

HOW to FIND MILITARY RECORDS

REGISTRATION CARD

1 *Gilman* (First name)
2 PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS: *Stanton Conn* (Middle name) (City or town) (County)
3 Age in Years *45* 4 Date of Birth *3/1* (Month) (Day) (Year)
5 ☒ White 6 ☐ Negro 7 RACE *29* (Day) (Year)
8 ☐ Citizen 9 ☐ Indian 10 ☐ Non-citizen
11 ☒ Native Born 12 ☐ Naturalized 13 ☐ Citizen 14 ☐ Alien
15 If not a citizen of the U. S., of what nation are you a citizen or subject? *Farmer*
16 PRESENT OCCUPATION
17 PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS: *J. B. Goff*
18 NEAREST RELATIVE: *Stanton Conn* (City or town)
19 Name *J. B. Goff* (No.)
20 Address *Stanton Conn* (City or town) (County)
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED THE ABOVE INFORMATION.
P. M. G. O. Form No. 1

WAR

On the Path

Jealous of genealogists with ancestors in major, record-generating US wars? Don't be. We'll help you trace people who served in 10 lesser-known military conflicts.

BY MAUREEN A. TAYLOR



IF AMERICA'S HISTORICAL military conflicts could have sibling rivalry, they'd all be jealous of the Revolutionary War, the Civil War and World Wars. Information abounds about how to research ancestors who served in these wars—as you might expect, because of the masses who fought and the comparatively heavy toll taken on our country.

But less-famous conflicts, such as the Mexican War and Indian Wars, were just as devastating to those who fought and died. Genealogical records of those soldiers are no less telling than records of the “wars of the century.”

Of course, the notoriety of the Revolution, Civil War and other large-scale conflicts makes their records more accessible. Finding resources for other wars will require digging for details, studying US history and requesting offline records. But you can do it—and we're here to help, with our guide to finding genealogy records of 10 “small” military conflicts.

A US Army surgeon treats wounded soldiers in a field hospital during the Spanish-American war.

Search strategies

Knowing where to look for military records is half the battle. If an ancestor fought in a Colonial war—that is, any war taking place before the American Revolution—you're more likely to locate state militia pay lists, muster rolls and military hospital records in state archives and military historical societies covering the war or the place where your ancestor enlisted. For example, the New England Historic Genealogical Society <www.americanancestors.org> has a subscription database of 40,000 names of Massachusetts soldiers throughout the Colonial period. It'll be easier to find records if you can learn which regiment or company your ancestor was part of.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS
DIVISION, LC-USW33-042486

If your ancestor was in the British Army, you may find information at the British National Archives in Kew. See its muster rolls and pay lists finding aid at <www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/rdleaflet.asp?sLeafletID=16> and information on additional British Army records at <www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/researchguidesindex.asp#b>.

For most wars after the Revolution and the birth of the federal government, you'll consult the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) <archives.gov>, which has compiled service records, pension files and other federal records. Surviving service and pension records are on microfilm and/or paper at NARA. The FHL and other large libraries may have copies of NARA microfilm. See the box on page 45 for information on ordering NARA records that aren't microfilmed; you'll need to know the soldier's name, the war he served in and his state of residence.

Because many records have been indexed or digitized, though, start your search online. For example, subscription site Ancestry.com <ancestry.com> has a digitized version of NARA microfilm T288, General Index to Pension Files, 1861–1934, as well as books of transcribed muster rolls and rosters. (Your library may offer Ancestry Library Edition free.) Olive Tree Genealogy <www.olivetreegenealogy.com> and Online Military Indexes <www.militaryindexes.com> may direct you to other online sources.

The fact that not everything is online hurts a bit more for lesser-known wars: Shorter campaigns and fewer soldiers mean fewer descendants clamoring for records. You'll find yourself scrolling microfilm, turning book pages and penning record requests. The FamilySearch wiki <wiki.familysearch.org> gives an overview of each war in this article, with links to records you can access on microfilm through the FHL. Just type the name of the conflict into the search box. You can rent FHL microfilm through local Family History Centers <www.familysearch.org/eng/library/fhc/frameset_fhc.asp>.

Search WorldCat <worldcat.org>, a catalog of thousands of libraries' holdings, for books with indexed records from the war you're interested in. Borrow titles from your library or through interlibrary loan. Seek publications of groups such as the General Society of Colonial Wars <www.gscw.org>. Also look for regimental histories in book collections on HeritageQuest Online (available through subscribing libraries), Ancestry.com and Google Books <books.google.com>.

King Philip's War

■ **YEARS:** 1675 to 1676

■ **OVERVIEW:** In 1675, Wampanoag leader Metacomet (known to the English as King Philip) organized several southern New England tribes against the colonists after three Indians were executed for killing a colonist. Half of New England's towns saw armed conflict. In *King Philip's War: The History and Legacy of America's Forgotten Conflict* (Countryman Press), authors Eric Schultz and Michael J. Tougas estimate that more than 1 percent of colonists and 15 percent of the American Indians involved died. King Philip was killed in August 1676, yet the war continued in northern Maine (then part of Massachusetts) until a treaty was signed at Casco Bay in 1678. Learn more at the Society of Colonial Wars for Connecticut website <www.colonialwarsct.org/1675.htm>.

■ **RESEARCH TIPS:** Lists of participants and deaths are in publications such as *King Philip's War* by George William Ellis and John Emery Morris and *The History of the Great Indian War of 1675 and 1676* by Benjamin Church, Thomas Church and Samuel Gardner Drake (access both on Google Books through our Google Library <bit.ly/ftm-google-library>).

Soldiers in King Philip's War by George Madison Bodge (reprinted by Genealogical Publishing Co.) has more than 5,000 names from muster rolls, payrolls, biographical and genealogical sketches and other records. Bodge summarizes the war's history, naming many soldiers, in *A Brief History of King Philip's War, 1676–1677*, online at <freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~massasoit/bodge.htm>.

The state archives or libraries of Rhode Island <www.rihs.org>, Connecticut and Massachusetts may have town or colony documents prosecuting military actions, muster rolls and interactions with Indians. The Massachusetts State Archives has a database of Colonial records from 1629 to 1799 <www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcsrch/RevolutionarySearchContexts.html>. Type in a name and choose King Philip's War from the drop-down menu; you'll get a summary of the record and information on its location at the archives.



TIP: Your ancestor's state archives or historical society may have records of his military service, especially if he served in a state militia or guard, or in a state unit that was federalized during wartime.

MORE ONLINE

Free Web Content

- Photo of a Spanish-American War nurse <familytreemagazine.com/spanish-american-war-nurse>
- Top 10 Military Research Websites <familytreemagazine.com/article/10-military-research-web-sites>
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- Family Tree Essentials CD <shopfamilytree.com/product/family-tree-essentials-cd>
- *Family Tree Legacies* <shopfamilytree.com/product/family-tree-legacies>

French and Indian War

■ **YEARS:** 1754 to 1763

■ **OVERVIEW:** The French and Indian War is the North American component of the Seven Years War, a series of worldwide conflicts between Great Britain and France. Though the war's name refers to the French and their Indian allies, native tribes participated on both sides. Battlefields stretched along the frontier of French and British colonies from Nova Scotia south to Virginia. After a series of disastrous campaigns in 1757, Britain managed to turn the tide of the war by capturing Montreal in 1760.

The war resulted in Britain's colonial dominance in North America. The Treaty of Paris required France to cede Canada to Great Britain (with the exception of two coastal islands) and transfer Louisiana west of the Mississippi to Spain. Great Britain also gained control of Florida from the Spanish. France would regain control of Louisiana, then sell it to the United States as the Louisiana Purchase. For more information, see Robert Leckie's *A Few Acres of Snow: The Saga of the French and Indian Wars* (John Wiley) and peruse the site for PBS' "The War That Made America" <www.pbs.org/thewarthatmadeamerica>

■ **GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES:** Militia muster rolls and pay lists are among the documents you can find in colonial papers at the various state archives in which the soldier lived or served. A colonial militia collection at the Rhode Island Historical Society <www.rihs.org/mssinv/Mss673sg1.htm> contains official state records of the French and Indian War; see <www.rihs.org/mssinv/Mss673sg1.htm> for an inventory. Also look for published indexes, such as *Virginia's Colonial Soldiers* by Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck (Genealogical Publishing Co.), which indexes sources including muster rolls, court martial records and more.

Quasi-War with France

■ **YEARS:** 1798 to 1800

■ **OVERVIEW:** After the American Revolution, the United States declared neutrality in the conflict between Britain and France, eventually signing the Jay Treaty with Britain. Combined with the US refusal to repay debts to France (they were owed to the crown, claimed America, not the new French Republic) tensions escalated into an undeclared naval war. France intercepted vessels trading with Britain; the United States hastily raised a navy in response. The Convention of 1800 halted the hostilities.

■ **GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES:** For officers' service information, search Ancestry.com's database Officers of the Continental and US Navy and Marine Corps, 1775-1900, or look for the 1901 book of the same name, edited by Edward W. Callahan. NARA microfilm M330 contains abstracts of service records of naval officers from 1798 to 1893.

US citizens may have filed against France, Spain or Holland to reclaim ships and property seized during this conflict. If you had an ancestor involved in trade, see NARA's online



TIP: To see a list of NARA's military records microfilm, go to <eservices.archives.gov/orderonline>; click Microfilm at the top of the page, click Advanced Search, select Military Service Records from the Subject Catalog pull-down menu, and click Search.

article on these French spoliation claims and the resulting records <archives.gov/publications/prologue/1991/spring/french-spoliation-claims.html>.

War of 1812

■ **YEARS:** 1812 to 1815

■ **OVERVIEW:** US and British differences didn't stop after the American Revolution. British trade restrictions, impressment (capture and forced service) of American sailors into the Royal Navy, and England's alliance with American Indian tribes caused continued tensions. Britain blockaded Atlantic seaboard ports, attacking Navy and merchant vessels. Naval battles took place in the Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico and St. Lawrence River. Francis Scott Key penned the "Star Spangled Banner" after observing the American defense of Fort McHenry in Baltimore. The treaty of Ghent ended the war in December 1914. Though battles continued into the next year until the news crossed the Atlantic.

■ **GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES:** Records are plentiful for this "second war of independence." War of 1812 compiled military service records are indexed on NARA microfilm M602, as well as on Ancestry.com. The actual records aren't filmed, so you'll need to order copies from NARA. You won't find much in the way of service records for Army officers, but look for their names in *Historical Register and Dictionary of the U.S. Army* by Francis B. Heitman (Genealogical Publishing Co.). For Naval officers, see NARA film M330.

Many pension applications date from decades after the war, as Congress passed laws allowing veterans or their widows and children to apply. The "Old Wars" pensions cover service resulting in death or disability from the end of the Revolutionary War until the Civil War. Most War of 1812 soldiers in this group were volunteers or members of state militia that were federalized during the war. Their names are arranged alphabetically by veteran on NARA microfilm T316.

An 1871 law covered veterans who served at least 60 days or their widows (if the couple was married before 1815). An 1878 law included men who served at least 14 days. You'll find an index to these later pensions on NARA microfilm M313, online at Ancestry.com and transcribed in *Index to War of 1812 Pension Files* by Virgil D. White. The records themselves haven't been microfilmed; you can order them from NARA (see page 45). For more details, see NARA's article <archives.gov/publications/prologue/1991/winter/war-of-1812.html>.

As for the American Revolution, Uncle Sam issued bounty land warrants to pay War of 1812 veterans. Both wars'

warrants are grouped on NARA microfilm M848 and in Ancestry.com's database of US War Bounty Land Warrants, 1789-1858.

If your ancestor was involved in the maritime trade, search Footnote's collection of War of 1812 Prize Cases from the Southern District Court of New York. Digitized from NARA microfilm M928, these files relate to maritime property seized at the country's leading port from 1812 to 1816.

