

## DRAFT RECORDS

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### *Civil War*

The Enrollment Act, enacted by the 37th Congress to enlarge the ranks of the Union Army, subjected all males between the ages of 20 and 45 to the draft. Men who were mentally or physically impaired, the only son of a widow, the son of infirm parents, or a widower with dependent children were exempt. The act divided the United States into enrollment districts along the same lines of congressional districts.

Records of the Provost Marshal General's Bureau, 1863–65, RG 110, are the principal records that relate to the 1863 draft. Enrollees had their names placed on consolidated lists. The consolidated lists are the most useful of the Washington, DC, office of the Provost Marshal General's Bureau that relate to individual men. Most are bound volumes arranged by state, thereunder by enrollment or congressional district, and thereunder by class. The three classes established by the draft acts were Class I: men between the ages of 20 and 35 subject to military duty and unmarried men above 35 and under 45 subject to military duty; Class II: married men above 35 and under 45; and Class III: veterans or those who were currently in the service. Entries in each class are arranged roughly in alphabetical order by initial letter of surname. Each entry shows name; place of residence; age on July 1, 1863; occupation; marital status; state, territory, or country of birth; and if Class III, the military organization. The lists do not include information about the men's families. Many consolidated lists are not complete, a fact some researchers find frustrating because a draft enrollment is one of the few places an individual may be located if he does not have a military service record.

# REGISTRATION CARD

SERIAL NUMBER **115** ORDER NUMBER **A. 3156**  
 1 **Edward Kennedy Ellington**  
(First name) (Middle name) (Last name)  
 2 PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS:  
**1955 - 3rd St NW** **Washington, D. C.**  
(No.) (Street or R. F. D. No.) (City or town) (State)

Age in Years **3** Date of Birth **Apr. 29th 1899**  
(Year) (Month) (Day) (Year)

**RACE**

White	Negro	Oriental	Indian
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
5	6	7	8

U. S. CITIZEN			ALIEN	
Native Born	Naturalized	Citizen by Father's Naturalization Before Registration's Majority	Declarant	Non-declarant
10	11	12	13	14
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

15 If not a citizen of the U. S., of what nation are you a citizen or subject?

PRESENT OCCUPATION	EMPLOYER'S NAME
16 <b>Messenger</b>	17 <b>Federal Govt.</b>

18 NAME OF EMPLOYER OR BUSINESS:  
**Chief Staff - War Dept. Wash. DC**  
(No.) (Street or R. F. D. No.) (City or town) (State)

NEAREST RELATIVE  
 Name: **Edna C. Ellington**  
 Address: **1955 - 3rd St NW Wash. DC**  
(No.) (Street or R. F. D. No.) (City or town) (State)

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE  
 P. M. G. O. FORM NO. 1 (Rev) 91-1081 *E. K. Ellington* (OVER)

World War I draft registration card for Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington. (RG 163)

Descriptive rolls or lists are the principal records of the enrollment districts that relate to individual men. They are arranged by state, thereunder by number of enrollment or congressional district. The rolls are chiefly in bound volumes, and their arrangement varies from district to district. Some are not indexed; some are indexed by initial letter of surname; and some are by place of residence.

An entry often shows, in addition to information in the corresponding consolidated list, the physical description, place of birth, and whether accepted or rejected for military service. Entries in many volumes, however, are not complete.

It is difficult to find a particular individual in either the consolidated lists or the descriptive rolls unless the congressional district in which he lived during the Civil War is known. If the researcher knows the county in which the individual lived in 1863, the number of the congressional district can be ascertained from the *Congressional Directory for the Second Session of the Thirty-Eighth Congress of the United States of America* (Washington: U.S. House of Representatives, 1865).

Before using the consolidated lists and descriptive rolls, researchers should know the congressional district in which the individual lived. If the person lived in a major urban area, a city directory of the period is an effective way of discovering the person's place of residence. A map of the city, usually used in conjunction with census files, will help determine the congressional district as well as the subdistrict encountered in urban demography. In addition, it helps to know when the person was enrolled. Almost all the enrollment districts generated registers of enrolled men, lists of substitutes, and records relating to exemptions.

Researchers should take certain steps before attempting to find answers about any individual in the records of the provost marshal. Consulting the service records and pension files should be the first step. If the individual is located in these files, there is no need to check the draft records, for there won't be any additional information. If, on the other hand, the individual has neither a service record nor a pension file, and the researcher knows his age and place of residence, then a look at the records of the provost marshal

may pay off. Researchers should keep in mind, though, that consolidated lists, corrections to enrollment, and other obscure records in RG 110 are not complete and are quite fragile.

Under terms of the Conscription Act, the President on May 8, 1863, issued a proclamation announcing that aliens who had declared their intention to become citizens and were in the United States 65 days after that date would not be allowed to avoid the draft on the plea of alien status. The State Department became involved in the release from military service of aliens who were drafted from 1862 onward.

General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, contains case files relating to aliens drafted into the U.S. Army and released, 1862–64. Included are draft notices, depositions, and correspondence relating to releases. These files are arranged alphabetically by surname of alien. Each file contains the alien's name, district from which drafted, country of citizenship, and occasionally, date of release. Some files provide age, length of time in the United States, and physical description of the alien.

### *World War I*

The National Archives and Records Administration–Southeast Region in Atlanta maintains World War I draft records, which are part of RG 163, Records of the Selective Service System (World War I). For records relating to the World War I draft, consult M1509, *World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards*. This series is arranged alphabetically by state or territory; thereunder by county or city. The Selective Service System established local boards for each county or city with populations of 30,000 or more. Within the county, city, or local board, the cards are arranged alphabetically by surname of registrant. On May 17, 1917, Congress passed the Selective Service Act authorizing the President to draft men into military service. The Selective Service System registered men between the ages of 21 and 31 for the draft. During World War I there were three registrations: the first was on June 5, 1917; the second on June 5, 1918 (with a supplemental registration on August 24, 1918); and the third on September 12, 1918 (which included men between the ages of 18 and 45).

The draft registration cards contain information supplied by each registrant, including name, address, date of birth, age, race, citizenship status, birthplace, occupation and employer, dependant relative, marital status, father's birthplace, and name and address of nearest relative.

For help in establishing what geographic areas to search in the above series, especially if the person you are researching lived in a heavily populated area, you may wish to consult M1860 *Boundary Maps of Selected Cities and Counties of World War I Selective Draft Registration Boards, 1917–1918*. The maps are arranged geographically.

### *World War II*

On April 27, 1942, the Selective Service conducted the fourth of six draft registrations. Also called the “Old Man’s Registration” or “Old Man’s Draft,” this registration collected information on the industrial capacity and skills of men born between April 27, 1877, and February 16, 1897 (ages 45 to 64). This draft registration was not intended to be used for military service but to provide a complete inventory of manpower resources in the United States that could be used for national service during World War II.

The draft cards are arranged by state and then alphabetically by the registrant’s surname. The fourth registration draft cards contain the following information on the registrant: name, serial number, residence, mailing address, telephone number, date and place of birth, name and address of employer, height, weight, race, hair color, eye color, distinguishing marks, signature, and the name and address of a person who would know the registrant’s address.

The original records of the fourth registration draft cards are in the National Archives regional branches. The cards for the District of Columbia are in the National Archives at College Park, Maryland. Many regional facilities are filming the cards in their custody. After the cards are microfilmed the region provides a copy for viewing at the National Archives Building. Draft cards for states that are not on microfilm are in the National Archives regional facility that keeps Federal records for the state where the person registered. There are no fourth registration draft cards for the following

states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

**Important Note:** Draft cards of the other registrations are still in the custody of the Selective Service System. The records are protected under the Federal Privacy Act. For information on how to obtain copies of other World War II draft cards contact the Selective Service System at: Selective Service System, National Headquarters, Records Section-PCA, 1515 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22209-2425. The registration card shows a registrant's name, date of birth, home address, Selective Service Registration Number and may include additional information like a phone number and/or marital status. The registration cards are protected under the Privacy Act. To obtain a copy, a requester must be the registrant or show written permission from the registrant. If the registrant is deceased, provide a copy of the registrant's death certificate. Also provide the registrant's full name, date of birth, and address (including county, if known) at the time of registration. Send your signed, written request to the address shown above, or fax a signed, written request to 703-605-4071. More information is available on their web site at [www.sss.gov/records2.htm](http://www.sss.gov/records2.htm).

### *Korea and Vietnam*

For information on how to obtain copies of registration cards for Korea and Vietnam contact the Selective Service System at: Selective Service System, National Headquarters, Records Section-PCA, Arlington, VA 22209-2425. The **registration card** shows a registrant's name, date of birth, home address, Selective Service registration number and may include additional information like a phone number or marital status. The registration cards are protected under the Privacy Act. To obtain a copy, a requester must be the registrant or show written permission from the registrant. If the registrant is deceased, provide a copy of the registrant's death certificate. Also provide the registrant's full name, date of birth, and address (including county, if known) at the time of registration. Send your signed, written request to the address shown above, or fax a signed, written request to 703-605-4071. You may be interested in a classification card which shows a

registrant's name, local board number, his classifications, and the dates he received the classifications. The classification record is public information and is available to anyone who asks for it. Requesters must provide the registrant's full name, date of birth, and address at the time of registration (usually when the registrant was 18 years old). