

Recent Military Wars

I. Spanish-American War – Cuba, Philippine Islands; 1898-1899

Did you know that -- this War lasted all of four months?

Did you know that – 280,564 sailors, marines, and soldiers served in the Spanish-American War, of whom 2,061 died from various causes (90% from infectious diseases)?

Did you know that – the War cost the U.S. \$250 million?

Did you know that – there was no draft for this War?

Did you know that -- a 3% federal excise tax was imposed in 1898 to help pay for the Spanish-American War? It was designed as a tax on wealthy Americans when phone service was considered a luxury. In 2006, The Treasury Department said that it will no longer collect that tax.

Timeline

--Following Spanish repression, the Cubans revolted in 1895 and called upon the United States for assistance.

--25 February 1898, the USS *Maine* exploded in Havana's harbor.

--20 April 1898, War was declared by the U.S.

--An inept American army composed of thousands of volunteers and few regular army men, led by Lieut. John J. Pershing, battled the Spaniards until the Americans won at San Juan Hill where Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt was in command.

--12 August 1898, Armistice was declared

--10 December 1898, The Treaty of Paris. The Treaty provided for Cuban independence, transfer of Puerto Rico and Guam to the U.S., and cession of the Philippine Islands to the U.S. for twenty million dollars.

Locating Service and Medical Records

1. Military personnel records prior to World War I are on file at the National Archives and Records Administration.
2. Consult the "General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934", National Archives Microfilm publication T288. This index intermingles the names of Civil War and Spanish-American War soldiers in alphabetical order. The date of service and date they applied for a pension determine which conflict. (FHL #540757+ – 544 films)
3. Make note of the pension certificate or correspondence number.
4. Military Retirement and Disability pensions
 - a. If Pensioner died before 1928, his pension records are available at the National Archives (NATF Form 85).
 - b. If the soldier died after 1928, his military records are the responsibility of the Veterans Administration's responsibility. Contact the VA Regional Office covering the place where the soldier lived after he was discharged. The VA only has records for veterans who have filed claims.
 - c. After you have located the records, copies may be requested from your local VA Regional Office.
 - d. Most of the volunteers were from the states of Illinois, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

- e. One regiment was made up of volunteers throughout the country: the Rough Riders – First U.S. Volunteer Cavalry Regiment under Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt.
- f. Indicate in your correspondence that you are requesting this information under the Freedom of information Act.

Online Indexes & Records

1. Colorado Volunteers in the Spanish American War (1898)
2. Colorado State Archives Veteran Graves Registrations 1862-1949
3. Illinois Spanish-American War Veterans Database
4. Connecticut Servicemen, Spanish-American War (Ancestry \$)
5. Indiana – Roster for the Spanish-American War
6. Indiana Spanish American War Records (Ancestry \$)
7. Kansas Troops in the Volunteer Service of the United States in the Spanish and Philippine Wars
8. Massachusetts Spanish American War Records (Ancestry \$)
9. Michigan Men in the Spanish American War (Ancestry \$)
10. Minnesota Volunteers in the Spanish American War and the Philippine Insurrection (Ancestry \$)
11. North Carolina Volunteers, Spanish American War (Ancestry \$)
12. Ohio Soldiers in the War with Spain, 1898-1899 (Ancestry \$)
13. Oregon Volunteers, Spanish American War, Philippine Insurrection (Ancestry \$)
14. Pennsylvania: Record of Pennsylvania Volunteers in the Spanish-American War, (Ancestry \$)
15. Pennsylvania: Spanish American War Veterans' Card File of United States Volunteers
16. Tennessee: Index to Service Abstracts in Tennessee Volunteer Units During the Spanish American War – 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th Tennessee Infantry
17. Texas: United States Volunteers, Spanish-American War Service Records, 1898 – from the Texas Adjutant General Service Records Series (“USV” on menu)
18. Utah: The History of the Utah Volunteers in the Spanish-American War and in the Philippine Islands (Ancestry \$)
19. Spanish American War – Online Rosters for assorted states
20. Spanish American War Centennial Website. They welcome contribution of information. Website: <http://www.spanamwar.com>.

II. World War I -- USA, Germany: 1917-1918 – “The Great War”

Did you know that – 2.7 million draft registrants were conscripted and 300,000 people volunteered to fight? The Selective Service Act was passed 18 May 1917.

Did you know that – there were three massive draft registrations which created records on almost every male U.S. resident born between 1873 and 1900?

Did you know that -- WWI forces suffered more than 116,000 casualties?

Did you know that – this was the first American war where many American troops were buried overseas?

Did you know that – WWI was the first conflict in which soldiers fought in the skies – 78,495 men?

Locating records from World War I

1. Military records are held in the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis, MO. (archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel)
 - a. Records are located by Social Security number.
 - b. If no Social Security number, located by name, date of birth, VA claim or file number, former service number, name of unit or ship assignment, former address.
2. A fire on 12 July 1973 at NPRC in St. Louis destroyed 16-18 million records for personnel - 80% of Army records for personnel discharged between 1912-1960.
3. WWI pension records for injured soldiers were stored in the regional offices of the Department of Veterans Affairs and escaped the 1973 fire.
4. Refer to the information given on locating military records under the Spanish-American War section.
5. Even if the service records you need were destroyed, there may be documents in the National Archives concerning your relative. Records have not been micro-filmed, but you can hire an on-site researcher (archives.gov/research/hire-help)
6. Military Discharge Records from World War I might have been recorded in the County Recorder's Office.
7. World War I List of Prisoners of War who entered service from the State of Arizona is available at the Arizona State Archives.

Online Indexes & Records

1. Draft Registration Cards Index (with digital images) (FHL microfilm – 4,383 rolls) (Ancestry \$) Now available for all states plus DC and Puerto Rico – 24 million records.
 - a. 5 Jun 1917 – all men between ages 21 and 31
 - b. 5 Jun 1918 – men who had reached age 21 after 5 Jun 1917, supplemental 24 Aug 1918 for those who reached age 21 after 5 Jun 1918.
 - c. 12 Sep 1918 – men ages 18 through 45
2. Civilian Draft Registrations Index (not complete – 5% of men who registered)
3. American Soldiers of World War I – Death Index – alpha by state (Ancestry \$)
4. U.S. Naval Deaths (Ancestry – requires registration)
5. U.S. Marine Corps Muster Rolls, 1893-1940 (Ancestry \$)
6. World War One Alien Registration Records – indexes of German Aliens 1917-18
7. Records by States: Alabama, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia – (some partial and some \$)
8. Veterans Affairs Burial Search

III. World War II – USA, Japan, Italy, Germany: 1941-1945

Did you know that – 16 million men and women served in World War II?

Did you know that – approximately 9 million men and women enlisted in the U.S. Army between 1938 and 1946?

Did you know that – servicemen were not assigned service numbers until 1918? Before that time, soldiers were registered alphabetically by surname and under the county where they registered.

Where to Order Records - USA

1. The National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO – 20th Century military records. 1973 fire destroyed 80% of Army records (1912-1959) and 75% of Air Force records (1947-1963)
2. The National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO – 20th Century civilian records.
3. eVetRecs Military Personnel Records Request - military veteran or next-of-kin of deceased former member of the military. (archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs)
4. Records for military personnel who served within the last 75 years are restricted to the veteran, requesters with release authorization signed by the veteran or, if the veteran is deceased, the next of kin.

Online Indexes & Records:

1. World War II Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File covers a majority of enlistments. (<http://aad.archives.gov/aad>)
2. Ancestry's World War Records Collection (\$)
3. World War II Draft Registration Cards 1942 – 11 states, 5 partial (\$)
For men born on or between 28 Apr 1877 and 16 Feb 1897
4. Records by States: Colorado, Indiana, Kansas, Montana, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia
7. Veterans Affairs Burial Search
8. U.S. Veterans Cemeteries Database, ca 1775-2006 (Ancestry \$)

IV. General Information

1. **Soldiers' and Sailors' Homes and Hospitals.**
The National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was established by Congress in 1866 to provide residences for needy veterans. Fifteen branches were established from 1866 to 1938. In 1930, these records became a part of Records of the Veterans Administration, Record Group 15 in the National Archives. (FHL films under "Veterans Homes") (www.archives.gov)
2. Three governmental agencies maintain cemeteries and burial records for military personnel and veterans.
 - a. American Battle Monuments Commission, Washington, D.C. Maintains American military burial grounds on foreign soil. 33,717 records of those interred overseas (www.abmc.gov/search/wwi.php)
 - b. Department of Veterans' Affairs, National Cemetery System, Washington, D.C. Oversees and maintains 113 national cemeteries and custody of more than two million burial records. Card file index from 1861 to present.
 - c. Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia. Maintained under the auspices of the Department of the Army. Card index on site.
3. The Air Force was established 25 September 1947
4. Service Numbers

Service numbers were first issued on 28 February 1918 to enlisted men in the Army. Officer service numbers were not issued until 1921. Numbers were assigned at random from 1918-1939. Beginning in 1940, sets of numbers were assigned to branches of the Army, National Guard, those inducted outside the continental U.S., World War II, Korea, Vietnam.

5. Social Security numbers became the identifying number for:

Regular Army	1 July 1969.
Air Force	1 July 1969
Navy and Marine Corps	1 July 1972.
Coast Guard	1 October 1974.
6. 1975 Survey of WWI veterans is available on microfilm at the U.S. Army History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

IV. Addresses

1. National Archives (NATF Form 80), General Reference Branch
National Archives and Records Administration
8th and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20408
2. National Personnel Records Center, Military Personnel Records
9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5100
3. National Personnel Records Center, Civilian Personnel Records
111 Winnebago Street, St. Louis, Missouri 63118
4. Arizona Regional Office, Department of Veterans' Affairs
3255 N. Central Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85012

VI. Bibliography

1. Haulsee, W. M. *Soldiers of the Great War*. Soldiers Record Publ. Assoc. (FHL microfiche 60512344 – soldiers who died, chronology of the war) (Ancestry \$)
2. Johnson, Lt. Col. Richard S. *How to Locate Anyone Who Is Or Has Been in the Military*. San Antonio, TX: MIE Publishing, 1993.
3. Neagles, James C. *U.S. Military Records, A Guide to Federal & State Sources*. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Incorporated, 1994.
4. Schaefer, Christina K. *The Great War, A Guide to the Service Records of All the World's Fighting Men and Volunteers*. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1998.
5. Szucs, Loretto Dennis & Sandra Hargraves Luebking. *The Source, A Guidebook to American Genealogy, Third Edition*. Provo, UT: Ancestry, 2006.
6. *The Family Tree Magazine*. Cincinnati, OH; F+W Publications, Inc., November 2007 issue.