Two NARA microfilms cover impressed seamen from 1793 to 1802: M2025 has registers of applications for their release, and M1839 has miscellaneous documents. See <archives.gov/genealogy/military/1812/impressed-seamen-1793-to-1814.html> for information. Merchant seaman had to register with customs officials at their ports. If your ancestor served on a merchant ship, check these Seaman Protection Lists at the NARA location covering the port of registration. Rhode Island certificates are at the Rhode Island Historical Society; find an index in *Register of Seamen's Protection Certificates from the Providence, Rhode Island Custom District 1796-1870* (Clearfield Co.). Extracted information for Waltham, Mass., certificates is online at the Mystic Seaport Museum <library.mysticseaport.org/initiative/protectionindex.cfm>.

A resource called the Draper Manuscripts, housed at the Wisconsin Historical Society <www.wisconsinhistory.org/military/draper>, is full of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 information. The interviews, letters, maps and other documents relate to the western Carolinas and Virginia, some portions of Georgia and Alabama, the Ohio River valley, and parts of the Mississippi River valley. Consult *Guide to the Draper Manuscripts* by Josephine L. Harper (Wisconsin Historical Society) for details. The FHL and other large libraries have microfilm copies of much of the collection.

Texas War of Independence

■ **YEARS:** 1835 to 1836

■ **OVERVIEW:** The rousing declaration "Remember the Alamo!" comes from this conflict. Mexican Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna abolished the Constitution of 1824, setting off a war between Mexican troops and American settlers (called Texians) in what was then part of Mexico. It lasted from Oct. 2, 1835 to April 21, 1836, with additional conflicts occurring into the 1840s. The independent Republic of Texas was established in 1836 (it became a US state in 1845). Find more information on the Texas Military Museum website <www.texasmilitaryforcesmuseum.org/tnghist1.htm> and in *The Texas War of Independence, 1835-1836: From Outbreak to the Alamo to San Jacinto* by Alan Huffines (Osprey Publishing).

■ **GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES:** Because Texas wasn't part of the United States when this war occurred, you won't look to NARA for records. Instead, you'll use published indexes and the Texas state archives.

You'll find a Texas army roster at <earlytexashistory.com/Tx1836/txindex.html>. *Muster Rolls of the Texas Revolution* (Daughters of the Republic of Texas) contains soldier names. Look for pension details in *Republic of Texas Pension Application Abstracts* by John C. Barron (Austin Genealogical Society). Volunteers are transcribing pension papers at <www.usgwarchives.net/pensions/texrev>; you'll find information on the claims and a searchable index on the Texas State Library and Archives website <www.tsl.state.tx.us/arc/repclaims/repintro.html>. The pension records are on microfilm at the Texas archives and the FHL. Historical information on the siege of the Alamo and those who served appears in *Roll Call at the Alamo* by Phil Rosenthal and Bill Groneman (Old Army Press).

Order Up

If the records you need aren't on microfilm, you'll have to hire a researcher to get them for you, or request them from NARA.

You'll find a list of local researchers on NARA's website <archives.gov/research/hire-help>, or you can use the Association of Professional Genealogists online directory <www.apgen.org/directory>.

NARA has a nifty Order Online system to help you request records from afar. Start at <eservices.archives.gov/orderonline> and log in (if you have an account) or create a new account. Then you'll click Order Reproductions, select Military Service and Pension Records, and follow the system's prompts. You also can order records by mail

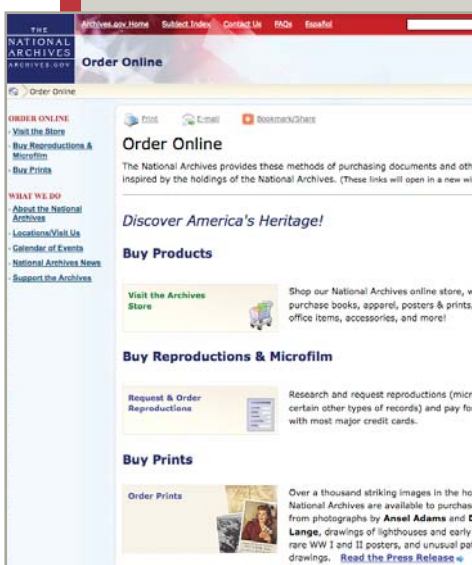
using NARA's order forms, downloadable from <archives.gov/contact/inquire-form.html#part-a>.

Depending what records you need, it may be more cost-effective to hire a researcher than to order from NARA. Reproduction fees for military records include:

■ **PENSION OR BOUNTY LAND WARRANT APPLICATION FILE, PRE-CIVIL WAR:** \$50

■ **PENSION OR BOUNTY LAND WARRANT APPLICATION FILE, CIVIL WAR AND LATER:** \$75 for up to 100 pages; add 65 cents per additional page

■ **MILITARY SERVICE FILES:** \$25 per case
See the full fee schedule at <archives.gov/research/order/fees.html>.





On Film

Here's a rundown of the NARA microfilm titles you'll want to consult for researching those who served in the wars covered in this article. You can look for copies at the FHL or find out whether a title is digitized on Ancestry.com or Footnote by checking NARA's list of Microfilm Publications Digitized by Partners at archives.gov/digitization/digitized-by-partners.html.

- **M233:** Registers of **Enlistment in the US Army**, 1798-1914
- **M330:** Abstracts of Service Records of **Naval Officers**, 1798-1893
- **M1328:** Abstracts Of Service Records of **Naval Officers**, 1829-1924
- **M848:** **War of 1812** Bounty Land Warrants, 1815-1858
- **M313:** Index to **War of 1812** Pension Application Files
- **M928:** Prize and Related Records for the **War of 1812** of the US District Court for the Southern District of New York, 1812-16
- **M2025:** Registers of Applications for the Release of **Impressed Seamen**, 1793-1802
- **M1839:** Miscellaneous Lists and Papers Regarding **Impressed Seamen**, 1796-1814
- **T316:** Old War Index to **Pension Files**, 1815-1926
- **T317:** Index to **Mexican War** Pension Files, 1887-1926
- **T288:** General Index to **Pension Files**, 1861-1934
- **M616:** Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the **Mexican War**
- **M278:** Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the **Mexican War** in Organizations From the State of Texas
- **M351:** Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the **Mexican War** in Mormon Organizations
- **M638:** Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the **Mexican War** in Organizations From the State of Tennessee
- **M863:** Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the **Mexican War** in Organizations From the State of Mississippi
- **M1028:** Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the **Mexican War** in Organizations From the State of Pennsylvania
- **M871:** General Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the **War with Spain**
- **M872:** Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the **Philippine Insurrection**

Mexican-American War

■ **YEARS:** 1846 to 1848

■ **OVERVIEW:** Mexico refused to acknowledge Texas independence, so a year after Texas became a state, the United States and Mexico were at war. The US Navy blocked Mexican ports; the Army invaded Mexico and its northern territories. The war led to what's known as the Mexican Cession: Mexico sold its land in what's now California, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah and Nevada to the United States for \$15 million. Get more details on the Son of the South website www.sonofthesouth.net/mexican-war/war.htm.

■ **GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES:** Texas and Illinois provided the most regiments, but only a few New England states didn't send any units to war. First, check the microfilmed indexes to Mexican War pensions (NARA microfilm T317) and service records (M616). NARA and the FHL have microfilmed service records for Texas volunteers and those from several other states (see the box at left); if you don't find film for your ancestor's state, you'll need to order the records from NARA.

The Descendants of Mexican War Veterans www.dmwv.org/mexwar/mexwar1.htm offers more statistics and recommended reading. Look online for indexes, too, for instance, a list of Pennsylvania men who fought in the Mexican War usgwarchives.net/pa/1pa/milit.htm#mexican. Search for Americans buried in the Mexico City cemetery at www.abmc.gov/wardead/index.php.

Utah War

■ **YEARS:** 1857 to 1858

■ **OVERVIEW:** President Buchanan sent troops to enforce his choice for a non-Mormon governor in Utah Territory, heavily populated by Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints members. No formal battles took place; instead, clashes between settlers and troops claimed lives. For more details, see *Causes of the Utah War* by William P. MacKinnon (Fort Douglas Vedette) and the Utah Encyclopedia www.media.utah.edu/UHE/u/UTAHWAR.html.

■ **GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES:** From 1849, the Constitution of the Provisional State of Deseret required men between the ages of 18 and 45 to participate in the Utah militia. Most Utah militia records are in Utah Territorial Militia Muster Rolls, 1849 to 1870 (FHL films 485554 to 485558). Younger boys and older men also could join. On the US side, Army "regulars" (those who already were in the Army, rather than soldiers who enlisted for a specific war) did the fighting. Look for their names in NARA microfilm M233, listing US Army enlistments from 1798 to 1914; the database also is on Ancestry.com.

Indian Wars

■ **YEARS:** 1860 to 1900

■ **OVERVIEW:** Failed treaties and pressure from the encroaching US population led to a series of frontier wars between the United States and Indian nations, especially

during the late 1800s. Notable conflicts include the Sioux Wars in the Dakotas, which saw the death of Gen. George Custer at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. The massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890 was the last armed conflict of the Sioux Wars. In the Southwest, Geronimo led the Apache against US troops. Several US African-American regiments in these wars came to be called Buffalo soldiers. The US also employed Indian scouts.

A timeline such as the one on Wikipedia <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_wars> can help you keep track of all the battles that raged during this tumultuous period.

■ **GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES:** Many men who served with these units were in the regular Army; they're named in the previously mentioned enlistment registers microfilm M233, also on Ancestry.com.

Veterans of Indian Wars from 1859 to 1891 could apply for pensions under a Congressional act of March 4, 1917. For pension records from these wars, see NARA microfilm T288, General Index to Pension Files, 1861–1934 (also on Ancestry.com). Virgil White's *Index of Pension Applications for Indian Wars from 1818 to 1898* (National Historical Publishing Co.) also is a useful resource. You'll need to order copies of pension records from NARA.

For information on Indian scouts, see the NARA article <archives.gov/publications/prologue/2009/summer/indian.html>. NARA has records of Buffalo soldiers as well; see the article at <www.archives.gov/publications/record/1998/03/buffalo-soldiers.html> for details.

Spanish-American War

■ **YEAR:** 1898

■ **OVERVIEW:** When the American battleship *Maine* mysteriously sank in Havana harbor in 1897, the already-extant political tension between Spain and the United States escalated into a war with Cuban independence at the center. Fighting—some by Teddy Roosevelt's famous Rough Riders—took place in Spanish holdings in the Caribbean and Pacific. The Treaty of Paris gave the United States and colonial authority over Puerto Rico, Guam, the Philippines and (temporarily) Cuba for \$20 million. See related documents, information and photographs at the Library of Congress website <loc.gov/rr/hispanic/1898>.

■ **GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES:** The NARA article at <archives.gov/publications/prologue/1998/spring/spanish-american-war-1.html> is a great resource for learning about Spanish-American War records. Service records are indexed on NARA film M871, General Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the War with Spain. You'll need to order the actual records from NARA.

You can find an index to the First Volunteer Cavalry—aka Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders—at <www.accessgenealogy.com/military/spanish/rough_riders.htm>. Their service records are digitized in NARA's Archival Research Catalog <arcweb.archives.gov/arc>: Click the Digital Copies tab, then type

Spanish-American War into the box and use the pull-down menu to limit results to 2,000. Finally, click Search.

Veterans who applied for pensions may be listed in the previously mentioned NARA microfilm T288 (also digitized on Ancestry.com). The pension records themselves aren't microfilmed; you'll need to request them from NARA.

The US Navy (on whose ships African-Americans and Asian immigrants were integrated with other sailors) played a large part in this conflict. You'll find ships rosters on the Spanish American War Centennial website <www.spanamwar.com/genealogy3roster.htm#Navy>. Naval compiled military service records start in the late 19th century; only officers' records are microfilmed on films M330 and M1328.

Female ancestors might have served as nurses working under contract with the Army. Records on paper at NARA include Personal Data Cards of Spanish-American War Contract Nurses.

Philippine Insurrection

■ **YEARS:** 1899 to 1902

■ **OVERVIEW:** In this war, Filipinos sought independence from the United States, which had received the islands after the Spanish-American War. The Philippine government surrendered July 4, 1902. The United States granted the islands autonomy in 1916 and independence in 1946. For more details, see <archives.gov/publications/prologue/2000/summer/philippine-insurrection.html>.

■ **GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES:** About 125,000 US troops—both Army regulars and new volunteers—served in the war. You'll find the regulars named in the microfilm and Ancestry.com database Registers of Enlistment in the US Army, 1798–1914. Volunteers who fought in state regiments were in units from the Spanish-American war; you'll consult service records of that war to learn about these men.

