Obtaining Military Records From The National Archive

Purdue Women's Club Genealogy Interest Group Mary Anne Robinson August 28, 2017

Subject: Msgt George Jay Ralph

What I Knew:

- First Enlistment was Army, after US entered WW2
- Retired from Air Force, August 1972, Beale AFB
- Stationed at Beale, Barksdale, Travis, Walker, England, Germany, Morocco
- Assume original enlistment was Texas
- Air Force Serial number xxxx842
- What I Wanted to learn:
 - Where dad lived before he met mom
 - Anything about dad's first wife and possible children

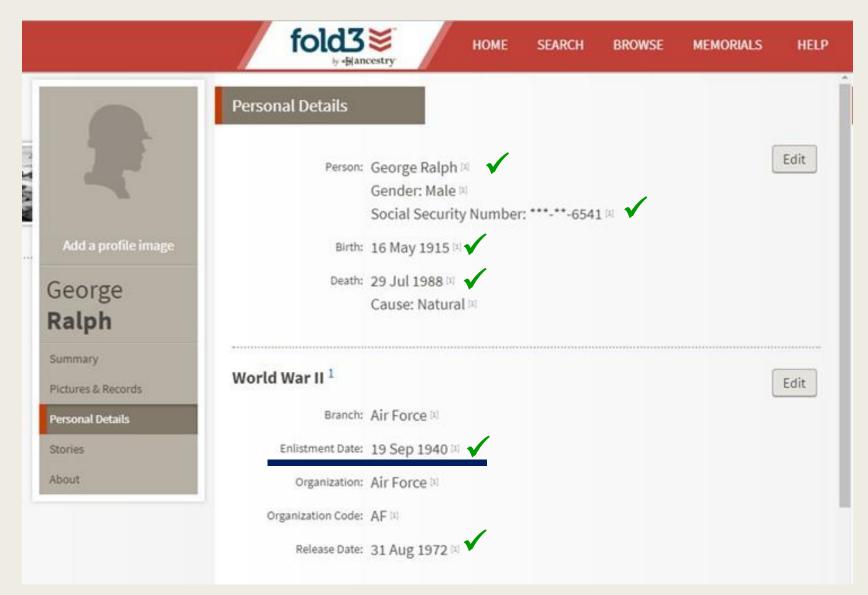




Results of an Ancestry.com Military search

Name:	George J Ralph
Birth Year:	
Race:	White, citizen (White)
Nativity State or Country:	
State:	Texas V
County or City:	Cameron
Enlistment Date:	26 Oct 1945
Enlistment State:	Maryland 🗶
Enlistment City:	Camp Springs Army Air Field
Branch:	Air Corps
Branch Code:	Air Corps
Grade:	Staff Sergeant
Grade Code:	Staff Sergeant
Term of Enlistment:	Enlistment for Hawaiian Department
Component:	Regular Army (including Officers, Nurses, Warrant Officers, and Enlisted Men)
Source:	National Guard in Federal Service, within 3 months of Discharge
Education:	2 years of high school
Civil Occupation:	Truck Driver, Heavy
darital Status:	Married
Height:	96
Weight:	000

Results of a Fold3 search



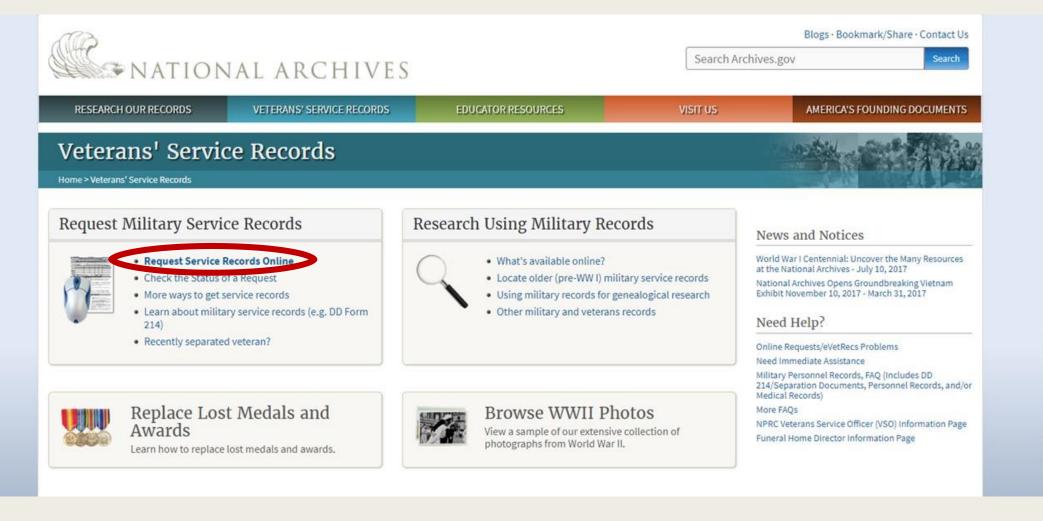
www.archives.gov



National Archives Begins Online Release of JFK Assassination Records

Historians Discuss Their Discovery of "Sussex Declaration"

https://www.archives.gov/veterans



archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records

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Vesetions Records	Military personnel records can include DD 2145/ Official Military Personnel File (OMPF), and med military service or as a valuable tool in genealog	ical records. Military personnel records can b		Need Help? Online Requests/even	

