

"With Malice Toward None; with Charity Toward All"

Civil War Pensions for Native and Foreign-Born Union Army Veterans

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I. Introduction

"With malice toward none; with charity toward all; . . . let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle"

— Abraham Lincoln, *Second Inaugural Address* (March 4, 1865)

In a series of empirical studies, the authors have examined the lives of Union Army (UA) Civil War veterans. Their primary focus has been on the nature of UA veterans' impairments and how the Civil War pension system compensated their disabilities. The research also explores how public acceptance—"malice toward none"—and inclusion into society of disabled UA veterans—"charity toward all"—in late nineteenth century American society were driven as much by political, economic, social, and attitudinal factors regarding conceptions of disability as by the pension laws themselves.

The Civil War forever changed public and medical conceptions of the then-new class of disabled citizens in American society. Yet attitudes toward the pension worthiness and deservedness of UA veterans with disabilities were largely shaped by factors external to disability. Prior studies have documented how views about veterans' disabilities, and hence UA pension compensation, were shaped by partisan forces, the emerging administrative and bureaucratic state, attorney advocacy and lobbying, veterans' social class and occupation, and economic factors in late nineteenth century America.

Among the ranks of returning UA soldiers were large numbers of foreign-born veterans. At the start of the Civil War, almost 15% of U.S. residents were foreign-born, with the majority migrating to Northern states where the demand for manual labor was strong. In contrast to this sizable proportion, relatively fewer foreign-born veterans were on the pension rolls—even at the height of the Civil War pension system in the late 1800s and early 1900s, when upwards of 90% of UA veterans received pensions.

As progressive-era statistician Isaac Rubinow wrote: *"The most singular feature of the [Civil War] American pension system is that it primarily rebounds to the advantage of a class least in need of old-age pensions."* That beneficial class was primarily white, native UA veterans residing in rural Republican strongholds.

This article continues the broader examination of the lives of disabled UA veterans, with particular focus on the crucial yet often overlooked group of foreign-born UA veterans and their experiences with the federal pension scheme. The authors investigate the social and cultural forces that influenced the quest for and access to Civil War pensions and which thereby dramatically changed forever conceptions of disability in American society.

The article is organized as follows: Part II overviews the operation of the Civil War pension scheme from 1862 to 1907 and highlights the role immigrants played in the UA. Part III presents empirical findings describing the characteristics of the sample of UA veterans and the degree to which pension outcomes were influenced by claimants' ethnicity and other factors independent of disability. Part IV concludes with implications for comparative and contemporary attitudes and behavior toward disabled persons.

II. Evolution of the Civil War Pension System

A. Pension Scheme

During the 48 months of the Civil War, there were roughly 860,000 casualties incurred by the nearly 2.5 million members of the UA. Of these casualties, Civil War-era statistician Gould estimated that nearly 400,000 occurred before July 1863 (the month of the Battle of Gettysburg). The need to maintain an army and national support for the war led to Congress's passage of the Civil War pension system in 1861, shortly after commencement of the war. The 1861 Act provided pensions for UA veterans' war-related injuries, as well as for widows and minor children of slain soldiers.

There are two primary periods in the evolution of the Civil War pension system:

- Period 1 (1862–1890): "Disability Pension System" — awards based on war-related injuries and impairments.
- Period 2 (1890–1907): "Service-Based Pension System" — awards linked to length of military service and later to age.

The General Law System (1862)

In 1862, Congress passed the "General Law System," which established the Pension Bureau. The General Law prescribed that the Bureau award pensions to UA veterans with war-related disabilities through a medical screening system for rating and compensating disabilities. Claimants were rated with respect to their "total disability for the performance of manual labor requiring severe and continuous exertion." The definition was later interpreted to include other types of labor requiring "education or skill."

The Pension Bureau retained local physicians to screen and rate claimants' disabilities and to complete standard "surgeon's certificates." Medical screen ratings were categorized for different diseases and disabilities, including those resulting from battle wounds, infectious diseases, and nervous system disorders.

Under the General Law, an army private in 1862 received a maximum of \$8 per month for being rated "totally disabled." Specific disability ratings were prescribed—for example, a war-related lost finger or small toe was compensated at 2/8 total disability (\$2/month); a lost eye, thumb, or single hernia at 4/8 (\$4/month). Pension ratings greater than 100% total disability, though uncommon, could be awarded in circumstances requiring attendant care services for severely disabled veterans.