The 1900 census contains information on military personnel stationed in the Philippines, Cuba and Puerto Rico. On Ancestry.com, Military and Naval Forces is the place of residence. Service records of US volunteers are indexed in NARA microfilm M872, Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the Philippine Insurrection. Order copies of the records themselves from NARA. Look for Marines who fought in the Philippines in the Ancestry.com database of Marine Corps muster rolls dating from 1893 to 1940.

Pensions were first granted to Philippine Insurrection veterans in 1922. An index to veterans who applied is in the aforementioned General Index to Pension Files, 1861–1934. The pension files haven't been microfilmed; you'll need to request them from NARA. ■

Contributing editor **MAUREEN A. TAYLOR** is collecting photos of War of 1812 veterans for a sequel to her book *The Last Muster: Images of the Revolutionary War Generation* (Kent State University Press).

Basic Training

Proving an ancestor's military service
is a matter of following orders. | By Maureen A. Taylor

As Judy Benjamin, Goldie Hawn's character in the film *Private Benjamin*, found out, military life is all about following the rules. That's not always true with genealogy, though following a few research conventions is a good way to start.

A relative's military service holds the promise of detail-filled records about his role in momentous historic events. For example, Roger Johnson, a *Family Tree Magazine* reader in Temecula, Calif., found anecdotal evidence his third-great-grandfather Levi Williams was a member of a military group called the Legion of the United States (the US Army's name from 1791 to 1797). But Johnson can't find records to prove it. To break through this roadblock, he'll have to find out more about the particulars—what this group did, when and where it was active, and how his ancestor might've come to be a member. Let's get him started.

Go to the source

When you're excited over a new family history find, it's easy to forget a research basic: Verify information that comes from a secondary source—one created after the fact, such as a county history or encyclopedia. Since secondary sources are removed from the time period in question, they're more likely to contain inaccuracies and are best used as clues for further research.

Williams supposedly served in the Legion with Gen. "Mad Anthony" Wayne from 1792 to 1794. Johnson's cousin sent him an old history of Washington Township, Ohio, stating Williams was a "hunter and a lieutenant" who saw service during the War of 1812. Johnson also found mention of Williams' service in C.P. Sarchet's

History of Guernsey County (Guernsey County Genealogical Society, out of print). Both books used quotes from Levi Williams' eldest son, John, a lifelong resident of Guernsey County.

Johnson should turn his attention to fact-checking that printed secondary source by locating primary sources—for example, a military service record or eyewitness accounts in autobiographies, newspapers or journals.

Take a step back

Now is a good time for Johnson to look for historical background on the Legion of the United States. Not only would it make his family story more interesting, but it could turn up first-person accounts of Williams' actions on the battlefield in newspapers or private papers of his comrades in arms.

My quick Google <google.com> search of the Web resulted in several hits, including a history, muster lists of men who served in the legion, and other articles at Legion Ville Headquarters <legionville.com>. Johnson had already searched all the links on the site, but didn't find mention of any Levi Williamses.

I also searched the Web on *general anthony wayne*. According to the Toledo (Ohio) Metroparks Internet site <www.fallentimbersbattlefield.com>, in 1794 "Wayne's force, made up of 1,600 to 1,700 'regulars' and 1,500 members of the Kentucky Militia, marched north from Cincinnati to build a series of forts ... Waiting for [them] were about 1,000 warriors led by Miami war chief Little Turtle." The Legion's victory in the Battle of Fallen Timbers led to the Treaty of Greenville, opening the Northwest Territory to white settlers.

Research Plan

- 1 Treat information from secondary sources as clues.
- 2 Gather background on the Legion of the United States by searching the Internet and reading history books.
- 3 Look for military records such as muster rolls, pay lists and bounty land claims in both state and national repositories. Investigate published sources, too.
- 4 Research repositories' manuscript collections for personal papers of the potential Levi Williamses' commanding officers.



Hit a research road-

block? Get help on the FamilyTreeMagazine.com Brick Walls Forum at <www.familytreemagazine.com/forum>.

Shoot for service records

Military records are Johnson's best source for proving his ancestor was part of that momentous battle. He's already visited the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) <archives.gov> in Washington, DC, where he found that 13 men named Levi Williams served during the War of 1812 (he doesn't recall which record he consulted, though). Two of the men died too early, leaving 11 possibilities for Johnson to investigate.

Knowing two facts will ease the records search: where Johnson's ancestor lived and which unit (called a sublegion) he served in. According to the Washington Township history, Williams joined the Legion at age 15 in Pittsburgh and served with Col. Ephraim Kibby and Capt. William Wells. Based on this, Johnson should check the Pennsylvania

State Archives' <www.phmc.state.pa.us> Legion-related holdings. State historical societies and archives generally have state militia service records, such as enlistment rolls and payroll lists. Johnson also should seek information on the commanding officers for each Levi Williams he's identified—their papers might contain details about men in their units. One tactic to try: Adding *muster rolls* to my Anthony Wayne Google search yielded some of Wayne's papers <specialcollections.wichita.edu/collections/ms/index.html> (click W, then scroll down) at the Wichita State University Libraries in Kansas.

Most federal military records are at NARA; typing *legion of the united states* into the Web site's search box turned up Discharge Certificates and Miscellaneous Records Relating to the Discharge of Soldiers from the Regular Army, 1792-1815 and Records of United States Army Commands, 1784-1821 (both are in record group 98, a collection that isn't micro-filmed). The Index to Compiled Records of Volunteer Soldiers in the War of 1812 (film M602) lists each man's commanding officer. One of these items may be the source Johnson consulted long ago, but I'd recommend looking again to sharpen that fuzzy memory. (If he can't return to NARA, he can hire a local researcher or rent microfilm through the Family History Library <www.familysearch.org>.)

Another look for published sources could help, too—since Williams supposedly was a lieutenant, Johnson may find him named in William Powell's *List of Officers of the Army of the United States from 1779 to 1900* (Gale, out of print). He also could contact an Army librarian at Carlisle Barracks <www.carlisle.army.mil/library> to ask for research suggestions.

Falling back on basic genealogical advice by seeking primary sources and gathering background information may be what Johnson needs to boost him over his brick wall—much as Private Benjamin eventually scaled those obstacle courses. 🐾

Read contributing editor MAUREEN A. TAYLOR's Photo Detective column in the July 2007 *Family Tree Magazine*, and visit her at <photodetective.com>.

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WORKBOOK

Pension Records

BY SHELLEY K. BISHOP

♣ **DID YOUR ANCESTOR** serve in the US military during the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 or Civil War? If so, look for a pension record related to his service. Military pension records are some of the richest family history resources available, often containing information not found anywhere else.

Access to these potential treasures has grown easier as online databases and digitized records bring more pension indexes and files to our fingertips. This workbook will arm you with the knowledge you need to scout out and capture your ancestor's pension file. We'll also examine records for each conflict, run through some quick drills and provide a worksheet to help track your research.

Clues in pension records

The US government issued pensions under various conditions, which changed over time. Disabled veterans applied for invalid pensions, documenting their physical hardships. Widows of men who died of war wounds applied for widows' pensions, citing loss of support for themselves and their children. Veterans and widows who lived long enough applied for service-based pensions when new laws made them eligible. The government, hesitant to hand out money on word alone, required proof that the applicant qualified for benefits. This often created thick files of affidavits, letters, service confirmations, marriage records, physical examinations and more.

Not every man who served in the military from 1775 to 1865 received a pension. A veteran or his survivors had to qualify under existing laws, file applications with the necessary documentation, and be approved by the government to receive benefits. These steps were laden with difficulty.

Pensions based on service, rather than death or disability, were generally unavailable until decades after the conflict ended. As a result, many veterans died before they could apply. In addition, some early pension records have been lost. Most pension files include personal and military

information. Civil War files tend to be larger than files from earlier wars. In a typical veteran's file, you might find:

- the soldier or sailor's full name
- his rank and the name of his company, unit or ship
- his date and place of enlistment
- his age and residence at time of enlistment
- his term of service or date of discharge
- his date and/or place of birth
- his residence at time of application
- descriptions of his service, wounds and claims
- testimonies of comrades, friends and neighbors

If a soldier applied for a pension, and then his wife applied for a widow's pension after his death, you'll find the files together. Most widows' files hold genealogical data such as:

- the widow's maiden name
- her date and/or place of birth and death
- her age and residence
- the date and place of her marriage to the soldier
- names and ages of their living children
- birth dates of minor children
- information about any previous marriages
- the veteran's date and place of death

This information, usually scattered throughout a file, can point your research in many directions. The date and place of enlistment can help you identify your ancestor in census, land and tax records. Birth information opens possibilities for finding parents. Marriage and death dates can substitute for missing vital records. An elderly pensioner's file might help you trace the family's migration over a lifetime.

Because pension files contain more personal details than compiled service records, seeking out the pension first helps you make sure you have the correct person. From the pension, you'll get the information you need to find the right service record, any bounty land warrants granted and associated records like pension ledgers, vouchers and last payments.

Finally, the affidavits of comrades, relatives and neighbors give you a glimpse into the pensioner's circle of friends. Their statements help you reconstruct the family and understand events. Not only can this lead you to additional records, it brings the story of your family's wartime and postwar challenges, joys and heartbreaks to life.

Revolutionary War pensions

After the American Revolution, the new US government was land-rich and cash-poor. Prior to 1818, veterans of the Continental Army and state militia units were more likely to be compensated with bounty land grants than with pension payments. Pensions were initially restricted to officers, severely disabled veterans, and widows of men who died in the war. Unfortunately, nearly all of the earliest pension files were destroyed in a War Department fire in 1800. Another fire in 1814 claimed more records.

An 1818 act granted service pensions to men who'd served in the Continental Army or Navy for at least nine months.

FAST FACTS

- **RECORDS BEGIN:** 1775, but few Revolutionary War pension files issued prior to 1814 survive
- **RECORDS END:** Union Civil War pension files closed by 1928 are at the National Archives (NARA); files still open later may be held by the Veteran's Administration
- **KEY DETAILS IN PENSION RECORDS:** soldier's name, age, rank, unit name or number, date and place of enlistment, service term, residence and disability (if any); in widows' files, also the maiden name, age, date of veteran's death, date and place of marriage, names and ages of minor children; records also may include previous marriages, names of relatives, and birth dates and places.
- **WHERE TO FIND:** most federal pensions are at NARA; Confederate Civil War pensions are at state archives where pensioner lived; Revolutionary War and some War of 1812 and Civil War Union pensions are on microfilm and digitized; indexes to other federal pensions are on microfilm and online
- **HOW TO ORDER FROM NARA:** use NATF Form 85 <archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/pre-ww-1-records.html>
- **ONLINE AVAILABILITY:** Ancestry.com <ancestry.com>, FamilySearch.org <www.familysearch.org>, Fold3 <www.fold3.com>, some state archive websites
- **SEARCH TERMS:** *Revolutionary War*, *War of 1812* or *Civil War* plus *pension records*; *Union pensions*; *Confederate pensions* plus the state name
- **ASSOCIATED RECORDS:** compiled service records, payment vouchers and ledgers, unit histories, pension rolls, lineage society applications, soldiers' home records, 1890 veterans' census, bounty land grants

Surviving Revolutionary War pensions are held at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, DC.

Response was so great that two years later, a new law required applicants to show financial need. Not until 1832 were benefits extended to anyone who'd served at least six months in Continental forces or a state militia. By that time, the ranks of survivors were thinning rapidly. Laws governing widows' pensions became more generous starting in 1836.

Surviving Revolutionary War pensions are at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in Washington, DC. They're alphabetized and microfilmed (see NARA microfilm M804). A finding aid, *Index of Revolutionary War Pension Applications in the National Archives*, is in many libraries. In addition, the files are now digitized, indexed and available at subscription sites Fold3 <www.fold3.com> and Ancestry.com <ancestry.com>, and free at FamilySearch.org <www.familysearch.org>.

A collection of selected records from NARA microfilm M805 draws from the same set of files, but contains no more than 10 pages deemed to have the most genealogical value from each file. HeritageQuest Online <www.heritagequestonline.com>, accessible via subscribing libraries, has digitized and indexed this film.

Several other online collections can enhance your Revolutionary War pension research. Ancestry.com's database "American Revolutionary War Rejected Pensions," includes rejected application files, and the "U.S. Pensioners, 1818-1872" database contains Treasury Department pension ledgers describing payments made to veterans and widows. These ledgers are helpful in tracking migration and may name heirs. The same records are in the FamilySearch's unindexed database "United States Revolutionary War Pension Payment Ledgers, 1818-1872."

Fold3 has the "Final Payment Vouchers Index for Military Pensions, 1818-1864," a finding aid for locating the last payment made to a veteran or to his heirs. It's particularly valuable for identifying relationships.

War of 1812 pensions

The War of 1812 utilized seamen on the Atlantic coast and Great Lakes, regular Army troops and local militias organized by county and state. After the war ended in 1815, the federal government—which had not yet begun issuing service pensions for the Revolutionary War—wrestled with how to compensate these men.

AT A GLANCE:

REVOLUTIONARY WAR PENSION FILE

New-York (H) 1st

1 Mercy Seely 2547
widow of Samuel Seely, dead.
N.Y.

2 who died on the tenth of January, 1827,
of Channing Co. in the State of New-York
who was a Pri. of Reg. in the company
by Captain E. Mottshull. of the Regt. commanded
by Col. A. Laughlin in the N. York
1st Private of Dragoons, 4 mos.
Cornet of Dragoons, 2 mos.

4 Inscribed on the Roll of Albany —
at the rate of \$3 Dollars 30 Cents per annum,
to commence on the 4th day of March, 1834.

Certificate of Pension issued the 9th day of March,
1834 and sent to Thos. May-
well, Esq. Elmira, N. Y.

Accrues to the 4th of March, 1834 \$346.40
Semi-annual allowance ending 4th Sept. — 21.65

5 \$368.05
{ Revolutionary Claim,
Act July 4, 1836,
Section the 3^d }

Recorded by S. S. Elish Clerk,
Book A Vol. 2 Page 118.

1 Mercy Seely, widow of Samuel Seely, received this pension for his service in New York. Like many veterans, Samuel died before an 1832 law made service pensions available.

2 The pension folder indicates Samuel Seely died Jan. 10, 1827. Because this is long before New York began keeping death records, it's valuable evidence.

3 The name of the company and its officers, and the type of service, might prompt you to explore battles and wartime experiences. For example, what was a "Cornet of Dragoons?"

4 Pension payments were vitally important to your ancestors, and can suggest where money to buy property or distribute to heirs came from.

5 This folder is just one of 34 pages in Samuel's file, which contains sworn testimonies, official confirmations, proof of marriage and various letters.

CITATION FOR THIS RECORD:

"Revolutionary War Pensions," digital images, Fold3.com (<http://www.fold3.com>: accessed 2 June 2014), file of Samuel Seely (Capt. Woohull's Company, Orange Co., New York); citing NARA microfilm publication M804, Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files, no roll specified.

AT A GLANCE:

CIVIL WAR UNION ARMY PENSION INDEX CARD

NAME OF SOLDIER:		King, Wesley			(2-11-5)
NAME OF DEPENDENT:		Widow, Minor,	King, Mary E.		
SERVICE:		1 B 91 Ohio Inf.			
DATE OF FILING.	CLASS.	APPLICATION NO.	CERTIFICATE NO.	STATE FROM WHICH FILED.	
2 1891 Jan. 29	Invalid,	986 003	1010035	Mo.	
3 1924 July 22	Widow, Minor,	1221760	952,562	4	Mo.
ATTORNEY:		C. S. McArthur			
REMARKS:		5			

1 The unit number in the Service box (Co. B, 91st Ohio Infantry) makes it possible to identify the soldier in service records and rosters. Search for a unit history to learn more about the soldier's wartime experiences.

2 Wesley King applied for an invalid (disability) pension Jan. 29, 1891, in Missouri. The special 1890 veterans' census might reveal the town he lived in.

3 His widow, Mary E. King, applied for a pension July 22, 1924, in Missouri, suggesting when and where to look for Wesley's death, burial and probate records.

4 Use the widow's certificate No. 952,562 to order the entire pension file from the National Archives. It will include the earlier invalid file pages.

5 If you find an X or XC number at the bottom of the card, the file was still open after 1928 and may be at the Veteran's Administration. (There's no such designation here.)

CITATION FOR THIS RECORD: "U.S. Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934," digital image, Ancestry.com (<http://www.ancestry.com>: accessed 27 May 2014), card for Wesley King (Co. B, 91st Ohio Infantry); citing NARA microfilm publication T288, General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934, roll 262.

The first post-War of 1812 acts offered half-pay pensions to widows and orphans of men who'd died in action or from wounds incurred during the war. The family received half of the monthly pay their soldier or sailor was entitled to for a period of five years, later extended to 10. Veterans who'd sustained disability also could apply for invalid pensions.

Nearly 60 years after the War of 1812 began, its veterans and their widows finally became eligible for service pensions under the Acts of 1871 and 1873. Restrictions on the length and type of service, and date of marriage if a widow, limited the number of applicants. The Act of 1878 lifted the restrictions and granted pensions based on as little as 14 days of service.

Regular Army death and disability applications comprise part of NARA's "Old Wars" series of pension files, which also includes records from the Mexican War and various Indian wars. The files haven't been microfilmed or digitized, but you can search digitized index cards at FamilySearch.org. See directions below for ordering the files from NARA.

War of 1812 pension application files also are arranged alphabetically at NARA. An index of file jacket envelopes is on microfilm (M313) and online in the Ancestry.com "War of 1812 Pension Application Files Index, 1812-1815" database. A second and smaller index, known as the Remarried Widows' Index, is on microfilm (M1784) and online at FamilySearch <www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1979426>.

Digitization efforts to bring the War of 1812 pension files online are underway. The Preserve the Pensions project <www.preservethepensions.org> will make free digital images available on Fold3. Imaging has started alphabetically. Check the database <go.fold3.com/1812pensions> for your ancestor's record if his surname begins with letters A through G. At present, most files must still be ordered from NARA.

Because land was the preferred compensation for servicemen until the mid-1800s, always look for a bounty land warrant for your War of 1812 ancestor. Our Land Records Workbook <shopfamilytree.com/workbook-land-records> helps you find federal land warrants and patents. Some veterans' bounty land papers were consolidated into their pension files.

Civil War pensions

The Civil War pulled an unprecedented number of American men into military service. Even before the war ended in 1865, parents, widows, orphans, and wounded men looked to their governments for relief. Both the federal government and former Confederate state governments responded.

■ **UNION:** Volunteers and draftees bolstered Union forces. As these men and their widows aged and new laws took effect, pension rolls swelled into the 20th century. The first pension law for Union widows, orphans and disabled soldiers was enacted in 1862. Later acts were less stringent, but until 1907, death and disability were the only grounds for a pension. The Act of May 11, 1912, granted service-based pensions to most veterans of the Civil War and Mexican War. Widows' compensation became more generous in 1916 and 1920.

Websites

- **Ancestry.com: Pensions**
<search.ancestry.com/search/category.aspx?cat=129>
- **Confederate Pension Records guide**
<archives.gov/research/military/civil-war/confederate/pension.html>
- **Cyndi's List: US Military Records**
<cyndislist.com/us/military/records>
- **FamilySearch Wiki: US Military Pension Records**
<www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/US_Military_Pension_Records>
- **FamilySearch: US Military Records Collections**
<www.familysearch.org/search/collection/list?page=1®ion=UNITED_STATES&recordType=Military>
- **Fold3**
<www.fold3.com>
- **Georgia Confederate Pension Applications**
<cdm.georgiaarchives.org:2011/cdm/landingpage/collection/TestApps>
- **HeritageQuest Online**
<www.heritagequestonline.com>
- **National Archives: Research Military Records**
<archives.gov/research/military>
- **National Society Daughters of the American Revolution**
<www.dar.org/national-society/genealogy>
- **National Society United States Daughters of 1812**
<www.usdaughters1812.org>
- **Papers of the War Department, 1784-1800**
<www.wardeaprtmentpapers.org>
- **Understanding Civil War Pensions**
<drbronsontours.com/pensionsunderstanding/civilwarpensions.html>

Publications and Resources

- *Genealogical Resources of the Civil War Era* by William Dollarhide (Family Roots Publishing Co.)
- *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives of the United States, 3rd Ed.*, by Anne Bruner Eales and Robert M. Kvasnicka (NARA)
- *Index of Revolutionary War Pension Applications in the National Archives* (National Genealogical Society)
- *Index to Old Wars Pension Files, 1815-1926* by Virgil White (National Historical Publishing Co.)
- *Index to War of 1812 Pension Files* by Virgil White (National Historical Publishing Co.)
- *Military Pension Laws, 1776-1858* by Christine Rose (CR Publications)
- *Revolutionary War Pensions* by Lloyd de Witt Bockstruck (Genealogical Publishing Co.)
- *U.S. Military Records* by James C. Neagles (Ancestry)

Put It Into Practice

1. True or False: Most men who served in the military between 1775 and 1865 were eligible to apply for a pension immediately after being discharged from the service.

2. Which resource typically contains more personal details for genealogy?

- a. a compiled service record
- b. a pension record

3. Where are most pension files issued by the federal government held, and how can you get a copy of one that's not available online?

EXERCISE A: Go to Fold3's <www.fold3.com> main search page, click on War of 1812 and browse all War of 1812 titles. Select the free War of 1812 Pension Files collection. Enter the name Thomas Campbell in the search box and hit Go. When results appear, select the soldier from North Carolina (his file contains 74 pages). Click on View Larger.

1. What company did Thomas serve in?

2. What was Thomas' wife's maiden name? When and where did they marry?

3. What else does the card show Hannah received for Thomas' service?

4. Write a citation for this record, using the source information that appears beside the image. (Browse through the pages to see the variety of documents the file contains.)

EXERCISE B: Choose an ancestor who served in the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 or Civil War who might have received a pension. Search for him in the databases on Ancestry.com, FamilySearch and Fold3 discussed in this article. If you find an index card, but the pension file itself is not online, determine the certificate number you'd use to order it.

All Civil War Army pension application files at NARA are in the "Civil War and Later" series in Record Group 15. The vast majority of these pension files aren't microfilmed or digitized, although a fraction are at Fold3 <www.fold3.com/title_24/civil_war_widows_pensions>.

Two pension indexes can help you find your soldier's file: The General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934, arranged alphabetically by veteran's name, is on microfilm (T288) and online at FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com. The Organizational Index, arranged by state and military unit, is on microfilm (T289) and online at Fold3.

When searching these indexes, it's helpful to know the soldier's unit, state and widow's name to ensure you've identified the right man. Both sets of cards indicate the filing date, application number and certificate number of the invalid and/or widows' pension. Use the last number assigned to order the file from NARA. One exception: If your ancestor was still receiving benefits after about 1928, you'll see an X or XC on the General Index card. While you should still check NARA first, this indicates the Veteran's Administration may hold the file.

FamilySearch's US Civil War Era Records web page <www.familysearch.org/civil-war> is a good launching point for Union and Confederate Civil War research. Related Union records on FamilySearch.org include Veteran's Administration Pension Payment Cards (1907-1933), Remarried Widows Index to Pension Applications (1887-1942) and Index to General Correspondence of the Pension Office (1889-1904).

In addition, a five-volume list of 1883 pension rolls is digitized on Ancestry.com <search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=31387> and free via Google Books <books.google.com>. If your ancestor served in the Navy, check the Navy Survivors' Certificates and Navy Widows' Certificates (from NARA microfilms M1469 and M1279, respectively) of approved naval pensions from 1861 to 1910. Both collections are online at Fold3 and in Ancestry.com's "US Navy Pensions Index, 1861-1910" database.

■ **CONFEDERATE:** Following the Civil War, each southern state issued its own pension laws and retained its own records. NARA doesn't hold Confederate pension files; you must get them from the state that issued them. Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia all have pension collections.

A Confederate soldier had to apply for a pension from the state where he was currently living. This wasn't necessarily



TIP: Confederate Civil War pensions were granted by the state where the pensioner lived at the time of application.

