

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Research Services

Personnel Records of the National Archives at St. Louis

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National Archives and Records Administration

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RESEARCH SERVICES ' ST. LOUIS





PART 1:

Research Services

- Brief History of Federal Personnel Records & the tie to St. Louis
- Overview of Records of Interest to Genealogists
- Military Personnel Records in the National Archives
- Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs)
- Official Personnel Folders (OPFs)

PART 2:

- Selective Service Draft Cards & Classification Ledgers
- Courts-Martials & Other Auxiliary Series
- Access to Records
- Resources Available to Guide Researchers
- How to Request Records

• Q & A



Research Services

PART 1

RESEARCH SERVICES ' ST. LOUIS



Brief History of Personnel Records

- The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) holds records relating to military service during the Revolutionary War to the present. Early records from the Revolution included both Continental troops & state troops that served as Continental troops (no state militia records) as well as records for personnel serving during the War of 1812 and through the Civil War, at our facility in Washington, D.C.
- For Union army soldiers, there are three major records in NARA that provide information on military service: (1) compiled military service record (CMSR); (2) pension application file; and (3) records reproduced in microfilm publication M594, Compiled Records Showing Service of Military Units in Volunteer Union Organizations (225 rolls)
- For Confederate army soldiers, there are two major records that provide information on military service: (1) compiled military service record (CMSR) and (2) records reproduced in microfilm publication M861, Compiled Records Showing Service of Military Units in Confederate Organizations (74 rolls) PDF format Records relating to Confederate soldiers are typically less complete than those relating to Union soldiers because many Confederate records did not survive the war
- In the 1890s, the Department of War used numerous sources, such as muster, descriptive & pay rolls, to create compiled military service records. CMSRs generally show when a soldier joined a unit and if he was present when the unit was mustered. (Note: The Department of War abstracted the compiled military service records for men who fought in the Revolutionary War from extant records among its files in an attempt to create substitutes for records destroyed by fires in 1800 and 1814). Because the Department was not able to reconstruct every record, a soldier may have fought in a Continental Army unit during the war, but there may not be a compiled military service record for him



Brief History of Personnel Records & (cont.)

- Modern military personnel record can be traced to late 19th Century
- U.S. Navy was first to transition to a true, more detailed individual military personnel record in late 19th Century
- After World War I we begin to see establishment of benefits and entitlements for veterans
- Post World War II expansion of entitlements created demand for military personnel records
- By late 1940's Defense Department recognized a need to more efficiently store & access military personnel records for use by vets, Next-of-Kin (NOK) & governmental entities
- Led to a desire to centralize the records...where do we put them?
- First effort led to centralizing records in North Carolina (temporary solution)—then in Kansas City—again a temporary solution
- By early 1950s DoD had secured funding from Congress for a Demobilized Military Personnel Records Facility to be constructed in St. Louis (centrally located)
- \$12.5 million dollar project (\$119 million in 2018 dollars) saw construction of facility at 9700 Page Avenue in Overland, MO
- National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) established in 1960 when military and civilian personnel records were combined in St. Louis





Military Personnel Records Center circa 1958



Brief History of Personnel Records (cont.)

- In 2004 the Archivist of the United States (AOTUS) with the DoD determined the Official Military Personnel File (OMPF), were to be permanent, archival records of the United States
- Decision required revisions/upgrades to old facilities to properly preserve/store records in perpetuity
- •
- Ultimately more cost-effective to replace than renovation of old facilities due to infrastructure, construction and antiquated designs
- New facility at 1 Archives Drive was finished in May 2011





Research Services St. Louis, MO (RL) Records of Interest to Genealogists

- National Archives at St. Louis is a personal data record series archive
- Official Military Personnel File (OMPF)
- Official Personnel Folder (OPF)
- Selective Service System Registration Cards & Classification Ledgers
- Individual Decease Personnel Files (IDPFs)
- Courts-Martial Records
- Many other personnel-related records rich in genealogical material

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Research Services

St. Louis, MO (RL)

Are Archival Records Free?

