Schedule

#	Time (ET)	Session Title	Presenter(s)
	10 a.m.	**Welcoming Remarks**	**David S. Ferriero** Archivist of the United States of America
1	10:05 a.m.	*Exploring History Hub for Genealogists and Researchers*	**Rebecca L. Collier** Archivist at the National Archives at College Park and Coordinator for History Hub **Darren Cole** Digital Engagement Specialist at the National Archives in Washington, DC **Kelly Osborn** Community Manager and Web Developer at the National Archives at College Park
2	11 a.m.	*Preserving Personal Collections*	**Sara Holmes** Management and Program Analyst at the National Archives in St. Louis
3	12 p.m.	*Immigrant Records: More Than Just Ship Passenger Arrival Lists*	**Elizabeth Burnes** Archivist at the National Archives at Kansas City and NARA's Subject Matter Expert on Immigration Records
4	1 p.m.	*Using National Archives Records to Research World War I Naval and Marine Corps Records for Genealogical Research*	**Nathaniel Patch** Archivist at the National Archives at College Park and NARA's Subject Matter Expert on U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard Records
5	2 p.m.	*Discovering and Researching Bureau of Indian Affairs School Records*	**Cody White** Archivist at the National Archives at Denver and NARA's Subject Matter Expert on Native American Records
6	3 p.m.	*The Homestead Act: Land Records of Your Ancestors*	**James Muhn** Researcher, Writer, and Lecturer on Federal Land Policy
	4 p.m.	**Closing Remarks**	**Ann Cummings** Executive for Research Services

Nathaniel Patch

Audience Skill Level: All

In this session, archivist Nathaniel Patch offers a guide to discovering the story of your World War I Sailor and Marine using the Records of the National Archives. Although for the experienced to advanced researcher, beginners will learn where to access easily understood records (such as deck logs, war diaries, and unit records), and how to build on that information to find more material in complicated record series.

Presenter Biography

Nathaniel Patch

Nathaniel Patch has been employed at the National Archives for almost 17 years. He started at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC as a technician in 2002, and then moved to the National Archives at College Park, MD after joining the Navy Reference Team as an archives specialist in 2006. At that time, Mr. Patch also started graduate school to earn a Master's degree in Naval History from American Military University (AMU) and subsequently graduated in 2012. Within two years of graduating, he was promoted to archivist in 2014 while continuing to work with the Navy Reference Team. Most recently, he was promoted in 2018 to Subject Matter Expert for Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard topics. His interest is in naval warfare, and in particular, submarine warfare and US-Japanese relations 1894-1945. He has given several lectures on different topics including researching genealogy using World War I and World War II Navy records, on the Battle of Midway, and how to conduct archival research for Underwater Archaeology. In addition, Mr. Patch has written several articles on submarine warfare that were published in Prologue magazine and currently working on projects for other publications.

Using National Archives Records to Research World War I Naval and Marine Corps Records for Genealogical Research

BY NATHANIEL S. PATCH

U.S. NAVY-MARINE CORPS SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

COLLEGE PARK, MD

Outline to Lecture

Introduction – Causes for U.S. entry into the Great War, mobilization of the services, and what they contributed to war

1. **Requesting Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) from the National Military Personnel Records Archives in St. Louis, MO**

2. **Researching a sailor who served in World War I**

3. **Researching a Marine who served in World War I**

4. **Going beyond the basics**

The United States Enters the War

On April 6, 1917, the United States declares war on Germany, and by the end of the year declares war on Austria-Hungry.

The primary causes for the U.S. to enter World War I are:

Germany's violation of "Freedom of the Seas" with their "Unrestricted Submarine Warfare.