MORE ONLINE



Free Web Content

- Revolutionary War genealogy web resources <familytreemagazine.com/article/Revolutionary-War-Web-Resources>
- Star-spangled genealogy <familytreemagazine.com/article/war-of-1812-genealogy>
- War of 1812 records <familytreemagazine.com/article/AncestorNews-War-of-1812-Records>



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- Archives.gov web guide <familytreemagazine.com/article/archivesgov-genealogy-web-guide>
- Fold3 web guide <familytreemagazine.com/article/fold3-web-guide>
- Searching the Daughters of the American Revolution database <familytreemagazine.com/article/toolkit-tutorial-searching-dar-databases>



ShopFamilyTree.com

- Online Military Records: Document Your Family's Service webinar <shopfamilytree.com/online-military-records-webinar>
- Researching Revolutionary War Ancestors video course <shopfamilytree.com/research-revolutionary-war-ancestors-digital-download-u6132>
- What's in a Civil War Pension File? video class <shopfamilytree.com/digw-what-s-in-a-civil-war-pension>

the state for which he served during the war. Like the federal government, most Southern states initially offered pensions only for death and disability. General service pensions came later, and many required applicants to prove financial need. Some Southern states have suffered record losses; for example, most South Carolina pensions issued before 1919 were lost in a fire.

NARA is still a good place to begin your search because of its online Confederate Pension Records guide <archives.gov/research/military/civil-war/confederate/pension.html>. The guide gives contact information for each state agency, along with links to databases. Another helpful resource with links is the FamilySearch Wiki Confederate pension records article <www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Confederate_Pension_Records>. FamilySearch has microfilmed all known Confederate pension records and digitized many.

Increasingly, more state indexes and records are appearing online. Ancestry.com has pension collections for every southern state except South Carolina. Find them by going to Ancestry.com's online database catalog and entering *Confederate pension* in the Keyword search box.

Ordering and using a pension file

Once you've identified your ancestor in a pension index, you'll probably be eager to get a copy of the file. You can obtain copies from NARA in person, by mail or online using NATF Form 85. Find instructions and links at <archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/pre-ww-1-records.html> in the Military Pension/Bounty Land Application section. Select the full or complete file (not the pension documents packet) for the right time period. Pre-Civil War files cost \$55. Civil War and later files cost \$80 for up to 100 pages; if the file is longer, they'll tell you how to order the rest of it. You can opt to receive paper copies or a PDF file on CD/DVD. Allow up to 90 days to receive your order. To order a Confederate Civil War pension file, contact the appropriate state archive.

Once you receive a copy of a pension file, what do you do with your find? The pages of the file may not be in logical order, but first, carefully read through it just the way you receive it. It may reveal names, dates and relationships for your family history. Experts recommend transcribing the

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE ANSWERS

1 False. 2 b. 3 The National Archives (NARA) in Washington, DC. Order online or by mail using NATF Form 85. **EXERCISE A** 1 Capt. Thomas Crawford's Company, North Carolina Militia. 2 Hannah Brandon, married Nov. 20, 1817, in Rowan County, NC. 3 Bounty land (Hannah received two warrants, each for 80 acres). 4 War of 1812 Pension Files," Thomas Campbell; digital images, Fold3.com (<http://www.fold3.com>: accessed 24 May 2014), from National Archives, Record Group 15, War of 1812 Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, 1871-1900.

pages word for word to best absorb and correlate the information. For long files, you may have to selectively transcribe the pages that contain pertinent information.

After noting the original page order, you can rearrange the pages chronologically or sort them according to your needs. Keep a list of questions that come to mind as you read and think about the records. Can you find something in the file that suggests an answer? Where else might you look?

Common abbreviations you might find in files include:

- **S.O.:** Soldier's original application for a pension
- **S.C.:** Soldier's certificate number of approved pension
- **W.O.:** Widow's original application
- **W.C.:** Widow's certificate number
- **B.L.:** Bounty land warrant number

As you become familiar with pension records, you'll probably find it helpful to learn more about military service, pension laws and types of associated records. See the Toolkit box for resources to help you understand your ancestor's experiences. A pension file may lead you to service records, unit histories, bounty land grants, payment vouchers, marriage or divorce records, cemeteries, the registers of soldiers' or orphans' homes, the special 1890 veterans' census, lineage society records and more.

Your Revolutionary War, War of 1812 or Civil War ancestor likely put considerable time and effort into applying for a military pension. Fortunately, it's easier than ever to get a copy of that pension record today. As some of the largest and most interesting sources that genealogists use, pension files have the potential to reveal key dates, places, names and events. Adding them to your research arsenal can open up a whole new frontier for discovering your ancestors. ■

MILITARY PENSION RECORDS WORKSHEET

Use this form to organize information that can help you in your search for an ancestor's military pension record. If you're not sure of a detail, leave it blank or provide your best guess(es) based on research you've done. Update the information as you uncover new records.

Ancestor Information

Name _____

Birth date/approximate year _____ Age when war began _____

State(s) and county(ies) where he resided before war _____

State(s) and county(ies) where he resided after war _____

Date and place of death_____

Cemetery where buried _____

Name of first/only wife _____ Marriage date and place _____

Second wife's name _____ Marriage date and place _____

If widow remarried, what was her new surname?

Military Service Information

Name _____

War _____ If Civil War, Union or Confederate? _____

Type of service (circle): US Army US Navy colonial militia state militia other_____

Unit name/number (if known) _____

Rank (if known)

Commanding officer's name (if known)

What indications of service have been found? (Check all that apply.)

What indications of service have been found? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ family history or lore
 - ☐ published roster or muster roll
 - ☐ service record
 - ☐ draft registration (Civil War)
 - ☐ pension voucher or list
 - ☐ soldiers' home records
 - ☐ county history
 - ☐ online index
 - ☐ bounty land record
 - ☐ 1890 veteran's census
 - ☐ lineage society database
 - ☐ tombstone marker
 - ☐ other _____

Pension Records Search Tracker

[illegible]

**JOIN THE
MARCH TO
SEARCH OUT
MILITARY
RECORDS
ON THE WEB.**

OPERATION ONLINE RECORDS

BY RICK CRUME



Just about everyone has a relative who answered Uncle Sam's call to arms, and the resulting records rank right up there as one of the best genealogical sources you can get: Military service papers and pension applications tell you details about a soldier's life, his family members, and the time and places he served. Those who didn't join up still might appear in draft registration records or a relative's pension application.

But some of these records haven't been easy to get—requiring renting (and then waiting for) microfilm from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) <archives.gov> or the Family History Library. Entire collections, such as Civil War pensions, aren't yet microfilmed, and you have to visit NARA in Washington, DC, or pay (through the nose, some might say) to order paper copies by mail. To rectify the situation on a tight budget, NARA has turned to partnerships with other organizations—notably Ancestry.com <ancestry.com>, Footnote <footnote.com> and FamilySearch <www.familysearch.org>—which have digitized, indexed and posted thousand of records. And these and other sites, such as HeritageQuest Online <heritagequestonline.com>, already had images of military records from NARA microfilm and books of muster rolls.

With this confusing array of online options, how do you know whether you still have to order records by mail (see the box on page 52) or if they're on the Web? And what site should you start with? Our maneuvers will help you navigate to genealogical records from the Revolutionary War through the Vietnam War.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR

There's a good chance your Colonial-era male ancestor of age fought in the Revolutionary War—and not necessarily for those seeking independence. Follow our formula to find his records online.

■ **Muster rolls** in family and local histories can help you determine if your ancestor

fought in the Revolutionary War. For instance, a history of Haverhill, Mass., says my ancestor James Snow, a member of Capt. James Sawyer's company, trained as a minuteman in spring 1775. This and other histories are part of HeritageQuest Online, searchable free through subscribing libraries (contact your library to ask about the service and whether you can log on from home via the library's Web site). Footnote (\$59.95 a year) also has digitized muster rolls.

■ **Records of the Daughters of the American Revolution** (DAR) <dar.org> may reveal a Patriot in your tree. Start searching with Ancestry.com's (\$155.40 per year) DAR Lineage Books database <ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=3174> of 2.4 million names from DAR membership applications. (If you're not an Ancestry.com subscriber, see if your library offers Ancestry Library Edition.) Search by the applicant (in the given name and surname boxes) or the patriot ancestor (using the keyword box). You can order a copy of the membership application for \$10 following the instructions at <dar.org/library/record_copy.cfm>. The lineage books may contain errors—documentation requirements

weren't always as stringent as they are now. Fortunately, more-recent members have updated much data. You also might find your ancestor in the DAR Patriot Index, a three-volume set with facts on 100,000-plus people. Request a free lookup at <www.dar.org/natsociety/pi_lookup.cfm>.

■ **Revolutionary War pension files** may reveal a birthplace, description of service, postwar residence and pension amount. They're digitized on HeritageQuest: Click Search Revolutionary War, then enter some combination of given name, surname, state and unit of service. Select a last name in the matches to see the pension application; use the right arrow on the Image button to view other pages in the file. Click Download to save the file to your computer. These records are from NARA microfilm M805, which includes up to 10 pages from each soldier's file, but has only significant genealogical documents from larger files.

Footnote, though, offers NARA microfilm M804, which includes the entire pension files. Click Browse and select Revolution: 1775-1815 as the category, and Revolutionary War Pensions as the title. Optionally, select a state and scroll down to enter a name in the search box.

AT YOUR SERVICE

Look over your family tree to find ancestors, especially men, who were born during the following time periods, then check military draft, service or pension indexes for the corresponding conflicts. (These are general guidelines; men and women who served at very young or old ages may fall outside these ranges.)

If the birth year is ...	Look for records of the ...
1726-1767	Revolutionary War (1775-1783)
1762-1799	War of 1812 (1812-1815)
1796-1831	Mexican War (1846-1848)
1811-1848	Civil War (1861-1865)
1848-1881	Spanish-American War (1898)
1849-1885	Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902)
1872-1900	World War I (1917-1918)
1877-1925	World War II (1941-1945)
1900-1936	Korean War (1950-1953)
1914-1955	Vietnam War (1964-1972)

■ **Service records:** Footnote's Revolutionary War Service Records include compiled service records for the Continental Army, state troops and some state and local militias. You might look for a soldier's pension file first to identify his unit, before searching for his service file.

■ If your Revolutionary-era relative sided with the British Crown, try the free

Loyalist records in the On-Line Institute for Advanced Loyalist Studies <www.royalprovincial.com>. In addition to a muster roll index, you'll find regimental documents, land petitions and postwar settlement papers. Be sure to look for variant spellings: I couldn't find my ancestor James Pennington, a soldier in the Queen's American Rangers, until I tried entering

Penington—a muster roll showed he was taken prisoner July 20, 1779.

■ Land-rich and cash-poor, Uncle Sam issued **bounty-land grants** to eligible veterans of the Revolutionary War and War of 1812, part of Ancestry.com's US War Bounty Land Warrants, 1789-1858 <ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1165>. Typical information includes the veteran's rank and regiment, and the date the warrant was issued. HeritageQuest's Revolutionary War database includes bounty-land warrant application files.

WAR OF 1812

Despite its name, the War of 1812 with Great Britain lasted until 1815. The conflict involved about 60,000 US Army forces and 470,000 militia and volunteer troops, but only about 2,000 of them were killed. War Hawks came mostly from the Western and Southern states, while New Englanders generally opposed going to war.

■ Start your search with the War of 1812 **Service Records** index on Ancestry.com <ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=4281>, which lists almost 580,000 soldiers mustered into the armed forces between 1812 and 1815 (some soldiers are listed more than once). If you're dealing with a common name, enter the soldier's state in the Keywords box. Each record includes the name, company, and rank at induction and discharge. Use the microfilm roll information to order records from NARA.

■ The government originally awarded pensions only for service-related deaths and disabilities, but 1870s laws granted **pensions** based on service alone. Most War of 1812 veterans had died by then, but their survivors might have filed for pensions. Browse for your ancestors in Ancestry.com's War of 1812 pension application index, <ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1133> by choosing from a list of alphabetical ranges, then guessing at image numbers—the going is slow unless you have a fast Internet connection. Looking for James Hall, I finally found several in the H-Hame range on images 463 to 479; for most, the index card gives a state



of residence, service information and widow's name. Use the information on the card to request a copy of the pension application from NARA.

