

Tips for Getting Started in Researching a Civil War ancestor:

- Collect information from living family members today before you start researching ancestors. This includes collecting oral histories and beginning to compile a family tree.
- Establish a line of descent by searching for ancestors in the U.S. Census records. [Ancestry](#) and [FamilySearch.org](#) have only collections of census records and you may also search the census for free by visiting the National Archives and Records Administration.
- Once you have established an ancestor that was old enough to have served in the Civil War, search the [National Park Service Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System](#) database for your surname or your Civil War era ancestor. If you need assistance using this system please contact the museum by calling, 202-667-2667.
- The Soldiers and Sailors database only provides, regiment, company, rank in/out, microfilm number and location on the wall at the African American Civil War Memorial. For a more complete record we encourage descendants to go to the [National Archives and Records Administration](#) and retrieve the pension or military records for their ancestor or access the military service record online at [fold3.com](#).

Genealogy Resources

Documents

[pedigree chart \(PDF\)](#) A pedigree chart records ancestors from whom you directly descend and show your family tree at a glance.

[Family Group Sheet](#) Each piece of information concerning a pedigree ancestor and his/her family is placed on this worksheet, offering you a glimpse of more complete family units at a glance. Family group sheet provided by Ancestry.com

For more documents to assist in research visit [Ancestry.com](#)

Websites

These websites provide access to some records online; however at this time all pension records have not been digitized or are not available online.

[National Archives and Records Administration](#)

The National Archives is the repository of all documents and materials created by the United States Federal government. Original copies of military, pension and census records would be available for viewing. The National Archives has different locations and collections that would assist you in your genealogy research so visit their website before planning your visit.

[The Library of Congress](#)

The repository of Congressional documents the Library of Congress has in its collection a vast holding of documents that depict American culture and history. There prints and photographs division contains one of the largest collections of photographs of African American Civil War soldiers. Newspapers, laws and interviews of former slaves there are many items at the Library of Congress that could assist in genealogical research.

[Fold3](#)

Fold3 provides convenient access to US Military records, photos and personal documents of service members. Many pension records have not been digitized yet; fold3 at this time has

military service records and pension index available online. Fold3 has a vast collection of records available online including census records and city directories so preview their collections while your research. Some records on this site are viewable for free and some records there is a subscription fee.

Family Search

Family Search is a genealogy organization, supported by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which provides access to records and resources online from repositories around the world. Their records span billions of names across hundreds of collections including, vital, probate, land, military, census and more. All records in their collections are free to view.

Ancestry

Ancestry.com makes available billions of records for census, vital, probate, military, newspapers and more online. They have an extensive African American collection that includes records of the United States Colored Troops, Regular Cavalry Regiments (Buffalo Soldiers), U.S. Southern Claims Commissions (Freedman's Bureau Records), Slave Ads and Abstracts, Slave Owner Petitions, and U.S. Interviews with Former Slaves. There is a subscription fee to view records from this site.

Sacred Ground Sacred History

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