Germany's attempt to form an alliance with Mexico with the promise of several Southwestern States for their cooperation – Zimmerman Telegram.
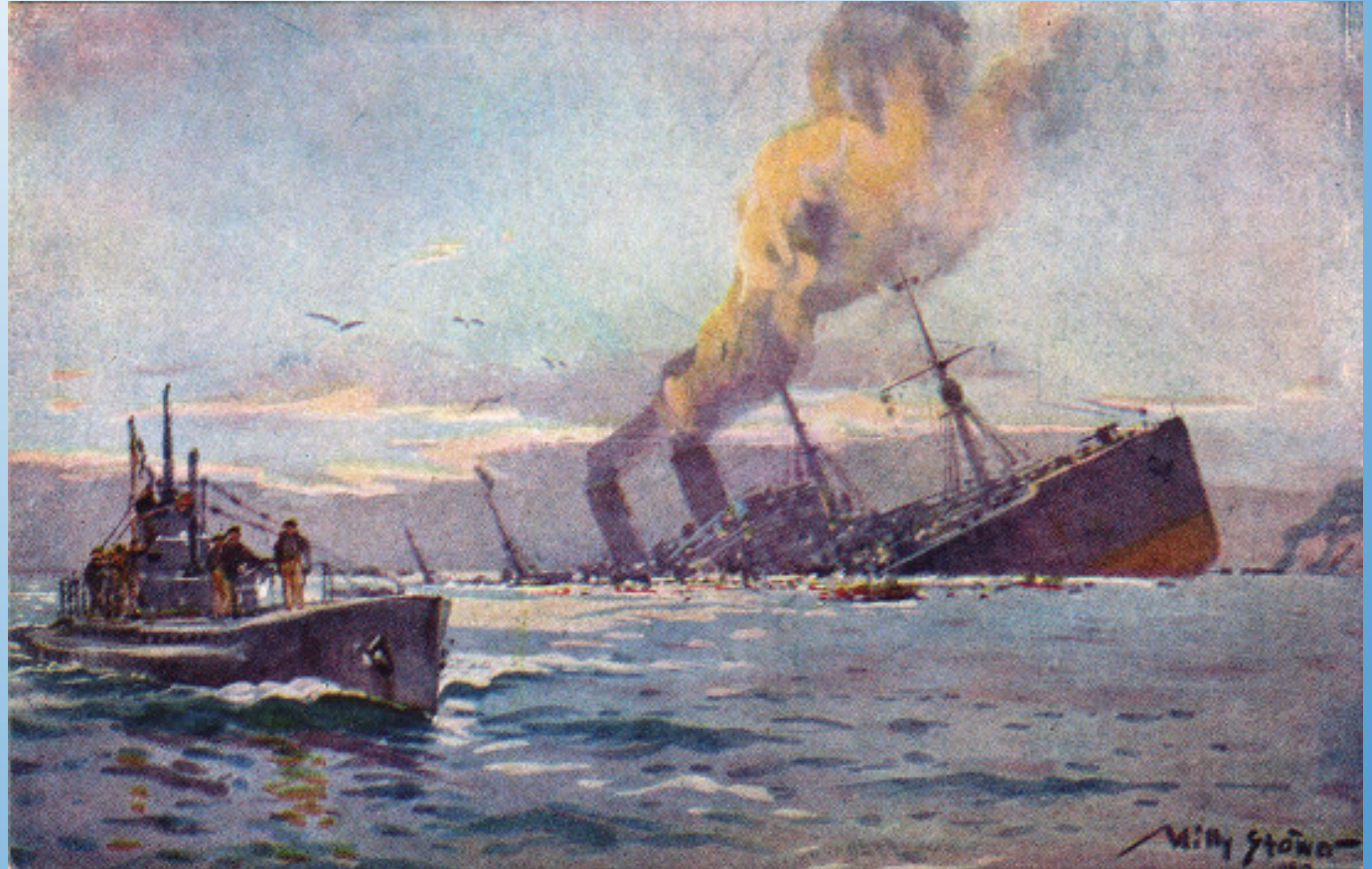
U.S. Naval Forces in European Waters

U.S. Naval Bases began to open for the purposes of stationing destroyers, submarine chasers, minelayers, and aviation

London was the headquarters for U.S. Naval Forces in European Waters

In May 1917, the first destroyer squadron arrives in Queenstown, Ireland

There were bases in England, Scotland, Ireland, and France

Later in the war, there were bases in Gibraltar and in Italy along the Adriatic Sea

Not seen in the map are bases in Azores, in Archangel, Russia, and Siberia, Russia

Expanding the Navy
Mobilization and Personnel

NAVAL RESERVE ACT OF 1916

Ended the Naval Militia

Created the Reserve Status of Naval Personnel

Did not exclude women from joining

Naval Reserve added tens of thousands of sailors and officers to the Navy

EMERGENCY INCREASE OF THE NAVY

At the End of World War I, the Navy expanded from 4,376 officers and 64,680 enlisted in April 1917 to:

Regulars – 10,590 officers and 218,251 enlisted

Reserves – 21,618 officers and 278,659 enlisted

Coast Guard – 688 officers and 6,101 enlisted

Total = 32,896 officers and 503,011 enlisted

Transportation and Convoying
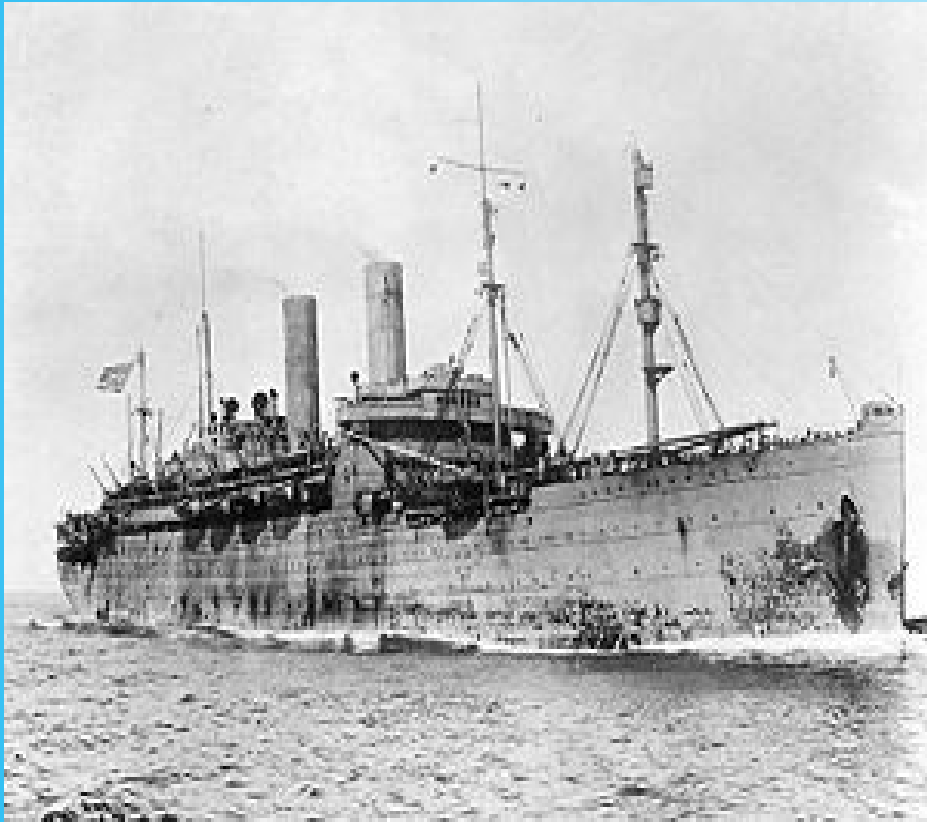
Anti-Submarine Operations
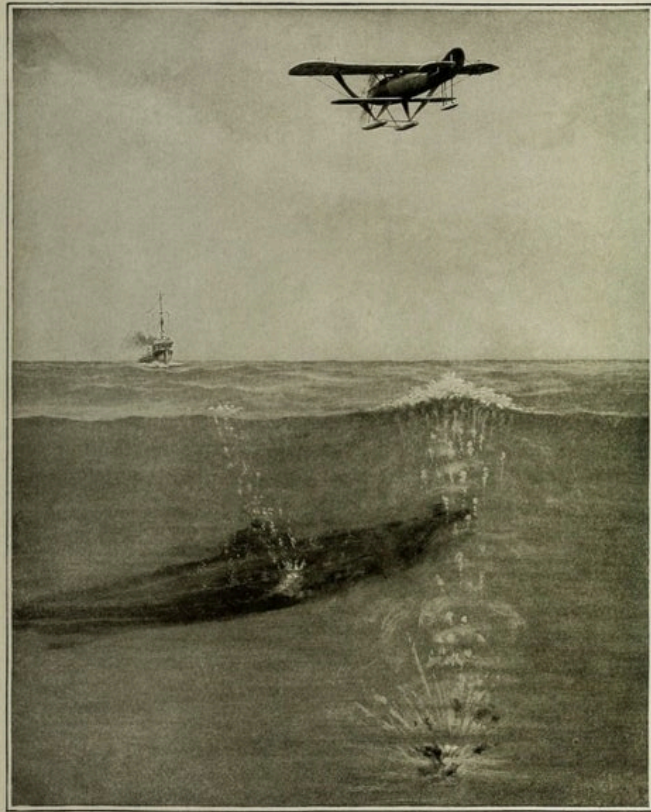
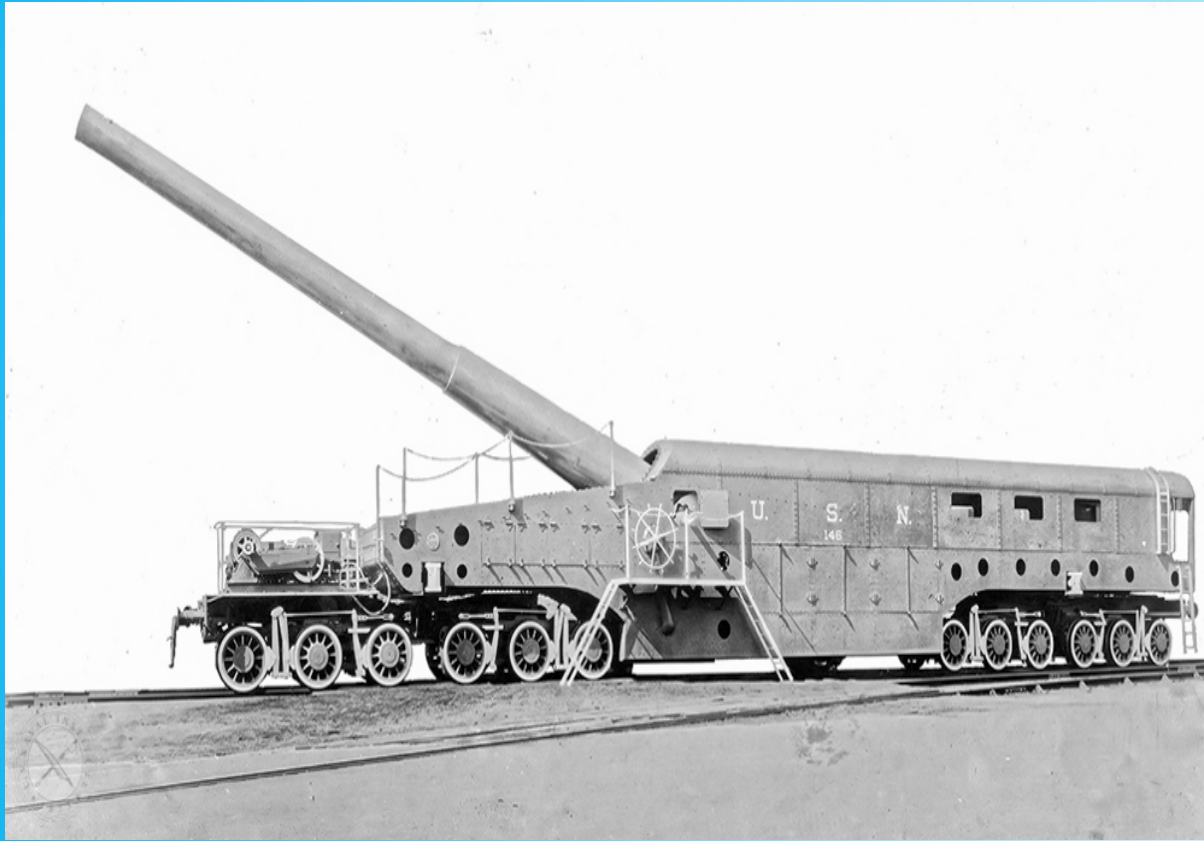A Depth Bomb need not actually hit a submarine to destroy it.

Minelaying and the Northern Barrage

The Northern Mine Barrage, 1918
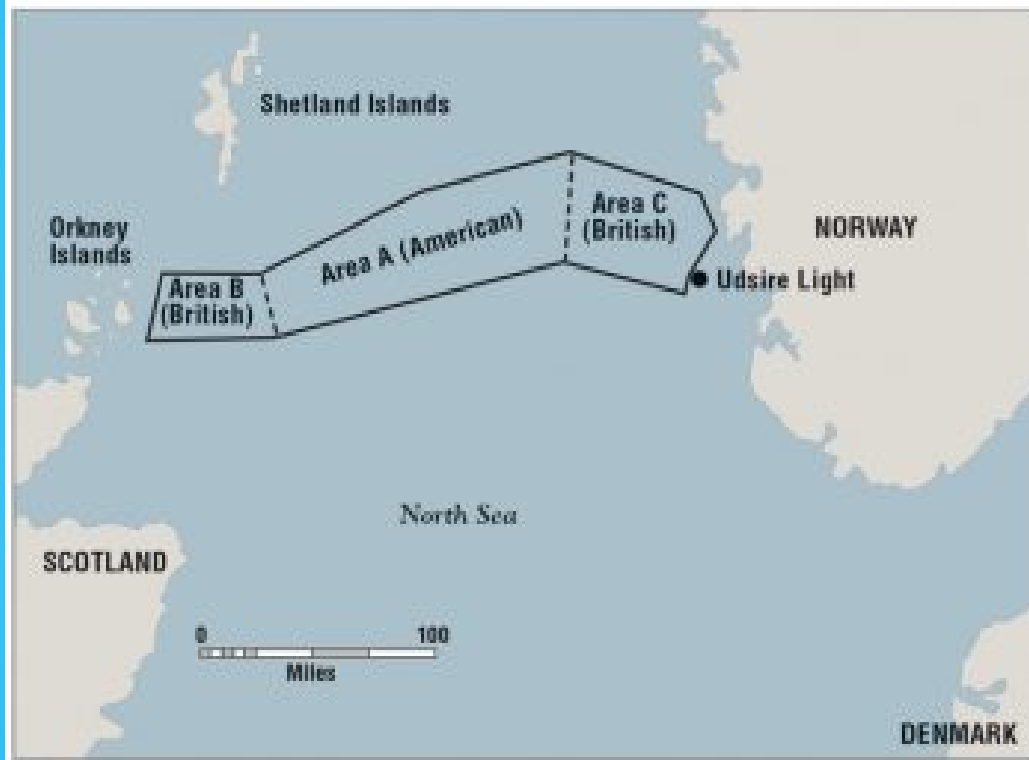
Naval Gun Railway Batteries

Marine Corps Enlistment and Mobilization

The Secretary of the Navy was instructed to increase the size of the Marine Corps to 693 Officers and 17,400 Enlisted. At the end of the war 3,017 Officers and 75,500 Enlisted.

Also the Naval Reserve Act of 1916 created the Marine Corps Reserve, which added 463 Reserve Officers and 6,760 Reserve Enlisted including 277 Female Marine Reservists.

Several new bases and training facilities opened to meet the demands of training the expanding Marine Corps including Quantico, VA.

Marines were also trained and organized aviation squadrons. The 1st Aviation Squadron and the 1st Marine Aeronautic Company. The 1st Aviation Squadron eventually expanded into the 1st Aviation Force consisting of four squadrons. Marine Aviation in total expanded from 35 Officers and Enlisted to 2,462 Officers and Enlisted.

Expansion of the Marine Corps

At the outbreak of World War I in 1917, the Marine Corps consisted of 419 commissioned officers, 43 warrant officers, and 13,214 enlisted – Total – 13,725.

Of the those Marines, 187 officers and 4,546 enlisted were serving elsewhere in the World. Another 49 officers and 2,187 enlisted were serving aboard U.S. naval vessels.

By the end of the war, the authorized strength of the Marine Corps including Reserves was 2,187 commissioned officers, 287 warrant officers, 70,489 enlisted – Total – 72,963.

This number of Reservists includes 277 Female Marines.

Approximately, 30,000 Marines were sent with the American Expeditionary Forces, and another 1,600 Marines served in naval bases ashore in Europe.

There were approximately 11,366 casualties including 25 POWs (Prisoners of War) and 2,459 killed in action.

What did the U.S. Navy Do in World War I?

At Home:

Harbor and Coastal Defense

Construction and Maintenance of Ships and Airplanes

Ordnance Production

Counterintelligence and Cryptography

Overseas:

Anti-Submarine patrols

Convoy Escort

Air patrols

Troop Transport

Armed Guard

Defensive Minelaying (Northern Barrage)

16-Inch Railway Guns

First to Fight!

Secretary of the Navy authorized the deployment of the 5th Marine Regiment to France in June 1917.

They sailed from Philadelphia to St. Nazaire, France, arriving on the USS *Henderson* and USS *Hancock* at the beginning of July 1917.

The 6th Marine Regiment and 6th Machine Gun Battalion (Marine) were organized in Quantico, VA, in August 1917.

4th Brigade (Marine) was organized along with 2nd Division in September 1917.
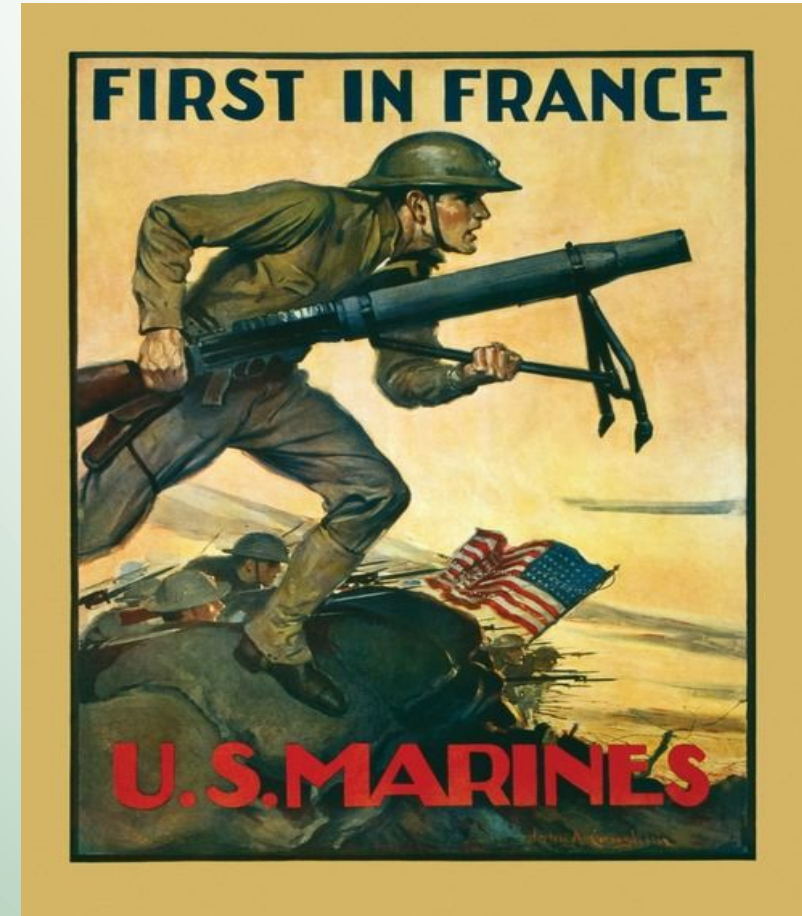
Marine Aviation

The Marines organized two Aviation Units

1st Marine Aeronautic Company –
A squadron of seaplanes based in the Azores and flew anti-submarine missions

1st Marine Aviation Squadron – A squadron of biplanes formed in Pensacola, FL, started the foundation of Marine Close Air Support and attacked German U-Boat Pens in Belgium. It eventually evolved into the 1st Marine Aviation Force, consisting of four squadrons.

Part One: Beginning Your Research

GETTING MILITARY PERSONNEL RECORDS

Getting Service Records from the National Military Personnel Archives

Useful and Interesting Information that you can get from a Service Record

- Dates of Service
- Ships, Squadrons, Shore Commands, and Units Assignments
- Medical History
- Judicial History
- POW/MIA (Prisoner of War/Missing in Action) History
- Awards
- Next of Kin and Location of Family

REQUEST PERTAINING TO MILITARY RECORDS

To ensure the best possible service, please thoroughly review the accompanying instructions before filling out this form. Please print clearly or type. If you need more space, use plain paper.

SECTION I - INFORMATION NEEDED TO LOCATE RECORDS (Furnish as much as possible.)

1. NAME USED DURING SERVICE (last, first, and middle)	2. SOCIAL SECURITY NO.	3. DATE OF BIRTH	4. PLACE OF BIRTH

5. SERVICE , PAST AND PRESENT (For an effective records search, it is important that all service be shown below.)

BRANCH OF SERVICE	DATES OF SERVICE		CHECK ONE		SERVICE NUMBER DURING THIS PERIOD (If unknown, write "unknown")
	DATE ENTERED	DATE RELEASED	OFFICER	ENLISTED	
a. ACTIVE SERVICE					
b. RESERVE SERVICE					
c. NATIONAL GUARD					

6. IS THIS PERSON DECEASED? If "YES" enter the date of death. ☐ NO ☐ YES _____

7. IS (WAS) THIS PERSON RETIRED FROM MILITARY SERVICE? ☐ NO ☐ YES

SECTION II – INFORMATION AND/OR DOCUMENTS REQUESTED

1. **REPORT OF SEPARATION** (DD Form 214 or equivalent). This contains information normally needed to verify military service. A copy may be sent to the veteran, the deceased veteran's next of kin, or other persons or organizations if authorized in Section III, below. NOTE: If more than one period of service was performed, even in the same branch, there may be more than one Report of Separation. Be sure to show EACH year that a Report of Separation was issued, for which you need a copy.

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

Reading the Service Record

The Important Information:

Duty Stations

Ship Assignments

Travel Assignments

Ranks/Rating

Service Number

Don't worry about training centers – those records are not kept

Flushing Out the Story

The Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) will provide a lot of information about the individual, but little about what they did during the war.

To broaden the picture of their experience, you will need to research the role of the U.S. Naval Command your individual served with, whether it was overseas or on the homefront.

Part Two: Researching a Sailor in World War I

Textual Records of the United States Navy for the First World War are located at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC

The Old Military and Civilian Reference Branch

Archives1Reference@nara.gov

These records will be primarily organizational records where materials will be arranged by the name of the ship, squadron, unit or naval command. This is why you needed the service record.

Easy Places To Start – Low Hanging Fruit

Ship-Related Records

Record Group 24: Records of Bureau of Navigation

Deck Logs – Arranged by Ship

Muster Rolls – Arranged by Ship

Record Group 45: Records of the Naval Records and Library

War Diaries – Arranged by name of ship

Non Ship-Related Records

Record Group 24: Records of the Bureau of Navigation

Muster Rolls – Arranged by Command

Record Group 45: Records of the Naval Records and Library

War Diaries – primarily Fleet Organizations and Operating Bases and Detachments

Examples

DECK LOGS

MUSTER ROLLS

Examples

Casualty Records and POWs in Records of Naval Records and Library: Record Group 45

Entry 257: Lists of U.S. and Foreign Vessels Lost

Entry 261: Lists of Sinkings and other incidents involving U.S. Naval Craft

Entries 257 and 261 are arranged by name of ship

It lists how and where it was lost, if known

Entry 266: Lists of Officers and Enlisted Men of the Regular Navy and Naval Reserves who were reported dead or missing

Entry 271: Lists of Prisoners of War

Entries 266 and 271 are arranged alphabetically by surname

They will describe how, where, and why the men were captured or killed.

Sometimes they will mention other people involved

Part Three: Researching a Marine in World War I

RECORD GROUP 127: RECORDS OF THE U.S. MARINE CORPS

RECORD GROUP 120: RECORDS OF THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

Easy Places To Start – Low Hanging Fruit

Unit Related Records

Record Group 127: Records of the U.S. Marine Corps

Unit Records – Arranged by Unit

Record Group 120: Records of the American Expeditionary Forces

Combat Divisions - Arranged by Division

Marine Corps Muster Rolls

Record Group 127: Records of the US Marine Corps

Arranged Monthly and Divided by Command Starting with Shore Establishments and Ships, then it goes into regiments

USMC Muster Rolls from 1775 to 1958 have been digitized and are available on Ancestry.com

Record Group 127: Records of the US Marine Corps – Washington, DC (Archives I)

Entry A1 240: Unit Records

2nd Division, 4th Brigade, 5th Regiment, 6th Regiment, 6th Machine Gun Battalion, 11th Regiment, 13th Regiment, and Aviation and Supporting Units

55 Boxes that include Operational Orders, Files, Field Messages, Brief Histories, Award Citations, and Casualties

Entry I-2 18: Commandant Correspondence, 1913–38 (in two subseries of 1913–32 and 1933–38)

Entry I-2 138: Quartermaster General Correspondence, 1918–26

Record Group 120: Records of the American Expeditionary Forces in College Park, MD (Archives II)

Entry A1 1241: Records of Combat Divisions

2nd Division

4th Brigade (Marine) – 5th Regiment (Marine) – 6th Regiment (Marine) – 6th Machine Gun Battalion (Marine)

The entry is arranged by combat division and then by subordinate commands. In the first part of each division are the divisional records, which have a filing scheme similar to the War Department Decimal Filing system. After the division are the brigades (3rd Brigade [USA] and 4th Brigade [Marine]). And after that are the regiments and supporting units.

Also at College Park, MD

Record Group 407: Records of the Adjutant General's Office

Entry 37A Central Decimal Files; Project Files, 1917–25

Box 1432 – Marine Corps

Box 1464 – Decorations to Marines in 2nd Division

Record Group 117: Records of the American Battle Monuments Commission

Entry 31: Correspondence with Division Officers of the American Expeditionary Forces

An index (alphabetical by surname) under the section for the 2nd Division includes Marines

Part Four: Going Beyond the Basics and Up the Tree for Other Fruit - Context

Once you have **used the easy-to-find records, and you have gleaned information about organization, locations, and associated commands in addition to all the descriptions of operations, it is time to continue on.**

For some this is where the journey ends, but for others, this is where the adventure continues. And at this point, this becomes a "Choose your Own" Adventure.

There are World War I era, 1916–1920, records in other record groups. There are also specific records for Naval Forces in European Waters and for Naval Forces in Turkish Waters.