• **Bounty-land warrants** for these veterans are with Revolutionary War soldiers' on Ancestry.com (see opposite).

CIVIL WAR

The military service of the 3.5 million Civil War soldiers generated mountains of records, and their popularity has made them a digitization priority. Only a fraction of records are online as yet, but indexes are plentiful. Knowing your ancestor's state and unit number will help ensure you get the right files from NARA, especially if your soldier had a common name. At <www.familytreemagazine.com/articles/nov08/civilwarsearch.asp>, you can see how I used these sites to find my ancestor.

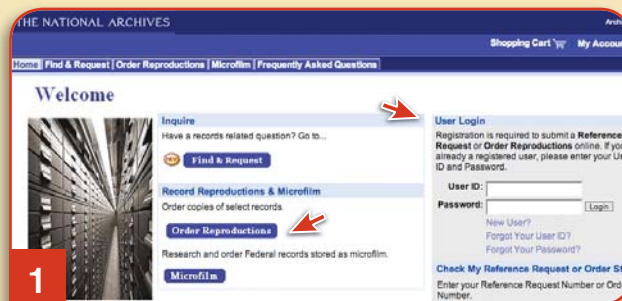
■ The **Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System** (CWSS) <www.itd.nps.gov/cwss> has service information on 6.3 million names of Civil War soldiers (those who served in different units are listed more than once) taken from NARA's General Index Cards to Union and Confederate soldiers. You'll also find regimental histories, battle descriptions and prisoner records. Ancestry.com has a similar soldier index <ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=4284>.

■ **Service records** may give the soldier's place of birth and dates of enlistment and discharge, and describe battle wounds, illnesses and medical treatment. Footnote is digitizing and posting Confederate service records for subscriber access. Click the down arrow by Browse and select Civil War, then Confederate Soldier Service Records. Optionally, choose a state and unit. Scroll down, enter a name in the search box and hit Go. (NARA has microfilmed Confederate service records; rent the film from the Family History Library by visiting a Family History Center near you <www.familytreemagazine.com/fhcs>.)

■ Part of the special **1890 census of Union veterans and widows** survived the fire that ruined the rest of that year's enumeration. If your veteran ancestor lived in Washington,

FOR THE RECORD

If the military record you need isn't digitized online or microfilmed, and you can't get to NARA in Washington, DC (or hire a researcher—see the box on the next page), use NARA's Order Online system. First, you'll need to know your soldier's name, the war he served in and the state from which he served. Then follow these steps:



1 Go to <archives.gov/order>.

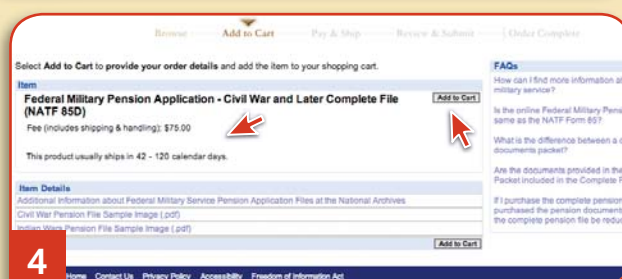
Log in on the right or click New User? to register with the site. Once you're logged in, come back to this screen and click Order Reproductions.



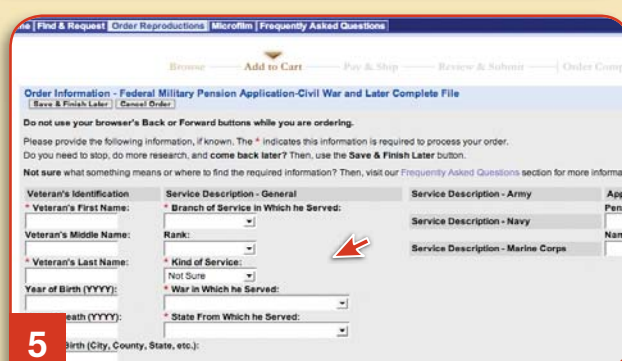
2 Under Record Reproductions, select Military Service and Pension Records (that's what we chose) or WWI Draft Registration Cards.



3 From the list of pre-WWI records, click the record you need (we chose Civil War and later pension records).



4 Note the fee and estimated wait for the record. For more information or sample records, click the items under Item Details. Then select Add to Cart.



5 Fill in what you know about your relative. Let the system idle too long and you'll get kicked out, so if you must pause, click Save and Finish Later. Click Continue to Pay and Ship (at the bottom) to enter your address and credit card information.

DC, or one of the states alphabetically from Kentucky to Wyoming, you're in luck. Look for his name in Ancestry.com's 1890 Veterans Schedules database <ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8667>. Just remember that the information, recorded 25 years after the fact, might have errors caused by foggy memories—two of my 1890 relatives named the wrong unit.

■ The **American Civil War Research Database** <www.civilwardata.com> (\$25 per year, or \$10 a week for just service information) summarizes a variety of resources, including state rosters, pension indexes, regimental histories and Rolls of Honor. Use it to identify a soldier's service dates and unit, as well as the unit's casualty statistics. Ancestry.com has a version of this database, but it's not updated often.

■ A Civil War veteran, his spouse or other family members could file for a **pension**.

Eventually, due to a partnership, you'll be able to view images of Union pension records at Footnote with a subscription, or at Family History Centers for free. For now, look for an online pension application index. The free FamilySearch Record Search pilot site <labs.familysearch.org> has added a database of Union pension index cards (it also includes some veterans of the Spanish-American War, Philippine Insurrection and World War I). Click Record Search and select the database in the Military section. Enter the soldier's name and, optionally, narrow your search by typing his state of enlistment in the Place field.

You can search transcriptions of the same Civil War Union pension index cards for free on Footnote. Click on the arrow beside Browse by Historical Era and select Civil War. Under Title, click Civil War Pensions Index and then, optionally, choose a state

and branch of service. Scroll down, enter a name in the Search box and hit Go. Ancestry.com also has a pension index <ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=4654>, searchable by the state where the application was filed (not necessarily the state from which the soldier served).

The former Confederate states granted pensions for their veterans, so application records aren't centralized. Look for online indexes at state archive Web sites; Florida <www.floridamemory.com/collections/pensionfiles> and Georgia <content.sos.state.ga.us/cdm4/pension.php> even have the actual records online. For more help, see NARA's links at <archives.gov/genealogy/military/civil-war/confederate/pension.html>.

SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

Just 280,564 American sailors, marines and soldiers served in the Spanish-American War—far fewer than in the Civil War and the two World Wars. Engagements took place mostly in Cuba and the Philippines. Of those soldiers, 2,061 died from various causes. The **Spanish-American War Centennial** site <www.spanamwar.com> has rosters and historical information. You'll find a surname index to Teddy Roosevelt's famous **Rough Riders** on the free Access Genealogy site <www.accessgenealogy.com/military/spanish/rough_riders.htm>; that unit's service records are online in NARA's Archival Research Catalog <arcweb.archives.gov>. Order copies of other soldiers' service records and pension files from NARA.

PHILIPPINE INSURRECTION

More than 125,000 American soldiers served in the Philippines; 4,000 of them died during the conflict. The **1900 US census** covered military personnel stationed in the Philippines, Cuba and Puerto Rico. In Ancestry.com's 1900 census database, select Military and Naval Forces as the state of residence. In HeritageQuest Online, select Military and Naval as the state. My relative Charles A. Adsit of Cuba, NY, is

ONLY ON PAPER

NARA hasn't microfilmed most military service and pension files, but it'll make photocopies for a fee. The voluminous, fragile collections can complicate the job of locating and photocopying files. Record fees rose in October 2007, to \$25 for service files predating Oct. 31, 1912. Civil War and later pensions jumped from \$37 to \$75 (for up to 100 pages, plus 65 cents for each additional page). A pre-Civil War pension file now costs \$50. Fortunately, I'd already ordered my ancestors' Civil War service and pension files—at the current rates, they'd average out to \$4.17 and \$2.34 per page, respectively.

If the records you need aren't in online resources and you can't avoid fees by personally visiting NARA in Washington, DC, it may be cheaper to hire an on-site researcher—see <archives.gov/research/hire-help> for information. Last year, I paid an hourly researcher \$81.50 for copies of two Civil War service files and two Civil War pension files, which I received within two weeks. The same copies would cost \$200 from NARA, with a two-to-four-month wait.

If you're going ahead with a NARA records request, for pre-WWI conflicts, see our step-by-step instructions for using NARA's Order Online system on the previous page.

There's a good chance your WWI and WWII relatives' service records were among those destroyed in a 1973 fire at NARA's National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis. Eighty percent of service files for Army personnel discharged between Nov. 1, 1912 and Jan. 1, 1960, burned. Still, consider putting in a request. For privacy reasons, only limited information from these files is released to the general public; for more details, see <archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/public/general-public.html>. But veterans and their next-of-kin are eligible to get free copies of surviving military personnel record for World War I and later conflicts; see <archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/get-service-records.html> for instructions.

listed as a 30-year-old musician stationed in the Philippines in the 13th infantry's Company E. Ancestry.com's military collection also has books with rosters from a handful of states. You can order service and pension records from NARA.

WORLD WAR I

In 1917 and 1918, about 24 million male residents of the United States completed **WWI draft registration cards**. All men born between Sept. 11, 1872, and Sept. 12, 1900—about a quarter of the US population—had to register. Those records are part of Ancestry.com's military collection <ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=6482>, with images showing full name, residence, date of birth, occupation, physical description and name of the nearest relative.

WORLD WAR II

Most 20th-century military personnel records, including many files for the 16.5 million men and women in World War II, were lost in a 1973 fire—but you still can find WWII veterans in online records.

- Seven **WWII draft registrations** occurred between 1940 and 1943, but due to privacy restrictions, only the fourth—the “old man’s registration” of those born between April 28, 1877, and Feb. 16, 1897—is open to the public. (Those men weren’t liable for military service, so you’re unlikely to find service records for them.) Information on the registration cards includes place of residence, date and place of birth, employer and the nearest relative.

Ancestry.com's WWII Draft Registration Cards, 1942 <ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1002>, has draft cards from 17 states; more will be added as NARA microfilms them. The free FamilySearch Labs also is adding the card images to its Record Search. Fourth-registration draft cards for most Southern states were mistakenly destroyed without being micro-filmed, so they're lost for good.

- Look for those who joined up in **WWII Army Enlistment Records**, 1938-1946, on both NARA's free Access to Archival



Databases (AAD) site <aad.archives.gov/aad> and Ancestry.com <ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8939>. The 8.3 million records cover most men and women who served in the Army during the war, and include residence, place of birth, and height and weight.

KOREAN WAR

Privacy concerns have kept most post-WWII records offline. But AAD has four files of **casualty lists**—military personnel who were injured, died or taken prisoner.

VIETNAM WAR

AAD has three Vietnam War **casualty list** files. You also can browse states' lists at <archives.gov/research/vietnam-war/casualty-lists/state-level-alpha.html>.

Footnote's free Interactive **Vietnam Veterans Memorial** database <go.footnote.com/thewall> lets you search or browse for names of those killed in the war. Each records links to an image of the name on the Vietnam memorial wall in Washington, DC, and details about the soldier.

The plethora of online military indexes and digitized images can be confusing, but many records are easier to find now than ever before. With our reconnaissance work, you're on the path to recruiting your ancestor's military past. 🐞

Contributing editor **RICK CRUME** wishes he could find the family Bible mentioned in his ancestor Henry J. Hall's Civil War pension file. Henry, who needed the Bible to prove his birth date, couldn't find it, either.



WORKBOOK

Draft Records

BY SHELLEY K. BISHOP

♣ **US MILITARY DRAFT** records are potentially untapped sources of information on male ancestors and sometimes their female family members. Even men who didn't serve in the military may have had to register under one of the conscription acts for the Civil War, World War I, or World War II. Online resources make it easy for today's savvy researcher to find and use draft records as a springboard for family history discoveries. We'll give you an overview of registration records created between 1862 and 1945, identify where to find them, and explain how to expand on the information they provide. We'll also give your skills a boost with more resources to explore, a bit of practice interpreting these records, and a worksheet to chart your searches.

