AN OVERVIEW OF MILITARY RECORDS AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

From the Revolutionary War to the 20th Century

Ketina Taylor
Archivist

Spanish-American War
Volunteer Service
  ► Compiled Military Service Records (CMSRs)

Regular Army Service
  ► Register of Enlistments

U.S. Naval Service
  ► Rendezvous Reports

Marine Corps
  ► Service Records

Pensions
Compiled Military Service Records

- Created in the 1890s to help the War Department verify service for pension claims
- Compiled from various original sources such as muster rolls, payrolls, returns, hospital records, and prison records
- Arranged by
  - War
  - State
  - Military unit
  - Surname (alphabetical)
Compiled Military Service Records

- Revolutionary War (1775–83)
- War of 1812 (1812–15)
- Indian Wars (1784–1858)
- Mexican War (1846–48)
- Civil War (1861–65) (Both Union and Confederate)
- Spanish-American War (1898)
- Philippine Insurrection (1899–1902)
Many of these records can be found online at Ancestry.com or Fold3.com.

The originals of these records are at the National Archives at Washington, DC.
Basic information about soldiers:

- Full name
- Date(s) of enlistment
- Period(s) of service
- Residence
- Personal description
- Miscellaneous
  - Pay rates
  - Special duty assignments
  - Wounding/death in combat
  - Hospital/POW records
Revolutionary War Compiled Military Service Record (CMSR) of William Graham

- **Name:** William Graham
- **Unit:** 1 Massachusetts Regiment
- **War:** Revolutionary
- **Rank:** Corporal
Graham, William
1 Massachusetts Regiment
(Revolutionary War)

Corporal

CARD NUMBERS.

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Number of personal papers herein 0

Book Mark: R 9 436786

See also

- 1 Massachusetts Regiment
- Revolutionary War

Won Graham

Appears on

Company Pay Roll

of the organization named above for the month of Jan., 1776

Commencement of time: 17
Commencement of pay: 17
To what time paid: 17
Pay per month: 7/3 dollars
Time of service: 1 month
Whole time of service
Subsistence: 2.4.0
Amount: 2.4.0
Amt. of pay and subsistence
Pay due to sick, absent

Casualties

Remarks:


Appears on

Company Muster Roll

of the organization named above for the month of Oct. 2, 1779

Roll dated: Bedford, Oct. 2, 1779

Appointed: 17
Commissioned: 17
Enlisted: Jan. 16, 1776
Term of enlistment: 3 years
Time since last muster or enlistment

Alterations since last muster

Casualties

Remarks:

On guard.

Next roll on file July 1780.
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<td>May 1779</td>
<td>£ 34.90.00</td>
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**Casualties**

**Remarks:**

**Next roll on file May 1779.**

**Metcalf**

**Copyist.**
Register of Enlistments

- Basic source to document service in the Regular Army from 1798 – 1914

- *Register of Enlistments in the U.S. Army, 1798–1914 are available on Familysearch.org, Ancestry.com, and Fold3.com*

- Arranged by
  - Year of enlistment
  - Alphabetically (first letter of surname)
  - Chronologically by date of enlistment
REGISTER OF ENLISTMENTS

- Basic information about soldiers:
  - Rank
  - Physical description
  - Occupation
  - Date and place of birth
  - Date of enlistment
  - Unit assignment
  - Term of service
  - Discharge information
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<th>ENLISTED WHERE</th>
<th>WHERE BORN</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<td>42</td>
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<td>26 Pathfinder St., Cambridge, Mass.</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Soldier</td>
<td>5 ft 3 in.</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>Sargent, James</td>
<td>1 1/2 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania, D.C.</td>
<td>Soldier</td>
<td>5 ft 7 in.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alfred Pride’s service:

- enlisted July 11, 1878
- born Richmond, Virginia
- age 32
- occupation – soldier
- physical description: black hair; 5’ 8” tall
- served in the 24th Infantry, Company F
- enlisted 3 times
- discharged February 10, 1883
- “exp. of service at Ft. Elliott, TX; Pvt.; Char.: good”
Rendezvous Reports
1846–1891

- Weekly reports from the recruiting officers

- Indexes are available on Fold3.com.

