



Archives News

Spring
Volume 29
Number 1

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"History is too fragile to be left to chance; only dedicated support can preserve it."

Richard Slatten

War, Remembrance, and the Power of Records: Digitizing the Library of Virginia's WWII Separation Notices

The Library of Virginia is excited to be among the recipients of \$33.17 million in grants for 245 humanities projects across the country announced by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) on April 13, 2022. The Library's project "War, Remembrance, and the Power of Records: Digitizing the Library of Virginia's WWII Separation Notices" received a \$315,000 NEH grant through the Library of Virginia Foundation to digitize 250,000 separation notices of WWII-era Virginia service members and make them accessible through community outreach transcription and online searchability.

This significant three-year initiative focuses on digitizing the vast collection and then working with a wide array of community groups, family members, school groups and educators, and other individuals to uncover details and fill gaps in the stories of these individuals, potentially making connections and discoveries about the people of this era of history.

The project is being funded through NEH's Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grant program and, in part, by NEH's special initiative, A More Perfect Union, which will help Americans commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 2026 by exploring, reflecting on, or telling the stories of our quest for a more just, inclusive, and sustainable society throughout our history.

The Virginia WWII Separation Notices are a part of the Virginia WWII History Commission Records Collection at the Library. The Commission received the notices in March 1946 when the Veterans Employment Representative of Virginia and the Virginia State Employment Service agreed to provide the WWII History Commission with their inactive files of WWII separation notices. By July 1947, the Commission had acquired separation notices for approximately 250,000 of the 300,000 Virginians who served in the military during WWII.

The Commission operated as an independent agency until the state government reorganization act approved by the General Assembly on March 30, 1948, placed it admin-

istratively under the Virginia State Library (now known as the Library of Virginia). The Commission was only able to preserve the files and ultimately transferred them to the Library on July 12, 1950.

The Library did not have the resources to process these records either, but at the time it was not necessary. Duplicate copies were available from the federal government. On July 12, 1973, however, a disastrous fire at the NPPC in St. Louis, Missouri, destroyed approximately 16 to 18 million Official Military Personnel Files. Approximately 80 percent of United States Army and Army Air Force records for personnel discharged between November 1, 1912, and January 1, 1960, were lost. No duplicate copies of the records that were destroyed in the fire were maintained, nor was a microfilm copy ever produced, making the Library's notice copies incredibly rare and valuable.

The notices remained unprocessed and relatively unavailable to even veterans or next of kin until 1998 when a Library archivist alphabetized, inventoried, and rehoused the approximately 250,000 notices. The archivist completed the processing of the notices in 2003, which remained closed to the general public because of legal privacy restrictions. Veterans and their families could request copies of their separation notices, and since 2006, the Library has satisfied more than 700 inquiries into the records. Open public access, however, is imminent, as

ENLISTED RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION	
HONORABLE DISCHARGE	
<p>1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL WALKER ELLIOTT JR</p> <p>2. ORGANIZATION CO A 365TH INF</p> <p>3. ADDRESS FOR SEPARATION PURPOSES BROADWAY, VA</p> <p>4. ADDRESS FOR WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT SEE 9</p> <p>5. BIRTHDAY CO. VA 20 APR 28</p> <p>6. MARITAL STATUS WIDOWED</p> <p>7. COLOR CODE 44, GOLD TAB</p> <p>8. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE RICHMOND VA</p> <p>9. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>10. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF SEPARATION RICHMOND VA</p> <p>11. PLACE OF SEPARATION FORT BRAVO NC</p> <p>12. DATE OF SEPARATION 11 JAN 46</p> <p>13. PLACE OF BIRTH VA</p> <p>14. HEIGHT 5' 1" 132 lbs.</p> <p>15. WEIGHT 120 lbs.</p> <p>16. MEDICAL 14</p> <p>17. NO. OF EXPENSES 0</p>	
ELEVATOR OPERATOR (295-20)	
MILITARY HISTORY	
<p>18. DATE OF INDUCTION 5 NOV 42</p> <p>19. DATE OF ENLISTMENT 5 NOV 42</p> <p>20. DATE OF SEPARATION 11 JAN 46</p> <p>21. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE RICHMOND VA</p> <p>22. PLACE OF BIRTH VA</p> <p>23. PLACE OF SEPARATION FORT BRAVO NC</p> <p>24. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE RICHMOND VA</p> <p>25. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF SEPARATION RICHMOND VA</p> <p>26. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>27. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF SEPARATION RICHMOND VA</p> <p>28. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>29. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>30. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>31. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>32. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>33. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>34. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>35. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>36. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>37. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>38. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>39. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>40. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>41. HOME ADDRESS RICHMOND VA</p> <p>42. 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Archives News

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Dr. Louis H. Manarin

Founding Member of the Friends of the Archives

Passes Away at Age 89

Louis Henry Manarin of Henrico, Virginia, passed away peacefully surrounded by his family in his home on Friday, August 20, 2021. A historian, he was the former State Archivist of the Commonwealth of Virginia and co-author and editor of more than a dozen books on Virginia and North Carolina history. Raised in the Washington, D.C. area, he attended Valley Forge Military Academy and received his bachelor's degree from Western Maryland College. He earned his Ph.D. in history from Duke University and was awarded a doctor of letters from Western Maryland College.

In December 1989, he joined Dr. Richard Slatten and Dr. Benjamin B. Weisiger III as incorporators of the Friends of the Virginia State Archives. He also served with twelve other individuals on the initial board of directors of the Friends and was active with the organization until he retired from the Library

of Virginia.

During his almost 30 years of service to the Commonwealth, Manarin was instrumental in encouraging the General Assembly to codify Virginia's public records laws into the Virginia Public Records Act, in establishing the Circuit Court Records Preservation program at the

Library of Virginia, in promoting the legislation that funds the Records programming through a recordation fee, and in advocating and planning for a State Records Center to facilitate expansion of the Library's archival holdings and to support the state's records management program.

Manarin is interred in Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, near the Confederate Memorial Pyramid and not far from the Soldier's Section, near the men who were the focus of many of his historical studies.



Dr. Louis H. Manarin, former state archivist of Virginia and a founder of the Friends, was recognized posthumously by the Henrico County Board of Supervisors for "his meticulous research and preservation of the story of Henrico County." (Photo: Richmond Times-Dispatch)

Acknowledgments

Peter E. Broadbent
William C. Bryant
Marty Hiatt

Emily J. Salmon, in memory of Louis H. Manarin
Conley L. Edwards, in memory of Louis H. Manarin



The Friends express their appreciation to those members who have renewed their annual membership as Patrons. We value your continued support.

Library Of Virginia Book Purchase Program

This issue of *Archives News* contains the fifth installment listing book donations by the Friends of the Virginia State Archives to the Library of Virginia.

The Friends are hopeful that members will see some titles below that may interest them or assist in their research and can refer to the Library of Virginia catalog for a more complete description and a call number.

Members are encouraged to donate to the Friends to help augment this book purchase fund. If you are aware of books that do not appear in the Library's catalog, but that you think would be helpful to researchers at the Library, please send information (including author, title, publisher, and vendor) to pbroadbent179@gmail.com to be considered for future acquisition by the Friends.

Friends of the Virginia State Archives Donations through December 2019

County court records, Lawrence County, Kentucky Williams, James Alan 2008	Cumberland County, North Carolina marriage abstracts Vogt, John 2012	English crown grants in St. Matthew Parish in Georgia 1755-1775 Hemperley, Marion R. 2015
County court records, Morgan County, Kentucky Williams, James Alan 2008	Delamar transcripts : transcriptions of petitions to the General Assembly of North Carolina relating to the Revolutionary War 2017	Families of western New York Cutter, William Richard 2003
County court records, Pike County, Kentucky Williams, James Alan 2007	Divorces and separations from petitions to the North Carolina General Assembly McBride, Janet 2009	Forgotten Americans who served in the war of 1812 Johnson, Eric E. (Eric Eugene) 2018
County Court Records : Knox County, Kentucky Williams, James Alan 2012	Duplin County, North Carolina, abstracts of deeds Draughon, Eleanor Daphne Smith 1986	Founders and builders of Greensboro : fifty sketches Caldwell, Bettie D. 2018
County Court records, Rutherford County, North Carolina Williams, James Alan 2016	Duplin County, North Carolina, marriage abstracts Vogt, John 2012	Franklin County, Georgia inferior court minutes Ports, Michael A. (Writer on genealogy) 2018
County Court records : Wilkes County, North Carolina Williams, James Alan 2014	Early church records of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania Wright, F. Edward 2018	Franklin County, North Carolina, marriage abstracts Vogt, John 2019
County court records Perry County, Kentucky Williams, James Alan 2007	Early New England families, 1641-1700 Williams, Alicia Crane 2016	Frederick County, Maryland land records Andersen, Patricia Abelard 1995
County court records, Scott County, Virginia Williams, James Alan 2016	Early wills of Westchester County, New York, from 1664 to 1784 : a careful abstract of all wills (nearly 800) recorded in New York surrogate's office and at White Plains, N.Y., from 1664 to 1784 : also the genealogy of "The Havilands" of Westchester County, and descendants of Hon. James Graham (Watkinson and Ackerley families) with genealogical and historical notes Pelletreau, William S. (William Smith) 1898	Genealogical material from legal notices in early Georgia newspapers Huxford, Folks 2007
Coweta County chronicles for one hundred years with an account of the Indians from whom the land was acquired and some historical papers relating to its acquisition by Georgia, with lineage pages Jones, Mary G. (Mary Gibson) 2019	Edgecombe County, North Carolina, marriage abstracts Vogt, John 2012	Genealogy of early settlers in Trenton and Ewing, "old Hunterdon County," New Jersey Cooley, Eli F. (Eli Field) 2002
Craven County, North Carolina marriage records Vogt, John 2015	Edgefield County, South Carolina, probate records Wells, Carol 2005	Georgia land lottery research Graham, Paul K. 2010
Creeks and rivers in Tennessee Pruitt, Albert Bruce 1996		Gibson County, Tennessee (illustrated) : a series of pen and picture sketches comprising a passing glance at the history, progress, and present state of industrial and social development in Gibson County : historical, descriptive, and biographical Greene, W. P. 2019
Crisp County, Georgia : historical sketches Fleming, W. P. (William P.) 1980		Grayson County, Virginia, order book 1 Treacy, Karen Wagner 2017

(Continued on page 7)

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Worth Noting

The Library of Virginia reports the availability of several collections of interest to the Friends. More-detailed descriptions of each collection can be found by searching the Library's catalog. From the Library of Virginia website (<http://www.lva.virginia.gov/>), select "Search the LVA Catalog." Use the accession numbers noted in the description under "Archives and Manuscripts" to retrieve the information quickly.

Will, undated, of **John Baird of Prince George County, Virginia**. The undated will bequeaths various tracts of land and enslaved persons to his daughter, Elizabeth Gordon, her two sons, John and William Westmore, and his son, William Baird. Among the enslaved persons named are Liddy, Milly, and Setty. Accession 52439

Letter, 29 October 1891, from **John G. Gibson** (b. ca. 1847) of Richmond, Virginia, to unnamed recipient referred to as Growing Trade care of Clay Works Yard. Gibson, responding to an ad in the newspaper seeking someone to take charge of a brick-making business, describes his experience and method for making bricks, and suggests equipment for brick making. Accession 52427

Autograph book, 1858–1865, of **Philip Haxall** (1840–1897) of Richmond, Virginia, containing autographs of classmates at Hanover Academy and the University of Virginia, as well as friends in Richmond and Charlottesville, Virginia, and including photographs and clippings. Haxall annotated the autographs with the person's service during the Civil War. Also includes a letter, 13 October 1861, from General J. R. Anderson (1813–1892) offering Haxall a commission as his aide de camp. Accession 53183

Business records, 1949–1961, of the **Norris Furniture Corporation** of Richmond, Virginia, consisting of financial records containing inventories, 1956–1961 and undated, of furniture, including items sent to stores in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and High Point, North Carolina; financial records including balance sheets, 1949; and consignment papers, 1955–1956; ledger, 1957–1961, containing cash receipts and disbursements and sales journal and purchases; and payroll ledger, 1958–1961, recording earnings, deductions, and net pay of employees. Accession 42731

Ledger, 1910–1912, of **J. H. Miller** (b. ca. 1863), a horse dealer located in Richmond, Virginia, recording his sale of horses, mules, and wagons and including an index. Also includes loose papers consisting of correspondence, 4 June 1912, from the American National Bank; an advertisement for Roland H. Childrey, pharmacist; and notes. This volume was also used in the **PBS television series "Mercy Street"** and contains descriptions of three characters: Dr. Jedidiah Foster (p. 399), nurse Anne Hastings, and nurse Mary Phinney. Accession 52201

Letter, 15 August 1800, from **Amos Alexander, mayor of Alexandria, Virginia** (then part of the District of Columbia), to Jeremiah Condy, attorney in Georgetown, District of Columbia, regarding the **brig Ranger** in port in Alexandria. The captain Elihu Merchant and the crew were arrested on suspicion of piracy, the brig was dismantled, and its cargo sold. Accession 52748

Letter, 2 June 1836, from **Richard Scott Blackburn** (1809–1867) of Jefferson County, (West) Virginia, to John Hooe (1793–1874) of Prince William County, Virginia, offering to sell Hooe part or all of a property called the Wigwam. Blackburn states that he is willing to accept enslaved persons as payment. Accession 52712

Letter, 15 April 1863, from **Charles E. Bush** (1840–1912), Company B, **84th Pennsylvania Infantry**, at Falmouth, Virginia, to Fanny Woodward (1843–1929) and Marietta Woodward (b. ca. 1845) of Chenango County, New York, thanking them for the photographs they sent him and commenting on his health and the weather. He mentions that he is on picket duty and that a soldier in his company had swapped papers with Confederate troops. Accession 52768

Certificate of graduation, 25 June 1897, to **Beatrice Eberhard** (1883–1910) of Norfolk, Virginia, from the Norfolk Public Schools for completion of the curriculum coursework. It is signed by E. T. Tebault (1846–1926), principal of Brambleton Grammar School no. 2 and R. A. Dobie (1846–1927), superintendent of the Norfolk public schools. Accession 53417

"Viral Jottings," 2 March 2020–17 April 2021, by **Llewellyn H. Hedgbeth** of Salem, Virginia, recording Hedgbeth's thoughts and experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic, including on local, state, and national actions and events. Accession 53420

Textbooks, 1897–1917, used by **Amy Jackson (Walker)** (1889–1959) and **Roosevelt Walker** (1917–2010) of Mecklenburg County, Virginia, while attending African American public schools in the 1900s and 1920s, respectively. They inscribed their names on the inside covers. Accession 53307

Rockbridge County, Virginia, **Civil War muster roll**, 1903, compiled by J. Preston Moore (1841–1911), J. Scott Moore (1844–1907), and W. T. Poague (1835–1914), listing rosters of the various companies formed in Rockbridge County that served in the Confederate States Army. Rosters include their service during the war, casualties, and, at times, postwar lives. Also includes list of Rockbridge County men who served during the Civil War, but not in companies from the county. Accession 53395

(continued on page 7)

Virginia Vaccination Vacillation: An 1899 postcard reflects vaccination concerns in New Kent County

To vaccinate, or not to vaccinate? That has always been the question. It is particularly timely these days as people seek, or seek to avoid, vaccinations against COVID-19. In 2014, Library of Virginia local records archivist Callie Freed highlighted the timeliness of smallpox epidemic outbreaks documented in local records collections. She noted that contemporary scientists around the country recently studied smallpox scabs found in local record collections in their efforts to develop a new vaccine to thwart potential future outbreaks or biological terrorism (<https://uncommonwealth.virginiamemory.com/blog/2014/07/11/a-different-kind-of-local-record/>). Little did we know that in 2020 the world would be plagued with a new kind of epidemic, for which there were no hundred-year-old scabs to study.

During the early months of 2021, widespread availability of and access to one of the COVID-19 vaccines varied depending upon a number of factors, including the locality in which one lives. This was also the case more than 100 years ago in Virginia. Indeed, a small collection of New Kent County Smallpox Epidemic Records from 1895 to 1912 reveals today.

In January 1895, Dr. John D. Turner and Dr. James Gregory were responsible for personally vaccinating hundreds of individuals throughout New Kent County. According to their handwritten records, together the two doctors reported vaccinating 1,635 men, women, and children in the county. In addition, 396 people were not vaccinated because they either were not at home, or claimed underlying medical conditions preventing vaccination, or had already been vaccinated, and 36 people refused outright to be vaccinated. That means that of the 2,607 total number of people with whom they made contact or made efforts to contact, almost 80 percent received the smallpox vaccine, about 19 percent had reasons not to be vaccinated other than refusal, and about 1 percent refused. Not a bad local vaccination rate by today's standards.

In fact, Dr. Gregory was assigned one particular area: St. Peters District, which, according to U.S. Census records, had a population between 1,424 in 1890 and 1,212 in 1900. Depending on which census figure one uses, his 13-page list of names from 1895 indicated he had interacted with at least 90 percent of the population in his district, which means most, if not all, residents had the opportunity to receive a vaccination.

Dr. Turner's list, on the other hand, did not specify a particular district, but was divided into "whites" and "colored" (hereafter referred to as Black). This differentiation provides interesting statistical insights. Of the Black population with whom he made contact or made efforts to contact, 76 percent received vaccinations from him, as opposed to just over 50 percent of the white population. As with Dr. Gregory's list, it is not clear whether some people had been vaccinated previously, or whether they had underlying conditions that discouraged vaccination, but the records illustrate the seriousness of the

effort to vaccinate as many residents as possible.

In a January 24, 1899, postcard to New Kent County clerk John N. Harris, resident S. C. Waddell penned thoughts that might parallel those of some folks today regarding vaccination efforts. As the threat of smallpox still loomed, Waddell was concerned about local folks living in remote areas, without convenient access to vaccinations. "My dear Sir, There are three colored children on this place, who have not been vaccinated, & probably a good many others in the neighborhood, & we feel anxious to know whether the county has made, or is willing

either the County has made, or is willing to make arrangements for having this important matter attended to. We are such "Shut Ins" that we know little of what is going (on) around us, but see enough in the papers to make us uneasy about Small Pox & think that you might be able to exert influence to have the matter attended to . . . Dr. W. could vaccinate these children himself if his hands were not so tremulous."

Whether the vaccinations were administered is unclear, but an invoice to the county by Dr. H. U. Stephenson 14.5 months later in

My dear Sir. There are three colored children on this place, who have not been vaccinated, & probably a good many others in the neighborhood, & we feel anxious to know whether the County has made, or is willing to make arrangements for having this important matter attended to. We are sick of course that we know little of what is going on, and are enough in the papers to make us uneasy about smallpox. I think that you might be able to exert influence to have the matter attended to. I hope that you have all escaped grippe - we have so far, but there is a good deal of it about Anna Monroe's wife died, with that or pneumonia last Saturday.

In a January 24, 1855, postcard to New Kent County clerk John N. Harris, resident S. C. Waddell was concerned about local folks living in remote areas, without convenient access to vaccination, as the threat of smallpox still loomed. (Photo: LVA)

April 1900 listed 31 people vaccinated and one person treated for smallpox. Smallpox was not eradicated, however. Another hefty vaccination effort took place more than a decade later, in August 1912, according to invoices from two doctors. Dr. C. L. Bailey vaccinated 440 individuals, and submitted his list of names and his expenses to the county for reimbursement. Another doctor submitted an invoice for 450 people, although a list of names was not among the paperwork.

While the success of COVID-19 vaccination drives or the future of variant strains and/or booster vaccinations is uncertain in these unprecedented times, there is much to be learned from extant records of vaccination efforts such as these from more than a hundred years ago. Accurate electronic record-keeping and data archiving regarding COVID-19 vaccinations continue to be a serious matter, and many people who receive their vaccinations value their paper vaccination cards, even posting photos of them on social media. One can only imagine what today's vaccination records might mean for scientists, historians, and archivists a hundred years from now.

Tracy Harter

Senior Local Records Archivist

Reprinted from the Library of Virginia's blog

"The Uncommon Wealth," June 16, 2021.

Read Tracy's interesting article, "Manifest Danger: Smallpox Epidemics Hit 19th-Century Chesterfield," at <https://uncommonwealth.virginiamemory.com/blog/2020/04/22/19th-century-chesterfield-county-smallpox-epidemics/>

tion notices that they intended to seek employment in Virginia after their discharge. The separation notices include information on the date and place of birth, physical description, race, marital status, and civilian occupation of each individual. Also included are rank, military organization, date of induction or enlistment, place of entry into service, military occupation, battles and campaigns, decorations and citations, wounds received in action, service outside the continental United States, prior service, total length of service, and reason for separation. Naval records also list training schools attended and places of service (ships and naval stations).

In addition to the separation notices, many Army records also contain a separation qualification record documenting the soldier's military and civilian education and occupations. The notices may also include the soldier's social security number, but this information will be redacted during the digitization phase. Otherwise, the collection is open to the public by law, and the Library will provide equal access to all who seek to use it.

While the majority of the Library's WWII separation notices are for military personnel who were born and/or raised in Virginia prior to the war and returned to Virginia after discharge, the collection does include records for a number of military personnel who do not appear to have any direct connection to Virginia other than they indicated that they would seek employment in the state after discharge.

The collection includes records of men and women; high-ranking military members and rank & file soldiers; diverse races and religious affiliations; the educated and uneducated; farmers, accountants, and laborers; and individuals from urban centers, such as Richmond, as well as more rural locations such as Rockbridge or Isle of Wight Counties.

Louis Geffen served in the army from January 15, 1943, to May 2, 1946. He was a Judge Advocate, and his separation notice indicates that he served in the prosecution division of the War Crimes Branch in Manila and Tokyo. Geffen was from Atlanta; his wife, Anna Birshstein, was from Norfolk, Virginia. Their personal papers, housed at Emory University, cover several generations of their family and document, among other things, his service in WWII.

While Geffen rose to lieutenant colonel and served with General Douglas MacArthur, other service members, such as Edward F. Minnix, led more humble military careers. Minnix was born and raised in Smithfield, Virginia, served in the army from November 1942 to May 1945, and was an African American from rural Southside Virginia. His separation notice record indicates that he achieved a 5th-grade education level and reached the rank of private. Also included in his record is correspondence related to his search for postwar employment as an Electric Hoisting Engineer, a position he had held prior to the war. Seemingly offered a position as an Electric Monorail Crane Operator in a Portsmouth fertilizer plant at \$0.63 cents per hour, Minnix was seeking a disability pension by July 1945. His separation notice is a launching point to his postwar story, which likely continues in other military and local records.

The individual stories abound, but many individual accounts together will help shape a fuller understanding of the cultural and social impact of the war. In these records are the stories of those who struggled from the experience, such as Paul B. Burgess from Richmond, who entered service in 1940 and was discharged on D-Day, June 6, 1944. Burgess presumably suffered from "psychosis, severe, caused by participation in frequent and dangerous reconnaissance and combat missions

over enemy held territory. Twenty-six of his squadron members were killed during a raid which resulted in an acute anxiety state."

Women, too, are well documented in the records. For example, Nellie Shaffer, of Arlington, Virginia, returned from U.S. Navy service in November 1945, but declined assistance from the United States Employment Service by responding to their offer of assistance with "thank you for your services, but I have decided to make my life work being a full-time housewife." And Mary M. Wood, Albemarle County, who was divorced and worked as a hairdresser in Charlottesville, served as an army clerk typist for three years, separating from service in 1946.

Information related to women's return to work or home following the war, the post-war employment of African Americans and other non-whites, the emotional and medical fallout from war, and the impact of service on mobility and change can be culled from the records and analyzed alone or in conjunction with similar records from other state and national collections, providing opportunities for a fuller understanding of postwar Virginia and the United States, as well as the world.

For this project, public transcription of the WWII separation notices will be managed through From the Page. This online platform works with institutions from all over the globe. Its partners include some of the most recognizable names in the research, libraries, and archives communities. Harvard, Stanford, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the state archives of Alabama, North Carolina, and Maryland are just a few prominent institutions that have used this software to engage the public and enhance their collections. Not

only will the Library promote the transcription of the WWII separation notices to its networks, other institutions linked into From the Page can also share this transcription project, making the public engagement far-reaching and greater. The Library's use of the From the Page platform has been supported by donations from the Friends of the Virginia State Archives.

While a global conflict that arguably changed the course of the 20th century, WWII was also a deeply personal event. A June 2019 *New York Times* article entitled "Their Fathers Never Spoke of the War. Their Children Want to Know Why," highlighted the eagerness of family members of WWII veterans to learn more about their loved ones' experiences in the war. Many veterans avoided discussing their wartime service following their return to civilian life, and for those still living, memories are fading. According to the article: "We have people calling every day to try to find out about their fathers," said Tanja Spitzer, a researcher at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans. "They regret that they didn't do anything when their parents were alive. We get a lot of apologizing about it. For them, it is very emotional."

As such, family members have turned to "cryptic, yellowed military records" to help build better understanding of what their fathers and mothers experienced. The fortuitous existence of Virginia's separation notices can be an integral part of helping people reconstruct a major part of the story of the lives of 250,000 Virginia men and women who served.

The digitized WWII separation notices will enhance the Library's ability to serve genealogists and families of WWII veterans by making these notices accessible onsite or remotely. With the availability of these notices, the long-term goals of the Library will be to build relationships with surviving veterans and family members to expand the veteran's stories through the addition of photographs, diaries, letters, and oral histories.

*The WWII Separation Notice Team at the Library of Virginia
Access to the records will be limited during the digitization phase of the project. Interested
users are encouraged to contact Archives Reference for more information.*



Workers examine the destruction at the National Personnel Records Center in 1973. (Photo: National Archives)

Worth Noting (continued from page 4)

Letter, 20 March 1865, from **John P. Moore** (1841–1865), Company I, **4th Virginia Infantry**, to his cousin Cassie Paxton (b. ca. 1843) of Rockbridge County, Virginia, discussing life in the trenches at Petersburg, Virginia, including the heat. Accession 53394

Letter, August 1861, from **Richard Davis Murphy** (1835–1902), Company B, **1st Virginia Cavalry**, at Fairfax Courthouse Virginia, to his sister Ellie S. Davis of Winchester, Virginia, concerning the weather and camp and family news. He also writes about skirmishing between Confederate and Union forces in Loudoun County and near Alexandria. Accession 52767

Donations to the Library of Virginia (continued from page 3)

Guilford County, North Carolina, marriage abstracts
Vogt, John 2012

Halifax County, North Carolina, marriage abstracts
Vogt, John 2018

Harford County, Maryland deponents
Peden, Henry C., Jr. 2017

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22nd Annual Slatten Lecture, September 24, 2022 Featuring Presentations by Rebecca Whitman Koford

For two decades, The Friends of the Virginia State Archives have brought top genealogical speakers to share their expertise and provide insights into research methodology. Past speakers have included many recognized genealogical professionals. Lloyd Bockstruck, Elizabeth Shown Mills, Barbara Vines Little, John Philip Coletta, and Vic Dunn are just a few presenters at the annual Slatten Lecture.

The Friends continue this exceptional series this year with presentations by Rebecca Whitman Koford, a full-time professional genealogist, author, and lecturer. She will deliver four lectures drawing on her years of research experience. Rebecca's presentations offer valuable information for beginning, intermediate, and advanced

researchers. She will discuss the value of research logs, the rich resources in land records that help establish genealogical relationships, the fascinating and complex story of the settlement of the Virginia Military District after the American Revolution, and research techniques that help distinguish soldiers of the same name during the War of 1812, one from Virginia and one from Maryland.

Don't miss this opportunity to attend the annual Richard Slatten Lecture. Registration information will be forwarded to members in July. Mark your calendar for Saturday, September 24, 2022, at the Library of Virginia, 800 East Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

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