- Archival records are free to access in our public research rooms & those in the NARA Catalog
- Archival records can be photographed or scanned for free in our research rooms
- If a patron wants copies of an archival record, or if the request is from an off-site patron, there are copy fees associated with this work
- Copies of archival records are subject to fees under 44 USC 2116 & 36 CFR 1258
 - NARA does not receive appropriations for copies of records
 - Fees for archived records are processed through the NARA Trust Fund (44 USC 2307)
 - Archival OMPFs are subject to fees except for requests for benefits & entitlements from the vet or Next of Kin (NOK)
 - Current fee schedule for OMPFs: .80 per page; \$25: 5 pp or less; \$70: 6 pp or more

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Archival Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs)

- All OMPFs become a public, archival record 62 years to-the-day from when the veteran retired, separated or was killed in service
 - This is a rolling date: (62 Today's date) = Archival date. Example: 62 10/20/2018 = 10/20/1956.
- Any record with this date of retirement, separation or KIA or <u>EARLIER</u>, is a public, archival record
 - Anyone can request & review or purchase a copy, subject to FOIA Privacy Exemption review
- If a record is newer than the current archival date it has limited access:
 - Veteran, NOK, military service department, law enforcement

RG 24: Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel NAID: 38982845, : RG 319: Records of the Army Staff NAID 299741; RG 342: Records of U.S. Air Force Commands, Activities, and Organizations NAID 30479766; RG 127: Records of the U.S. Marine Corps NAID 299715; RG 26: Records of the U.S. Coast Guard NAID 597218



What's in an OMPF?

- The OMPF documents an individual's military service:
 - Date & type of enlistment/commissioning/appointment
 - Duty stations & assignments
 - Training & qualifications
 - Performance reports
 - Awards & decorations received
 - Insurance/emergency contact information
 - Non-judicial disciplinary actions (e.g., Article of 15; Letters of Counseling/Reprimand)
 - Date & type of separation/discharge/retirement, including DD Form 214 (Report of Separation)
 - May also contain birth & marriage certificates, divorce decrees, letters, & official photographs
- Detailed information about a veteran's participation in battles & military engagements is not found in the OMPF



How Big are OMPFs?

- Average size of an OMPF is 76 pages
- Some records are small: < 40 pages
- Some are huge: Thousands of pages



Navy Officer Personnel File circa 1920s



Six of the 11 boxes comprising General Hap Arnold's Personnel File (6,000+ pages)





- Shortly after midnight, on July 12, 1973, a fire was reported at NPRC's military personnel records building at 9700 Page Avenue in Overland, MO
- It burned uncontrolled for 4 days
- 42 Fire Departments responded
- Facility was not constructed with fire sprinklers or fire breaks
- Approximately 22 million OMPFs were stored on the 6th (top) floor





1973 Fire (continued)



Irreplaceable loss...







A Burned Record: "B-File"

Some 6.5 million OMPFs were recovered from the fire. Some are severely damaged





Research Services St. Louis, MO (RL) Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs)

• Records damaged or lost include an estimated **16-18 million military records**. Records damage occurred from both fire and water

Records Affected	Discharge Dates	Estimated Loss
Army WWI	11/1/1912 - 9/7/1939	000/
Army WWII	9/8/1939 - 12/31/1946	80%
Army Post-WWII	1/1/1947 - 12/31/1959	
Air Force	9/25/1947 - 12/31/1963 surnames Hubbard - Z	75%



Research Services St. Louis, MO (RL) Official Personnel Folders (OPFs)

- OPFs are the personnel records of former civil servant employees of the federal government
- A large collection of these records are permanent & some are archival & available to all
 - OPFs from the beginning of Civil Service through 1951 (separation/retirement) are archival, public records
 - OPFs from 1952 1973 are not yet designated as permanent and archived
 - OPFs from 1974 to present are not permanent records

RG 146: Records of the Civil Service Commission; RG 142: Records of the Tennessee Valley Authority; RG 178: Records of the US Maritime Commission; RG 28: Records of the Post Office Department; RG 297: Records of the Library of Congress; RG 334: Records of Interservice Agencies NAIDs: Many