Basic information about sailors:

- Name of sailor
- Date and term of enlistment
- Rating (rank)
- Previous naval service
- Usual place of residence
- Place of birth
- Occupation
- Personal description
- Permanent marks or scars
James G. Mason:
- enlisted June 25, 1884 at Mare Island, California
- enlisted for one cruise on the Monongahela
- age 22
- occupation – cook
- physical description: Negro; 5’ 1 1/2” tall
- born in East Oakland, Cal.
- has a scar on his left leg
- has a tattoo of a shield cross and flag on his left forearm
- rating: Landsman
Service Records
1798–1895

- Alphabetical Card List of Enlisted Men of the Marine Corps, 1798–1941 (RG 127, Entry 75 NAID 922151)
- Service Records of Enlisted Men, 1798–1895 (RG 127, Entry 76 NAID 922155)
  - Enlistment/reenlistment papers
  - Conduct record
  - Descriptive list
  - Notice of discharge
  - Medical surveys
- None of the records have been digitized.
- Email your request to archives1reference@nara.gov
Enlistment paper for
John Easton,
December 15, 1864

I, John Easton,
do acknowledge that I have voluntarily enlisted myself to serve four years in the Marine Corps of the UNITED STATES unless sooner discharged, upon the terms mentioned in the act passed the 11th day of July, 1788, entitled “An act for establishing and organizing a Marine Corps;” also the act passed the 21st day of March, 1833, entitled “An act to improve the condition of the non-commissioned Officers and Privates of the Army and Marine Corps of the United States, and to prevent desertion;” also the act passed 30th June, 1844, entitled “An act for the better organization of the United States Marine Corps;” and also the acts passed the 21st day of March, 1837, entitled “An act to provide for the enlistment of boys for the Naval service, and to extend the term of the enlistment of seamen;” and February 20, 1845, entitled “An act to amend an act entitled “An act to provide for the enlistment of boys for the Naval service, and to extend the term of the enlistment of seamen,” and also the 9th section of an act passed March 3, 1815, “making appropriations for the Naval service for the year ending the 30th of June, 1816;” and that I have had read to me the Rules and Articles of the Army and Navy against Mutiny and Desertion.

Witness my hand, this 
Fifteenth day of December, 1864.

In the Presence of:
Robert Fellett.

John Easton

I, John Easton,
do solemnly swear or affirm, (as the case may be) that I will bear true allegiance to the United States of America, and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies or opposers whosoever, and observe and obey the order of the President of the United States, and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to the Rules and Articles for the government of the Army and Navy of the United States. And further, that I am of the full age of Twenty-one years.

Sworn before me, at Marine Barracks, Portsmouth N. H.
this 
Fifteenth day of December, 1864.

E. T. Kelso,
Capt. Comdg. Port.

SIZE ROLL.

John Easton

delisted 15th December at
Portsmouth, N. H., for four years, by Capt. C. J. Kelso.
aged 25 years. 5 feet 7% inches high. Blue eyes, Brown hair, Fair complexion. By trade or occupation a Teacher.

REMARKS: Enlisted as a Volunteer.
Has served in the Army.

I certify, That the above recruit is free from bodily defects, and is qualified to perform the duty of a soldier.

Has been vaccinated.

J. W. Black
Cash Surgeon.
Based on service in the U.S. military between 1775 and 1916. Many of these pension records are available online at Ancestry.com, Fold3.com, or Familysearch.org.

Different types of pensions:

- Disability pensions
- Service pensions
- Widow/dependent pensions

Many different pensions acts

- If rejected under one act, applications could reapply under a later one
What kind of information can I find?

- Full name of individual
- Date(s) of enlistment
- Period(s) of service
- Units individual served with
- Residence
- Medical history
- Death dates
- Information about Widow and/or Children
Revolutionary War Pension of William Graham

Mass. A. 16.

Graham, William

Mary

Number: V. 10068

Contents:

[Blank lines]

[Blank lines]
William Graham’s Pension Certificate

Act of 18 March 1818

Mary Graham’s Pension Certificate

Act of 4 July 1836
William Graham’s Declaration of Pension

- April 21, 1818 (age 62)
- Filed in Hadley (Saratoga Co., New York)
- Enlisted in Capt. Abraham’s Co. (1st MA Reg.) in 1777 for a period of three years
- Fought at the Battle of Bunker Hill under Capt. William Scott of the New Hampshire Line
- Lost his discharge papers
- Statement of Lewis Scott, son of William Scott
William Graham’s Inventory of Property

- No real property

- List of personal property (examples):
  - 2 hogs valued at $5.00
  - 1 spade valued at 25 cents
  - 1 tea kettle valued at 75 cents