Modifications and the Consolidation Act

Congress supplemented the General Law in 1864 and 1866 to allow for increased pension benefits for total disability and added conditions not covered by the 1862 Act. By 1866, conditions and diseases such as malaria, measles, and sunstroke were compensated based on their "equivalence in disability" to physical war-related wounds. Veterans who lost both feet received \$20 monthly pensions; those who lost both hands or eyes received \$25.

By the early 1870s, a complex pension rating system had evolved. In fiscal year 1870, the government spent \$29 million on pensions. In response, Congress passed the

"Consolidation Act" in 1873, which assigned grades of severity to the rating of impairments in awarding pensions.

The 1879 Arrears Act

The 1879 Arrears Act provided that veterans could receive lump sum pension back payments that should have been granted as a result of their military service during the Civil War. The Act dramatically increased the number of veterans applying for and receiving disability pensions, and galvanized interests of the political constituency of disabled UA veterans, whose advocacy was increasingly important to both major political parties.

The Disability Pension Act of 1890

The second period of the Civil War pension scheme began in 1890 when Congress passed the Disability Pension Act. Unlike the "invalid" scheme under the General Law, the 1890 Act was a service-based pension system, compensating veterans on the basis of their length of military service. It expanded pension eligibility to include physical and mental disabilities not related to wartime experience, as long as the disability was not the product of "vicious habits or gross carelessness."

UA pensioners and federal expenditures swelled after 1890; the amount the government spent on pensions in 1890 alone was \$106 million. The 1890 Disability Pension Act was, up to that time, described as the most costly and liberal pension measure "ever passed by any legislative body in the world."

Later Pension Laws (1904–1920)

In 1904, Executive Order No. 78 provided that old age itself was a "disability" covered by the 1890 Act, regardless of the claimant's income level or health condition, provided the claimant showed ninety days of service with an honorable discharge.

In 1907, the 1890 Act was replaced by the Service and Age Pension system, which granted pensions based solely on a veteran's age and length of military service. Veterans over the age of 62 were to receive pensions, with graduated increases in payments with age. By 1907, the 1890 Act had cost taxpayers over \$1 billion. Between 1870 and 1910, the proportion of veterans receiving pensions rose from 5% to 93%. Congress passed subsequent legislation in 1908, 1912, 1917, 1918, and 1920, further increasing pension rates.

B. Foreign-Born and Native UA Veterans: Descriptive Findings

The data used in this study were derived from Civil War records stored at the U.S. National Archives. A random sample of white male recruits with enlistment papers (henceforth "M-5") was drawn, representing 331 companies mustered into the UA during the Civil War. Records were obtained for 8,054 UA recruits from the pension records, providing information such as name, birthplace, age at enlistment, occupation at enlistment, application date, state of residence at time of application, primary disability claimed, and attorney usage information. Approximately two-thirds of recruits were linked to the Pension Bureau data set.

Note: The sample was restricted to white volunteer infantry regiments; officers, Black recruits, and other branches of the military were not sampled. Research by Fogel indicates that the sample is representative of the contemporary white male population who served in the UA.

1. Birthplace

Figure 1A below lists the birthplace of 34,216 recruits (excluding 1,351 with unknown nativity). More than one-quarter—9,115 recruits—were foreign-born. Foreign-born UA recruits came from countries throughout Western and Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, and the Caribbean.

Figure 1A: Birthplace of Foreign-Born Recruits (Major Groups)

Country of Birth	Recruits	% of Foreign-Born
Ireland	3,080	33.8%
Germany	2,258	24.8%
Canada (General)	1,052	11.5%
England	1,031	11.3%
Scotland	298	3.3%
France	234	2.6%
Prussia	226	2.5%
Switzerland	162	1.8%
Norway	136	1.5%
Sweden	98	1.1%
Other countries	(many)	<1% each
TOTAL FOREIGN-BORN	9,114	100.0%

Figure 1A (continued): U.S. State of Birth for Native-Born Recruits (Major States)

U.S. State	Recruits	% of Natives
Ohio	5,701	22.7%
New York	5,261	21.0%
Pennsylvania	4,016	16.0%
Indiana	1,520	6.1%
Illinois	1,301	5.2%
Kentucky	913	3.6%
Vermont	628	2.5%
Massachusetts	614	2.4%
New Jersey	555	2.2%
Virginia	529	2.1%
Other states	(many)	<2% each

U.S. State	Recruits	% of Natives
TOTAL NATIVE-BORN	25,101	100.0%

Almost three-quarters (73%, or 25,101 recruits) were native to the United States. The majority of native recruits sampled were born in politically important states such as Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania.

Figure 1B (not reproduced here; available in the original source) illustrates the acceleration in immigration rates in the sample between the years 1845 and 1861. Over half of the more than four million immigrants in the United States in 1860 immigrated between 1850–1860, mostly to the Northern states.

The Irish were the largest immigrant group in the UA sample, comprising approximately 34% of foreign recruits. The next largest group was German-born. Including those from the various German states, such as Prussia and Bavaria, they accounted for more than one-quarter of enlisted foreign-born recruits. Canada, England, and Scotland contributed approximately 26% of the recruits sampled.

Foreign-born UA soldiers tended to be younger than native recruits because relatively younger individuals tended to migrate to the United States. The first million UA volunteers were primarily born in the United States, enlisting "under the immediate stimulus of the first patriotic emotions." As the war progressed, a relatively higher proportion of the UA was foreign-born.

2. Residence at Enlistment

In 1860, more than nine out of ten (94%) of the more than four million foreign-born immigrants lived in states adhering to the Union. The Irish and German comprised the largest immigrant groups, settling in states such as New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois. Irish immigrants tended to settle in industrial centers working manual labor jobs for low wages; Germans tended to settle in agricultural communities.

UA recruiting tactics were largely the same for native and foreign-born citizens. However, many foreign-born men preferred to join UA regiments comprised of and led by men from their native country—a practice that contributed to the growth of the party patronage system within the UA military and later with the Pension Bureau.

Figure 2A: Enlistment States for Foreign Recruits

Enlistment State	Enlisted Foreign Men	% of Total Foreign Enlisted
New York	2,758	44.9%
Illinois	689	11.2%
Ohio	615	10.0%
Pennsylvania	415	6.8%
Michigan	326	5.3%
Connecticut	147	2.4%
Missouri	147	2.4%

Enlistment State	Enlisted Foreign Men	% of Total Foreign Enlisted
New Hampshire	138	2.2%
Massachusetts	133	2.2%
Kentucky	115	1.9%
Maryland	115	1.9%
Iowa	109	1.8%
Other states	(16)	<2% each
TOTAL	6,146	100.0%

Figure 2B: Enlistment Region for Foreign Recruits by Country of Birth

Birth Country	Northeast	Midwest	South	State Missing	Country Total
Ireland	1,559	429	190	12	2,190
Germany	741	686	92	6	1,525
Other Non-U.S.	544	429	41	2	1,016
Canada	499	239	37	2	777
Britain	366	232	62	2	662
Region Total	3,709	2,015	422	24	6,170

Almost half of foreign-born recruits sampled lived in New York (45%), with the majority likely to have enlisted in New York City. Other popular states were Illinois (11.2%, mostly from Chicago), Ohio (10%, mostly from Cincinnati), and Pennsylvania (6.8%, mostly from Philadelphia). Almost three-quarters of the Irish who enlisted resided in the Northeast, while German enlistment was split between the Northeastern (49%) and Midwestern (45%) states.

3. Occupation at Enlistment

Comparing foreign-born with native recruits at enlistment:

- Agriculture/farming was less than half as likely for foreign-born (21.7%) as for native recruits (56.2%).
- Immigrant newcomers were almost three times as likely as natives to work manual jobs (32.1% vs. 12.2%).
- Both groups showed equal representation (2.7%) in higher-paying "professionals and proprietors I" jobs.
- Foreign-born recruits were nearly twice as likely to hold lower-paying "professionals and proprietors II" jobs (8.2% vs. 4.9%).

German immigrants had the highest proportion of representation in professional occupations (16.1% in proprietors I and II combined), while Irish immigrants had a much lower proportion (7.2%). Nearly half of the Irish (47.1%) were engaged in manual labor, with almost another quarter (22.6%) working as artisans.

Occupational differences between foreign-born and native recruits narrowed over time. By 1910, occupational composition converged substantially, reflecting the economic and social assimilation of foreign-born veterans during the post-war industrializing decades.

4. Enlistment Trends and Age During the War

With growing recognition of a prolonged war and the need for new recruits, the foreign-born were in great demand, especially after 1863 when major draft laws were instituted. Prior scholars have estimated that over the course of the war, 20–25% of the UA was foreign-born.

Figure 5: Foreign-Born Enlistment by Year

Year	Foreign Recruits	% Foreign	Native Recruits	% Native	Total
1861	1,595	29.9%	3,735	70.1%	5,330
1862	1,562	21.7%	5,627	78.3%	7,189
1863	540	39.0%	846	61.0%	1,386
1864	1,605	27.8%	4,173	72.2%	5,778
1865	867	31.4%	1,891	68.6%	2,758

Enlistment of foreign recruits peaked at 39% in 1863, during the mid-point of the war. By the last full year of the war, one out of three enlisted men (31%) was foreign-born.

Figure 6: Average Enlistment Age by Nativity (Overall)

Nativity	Recruits	Average Age	Std. Deviation	Maximum Age	Minimum Age
Foreign	6,169	27.56	7.58	57	14
Native	16,272	24.81	7.39	60	12

On average, foreign-born recruits were approximately three years older than native recruits. This age difference was relatively stable throughout the war. The relative drop in average age evidenced in 1863 was likely a function of the 1863 Conscription Act, which drafted thousands of young men into the UA.

5. Wealth and Nativity

The foreign-born were presented with a variety of economic and social incentives to enlist. Many immigrants arrived with no accumulated wealth and little chance for economic or social advancement. Bounties, clothes, food, and the promise of pensions were strong inducements to join the UA.

During the period immediately before the war, foreign-born recruits evidenced lower average real estate wealth values. By the 1870 census, however, foreign-born UA veterans' real estate wealth actually surpassed that of natives (\$1,356 vs. \$1,104), though with

substantially lower standard deviations—implying greater economic equality among the foreign-born, while native recruits' wealth was more concentrated in fewer people.

By 1900 and 1910, economic convergence was evident: both 71% of native and foreign-born veterans owned their homes in 1900; roughly 80% of all veterans sampled owned a home by 1910; and mortgage-free rates were similar (86% for foreign-born, 81% for native in 1910).

The wartime experiences of foreign-born recruits accelerated their ability to advance economically during the post-war industrializing years. Associations made between native and foreign-born veterans during the war established long-standing social networks, embodied in the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.), which proved valuable in securing post-war pensions, employment contacts, and social support.

An important economic and social benefit to the foreign-born enlisted in the UA was the automatic grant of citizenship, thereby earning the right to receive a pension under the 1862 General Law and later pension laws.

III. Civil War Pensions for Native and Foreign-Born UA Veterans

This section examines empirically the experiences of disabled native and foreign-born veterans with the UA pension scheme. The authors hypothesize that foreign-born veterans were at a disadvantage in benefiting from the Civil War pension system on at least two levels: (1) they may have faced unequal access to entry into the system; and (2) once admitted, they may have been rewarded less on average due to attitudinal prejudice or social, health-related, and cultural disadvantages.

While historians such as Ella Lonn have postulated that foreign-born UA veterans "shared fully" in Civil War pensions, no prior research had empirically verified the notion of "equal treatment" by the Pension Bureau regardless of national origin. To address this, the authors develop two theoretical models: the "Pension Access Model" and the "Pension Outcome Model."

A. Research Models

1. Pension Access

In the Pension Access Model, the authors assume that access and application to the pension scheme were the result of several individual and social factors—disability, claim type, age, geographic location, year of application, and attorney usage. If nativity did not influence the likelihood of access, a native and a foreign-born claimant with otherwise identical background characteristics should have the same chance of access.

If foreign nativity did adversely and significantly affect the odds of being admitted to the pension system, a "penalty" on the foreign-born claimant would be observed in the form of a lower likelihood of pension access. Possible reasons for such differential access include:

- Self-selection: Foreign-born recruits who believed they would not succeed might have taken less initiative in applying, including lower probability of retaining pension attorneys.
- Discriminatory attitudes and practices of the Pension Bureau or its administrators and examining surgeons, who may have systematically screened out foreign-born recruits at higher rates.

Civil War-era statistician Benjamin Gould expressed views about the moral worthiness of foreign-born UA veterans for pensions that were common among contemporaries, noting that by 1863, troops were being raised primarily from "that class of men who could be tempted by the large bounties, or were influenced directly or indirectly by the pressing danger of conscription." Such attitudes of attitudinal bias had been shown in prior studies to significantly influence pension access and outcomes.

The authors' definition of pension access was created through data linkage between claimant information from the UA military records and the Pension Bureau records. When at least one pension record was found for a UA recruit who survived the war, access was counted as achieved.

Crucially, analysis of Figure 8 (Cumulative Pension Application Rates by Year) revealed striking similarity between foreign-born and native recruits in the time distribution of first pension applications throughout the entire period from 1862 to 1907. By 1907, almost all veterans had applied, regardless of birthplace.

Figure 9 (Mortality Rates by Nativity) revealed that between 1890 and 1929, foreign recruits died at a faster rate than natives. Foreign recruits were therefore relatively disfavored because a lower proportion of them lived to 1890 and 1907 when the more comprehensive and generous Service and Age Pension Acts were passed. Differences in pension access rates by nativity must therefore account for these mortality rate differences.

2. Pension Outcomes

The Pension Outcome Model examines the distribution of pension awards for those UA veterans who gained access to the system. The model explores how awards varied with factors such as the applicant's nativity, disability type, class or occupational level, degree of advocacy, attorney involvement, and the politics surrounding the pension system at the time of application.

Two pension outcome measures are used: the likelihood of being granted an increase in pension, and the monthly pension dollar award.

Figure 10 (Total Number of Pension Applications by Year) shows spikes in applications coinciding with the passage of the 1879 Arrears Act, the 1890 Disability Pension Act, and the 1912 Age and Service Pension Act. The sample contains 112,625 pension applications with non-missing application dates.

As illustrated in Figure 12 (Percentage of Pension Applications with Attorneys), 84.65% of all claimants between 1862 and 1907 were assisted by attorneys. Attorney usage was substantially lower when a Republican (or neutral) majority vote was present in the state of the claimant's application.

Prior research found that claimants with more visible (less obscure) disabilities such as musculo-skeletal conditions were less likely to use attorneys and enjoyed better pension outcomes, and that there was a substantial dollar premium in claiming under a more visible disability type. Claimants with more stigmatized diseases and disabilities were twice as likely to be rejected outright by pension doctors.

Figure 11: Occupational Distribution of White Men Over Age 65 (Rubinow Sample, 1900)

Occupation	Native (Number)	Native (%)	Foreign-Born (Number)	Foreign-Born (%)
Agriculture	364,552	56.9%	125,289	40.9%
Professional	36,149	5.7%	8,219	2.7%
Domestic	47,798	7.5%	49,594	16.2%
Trade/Transportation	81,026	12.6%	41,356	13.5%
Manufacturing	111,626	17.3%	82,204	26.7%
TOTALS	641,151	100.0%	306,662	100.0%

Rubinow's analysis shows that in 1900, the majority of native men over age 65 were employed in agricultural and professional occupations (62.6%), compared to 43.6% for the foreign-born. The foreign-born were more likely to be employed in domestic and manufacturing jobs (42.9% vs. 24.8% for native). Rubinow concluded that foreign-born whites and African Americans "constitute a very large majority of the wage-working class" yet received very little of the war pension.

B. Results—Pension Access Model

Figure 13 (below) presents the results of the logistic regression on the likelihood of access to the pension system. The sample consists of 22,449 UA men who survived the war; approximately 61% applied for a pension at least once.