- OPFs may contain the following documents:
 - Applications
 - Oaths of Office
 - Correspondence
 - Appraisals
 - Leave and Pay Information
 - Letters of Recommendation/Protest

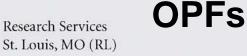
OPFs

- Changes in Work Status
- Photographs
- Rarely: Vital Records



Ellen Harriet Gery OPF-Dept. of the Army/Air Force; RG 146: Records of the Civil Service Commission; National Archives at St. Louis









Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA)



END OF PART 1



PART 2

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

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Selective Service Draft Cards & Ledgers

- National Archives at St. Louis maintains World War II through Vietnam era Selective Service Records
- Men born April 28, 1877 to March 28, 1957 or,
- Registrations from 1918 to 1976 (end of draft)

RG 147: Records of the Selective Service System, 1940 to Present NAID: Varies by state

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Selective Service Draft Cards: "Old Man's Draft"

-DOB- April 28th 1877-February 16th 1897 -Not liable for military service -Occupational Strength -Registered 14,369,325 men (911,630 in NYC alone)

SERIAL NUMBER 1. NAME (Prin	nt)	ORDER NUMBER
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(Exchange) (Number)	(Mo.) (Day) (Yr.)	(State or country)
8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS		Carrietton Tr. J-
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General Courts-Martial Records

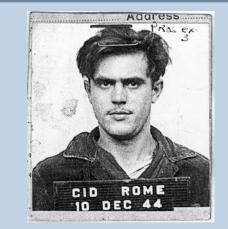
 Proceedings spanning from 1918 through 1976 (Army); 1951-1976 (Navy & Marine Corps)

Research Services St. Louis, MO (RL)

- Courts Martial Records are very large as compared to personnel files
- Unlike personnel files, court records are freely open to the public with no redactions ("buyer beware")
- Can contain graphic images, information and testimony

RG 153: Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Army) NAID: 12459579

RG 125: Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Navy) NAID: 38982845



Werner Schmiedel, aka "Robert Lane"

- Convicted in August 1944 for AWOL & terrorizing citizens to 20 years; sentenced reduced & escaped
- Lead "Lane Gang" that terrorized & robbed Italian shopkeepers & travelers in 1944. Responsible for murder of civilian & multiple escapes
- Convicted a second time & hanged June 1945



Special & General Courts Martial Records

	HEADQUARTERS XXIII	CIERS	
	nino atta	und .	
	GERERAL COURT-MARTIAL)	APO 103 Brownwood, Texas 23 August 1944	
	ORDERS NUMBER 130)		
	Before a general court-martial which pursuant to paragraph 6, Special Orders N 10 June 1944, as anended by paragraph 1, headquarters, 14 June 1944, and paragraph this headquarters, 29 July 1944, was arres	umber 120, this headquarters, Special Order Number 123, this 8, Special Order Number 164,	
	Second Lieutenant Jack R. Robinson, 758th Tank Battalion.	0-1031586, Cavalry, Company "C",	
	CHARGE I: Violation of the 63rd Art		
	Specification: In that Second List Company "C7, 75th Tank Hatalion, did, a 6 July 1944, senare himself with diarespe- coms Hiltury Police, 1848th Unit, Bipht Forces, his superior officer, by contempt his several slopy salutes, repeating sev words to that effect, and by acting in an anamer toward the said Captain Gernal M.	et toward Captain Gerald M. Mear, h Service Command, Army Service ously bowing to him and giving eral times "OK Sir", "OK Sir" or insolent, imcertinent and rude	
W.T.C.	CHARGE II: Violation of the 64th Ar Specification: In that Second Ligat Company "C", 78th Tank Ratallon, having Captain Gerald M. Bear, Corps Military To Command, Arry Service Proces, his superior room and be seated on a chair on the far- t Camp Hood, Texes, on or about 6 July 1	enant Jack R. Robinson, Gavalry, received a lawful command from lice, 10245th Unit, Eighth Service r officer to remain in a receiving side of the receiving room, die,	
	PLEAS		
	To the Specification of Charge I: To Charge I:	Not Guilty Not Guilty	
	To the Specification of Charge II: To Charge II: MILITARY JUSTICE DIVISION, MCD.	Not Guilty	
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	er Der Laise Alriente Committe - 1 -		
	Ray Whiteser and seen	SEP 3 1944 SEP 4 1944	