Clues in Draft Records

Local districts or boards conducted draft registrations to identify men eligible for service in times of war—specifically, the Civil War and World Wars. Many of the registration lists and cards these boards created survive, providing a deep well of data on several generations of American men. Those born as early as 1816 and as late as 1920 could've been eligible to be drafted for one or more of these three wars.

Questions the draft boards asked registrants varied from war to war, and even from one registration to the next. Typically, you'll find information about the registrant's name, residence, age, date and place of birth, race, US citizenship and occupation.

Depending on the registration, you also may discover details about your ancestor's previous or current military service, his marital status, the name and address of a relative or contact person, a physical description, and his signature.

These findings can move your research forward in many ways. Birth information can tell you about births that occurred long before a state began keeping vital records. A

woman named as a man's nearest relative might narrow your search for a marriage record. An immigrant's claim to be a US citizen could lead to naturalization papers.

Draft information is also useful in combination with other evidence. Residence and occupation details can distinguish your relative from others with the same name. If you're "missing" a person in census records, a draft registration can indicate where he lived. Descriptions of height, build, hair and eye color can help you visualize your ancestor.

Civil War

Prior to the Civil War, the federal and state governments relied on offering free public land to attract volunteer soldiers in wartime. These bounty land incentives were discontinued by 1855. The Civil War brought an unprecedented need for troops on both the Union and Confederate sides. Governors from Maine to Mississippi issued calls for volunteers beginning in 1861. As the war escalated, the need for men reached crucial heights. Without the promise of free land to spur recruits (an incentive in previous wars), how could this demand be met?

Although the idea of a national draft faced considerable opposition in the North, it seemed the only viable solution. The Enrollment Act of 1863 required all men age 20 to 45 to register within their Congressional District, which often covered several counties.

The first Union registration took place July 1, 1863. Three smaller enrollments followed. For eligibility purposes, men were divided into classes. Those age 20 to 35 years, plus unmarried men age 36 to 45, were designated Class I. Nearly everyone else was Class II. In addition to name and residence, Northern draft registers typically show:

- age on the registration date
- whether white or colored

- occupation or trade
- whether married
- state or country of birth

The registrations were assembled into consolidated lists, many of which survive. You can find digital images of existing consolidated lists on subscription site Ancestry.com (which you can use free at libraries offering Ancestry Library Edition). For more-focused results, search within the site's US Military Records collection, <ancestry.com/cs/us/militaryrecords>. As a starting point, enter your ancestor's name and where you think he lived in 1863.

The original consolidated lists are in Record Group 110 (Records of the Provost Marshal General) at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) <archives.gov> in Washington, DC. The registration books from which they were compiled, which sometimes contain additional information, haven't been microfilmed or digitized. They're held at NARA's regional branches.

If your ancestor registered, does that mean he served in the war? Not necessarily. Those in Class II were rarely made to serve. Each community and state was responsible for filling a quota of men. If they could raise that number with volunteers, no one needed to be drafted, so volunteers were heavily encouraged. Some states, like Massachusetts and Ohio, never had to call up draftees. Even if they were drafted, men could be exempted from service if they were:

- physically or mentally impaired
- only sons of dependent widows or infirm parents
- widowers or orphans supporting young children

FAST FACTS

- **RECORD COVERAGE:** Civil War, World War I, World War II
- **KEY DETAILS IN DRAFT RECORDS:** name, address, age, date and/or place of birth, race, citizenship status, marital status, employment information, name of nearest relative, physical characteristics
- **FIND ORIGINAL RECORDS AT:** National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) <archives.gov> in Washington, DC; Southeast Region Archives in Atlanta; other NARA branches, and National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis
- **RESEARCH ONLINE AT:** Ancestry.com <ancestry.com>, FamilySearch.org <www.familysearch.org>, Findmypast.com <www.findmypast.com>, Fold3.com <www.fold3.com>
- **SEARCH TERMS:** *Civil War* (or *WWI* or *WWII*) plus *draft records*; *US draft registration records*
- **ASSOCIATED/SUBSTITUTE RECORDS:** military enlistment rosters, service records, state adjutant general's records, military unit histories, military pension records, newspapers, and county histories

Men born as early as 1816 and as late as 1920 could've been eligible to be drafted for one—or more—wars.

- non-citizens who hadn't declared intent to naturalize
- convicted of a felony
- able to furnish a substitute or pay a \$300 fee

The South also instituted a draft. The Confederate Conscription Act of 1862 required all white males age 18 to 35 years to register. This was extended to ages 17 to 50 by early 1864. Ministers, teachers, civil officials, tradesmen, railroad workers and plantation owners were typically exempt. Initially, a man could hire a substitute and pay up to \$1,000 to avoid service, but that allowance was scrapped in late 1863 due to bitter opposition. Men already enlisted for one-year terms automatically saw their service extended to three years.

There are no consolidated lists of Confederate registrations. Each Southern state conducted its own drafts. Many times, troops raised by conscript were merged with existing units. Relatively few Confederate conscription registers survive today, and those that do can be difficult to find.

The best place to begin your search for any existing Southern conscription records is in the state adjutant general's records. Some states compiled and published adjutant general records after the war. Georgia, for instance, published six volumes of *The Confederate Records of the State of Georgia*, which are available free on Google Books <books.google.com>.

If your ancestors lived in Tennessee, search the Civil War Sourcebook <www.tnsos.net/TSLA/cwsourcebook>, a digital collection of official records, diaries, letters and newspaper articles. South Carolina offers information about its Confederate Military Records at <archives.sc.gov/recordsheld/militaryrecords>. To learn more about Civil War records for individual states, North or South, see <www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/United_States_Civil_War_1861_to_1865_Part_1>.

World War I

The need for a national draft emerged again in 1917 when the United States entered the Great War. In response, Congress created the Selective Service System, consisting of local and state draft boards under the Office of the Provost Marshal. Three registrations took place in 1917 and 1918. In total, about 24 million men between the ages of 18 and 45, including noncitizens, were required to register. If your relative was born between September 1872 and September 1900, he was probably among them.

A draft board official asked questions of each man and recorded the answers on individual, two-sided cards. The questions varied by registration, but in general noted:

AT A GLANCE:

CIVIL WAR DRAFT LIST

EDULE II.—CONSOLIDATED LIST of all persons of CLASS II, subject to do military duty in the 6th Montgomery and Lehigh State of Pennsylvania, enumerated John J. Freedly, Provost Marshal.

RESIDENCE.	NAME.	DESCRIPTION.			PLACE OF BIRTH. (Naming the State, Territory, or Country.)	FORM
		AGE 1st July, 1863.	WHITE OR COLORED.	PROFESSION, OCCUPATION, OR TRADE.		
1 <u>Shohocken</u>	1 <u>Egbert Frank.</u>	44	White	Blk Smith	<u>Penna.</u>	
"	2 <u>Elliot Samuel</u>	35	"	3 <u>Laborer</u>	<u>Delaware</u>	4
<u>W. Norristown</u>	3 <u>Enderby Joseph</u>	39	"	<u>Restaurant</u>	<u>Germany</u>	
"	4 <u>Edler William</u>	42	"	<u>Grocer</u>	"	
"	5 <u>Epunright Rudolph</u>	44	"	<u>Shoemaker</u>	<u>Montg. Co</u>	
<u>Whitteman</u>	6 <u>Engle Albert J</u>	36	"	<u>Merchant</u>	<u>Penna</u>	
"	7 <u>Elliot William</u>	44	"	<u>Broker</u>	<u>Engl and</u>	
"	8 <u>Emory John</u>	37	"	<u>Farmer</u>	<u>Maryland</u>	
"	9 <u>Engle Eli</u>	43	"	"	<u>Penna.</u>	

1 This list (which is shown split into halves for larger viewing) was compiled in Pennsylvania's Montgomery and Lehigh counties in June 1863. Registrants' names are grouped by township.

2 Class II lists named primarily married men between ages 35 and 45. Younger and unmarried men were in Class I.

3 Occupation can help identify ancestors. Compare this listing of Samuel Elliot, laborer, to 1860 and other census records.

4 Place of birth offers clues to where men came from. Samuel Elliot may appear in Delaware records.

5 Union Civil War draftees could pay a \$300 commutation fee or send a substitute in their place, as William Elliot did.

military duty in the 6th Congressional District, consisting of the Counties of Pennsylvania, enumerated during the month of June, 1863, under direction of

PROFESSION, OCCUPATION, OR TRADE.	PLACE OF BIRTH. (Naming the State, Territory, or Country.)	FORMER MILITARY SERVICE.	REMARKS.	
<u>Smith</u>	<u>Penna.</u>			1
<u>laborer</u>	<u>Delaware</u>			2
<u>restaurant</u>	<u>Germany</u>			3
<u>grocer</u>	<u>"</u>			4
<u>shoemaker</u>	<u>Montg. Co</u>			5
<u>merchant</u>	<u>Penna</u>			6
<u>broker</u>	<u>Engl and</u>	<u>Drafted</u>	<u>Sent a Substitute.</u>	7
<u>farmer</u>	<u>Maryland</u>			8
<u>"</u>	<u>Penna.</u>			9

CITATION FOR THIS RECORD: "U.S. Civil War Draft Registrations Records, 1863-1865," digital image, Ancestry.com (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 10 March 2015), entry for Samuel Elliot in list for 6th Congressional District, Class II: Montgomery and Lehigh, Pennsylvania (June 1863).

AT A GLANCE:

WWI DRAFT CARDS

REGISTRATION CARD									
SERIAL NUMBER 311		ORDER NUMBER 6209							
1 <i>Gilman Stanton Sanborn</i> (First name) (Middle name) (Last name)									
2 PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS: <i>Cody Park Wyo</i> (No.) (Street or R. F. D. No.) (City or town) (County) (State)									
Age in Years 3 <i>45</i>		Date of Birth 4 <i>Sep 29 1872</i> (Month) (Day) (Year)							
RACE									
5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> White		6 <input type="checkbox"/> Negro		7 <input type="checkbox"/> Oriental		8 <input type="checkbox"/> Indian			
5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		6 <input type="checkbox"/>		7 <input type="checkbox"/>		8 <input type="checkbox"/>			
U. S. CITIZEN									
10 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native Born		11 <input type="checkbox"/> Naturalized		12 <input type="checkbox"/> Citizen by Father's Naturalization Before Registrant's Majority		13 <input type="checkbox"/> Declarant		14 <input type="checkbox"/> Non-declarant	
10 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		11 <input type="checkbox"/>		12 <input type="checkbox"/>		13 <input type="checkbox"/>		14 <input type="checkbox"/>	
15 If not a citizen of the U. S., of what nation are you a citizen or subject?									
16 PRESENT OCCUPATION <i>Farmer</i>					17 EMPLOYER'S NAME <i>J. B. Goff</i>				
18 PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS: <i>Cody Park Wyo</i> (No.) (Street or R. F. D. No.) (City or town) (County) (State)									
NEAREST RELATIVE		19 <i>Gertrude D. Sanborn</i> Name 20 <i>Cody Park Wyo</i> Address (No.) (Street or R. F. D. No.) (City or town) (County) (State)							
		20 <i>Cody Park Wyo</i> (No.) (Street or R. F. D. No.) (City or town) (County) (State)							
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE									
P. M. G. O. Form No. 1 (Red) <i>G. D. Sanborn</i> (Registrant's signature or mark) (OVER)									

1 At 45 years old, Gilman Stanton Sanborn was at the upper end of the draft range. The Selective Service Act required men age 18 to 45 to register.

2 Draft cards can substitute for early birth records. Gilman was born in 1872. Like many states, Wyoming didn't begin keeping birth records until the early 1900s.

3 WWI draft cards indicate whether immigrants were naturalized or if not, whether they had declared intention for citizenship.

4 Who was Gertrude D. Sanborn, Gilman's nearest relative? Draft records often provide evidence of wives, parents or siblings.

5 Each card has two sides. The reverse notes the man's physical description, with a stamp showing where he registered.

REGISTRAR'S REPORT							
DESCRIPTION OF REGISTRANT							
HEIGHT			BUILD			COLOR OF EYES	COLOR OF HAIR
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<i>Blue</i>	<i>Brown</i>
29 Has person lost arm, leg, hand, eye, or is he obviously physically disqualified? (Specify.) <i>no</i>							

CITATION FOR THIS RECORD: "U.S. World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," digital image, Ancestry.com (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 7 March 2015), card for Gilman Stanton Sanborn, serial no. 311, Cody, Park County, Wyoming.

