



Research
Services

**CIVIL WAR UNION NONCOMBATANT PERSONNEL:
TEAMSTERS, LAUNDRESSES, NURSES, SUTLERS, AND MORE**
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The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is the repository of the permanently valuable records of the U.S. Federal Government, with facilities open to the public for research in Washington, DC, and College Park, MD; and at 12 regional archives; 2 personnel record centers; and 15 Presidential Libraries. Bring photo identification (such as a driver's license) and learn about the researcher registration process and research room rules at www.archives.gov/research/research-room-rules.

The National Archives Building, 700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20408, www.archives.gov/dc, contains many records about noncombatant civilians connected with the Union Army during the American Civil War. However, the records are underutilized because there is no comprehensive index, no "one" place to look, and requires time-consuming research into obscure records. Digitization is *slowly* improving that situation, however! This lecture will provide suggestions for research with emphasis on online **or** alphabetical materials that can help you get started.

The National Archives Catalog, catalog.archives.gov, has digital images and information about NARA's holdings.

- In this handout, NAID means "National Archives Identifier," which is a unique number given to every record group, record series, file, item, bibliographic term, image, or digital object in the Catalog. You can search for the NAID as well as for names and other words.
- Play with the Catalog. Search in different ways, and become comfortable with how it works.
- Search for surnames and/or geographic place names of interest annually!
- Only about 1 percent of our holdings are digitized according to our Record Group Explorer Data at www.archives.gov/findingaid/stat/discover.

TEAMSTERS AND WAGONMASTERS:

Teamsters drove wagons with the Army's supplies. Wagonmasters had charge of the wagon train. It is necessary to know the name of the officer, regiment, or unit under which he served, and then dig into obscure records.

For an overview of the research process and important records not listed below, see "Wagonmasters Serving the Union during the Civil War." *NGS Quarterly*, Vol. 85, No. 4 (Dec. 1997): 295-311, online at www.archives.gov/research/military/civil-war/union/wagonmasters.html.

Additional records include:

Record Group 92

- (1) "List of Wagonmasters, Teamsters, Laborers, and Other Employees, August 1861–October 1862" (NAID 131043647). Digitized! Single volume. catalog.archives.gov/id/131043647.
- (2) "Reports of Clerks, Superintendents, Wagonmasters, Forage Masters, and Others Employed at Various Posts on September 30, 1865, and of Printers Employed from October 1863 to September 1865" (NAID 4707062), catalog.archives.gov/id/4707062. Digitized! Arranged by name of reporting officer. The most common occupations are clerks, superintendents of stables and ambulance trains, wagonmasters (and their assistants) and forage masters, but there are also agents, ambulance masters; carpenters; carters; cleansers of leather and collars, draughtsmen; drivers; inspectors and their assistants; laborers; messengers; receivers; and day and night watchmen.
- (3) "Consolidated and Daily Reports and Lists of Clerks, Messengers, Agents, Teamsters, Wagonmasters, Interpreters, and Guides, 1850–52, 1863, 1865–69, 1875, 1879, 1881" (NAID 4707052). 8 boxes, arranged chronologically. Not digitized. catalog.archives.gov/id/4707052.

Record Group 153, Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Army) "Court Martial Case Files, 1800–1894" (NAID 301659).

- Wagonmaster John H. Grey: catalog.archives.gov/id/1847562
- 196 Teamsters:
catalog.archives.gov/search?q=teamster&f.ancestorNaIds=301659

NURSES, COOKS, LAUNDRESSES, AND MATRONS:

Records about women who served in these roles often overlap, and the same woman may have served in all four capacities at different times, so it pays to explore all records regardless of occupational label. Many men also served as nurses. For an overview of the research process and records about laundresses, see "Union Army

Laundresses." *NGS Magazine*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (July–Sept. 2016): 33–37, online at twelvekey.files.wordpress.com/2016/09/ngsmagazine2016-071.pdf.

Record Group 15, Department of Veterans Affairs - Approved and disapproved pension files.

- Step 1: Look for the nurse's name and pension file number(s) in T288, *General Index to Pension Files, 1861–1934*, available online on Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org at (www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1919699), **or** in T289, *Organization Index to Pension Files of Veterans Who served Between 1861 and 1900*, which is available online at Fold3.com and FamilySearch.org (www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1471019).
- Step 2: Go to the National Archives Building (www.archives.gov/dc) to see and copy the pension file yourself, **or** order a copy of the COMPLETE file online at eservices.archives.gov/orderonline.
- Note: Pension files for two nurses are online: Emma M. Fogg French (NAID 142666395) and Mary E. Chamberlain Perkins (NAID 124081524).

Record Group 112, Records of the Office of the Surgeon General (Army)

- (1) "List of Female Nurses, Cooks, and Laundresses Employed in Army Hospitals During the Civil War, 1861–1865" (NAID 28277783). One volume, catalog.archives.gov/id/28277783. Digitized!
- (2) "List of Male and Female Nurses, ca. 1860–ca. 1890" (NAID 2561317). One volume, catalog.archives.gov/id/2561317. Digitized!