- Court martialed for insubordination & failure to follow a lawful order
- Found not-guilty but discharged because he was found unfit for military service
- Branch Rickey signed him to play for the Dodgers shortly thereafter



2nd Lt. Jackie Robinson – ca. 1940s (photo courtesy Major League Baseball Hall of Fame)



Sources Strain S

Non-OMPF ARCHIVAL RECORDS at the NATIONAL ARCHIVES - ST. LOUIS

Branch of Service	Non-OMPF Record Series Description	Years
All Branches	Applications For Headstones	1925-1970
All Branches	Applications for Headstones and Markers; Department of Memorial Affairs	1970-1985
All Branches	Arlington National Cemetery Daily Logs	1948-2011
All Branches	Arlington National Cemetery Interment and Disinterment Records	1864-2011
All Branches	Burial Case Files	1915-1939
All Branches	Deceased Veterans Claims (XC files) - successor series to "Pension Files"	1898-1945
All Branches	Deceased Veterans Claims Index Cards	1918-1945
All Branches	Interment Control Forms	1928-1962
All Branches	Mortuary Records, Da Nang	1966-1972
All Branches	Mortuary Records, Tan Son Nhut	1963-1978
All Branches	North Carolina WWI Index Cards	1917-1918
All Branches	VA Master Index File	through 1972
Air Force & Army	Daily Sick Reports/Books, US Army and Army Air Force	1912-1953
Air Force & Army	Separation and Discharge Records, US Army and Air Force	1942-1959
Air Force & Army	Enlistment/Induction Serial Number Ledgers	1947-1960



Air Force	Awards Card File	1942-1963
Air Force	Casualty Files / Mortuary Files / Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPFs), Air Force	1940-1973
Air Force	Drop Cards	1947-1969
Air Force	Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPFs)	1947-1976
Air Force	Individual Flight Records	1911-1958
Air Force	Morning Reports, Air Force	1947-1966
Air Force	Pay Vouchers, Final	1947-1950, 1961-1962
Air Force	Publications (microfilm)	1940-1953
Air Force	Publications (paper)	1954-1968
Army	American Expeditionary Forces Card File	1917-1918
Army	Army Hospital Clinical Record Cover Sheets	1906-1959
Army	Award Cards, WWI	1918-1940
Army	Awards Precedence Files	1918-1920
Army	Berlin Airlift Device Cards	1948-1949
Army	Chaplain Files	1917-1950



Army	Chemical Warfare Service Officers Index	1941-1959
Army	Courts Martial Records of Trial, General	1917-1976
Army	Courts Martial Records of Trial, Special (resulting in Bad Conduct Discharge)	1939-1976
Army	Courts Martial Summaries, American Expeditionary Forces in Germany	1919-1921
Army	Daily Reports of Changes, US Army	1918-1919
Army	Dependency Folders, U.S. Army	1918-1943
Army	Deserters Vouchers, US Army	1926-1930
Army	Disability Discharges, US Army	1917-1939
Army	Discharge from Draft, US Army	1918
Army	Discharge Reports, WWI, US Army	1918-1920
Army	District of Columbia National Guard	1887-1945
Army	Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPFs)	1947-1976
Army	Mexican Border Service	1916-1917
Army	Miscellaneous Unit Records and Name Lists	1912-1957
Army	Morning Reports and Rosters, US Army	1947-1959
Army	Morning Reports, US Army	1912-1946

