NATIONAL ARCHIVES CATALOG

Spotlight on Electronic Records

Have you ever come across electronic records in the Catalog and wanted to understand more about them? What exactly are electronic records, what is available, how to research within them? This week, we'll take a closer look at these valuable records and show you how to use them as a resource in your research.
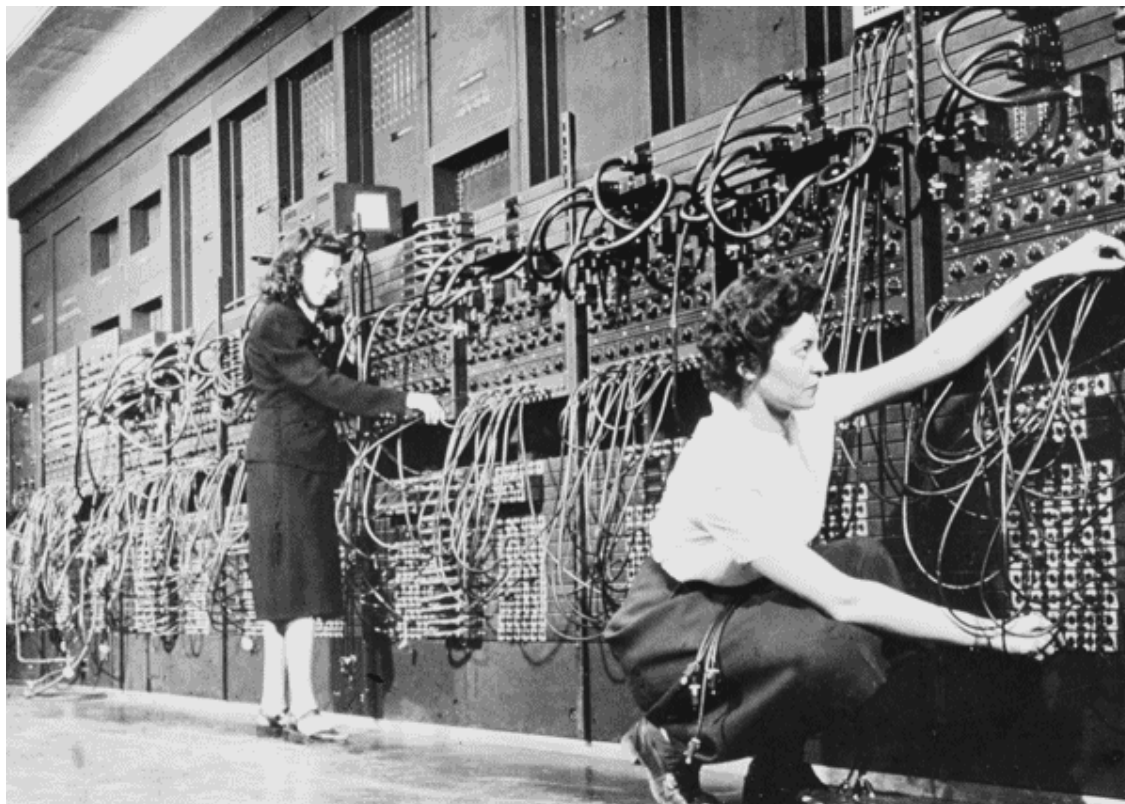
What are Electronic Records?

[Electronic records](#) encompass a wide range of formats including data files, electronic telegrams, email, reports in PDF format, websites, and even geospatial records. Electronic

records can either be "born-digital," which are records created in a digital format, or they can be records that were created on paper and later converted to a digital format. The National Archives holds more than 800 series of electronic records of permanent value, containing more than 750 million unique files. Most records date since the 1960s, with some dating as early as World War II.

What kinds of records are available as Electronic Records?

Some of the subject areas represented in electronic records include agriculture, economic and financial statistics, demographics, labor, education, health and social services, attitudinal data, international issues, military, and the environment. Within these records, you can expect to find Casualty lists from the Korean War and Vietnam War, Internal Revenue Service statistical data, Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data files, Records of Federal Civilian Employees, and much more.

What should you know about these records?

Nearly 140,000 file units are described in the National Archives Catalog that are in the custody of the Electronic Records Division. Of those, more than 85,000 file units (about 60% of the holdings) are available for download from the Catalog. To locate these records, do an advanced search and limit the results to the location of archival materials at "National Archives at College Park - Electronic Records."

Look for this symbol in your search results to indicate data files.

Many data files are usually not appropriate for viewing within your web browser. You'll want to refer to the Technical Specifications Summary and the technical documentation found in the Catalog description for details on the formats of the data files. Some data files are not available in the Catalog; contact the Center for Electronic Records reference staff for access: cer@nara.gov

View a complete list of all electronic records available in the Catalog.

Access to Archival Databases

Attention genealogists! Be sure to take a look at Access to Archival Databases, also known as AAD. This is an excellent resource for researching family history. AAD is free to use and offers online search and retrieval access to a selection of NARA's accessioned electronic records in databases. You can find Passenger List data, military personnel information, records of Prisoners of War, as well as data from the Social Security Administration's Numerical Identification Files (NUMIDENT), which is similar to the data found in the Social Security Death Index.

New Pension File Discovery

We shared some surprising finds in military pension files in our previous newsletter. Images in Civil War pension files are rare, and finding a tintype of a US Colored Troops (USCT) soldier is even rarer. In this video, our staff talk about why this tintype of Willis Calhoun (67th USCT) is so special.

THE TINTYPE PHOTO WAS DIGITALLY SCANNED.

Did You Notice?

Did you take a closer look at the [illustrated family record](#) (fraktur) from the Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application File of Peter Hunt that we featured in our previous [newsletter](#)? If you explored the record using the zoom feature in the National Archives Catalog, you may have found this interesting little sketch incorporated into the letter "H". Have you found any discoveries like this?
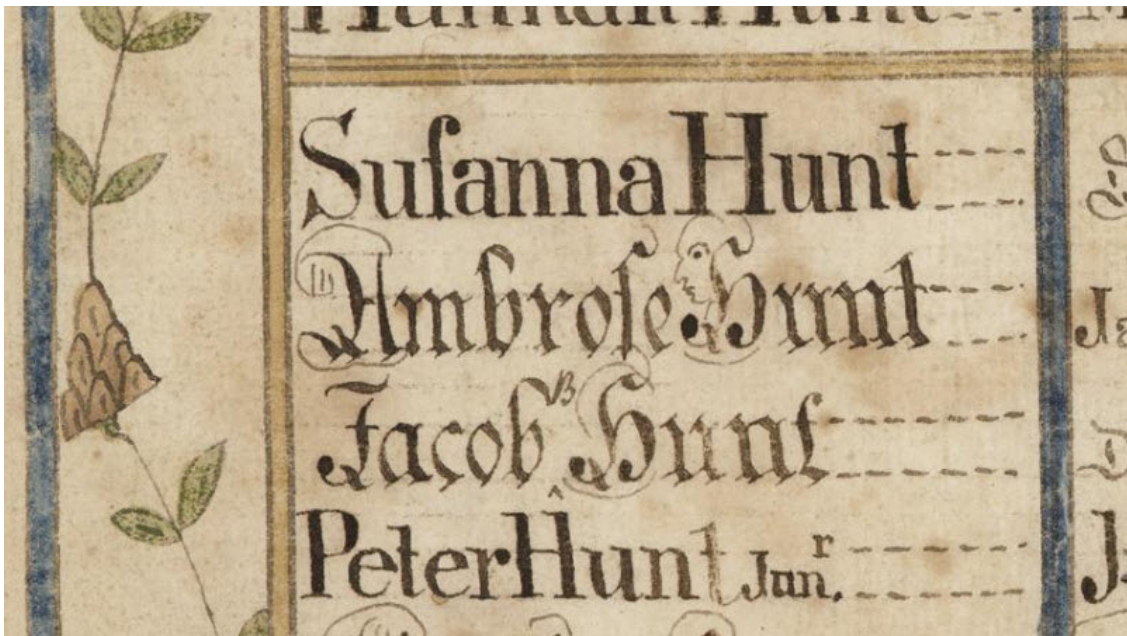
Big Record Challenge: Update!

Thanks to all our Citizen Archivists who answered our challenge and helped transcribe last week's featured record, the Approved Pension File for Corporal Charles F. Sulzberger, Company B, 1st Regiment of New York Engineers (XC-2501599). Thanks to your help, 171 out of 186 pages are now completely transcribed and searchable in the Catalog!

Special thanks to our transcribers for a job well done:

Lauren Souther	SAO
Alex Smith	Faskingfem
Laurie Hamilton	Dana Kessler
ScribeOfPoland	Groenblad
Danadar	

Have a question? Find answers on History Hub!

History Hub is a support community for history enthusiasts, researchers, citizen archivists, family historians, and archival professionals. Visit us at now at history.gov!

Questions or comments? Email us at catalog@nara.gov.