

Net Notes

WAR DEPARTMENT PAPERS

<http://wardepartmentpapers.org>

FOR MANY YEARS, it was thought that a fire in 1800 had destroyed the papers of the War Department. After a multi-year research effort, including visits to more than 200 repositories and the consulting of more than 3,000 collections in the US, Canada, England, France and Scotland, this website makes available 55,000 documents (in the form of digitized images and searchable metadata) of the early War Department.

These documents encompass Indian affairs, veteran affairs, naval affairs (until 1798), as well as militia and army matters.

You can use basic or advanced search options. You can also browse the collection by documents, which are presented in chronological order, or by people, which are presented in alphabetical order.



When you click on the title of the document, you are taken to a new page where more details are given about the document, including its source. If there is an image available, there is an icon to indicate this; clicking on it will bring up the image, and there is also the option to view it full-size.

I was curious to know what data might be included about pensions. There were 62 documents found with the word "pension" in them; many related to a particular individual's pension.

It's a fascinating glimpse of the pre-1800 War Department in a readily accessible and user-

friendly format. With the easy access to abstracted information and digitized images, just looking around the website introduced me to a lot of history that I was unaware of. — **DIANE L. RICHARD**

DIGITAL LIBRARY ON AMERICAN SLAVERY

<http://library.uncg.edu/slavery/>

THIS PROJECT IS a cooperative venture between the Race and Slavery Petitions Project and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. It offers a searchable database of detailed personal information about slaves, slaveholders and free people of color. The information was gathered and analyzed over an 18 year period, drawn from petitions to southern legislatures and county courts filed between 1775 and 1867 in the 15 slaveholding states in the United States and the District of Columbia.

The data can be accessed in three ways: a keyword search, a search on a specific individual's name or you can browse the holdings.

I have been doing slave and free black research in Wilson and Bertie Counties. I decided to search the petitions for some of the names and families. I selected North Carolina from the drop-down menu of states and entered the various surnames of interest. I found an entry for a John Carter in 1858, Wilson County.

When you find a petition of interest, you will see that it has a PAR (Petition Analysis Record) number. When you click on this number, more details are revealed, including location, dates, an abstract of the petition, whether it was granted or not, citation infor-

mation and, of most interest to genealogists, "People Associated with Petition". For the entry found, the three slaves who were the focus of the petition were named Mary, Rebecca and Wright.

Having previously worked with the resources of The Race and Slavery Petitions Project, I knew that the Turner family of Wake County had a listing. A search on Turner for North Carolina gave me petition 11279007.

To learn more about a petition, it's important to know that The Race and Slavery Petitions Project created a microfilm edition of all petitions and documents in the collection, which was published by University Publications of America and later by LexisNexis in Bethesda, Maryland. Microfilm copies of the original petitions and related documents are published under the title *Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1775-1867*.

Additionally, the original legislative petitions can be found at respective state archives. The original county court petitions are available at state archives and county courthouses, depending on which state.

— **DIANE L. RICHARD**

BROOKLYN REVEALED

www.brooklynrevealed.com

ARE YOU DOING research in Brooklyn? Are you simply interested in history? Do you love old photographs? Then I suggest you check out this website from the New-York Historical Society (N-YHS), and learn the history of the original six towns of Brooklyn and the neighborhoods that were subsequently built within and around those towns. They "began this website by selecting photographs, including postcards, from the N-YHS library collections... then researched the name origins of all streets depicted in the photographs and added that information to the site". The site does not attempt to list every street and its history, just those that they have an image of.

A great place to start is the interactive map on the left side of the page. When you place your mouse over the map, a brief history of that town will be revealed (drag the blue dot on the right scroll bar to make sure that you read the entire historical summary). Then, when you click on a section of the map, you will see groups of photographs taken in that area of Brooklyn (this page also has the same history

revealed on the main page).

Double click on any individual photograph to enlarge it. A note will appear that tells you how the streets depicted in the photograph got their names.

Once you have enlarged a photo, you can use the right and left arrows at the bottom of each photograph to move through the entire set.

Already know a street whose history interests you? Back on the main page, there is a button labeled "List of Streets" (arranged alphabetically). Additionally, readers of the website can post comments and someone from N-YHS will respond to them, either requesting substantiation of the information (so the data can be added to the "official" portion of the website) or indicating that they have made a suggested change.

If you have done extensive research in Brooklyn, or lived there and are familiar with the streets and their history, don't miss this website. — **DIANE L. RICHARD**

US IMMIGRATION MAP

www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/03/10/us/20090310-immigration-explorer.html?hp

SOMETIMES I LIKE to have fun while doing my research. If that fun includes maps, all the better. The *New York Times* website has created an interactive map that is simple and fun. It is called the Immigration Explorer and gives you the option, within the limitations of available census data, to explore foreign-born populations, by county, from 1880 to 2000, a decade at a time.

You can look at a map of the US for any census year and see an overview of all the foreign-born populations identified at the time, or you can "zoom in" and look at a particular state and its counties.

When you place your mouse over a county, you will be told the total population for that census, as well as the number of those who were foreign born. The colors used tell you where the immigrants were from, even if it's only one person.

If you are interested in the demographics of non-European immigrants, e.g., those from China or Africa, you are often limited to the years 1970-2000. However, you can track those from Germany, England, Russia, etc., throughout the range of time periods. See the dramatic early growth, the effects of the immigration wave

in the early 1900s, the impact of WWI and WWII, and more.

If you want to gain a new appreciation for the dramatic change in immigration that has taken place in the last 40 years, look at the time period 1970-2000.

Though this provides a simplistic view of the percentage of foreign-born people in a county, it is very interesting to look at different places, at different times, focusing on different immigrant populations. You really gain an appreciation for how much can change in just a decade, or over a few decades. For example, in 1970, immigrants to North Carolina were mostly from Europe and Russia. By 1980, many of the counties

saw a rise in immigration from Asia and the Middle East. During the 1990s, it was mostly Asian/Middle East and Latin American, and by 2000, all except a handful of counties show immigration predominantly from Latin America. Similar patterns are found throughout the continental states, with the exceptions of northern border counties, where migration from Canada still dominates. — **DIANE L. RICHARD**

