



Henrico County Hints:



How to find a Civil War Service member

About 2.8 million men (and a few hundred women) served in the military during the Civil War.

In searching for a Civil War soldier, sailor, or marine, please consider the following questions.

Question 1: Do I know the name of the Civil War serviceman?

If you do **NOT** know the name of the Civil War serviceman, you still have some basic genealogical research to do. Perhaps you need to go a few more generations back in time. The Henrico County library, Library of Virginia, and the internet have some great resources to help you begin your search.

++Please see separate sheet called **Henrico County Hints: Growing Your Family Tree**++

Question 2: Do I know if he fought for the Union or the Confederacy?

There are many easily available resources for you to use to determine whether a Civil War soldier, sailor, or marine served in the Union or Confederate military. Try this list of places to begin your search:

- I. Library of Virginia (free)
 - a. Ancestry.com Library Edition (available only at the Library of Virginia)
 - b. Research guides are available in hard copy form or on their website, www.lva.virginia.gov
 1. Click on "Using the Collections"
 2. Click on "Guides and Indexes"
 3. Click on "Military Service"
 - c. *The Roster of Confederate Soldiers 1861-1865* (19 Vols.) & *The Roster of Union Soldiers 1861-1865* (33 Vols.). Both series' edited by Janet B. Hewett (Broadfoot Publishing: Wilmington NC). Available in book and computer format
- II. Family History Centers are branches of the main Family History Library (in Salt Lake City, UT). Virginia has 36 branch locations.
 - a. The Richmond location is at 5600 Monument Avenue. Phone: (804) 288 – 8134
- III. Internet Websites:
 - a. National Park Service Soldiers and Sailors System www.itd.nps.gov/cwss (free)
 - b. Ancestry.com (free to search but to access more info, paid membership required)

Question 3: Do I know what state he fought for during the war?

- I. Some states offer a series of books with abstracts or transcribed records for their state.
- II. Types of Civil War soldiers' records:
 - a. Compiled Military Service Records (CMSR) contain information about the soldier's military career such as when a soldier was present or absent, dates of enlistment and discharge, wounds received or hospitalization for illness, dates of capture and release as a prisoner of war.
 1. Confederate records usually have less information than Union because many records did not survive
 2. Does not contain genealogical information or battles a soldier fought in

3. Sometimes includes a soldier's physical description at time of enlistment (i.e. height, eye color, hair color, etc.)
 - a. Virginia's CMSR are available at The Library of Virginia
 - b. Other states are available at the National Archives in D. C.
- b. Pension Records
 1. Both Federal and state governments offered financial assistance to soldiers, widows, and/or children
 2. Former Confederate states offered pensions at some level
 - a. Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia
 1. Available at state archives or libraries
 - b. In Virginia, Confederate veterans and their families could apply for help through a series of acts in 1888, 1900, 1902 and through 1934.
 1. Available at The Library of Virginia on microfilm and digitized online at www.lva.virginia.gov
- c. 1890 Census Special Schedule [partial]: Veterans and widows
 1. Designed for Union soldiers only – lists the unit that they served in
 2. Available for states alphabetically from Kentucky – Wyoming only
- d. Other Records/Places of Research
 1. Some states have other records, such as Veteran's Homes
 - a. Virginia had several post war aid societies.
 - b. In Richmond the Camp Lee Soldiers' Home operated from 1883-1941 and the Home for Needy Confederate Women operated from 1900 - 1991. Their records are available at the Library of Virginia.
 2. Compiled & published records
 - a. Virginia Regimental History Series
 1. Provides a summary of the regiment's history of service and transcribed service records for each soldier.
 2. Research and/or circulating copies are available at The Library of Virginia, the Henrico Public Library or the Family History Center 5600 Monument Avenue Richmond, VA
 3. Many soldiers and their descendants formed veterans' organizations after the war ended. Some of them are still in existence with modifications while others are no longer active. Each organization has different records available.
 - a. Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) - For Union veterans from 1866-1956. The group is no longer active but old records are being compiled.
 - b. Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) - Successor to GAR, from 1881 to present day. <http://www.suvcw.org/index.html>
 - c. Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War - Formed in 1885. <http://www.duvcw.org/>
 - d. Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) - 1889 to present day - for male descendants of Confederate veterans. <http://www.scv.org/>
 - e. United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) - From 1890 to present day. <http://www.hqudc.org/>

III. Other good websites to visit:

<http://www.nps.gov/frsp/archive.htm> - Links to places for research by state

http://www.virginiacivilwar.org/footsteps_main.php - Searchable database by regiment of battles that were fought in Virginia