

## Monuments Project

### Getting Started

2017-2018

#### I. Focus & Organization of Research

1. Use ABMC's Suresnes [American Cemetery Burial List](#) to identify a service member you will research.
2. Use Monuments Project "[Briefcase](#)" to begin organization of research.
  - a. [Create Google Drive folder](#) for your service member, title it with your service member's state and name (eg. Washington, Homer Ward), & Share ownership with [untold@monumentsproject.org](mailto:untold@monumentsproject.org).
  - b. Make a copy of [Research Template](#) document for your service member. Put in your Drive folder. Keep track of sources you find in this document. Refer to [Research Model](#) and [Organizing Research Tutorial](#) as necessary to guide you.
3. Make a copy of [App Pin Template](#) for your service member and put it in your Drive. You will use this later in your research process to begin a draft of what could go on the Monuments Project App for your service member. Refer to [Model and Guide](#) in the Briefcase as necessary to guide you in drafting your App Pin submission.

#### II. Starting Research on Service Member

1. The **National Archives at Atlanta** branch has all the [Draft Registration Cards](#) as well as other WWI materials. These cards hold key information about each service member, including information about family, work, race, location of birth and residence, education, and whether or not they sought exemption from service. They also provide insight as to how the draft was conducted. You can contact NARA Atlanta to request a scan of your service member's card. You can also find them on [Ancestry.com](#). Many universities and libraries offer free access on-site. Teachers can also request free access via the [AncestryK12 Grant](#), which has been awarded to each school involved in the Monuments Project so far. Ancestry may also have some of the following: a soldier's Service Card, which may reveal more details such as cause of death; Troop Transport List, showing the ship they traveled on and when they left for war; records of the service member's family; census records offering more details about the service member, their family, and powerful data about the place they lived and how that may have shaped them.
2. **Newspapers.** Digital databases like [Chronicling America](#), [newspapers.com](#), and [newspaperarchive.com](#) offer quick, keyword-ready approaches to finding references to your service member. This may just be a report of their passing but could also include information about their life before the war or updates on their service. Some local papers published letters from soldiers home with details on their town and family. Be careful to play with different spellings and arrangements of the name and use each database's advanced search functions and tips to increase likelihood of making a relevant discovery. Even those local papers that lack information specific to your soldier offer rich insight into the that time period and perspective.
3. **Local Archives.** With information from a Draft Card you can proceed with identifying possible local archives that could hold items related to your soldier not yet digitized. Using keywords like Historical Society or History Center or Archive or Special Collections you can search their town, county, city, and

region for different routes to explore. Such places might hold all manner of info related to your soldier's life, family, town and experience.

### **III. Building Context**

If you only search for information that mentions your soldier you will not be able to put the individual properly in context. As you search and find new evidence continue to develop questions about the situations and experiences they lived through. This will lead to a richer story that tells us not just about the soldier but allows us to better understand the time period through their lens. You can refer to the [Homer Ward page](#) for more on how to research both soldier and context with examples of different documents highlighting the approach. Once your understanding of the need for context is clear you can use the different databases in the Briefcase to get started. Some basics to consider are things like the town they grew up in, the experience of people in their demographic, the type of work they did, level of education, the responsibilities of people in their rank and regiment, battles or events they were witness to, etc.

### **IV. Putting it Together**

Final App Pins will be posted on the app by the facilitating teacher or professor when they consider them complete. We would also like all researchers submitting a pin to the App to submit the necessary materials for an individual archive page for each soldier. When using the App you will notice that at the bottom of each pin is a link. That link will carry the user to a page on the Monuments Project website where they can view that soldier's story and accompanying documents in greater detail. App Pin submissions should follow the template and model provided in the Briefcase. Researchers can follow this [Model](#) for their Soldier Archive Page.

### **V. Update Accordingly**

The reality is that many of these stories are untold for a reason: it is difficult to find and piece together the documentation. Even if you find enough to submit an App Pin you may well find more later on. Keep us updated and we can make sure that the story you tell is updated accordingly.

*Note to Instructors:* The stages above are loosely outlined for a broad audience. To arrange a call to discuss instructional methods in more detail and suggested protocols and practices please don't hesitate to email us at [untold@monumentsproject.org](mailto:untold@monumentsproject.org).