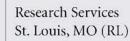


Army	Muster Rolls and Rosters, US Army	1912-1943
Army	National Guard Papers, WWI, US Army	1916-1919
Army	Nominal Checklist for Report of Sick and Wounded, US Army	1917-1939
Army	Nurses Cards, World War II Army	1944
Army	Nurses (Student) Individual Academic Records, US Army	1919-1937
Army	Officers' Reports of Change	1918
Army	Patient Rosters, US Army	1940-1948
Army	Pay Cards, Army Deserters	1943-1945
Army	Pay Cards, Army Officers	1940-1951
Army	Pay Cards, Army WWI Officers & Nurses	1917-1921
Army	Pay Cards, Contract Nurses, US Army	1933-1940
Army	Pay Cards, Contract Surgeons and Chaplains, US Army	1935-1942
Army	Pay Cards, Field Clerks, US Army	1917-1921
Army	Pay Cards, National Guard Officers	1922-1936
Army	Pay Cards, Regular Army Officers and Field Clerks	1920-1941
Army	Pay Cards, US Army, Reserve Officer Training Corps Students	1920
Army	Pay Cards, Warrant Officers, US Army	1917-1921



Army	Pay Vouchers, Final, Army WWI, Officers & Nurses	1917-1921
Army	Pay Vouchers, Final, Post WWI, WWII, and Post WWII	1926-1950, 1961-1962
Army	Pay Vouchers, US Army Enlisted, WWI (Multiple-name and Single-name)	1917-1921
Army	Payment Records, US Army Enlisted Personnel	1915-1917
Army	Philippine Prisoners of War Card File	1941-1945
Army	Reserve Officer Training Camps: Officers & Candidates for Commission, US Army	1917-1918
Army	Returns of Nurse Corps, US Army	1917-1920
Army	Russian Railway Service Corps	1917-1920
Army	SGO (Office of the Surgeon General) Hospital Admission Electronic Data Files	1942-1945, 1950-1954 1958-1963
Army	United States Soldiers Home Accounts	1900-1926
Marine Corps	Casualty Records (IDPFs)	1940-1989
Marine Corps	Compiled Service Records	1895-1904
Marine Corps	General Courts Martial Records	1951-1976





Other Records Available (see handout)

Navy	Aviation Training Jackets	1914-1946
Navy	Casualty Records (IDPFs)	1907-1989
Navy	General Courts Martial Records	1951-1976
Navy	Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPFs)	1964-1975
Navy	Inpatient (Clinical) Record Files Non-Fixed Medical Facilities	1943-1945
Navy	Officer Orders & Officer Personnel Jackets - South Pacific Force	1942-1945
SSS	Selective Service System - Registration Cards and Classification Ledgers	1940-1975
SSS	Selective Service System - World War I Various Series (excluding Registration Cards)	1917-1919
SSS	Alien Registration Forms	1940-1947
Merchant Mariners	Card Records of Licenses Issued to Merchant Marine Officers	1910-1946
Merchant Mariners	Deceased and War Casualty Seaman's Records	1937-1950
Civilian	Civilian Employment Records - Official Personnel Folders and Service Record Cards	approx. 1875-1951
Civilian	Civilian Internment Cards, WWII Individual	1941-1946
Civilian	German Civilian Personnel Files (Post World War II)	1943-1950



Research Services St. Louis, MO (RL) Resources Available to Guide Research

Civilian Personnel Records open to the public (prior to 1952): http://www.archives.gov/stlouis/archival-programs/civilian-personnel-archival/#written-requests

Civilian Personnel Records not yet open to the public (1952-present): http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/civilian-personnel/index.html

Construction of National Personnel Records Center https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5dk_NbxHdk8

Military Personnel Records not yet open to the public: http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/militarypersonnel/about-ompfs.html

Military Personnel Records open to the public (62 years in the past from "today's date"): http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/archival-programs/military-personnel-archival/index.html

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

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Research Services St. Louis, MO (RL) Resources Available to Guide Research

Persons of Exceptional Prominence records: <u>http://www.archives.gov/st-</u> louis/military-personnel/public/persons-of-prominence.html

Preservation Lab at the National Archives, St. Louis: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xNvAudiRwU

The National Archives at St. Louis: <u>http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/archival-programs/index.html</u>

Veterans Personnel Records at the National Archives, St. Louis https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WXQMiR5xxk



Research Services St. Louis, MO (RL) How do I get access to archival OMPFs?

