



Faces of War: Researching Your Adopted Soldier

Jennifer Holik

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The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) operates and maintains 25 permanent American military cemeteries overseas. In many of the countries in which these cemeteries are located, men and women officially and unofficially, through Adoption Foundation programs, adopt the graves of American service men and women in the ABMC cemeteries. Researching the service and life of a soldier while living in Europe, has its challenges, primarily because the records they need are located in archives in the United States. There is also the challenge of the 1973 fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri. The fire destroyed roughly 80% of the Army, Air Corps/Army Air Forces, and National Guard personnel files. This is not however, the end of the story where researchers are concerned. All the tools researchers need to start exploring their World War I or World War II soldier, civilian, sailor, or Marine's service, are included in this volume. The tools include: The basics of starting research and creating a timeline of service. Resources and strategies for online and offline military research. Resources for obtaining a wide range of information on a soldier's death and burial. Instructions for ordering and using military records to reconstruct service history for men and women. And, tips for placing the soldier into historical context using higher level records. Through examples, checklists, and document images, researchers are taught how to locate and analyze records for any branch of the military. This volume focuses more on World War II records, but the process for a World War I soldier and records created, are similar. Once you understand the research process, it can be applied to either war.



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