Figure 13: Logistic Regression on the Odds of Applying for Pension (22,449 Recruits)

Variable	Mean Value (%)	Marginal Effect at Mean	Significance
Native	72.52%	+19.09%***	
German-born (reference)	6.79%	Omitted	
British-born	2.95%	+0.09%	
Irish-born	9.76%	-8.10%***	
Canadian-born	2.46%	+1.96%	
Other foreign-born	4.53%	-5.04%***	
Born 1801–1830	19.53%	-0.30%	
Born 1831–1836	17.68%	+3.68%***	
Born 1837–1841	26.75%	+4.11%***	

Variable	Mean Value (%)	Marginal Effect at Mean	Significance
Born 1842–1844	22.59%	+3.03%***	
Born 1845–1849 (reference)	13.45%	Omitted	
Agricultural occupation	46.41%	+11.97%***	
Manual labor occupation	17.52%	-1.54%	
Professional occupation (reference)	34.42%	Omitted	
Northeast region	44.47%	-3.02%**	
Midwest region (reference)	46.08%	Omitted	
South region	8.74%	+5.10%***	

Note: *** = significant at 1% level; ** = significant at 5% level.

Key findings from the Pension Access Model:

- U.S.-born veterans had a significantly higher probability of pension access than foreign-born veterans—a premium of 19.09 percentage points.
- Among immigrants, Irish-born veterans faced an additional 8.10 percentage point penalty beyond the baseline foreign-born penalty, resulting in a total of approximately 27 percentage points less likely to gain access than natives.
- "Other foreign-born" (non-German, non-British, non-Irish, non-Canadian) recruits had approximately 24 percentage points less probability of access than natives.
- German-born veterans (used as the reference group for the foreign-born) had 19.09 percentage points less probability than natives; British and Canadian immigrants had slightly better odds than Germans, though not statistically significant.
- Those who enlisted in agricultural occupations had a significantly higher probability of pension access (+11.97%), while those in the South had a higher probability (+5.10%) and those in the Northeast had a lower probability (-3.02%).

C. Results—Pension Outcome Model

Figure 14 details the birthplace of 8,054 recruits who applied for pension. Compared with the full enlistment sample, immigrant representation fell markedly from 26.6% at enlistment to 18.7% at pension application—consistent with the access disadvantage documented in the previous section.

Figure 15 provides a breakdown of the first-claimed disability from all applications. The top three most prevalent disabilities claimed for both foreign and native recruits were: injuries and gunshot wounds, rheumatism and musculo-skeletal conditions, and diarrhea. These impairments captured 65% of applications for foreign veterans and 61% for natives. Applications claimed for "less visible" or more obscure disabilities did not differ significantly by nativity.

Figure 16 summarizes the classification of impairments into categories subject to more or less attitudinal prejudice. More visible conditions include gunshot wounds, diarrhea, ear

defects, eye defects, gastrointestinal disorders, hernias, and musculo-skeletal problems. Less visible conditions include infectious and parasitic diseases, nervous system disorders, genito-urinary disorders, and blood system impairments.

Figures 17A and 17B present the key outcomes from logistic regression (probability of a pension ruling increase) and OLS regression (monthly pension dollar award) respectively. Key findings include:

- Overall, there was no significant premium for natives over foreign-born in the administration of the pension scheme. Once accepted into the system, native and foreign-born claimants did not experience different rates of pension increases or different monthly dollar awards—with one modest exception: German-born UA veterans had a greater likelihood (14 percentage points) of being granted an increase relative to native veterans.
- Republican partisan affiliation had a strong positive impact on pension outcomes: applications filed in Republican-majority states had a 9.61% higher probability of being granted a ruling increase and \$1.63 more per month on average.
- Attorney use showed a modest penalty: a 4.91% decrease in the probability of pension increases and \$2.04 less on average per month in some samples.
- Visible disabilities showed a premium of approximately 11.12% greater probability of ruling increases in the native vs. all foreigners sample, and 13.58% in the native vs. Irish-born sample.
- During the period after the 1879 Arrears Act but before the 1890 Disability Pension Law, natives had a higher probability of receiving a pension increase by 6.76% over foreign-born veterans. This premium increased substantially in the native vs. German sample (13.38%) and native vs. British sample (13.58%). After passage of the 1890 Law, these effects disappeared, suggesting that as the pension system expanded and the foreign-born continued to assimilate, nativity became less associated with pension outcomes.

