**  
            **One item.**

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This is a letter from an officer in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Illinois Cavalry at Rolla in Phelps County, Missouri, 3 December 1861. Carnahan commented on winter quarters and camp life.

Robert Huston Carnahan, a native of Pennsylvania, enlisted in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Illinois Cavalry on 24 August 1861 and was commissioned captain of Company K. The regiment organized at Camp Butler, Illinois, and was mustered in on 27 August 1861. Its first service came in the fall of 1861, during Frémont's campaign to capture Springfield, Missouri, after which it moved to Rolla. In December 1861, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Illinois Cavalry became part of General Samuel R. Curtis's Army of Southwest Missouri.

Carnahan wrote to his daughter, Clara, from the regiment's camp near Rolla. He commented on riding sixty miles in a day's scout, and speculated on the possibility of going into winter quarters. He also wrote of rations, his black servant, and camping arrangements.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Illinois did not enjoy the comforts of winter quarters. The regiment was part of the cavalry expedition which began the Pea Ridge campaign, and participated in several skirmishes and engagements culminating in the Battle of Pea Ridge in March 1862. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Illinois Cavalry remained with General Curtis until the army reached Helena, Arkansas, in the summer of 1862. Once away from the Department of the Missouri, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Illinois Cavalry served in Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee. Carnahan remained with the regiment during its entire length of service. He was commissioned lieutenant colonel and colonel in 1864 and 1865. The regiment spent the summer of 1865 operating against the Sioux in Minnesota and the Dakotas, then was mustered out in October. Carnahan was brevetted brigadier general upon his muster out in October 1865.

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*23 January 1998*

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## Index Cards

Carnahan, Robert Huston.  
Illinois Cavalry—3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment. **SEE** United States. Army. Illinois Cavalry Regiment, 3<sup>rd</sup>.  
Missouri—History—Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Rolla (Mo.)—History—Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Phelps County (Mo.)—History—Civil War, 1861-1865.  
United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865.  
United States. Army. Illinois Cavalry Regiment, 3<sup>rd</sup>.