



FROM SHADOWBOX to STORY: USING MILITARY RECORDS TO FIND YOUR ANCESTOR

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This is an overview of the process of uncovering one veteran's military history after his personnel records were destroyed.

Beginning with the OMPF (Official Military Personnel File), you'll learn how to access and use alternate record sources to find more information on a veteran's service.

KEY RECORDS FOR 20th CENTURY MILITARY RESEARCH

- ✪ Official Military Personnel Files
- ✪ Individual Deceased Personnel Files and Burial Files
- ✪ Morning Reports
- ✪ Award Cards
- ✪ General and Special Orders
- ✪ C and XC Pension Files
- ✪ US Navy Ship Action Reports and Deck Logs
- ✪ Army/Air Force Morning Reports and Rosters
- ✪ Air Forces Mission reports and histories
- ✪ Operation, After Action, and Ground Unit reports and journals

TIPS FOR RESEARCH

- ✪ Search your veteran's unit name to find privately maintained sites dedicated to specific units and their histories
- ✪ Out of copyright/print memoirs and unit histories can be found on Google Books
- ✪ Subscription based research sites can generally be accessed through your local library
- ✪ Remember to check local sources and state specific records for mentions of your veteran

ONLINE RESEARCH SITES AND PORTALS – GENERAL

- ★ [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)
- ★ [FamilySearch.org/en/wiki/United_States_Military_Records](https://familysearch.org/en/wiki/United_States_Military_Records)
- ★ [Fold3.com](https://www.fold3.com)
- ★ [DigitalCollections.NYPL.org/](https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/)
- ★ [ChroniclingAmerica.loc.gov/](https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/)

NATIONAL ARCHIVES USEFUL LINKS

- ★ NARA Research Tools [Archives.gov/research/start/online-tools](https://archives.gov/research/start/online-tools)
- ★ NARA Military Collections [Archives.gov/research/military](https://archives.gov/research/military)
- ★ NARA Serial Numbers [AAD.Archives.gov/aad/index.jsp](https://aad.archives.gov/aad/index.jsp)
- ★ NARA Archival OMPF [Archives.gov/veterans](https://archives.gov/veterans)
- ★ NARA Non-Archival OMPF [Archives.gov/personnel-records-center](https://archives.gov/personnel-records-center)
- ★ NARA WWII Morning Reports [Catalog.Archives.gov/id/85713825](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/85713825)
- ★ NARA IDPF Files [Catalog.Archives.gov/id/297287480](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/297287480)
- ★ NARA Air Force Award Cards [Catalog.Archives.gov/id/4530002](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/4530002)

BRANCH SPECIFIC RESEARCH SITES

- ★ US Coast Guard [History.uscg.mil/](https://history.uscg.mil/)
- ★ US Army [History.army.mil/](https://history.army.mil/)
- ★ US Navy [History.navy.mil/](https://history.navy.mil/)
- ★ US Air Force [DAFHistory.af.mil/](https://dafhistory.af.mil/)
- ★ US Marine Corps [USMCU.edu/Research/History-Division/](https://usmcu.edu/Research/History-Division/)

PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICES

- ★ NARA Researcher List [Archives.gov/research/hire-help](https://archives.gov/research/hire-help)
- ★ Golden Arrow Research goldenarrowresearch.com/