• Off-site via correspondence:

National Personnel Records Center 1 Archives Drive St. Louis, MO 63138

- Fax a Standard Form 180 to: 314-801-9195.
- Unaccessioned OMPF requests can also be made online via eVetrecs: <u>http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records</u>
- Veterans can also access their unaccessioned OMPFs by visiting the Agency Research Room by calling 314-801-0800.
- On-site: Contact the Archival Research Room: 314-801-0850 to schedule an appointment.
 o Hours of operation: Monday Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. CT (except Federal Holidays).



Research Services St. Louis, MO (RL) Access to Archived OMPFs

- Veteran's complete name as used in service
- <u>Service number</u>
- Branch of service
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of service
- For records affected by the 1973 fire additional information such as:
 - place of discharge
 - last assigned unit &
 - place of entry into service may be useful



Research Services St. Louis, MO (RL) How do I get access to archival OPFs?



- Full name of employee & any alternate names or spellings
- Date of birth
- Employing agency/agencies
- Dates of employment
- Location of employment
- Social security number (if known)

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How do I get access to CCC & WPA St. Louis, MO (RL) **Records**?

- Full name used at the time of service
- Social Security Number (if known)
- Date of birth

Research Services

- Place of birth
- Hometown (city and state) at time of employment ٠
- Parents' name •
- Spouse's name (for WPA employment)
- Dates of service (day, month and year)
- Location of employment
- Forms are available at archives.gov/st-louis:
- Works Progress Administration: Form NA 14137 <u>http://wograms/civilian-personnel-archival/wpa-holdings-access.html</u> Civilian Conservation Corps: Form NA 14136
- //www.archives.gov/st-louis/archival-programs/civilian-personnel-archival/cccholdings-access.htm





How do I get access to archival OPFs & Other Non-OMPF Records?

Individuals may access these records by:

- Mail: National Archives at St. Louis P.O. Box 38757 St. Louis, MO 63138
- Fax a request to: 314-801-9187
- Inquiries can be submitted to:

General archival inquiries: stl.archives@nara.gov Research room inquiries: stlarr.archives@nara.gov, phone: 314-801-0850 Persons of Exceptional Prominence records: pep.records@nara.gov Facebook and Twitter inquiries: stlfb.archives@nara.gov

In-person: Public Research Room



Research Services St. Louis, MO (RL) On-Site Access: Public Research Room

Location:

1 Archives Drive St. Louis, MO 63138 **Public Hours:**

Monday – Friday, (8:00 am – 4:00 pm) (except federal holidays)

Contact Information:

(314) 801-0850 (314) 801-0608 (Fax) Stlarr.archives@nara.gov

 Bring a government-issued photo ID to enter the facility
 No weapons, knives, mace, pepper spray, tasers, rocket launchers, WMD, etc.



APPOINTMENTS ARE STRONGLY SUGGESTED!



National Archives 2018 Virtual Genealogy Fair

Join us for the annual National Archives virtual Genealogy Fair via webcast on **YouTube, Wednesday October 24, 2018**, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. CT.

- Opening remarks by David S. Ferriero (AOTUS)
- Calling Citizen Archivists! Getting the Most Out of the National Archives Catalog
- Federal Records that Help Identify Former Slaves and Slave Owners
- All's Fair in Love and War: Civil War Widow's Pension Files
- How to Search for Photographs that Document CCC Camps & Activities
- TVA Records: To St. Louis & Beyond!
- America's Military Made the Call: Hello Nurses!
- Closing Remarks

https://www.archives.gov/calendar/genealogy-fair

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

2018 VIRTUAL GENEALOGY FAIR





Wrap-up / Q & A

Thank you for your time & attention!

Contact Info:

Bryan K. McGraw

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bryan.mcgraw@nara.gov 314-801-9132