Military Personnel Records, FAD Noviludes DD

<u>archives.gov/veterans/military-service-</u> <u>records/record-request-notice</u>

- The Personnel Center gets 1.4 million requests annually. Half of requests seek a separation document for veteran benefits. Ten percent of the requests ask for a copy of a file.
- The standard reply for files is to provide key documents and extracts of vital information.
 - Military Services Dates
 - Character of Service
 - Promotions and Reductions
 - Duty Stations and Assignments, Foreign or Sea Service
 - Military Schooling and Training
 - Awards and Letters of Commendation
 - Disciplinary Actions / Lost Time
 - Enlistments Contracts
 - Entry and Separation Physical Exams, Immunizations / Dental Examinations

Instructions

- Online eVetRecs system can request information from your, or your relative's, military personnel records, for discharge within past 62 years (now 1955).
- You may use this system if you are:
 - A military veteran, or
 - Next of kin of a **deceased**, former member of the military.
 - Surviving spouse that has not remarried
 - Father / Mother
 - Son / Daughter
 - Sister / Brother
- If the military member was discharged more than 62 years ago, anyone may request records, for a fee
- What you get: an OMPF Official Military Personnel File

Required Information

- Request must contain enough information to locate service records.
 - The veteran's complete name used while in service
 - Service number
 - Social security number
 - Branch of service / dates of service
 - Date and place of birth (especially if the service number is not known).
- If you suspect records may have been involved in the 1973 fire, also include:
 - Place of discharge
 - Last unit of assignment
 - Place of entry into the service, if known.
- Requests must be **signed** and **dated** by veteran or next-of-kin.
- If you are the next of kin of a deceased veteran, you must provide proof of death such as a copy of death certificate, letter from funeral home, or published obituary.

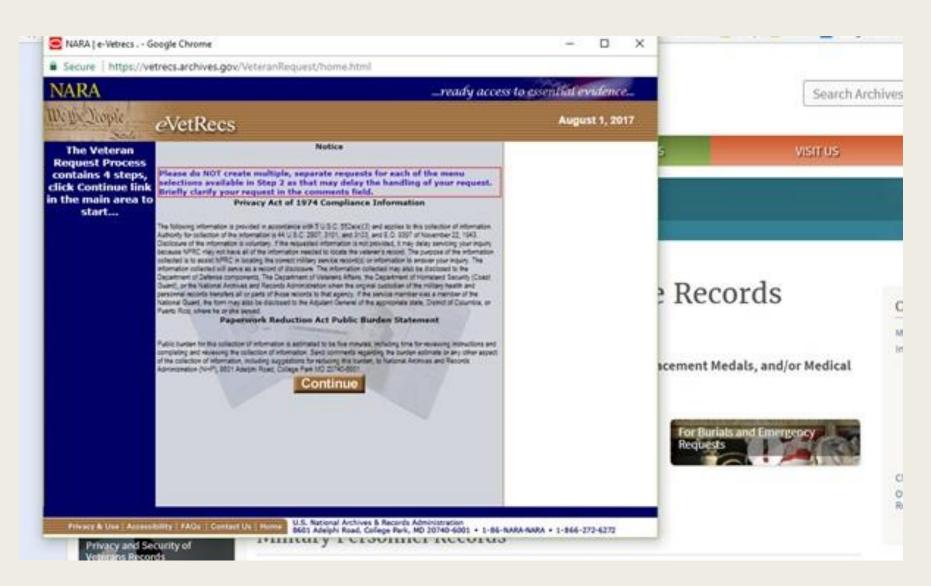
1973 Fire

On July 12, 1973, a fire at the National Personnel Records Center destroyed approximately 16-18 million Official Military Personnel Files (OMPF). The records affected:

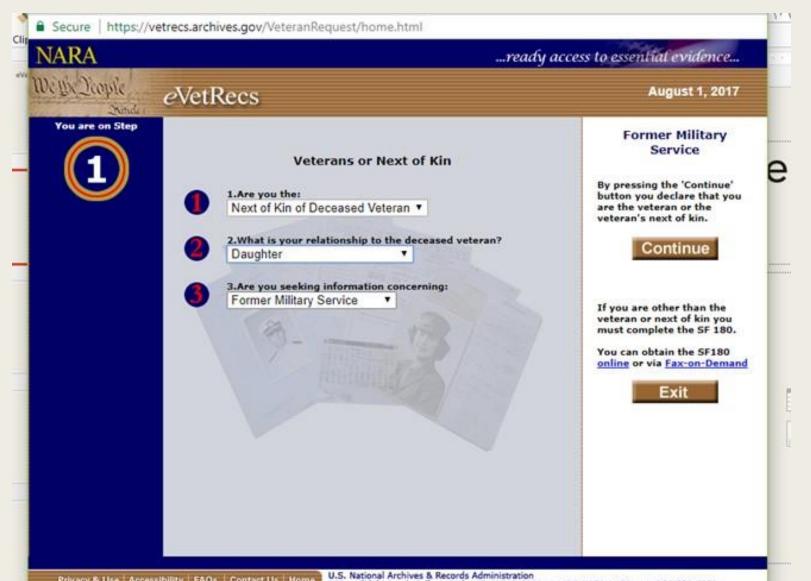
Branch	Personnel and Period Affected	Estimated Loss
Army	Personnel discharged November 1, 1912 to January 1, 1960	80%
Air Force	Personnel discharged September 25, 1947 to January 1, 1964 (with names alphabetically after Hubbard, James E.)	75%

No duplicate copies of these records were ever maintained, nor were microfilm copies produced. In addition, millions of documents had been lent to the Department of Veterans Affairs before the fire. A complete listing of the records lost is not available.

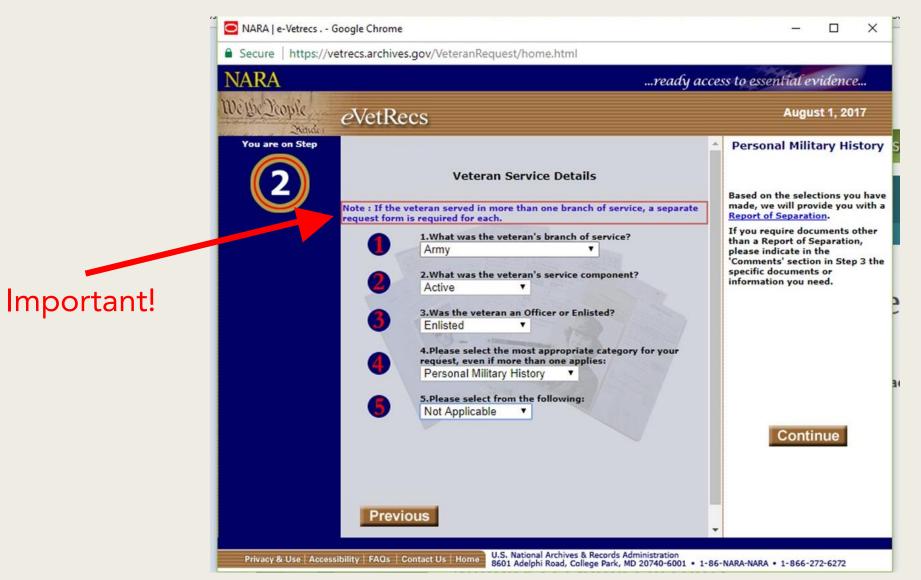
eVetRecs



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3

JARA			ready acce	ess to essential evidence
De We Deople	<i>e</i> VetRecs			August 1, 2017
You are on Step		Name used v	while in the Military	ested Return Address
	First Name:	George	Branch of Service:	Army
	Middle Name:	Jay	Service Unit:	Active
	Last Name:	Ralph	Officer/Enlist:	Enlisted
	Social Security Number: (XXX-XX-XXXXX)			
	Date of Birth: (MM/DD/YYYY)		Place of Birth: (City, State)	Oklahoma
	Service Number: (Do Not Enter Any Letters) Approximate date the veteran left the Service: (MM/YYYY) Previous			Continue
Privacy & Use Acces	ssibility FAQs Contact Us Home	U.S. National Archives & R 8601 Adelphi Road, College	ecords Administration e Park, MD 20740-6001 • 1-86	-NARA-NARA • 1-866-272-6272

Step 3, continued

NARA	ready access to essential evidence
Wellie Lople	eVetRecs August 1, 2017
You are on Step	Record Locator Information Documents Requested Return Address Documents Requested Documents Requested REPORT OF SEPARATION (DD Form 214 or equivalent) This contains information normally needed to verify military service. Using this online system, a copy may be sent to the veteran or the deceased veteran's next of kin at this time.
	 I would like to request an UNDELETED Report of Separation. I would like to request a DELETED Report of Separation. I would like to request a DELETED Report of Separation
	Output Output Please do not use "Enter" key) If information or documents other than a Report of Separation are needed, please indicate here what you require. Previous Please include all information and documents needed in "Comments" above. Do NOT create separate requests for information, as this may delay the handling of your requests.

