

UNITED STATES  
ARMY



THE NATIONAL  
WWII MUSEUM

A black and white photograph showing a group of young men in civilian attire (suits, sweaters) standing in a line. They are all raising their right hands in a gesture of taking an oath. On the far left, a man in a military uniform is partially visible, looking towards the group. Behind them is a large, dark banner with the words 'UNITED STATES ARMY' at the top and a circular emblem featuring a star and stripes in the center. The scene appears to be an induction ceremony for military service.

RESEARCHING  
AMERICAN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN  
RECORDS FROM WORLD WAR II





Officer's Cook First Class Eugene Tarrant, who served aboard USS *San Francisco*, and his wife Mary. Image from the collection of The National WWII Museum.



## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

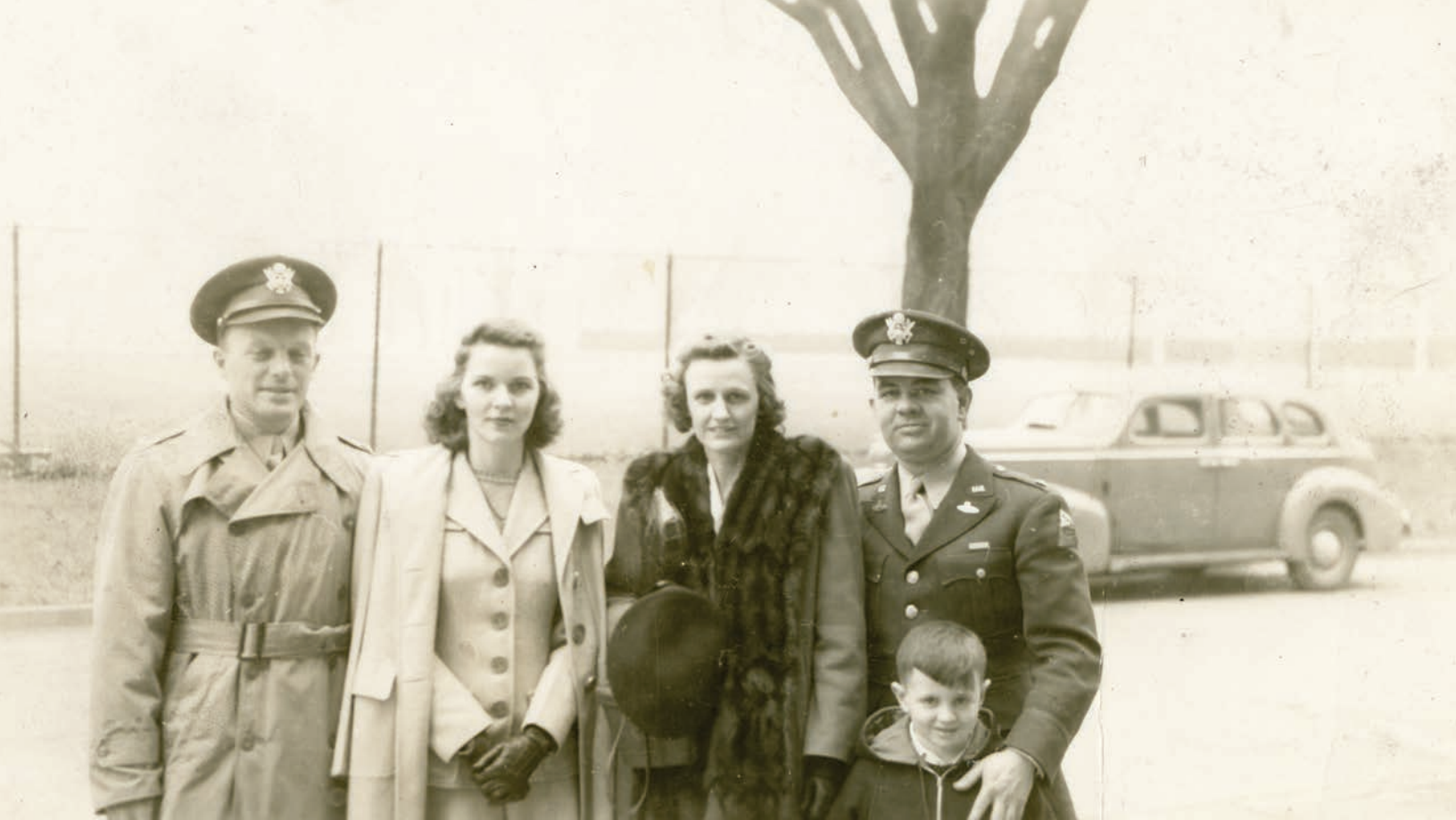
More than 16 million American men and women served in the US Armed Forces during World War II, and another 3.5 million worked as federal civilian employees during the war. These men and women are our parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings. Many have shared their stories, but many others have not, and few details from their time in service are known. How can we learn more about an individual's service? What information is out there, and how can we find it?

The purpose of this guide is to assist veterans and their families in obtaining copies of their military personnel files from the National Archives in St. Louis, Missouri.

Details in this guide include the types of records available, where they are located, and how to obtain copies. Also included in the guide is information about the types of material available on WWII units and ships. By researching the unit or ship to which a veteran was assigned, you can begin to piece together his or her unique wartime story, and better understand what the war means to your family.

This guide was created by historian Kali Martin, Research Assistant for The National WWII Museum President and CEO Emeritus Gordon H. "Nick" Mueller, PhD, in collaboration with the Museum's research and marketing teams, and in consultation with the National Archives.

This free resource supports research initiatives of the Museum's new Institute for the Study of War and Democracy.



*Our National Archives offer a wealth of original documents from World War II, including individual personnel files. These individuals could be our parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings.*

Information on the wartime service of our family members is available through the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in St. Louis, Missouri. Home to more than 56 million military personnel files, NARA can provide you with information such as dates of service and the unit, station, or ship associated with the veteran's service. NARA also has information on federal civilian employees and civilian Japanese American internees.

Other NARA locations have information regarding Japanese American internment, American prisoners of war, and the US Merchant Marine. This packet will guide you through what information is available, where it is located, and how you can obtain copies of records.

Patience and persistence will be essential to your search. You may wait several weeks or longer for official responses. In July 1973, a fire destroyed millions of records at NARA in St. Louis; as a result, an estimated 80 percent of US Army personnel records were permanently lost and others were destroyed. However, the staff at NARA in St. Louis may be able to provide some information on veterans using other sources.

The first step in beginning your research is to gather as much

information as possible about the person you are researching. When were they born? Where were they from? Were they married during their time of service? What branch of service or federal organization did they work for? If you are researching a female family member, what was her maiden name? Full names, service or Social Security numbers, and dates and location of service will be important in retrieving more information.

Talking to other family members and friends of a veteran can further fill in many personal details you will need to complete your research. On page 32 you will find a checklist to help you gather some information you will need later.

### **SERVICE NUMBERS**

One of the most important pieces of information in researching veterans is their service number, sometimes called a serial number. Upon their induction into any military branch, each individual was given a numerical identifier. The length of the service number varied by branch and whether or not the individual was enlisted or an officer. This number will be found on every official document, and is even located on dog tags.

Above: Gift in Memory of Lieutenant Colonel Lonsdale P. MacFarland, from the collection of The National WWII Museum.





US Army Signal Corps photograph. Gift in Memory of William F. Caddell Sr. from the collection of The National WWII Museum.



Sailors aboard a Patrol Torpedo boat in the Pacific during operations in the Philippines in late 1944. Image from the collection of The National WWII Museum.