Local Board for the County of State of Wyoming. Cody, Wyoming (STAMP OF LOCAL BOARD)	
(The stamp of the Local Board having jurisdiction of the area in which the registrant has his permanent home shall be placed in this box.)	
C3-6171 (OVER)	



TIP: If a WWI registrant was African-American, the registrar was to tear off the lower left corner of his draft card.

- name and age
- address
- date and place of birth
- citizenship status
- occupation and employer
- race and physical description

Some registrations also asked marital status, the name and address of the man's nearest relative, his father's birthplace, or information about dependants. Unless he was illiterate, the registrant signed his card to verify accuracy. Draft boards used the cards to determine which men to call up for service. They kept docket books listing the names and actions taken. Only a small percentage of those who registered were actually drafted.

Because they cover nearly 98 percent of the male population between 18 and 45 years old, WWI draft cards represent a tremendous resource for genealogists. Even if your ancestor didn't have to register, he or she might've had a brother who did. The cards can reveal unknown birth dates and places, the names of wives and/or parents, and clues to marriages and naturalization.

Digital images of WWI draft registration cards are online at Ancestry.com, Findmypast <www.findmypast.com> and the free FamilySearch.org <www.familysearch.org>. When searching these sites, start by entering your ancestor's name and likely residence at the time of registration. If you get too many results, filter them by adding a probable birth year and/or state. If you get too few, try variant name spellings (you can use the asterisk wildcard to substitute for zero or more letters). Each record consists of two images, the front and back of the card—be sure to view both.

The original registration cards are in Record Group 163 at the National Archives Southeast Region in Atlanta. Local docket books, classification lists, and miscellaneous papers relating to draft records may be found in state archives or National Archives regional locations.

World War II

When the Great War ended, so did military registration. There was no ongoing US draft in the 1920s and 1930s. Then escalating world conflict led to the first-ever peacetime registration in October 1940. Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, thousands of men voluntarily enlisted in the service. But with war raging on multiple fronts, the need for soldiers, airmen, and sailors was far greater. Congress passed a new Selective Service Act requiring all males between ages 18 and 45 to register.

For the most part, WWII registrations of young men (born from February 1897 to July 1927) haven't been publicly released due to privacy concerns. But some restrictions are lifting. Full-color digital images of North Carolina draft registrations are now online in the WWII collection at Fold3 <www.fold3.com>. Ancestry.com has a collection of US WWII

Websites

- **Ancestry.com: Draft, Enlistment and Service records**
<search.ancestry.com/search/category.aspx?cat=126>
- **Cyndi's List: US Military Records**
<cyndislist.com/us/military/records>
- **FamilySearch Wiki: US Military Draft Records**
<www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Draft_Records>
- **FamilySearch.org**
<www.familysearch.org>
- **Findmypast.com**
<www.findmypast.com>
- **Fold3** <www.fold3.com>
- **Linkpendium** <www.linkpendium.com>:
Click links for the place you're interested in, then look for a military records section.
- **Military Classifications for Draftees**
<www.swarthmore.edu/library/peace/conscientiousobjection/MilitaryClassifications.htm>
- **Mocavo: Military Draft Records**
<www.mocavo.com/records/Military-Draft-Records>
- **National Archives: Military Records**
<archives.gov/research/military>
- **National Archives Regional Record Centers**
<archives.gov/locations>
- **National Personnel Records Center**
<archives.gov/st-louis>
- **Online Military Indexes & Records**
<www.militaryindexes.com>
- **Selective Service Records**
<archives.gov/st-louis/archival-programs/other-records/selective-service.html>

Publications and Resources

- *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives of the United States*, 3rd Edition, by Anne Bruner Eales and Robert M. Kvasnicka (NARA)
- *One Million Men: The Civil War Draft in the North* by Eugene Murdock (State Historical Society of Wisconsin)
- *Uncle, We Are Ready! Registering America's Men, 1917-1918* by John J. Newman (Heritage Quest)
- *US Military Records* by James C. Neagles (Ancestry)

Put It Into Practice

1. True or False: Only men who were US citizens were required to register for the draft.

2. The first draft registrations in the United States occurred during the:

- a. War of 1812
- b. Civil War
- c. World War I

3. WWI draft registrations covered nearly what percent of males between 18 and 45 years old?

EXERCISE A: Go to the United States WWII Draft Registration Cards, 1942 collection on FamilySearch.org <www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1861144>. Enter the name *Roy Eberhard* in the name search box. Select the first result, Roy David Eberhard of Columbus, Franklin County, Ohio. View the document and answer the following:

1. Where and when was Roy born?

2. What company did he work for?

3. Who was named as the person who would always know his whereabouts?

4. How tall was Roy? (Hint: click the Image arrow button to advance to the next image.)

EXERCISE B: Choose an ancestor who was of age to be registered for the draft during the Civil War, World War I or World War II. Search for him in the databases on Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org, Findmypast.com, or Fold3, as discussed in this article. What did you find?

Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947, which includes cards from Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana and North Carolina. In time, cards from other states will likely become available.

The fourth registration, conducted April 27, 1942, required men born between April 28, 1877, and Feb. 16, 1897, to register. These men were 45 to 64 years old at the time. Nicknamed the “Old Man’s Draft,” this registration included many who’d already served—or at least registered—for World War I. Its intent was to gather information about older men’s skills and occupations that could be utilized in manufacturing, transportation and other aspects of the war effort.

As for the First World War, registrants’ answers to several questions were recorded on two-sided cards:

- name and age
- date and place of birth
- residence address
- telephone number
- place of employment or business
- employer’s name and address
- name and address of a contact person
- race and physical characteristics

The “Old Man’s” registration cards for most states have been microfilmed and digitized. You’ll find collections on Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org and Fold3. On any of these sites, start with a general name and place search, being aware of possible spelling variations. Narrow your search with additional fields, such as birthplace and year, if necessary.

Keep in mind that you should find two images for a single registrant. The cards for Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin were microfilmed in such a way that the front of one man’s card appears with the reverse of the previous man’s card, so take particular care to get the right match when working with the records of those states.

These collections aren’t complete, however, as registration cards for some states were destroyed before being microfilmed. No Fourth Registration records survive for Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina or Tennessee. For New York, only those from the boroughs of New York City survive. Other states or parts of a state may be missing from a particular database. If you don’t find the results you expect, read the notes that accompany the database to learn about its coverage.

The original cards for all six WWII draft registrations are at NARA’s National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis. They’re divided into two groups: one for the Old Man’s Draft, and one for the other five drafts of younger men. You can request a copy of an individual’s card using the Selective Service Record Request form, available at <archives.gov/st-louis/archival-programs/other-records/na-13172.pdf>.

Using Draft Records

Once you’ve found a draft record, you’ll want to get all the information you can from it. What does it tell you about your

MORE ONLINE



Free Web Content

- Military research guide
<familytreemagazine.com/article/At-Your-Service-Military-Research-Guide>
- Military records resources
<familytreemagazine.com/article/Military-Records-Toolkit>
- WWI genealogy resources
<familytreemagazine.com/article/World-War-I-Genealogy-Resources>



For Plus Members

- 10 Best Civil War Websites
<familytreemagazine.com/article/10-best-civil-war-websites>
- Document Detective: WWI Draft Registration Cards
<familytreemagazine.com/article/Document-Detective-WWI-Draft-Registrations>
- Websites for finding WWI records
<familytreemagazine.com/article/wwi-genealogy-websites>



ShopFamilyTree.com

- Civil War Research video course
<shopfamilytree.com/civil-war-research-independent-study-course-1>
- *The Genealogist's US History Pocket Reference* <shopfamilytree.com/genealogists-us-history-pocket-reference-u0774>
- US Military Records video course
<shopfamilytree.com/us-military-records-download>

ancestor? Is this consistent with what you already know about him? There might've been many men with similar names in any given state. Analyzing the information is crucial to making sure you've found the right one.

Compare facts such as birth date and place with information from census records and death records. The name of a specific town or township of birth is an important detail, giving you a place to dig for other family records. If the draft registration database reveals other men with the same surname born in the same place, you'll want to investigate a possible kinship between them. Could they be brothers?

Consider his occupation as well. Draft records generally provide more details about employment than census records. You may find the name and address of the company or landowner your ancestor worked for. Exploring this further can provide a lot of interesting material for your family history.

Many draft records asked questions about birthplace and US citizenship. If your ancestor wasn't born in America, his draft registration might indicate if he'd started or completed the naturalization process. Based on this, you can search for a passenger list, declaration of intention, and/or final papers. Non-citizens who agreed to fight for the United States often received expedited naturalization after the war.

Both WWI and WWII draft records list the name and address of the nearest relative or "person who will always know your address." Who did your ancestor put down for this? Married men typically named their wives. Unmarried or widowed men might've named a parent, sibling, friend or employer. If you don't recognize the person your ancestor named, try to determine who he or she was. You could discover a relationship you didn't know about.

It's particularly interesting to compare the cards of those who registered as young men for World War I and again in the Old Man's Draft for World War II. These records give you snapshots of your ancestor at two points in time, about 25 years apart. Note the differences in address, employment, nearest relative or contact person and physical traits.

Finding a draft record naturally leads to the question of whether or not an individual actually served in the war he registered for. To determine this, you'll want to learn more

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE ANSWERS

- 1 False 2 b 3 98 percent **EXERCISE A** 1 Allentown, Pa., March 9, 1894
2 Pennsylvania Railroad 3 Mrs. Roy D. Eberhard 4 5 feet, 5 inches

about the records created for that particular war. Enlistment records, service records, discharge papers, state adjutant generals' reports, and published unit histories are among the places you might look. Many of these resources are now available online. For an overview, see the United States Military Records wiki on FamilySearch.org <www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/United_States_Military_Records>.

You might also find accounts of men who served in a county history book or local newspapers. During the Civil War, newspapers often published notices of enlistments and events. They sometimes published lists of those attending GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) events in later years, or noted an old soldier's service unit in his obituary. Also search for your potential Civil War ancestor in the 1890 veterans' census, soldiers' home records and pension files. Because they usually contain a good deal of documentation, pension records are particularly worth seeking out. Our Military Pension Records Workbook <shopfamilytree.com/workbook-military-pension-records> can help you get started.

Cemetery records are another way to confirm service, as many veterans' gravestones bear military inscriptions or markers. Gravestone photographs and memorials on Find A Grave <www.findagrave.com> and Billion Graves <billiongraves.com> often indicate military service. Some towns and counties have constructed veterans' memorials or published lists of those who served in various conflicts.

Military draft registrations served a specific government purpose in times of war. Knowing how and why draft records were created can help you use the information to better understand your ancestors. Draft registrations can provide evidence of birth dates and places, marriages, names of parents or other relatives, addresses, employment, physical appearance, and more. Used in conjunction with other evidence, these details allow you to develop a fuller picture of your ancestor's life, and pave the way to future discoveries. ■

MILITARY DRAFT RECORDS WORKSHEET

Use this form to organize information that can help you in your search for an ancestor's military draft registration. If you're not sure of a detail, leave it blank or provide your best guess(es) based on research you've done. Update the information as you discover more.

ANCESTOR INFORMATION

Name _____

Birth date/approximate year _____

Birthplace _____

State(s) and county(ies) where he resided before and during the war _____

Occupation(s) _____

Names of parents _____

Name of first/only wife _____

Marriage date and place _____

Name of second wife, if any _____

Marriage date and place _____

MILITARY DRAFT ELIGIBILITY

For which war(s) was ancestor eligible to be registered for the draft?

☐ Civil War (men born about 1811-1848) ☐ World War I (men born about 1872-1900) ☐ World War II (men born about 1877-1925)

If Civil War, Union or Confederate side? _____

How old was person when war began or US entered war? _____

(Civil War began 1861; US entered World War I in 1917; US entered World War II in 1941)

Have you found any indication that this person served in the war? _____

If so, what and where found? _____

DRAFT RECORDS SEARCH TRACKER

Source/Database Searched	Website or Repository	Date Searched