Many of these records may have different means of arrangement that are unique to each office. These records were created before the first edition of the Navy Filing Manual in 1925.
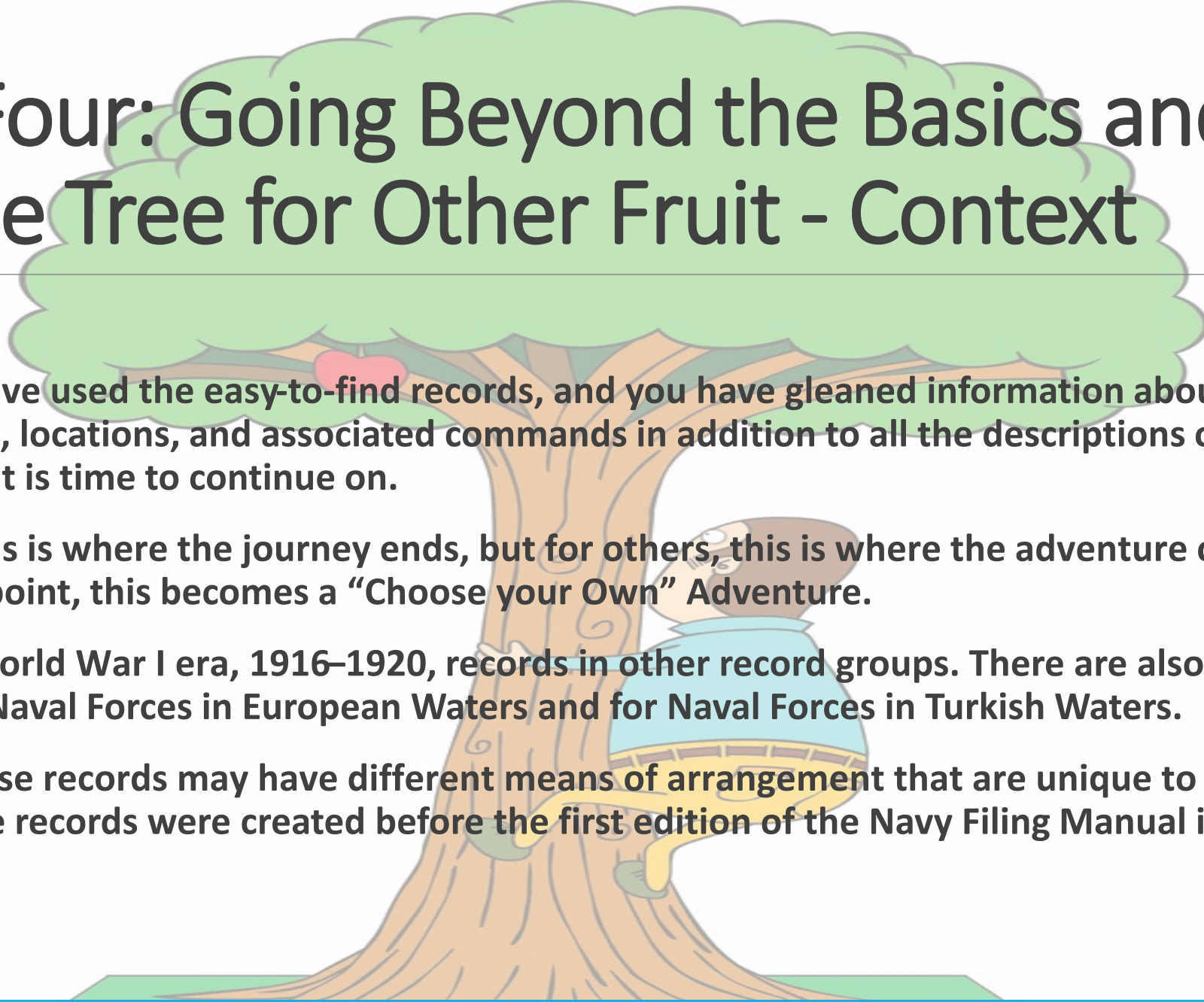
Using What You Find

From the easier-to-find material like deck logs and war diaries, you learn important clues…

Chain of Command:

Ships → Divisions → Squadrons → Commands

Squadrons (Aviation) → Air Bases

Muster Rolls:

Assignment 1 → Assignment 2

Ship's Log with information on organization and location

Using organization or area for other easy to use series

Checking other Record Groups for related records

Finding records on baes, detachments, or area commands

Getting a greater context to your individual's role in the war
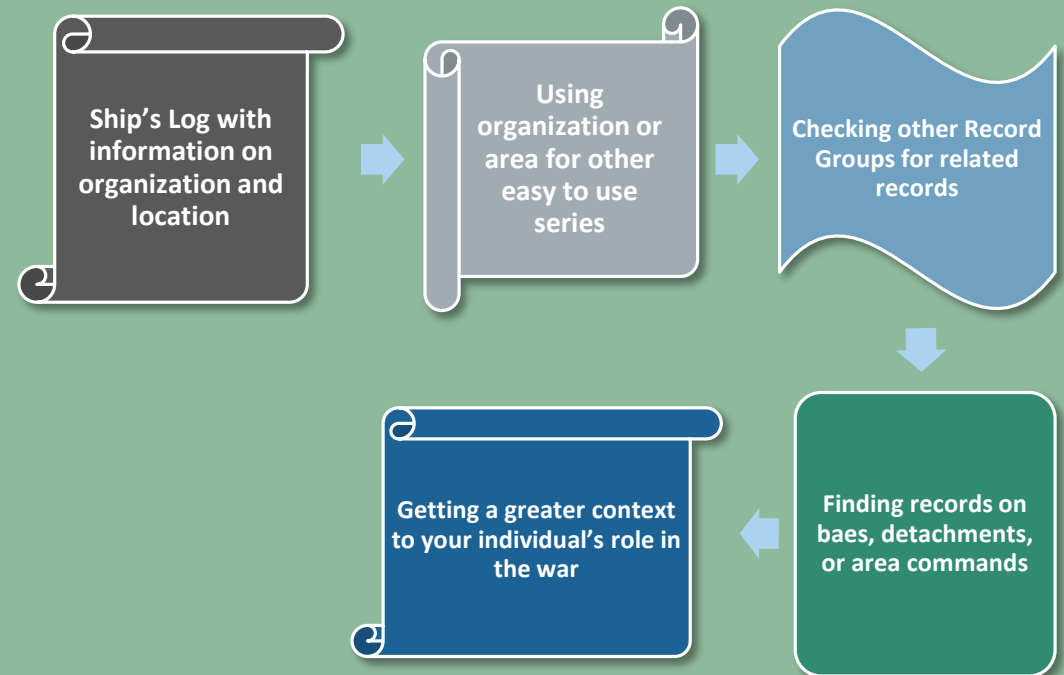
Record Group 38: Records of Chief of Naval Operations

A Brief Selection of Related Series:

Entry NM-63 63: Miscellaneous Correspondence for Commander and Subordinate Units to Naval Forces in European Waters, 1917–18