Record Group 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780s-1917

- (1) "Carded Service Records of Female Hospital Attendants, Matrons, and Nurses, 1861–1865" (NAID 655658), catalog.archives.gov/id/655658. Digitized!
- (2) "Duty Station Records of Hospital Attendants, Matrons, and Nurses, 1861–1865" (NAID 655661), catalog.archives.gov/id/655661. 22 boxes. Alphabetical by first letter of surname. Includes laundresses and cooks.
- (3) "Carded Medical Statements of Hospital Attendants, Matrons, and Nurses, 1861–1865" (NAID 655680), catalog.archives.gov/id/655680. 19 boxes. Alphabetical.
- (4) "Index to Reports and Correspondence Regarding Contracts for Male and Female Nurses, 1861–1865" (NAID 655662), 7 boxes. Roughly alphabetical by first letter of surname. Not digitized. catalog.archives.gov/id/655662. Indexes the following four series listed below:
 - (A) "Reports and Correspondence Regarding Contracts for Nurses, 1861–1865" (NAID 655665), catalog.archives.gov/id/655665. 3 boxes.
 - (B) "Contracts for Male Nurses, 1861–1865" (NAID 655668), catalog.archives.gov/id/655668. 24 boxes.

- (C) “Contracts for Nurses, 1861-1865” (NAID 655669), 1 box, surnames A-K only. catalog.archives.gov/id/655669.
- (D) “Contracts for Male and Female Nurses, Cooks, Hospital Matrons, and Seamstresses, 1861-1865” (NAID 655670), 1 box, alphabetical. catalog.archives.gov/id/655670.
- (5) “Index to Papers Relating to Female Nurses in the Civil War, 1861-1865” (NAID 655671), catalog.archives.gov/id/655671. 1 box. Roughly alphabetical by first letter of surname. Serves as an index to NAID 655674 below.
- (6) “Papers Relating to Female Nurses in the Civil War, 1861-1865” (NAID 655674), catalog.archives.gov/id/655674. 1 box.
- (7) “Contracts of Female Employees with the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1869 (NAID 1224821), catalog.archives.gov/id/1224821. 1 box. Alphabetical by name of nurse, matron, laundress, etc.
- (8) “Monthly Returns of Nurses, 1861-1863” (NAID 1224794), catalog.archives.gov/id/1224794. 21 boxes. By state, and then by hospital. Hospitals afloat are arranged by name of ship. 21 feet.
- (9) “Medical Record Books, 1861-1903” (NAID 1224801), catalog.archives.gov/id/1224801. 34 volumes. Arranged numerically. Includes medical cadets, brigade and regimental surgeons, **nurses**, chaplains, surgeons, and assistant surgeons.
- (10) “Medical Department Registers, 1861-1884” (NAID 1224811), catalog.archives.gov/id/1224811. 20 volumes. Need to know hospital or duty station. Includes some Civil War white and “colored” contract nurses; medical stewards; and others.

Record Group 99, Records of the Office of the Paymaster General

“Records of Payments to Hospital Nurses, 1859-1913” (NAID 4694015), catalog.archives.gov/id/4694015. Also includes stewards, 1859-1880. 4 volumes.

Record Group 105, Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands

Many records for Southern states have been microfilmed and digital images can be found online. Go to www.archives.gov/digitization/digitized-by-partners and search for “freedmen” and state of interest. **As examples** of records relating to nurses in the **post-Civil War era**, here are two from **Louisiana**, microfilmed as NARA Microfilm Publication M1905, *Records of the Field Offices for the State of Louisiana, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1863-1872*, online on FamilySearch.org at: www.familysearch.org/search/collection/2333781:

- (1) Roll 26, “Employee Contracts” for nurses and hospital attendants, October 1865-April 1869 (NAID 6016154).

- (2) Roll 87, "Registers of Rations Received at the Van Buren Hospital (Louisiana) Hospital for Freedmen, 1864" (NAID 6116751) includes a list of nurses for the "small pox hospital" in March–April 1864.

Record Group 153, Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Army)
"Court Martial Case Files, 1800–1894" (NAID 301659). Use this link for files about nurses: catalog.archives.gov/search?q=nurse&f.ancestorNalds=301659.

Record Group 217, Records of Accounting Officers of the Treasury

- (1) "Records of Disallowed Claims of Laundresses, ca. 1853–1920" (NAID 2591963), catalog.archives.gov/id/2591963. The Catalog gives the names of all 180 claimants, and the date, place, and nature of the claim. Files usually contain affidavits, correspondence, and other supporting documents naming soldiers (often deceased or deserted) who failed to pay. Most claims were rejected because of a lack of evidence of the soldier's indebtedness on the military muster rolls or payrolls.
- (2) Registers of Private Medical Claims, 1863–1884" (NAID 2600716), catalog.archives.gov/id/2600716. 4 volumes. Arranged by time period, and then alphabetically by first letter of claimant's surname. Entries show the amount claimed, an explanation of the claim, dates received and confirmed, and a certificate or settlement number. These claims were usually for the services of doctors or nurses, laundry, and medical supplies.

SUTLERS:

Sutlers were traveling storekeepers authorized by the Union military to follow the troops and sell them goods and foods that were not part of the Army's daily ration.

Publications. Researchers should start with publications before delving into archival records. Many can be found online at Hathitrust.org (www.hathitrust.org/), Google Books (books.google.com/), and FamilySearch.org (www.familysearch.org/en/).

- (1) Tobey, John E., and Nicholas H. Ellis. *U.S. Army Sutler, 1861–1865*. (Wellsboro, PA: Milatus Publishing, 2012). Useful information and list of 1,400 sutlers. Rare book that is locally available at City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax, VA 22030. 703-293-6227. Email: va_room@fairfaxcounty.gov
- (2) Lord, Francis A. *Civil War Sutlers and Their Wares*. (New York: T. Yoseloff, 1969).
- (3) Published regimental histories often mention sutlers.
- (4) Published county histories may mention a man's wartime occupation as sutler or sutler's assistant.

- (5) *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1880–1901) (available online).
- (6) *U.S. Serial Set*. Reports of congressional committees, executive branch agencies, and other documents authorized for publication by Congress.
- (7) “Sutlers of the Civil War.” *NGS Magazine*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Apr.–June 2014): 39–43, online at twelvekey.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/ngsmagazine2014-041.pdf, discusses records in the National Archives (listed below).

Record Group 92, Office of the Quartermaster General

- (1) “Name Index to Press Copies of Letters Sent Granting Permits to Sutlers, 1863–1865” (NAID 122681358), catalog.archives.gov/id/122681358. Digitized! Indexes “Press Copies” below.
- (2) “Press Copies of Letters Sent Granting Permits to Sutlers, 1863–1865” (NAID 619175), catalog.archives.gov/id/619175
- (3) “Bills, Invoices, Sutler’s Papers, and Other Records, 1862–1865” (NAID 4708933), catalog.archives.gov/id/4708933.

Record Group 94, Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1780-1917

NARA Microfilm Publication M1064, *Letters Received by the Commission Branch of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1863–1870*, aka “Letters Received, 1863–1870” ([NAID 300360](http://naid.300360)), catalog.archives.gov/search?q=sutler&f.ancestorNaIds=300360. Digitized! Includes several sutler files.

Record Group 153, Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Army)

“Court Martial Case Files, 1800–1894” ([NAID 301659](http://naid.301659)). Use this link for files about sutlers: catalog.archives.gov/search?q=sutler&f.ancestorNaIds=301659.

Record Group 217, Records of the Accounting Officers of the Treasury

Records of Disallowed Claims of Sutlers, ca. 1864–1893 (NAID 2591960), catalog.archives.gov/id/2591960. Alphabetical by name of sutler. Files usually contain affidavits, correspondence, and other supporting documents naming soldiers who failed to pay the sutler. Most claims were rejected because of a lack of evidence of the soldier’s indebtedness on the military muster rolls or payrolls.

OTHER PEOPLE:

Here are a few examples of other noncombatant personnel. Dig into the National Archives Catalog to find more!

CLERGY:

“Record of Religious Activities, 1864–1865.” (NAID 78786303), catalog.archives.gov/id/78786308. Digitized! This single volume reports on activities of Christian Commission clergy in the Nashville, TN, area who ministered to Civil War troops and support personnel.

PROVOST MARSHAL PERSONNEL:

- (1) “Registers of Accounts Forwarded for Payment, Fifth Congressional District, Maine, 1864–1866” (NAID 74860188), one volume. Digitized! catalog.archives.gov/id/7486018.
- (2) “Memoranda of Daily Transactions of Provost Marshals for the Second Congressional District, New Haven, Connecticut, 1863-1866,” (NAID 120149149), catalog.archives.gov/id/120149149. Digitized! One volume.

PURCHASERS OF SURPLUS ARMY HORSES:

“List of Horses Sold, February 1864” (NAID 68141923), catalog.archives.gov/id/68141923. Digitized! This one volume list of horses and their purchasers at auctions at Frederick City, MD, and Reading, PA, is discussed in “No Horsing Around! Unusual Records in the National Archives.” *NGS Magazine*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (Jan.–Mar. 2018): 59–60, online at twelvekey.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/ngsmagazine2018-013.pdf.

VARIOUS:

“List of Scouts, Guides, Spies, and Railroad Personnel” (NAID 75302268), catalog.archives.gov/id/75302268. Digitized! One volume.

“A388, Reports of Prostitutes in Nashville, [Tennessee, by] Surg. W. M. Chambers, U.S.V.” (NAID 99905732), catalog.archives.gov/id/99905732. Digitized! One volume.