

July 2017

Panel Discussion on *What is Parkvillia Northcutti?: The science and history behind a new fossil find near Kansas City*

On **Tuesday, July 25 at 6:30 p.m.**, the National Archives in partnership with Park University, will host a panel of natural history scientists for a discussion on *What is Parkvillia northcutti?*, a new fossil recently found near Kansas City. A free light reception will precede the program at 6:00 p.m.

The Kansas City metropolitan area is home to a group of rocks known to geologists as the Kansas City Group. One of the layers contained within these rocks is the Bonner Spring Shale. In Parkville, Missouri, on the Park University campus, the Bonner Springs Shale contains fossil leaves and rare insects that are approximately 306 million years old. Recently, **Tim Northcutt**, a local amateur paleontologist located several fossils from an extinct family of plants known as Lyginopteridaceae. These were shrub sized plants with branching fronds and leaves, but at times would have pollen organs on the fronds. The type of preservation required to keep pollen organs intact has occurred at this locality making it a rare find.



Above: Quarry operations in 1955 at Dinosaur National Monument in Utah. Fossil bones uncovered are being relieved on the left, and on the right the overburden is being removed by the use of jackhammers. The bones at the top include the pelvis, shoulder, neck, and one leg of *Camarasaurus supremus*; the bones in the middle include vertebrae and leg bones of a *Stegosaurus*; and the bottom set of bones include a skull, neck and rib bones of a *Camarasaurus supremus*. The National Archives has documents and photographs related to fossil research within National Park Service records. Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Records of Regional Offices, Region II Midwest Region General Files Photographs, 1951-1964. National Archives Identifier 285987.

Northcutt, will be joined by **Professors Scott Hageman, Brian Hoffman** and **Patricia Ryberg** from Park University's Department of Natural and Physical Sciences; and **Dr. Rudy Serbet** from the University of Kansas. The panelists will discuss the various aspects of this fossil find including how the fossils are named; what type of technology is used when excavating for fossils; and how the Midwest, specifically Platte County, Missouri, was once home to "beach-front" property and species like *Parkvillia northcutti*. *This program is offered in partnership with Park University.*

Reservations are requested for this **free program** by calling 816-268-8010 or emailing kansascity.educate@nara.gov. Requests for ADA accommodations must be submitted five business days prior to events.

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Upcoming Events

Unless noted, all events are held at the National Archives
400 W. Pershing Road
Kansas City, MO 64108

- **JULY 7 & 8** - TIMES VARY: *THE "WRITE" STUFF WORKSHOP*
- **JULY 14** - TIMES VARY: *FREE FRIDAY SUMMER FUN TOURS*
- **JULY 25** - 6:30 P.M. PANEL DISCUSSION: *WHAT IS PARKVILLIA NORTHCUTTI?*
- **JULY 28** - TIMES VARY: *FREE FRIDAY SUMMER FUN TOURS*

Free Friday Summer Fun Tours Continue in July

This summer, National Archives public programs staff will offer Free Friday Summer Fun Tours of the facility and *We the People* exhibit. *We the People* highlights the millions of records that give insight into the lives of ordinary people. The one-hour tour will provide visitors with an overview about records housed at the Archives. Tour participants will also learn the history of the Adams-Express Building, which houses the National Archives at Kansas City, along with other features within the building. Tours will be offered on the following dates:

- Friday, July 14
- Friday, July 28

Group tours must be scheduled 48 hours in advance and are limited to no more than 12 people per group. Tours times are available between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. More information about group tours can be found [here](#).



Reservations are required for tours by calling 816-268-8072 or emailing kansascity.educate@nara.gov.

Free Professional Development Opportunities for Educators

Several upcoming **free** professional development opportunities are listed below for educators offered by either the National Archives or our program partners.

- **Remembering WWI Workshop with HistoryPin on Wednesday, August 2** - The National Archives and National World War I Museum and Memorial are holding a free workshop for teachers and educators on **Wednesday, August 2 from 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**, to explore practical scenarios for using NARA's new national World War I app in the classroom. It will be held at the National World War I Museum and Memorial in Kansas City. The Museum is helping to partner on this new app, titled [Remembering WWI](#), which invites teachers and museums nationwide to contribute their own stories and play a part in the centennial commemoration of the World War I. In this how-to session, Historypin will introduce the ways the app has been designed to help people explore, use, and reuse newly digitized WWI photographs and moving images. Pastries, coffee, and a light lunch will be provided.

The logo for HistoryPin, featuring the word "history" in a bold, pink, lowercase font, followed by "pin" in a grey, lowercase font. A small registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the right of the word "pin".

Please bring an iPad (minimum requirements iOS 9) or Android tablet (minimum requirements Android 5, minimum width 4.3 inches) if you own one, and have the Remembering WWI app [downloaded](#) if you can. Register [here](#).

- **How Many "Trails of Tears?": Native American Forced Removal on Thursday, October 19** - Join National Archives staff for this online workshop offered on **Thursday, October 19 at 7:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. Eastern Time**. Many people associate the term "Trail of Tears" with the forced removal of the Cherokee Nation from the southeastern U.S. to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). Of course, they would be correct. However, there were other forced removals of tribes from the eastern and mid-western United States to various locations across the United States, some of which might have been from (or crossed through) your very own area of the country. Learn how to find and work with these records while incorporating them into classroom curriculum. Suitable for all grade levels. To register, email distancelearning@nara.gov.

National Archives to Host *The “Write” Stuff* Festival

Online Attendance Opportunities Available

The National Archives welcomes the start of summer break with its first-ever, two-day *“Write” Stuff Festival* showcasing how research impacts writing and storytelling on **Friday, July 7 and Saturday, July 8**. Writers young and old, accomplished and novice, are invited to the National Archives to meet and learn from favorite authors and illustrators. Young writers (4th-6th grade) can participate in special “story development” workshops in person or online. Additional Festival highlights include book signings, discussions, hands-on activities, and more! Full schedule [online](#).

The “Write” Stuff

Literacy, Writing, and Research Festival

JULY 7 AND 8



The *“Write” Stuff* Festival is free and open to the public, but [online registration](#) is required for Friday’s “kids only” afternoon

workshops, which are limited to 4th-6th graders. All events will be held in the William G. McGowan Theater and Boeing Learning Center at the National Archives in Washington D.C.

Not in Washington, D. C.? Participate online!

Playwright, author, and [Book Club for Kids](#) podcast host **Kitty Felde** joins National Archives staff for a *Making Fiction from Facts* webinar to address these questions and more:

- How to find inspirational material.
- How to access online resources from the National Archives.
- What are the rules for using facts in your fiction?
- When is it time to stop researching and start writing/painting/singing?

[Registration required](#); participants will receive a link to join the webinar via email the week of the program. More information about *The “Write” Stuff Festival* can be found [here](#).

New Interpretype Device Now Available for Visitors

New service for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing
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The National Archives at Kansas City is pleased to announce we have acquired new technology that will allow us to better serve visiting researchers who are deaf or hard of hearing. We now have available in our research room an Interpretype device. The Interpretype ITY C.20 is a Deaf-to-Hearing communication device.

This system uses two netbooks to provide real-time communication between deaf and hearing individuals by using text based chat. If you are in need of this assistance, please let us know when you visit or email us in advance at kansascity.archives@nara.gov.

As always, the National Archives appreciates advanced notice of researcher visits so that we may provide you the best customer service possible.

Hidden Treasures from the Stacks In the Event of..." War Risk Insurance Case Files from The Great War

Editorial note: In 2017, the United States will commemorate the 100th anniversary of its involvement in World War I, known as the Great War. Throughout 2017, in each issue of this monthly newsletter, the National Archives at Kanas City will highlight materials from our holdings that illustrate various aspects of the war - either on the home front or abroad.

Wartime conflict brings up new questions, problems, and issues to be resolved both at home and on the battlefield. There is little question, however, as to who exactly must shoulder the heaviest burden of war: soldiers and their families. Recognizing the sacrifice of its military draftees in World War I, the government sought to create a system that would help ease the burden of those soldiers it called into service. Though pension programs had been instituted after previous conflicts, legislators sought to enact a more formal, more efficient method to help relieve the distress in families of soldiers injured during conflict or for the families of those who never returned from the battlefield. Thus, the War Risk Insurance Act of October 6, 1917, was born.

Administered at the time by the War Risk Bureau, the basic terms of the War Risk Insurance Act provided that a soldier could purchase term life insurance from the United States government at a cheaper rate than from a private company. The payout provisions allowed the men who purchased the insurance to later file claims for any injuries or disabilities they received as a result of their service, with specification that the "physical disability of a discharged soldier [would] be recognized after his discharge, even though records show he was sound on leaving the service."

As time went on and the country no longer felt the sharp sting of the Great War, legislation was passed which gave soldiers six years to file any claims on their war risk insurance policies. From 1930 through 1936, thousands of claims were filed by veterans throughout the country. One such file was the case of Anna Townsend, who filed on behalf of her husband George Townsend.