# CONTENTS

<b>THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1973 FIRE AT THE NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>TYPES OF RECORDS AVAILABLE.....</b>	<b>10</b>
A. MILITARY RECORDS IN ST. LOUIS.....	10-11
B. MILITARY – OTHER NATIONAL ARCHIVES LOCATIONS.....	13
C. CIVILIAN RECORDS.....	14
D. JAPANESE AMERICAN INTERNEES.....	14
E. OTHER CIVILIAN RECORDS.....	14-15
<b>REQUESTING CIVILIAN AND MILITARY RECORDS.....</b>	<b>17</b>
A. MILITARY RECORDS IN ST. LOUIS.....	17-19
B. NAVAL AVIATION TRAINING JACKETS.....	19
C. MEDICAL RECORDS.....	20
D. DECEASED PERSONNEL FILES.....	20-21
E. CIVILIAN RECORDS IN ST. LOUIS.....	21
<b>REPLACING LOST OR UNISSUED MEDALS.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>OBTAINING MERCHANT MARINER AND PRISONER OF WAR RECORDS.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>UNDERSTANDING AND USING RECORDS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.....</b>	<b>25-26</b>
<b>REQUESTING RECORDS FROM OTHER NATIONAL ARCHIVES LOCATIONS.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>CHARLES JOHN NICKERMAN.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>CHECKLIST FOR MILITARY OMPF REQUESTS.....</b>	<b>32-33</b>
<b>SAMPLE SF-180 FOR VETERAN BENEFITS.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>SAMPLE SF-180 FOR GENERAL REQUESTS.....</b>	<b>35</b>





An African American gun crew aboard the USS *Intrepid*. Crew members (order of individuals in photograph unknown): Johnell Copeland, Que Gant, Harold Clark Jr., James Eddie Dockery, Alonzo Alexander Swann, and Eli Benjamin. Photo from the National Archives 80-G-334029.



# THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER

The following guide to requesting military and civilian records highlights the resources available in St. Louis at the National Archives and the National Personnel Records Center, or NPRC. Both are located within the same complex. The National Archives in St. Louis is responsible for federal personnel records -- civilian and military -- that have been declared archival, meaning they are available to the public except in instances where release of the information is restricted by the Freedom of Information Act.

Before they are officially turned over to the National Archives, federal personnel records are managed by the NPRC and remain under legal custody of the service branch or agency that created the individual records. Archived and non-archived files are stored together; therefore, the "move" between the NPRC and the National Archives is one of classification, but not physical.

The staff of the National Archives St. Louis location is significantly smaller than that of the NPRC. Therefore, requested files are pulled by NPRC employees even when records belong to the National Archives. If you are requesting military records 62 years or older, or civilian records 65 years or older, you are technically making the request to the National Archives, but the response will be provided through the NPRC.

## 1973 FIRE AT THE NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER

On July 12, 1973, a fire at the St. Louis NPRC facility destroyed approximately 16–18 million personnel files. US Navy and Marine Corps files were minimally affected by the fire. However, 80 percent of Army records for personnel discharged from November 1, 1912, to January 1, 1960, were destroyed or damaged. Air Force records for those discharged from September 25, 1947, to January 1, 1964, suffered a 75 percent loss.

What does this mean for those filing record requests? Sometimes there will be no record available. In other cases, information can be pieced together from damaged or auxiliary records, reconstructing some service information. Preservationists in St. Louis are still working to recover information from damaged records. Depending on the condition of the documents you are requesting, there may be a delay in delivery of the records.



Burned personnel records at the NPRC.  
Photo: Preservation Programs at the US National Archives Facebook page.



## TYPES OF MILITARY RECORDS AVAILABLE AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES IN ST. LOUIS

### OFFICIAL MILITARY PERSONNEL FILE (OMPF)

The Official Military Personnel File, or OMPF, is a file which contains information on an individual servicemember. This administrative record holds information such as the date and type of enlistment, duty stations, assignments, qualifications, training, performance, awards and decorations, disciplinary action, and separation from the military. For Army and Army Air Force personnel, the OMPF may also include outpatient medical and dental records. OMPF files are available for the US Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

These are held at the National Archives in St. Louis. OMPFs for women who served with the WAVES, WAC, WASP, and SPARS, and those who served in the Marine Corps, are also at the National Archives in St. Louis. Procedures for requesting those records are the same as for male personnel records.

### MEDICAL RECORDS

Army and Air Force OMPFs may contain health records covering outpatient procedures such as physicals, dental, and

mental health services, and any other treatment not resulting in hospitalization. They may also hold clinical records with documentation of inpatient procedures.

Navy and Marine Corps OMPFs do not contain medical records. Medical records for these personnel were retired to the National Archives by the hospital that created the record. In order to request these records, you will have to provide the name of the hospital to which the veteran was admitted.

### NAVAL AVIATION TRAINING JACKETS

Newly available at the National Archives in St. Louis are Naval Aviation Training Jackets. A Training Jacket is a record of an individual's aviation training, and will include personal information, fitness reports, flight instruction records, casualty reports, and photographs of the individual. This file series covers the period of 1914-1946, and includes cadets from the US Navy, US Navy Reserve, other US military branches, and even some foreign aviation cadets.

### INDIVIDUAL DECEASED PERSONNEL FILE

An Individual Deceased Personnel File (IDPF), sometimes called a mortuary or casualty file, is created upon the death of an active servicemember. This file contains documentation regarding the death and the disposition of remains and personal effects of the servicemember. The actual contents of the file will vary, but may include birth and marriage records, next-of-kin information, and military documents pertaining to the individual.

### MISSING AIR CREW REPORT (MACR)

Missing Air Crew Reports (MACR) were filed for Army Air Force personnel when their aircraft was shot down or lost during an operational mission. These were prepared by the individual's unit and give details on crew members as well as a report of the incident. This collection is not complete as at least 30 percent of all losses were not documented. MACRs are on microfilm and can be requested from the National Archives' microfilm collection online: [www.archives.gov/research/military/ww2/missing-air-crew-reports.html](http://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww2/missing-air-crew-reports.html).

### PERSONS OF EXCEPTIONAL PROMINENCE

Due to a high demand for copies of OMPFs for prominent individuals, such as former presidents, well-known generals, and celebrities who served in the armed forces, certain files have been put into a category known as Persons of Exceptional Prominence. These personnel files are available to the public (for a fee) regardless of the individual's date of discharge. Known as PEPs, many of these files have been digitized, and a digital copy can be obtained from the National Archives in St. Louis. Others are not digitized, but can be reproduced quickly. Paper copies of PEP files are reproduced at a rate of \$.80 per page. Digital copies range from \$20 to \$250, depending on the volume of the record.

To order these records, contact the National Archives in St. Louis by phone at 314-801-0847 or email [pep.records@nara.gov](mailto:pep.records@nara.gov). Copies of these files can be viewed for free at the National Archives in St. Louis. A list of the PEP files available can be found online at [www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/public/persons-of-prominence.html](http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/public/persons-of-prominence.html).



Actor Paul Newman enlisted in the US Navy in 1943 at the age of 17. Newman is one of the many famous names included in the PEP files. Image from the National Archives.





An armored gun crew mans a 20mm anti-aircraft gun aboard a merchant vessel. Image from the collection of The National WWII Museum.

## MILITARY OTHER NATIONAL ARCHIVES LOCATIONS

The National Archives has branches across the country, and some military records are available from locations in Washington, DC, and College Park, Maryland. The types of military files available at these locations can be found in the sections below.

### MERCHANT MARINERS

There is little personnel information for those who served as merchant mariners during the war, as the US Merchant Marine lacked the governing authority of other military branches. Unless the mariner retained his paperwork, there is little to be found. The US Coast Guard maintains limited individual mariner documentation such as seaman's papers, cards, and officer's licenses.

If you know the ship or ships on which a mariner served, you can request copies of the ship's logbook from the National Archives. These logs are divided among the various regional branches and you will need to know the location of the ship's arrival in the United States. The logbook for that trip will be held at the nearest Archives branch. For example, for ships returning to the United States and docking in New Orleans, the logbook for that trip will be at the National Archives branch in Fort Worth, Texas.

The National Archives building in Washington, DC, maintains a merchant mariner deceased personnel file in Record Group 26, Deceased and War Casualty Seaman's Records, 1937–50. This file may provide information on the vessel, date of death, and other information regarding individual merchant mariners.

### PRISONERS OF WAR (POW)

The National Archives in College Park, Maryland, keeps records listing names of almost all American POWs. You can request those records as long as you have the name, rank, service number, and approximate date and place of capture for the POW. There is also a searchable database online. To search the database go to <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/>, select World War II, and click the search button next to the file name "Records of

EFFECTIVE DATE		NATURE OF ACTION	TITLE OF POSITION	GRADE	SALARY	BUREAU	DIVISION	OFFICIAL STATION	CIVIL SERVICE STATUS
12-19-42		W S A	Jr. Clerk Typist (German)	CAF-2	1440	E F & R	Program	NY	9063 1-11
5-1-43		Chg. Stat.	Editorial Clerk (German)	CAF-4	1800	Rad. Prog.	Prog. Pres.	N.Y.C.	
5-1-43		Chg. Stat.	Sr. Editorial Clerk	CAF-5	2000	Rad. Prog.	Prog. Pres.	N.Y.C.	
3/1/44		Chg. Stat.	Script Editor (German)	CAF-7	2600	Rad. Prog.	Program	NYC	
10/22/44		Chg. Stat.	Script Editor Ger.	CAF-1	3630	Rad. Prog.	Language	NY	509813
1/1/46		Chg. Stat.	Script Ed.	CAF-11	4800	Int. Broad.	Broadcast	N.Y.	
7/25/46		Under Sup.	German Radio Unit	CAF12	5905.20	Int. Br.	Rad. Pro.	NY	
7/25/47		Res. RTT	To be paid for 77 days, 5 hrs. annual leave plus 2 hol.						

Above: This is the service record card for Anna Von Bucovich, who worked for the Office of War Information during World War II. Image from the National Archives, St. Louis Facebook page.

World War II Prisoners of War." There is also a second database with additional information on prisoners of the Japanese, including some civilians, searchable on the same website, titled "World War II Prisoners of the Japanese Data Files." More information on POWs can be found at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland.

# CIVILIAN RECORDS AVAILABLE FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

## FEDERAL CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FILE

Civilians who worked for the armed forces and other federal agencies during the war may have an Official Personnel File (OPF) or other documentation, such as service record cards, in the Civilian Personnel Records in St. Louis. These records include personnel who worked at over 100 government agencies, including personnel working at Japanese American incarceration camps.

Files for civilian employees whose employment ended in 1951 or earlier are available to the general public. If the individual remained employed with the agency after 1951, only that individual or an authorized requester may request the file. Only limited information from files of living individuals who remained employed after 1951 will be released to the general public without consent of the individual. If the individual is deceased, more information may be released. All general public requests are subject to provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

## JAPANESE AMERICAN INTERNEE RECORDS

There is a wealth of information regarding Japanese Americans interned and relocated during the war. The National Archives has an online database of more than 100,000 internee records in the War Relocation Authority records. This searchable database provides personal information on internees and may list the center to which they were relocated.

To search the database go to <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/>, select World War II, and click the search button next to the file name "Records About Japanese Americans Relocated During World War II."

If you are unable to locate the individual in the War Relocation Authority records, you may also search in the National Archives Record Group 60, General Records of the Department of Justice, 1790–2002. Within this Record Group are the "World War II Japanese Internee Cards" searchable here: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/720246>.

This is a collection of index cards for interned Japanese Americans and will include name, date of birth, address, case

file number, and other personal information.

Information regarding further materials on Japanese Americans interned during World War II can be found online at: [www.archives.gov/research/japanese-americans/internment-intro.html](http://www.archives.gov/research/japanese-americans/internment-intro.html).

A large amount of material is available, but most of the records have not been digitized. You will need to search the National Archives main site and submit specific requests for copies of material.

## RED CROSS RECORDS

The National Archives in College Park, Maryland, has received a large collection of Red Cross records. Included in these records are some of the Historical Nurse Files, which cover the WWII period. The availability and contents of the files varies greatly, and they are not digitized.

To inquire about a Red Cross nurse, submit a request via mail or email to:

### National Archives at College Park – Textual Reference (RDT<sub>2</sub>)

National Archives at College Park  
8601 Adelphi Road  
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Email: [Archives2reference@nara.gov](mailto:Archives2reference@nara.gov)

## US CADET NURSE CORPS

In June 1943, the Cadet Nurse Corps program was formed in order to ensure enough young women could be trained as nurses for work both at home and abroad. Open to women of all backgrounds (including African Americans and Japanese Americans) with at least a high school degree, the program provided tuition-and-fee scholarships for women to attend nursing school. Nearly 125,000 women graduated from the program between 1943 and 1948. The National Archives holds the Cadet Nurse Corps Files (Record Group 90). Within these files are membership cards for each individual cadet, which provide information on where and when she attended school, her hometown, and how she learned of the program. To search the cards you need to know the name of the nursing school and

Right: Wartime Civil Control Station in San Francisco, California. Japanese family heads and persons living alone form a line outside the station located in the Japanese American Citizens League Auditorium at 2031 Bush Street, to appear for "processing" in response to Civilian Exclusion Order Number 20. Image and caption from the National Archives and Records Administration.





the city and state in which it was located.

These files have been digitized and are searchable by name on the website [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com). This is a subscription site that offers access to these and many more National Archives records.

**To submit a request, write or email:**

National Archives at College Park – Textual Reference (RDT2)  
 National Archives at College Park  
 8601 Adelphi Road  
 College Park, MD 20740-6001

Email: [Archives2reference@nara.gov](mailto:Archives2reference@nara.gov)

**NONGOVERNMENT COMPANY RECORDS**

The National Archives does not hold copies of civilian company records. If you are looking for the employment records of an individual who worked for a civilian company, those records may still be in the possession of that company. In many cases, those records no longer exist. For example, the records of employees at Higgins Industries in New Orleans were destroyed after the company was sold in 1959.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Reverts	Aband.	Transf.	Pending	Closed
B - 8-20-97												Int. Serial No. HJ-1016-				
NAME <u>IIO, Choichi</u> (J)												FILE NO. <u>146-15-2-21-518</u>				
Alias _____												PRES. WARRANT _____				
Address <u>Anahola, Kauai, T. H.</u>												Requested _____				
CUSTODY RECORD _____												Denied _____				
Apprehended at <u>Hawi, Hawaii, T. H.</u> <u>12-8-41</u>												Issued _____				
Transferred to <u>Camp Livingston, La.</u>												Cancelled _____				
Transferred to <u>Ft. Missoula, Mont.</u> <u>8-5-43</u>												HEAR. NOTICE _____				
Transferred to <u>Santa Fe, N. M.</u> <u>4-5-44</u>												QUESTIONNAIRE _____				
Transferred to <u>Left for Hawaii</u> <u>12-4-45</u>												BOARD RECOMM. _____				
INTERIM ACTION _____												Release _____				
Release _____												Parole _____				
Parole _____												Intern _____				
Intern _____												FBI REPORTS _____				
FILE CHARGED _____												Period: _____				
In _____ Date _____ To _____ Date _____												A. G. ORDER _____				
												Release _____				
												Parole _____				
												Intern _____				
												DISPOSITION _____				
												Released _____				
												Paroled _____				
												Interned _____				

Above: Index card in the WWII Alien Enemy Detention and Internment Case Files, an example of the cards found in the World War II Japanese Internee Cards collection. Image from the National Archives and Records Administration.



Private Rad Hall and Private First Class Marie McMillen at Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1944. Private McMillen was a section leader at the Parachute School and made 690 jumps in her career. US Army Signal Corps photograph. Gift in Memory of Maurice T. White, from the collection of The National WWII Museum.



# REQUESTING CIVILIAN AND MILITARY RECORDS

## REQUESTING FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES IN ST. LOUIS

When requesting records, it is important to know that if you are not the next-of-kin or veteran making a request, you may only request records for servicemembers who were discharged at least 62 years prior to the current date. Civilian records at the National Archives in St. Louis are available to the public only if the federal civilian employee left federal employment before 1952. In every request, you must include your name and contact information such as mailing address and phone number within the letter of request or on the proper form.

### OFFICIAL MILITARY PERSONNEL FILE (OMPF)

There are two types of requests for OMPFs. The most common request is for a single document from the file, a DD-214, the separation document for a veteran or next-of-kin who is seeking service information in order to receive benefits, medical care, or for funeral purposes. The other common request is for genealogy or family research.

In the event a veteran's file was destroyed in the 1973 fire, the National Archives staff will work to piece together a record of service from its various collections. This may cause a delay in processing the request.

### INFORMATION NEEDED FOR A RECORDS REQUEST

Regardless of the type of request you make, you will need to provide certain information as part of the request. Every item below is not required, but having as much information as possible will help the Archives staff in locating records.

