BEGINNING GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES: MILITARY RECORDS

Lecture by
John P. Deeben
Archivist
Volunteer Service
  - Compiled Military Service Records (CMSRs)

Regular Army Service
  - Register of Enlistments

U.S. Naval Service
  - Rendezvous Reports

Marine Corps
  - Service Records (Case Files)

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
  - State
  - Military unit
  - Surname (alphabetical)
Revolutionary War (1775-83)*
War of 1812 (1812-15)
Old Indian Wars (1784-1858)*
Mexican War (1846-48)
Civil War (1861-65)*
Spanish-American War (1898)
Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902)
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
Wm. Graham

Company Pay Roll
of the organization named above for the month of June, 1778.
Commencement of time, 17.
Commencement of pay, 17.
To what time paid, 17.
Pay per month, $13 dollars.
Time of service, 1 month.
Whole time of service
Subsistence:
Amount, £2.4.
Amt. of pay and subsistence
Pay due to sick, absent

Casualties

Remarks:

Next roll on file May 1779.

(545)
Copyist.

William Graham

Company Muster Roll
of the organization named above for the month of Sept., 1779.
Roll dated Bedford, Oct 2', 1779.
Appointed, 17.
Commissioned, 17.
Enlisted, Jan. 26, 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.

(543)
Copyist.

William Grayham

Company Pay Roll
of the organization named above for the month of Nov. & Dec., 1779.
Commencement of time, 17.
Commencement of pay, 17.
To what time paid, 17.
Pay per month, $2 3/4 dollars.
Time of service, 2 months.
Whole time of service
Subsistence per month, 10.
Amount
Amt. of pay and subsistence, $4 60 1/2 dollars.
Pay due to sick, absent

Casualties

Remarks:

(545)
Copyist.

Mulleyman
Related Records

- **Personal Papers**
  - Enlistment papers
  - Inventories of personal effects
  - Final statements of service
  - Reports of death and interment
  - Pay and subsistence accounts (earlier wars)

- **Muster Rolls**
FORM FOR EXAMINING A RECRUIT.

(To be filled up according to directions in Triplett's Manual, pages 111, 113, 116, 117.)

RECRUIT: Theophilus B. Adams, age 18, occupation Whale Commander,
born in Newbury N.H., presented by Capt. A. Laphy.

1. Have you ever been sick? Yes.
   When, and of what diseases?

2. Have you any disease now, and what? No.

3. Have you ever had fits? No.

4. Have you ever received an injury or wound upon the head? No.

5. Have you ever had a fracture, a dislocation, or a sprain? No!

6. Are you in the habit of drinking? Yes.
   Or have you ever had the "horrors"?

7. Are you subject to the piles? No.

8. Have you any difficulty in urinating? No.

9. Have you been vaccinated, or had the small pox? Yes.
   Head.
   Ears.
   Face.
   Eyes and Appendages.
   Nose.
   Organs of Mastication and Voice.
   Neck.
   Chest.
   Abdomen.
   Genital and Urinary Organs.
   Vertebral Column.
   Superior Extremities.
   Inferior Extremities.

REMARKS.

Date: June 13, 1862
Rendezvous: Concord.

Inspecting Surgeon.
Personal Papers for 1st Lt. Thomas Cockrill, 1st Regiment Artillery, Maryland Militia, August 1813
Register of Enlistments

- Basic source to document service in the Regular Army
- Volumes cover 1798-1914, 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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>NAMES</th>
<th>ENLISTED</th>
<th>WHERE BORN</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Soren</td>
<td>Oct 26</td>
<td>26 nat</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Received</td>
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<td>Rodrigues</td>
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<td>Sold</td>
<td>Soldier</td>
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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:
  - T1098 for before and after Civil War (1846-61, 1865-84)
  - T1099 for Civil War service (1861-65)

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 (Case Files)
1798-1895

- Alphabetical Card List of Enlisted Men of the Marine Corps, 1798-1941 (RG 127, Entry 75)

- Service Records of Enlisted Men, 1798-1895 (RG 127, Entry 76)
  - Enlistment/reenlistment papers
  - Conduct record
  - Descriptive list
  - Notice of discharge
  - Medical surveys
Enlistment paper for John Easton, December 15, 1864

John Easton’s Service:

- enlisted December 15, 1864 at Marine Barracks, Portsmouth, New Hampshire
- born at Bellefonte, Centre Co., Pennsylvania
- 28 years old
- 5 feet, 7 ¼ inches tall, blue eyes, brown hair, fair complexion
- occupation: soldier (previously served in the Army as a Volunteer)

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, 1789, 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, 1864, 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, 1855, 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;” Senator passage for the above acts, in accordance with said acts, and in consideration of the terms and conditions aforesaid, I hereby enroll myself in the Marine Corps of the UNITED STATES, and take the oaths prescribed by said acts.
Based on service in the U.S. military between 1775 and 1916

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
Indexes for every war (Rev War - Philippine Insurrection)

Revolutionary War:
- M804, Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, 1800-1900.
- M805, Selected Records from Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, 1800-1900.

No Confederate pensions

Scanning projects
- Civil War widows/dependents
- 1812
Revolutionary War Pension of William Graham

Service:
Mass.
M. K.

Name:
Graham, William

Relation:
Mary

Number:
W. 10068
William Graham’s Declaration of Pension

- April 21, 1818 (age 62)
- Filed in Hadley (Saratoga Co., New York)
- Enlisted in Capt. Abraham Hunt’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)
- Mary’s declaration recapped the details of William’s service:
  - Capt. Scott in the NH Line
  - Capt. Hunt in the 1st MA Regiment
  - Capt. John Miller (Mills)
  - Capt. Timothy Remick’s Co.
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)

Military service records: National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO

- 1973 fire


U.S. Coast Guard: officers and enlisted personnel, separated after Jan. 1, 1898
Enlistment/appointment records

Duty stations and assignments

Training, qualifications, performance records

Awards and medals

Disciplinary actions

Separation/discharge/retirement paperwork (DD-214, Report of Separation)

Medical records for veterans and dependants (until 1992; later records at the VA)
DRAFT REGISTRATION CARDS

- WWI Draft Registration
  - M1509, World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918
  - On Ancestry.com

- 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. Deebeen

Serial No. 29
Registration No. 51

1. Name in full: Charles Stephen Deebeen
   Age: 21

2. Home Address: Shamokin St, Trevorton, Pa.

3. Date of birth: September 2, 1897
   Color of eyes: Brown
   Color of hair: Brown

4. Where were you born? Trevorton, Pa., U.S.A.

5. I am: A native of the United States.
   I live in: (City or town)
   I was born: (City or town)

6. I am not a citizen of what Nation are you a citizen or subject?
   Nation: Germany

7. Father's last residence: (City or town)

8. Name of employer: P & R, C & I Company
   Place of employment: North Franklin Colliery Trevorton, Pa.

9. Name of nearest relative: Jacob Deebeen
   Address of nearest relative: Trevorton, Pa.

10. Race: White
    Naturalized: No

I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true.

Charles S. Deebeen

Registrar's Report

Signature of Registrar: Thos. Mord

Date of registration: June 5, 1918

Local Board Div. 12
Northumberland Co.
Sunbury, Pa.
WWII Draft Registration Card for Charles S. Deeben
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

The patrol was ordered to straf the troops on the Romagne-Sainteville road just north of Digne. I observed about five transports, not more than seven. The patrol descended 600 meters and shot up the road causing some disorder. We were heavily engaged just east of Sainteville. In the northern edge of the woods just west of Sainteville a Max archie battery is very active. About 10 h 30 a fourth unknown Spad joined our patrol (probably from the 3rd Pursuit Group). About 10 h 40 I observed an H.A. two-seater probably a Jungmann flying west, north of Montfleury at 400 meters. About 200 meters above the two-seater were eight Fokkers and above the Fokkers were four more Fokkers just in the light. I fired at long range on the Fokkers and they turned north. I then attacked the two-seater and the Fokkers suddenly returned and I was forced to withdraw. The Fokkers again withdrew and I resumed the attack again with the H.A. Two Fokkers and above them a Fokker turned into the light. I opened with a regular gun and the balloon gun from above with Max. The Fokkers turned west and just north of Montfleury we again encountered the two-seater at 12 h 40 and the Fokkers did not tumble down. I opened with a regular gun and the balloon gun from above with Max. The two-seater fell in flames just north of Sainteville. The unknown Spad seemed to be in the combat but was higher than when we first attacked. I saw no balloons.
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)
BEGINNING GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES: MILITARY RECORDS

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