George Townsend was a 27-year-old resident of St. Paul, Minnesota, who was enlisted into military service on June 25, 1918, was stationed in the Thiaucourt region of France, and was discharged May 19, 1919. At the time of his enlistment, George was offered coverage under the War Risk Insurance Act for the amount of \$10,000.00 in the event of death or total disability. Anna Townsend filed claim on August 28, 1930, based on the fact that George contracted "certain sicknesses" during his service which rendered him permanently incompetent, including "nervousness, neuropsychiatric diseases and insanity" according to her claim. Medical documents included in the file offer more detail about the conditions from which George suffered.

An affidavit from a fellow soldier with whom Townsend served, reported that both men fell ill with severe diarrhea and vomiting in October 1918, while stationed in France. In September 1919, Dr. Finley Spates of Minnesota observed that George exhibited a "general debility following the ingestion and digestion of food. Pains over the epigastric areas, accompanied occasionally by vomiting of undigested food." He goes on to state that he firmly believed his condition was attributed to his military service and felt his condition was an "incurable" one. Additional records in the file go on to paint a grim picture of George's deteriorating condition, indicating that the gastric affliction he experienced



Above: George Townsend. Record Group 21 Records of the United States District Court, Second (Mankato) Division of the District of Minnesota, Law Case Files, 1898-1938, Case File #474. National Archives Identifier 283631.

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Sept, -17-1919



PHYSICIAN'S AFFIDAVIT.

NOTE.—This statement should be executed by the physician who first attended the claimant after his discharge from the service.

In the Compensation Claim No. C- of George Townsend (Name of claimant.) personally appeared Dr. Finley S. Spates of Duluth Paul Minnesota (Address), who, being duly sworn, states:

I am a practicing physician in the State of Minnesota That after his discharge from the military service on May 19, 1919, I first examined the claimant on Sept 17, 1919 His complaint at that time was: Chronic Gastritis

Upon physical examination I found the following symptoms present: General debility, following the ingestion & digestion of food. Pains over the epigastric area, accompanied occasionally by vomiting of undigested food. I have known & seen applicant at various times since & have known that he was still a victim of the same disease.

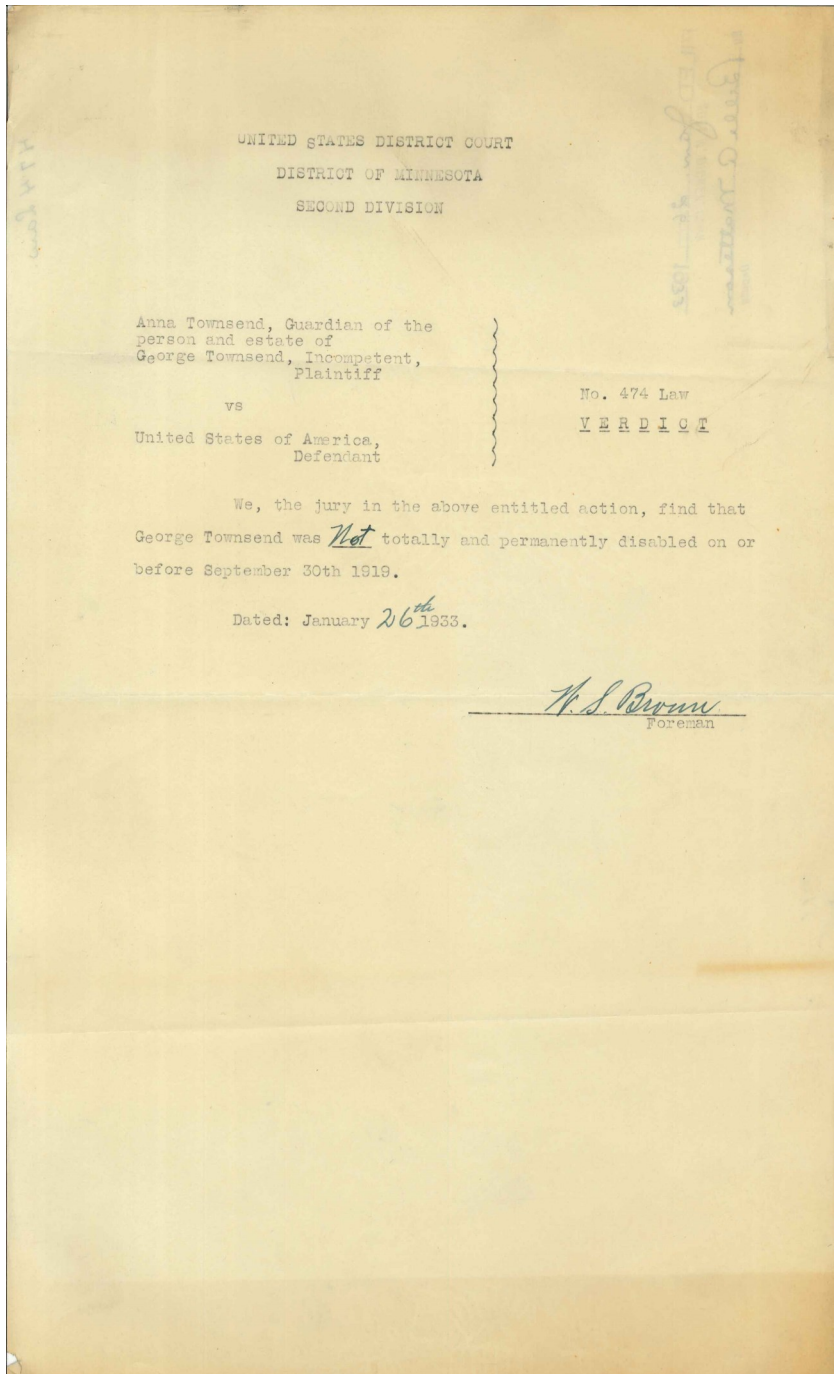
I diagnosed the injury or disease as Chronic Gastritis based on my knowledge or history of his case and condition of his tongue as you see it today.

The prognosis was it probably incurable especially so as it (Gastritis) is a Post-war sequel, as is the Amebic infection which he has, as diagnosed by medical experts recently.

I do believe the claimant's disability is attributable to his military service, for the following reasons: Chronic inflammation of the Stomach with its train of symptoms as I discovered a few months after his discharge from military service, and Amebism or systemic infection of the Amoeba coli, and at today's examination, March 1st 1928, I find the same Gastro-intestinal conditions as existed when I saw Claimant in Sept 1919.

Above: Affidavit from Dr. Finley Spates. Record Group 21 Records of the United States District Court, Second (Mankato) Division of the District of Minnesota, Law Case Files, 1898-1938, Case File #474. National Archives Identifier 283631.

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would interrupt his daily activity causing him to suffer nervous breakdowns and panic attacks, eventually leading him to become “permanently insane” and confined to an insane hospital by the time his wife Anna sought claim against his War Risk Insurance policy.

The jury for the case of *Anna Townsend, et al v. United States of America* were instructed to determine whether or not George Townsend was totally and permanently disabled on or before September 30, 1919 (the law stipulated that a soldier’s policy coverage continued in effect for 120 days after honorable discharge). Ultimately, the jury ruled in favor of the United States and based their decision on what the court felt was a lack of evidence in support of Anna Townsend’s claim and the fact that George was able to remain gainfully employed by the Ford Motor Company for several years after his discharge. Anna Townsend was unable to receive any insurance claims for her husband George’s military service under the provisions of the War Risk Insurance program.

Insurance reports suggest that by 1930, \$155,000,000.00 dollars out of a total of \$188,000,000.00 worth of compensation payments were made for disability compensation to soldiers who were injured during the Great War. The large number of claims filed make the War Risk Case Files a useful research tool when searching for an individual who served and was injured during World War I, especially if the individual possibly filed claim between 1930 and 1936. Frequently found in records of the United States District Court, the files provide insight into the experiences of the soldiers and sailors who were drawn into service during World War I and can offer a wealth of information for researchers of all kinds.

For more information about records related to World War I visit the [National Archives Catalog](#).

Above: Verdict rendered in *Anna Townsend v. United States of America*. RG 21 Records of the United States District Court, Second (Mankato) Division of the District of Minnesota, Law Case Files, 1898-1938, Case File #474. National Archives Identifier 283631.



GENERAL INFORMATION: The National Archives is open Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Closed on weekends and Federal holidays. Hours are subject to change due to special programs and weather. The National Archives is located at 400 West Pershing Road, Kansas City, Missouri, 64108.

The National Archives at Kansas City is home to historical records dating from the 1820s to the 1990s created or received by Federal agencies in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. For more information, call 816-268-8000, email kansascity.educate@nara.gov or visit www.archives.gov/kansas-city. Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/nationalarchiveskansascity. Tweet us @KCArchives or #KCArchives.