IV. Conclusion

This article has presented new information on native and foreign-born disabled UA veterans, and the impact of social, economic, and partisan politics on access to and rewards from pension policies aimed at the then-new class of disabled Americans.

Like many contemporary disability policies, the Civil War pension scheme disproportionately benefited those disabled whom society, politicians, and courts deemed "worthy." Such conceptions of moral worth were often tied to nativistic and patriotic views related to foreign-born participation in the UA during the latter years of the war.

The empirical investigation supports historian William Burton's view that the Civil War pension scheme is better understood not as "a clash between native and immigrants" (which "gravely distorts a more complex social reality") but through the lens of the complex interplay of disability status, ethnicity, political affiliation, and economic circumstance.

Summary of Key Findings

- Foreign-born veterans were significantly less likely to apply for a pension in the first place. Compared to natives, German-born, Canadian-born, and British-born veterans had approximately 19 percentage points less probability of applying; Irish immigrants had approximately 27 percentage points less; other foreign immigrants approximately 24 percentage points less.
- However, once recruits were accepted into the pension system, there was no apparent disparate treatment by nativity. Neither the odds of being granted a pension increase nor monthly pension awards depended on national origin.
- Many factors besides nativity influenced pension access and outcomes, including pensions' role in helping men maintain their own households, family size, partisan politics of the state of application, disability type and visibility, and attorney usage.
- As the pension system expanded after 1890, and with continued assimilation of the foreign-born into American society, nativity became progressively less associated with pension outcomes.

Future Research Directions

The authors identify several areas for future study, including:

- Expansion of the Civil War data set to compare white and African-American UA pension claimants' access to the system, disability types and severity, attorney usage, and pension outcomes. Estimates suggest roughly 186,000 African Americans served in the UA; parallel research by Donald Shaffer on 1,100 white and Black UA veterans found a substantially smaller proportion of Black veterans received access to pensions, with discrimination stemming from social, attitudinal, and economic forces rather than from the laws themselves.
- Comparative and transnational analyses of other nations' experiences with war pension schemes and conceptions of disability in society.

Methodological Appendix

A. Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) Models with Robust Standard Errors

A critical assumption required for OLS standard errors to be correct (unbiased and consistent) is that the sample observations are independent. While it is reasonable to assume that the pension applications are independent across different UA veterans, the assumption of independence is inappropriate for different applications on the same veteran. Year-to-year applications for the same veterans are highly correlated, and ignoring this non-independence would substantially understate the true standard errors and lead to incorrect statistical inference.

The statistical package STATA was used, enabling standard errors to be adjusted for correlations within veterans. The "cluster" option in the "regress" command gives OLS

estimates while allowing the dependent variable to have between-year correlations for a given individual. The standard error adjustment is achieved by assuming an individual-specific random effect that is normally distributed, with constant correlation between any two different years for an individual.

B. Logistic Models (LOGIT)

When the outcome measure is discrete rather than continuous, binary choice models are used to explain a binary (0/1) dependent variable. For example, a pension ruling outcome is measured by a variable called "ruling increase," which assumes the value of 1 if the applicant received an increase in the monthly pension award, and 0 if the monthly pension award stayed the same or was reduced.

Ordinary Least Squares cannot be used for discrete dependent variables because it cannot constrain predictions to the zero-one probability interval, producing nonsense probabilities and negative variances. The Logistic model (LOGIT) produces predictions expressed as probabilities with a logistic distribution.

In interpreting the estimated LOGIT model, a common practice is to present the marginal effects at the mean of the explanatory variables. In Figure 13, "marginal effect at the mean" measures the impact of any factor on pension access or pension outcome, evaluated at the mean of all factors. For example, the coefficient on the agricultural enlistment occupation (0.1197) means that if a recruit was a farm owner or farm laborer, his odds of applying for pension was on average 0.1197 higher than a recruit who was a skilled worker, all else being equal.

Standard errors of the LOGIT estimates are calculated using the maximum likelihood (MLE) method. For the LOGIT model, a likelihood ratio (LR) test is used to assess goodness of fit: a p-value of 0.0001 for $-2\log L$ means that if all the socioeconomic factors were irrelevant, there would be only a 0.01% chance of obtaining the current value for $-2\log L$ —indicating that the socioeconomic factors provide significant explanatory power.

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