#### KEY DETAILS INCLUDE:

- Complete name used by the veteran during his or her time of service (be sure to include maiden names, if applicable)
- Service branch
- Service dates (even a year range can help)
- Service number or Social Security number
- Date and place of birth (important if you do not have a service number or Social Security number)

If the records may have been damaged or destroyed in the 1973 fire, include as much extra information as possible, such as:

- Place of discharge
- Last unit the veteran was assigned to
- Where the individual enlisted or entered service

You can still file a request if you do not have all of the information, but at minimum you must provide the first and last name, and branch of service. Even if the name of the veteran seems unique, there is a good chance that he or she is not the only veteran with that name. Without knowing the branch of service, the National Archives personnel will have no starting place, as records are divided by branch.

### REQUESTING A DD-214 FOR BENEFITS

Benefits requests allow for a single document to be released in order to assist the veteran or next-of-kin, regardless of the veteran's year of separation from service. These requests are given priority, so long as only the DD-214 is requested. If a full OMPF is requested, even for benefits, it will not be given priority and you may have to wait months for your documents. Benefits requests are filled at no cost to the veteran or their next-of-kin.

When requesting records for benefits, medical needs, or funeral purposes, the most expedient method will be to request the records online or via fax. This may be done by the veteran or next-of-kin only. There is no date-of-discharge restriction on benefits requests. The National Archives defines next-of-kin as "the un-remarried widow or widower, son, daughter, father, mother, brother, or sister" of a veteran. When requesting documentation for benefits needs, you must only select the DD-214. Do not request a full profile if you need proof of service for any time-sensitive benefit applications.

Veterans or next-of-kin may request various personnel records online with eVetRecs: <https://vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html>. Once the online portion of the application is completed, a signature page must be printed, signed, and then either faxed or mailed to the NPRC.



Requests for a DD-214 for benefits needs are generally filled within two weeks, but these requests will only provide you with a separation document. Should the documentation be needed urgently, follow the instructions below to have a request expedited.

Signature forms can be faxed to 314-801-0764.

**To mail in the signature form, send it to:**

National Personnel Records Center  
 (Military Personnel Records)  
 1 Archives Drive  
 St. Louis, MO 63138

If you are unable to complete the request via eVetRecs, you may file the request in writing or with a Standard Form 180 (SF-180). The instructions for those methods are offered below. A sample SF-180 for benefits is on page 34.

**EXPEDITING RECORDS RETRIEVAL**

In the event records are needed urgently (for a medical procedure or a funeral, for example) and there is a deadline for the response, make note of this in eVetRecs in the "Comments" section. If you are sending in an SF-180, note your need and deadline in the "Purpose" section of the form. The NPRC tries to fill urgent requests within two days, but the response time will

depend on the status of the records, subject to loss or damage from the 1973 fire. For funeral needs, requests must be made by next-of-kin, and should be faxed to 314-801-0764, along with the date and time of the funeral, contact information for the funeral home, and proof of death such as a death certificate, letter from the funeral home, or an obituary.

You may also reach the Customer Service Team at the National Archives in St. Louis by calling 314-801-0800. The National Archives receives a large number of calls each day, so you may experience a long wait time.

For requests for funeral needs, the National Archives will assist the funeral home in coordinating military funeral honors for the veteran. If a veteran is to be interred at a Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery, contact the National Cemetery Scheduling office at 800-535-1117 or visit their website for assistance: [www.cem.va.gov/cem/burial\\_benefits/](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/burial_benefits/).

**GENERAL RESEARCH REQUESTS**

If you are not the veteran or next-of-kin requesting records, you may only request records for veterans discharged 62 years prior to the current date. These records have become archived and should generally be available for reproduction. There are two options for requesting these records: you can print, complete, and return an SF-180, or you may write a letter to request records. The form is available online: [www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html).

SF-180s or written requests can be faxed to:  
 314-801-9195

**To mail in the SF-180 or written request, send it to:**

National Personnel Records Center  
 (Military Personnel Records)  
 1 Archives Drive  
 St. Louis, MO 63138

For written requests, be sure to state the purpose of your request, whether you are requesting a DD-214 for benefits or a full OMPF, and any personal information as listed in the preceding section. A sample SF-180 for general requests is on page 35.

**COST OF RECORDS REQUEST**

It is free to request records. If your requested records are located, there will be a fee to obtain reproductions. Copies of a DD-214 for benefits are free for veterans and next-of-kin. For all other records requests, including those by a veteran or family for a full file, the fees on the following page apply:

**ORDER FOR ARCHIVAL RECORD REPRODUCTION SERVICES**

**Request Information**  
 Veteran's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Veteran's Service Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Photocopy Information**  
 Total Cost: \$25.00

**Payment Information**  
 Personal Check  
 Cashier's Check  
 Money Order  
 Credit Card  
 Checks and money orders should be made payable to NPRC Archival Programs.  
 If paying by credit card, please provide the following information:  
 Type of Credit Card  MasterCard  Visa  Discover  American Express  
 Name on Credit Card \_\_\_\_\_  
 Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 Credit Card Billing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Requester's E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Address Information**  
**Ship To Address**  
 Copies will be shipped to the address below. If this is not the address to which your copies should be sent, please provide the correct address.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Return Address**  
 Return this form **and** the total payment required to the address below.  
 National Archives and Records Administration  
 National Archives at St. Louis  
 Attn: RL-SL  
 P.O. Box 38961  
 Saint Louis, MO 63138  
NPRC: Test Form 2012-018 (10/12)

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
 This form is for payment purposes only. Information on documents received with payment will not be forwarded.

Sample payment form from the NPRC. The cost will vary depending on the OMPF you request.



- For an OMPF of five pages or less, \$25 flat fee.
- For an OMPF of six or more pages, \$70 flat fee.

Once your records are located you will be notified by letter. Included will be an order for Archival Record Reproduction Services with your reproduction fee total, which serves as your payment form. Return this form to the address at the bottom. You can pay with a personal check, cashier's check, money order, or credit card.

### TIME FRAME

Requests made through eVetRecs will receive a request number via email. Ten business days after you receive confirmation of your request, you can check the status of your request online: [www.archives.gov/forms/st-louis/mpr-followup.html](http://www.archives.gov/forms/st-louis/mpr-followup.html). If you do not receive a confirmation, allow 10 business days from the date you faxed the form, or longer if you mailed it, before you complete a status check. The request number is not required to check the status of a request.

The NPRC is working to minimize the response time for records requests. The response can take from 10 days to six weeks or longer. If the records you request were damaged or destroyed in the 1973 fire, there is a possibility that the National Archives

staff can piece together information from other records. If this is the case, the wait for requested information may extend to several months.

### NAVAL AVIATION TRAINING JACKETS

Naval Aviation Training Jackets may be requested via mail, email, or fax. These jackets will predominantly cover US Navy and Marine Corps aviators, but may cover aviators from other branches or countries. In your request, state that you are requesting a Naval Aviation Training Jacket and include the same information you would use for requesting an OMPF: full name, date of birth, service or Social Security number, dates of service, and branch.

Reproduction fees are \$.80 per page, with a \$20 minimum reproduction fee. Photographs can be reproduced at a cost of \$3.50 per photograph. An enhanced digital copy of a photograph is \$20.

Requests can be faxed to 314-801-9187 or emailed to [stl.archives@nara.gov](mailto:stl.archives@nara.gov).

### Requests can be mailed to:

National Archives & Records Administration  
Attn: Archival Programs  
PO Box 38757  
St. Louis, MO 63138

Marine Gunner Horace C. Lownsberry signals to the belly gunner to alert him to two enemy planes sighted below. 13 July 1943. Image from the collection of The National WWII Museum.



## MEDICAL RECORDS

Navy and Marine Corps OMPFs will not contain medical records. These records must be requested independent of the OMPF. The availability of these records to the general public is subject to provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and requires that the person requesting has authorization from the veteran. If the veteran is deceased and you are next-of-kin, you must provide proof of death in the form of a death certificate, letter from the funeral home, or published obituary. Otherwise authorization from a veteran is required in writing and must be signed and dated. An example of such authorization is below:

"I authorize the National Personnel Records Center, or other custodian of my military service record, to release to (your name or that of your company and/or organization) the following information and/or copies of documents from my military service record."