- Basket maker by trade but unable to work due to age (64) and illness

- Wife (age 68) unable to work

- Daughter (age 30) is lame and subject to frequent fits

- States he would be unable to subsist without his pension or a private or public charity
Mary Graham’s Declaration of Pension

- Filed in 1837 (age 86)
- Copy of an affidavit filed by William Graham in 1820 detailing his service under:
  - Capt. Scott in the NH Line
  - Capt. Hunt in the 1st MA Regiment
  - Capt. John Miller (Mill)
  - Capt. Timothy Remick’s Co.
1838 statement of Mary Graham’s death

- Mary died June 10, 1838
- Surviving children and legitimate heirs:
  - Lucinda Eggleston
    - Married to Amos
    - Living in Saratoga Co, NY
  - Nancy Clayton
    - Married to Farmer
    - Living in Fulton Co, NY
September 23, 1907

Frederick W. Ashley
Chief Assistant Librarian
Library of Congress
Washington, D. C.

Sirs:

I have to advise you from the papers in the Revolutionary War pension claim W. 10089, that it appears that William Graham enlisted at Peterborough, New Hampshire, in May 1775 and served one year and eight months in Captain William Scott's Company, Colonel Stark's and Sergeant New Hampshire Regiment, he was in the battles of Bunker Hill, White Plains, York Island, and Trenton; he enlisted at Boston, Massachusetts in 1777 and served three years in Captain Abraham Hunt's Company, Colonel Joseph Vose's Massachusetts Regiment; at the expiration of this service, he enlisted and served in Captains John Mills' and Timothy Remick's Companies, Colonel Joseph Vose's Regiment, and was discharged in June 1783. He stated that he served in all eight years and nine days.

He was allowed pension on her application executed April 21, 1818, while a resident of Hadley, Saratoga County, New York, aged sixty-two years. He died January 19, 1834 at Corinth, Saratoga County, New York.

Soldier married in July 1783 at Deerfield, Massachusetts, Mary China or China. She was allowed pension on her application executed March 25, 1837, while a resident of Corinth, New York, aged eighty-six years. She died May 27, 1838 or June 10, 1838.

Daughter, Luinda, was born June 29, 1793 at South Ash, Massachusetts; in 1837 she was the wife of Amos Eggleston and living in Corinth, New York; in 1853 she was living in Litchfield Township, Hillsdale County, Michigan, and her son Henry Eggleston was thirty-eight years old in 1854.

Daughter, Nancy, wife of Farmer Clayton of Ephratah, Fulton County, New York, she died about 1844, leaving four children, their names are not stated.

Daughter, Rhoda, never married, she died
Indexes for every war (Rev War – Philippine Insurrection)

Revolutionary War:
- **M805, Selected Records from Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, 1800–1900. Not available online.**

No Confederate pensions
The National Archives does not hold Confederate Pension records. Our website lists the places where these records can be found (https://www.archives.gov/research/military/civil-war/confederate/pension.html)

Arkansas Records:

Arkansas History Commission
Telephone: 501-682-6900


Arkansas Confederate Pension Records online at FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com
Modern military service relates chiefly to the major wars and conflicts of the 20th century and later, including:

- World War I (1917–1918)
- World War II (1941–1945)
- Korean War (1950–1953)
- Vietnam War (1965–1975)
- Operation Desert Storm (1991)
- Iraq and Afghanistan Operations (2001-)

Military service records are located at the National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO (http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/)

- 1973 fire
On July 12, 1973, a disastrous fire at the NPRC destroyed approximately 16-18 million Official Military Personnel Files. The records affected are:

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<th>Branch</th>
<th>Personnel and Period Affected</th>
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<td>Personnel discharged November 1, 1912 to January 1, 1960</td>
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<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>Personnel discharged September 25, 1947 to January 1, 1964 (with names alphabetically after Hubbard, James E.)</td>
<td>75%</td>
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U.S. Coast Guard: officers and enlisted personnel, separated Jan. 1, 1898-present.
Records are accessioned into the National Archives, and become archival, 62 years after the service member's separation from the military. This is a rolling date; hence, the current year, 2016, minus 62 years is 1954. Records with a discharge date of 1954 or prior are archival and are open to the public. Records with a discharge date of 1955 or after are non-archival and are maintained under the Federal Records Center program. Non-archival records are subject to access restrictions.
## OFFICIAL MILITARY PERSONNEL FOLDERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military Records</th>
<th>Civilian Records</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Personnel service records (including DD-214s)</td>
<td>• Records of military family members treated at Army, Air</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Health and medical records of discharged &amp; deceased vets (20th century)</td>
<td>Force and Coast Guard medical facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Medical treatment records of service retirees</td>
<td>• Personnel files may be requested using Standard Form</td>
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<td>• Records of dependents treated at Naval medical facilities</td>
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DRAFT REGISTRATION CARDS

