

Researching Civil War Ancestors

Class 3: Post War Records & Strategies

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Adopt the Regiment

- Determine who the other soldiers in the same vessel, company, and or regiment are.
- Create a spreadsheet of names and dates.
- Repeat the steps as you would for your own ancestor
- Locate where they reside to search for diaries & letters they may have left.
- Search Pension files for mutual "affidavits"
- Create a Social Media page for descendants

Ethnic Diversity in the Civil War

African American

- **Union Forces:** 186,097 men included 7,122 officers and 178,975 enlisted soldiers.
- Approximately 20,000 black sailors served in the Union Navy
- Later in the War the United States Colored Troops (USCT) was formed to reinforce the Union Army from 1863-1865. These soldiers were both former runaway enslaved and Northern Free African-Americans.
- During the Civil War African-American soldiers served in forty major battles and hundreds of skirmishes.
- Sixteen African Americans received the Medal of Honor.
- **Confederate Forces:** Both free and enslaved African-Americans were used for manual labor, but the issue was whether to give them arms.
- In March 1865, an effort to recruit, train, and arm black soldiers. No large number of recruits or any combat was seen by these veterans.
- Resources for USCT soldiers on FamilySearch.org:
[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United States Colored Troops in the Civil War](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Colored_Troops_in_the_Civil_War)

Native American

- **Confederate Forces:** Approximately 7,860 Native Americans from Five Civilized Tribes: the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole nations.
- **Union Forces:** Several regiments of the "Indian Home Guard" were organized from Kansas, Missouri and Arkansas to serve in the Indian Territory.

Province of Canada

- Between 33,000 and 55,000 men from British North America enlisted in the war mostly in Union forces.

German

- **Union Forces:** Approximately 216,000 were born in Germany. New York supplied over 36,000 native-born Germans, and Wisconsin with 30,000 and Ohio with 20,000.
- Some German's had previously saw service in various European armies.



Hispanic

- Approximately 3,500 Hispanics consisting of Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans and Cubans living in the United States joined the Civil War.
- **Confederate Forces**: over 2,500
- **Union Forces**: over 1,000

Irish

- **Union Forces**: over 180,000. It is estimated 20% or 23,600 of the Union Navy were born in Ireland.
- **Confederate Forces**: over 20,000

Italian

- Between 5,000 and 10,000 Italian Americans fought in the Civil War.
- **Confederate Forces**: A group of soldiers from the former Kingdom of the Two Sicilies fought for the Confederacy. They were former prisoners of war who had fought against Giuseppe Garibaldi.

Jewish

- Approximately 150,000 Jews resided in the United States at the time of the Civil War.
- It is estimated that as many as 8,000 Jewish soldiers fought for both the Union & Confederacy.

Polish

- **Union Forces**: Approximately 5,000.
- **Confederate Forces**: Approximately 1,000.

National Soldier Homes

- Finding Guide to National Soldier Home Records:
https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Military_Old_Soldiers_Home_Records
- Eastern Branch National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (Togus, Me) – FamilySearch.org
<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/828792>
- Arkansas Confederate Soldier Home, 1890-1963 – Ancestry.com
<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61889/>
- Missouri Confederate Soldiers Home Applications – Ancestry.com
<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60055/>

Union Pensions

- Majorities are held at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.
- NARA Order Online: <https://eservices.archives.gov/orderonline/start.swe>
- T288 Index (Ancestry.com) Alphabetical
- T289 Index (Fold3.com) By Regiment
- U.S. Navy Pensions (Fold3.com)
<https://www.fold3.com/title/120/navy-survivors-certificates>
- Review of Typical Pension File papers



Tips when visiting NARA in Washington, D.C. for Pension research

- Copy all application and certificate numbers carefully on your slips.
- Turn in slips on a regular basis if you have many requests.
- Copy the entire file and sort later with your copies
- Don't forget the Wrappers sheets
- Majority are held at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.
- NARA Order Online: <https://eservices.archives.gov/orderonline/start.swe>

Confederate Pensions

- **Ancestry** : Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee
- **FamilySearch**: Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina
- Confederate Pension Finding Guide: <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/civil-war/confederate-pension-records>

G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic)

- Formed: April 6, 1866
- The GAR had largest enrollment in 1890, with 410,000 members.
- Dissolved: August 2, 1956
- G.A.R. Records are not centralized

U.C.V (United Confederate Veterans)

- Formed: June 10, 1889
- Headquarters: New Orleans, LA
- The organization grew rapidly throughout the 1890s with a total of 1,555 that were present at the 1898 reunion.
- Dissolved: December 31, 1951
- Post records not centralized

Civil War Hereditary Societies

- MOLLUS - The Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (1865)
- Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (1881)
- Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (1883)
- Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War (1885)
- Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic (1885)
- United Daughters of the Confederacy (1894)
- Children of the Confederacy (1896)
- Sons of Confederate Veterans (1896)
- National Society Daughters of the Union (1912)
- Military Order of the Stars and Bars (1938)
- National Order of the Blue and Gray (1990)