**In order to consider a request for these records, the NPRC will need the following information:**

- Name of the hospital in which the servicemember was treated
- Month (if known) and year the treatment was received
- Veteran's name and Social Security number or service number

The request stating the records you desire along with personal identification information can be sent as a letter via fax or mail. You may also use the SF-180. Specify on the form that you are requesting medical records.

**Request letters and SF-180s can be faxed to:**

314-801-9195

**Mail your request letter or SF-180 to:**

National Personnel Records Center  
(Military Personnel Records)  
1 Archives Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63138

## COST OF MEDICAL RECORDS REQUEST

As with requesting OMPFs, filing the request is free. Reproduction costs will vary depending on the size of the file. You will be notified of the costs before you are charged and will be able to pay by personal check, cashier's check, money order, or credit card. The NPRC does not post a response time frame for medical records.

## INDIVIDUAL DECEASED PERSONNEL FILE (IDPF)

The National Archives has a limited collection of IDPFs for the US Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, including Army Air Force records. Army IDPFs are being transferred from the US Army Human Resources Command to the National Archives



in St. Louis. To request these records from the National Archives, you will need to provide at minimum the name of the servicemember and military branch. If you know the date of the veteran's death and the unit, installation, or ship, provide that information to assist in locating the record. These records fall under potential restrictions of the Freedom of Information Act Exemption (b)(6), so some information, such as third-party Social Security numbers and addresses, may be redacted before a copy is sent to you.

**To obtain a copy of these records you will have to submit a request either via email or mail. Your request must state the following:**

- The records you are requesting (IDPF)
- Relevant information including the veteran's name, date of death, and unit, installation, or ship

**You may email your request to**

**STL.Archives@nara.gov or mail it to:**

National Archives at St. Louis  
PO Box 37587  
St. Louis, MO 63138

As stated, US Army IDPFs are currently being transferred to the National Archives in St. Louis. Their availability is dependent upon their transfer status. To request a US Army IDPF, submit the same type of request as for other branches. You will be notified if the IDPF is available.

### OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FILE, CIVILIAN RECORDS

When requesting records, it is important to know that if you are not the next-of-kin or veteran making a request, you may only request from the National Archives in St. Louis records for civilian employees who left federal employment before 1952. In every request, you must include your name and contact information such as mailing address and phone number within the letter of request or on the proper form.

Civilian personnel records can be requested by mailing a written request to the National Archives. In the letter, state that you are requesting an Official Personnel File (OPF) and explain the purpose of your request (family research, genealogy, or other project). In order for your record to be located, include as much of the following information as possible:

- Name used during employment
- Date of birth
- Social Security number
- Dates of federal service
- Name and location of the federal agency the individual worked for

### Mail your request to:

National Archives & Records Administration  
ATTN: Archival Programs  
PO Box 38757  
St. Louis, MO 63138

You may be contacted to fill out a form or to provide some additional detailed information based on the organization with which the person was employed.

### COPY FEES FOR CIVILIAN PERSONNEL RECORDS

You must purchase the full Official Personnel File; individual pages will not be reproduced. There are set fees for the reproduction of an OPF:

- For an OPF of five pages or less, \$25 flat fee.
- For an OPF of six or more pages, \$70 flat fee.

As with other records requests, do not send payment with the request. Once your requested record has been located you will be notified of the necessary fees and payment options.

### PRIVATE RESEARCHERS

You may hire a private researcher to visit the National Archives to view and copy the records for you. This does not guarantee that records will be found, but it may expedite the process. However, the costs associated with records retrieval will increase. Fees charged by private researchers include flat fees and hourly rates. It is free for veterans to request a copy of their discharge paper, and next-of-kin may receive copies of OPFs free of charge.

A list of researchers is available here: [www.archives.gov/research/hire-help/topics.html?topic=military](http://www.archives.gov/research/hire-help/topics.html?topic=military). The researchers listed are not endorsed by NARA or The National WWII Museum.



## REPLACING LOST OR UNISSUED MEDALS

Many people want to find a family member's service records so that they may replace medals that have been lost over the years, or which were never issued. Only veterans and certain next-of-kin can request medal replacements; all others must obtain medals from a commercial source.

For medal requests, the US Army defines next-of-kin as: surviving spouse, father, mother, eldest sibling, child, or grandchild. The US Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard define next-of-kin as: father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, or un-remarried spouse. The US Air Force and Coast Guard do not accept next-of-kin requests for veterans separated before 1954. Members of the US Army Air Corps and Army Air Force need to apply to the US Air Force for medal replacements, not the US Army.

For WWII veterans, there is usually no cost to replace medals. Requests should be filed through eVetRecs, or in writing to the NPRC. Upon receipt of the request, the NPRC will work with

the appropriate service branch to provide replacement medals. The NPRC does not provide the medals.

More information on medal replacement by branch is available online: [www.archives.gov/veterans/replace-medals.html](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/replace-medals.html).

**US Army, Navy, Army Air Force, and Marine Corps veterans can request medal replacements online through eVetRecs, or in writing to:**

National Personnel Record Center  
1 Archives Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63138

**Coast Guard veterans must write to:**

Coast Guard Personnel Service Center  
4200 Wilson Blvd, Suite 900 (PSC-PSD-MA)  
Stop 7200  
Arlington, VA 20598-7200

Lieutenant Ernest Childers, an American Indian, receives the Congressional Medal of Honor from Lieutenant General Jacob L. Devers, Commander of American Forces in the Mediterranean Theater. US Army Signal Corps photograph, from the collection of The National WWII Museum.



## OBTAINING MERCHANT MARINER AND PRISONER OF WAR RECORDS

To request records from the National Archives in Washington, DC, or College Park, Maryland, you may either send your request in writing or by email. An archives technician will contact you to assist with your request, so be sure to provide all relevant contact information.

**For records held at the Washington, DC, location, write or email to:**

National Archives at Washington, DC – Textual Reference (RDT1)

National Archives Building  
7th and Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20408

Email: [Archives1reference@nara.gov](mailto:Archives1reference@nara.gov)

For records held at the various archives branches, you will need to obtain the contact information for that branch and submit a request. A complete list of branches with links to their websites is available online at: <https://www.archives.gov/locations#>.

Bombardier Squadron Pilot officer Lieutenant Eldon H. Dahl was shot down over Germany and interned in an Italian prison camp. Upon his release due to Italian Armistice, Dahl was captured by German soldiers, but managed to escape. Image from the collection of The National WWII Museum.

**REQUESTING RECORDS**





Above is the cover of the unit history for the 47th Infantry Regiment, known as the Raiders. This unit history was printed in southern Germany after the war.

# UNDERSTANDING AND USING RECORDS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Official Military Personnel Files can provide many interesting details of a veteran's service. Regardless of the branch of service, records should provide you with information such as units or ships served, special qualifications or ratings, battles and campaigns, decorations and citations, and wounds received in action. If you do not have an OMPF but know what branch and unit a veteran served with, the National Archives holds an incredible amount of information that can help you better understand your veteran's WWII story.

The National Archives in College Park, Maryland, houses roughly 200,000 cubic feet of documentation on American military participation. This information is focused on the larger picture of units and vessels, and information on individuals is limited. For the family trying to retrace the steps of a veteran, there are several types of records that can provide a wealth of information that can help piece together an individual's WWII experiences.

## UNIT INFORMATION ACTION REPORTS

The National Archives holds reports called action reports from all branches of the military. Written by unit officers, action reports (sometimes called after-action reports) provide details from an engagement with enemy forces. These will vary by branch and by unit. For US Army and Marine Corps units that frequently engaged enemy forces, there may be monthly action reports. Action reports for Navy vessels will generally focus on a particular event. As a general rule, there will be little information about individuals in action reports.

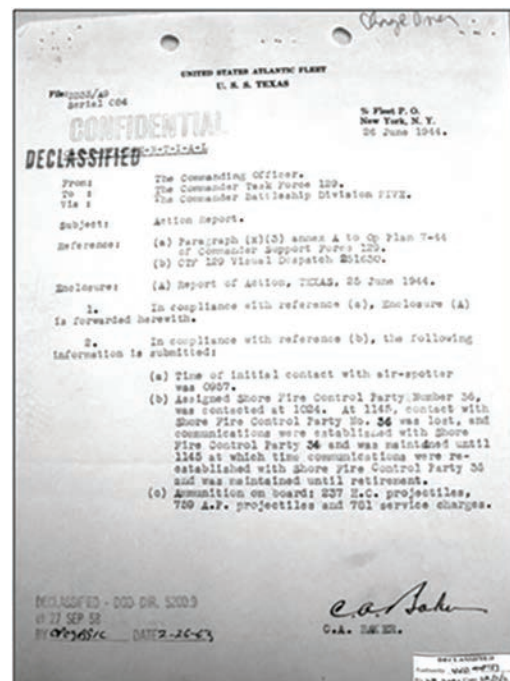
## DECK LOGS

Deck logs provide a chronological account of a ship, station, unit, or other command's daily activities. The National Archives holds deck logs for both Navy and Coast Guard vessels from World War II. Small vessels such as landing craft will not have deck logs. The content of deck logs varies, but should at minimum give the daily location of a vessel, a brief overview of engagements, or other notable events. There may be limited crew information, such as leave time, injuries, or

AWOL punishment, but detailed information regarding crew members will not usually be found in deck logs. Do not expect to find details regarding work done to a vessel, crew work assignments, or details on aircraft operations on carriers.

## WAR DIARIES

War diaries provide daily summaries of activities of units. They were kept by various levels of US Army units. Navy ships kept war diaries, but in some cases, such as patrol-torpedo boats that operated as a squadron, the war diary was kept at a squadron level. War diaries can provide copies of operational materials, messages, and other detailed information. The National Archives holds numerous war diaries from World War II, though some are missing.



First page of an action report from the battleship *Texas*.  
From NARA, RG 38.





### US NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MUSTER ROLLS

Monthly logs kept by Navy vessels and bases and Marine Corps units list the names of those attached to that unit, ship, or command. Held by NARA, muster rolls are available online at [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) and [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com).

### COAST GUARD

The Coast Guard maintains historical materials, including unit histories, online at: [www.uscg.mil/history/WW2Index.asp](http://www.uscg.mil/history/WW2Index.asp). An online search may provide links to either digital copies of unit histories or details on where paper copies can be purchased. There may also be unofficial postwar histories of some Navy ships or commands available in libraries or online.

### UNIT HISTORIES

Army units maintained a historical narrative of their experiences. Many of these were published in limited numbers after the war. Also, some Marine Corps unit histories are available in print. These may be available at local libraries or sold online.



Top photo: Sailors aboard USS *Rutland* off Ulithi in May 1945 during a ship's inspection. Image from the collection of The National WWII Museum.  
Bottom right: US Coast Guardsmen raise an American flag aboard a Coast Guard transport during the invasion of Sicily, 1943. From the collection of The National WWII Museum.



# REQUESTING RECORDS FROM OTHER NATIONAL ARCHIVES LOCATIONS

Copies of documents such as action reports and deck logs can be obtained from the National Archives. NARA has two locations in the Washington, DC, area and 12 regional locations nationwide. All records are searchable in a single online catalog that will provide the location of different documents.

Records at the National Archives are maintained within Record Groups. Material grouped together within a Record Group will be very specific. For example, the US Navy Bureau of Personnel records are Record Group 0024, "Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel." The Record Group number will be the most basic form of identification for a set of records and will give a clear idea of the topic of that material. There are more than 500 Record Groups at the National Archives, and its website has lists grouped by topic, found here: [www.archives.gov/research/alic/tools/record-group-clusters.html](http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/tools/record-group-clusters.html). The Record Groups do not change by location, but some locations will not have all record groups.

## ACCESS TO ARCHIVAL DATABASES (AAD)

The first place to look when requesting records (other than personnel records) from NARA is its Access to Archival Databases (AAD). This database connects you to material digitized by NARA. It is the portal to finding such material as Japanese American internee records, American POW records, and WWII Army Enlistment records. Information found in the AAD is generally fully available online, and you will not need to make special requests to obtain this information. The AAD is found here: <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/>.

## MICROFILM CATALOG

NARA's microfilm catalog is a searchable database containing more than 3,400 numbered microfilm rolls. You can search the database by Record Group number, facility location, keyword, or microfilm number. Once you locate the desired microfilm and have its publication number, you may order copies of the microfilm online at <https://eservices.archives.gov/orderonline/>. Processing time for these requests is up to 90 days. Fees vary, but a fee schedule can be found online at <http://www.archives.gov/research/order/fees.html>.

## NATIONAL ARCHIVES CATALOG

The National Archives Catalog is a searchable database for items in the possession of NARA. Enter your search term, such as "after-action" reports, and search through the listings. In order to request copies of records, such as an after-action report, you will need to write an email stating in detail the records you would like copied and provide the following information, found on each item's page:

- Record Group
- National Archives Identifier
- Box number (if given)

There will be contact information listed on the item's page that will direct you to the NARA location that has the documents you are interested in. You can then send an email request to the email listed, or you may mail in your request to the noted address. Once your request is received, an archives technician will respond to you and begin the process of filling your request. The type of copy, response time, and copy cost will vary depending on the NARA location and type and size of the record. The archives technician who works on your request will arrange delivery and provide payment details. The catalog is found at [www.archives.gov/research/catalog/](http://www.archives.gov/research/catalog/). If you have any questions regarding records research or are not sure where to find the records you are interested in, you can contact NARA online at [www.archives.gov/contact/](http://www.archives.gov/contact/).

U. S. NAVAL  
COMMUNICATION SERVICE

OUTGOING  
DISPATCH

N.A.A.F. Municipal Airport #1  
Jacksonville, Florida

UNCLASSIFIED: NAVY LINE.....	GOV'T. NAVY.....	TWX.....
CLASSIFIED: RESTRICTED.....	CONFIDENTIAL.....	SECRET.....
PRECEDENCE: MGM.....	AMGM.....	D..... R..... P..... OP..... O.....

To:

Mr. Charles A. Nickerman  
2640 West 9th Street  
Los Angeles, Calif.

(These lines for use by Communications only—See reverse side for drafting instructions)

*Handwritten:*  
3-26-45

I DEEPLY REGRET TO ADVISE YOU THAT YOUR SON, CHARLES JOHN NICKERMAN, ARM3c, U.S.N.R., IS MISSING ON A ROUTINE TRAINING FLIGHT ON WHICH THE PLANE IS OVERDUE AND PRESUMED DOWN AT SEA. AN EXHAUSTIVE SEARCH IS BEING CONDUCTED AND YOU WILL BE ADVISED IMMEDIATELY OF ANY RESULTS.

RECEIVED IN-CASUALTY NOTIFICATION UNIT  
MAR 14 1945

FINISHED FILE

RECEIVED  
U.S. NAVY DEPARTMENT  
1945 MAR 14 PM 12 27

ORIGINATOR: COMMANDING OFFICER      DATE: 3/11/45      RELEASED BY:  
FROM: U.S. NAAS, Jacksonville Municipal No.1, Jacksonville, Florida.  
ACTION:  
INFO:

Copy of the dispatch sent to the family of US Navy sailor Charles John Nickerman informing them of his aircraft's disappearance.

## OMPF EXAMPLE

## CHARLES JOHN NICKERMAN'S OFFICIAL MILITARY PERSONNEL FILE

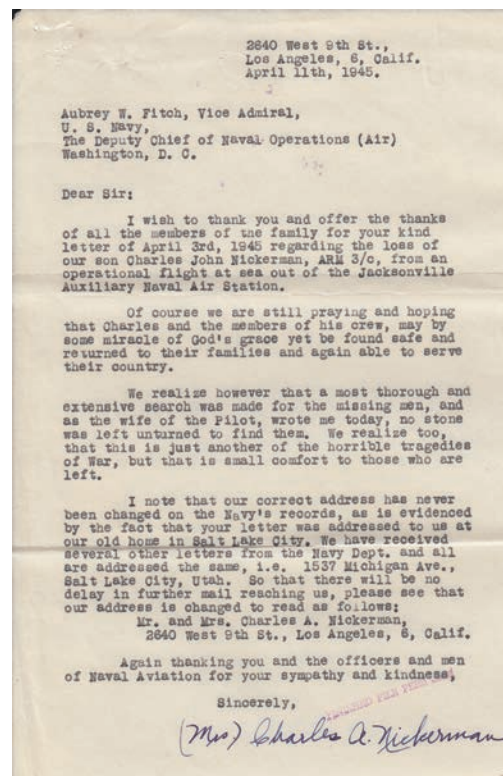
While many OMPFs provide only limited information, some might contain a wealth of information on a servicemember, as is the case with one US Navy sailor, Charles John Nickerman.

On March 10, 1945, a US Navy PB4Y Liberator disappeared off the Bahamas during a routine long-range navigational training flight. Aboard was 19-year-old Aviation Radioman Third Class, Charles Nickerman, from Salt Lake City, Utah, seen to the right in an enlistment "mug shot." The next day his parents received a telegram informing them that their son was presumed missing at sea. Despite an exhaustive search by the US Navy, British forces in the Bahamas, and eventually Charles's father, only the two life rafts from the aircraft were ever recovered. Charles Nickerman was declared deceased by the US Navy on March 11, 1946.



Nickerman's personnel file was pulled and scanned at the National Archives in St. Louis. An unusually large file, it contains two images of him and over 120 documents detailing his enlistment, training, and certifications, and numerous letters regarding the disappearance of his aircraft and the search to recover the crew. This is one striking example of the types of material that might be found in a file. It is important to note that photographs are only reproduced for those researching at the National Archives in St. Louis.

Seen to the left is a copy of the dispatch sent to the family of Charles Nickerman informing them of the aircraft's disappearance, and to the right a letter from his mother to Vice Admiral Aubrey W. Fitch, the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air) in Washington, DC, thanking him for the extensive search efforts.







Second Lieutenant Rita G. Hall, US Army nurse, waves goodbye as she and other nurses disembark at Cape Gloucester, New Britain, August 1944. Image from the collection of The National WWII Museum.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The resources available to those wishing to research World War II are vast. Significant materials offering context to individual experiences have been digitized by individuals and are available from various online sources.

**Some online resources of interest to family researchers are:**

**The Digital Collections of The National WWII Museum (a collection of photographs and oral histories)**  
[www.ww2online.org](http://www.ww2online.org)

**Naval History and Heritage Command**  
[www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil)

**US Army Center of Military History**  
[www.history.army.mil](http://www.history.army.mil)

**US Army in World War II Series**  
<http://www.history.army.mil/html/bookshelves/collect/usaww2.html>

**USMC History Division**  
<https://www.usmcu.edu/historydivision>

**US Air Force History and Museums**  
[www.afhistoryandmuseums.af.mil/](http://www.afhistoryandmuseums.af.mil/)

**United States Coast Guard Historian's Office (featuring lists of Coast Guard casualties and unit histories)**  
[www.uscg.mil/history](http://www.uscg.mil/history)

**US Merchant Marine Academy**  
[www.usmma.edu/about/usmma-history](http://www.usmma.edu/about/usmma-history)

**Library of Congress Veterans History Project (large collection of oral histories and photographs)**  
[www.loc.gov/vets/](http://www.loc.gov/vets/)

**Japanese Internment (a website with hundreds of oral histories)**  
<http://www.densho.org/>

**Red Cross in World War II**  
<http://www.redcross.org/about-us/history/red-cross-american-history/WWII>

**Two subscription websites that provide access to enlistment records, muster rolls, and other basic information are:**

**Fold 3:** [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com)

Fold 3 has MACRs, war diaries, action reports, and other official war documents.

**Ancestry:** [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

Ancestry offers selected personnel records such as muster rolls and enlistment records.

### OTHER

Local resources should not be overlooked as part of your research. Local, state and university libraries, archives, and museums may hold personal papers of servicemembers, unit histories, or other documents that can provide a researcher with a wealth of information.

Local newspapers published enlistment and casualty lists, and may have run stories when men and women returned home or died in service. Back issues of newspapers may be found in local library collections on microfilm, or on digital databases. If you are looking for information on a deceased individual, the funeral home which provided funeral services may have a copy of their service record in their files.

Upon their return home, servicemembers were encouraged to file a copy of their military paperwork at county courthouses for safekeeping. Local Veterans Affairs offices may also be able to provide copies of service or medical records.

Many units formed reunion groups or unit associations after the war, and some of these groups may have websites full of information. These groups may be able to provide unit information, rosters, and other material.



## CHECKLIST FOR MILITARY OMPF REQUESTS

### Gather as much personal information as you can.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Service branch: \_\_\_\_\_

Service dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Service or Social Security number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and place of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of discharge: \_\_\_\_\_

Last unit the veteran was assigned to: \_\_\_\_\_

Where the individual enlisted or entered service: \_\_\_\_\_

Determine type of request:

Benefits \_\_\_\_\_ General Research Request \_\_\_\_\_

As sailors left stateside assignments for sea duty, WAVES were trained to replace them. A WAVE Specialist (Mail) Third Class says farewell to the enlisted sailor who she was to replace. Image from the collection of The National WWII Museum.



## BENEFITS REQUESTS

(such as medical, funeral, or other personal needs)

### Is the veteran or next-of-kin making this request?

Veteran \_\_\_\_\_ Next-of-Kin \_\_\_\_\_

### If the request is being made by next-of-kin, do you have the required proof of death documents if necessary?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

### Is the benefits request urgent for a medical procedure or funeral?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**If yes, fax SF-180 immediately to: 314-801-0764 or request online:** [vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html](http://vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html)

### If no, fax SF-180 to 314-801-0764 or mail to:

National Personnel Records Center  
(Military Personnel Records)  
1 Archives Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63138

- On the SF-180 or in the online request, be sure to select DD Form 214 or equivalent.
- Be sure to note an urgent request in the comments section on the online application or in the "purpose" section of the SF-180. You should receive a response within two business days.
- You should receive a response within two weeks for nonurgent requests. You may call the Customer Service Team (314-801-0800) if you do not get a response within 10 business days.

## GENERAL RESEARCH REQUESTS

(such as family history or general research)

### Was the veteran whose record you are requesting discharged at least 62 years prior to the current date?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, gather the above personal information and print out an SF-180 for your request.

If no, you may not request this record unless you are the veteran or next-of-kin.

**If you are the veteran or next-of-kin making the request, you may file the request online at:** [vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html](http://vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html)

- All others requesting records must fill out an SF-180.
- Be sure to note both online and on the SF-180 that you are requesting a full OMPF.
- SF-180s or written requests can be faxed to 314-801-9195.

### To mail in the SF-180 or written request, send it to:

National Personnel Records Center  
(Military Personnel Records)  
1 Archives Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63138

This is a sample of a request for a DD-214 for benefits purposes.

# SAMPLE SF-180 FOR VETERAN BENEFITS

It has been filled out as if the veteran is requesting the information. If it is being requested by next-of-kin, make that selection in Section III and provide necessary documentation.

This is a sample of a request for a full OMPF for general use. It has been filled out as if a family member

Standard Form 180 (Rev. 11/2015) (Page 1)  
Prescribed by NARA (36 CFR 1233.18 (d))

Authorized for local reproduction  
Previous edition unusable

OMB No. 3095-0029 Expires 04/30/2018

## REQUEST PERTAINING TO MILITARY RECORDS

Requests from veterans or deceased veteran's next-of-kin may be submitted online by using eVetRecs at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>. To ensure the best possible service, please thoroughly review the accompanying instructions before filling out this form. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY OR TYPE BELOW.

### SECTION I - INFORMATION NEEDED TO LOCATE RECORDS (Furnish as much information as possible.)

1. NAME USED DURING SERVICE (last, first, full middle) Smi th, John Peter		2. SOCIAL SECURITY # 111- 11- 1111		3. DATE OF BIRTH 11- 02- 1924		4. PLACE OF BIRTH New OrLeans, La	
5. SERVICE, PAST AND PRESENT (For an effective records search, it is important that ALL service be shown below.)							
	BRANCH OF SERVICE	DATE ENTERED	DATE RELEASED	OFFICER	ENLISTED	SERVICE NUMBER (If unknown, write "unknown")	
a. ACTIVE	USN- US Navy	1- 1- 43	6- 1- 46	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	123 45 67	
b. RESERVE	Unknown			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
c. STATE NATIONAL GUARD	Unknown			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

6. IS THIS PERSON DECEASED?  NO  YES - *MUST* provide Date of Death if veteran is deceased: \_\_\_\_\_

7. DID THIS PERSON RETIRE FROM MILITARY SERVICE?  NO  YES

### SECTION II - INFORMATION AND/OR DOCUMENTS REQUESTED

1. CHECK THE ITEM(S) YOU ARE REQUESTING:

**DD Form 214 or equivalent.** Year(s) in which form(s) issued to veteran: 1946

This form contains information normally needed to verify military service. A copy may be sent to the veteran, the deceased veteran's next-of-kin, or other persons or organizations, if authorized in Section III, below. An UNDELETED DD214 is ordinarily required to determine eligibility for benefits. If you request a DELETED copy, the following items will be blacked out: authority for separation, reason for separation, reenlistment eligibility code, separation (SPD/SPN) code, and, for separations after June 30, 1979, character of separation and dates of time lost.

An UNDELETED copy will be sent UNLESS YOU SPECIFY A DELETED COPY by checking this box:  I want a DELETED copy.

**Medical Records** Includes Service Treatment Records, Health (outpatient) and Dental Records. IF HOSPITALIZED (inpatient) the FACILITY NAME and DATE (month and year) for EACH admission MUST be provided: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other** (Specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. **PURPOSE:** (Providing information about the purpose of the request is strictly voluntary; however, it may help to provide the best possible response and may result in a faster reply. Information provided will in no way be used to make a decision to deny the request.)

Benefits (explain)  Employment  VA Loan Programs  Medical  Genealogy  Correction  Personal  Other (explain)

Explain here: \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION III - RETURN ADDRESS AND SIGNATURE

1. REQUESTER NAME: John P. Smi th

2.  I am the MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER OR VETERAN identified in Section I, above.  I am the VETERAN'S LEGAL GUARDIAN (*MUST submit copy of Court Appointment*) or AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE (*MUST submit copy of Authorization Letter or Power of Attorney*)

I am the DECEASED VETERAN'S NEXT-OF-KIN (*MUST submit Proof of Death. See item 2a on instruction sheet.*)  OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

(Relationship to deceased veteran) (Specify type of Other)

3. SEND INFORMATION/DOCUMENTS TO: (Please print or type. See item 4 on accompanying instructions.)

John P. Smi th  
Name  
10 Pine Street  
Street Apt.  
New OrLeans La 12345  
City State Zip Code

4. AUTHORIZATION SIGNATURE: I declare (or certify, verify, or state) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the information in this Section III is true and correct and that I authorize the release of the requested information. (See items 2a or 3a on accompanying instruction sheet. Without the Authorization Signature of the veteran, next-of-kin of deceased veteran, veteran's legal guardian, authorized government agent, or other authorized representative, only limited information can be released unless the request is archival. No signature is required if the request is for archival records.)

9/10/2016

\* This form is available at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans-military-service-records/standard-form-180.pdf> on the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) web site. \*

Signature Required - Do not print (504) 000- 0000 Date  
Daytime phone Fax Number  
jpsmi th@gmail . com  
Email address

# SAMPLE SF-180 FOR GENERAL REQUESTS

(but not next of kin) is requesting the information. Be sure to select the OTHER box and state that you are requesting a full OMPF. If you select the DD-214 option, you will only get a single discharge paper. Complete Section III to fit the circumstances of the request. For medical requests, make that selection in Section II.

Standard Form 180 (Rev. 11/2015) (Page 1)  
Prescribed by NARA (36 CFR 1233.18 (d))

Authorized for local reproduction  
Previous edition unusable

OMB No. 3095-0029 Expires 04/30/2018

## REQUEST PERTAINING TO MILITARY RECORDS

Requests from veterans or deceased veteran's next-of-kin may be submitted online by using eVetRecs at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>. To ensure the best possible service, please thoroughly review the accompanying instructions before filling out this form. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY OR TYPE BELOW.

### SECTION I - INFORMATION NEEDED TO LOCATE RECORDS (Furnish as much information as possible.)

1. NAME USED DURING SERVICE (last, first, full middle) Smi th, John Peter	2. SOCIAL SECURITY # 111-11-1111	3. DATE OF BIRTH 11-02-1924	4. PLACE OF BIRTH New Orleans, La			
5. SERVICE, PAST AND PRESENT (For an effective records search, it is important that ALL service be shown below.)						
	BRANCH OF SERVICE	DATE ENTERED	DATE RELEASED	OFFICER	ENLISTED	SERVICE NUMBER (If unknown, write "unknown")
a. ACTIVE	USN- US Navy	1-1-43	6-1-46	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	123 45 67
b. RESERVE	Unknown			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. STATE NATIONAL GUARD	Unknown			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6. IS THIS PERSON DECEASED?  NO  YES - *MUST* provide Date of Death if veteran is deceased: \_\_\_\_\_

7. DID THIS PERSON RETIRE FROM MILITARY SERVICE?  NO  YES

### SECTION II - INFORMATION AND/OR DOCUMENTS REQUESTED

1. CHECK THE ITEM(S) YOU ARE REQUESTING:

DD Form 214 or equivalent. Year(s) in which form(s) issued to veteran: 1946

This form contains information normally needed to verify military service. A copy may be sent to the veteran, the deceased veteran's next-of-kin, or other persons or organizations, if authorized in Section III, below. An UNDELETED DD214 is ordinarily required to determine eligibility for benefits. If you request a DELETED copy, the following items will be blacked out: authority for separation, reason for separation, reenlistment eligibility code, separation (SPD/SPN) code, and, for separations after June 30, 1979, character of separation and dates of time lost.

An UNDELETED copy will be sent UNLESS YOU SPECIFY A DELETED COPY by checking this box:  I want a DELETED copy.

Medical Records Includes Service Treatment Records, Health (outpatient) and Dental Records. IF HOSPITALIZED (inpatient) the FACILITY NAME and DATE (month and year) for EACH admission MUST be provided: \_\_\_\_\_

Other (Specify): FULL OMPF

2. PURPOSE: (Providing information about the purpose of the request is strictly voluntary; however, it may help to provide the best possible response and may result in a faster reply. Information provided will in no way be used to make a decision to deny the request.)

Benefits (explain)  Employment  VA Loan Programs  Medical  Genealogy  Correction  Personal  Other (explain)

Explain here: \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION III - RETURN ADDRESS AND SIGNATURE

1. REQUESTER NAME: John P. Smi th

2.  I am the MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER OR VETERAN identified in Section I, above.  
 I am the DECEASED VETERAN'S NEXT-OF-KIN (*MUST submit Proof of Death. See item 2a on instruction sheet.*)  
(Relationship to deceased veteran)

I am the VETERAN'S LEGAL GUARDIAN (*MUST submit copy of Court Appointment*) or AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE (*MUST submit copy of Authorization Letter or Power of Attorney*)  
 OTHER  
(Specify type of Other)

3. SEND INFORMATION/DOCUMENTS TO:  
(Please print or type. See item 4 on accompanying instructions.)  
John P. Smi th  
 Name  
10 Pine Street  
 Street Apt.  
New Orleans La 12345  
 City State Zip Code

4. AUTHORIZATION SIGNATURE: I declare (or certify, verify, or state) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the information in this Section III is true and correct and that I authorize the release of the requested information. (See items 2a or 3a on accompanying instruction sheet. Without the Authorization Signature of the veteran, next-of-kin of deceased veteran, veteran's legal guardian, authorized government agent, or other authorized representative, only limited information can be released unless the request is archival. No signature is required if the request is for archival records.)

9/10/2016

\* This form is available at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans-military-service-records/standard-form-180.pdf> on the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) web site. \*

Signature Required - Do not print  
(504) 000-0000 Date

Daytime phone Fax Number  
jpsmi th@gmail . com

Email address





THE NATIONAL  
WWII MUSEUM



Image from the collection of The National WWII Museum.