- **WWI Draft Registration**

- **WWII 4th Draft Registration (Old Man’s Draft), 1942**
  - Currently available on Ancestry.com and Fold3.com:
    - AK, AR, CA, CT, DE, ID, IL, IN, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, OH, OR, PA, PR, RI, VT, VA, WA, WV, WI

- **Korea & Vietnam Draft**
  - Draft registration cards for men born before January 1, 1960, write to St. Louis*
WWI Draft Registration Card for Charles S. Deeben

Serial No. 29
Registration No. 51

1. Name as full. Charles Stephen Deeben
3. Date of birth. September 2, 1897
4. Place of birth. Trevorton, Pa., U.S.A.
5. I am a citizen, of what Nation are you a citizen or subject? Germany
6. Father's last name. Gnesein
7. Name of employer. P & R, C & I Company
9. Name of nearest relative. Jacob Deeben
10. Address of nearest relative. Trevorton, Pa.

I certify that my answers are true; that the person registered has read his own answers; that I have witnessed his signature, and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge, are true, except as follows:

Signature: [signature]
Date of registration: June 5, 1918

Local Board Div. 12
Northumberland Co.
Sunbury, Pa.
WWII Draft
Registration Card
for Charles S. Deeben
OTHER PLACES TO FIND DRAFT CARDS

- Records can also be found on Familysearch.org.

- Not all draft cards are available online. For cards not online, please contact the National Archives at St. Louis.
Military Unit and Operational Records

- **World War I**
  - **Record Group 120, Records of the American Expeditionary Forces (World War I)**
    - Records of Armies, Army Corps, combat divisions and other tactical units
      - Correspondence, issuances, historical files (E1241)
      - G-3 (Operations) Reports (E270)
      - Journals of Operations (E271)
  - **Record Group 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs**
    - Records of the Historical Section Relating to the History of the War Department (E310)
      - Unit histories, war diaries, issuances
Reconnaissance Report, 1st Pursuit Group, September 26, 1918
Military Unit and Operational Records

- **World War II**
  - Record Group 407, Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1917–
    - Records of Armies, Army Corps, combat divisions and other tactical units
      - World War II Operations Reports (E427)

- **Korean War**
  - RG 407
    - Command Reports, 1949–54 (E429)
  - Record Group 338, Records of U.S. Army Operational, Tactical, and Support Organizations (WWII and After)
    - Unit histories (E37042)
Military Unit and Operational Records

- **Vietnam War**
  - Record Group 472, Records of the United States Forces in Southeast Asia, 1950–1975
    - Combat divisions, brigades, support brigades (aviation, medical, engineer, military police, signal), and logistical support organizations
    - Very few records at the company level
  - Record Group 550, Records of the United States Army, Pacific, 1945–1984
    - Organizational History Files (E A1)
# Access to Archival Databases (AAD)

[Image of Access to Archival Databases (AAD) website]

## Browse by Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genealogy/ Personal History</th>
<th>Private Sector</th>
<th>Wars/ International Relations</th>
<th>Time Spans</th>
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<td>- Businesses</td>
<td>- Civil War</td>
<td>- 1000 - 1900</td>
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<td>- Civilians</td>
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<td>- World War II</td>
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<td>- Textual Records</td>
<td>- Grants and Assistance</td>
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**Getting Started Guide**

[Image of Getting Started Guide]

**Search AAD**

[Search bar and link to Advanced Search]
AAD has a variety of military records including:

- Civil War Battle Site Records
- World War II Enlistment Records
- World War II Prisoner of War Records
- Korean War, including causalities and prisoner of war
- Vietnam War records, including causalities
**Display Full Records**

**File Unit:** Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File, ca. 1938 - 1946 (Reserve Corps Records)

**in the Series:** World War II Army Enlistment Records, created 6/1/2002 - 9/30/2002, documenting the period ca. 1938 - 1946.

- Record Group 64 [info]

**Brief Scope:** This series contains records of approximately nine million men and women who enlisted in the United States Army, including the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.

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This series does not contain records of officers or those of military service only.

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< Previous Record | Next Record >

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An overview of military records at the National Archives

From the Revolutionary War to the 20th Century

Questions?