Entry NM-63 245: Tactical Data Reports from Vessels, 1913–34

Entry UD 118: Formerly Security-Classified Publications of World War I

Entry UD 120: Formerly Security-Classified Armed Guard Reports

And More Generic Correspondence Series –

Entry NM-63 58: Office of Naval Records and Library Administrative Records, 1918–25

Entry NM-63 178: General Correspondence (Confidential), 1914–26

Record Group 72: Records of the Bureau of Aeronautics

A Brief Selection of Related Series:

NM-52 23: Formerly Classified Correspondence Relating to Aviation, 1917–1919

PI-26 17: General Correspondence Initiated in CNO, 1917–1925

PI-26 19: General Correspondence Initiated in CNO [Dispatches Naval Forces in European Waters]

PI-26 30-A/B: Security Classified Records Naval Forces in European Waters

PI-26 34: Records of Naval Forces in European Waters Aviation Section

PI-26 36: Aviation Section Reports, 1918–19

General Correspondence should have specific information on airplanes, blimps, development of squadrons, and anti-submarine technique and equipment used by aircraft.

Record Group 313: Records of Naval Operating Forces

As a complement to Record Groups 38 and 45, Record Group 313 contain the Administrative Files of Naval Commands in the Field.

There are 32 entries (Entries UD 9-A to UD 9-GG) of administrative and operational records for the U.S. Atlantic Fleet and Naval Forces in European Waters that include World War I.

A Brief Selection of Related Series:

UD 9-A: Commander Cruiser and Transportation Force War Diaries, 1917–19

UD 9-D: Atlantic Fleet Submarine Force, General Correspondence, 1915–18

UD 9-F: U.S. Naval Operations in European Waters, General Correspondence (London Headquarters), 1917–19

UD 9-R: Historical Files, 1917–18

UD 9-M: Headquarters U.S. Naval Air Stations in Ireland, General Correspondence, 1918
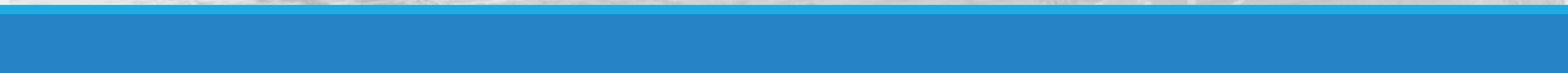
Using Navy Records for Marine Corps Research – Washington, DC

Some of the Navy Record Groups and series relating to World War I might contain some information about Marine Units. The majority of the 4th Brigade records will be Record Groups 120 and 127. The other Marine Corps units like the aviation units and shore-based barracks might be in some Navy entries.

Record Group 38: Records of the Chief of Naval Operations

Entry UD 118: Formerly Security-Classified Publications of World War I

Record Group 72: Records of the Bureau of Aeronautics

NM-52 23: Formerly Classified Correspondence Relating to Aviation, 1917–19

PI-26 34: Records of Naval Forces in European Waters Aviation Section

Record Group 313: Records of Naval Operating Forces

UD 9-F: US Naval Operations in European Waters, General Correspondence (London Headquarters), 1917–19

Personnel and Other Records for Individual Marines...

Record Group 127 – In Washington, DC

Alphabetical Card List of Enlisted Men of the Marine Corps, 1798–1941

Registers of Promotions of Non-Commissioned Officers, 1914–20

Register of Deserters, 1910–41

Register of Discharges, 1838–1927

Register of Discharges under Special Orders, December 1918–May 1920

Casualties…

In total during World War I, the Marine Corps had casualties of 118 officers and 3,166 enlisted.

Of those numbers, 45 officers were killed in action, and 1,409 enlisted were killed in action.

Other deaths were from dying of wounds, dying of disease, and other causes.

In Record Group 127 (in Washington, DC)

Original Death Registers of Enlisted Men, 1908–18

Death Registers of Enlisted Men, 1868–1942

Register of Deaths of Marine Corps Personnel During World War I, 1918–19

Several Series of Card Lists for Marines who were wounded, killed, had shell shock, and whose remains were returned to the United States

Burial Case Files at National Military Personnel Record Center in St. Louis, MO

Part of Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General

Arranged by the name of the deceased.

The files can provide unit information, kinship, and where they were buried.

Since these records are not part of the service record, Burial Case Files will not be included when you receive your individual's Official Military Personnel File. You can make a separate request for these records, and you do not need a Standard Form 180: Request for Military Service Record.

National Personnel Records Center
1 Archives Drive
St. Louis, MO 63138

Telephone: 314-801-0800

World War I Naval Records at the National Archives In College Park – Special Media

Cartographic and Graphic Images

The Cartographic Reference Branch has World War I–era maps, charts, and recruiting posters.

Also, they have engineering and shipyard drawings of U.S. naval ships, vessels, and aircraft.

U.S.S. ARIZONA

You can contact them using carto@nara.gov

Still Photography

There is a lot of still photography for naval forces aboard and at home during World War I.

There are pictures of people, places, ships, and aircraft.

You can contact them using stillpix@nara.gov

Let the Adventure Begin…

Questions?

Thank you for attending!

Please stay tuned for the next session.

If we did not get to your question,
you may submit it to inquire@nara.gov

Video recording and handouts
will remain available at
www.archives.gov/calendar/genealogy-fair

2019 Virtual Genealogy Fair

We value your opinion.

Please take a few minutes to complete a short evaluation. Your comments help us maintain the quality of our services and plan future programs.

Click ⇒ Event Evaluation

www.surveymonkey.com/r/KYREventEval