https://vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/pg/SF180A_1.htm#1 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20140-6001 • 1-86-NARA-NARA • 1-866-272-6272

Step 3, continued

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	Street:								
	City:	The State							
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Step 4, Verification

NARA			ready access to a	essential evidence
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1	be able to go back and Previous	I make any changes.		Continue
	Veteran/Next of Kin:	Next of kin of Deceased Veteran	Relationship to Veteran:	Daughter
	Branch of Service:	Army	Service Component:	Active
	Officer/Enlisted:	Enlisted		A
	Request Regarding:	Personal Military History	Request Category:	Not Applicable
	Veteran First Name:	George	Veteran Date of Birth:	
	Veteran Middle Name:	Jay	Veteran Place of Birth:	Oklahoma
	Veteran Last Name:	Ralph	Approx. Date Discharged:	
	Veteran SSN:		Service Number:	undefined
	Comments:			

Company:

Important!

Final Step

- Even though this is completed online, you will be given instructions for printing a signature page. You must print and mail your authorizing signature to the address provided to you in the preprinted form.
- Each separate request, for each branch of service, will require a separate signature and mailing.

Alternative written form completion SF180 Form, instruction plus 2 pages

INSTRUCTION AND INFORMATION SHEET FOR SF 100, REOLEST PERTAINING TO MILITARY RECORDS

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www.archives.gov/files/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf

Cost

Cost for veterans or veterans next of kin = \$0

- If records are requested as a member of the general public for veterans discharged more than 62 years ago, a copying fee will apply.
 - Online, mailed and faxed archival requests require the purchase of the COMPLETE photocopy of the OMPF
 - A routine OMPF of 5 pages or less: \$25 flat fee
 - A routine OMPF of 6 pages or more: \$70 flat fee (most OMPFs fall in this category)

Result – 95 pages of records Cost = \$0

ocuments > Data Files > Genealogy > Ralph-Paull-Ostler > Ralph, George J 84 > Military Records

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Time

Requests were submitted in Fall 2015

- A document technician called December 2015 to advise me that she had completed the Army records. She wanted to know if I would like to have those records sent immediately, or if I would like to wait to have the package integrated with the Air Force records. (I chose the second option)
- The complete package arrived April 2016

What I learned

- I did get the full maiden name of my father's first wife, along with a date and location of their marriage. No evidence of a child.
- I was able to create a complete list of all the places my father lived, both stateside and overseas.
- Each honorable discharge listed all the awards and commendations issued during that enlistment, and had an official stamp allowing it to be used for verification of benefits.
- There was an error in my father's birth year that took over 20 years to correct.
- I have a wonderful word picture of my dad in the 1940's, his character, patriotism and attention to duty.

Other Methods to Obtain Military Service Records

- Recently separated veterans may find records through Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense eBenefits Portal.
- The National Archives in St. Louis will allow you to visit in person, instructions on scheduling appointments in the Research Rooms are available on the website.
- Contact your State or County: Some veterans may be able to obtain copies of certain military records from their state, county or municipality. Contact your state or county veterans agency for more information.
- Hire an independent researcher: Patrons in locations remote to St. Louis may consider hiring an independent researcher to conduct research on their behalf.
 - NOTE: Some companies advertise "DD Form 214 research services" and will charge a fee for obtaining copies. Generally there is no charge for basic military personnel and health record information provided to veterans and next-of-kin.

What Records are Not Available?

- State Militia Records; contact the appropriate State Archives.
- Veterans Affairs records: Instead, call the VA Toll Free number 1-800-827-1000.
- Pay records: If available, would be at the Department of Defense Finance Centers.
- Records of veterans separated from active service but in reserve, active or inactive: Contact Reserve Component of the appropriate branch of service.
- Older records before WWI may be on file at the National Archives and Records Administration, Old Military and Civil Records Branch (NWCTB), Washington, DC 20408.
- Files of veterans discharged, retired or died in service since Jan 1, 1995 (Navy), Jan 1, 1999 (Marines) and Oct 1, 2004 (Air Force): Contact the Personnel Center of the branch of service.
- Records of members in the National Guard, or former Guard members not called into active federal service: Contact Adjutant General of the state in which the member served.

Links and Forms

Type the links into your browser

- National Archive Website
 - www.archives.gov
- Downloadable SF 180, to request military records
 - www.archives.gov/files/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf