

Online Resources from the National Archives

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The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is the federal agency responsible for preserving and making available for research the permanently valuable records of the U.S. government. These records number in the billions, and thousands of them are available on the agency's website (www.archives.gov). The site provides numerous resources for educators and students, and virtually everything is in the public domain. Being familiar with the contents of the site and knowing how to search it will insure a fruitful visit.

Five areas on the site are of particular interest to teachers and students: The Digital Classroom, the Exhibit Hall, the National Archives Experience, the Presidential Libraries, and ARC (Archival Research Catalog). The Digital Classroom provides document-based lessons, arranged according to the eras identified in the National History Standards, which are correlated to the National Standards for History and for Civics and Government. The section also provides information on the agency's summer institute for teachers and other professional development opportunities.

Milestone Documents

The Our Documents website (www.ourdocuments.gov) features full-color images of one hundred milestone documents (drawn primarily from the holdings of the National Archives), brief essays that place the documents in their historical contexts, and resources for teachers.



Poster of Dorie Miller (WWII)

This 1943 poster of Sailor Doris (Dorie) Miller, who was awarded the Navy Cross for his heroic actions at Pearl Harbor, is one of the thousands of posters created by the Office of War Information during World War II and available in ARC (ARC identifier 535886). It is also featured in the Powers of Persuasion exhibit at www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/powers_of_persuasion/powers_of_persuasion_home.html.

Photograph of LBJ

This photograph of President Lyndon B. Johnson listening to a tape sent by Captain Charles Robb from Vietnam on July 31, 1968, comes from the holdings of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library in Austin, Tex. It is available in ARC (ARC identifier 192617), and is featured in the Picturing the Century exhibit online at www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/picturing_the_century/index.html.

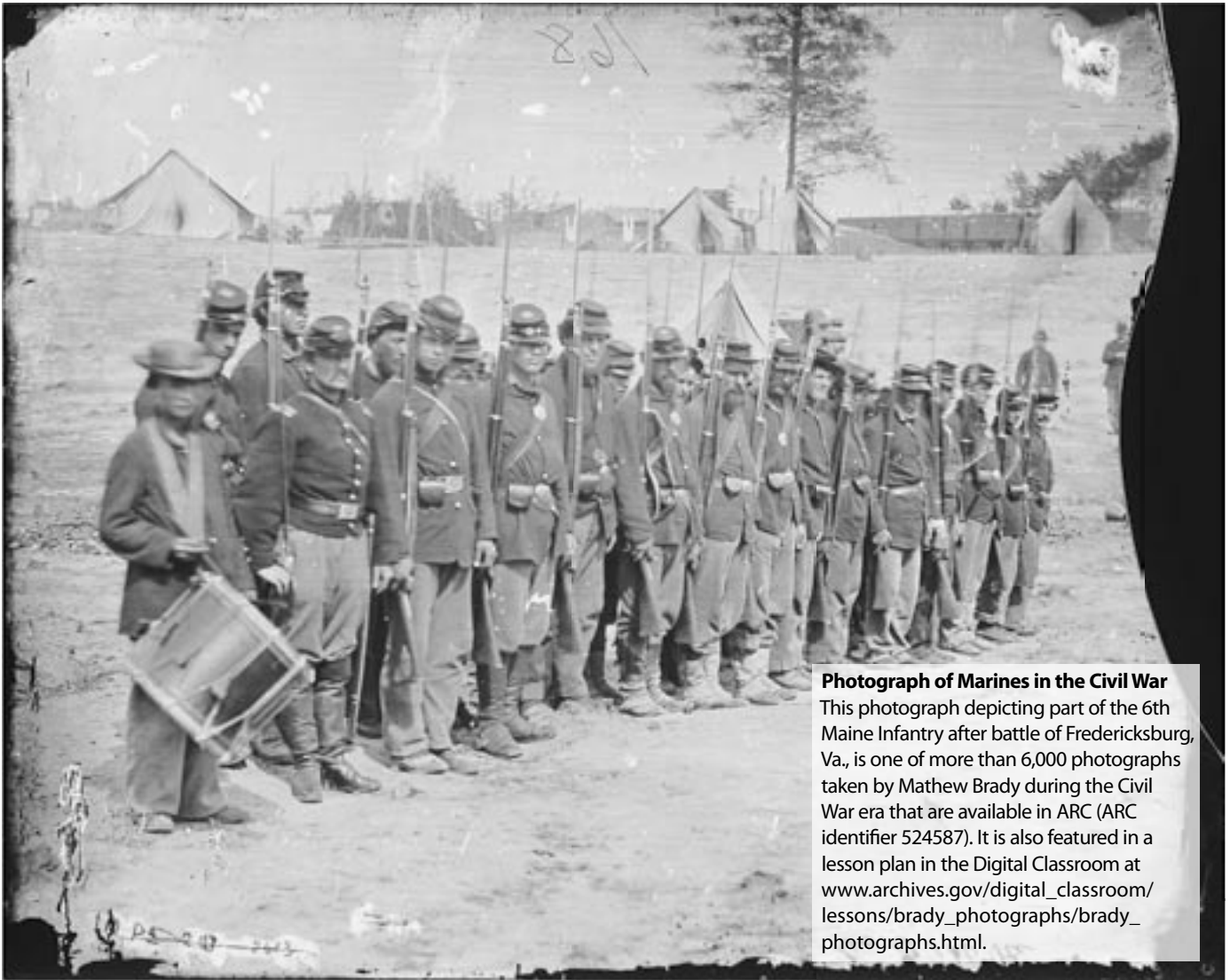


The Exhibit Hall provides images of documents and the text of exhibits that have been presented at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., as well as at the Presidential Libraries. The National Archives Experience offers information on plans for the new permanent exhibit scheduled to open at the National Archives in the fall of 2004, and will provide numerous interactive opportunities. The Presidential Libraries link serves as a portal to the individual websites of each Presidential Library. Each library's site provides valuable resources—from audio files of President Kennedy's speeches, to thousands of documents related to important decisions made by President Truman, and more. Finally, the ARC database contains descriptions of about 20 percent of the agency's holdings and more than 124,000 digital copies of select textual documents, photographs, maps, and sound recordings that represent a wide variety of National Archives holdings across the country.

There are two main ways to search the website. Conducting a "Basic Search" at www.archives.gov/search/index.html will retrieve pages from all parts of the site except for the ARC database. In order to retrieve items from the ARC database, a search must be conducted at arcweb.archives.gov/arc/basic_search.jsp.

Some of the resources in ARC include:

- More than 6,000 Mathew Brady photographs of Civil War-era personalities and scenes
- The Articles of Confederation
- Letter with which Robert E. Lee resigned from the U.S. Army
- The police blotter listing the assassination of President Lincoln
- The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (the GI Bill of Rights)
- President Woodrow Wilson's Mother's Day Proclamation of May 9, 1914
- The Emancipation Proclamation
- More than 100 Civilian Conservation Corps photographs taken between 1939 and 1941
- A copy of the motion filed on behalf of James Meredith
- The Kennedy family tree



Photograph of Marines in the Civil War

This photograph depicting part of the 6th Maine Infantry after battle of Fredericksburg, Va., is one of more than 6,000 photographs taken by Mathew Brady during the Civil War era that are available in ARC (ARC identifier 524587). It is also featured in a lesson plan in the Digital Classroom at www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/brady_photographs/brady_photographs.html.


- More than 100 photographs from the Kennedy White House
- More than 100 Civil War-era maps, charts, plans, and drawings
- About forty plans, engineering drawings, diagrams, blueprints, and sketches of Civil War forts
- About 300 photographs taken by John K. Hillers of the Geographical and Geological Survey of the Rocky Mountain Region led by John Wesley Powell
- About 500 photographs taken by Lewis Hine of child labor abuses for the National Child Labor Committee, 1908-1912
- Almost 200 photographs taken by Lewis Hine for the Tennessee Valley Authority in 1933
- Almost 100 images from “Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War,” by Alexander Gardner, 1861-1865
- More than 100 original sketches drawn by artist Charles Alston to highlight the participation of African Americans during World War II
- Thousands of photographs from the Environmental Protection Agency’s Program to Photographically Document Subjects of Environmental Concern in the 1970s (DOCUMERICA)
- Almost 300 World War I posters from the U.S. Food Administration
- Eight documents from the Confiscation Case File of Robert E. Lee
- Twenty-five photographs submitted as exhibits to the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack
- Five documents relating to the Spanish-American War and the sinking of the USS *Maine*
- Eleven documents from the case file of suffragist Susan B. Anthony
- Nine documents from the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York’s case against Julius and Ethel Rosenberg
- Twenty aerial photographs showing the Auschwitz concentration camp and a Central Intelligence Agency analysis of this photography
- “In case of failure message” drafted by General Eisenhower in case the D-Day invasion failed
- A single-page memorandum giving authorization for Francis Gary Powers’s last U-2 flight over the USSR

- A letter to President William McKinley from Annie Oakley offering to place a company of fifty American lady sharpshooters at his disposal should war break out with Spain
- Documents from the United States Army personnel files of General Douglas MacArthur, General Benjamin O. Davis, Audie Murphy, and Elvis Presley
- More than 400 documents that relate to the Chinese Exclusion Act
- The White House press briefing following the assassination attempt on Ronald Reagan
- Sixty-four documents related to investigations into prohibition violations in Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Montana
- Speeches of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933-1945
- Thousands of photographs from the War Relocation Authority that document the daily life and treatment of Japanese

Americans during World War II

- 100 political cartoons created by Clifford K. Berryman, the Pulitzer Prize winning cartoonist
- Twenty-three letters representing correspondence between Harry and Bess Truman
... and more than 100,000 others!

When conducting a search in ARC for digital images of documents, it is important to remember that while there are thousands of documents in ARC, there are billions of documents in the holdings of the National Archives. If a search does not end with the desired result, do not assume that what you are looking for does not exist, but rather that it has not been digitized or described in ARC. Consider that the materials may be available on microfilm; perhaps plan a visit to one of the National Archives facilities to conduct original research (see page 397 for a list of addresses). Also, it is important to keep in mind that ARC's search engine conducts

searches of the text that describes the digital images. It is not searching the text of the digitized documents themselves. In most cases, employees of the federal agency that created the documents wrote these descriptions. In other words, when brainstorming keywords for a search, try to use the government's language. For example, if you are interested in documents related to the Trail of Tears, do not search on "Trail of Tears," but rather, "Indian removal." If you are interested in the Japanese internment camps during World War II, try searching on "War Relocation Authority," in addition to "internment camp." For additional ARC highlights and search hints, please visit archives.gov/research_room/arc/ 

LEE ANN POTTER is the head of education and volunteer programs at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C. You may reproduce the documents shown here in any quantity.



Photograph of World War II female pilots

This photograph, showing members of the United States Army Corps (WACs) receiving candy bars from an American Red Cross canteen worker while they wait to board a ship for Europe in May, 1945, is one of more than 40,000 archival photographs available online from the National Archives through the ARC database (ARC identifier 535769).