

**National Archives Catalog** 

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# Two Steps Every Researcher Should Take

You've determined your research topic and gathered information, but are you ready to visit a National Archives facility to conduct your research in person?

Before you arrive, be sure to follow these two steps to ensure success!

- 1. Search the National Archives Catalog
- 2. Contact National Archives staff before your visit



National Archives Identifier 35810628

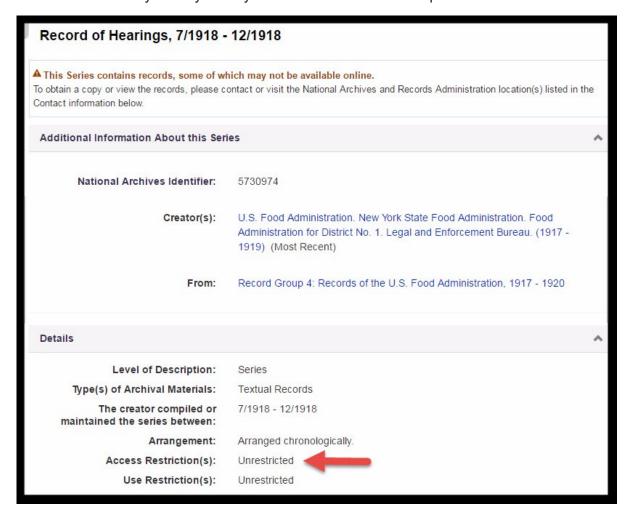
#### **Search the National Archives Catalog**

Use the <u>National Archives Catalog</u> to search for your topic and related keywords. If you're having trouble finding relevant results, try narrowing your search with the refine options on the left side of the screen or by conducting an <u>advanced search</u>. If you have any questions about how to use the Catalog, please contact us at <u>catalog@nara.gov</u>. We are here to help you navigate!

Once you find records that interest you and you decide to visit a National Archives facility to view them in person, first confirm their availability by checking their Access Restriction(s) in the "Details" section of the Catalog description.

If records are listed as "Unrestricted," you should be able to view the records in

person. If records are listed as "Restricted - Possibly," "Restricted - Partly," or "Restricted - Fully" then you may be unable to view them in person.



If you are interested in coming to a National Archives facility to view particular records, note the National Archives Identifier (NAID) of the records. This will come in handy in the next step when you contact us.



National Archives Identifier 35810078

#### **Contact Us**

Regardless of the Access Restriction(s), please contact the reference unit listed in the Catalog description under "Archived Copies." It is very important that you contact us **three or more weeks** before any planned visit to give the reference staff enough time to do appropriate investigation and preparation.

Reference staff will be able to confirm the availability of records and possibly prepare them for your visit if available for research. Give them either the URL you bookmarked or the NAID you recorded. Please note, not all facilities will prepare records in advance of your visit.



Even if you don't find anything of interest, still contact us! If you know which facility holds the records you would like to see, contact them directly (a list of locations with contact information can be found <a href="here">here</a>). If you are unsure of which facility might hold records relevant to your interest, use the general <a href="contact us">contact us</a> form. It's possible the records you seek haven't been described yet, or weren't described in a way that corresponded to the keywords you entered in your search. A reference archivist will be able to help you further.

We know in person research visits often involve time and money, so we want to help ensure your visit is as successful and productive as possible.

Want more researcher pro tips? Check our Researchers Help group on History Hub!

## Looking for some transcription work?



Help us transcribe index cards of Naturalization Records. These index cards have just a few lines of text on them, so they are easy to complete and they are addictive! We bet you can't do just one.

New to Transcription for the National Archives? Learn how to <u>get started</u>. Get started transcribing <u>Indexes to Naturalization Records</u>.

### Coming soon: revamped home for Citizen Archivists



Welcome to our Citizen Archivist program. With the help of our virtual volunteers, we are increasing online access to the historical records of the National Archives. Join us! You can help crowdsource metadata and information about our records through tagging, transcribing and adding comments in the National Archives Catalog. Together we can make the records of the National Archives more discoverable online.







In the next few weeks we will launch a revamped version of our Citizen Archivist Dashboard. We're combining all missions (transcription and tagging) on one page, adding a new page with detailed information about how to get started tagging and transcribing, as well as a Frequently Asked Questions page filled with questions we've received from all of you.

Our Citizen Archivist Dashboard will remain at <a href="https://www.archives.gov/citizen-archivist">https://www.archives.gov/citizen-archivist</a> and any links you have saved will redirect to the new pages.

Stay tuned! We'd love to have your feedback on our Citizen Archivist Dashboard and ensure that it works best for our volunteers. What would you like to see featured?

Questions or comments? Email us at <a href="mailto:catalog@nara.gov">catalog@nara.gov</a>.









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