

Alabama History DIY: World War I Records

Project Guide

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ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES & HISTORY

ABOUT THE ARCHIVES

The Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) is the state's government records repository, special collections library and research facility, and is home to the Museum of Alabama, the state history museum. It is located in downtown Montgomery, directly across the street from the State Capitol. The Archives and Museum are open Monday through Saturday, 8:30 to 4:30. The EBSCO Research Room is open Tuesday through Friday and the second Saturday of the month from 8:30 to 4:30. To learn more, visit www.archives.alabama.gov or call (334) 242-4364.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This document was created to instruct volunteers assisting with *Alabama History DIY: World War I Records*, a crowdsourced transcription project launched and completed in 2018. Participation was open to all interested individuals, regardless of experience level or place of residence. ADAH staff personally sent the guide to each new user and asked him or her to read it before beginning the work.

Author: Meredith McDonough

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ABOUT THE COLLECTION

This collection consists of about 111,000 index cards with personal details about Alabamians who served in the armed forces during World War I. Information recorded may include name, race, age, date and place of birth, home address, date and location of induction, units served in, rank, engagements, wounds, dates and locations of service, date of discharge, and other remarks. The amount of information varies on each card.

The cards are available for browsing in the [ADAH digital collections](#), but this project will enhance access to them in several ways:

- Verifying that the names and counties in the digital collection are correct.
- Noting probable relationships between cards so that variant spellings and versions of a person's name will be linked.
- Capturing additional details, such as hometown, race, branch, and service number. Not all information provided on the cards will be transcribed, but we believe that the selected fields will be the most useful to researchers.

If you still have questions after reading this guide and reviewing these [examples online](#), contact Meredith McDonough at meredith.mcdonough@archives.alabama.gov.

CARD FORMATS

There are three card formats in the collection:

SOLDIERS (Army and Marines, including nurses)

Lambert, Otis 2,110,748 White
 Residence: Winfield Marion County ALABAMA
 Inducted at Hamilton, Ala. on Dec 13, 1917
 Place of birth: Winfield, Ala. Age or date of birth: 23 6/12 yrs.
 Organizations served in, with dates of assignments and transfers: 29 Co 8 Bn 162 Dep Brig to Jan 6/18;
 19 Co 5 Bn 162 Dep Brig to Feb 1/18; Co L 348 Inf to June 11/18; June Auto Repl Draft
 to July 27/18; Co H 23 Inf to Discharge.
 Grades, with date of appointment: Pvt.
 Engagements: St. Mihiel; Meuse-Argonne; Champagne; Meuse-Argonne Nov 1-11/18
 Wounds or other injuries received in action: Slightly Oct 3, 1918
 Served overseas from June 22/18 to Aug 4/19 from to
 Honorably discharged on demobilization Aug 16, 1919
 In view of occupation he was, on date of discharge, reported 0 percent disabled.
 Remarks:

Form No. 21. Ala. N. G.

SAILORS (Navy)

Name RUBRIGHT - CHARLES RICHARD Service Number 134-57-99
 Enlisted at RECRUITING STATION ATLANTA GA. Date 5-28-14
 Age at Entrance 17 YRS. 8 MOS. Rate APPRENTICE SEAMAN U.S.N.
 Home Address 4417 7TH AVE., BIRMINGHAM, (JEFFERSON COUNTY) ALABAMA
 Served at S From To Served as No. Days

USS NEW YORK	4-6-17	6-21-17	SEAMAN	42
DISCHARGED 6-21-17			ELECTRICIAN 3RD CLASS	
REENLISTED USS NEW YORK			RADIO	136
YORKTOWN VA. 6-22-17			ELECTRICIAN 2ND CLASS	
USS NEW YORK	6-22-17	7-11-17	RADIO	46
RECEIVING SHIP AT PHILADELPHIA			ELECTRICIAN 1ST CLASS	
PA.	7-11-17	7-17-17	RADIO	319
USS NEWPORT NEWS	7-17-17	1-8-18	CHIEF ELECTRICIAN	
USS LAMSON	1-8-18	11-11-18	RADIO OPERATOR	41

Remarks:
 Date Discharged
 Place Rating at Discharge

Form No. 23--Ala. N. G.

FREEFORM (draft cards and miscellaneous information)

ALABAMA IN THE WORLD WAR
 DRAFT

Page, George Chambers County

Order No. 1320
 Serial No. 214
 Primary Industry, Farming
 Inducted and entrained for Camp Dodge, Iowa, March 28, 1918.

Authority: Original record, LaFayette, March 29, 1918.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Inconsistencies

- The cards contain many typing and spelling errors and inconsistencies. Our goal is not to determine what is correct, but rather to provide enough details so that researchers can find the cards that are relevant to their work.
- Occasionally, a card may be presented under the wrong name or county; when this happens, the information on the card should prevail.

Spelling

- Transcribe people's names exactly as they appear, including typos and abbreviations: **Thpmas** or **Wm**. Use the **See Also** field to provide corrected spellings (see the [field definitions](#) for instructions).
- For town and city names, type the correct spellings: **Marengo** instead of **Maringo**.

Illegible Text

- If characters in a word are difficult to read, make a guess and enclose the entire word in single square brackets: **[Tomlinson]**.

Data Fields

- Not all the information on the cards will be transcribed. See the [field definitions](#) for instructions.
- Leave fields blank if the requested information is not given on a card.

Review

- Select **Needs Review** (located to the left of the **Save Changes** button on the individual card pages) only in the following situations:
 - When the name on the card contains typos, misspellings, abbreviations, or illegible text. ADAH staff will review these entries individually. If necessary, use the **Page Notes** at the bottom of the page to provide an explanation.
 - If the home town on the card is in more than one county (for example, Phenix City used to be in both Lee and Russell Counties). Select one county from the drop-down list and add the other county in the **Page Notes** at the bottom of the page.
 - If the same card has been digitized twice. (This does not apply to separately typed cards with identical information, as is often the case for individuals in the Navy.)
 - If the image of the card is illegible even after zooming in.

Relationships

- The **See Also** field is used to indicate probable relationships between cards with similar names. (See the [field definitions](#) for instructions.) Use of this field does not *guarantee* a relationship, however. Names included here should be reasonable suggestions, but they do not need to be extensively researched and verified.

Examples

- For samples of transcriptions, refer to [these examples](#). (You will need to login to FromThePage first.) See the **Page Notes** at the bottom of each page for explanations and tips.

FROMTHEPAGE NAVIGATION

Logging In

- Log in to your account at FromThePage (<https://fromthepage.com>).
 - Select **Sign In** at the top right corner of the page.
 - You can type either your login name or email address on the first line.
 - To edit account details (email address, login name, password, etc.), click on **Signed In As** (also at the top right corner) and select **Your Profile**.

Finding Cards

- Click on **Collections** in the top banner to view the entire list of collections in FromThePage.
- Scroll or search (**Ctrl + F** on PCs, **Command + F** on Macs) to find the desired set of cards.
 - Cards are arranged by county, and each set is named according to the following format: **WWI service records for [COUNTY NAME], Alabama**. Most of the collections on this page are arranged alphabetically, so the cards are toward the bottom of the page.
 - Avoid the collection link to **Alabama World War I Service Records**, as this top-level arrangement is not easily navigable.
- Click on the name of the collection for the county of your choice.
 - After reaching the individual county page, you can save the address for future use. During subsequent FromThePage sessions (after logging in), you can, paste that link into the address bar to go directly to the set of cards.
- On the county page, choose a new set of cards.
 - The entry for each set (called a **Work** in FromThePage) includes a progress bar to indicate which sets have been edited. Only one person should work on a set of cards, so select a work that is **0% transcribed** (unless you are returning to continue a work that you began).
 - Once a set of cards has been completely transcribed, it will no longer display to the public. If you cannot find a particular set, it was likely completed by someone else.
- On the page for the selected set, click on a card to begin transcribing.
 - If you are returning to a set of cards you began in another session, click on the **Pages That Need Transcription** button on the right to navigate directly to the next card.
 - Before beginning a new set of cards, you may want to browse the complete list of names to note potential relationships for the See Also field. To view this list, click on the **Contents** tab.

Transcribing

- Adjust the display of the card as needed.
 - The default view displays the image of the card above the transcription fields. The image will be at full size (you cannot zoom out) and centered in the viewing area (you will need to click and drag the image down to view the top of the card.)
 - You can adjust the display to move the image below the fields, or to the left or right of the screen. The left/right option displays the entire card at once, and you can zoom in to view details as needed.

Transcribing [continued]

- Type information into the blank fields or choose appropriate terms from the drop-down list fields (**Home County, Race, and Branch**). See the [field definitions](#) for input instructions.
- After transcribing the card, click the **Save Changes** button (above the viewing area on the right).
- Advance to the next card using the arrows at the top right of the page. You can also navigate to previous cards to compare names and details.
 - If you attempt to move to another page without first saving your work, you will be prompted to do so.
- General **Transcription Conventions** are lists below the card, along with a link (**More help....**) to a full list of instructions.
- You can leave comments in the **Page Notes** feature at the bottom of each page, but these will not be monitored by ADAH staff (unless the card is also marked **Needs Review**; see the [general instructions](#) for more details).

FIELD DEFINITIONS

Last Name

- Last name of the individual. Generally located at the right corner of the card. Names are typed in inverted order, so the last name will be listed first.
 - On most cards, the last name is followed by a comma, but Navy cards generally use a hyphen: **Eachern – James Daniel** rather than **Eachern, James Daniel**.

First Name

- First name or initial of the individual. Names are typed in inverted order on the cards, so the first name or initial will be listed after the last name. If only an initial is given, end with a period even if the original text does not include punctuation. If a name includes parentheses, omit the punctuation and type the complete name: **Sidney** instead of **S(idney)**.

Middle Name

- Middle name or initial of the individual. If only an initial is given, end with a period even if the original text does not include punctuation. If more than one middle initial is given, include both in this field, separated by a space: **W. H.** Leave the field blank if no middle name or initial is included. If a name includes parentheses, omit the punctuation and type the complete name: **Sidney** instead of **S(idney)**.

Suffix or Title

- Suffix (Jr., Sr., III, etc.) or title (Dr., Mrs., etc.) of the individual. Names are typed in inverted order (last name first) on the cards; suffixes will be listed at the end, and titles may appear either before the first name or at the end. Include a period at the end of the suffix or title even if the original text does not use punctuation, except for Roman numerals (such as III). Leave the field blank if no suffix or title is included.

Home Town

- Place of residence listed on the card, **not** the place of birth, enlistment, induction, etc. Leave blank if no city or town of residence is included.

Home County

- Place of residence listed on the card, **not** the place of birth, enlistment, induction, etc. Select the appropriate county name from the provided drop-down menu. (Click on the field to view the complete list of terms. You can also begin typing the county name to pull up the correct term.)
 - If no county is included on the card, use the county the card is posted under. (For example, select **Perry** for a card for Arthur M. Hale in **World War I military service cards for Perry County, Alabama ("H" surnames)**.) Leave blank if no county of residence can be determined.
 - If the home town on the card is in more than one county, select one county from the drop-down list, add the other county in the **Page Notes**, and check **Needs Review**. (For example, Phenix City used to be in both Lee and Russell Counties. For a **Phenix City** card filed under Lee County, select **Lee** in the drop-down, type **Russell County** in the notes, and check the record for review.)

Race

- The race of the individual, indicated by the words **Colored** and **White**. When provided, this information is usually located at the top right of the card. Select the appropriate term from the provided drop-down list, **African American** for **Colored**, and **Caucasian** for **White**. Leave blank if no race is included.

Branch

- The branch of service in which the individual served. This information is not usually stated clearly, but the format of the card can be a clue. Select the appropriate term from the provided drop-down list: **Army or Marines, Navy, Army - Air Service, Army - Nurse, or Army - Female, or Navy - Female**. Leave blank if no organizational service information is included.
 - The same card format was used for members of both the Army and the Marines, so these branches are listed together.
 - Though the Air Service was technically part of the Army during World War I, it is listed separately because members can easily be identified by the abbreviations **aero** or **aer** on the cards.
 - Cards for nurses include terms such as **nurse, hospital** or **infirmary** (or an abbreviation thereof).
 - If the person on a card is a female and the branch can be determined, select either **Army - Female** or **Navy - Female**.
 - Freeform cards sometimes give details about training camps or stations. A quick Internet search will usually yield the affiliated branch of service.

Service Number

- Service number for the individual. Type the number without punctuation, even when the card includes commas or hyphens: **4754227** instead of **4,754,227** and **1428234** instead of **142-82-34**. Leave blank if no service number is included (some cards indicate this with **NSN**).
- Draft cards do not include service numbers (the order and serial numbers on those cards are **not** the same).

See Also

- Use this field to indicate relationships between cards when they refer to the same person by different names. Type the full name in direct order, and separate multiple entries with a semicolon and a space: **Charlie K. Smith; Charles King Smith**. When typing names with only first and middle initials, separate them with a space: **G. T. Blackford**.
 - To determine a relationship between two cards, you may need to compare details from untranscribed fields, such as enlistment date and location.
 - If there are two cards for the same person but the names match exactly, do not repeat the name in this field.
 - Examples:
 - Two cards for Charles A. Wallace of Baldwin County: one for Charles A. Wallace and the other for Charley A. Wallace. For the first card, type **Charley A. Wallace** in the **See Also** field; for the second card, type **Charles A. Wallace** in that field.
 - Four cards for Julien Max Strassburger of Montgomery County: one for Julien Max Strassburger, one for Julien M. Strassburger, one for Julian M. Strassburger, and one for Julian N. Strassburger. For the first card, type **Julien M. Strassburger; Julian M. Strassburger; Julian N. Strassburger** in the **See Also** field. For the second, type **Julien Max Strassburger; Julian M. Strassburger; Julian N. Strassburger**. For the third, type **Julien Max Strassburger; Julien M. Strassburger; Julian N. Strassburger**. And for the fourth, type **Julien Max Strassburger; Julien M. Strassburger; Julian M. Strassburger**.
 - Four cards for William P. Walker of Cullman County, and the name is the same on all four cards. Do not type anything in the **See Also** field.

See Also [continued]

- Examples [continued]:
 - Five cards for George Frederick Spann of Montgomery County: four for **George F. Spann** and one for **George Frederick Spann**. For the first four cards, type **George Frederick Spann** in the **See Also** field, and for the fifth card, type **George F. Spann**.
- Also use this field when a name includes typos, misspellings, or abbreviations. Type the corrected or full form, enclosing the name in brackets: **[Thomas Ross Hammerly]** or **[William A. McGill]**.