

Civil War Research: Tracing Union & Confederate Ancestors

Class 5: Post-Service Records for Union and Confederate Veterans

David Allen Lambert, Chief Genealogist, dalambert@nehgs.org

Post-Service Records: Newspapers

Utilize newspapers online and on microfilm to search for the veteran, his regiment, vessel, or the Union or Confederate veteran organization he belonged to after the Civil War.

Search Suggestions

- Search for the name of the veteran of the Union or Confederacy individually.
- Search for the individual regiment or vessel the veteran served on during the War. This search can be performed with the veteran's name as a combination search to narrow down results.
- Search for the name of the G.A.R. or U.C.V. Post they were a member of.
- Search for G.A.R. or U.C.V. events in the community the veteran resided in. Search for parades or events indirectly associated with the G.A.R. or U.C.V. post and the community. Do not limit your search to include your veteran's name. Sometimes the names of veterans are not given in detail when an article mentions a G.A.R. or U.C.V. post was present at an event.

Newspapers not Online

- Search catalogs of local public libraries for the community where your veteran ancestor resided.
- If a newspaper did not exist in that community, search for a neighboring town/city newspaper
- Contact local historical societies for newspaper morgue books, or loose papers when microfilm or digital options are not available.

Post-Service Records: National Soldier Homes

A comprehensive listing of Union and Confederate National Soldier Homes is available from the FamilySearch.org Wiki online. This list provides a detailed breakdown of what records are online as well as resources to locate existing records when they are not available online:

[http://familysearch.org/wiki/en/United States Military Old Soldiers Home Records](http://familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Military_Old_Soldiers_Home_Records)

Post-Service Records: Veteran and Descendants Groups

Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) 1866 to 1956

- **G.A.R. State Departments**
 - Each state (including those in former Confederate states) fell within a G.A.R. “Department,” and within these Departments were the “Posts”. These were the forerunners of current V.F.W. Halls.
 - The posts were made up of local veterans, many of whom participated in local civic events. As the posts were formed, they were assigned to the home Department of the National Commander-in-chief of the year that they were chartered.
- G.A.R. Records will typically consist of:
 - Paperwork of the particular post with applications and membership rosters.
 - Photographs of members.
 - Annual Encampments.
 - Newspaper articles.
- G.A.R. Records are not centralized. If they survive, they can be located in various local repositories such as public libraries, historical societies and veteran’s agencies. They can even be privately owned.
- The Sons of Union Veterans (S.U.V.) have started to catalog where the existing Grand Army of the Republic Post records are across the United States. For further details visit their project website at <https://www.garrerecords.org> This same S.U.V. website contains a detailed state by state list of G.A.R. post locations and details for the entire United States.
- National Encampments of the G.A.R. held annually across the United States 1866-1949.

Women’s Relief Corps (W.R.C) 1879 to present

- The Woman's Relief Corps was formed in 1879 and was recognized by 1883 as the "official women's auxiliary" to the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.)
- *“Our mission is to perpetuate the memory of those who sacrificed much and sometimes all in the American Civil War; provide assistance to veterans of all wars and extend needed aid to them and to their widow(er)s and orphans.”*
- W.R.C. website: <https://womansreliefcorps.org/membership-application/>

Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic (L.G.A.R.) 1881 to present

- The Loyal Ladies League was established in 1881 as an auxiliary to the G.A.R. In 1886 the organization went more national and changed its name to The Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic. It was finally incorporated by an act of the 86th Congress on June 17, 1959.
- L.G.A.R. website: <http://www.lgarnational.org/>

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (S.U.V.C.W.) 1881 to present

- The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (S.U.V.C.W.) is a fraternal organization composed of male descendants of Union veterans who fought in the Civil War. It was established in 1881 as the Sons of Veterans of the United States of America, and later changed its organizational name.
- S.U.V.C.W. website: <https://suvchw.org/>

Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States - 1865 to present

- The Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (MOLLUS) is a fraternal organization composed of veterans of the Union Army, Navy, or Marine Corps who served during the American Civil War. It was founded on April 15, 1865, by Union officers who were concerned about the welfare of their fellow veterans and wanted to preserve the memory of their service.
- MOLLUS website: <https://loyallegion.org/>

Daughters of Union Veterans 1861-1865 (D.U.V.C.W.) - 1885 to present

- Incorporated as "The National Alliance of the Daughters of Veterans of the United States of America" on December 12, 1885. The name was changed to Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War in 1925, and ultimately Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War 1861-1865 in the year 1944.
- DUVCW Website: <https://www.duvcw.org>

United Confederate Veterans (U.C.V.) - 1889-1951

- The United Confederate Veterans (U.C.V.) was a fraternal organization established for veterans of the Confederate States Army, Navy, and Marines who served during the American Civil War. It was founded in 1889 and existed until 1951.
- Rosters of the U.C.V. from 1895-1899 available from FamilySearch (Affiliate Access):
 - <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/590459>
- Index to the Confederate Veteran Magazine from 1893-1932 is available online:
 - <https://lva-virginia.libguides.com/confederate-veteran>

- All issues of the Confederate Veteran Magazine from 1893-1932 are available online:
 - <https://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/serial?id=confedvet>

Sons of the Confederacy (S.C.V.) – 1896 to present

- The S.C.V. was founded in 1896 and offers membership to male descendants (direct or collateral) of Confederate veterans who served honorably in the Confederate armed forces. The organization also allows for honorary memberships and associate memberships for individuals who share their objectives.
- S.C.V. website: <https://scv.org/>

United Daughters of the Confederacy (U.D.C.) - 1894 to present

- The U.D.C. was founded in 1894 in Nashville, Tenn. The primary objectives of the UDC include honoring the memory of Confederate soldiers and their sacrifices during the American Civil War, preserving Confederate monuments and memorials, educating the public about Southern history and heritage, and promoting patriotism and civic responsibility among its members.
- U.D.C. website: <https://hqudc.org/>