



MILITARY VETERAN'S PLAN

CONTRIBUTED BY: Justin G. Thomas from Washington

Help you know more about your Military Ancestors & Relatives (past and present) and their stories. To remember them and their service.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN: Be sure to visit our website and fill out the Pre-Experiment Survey!

**TAKE
SURVEY**

1 ASK A RELATIVE

Did any of your living relatives serve in the military? Do they know of any ancestors that served in the military? Ask them if they do. The sources shared below in this activity can help you get started. (This information will be needed for future activities.)

Sources: [Sample Interview Questions for Veteran's Project Kit](#)
[10 Questions A Veteran Would Be Happy to Answer \(Blog\)](#)

2 MILITARY VETERAN'S ID

How old was your relative or ancestor when they served? If you do not have any close relatives that have served, look through your family tree for those that were between the ages of 18 – 35 during the war in the country they lived.

Sources: [Ages of Servicemen in Wars](#)

3 MILITARY VETERAN'S LOCATION

Where was your military relative or ancestor living when the war started? Look on [google maps](#) or use a physical map to find the location.

4 MILITARY SIDE LOYALTY

What side did your military relative or ancestor fight for when the war began? Based on where they were living before the war era can determine what side that they were fighting for. Sometimes they fought for neither side and stayed neutral. (You can find out about this through your interview with your relative or while doing your research of your Ancestor's Military Records)

Example: When I was researching one of my American Civil War Ancestors Thomas VanBuskirk, he was residing in the state of Ohio before the Civil War started. I found out through my research on him from his military records that he joined the Union Side in the 49th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment.



MILITARY VETERAN'S PLAN

PAGE TWO

5

WAR ERA SUMMARY

What war era did your military relative or ancestor take part in? Perhaps ask your relative about that war era or read about it online or in a book.

Sources: [American Revolutionary War](#), [War of 1812](#), [Civil War](#), [World War I](#), [World War II](#)

6

VETERAN MILITARY RECORDS

Does your relative or ancestor have any documents that prove that they have served in the War conflict? (Perhaps they have photos? Journals? Military Identification Cards? A letter?) If you happen to have found an ancestor that served in your family tree, search for one or more military records. [FamilySearch](#), [Fold3](#), and [Ancestry](#) are good places to look for military records.

7

REGIMENT, UNIT, OR SHIP SERVICE

Each soldier, sailor, pilot joined a Unit, Regiment, served on a Ship, or in a Squadron. What Regiment/Unit/Squadron/Ship did your relative or ancestor serve? Perhaps your relative has a patch of their unit, a photo of the ship they served on, or a photo of the military plane they flew. If you are looking for some good places to read up about certain Regiments/Units/Ships or Squadrons, Wikipedia or Google are good places to start.

Example: I was researching one of my ancestors and discovered Francis L VanBuskirk was a Pilot in World War II. He flew a Consolidated B-24 Liberator in the 13th Air Force, 5th Bombardment Group, 23rd Bomber Squadron. From my Google and Wikipedia Searches I found out the base stations he was assigned to with the group. I also found much additional information. Francis served in the military from the 4th of January 1943 – 11th July 1945.

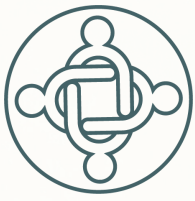
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VETERAN'S BATTLEFIELD PARTICIPATION

Every Regiment/Unit/Ship/Squadron has participated in one or more battles or skirmishes in the war that your relative or ancestors served. What battles did they fight in? Ask your military relative to tell about their experiences in one of the battles and even read up about it.

Sources: There are many sources online where you can find information about different battlefields – Wikipedia, Google Search, [battlefields.org](#), [fold3](#) just to name a few.

Example: While reading newspaper clippings provided by Francis L VanBuskirk's Grandson Ryan, I learned the 23rd Bomber Squadron participated in the Bombing of Rabaul. I researched using Google Search and Wikipedia to find additional information about the Bombing of Rabaul, a Japanese base in New Britain in the Pacific. The dates that took place were from the 2nd to the 11th of November 1943.



MILITARY VETERAN'S PLAN

PAGE THREE

9 FIND & VISIT A GRAVE

Does your relative or ancestor have a grave memorial? (Sites online to use: [Findagrave](#) or [BillionGraves](#)). It might have their grave headstone, photo of them, even a story to tell. Visit their gravesite if possible.

10 A VETERAN'S PHOTO

Military relatives and ancestors had photos either of them in uniform, on the field, or with their war buddies. Have your relatives share photos with you if they have them. Sometimes you can find photos from others shared online such as [FamilySearch](#), [Ancestry](#), [Fold3](#), [MyHeritage](#).

11 WAR ERA SONGS

Ancestors who were in the military from many past eras wrote or sang songs of the war. Sometimes they sang or played popular music from that time period. Ask your relative about songs they remembered singing or listened to. Perhaps play or sing it with the family.

Some example Sources of War Era Songs:

[American Civil War](#)

[World War 1 Song "It's A Long Way To Tipperary"](#)

[World War 2 Song "Comin' In On A Wing And A Prayer"](#)

12 AT THE HOMEFRONT

What's the definition of Homefront? Wikipedia states that, "The civilian population and activities of a nation whose armed forces are engaged in the war abroad." What was the Family of the relative doing back home during the war? Did they help produce ships and equipment? Plant vegetables on a farm for the war effort? Write letters to their loved ones or siblings who were abroad to find out.

13 VIRTUAL BATTLEFIELD & WAR MUSEUM TOURS

There are many virtual battlefield and war museum tours online that you can visit to get the real feel of what it was like during the time when your relative or ancestor served. Participate in a Virtual Tour of one of the battlefields, or if you can't find one visit a Virtual Museum of that war.

Virtual Battlefield & Museum Tour Idea Sources:

[Battlefields.org](#)

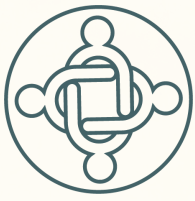
[Normandybattlefields.com](#)

[Visit These Military Museums and Monuments Virtually](#)

[Heinzhistorycenter.org](#)

[Theworldwar.org](#)

[Nationalww2museum.org](#)



MILITARY VETERAN'S PLAN

PAGE FOUR

14 VISIT A REENACTMENT

If there's a Reenactment Group in your area plan a visit where you can watch a real-life battle unfold. Perhaps visit a tent area of the reenactment to learn about camp life. If you aren't able to visit in person there are online videos you can view.

Sources:

[Life of a Civil War Soldier](#)

[Reenactment Societies & Groups](#)

[Revolutionary War Reenacting Tour \(Mt.Vernon\)](#)

15 FOOD RECIPES

What did your Military Ancestor or Relative eat? Effects of war also affected families back home, such as food rationing coupons during World War II in the United States. Find a recipe, then try it out. Yum! Can't wait!

Sources:

[Authentic Civil War Recipes](#)

[War front recipes](#)

[100 War Time Recipes](#)

16 WAR JOURNALS & LETTERS

Many soldiers wrote letters back home to their families while others wrote journals of their war experiences. Have your military relatives read or tell their experiences or read one of your ancestor's journals and letters if they have any. You can even find some of their letters and journals online. Places to look are on [FamilySearch](#), [Ancestry](#), [Fold3](#), or [MyHeritage](#).

17 WRITE THEIR STORY

Now that you have interviewed your relative or found and gathered all the Ancestors' documents and information it's time to write up their story. Perhaps put a notebook together of all your research.

Sources:

[Tell Your Story](#)

18 SHARE THEIR STORY

With research gathered and their story written, share their military story and experiences, and research on social media, and with your family. Perhaps your other family members are wanting to know if they have ancestors that served as well. Post their story on [FamilySearch](#), [Ancestry](#), [Fold3](#), or [MyHeritage](#).



MILITARY VETERAN'S PLAN

PAGE FIVE

19 MILITARY ANCESTOR OF HONOR

Create a simple honor box or frame to hang up on the wall of your Military Ancestor (This activity may take more than one day to complete) Can be as simple as a photo of them with their name, rank and time they served with their Unit/Ship/Squadron they served.

20 REMEMBRANCE DAY

Plan a day to remember those who you have learned about who served or is still serving. A good time to do this event is on Memorial Day (May 31st) and Veteran's Day (November 11th). Perhaps if you have their story written by now read their story on this day to your family to honor and remember them. If your Military Relative is still alive give them a notebook of all of the research you've done as a gift. Let us remember them.

21 WRITE A THANK YOU LETTER OR WRITE TO A VETERAN

We should thank all our Veterans for serving to preserve our freedoms. Write a letter of thanks to your relative for their service. Perhaps if your relative is still abroad serving write a letter to them. They will thank you for it and may share some additional information about their service because you have shown an interest in what they do.

WHEN YOU'RE DONE: Be sure to visit our
website and fill out the Post-Experiment Survey!

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plan author

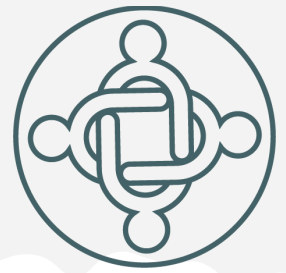
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on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#),
[Twitter](#), or [TikTok](#) using the
hashtag #21DayExperiment

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DAY 1

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Ask a Relative

DAY 12

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At The Homefront

DAY 2

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Military Veteran's ID

DAY 13

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Virtual Battlefield & War Museum Tours

DAY 3

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Military Veteran's Location

DAY 14

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Visit a Reenactment

DAY 4

☐

Military Side Loyalty

DAY 15

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Food Recipes

DAY 5

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War Era Summary

DAY 16

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War Journals & Letters

DAY 6

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Veteran Military Records

DAY 17

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Write Their Story

DAY 7

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Regiment, Unit, or Ship Service

DAY 18

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Share Their Story

DAY 8

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Veteran's Battlefield Participation

DAY 19

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Military Ancestor of Honor

DAY 9

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Find & Visit a Grave

DAY 20

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Remembrance Day

DAY 10

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A Veteran's Photo

DAY 21

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Write a Thank You Letter or Write To a Veteran

DAY 11

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War Era Songs