

## HOW TO RESEARCH YOUR WORLD WAR TWO ANCESTOR'S MILITARY HISTORY

The first step is to request your ancestor's veteran's Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) from the NARA at St. Louis using the form that can be found at their web site:

<https://www.archives.gov/personnel-records-center/military-personnel/ompf-archival-requests>

A number of records were damaged in the fire in 1973 but many have been restored so make that request! Also check for unit designations on letters written home, grave markers or obituaries.

Below is a list of excellent websites that offer the civilian researcher a wide variety of WW2 reports, maps and photos. Also, many of the WW2 Infantry and Armored Divisions had post war associations and their web sites are often excellent sources for information. They are of course maintained now by the children of veterans.

If you need more help with your research you may also consider hiring a professional archivist. I highly recommend Golden Arrow Research as I have used them extensively to obtain After Action Reports (AARs at the Battalion and Company level), Morning Reports (at the company level), and Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPFs). Their web site has examples of the types of documents that they can locate in the National Archives ([www.goldenarrowresearch.com](http://www.goldenarrowresearch.com)). They will not charge you unless they find the records at the NARA.

### US Army Center for Military History

<https://history.army.mil>

This web site provides access to the Commemorative Booklets under the tab "World War II Era". These provide a good summary of the various battles in 50-75 pages. Also note the link to the "US Army in World War II" tab which is the "Green Book" series - the official history of the US Army in WW2. Lastly there is a link to "Army History Magazine". Lots to explore!

### Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library

<https://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/>

This site has numerous links to maps, photos and documents including the Combat Studies Institute, Staff Rides at various battlefields (including the Civil War), etc.

### Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC)

[discover.dtic.mil](http://discover.dtic.mil)

This is a great site with a searchable database for locating reports and documents on specific battles and units. One of the best sites available to the public.

### Ft. Benning Maneuver Center (Infantry School)

<https://www.benning.army.mil/Library/Virtual.html>

This site contains a growing list of Infantry School reports that were prepared by young officers who had experienced first hand ground combat in WW2. A great source for locating reports that pertain to your WW2 ancestor. There is also a link to the Armor School reports on this site.

### US Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC)

<https://arena.usahec.org/>

The official education center site which is not as helpful as the ones already listed above.

### US Army war College Press (Parameters)

<https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters/>

The site for the US Army quarterly publication on a variety of combat topics. You can access historical issues here as well and each one contains a good book review section.