

Guide to Military Service & Pension Records

Determining Service

In general terms, a man between the ages of 16 and 45 was eligible for military service. Determine if the ancestor was eligible during the following wars:

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|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| French and Indian War | 1755-1763 | Spanish-American War | 1889 |
| Revolution | 1775-1783 | Philippine American War | 1899 |
| War of 1812 | 1812 | Boxer Rebellion (China) | 1899-1901 |
| Seminole War, 1 st | 1817-1818 | World War I (Great War) | 1914-1918 |
| Black Hawk War | 1832 | World War II | 1939-1945 |
| Seminole War, 2 nd | 1835-1842 | Korean War | 1950-1953 |
| Mexican War | 1846-1848 | Vietnamese Conflict | 1961-1975 |
| Civil War | 1861-1865 | Persian Gulf War | 1991 |
| | War on Terrorism | 2001-present | |

This is an incomplete list. Service during peacetime should also be considered. Remember, many military records remain private for 72 years. Only the service person, spouse, or children may request them. Restrictions do apply.

Federal Records

If the person served in a Federal unit (before World War I), records can be found at the National Archives in Washington D.C. Copies of these records may be obtained by using form NATF 85 for pension and bounty land warrant information, and form NATF 86 for service record information. See *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives of the United States* or <archives.gov> for more information. Copies may also be ordered online at <eservices.archives.gov/orderonline>.

State Records

If the person served with a state militia, the records will be in the Office of the Adjutant General of the National Guard, the state archives, or a state historical society. Some published lists or extracts can be found in libraries. Though some Confederate military information is at the National Archives, pension records are under state jurisdiction in the state where the veteran resided when applying for a pension.

Sources at Mid-Continent Public Library:

Check both the [Genealogy Records on Microfilm](#) and [Genealogy Records on Microfiche](#) catalogs for military information available in these media. Examples are the microfilmed World War I Draft Registrations for Missouri and Kansas and the microfiche collection of Civil War Units Histories.

On the online catalog, using the Power Search screen, enter the name of the war as listed above as a subject. The state the individual served from can be used as a second subject. Use the name of a specific military unit to find unit histories or yearbooks.

Check at the reference desk for indexes to military records.

Most military books are filed under the Dewey Decimal system at 973.

General References:

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929.1 UN3 3rd *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives of the United States.* Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2000.

Grundset, Eric G. and Steven B. Rhodes.

929.1072 G925 *American Genealogical Research at the DAR.* Washington, D.C.: National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, 1997.

Johnson, Richard S., Lt. Col., and Debra Johnson Knox.

355.0025 H 93 1999 *How to Locate Anyone Who Is or Has Been in the Military.* Spartanburg, South Carolina: MIE Publishing, 1999.

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929.1 M481w *Why You Might Have Missed Your Soldier [sound recording]: Basic Military Records at the National Archives.* Hobart, IN: Repeat Performance, 2001.

Neagles, James C.

929.3 N245U *U.S. Military Records: A Guide to Federal & State Sources: Colonial America to the Present.* Salt Lake City, Utah: Ancestry, 1994.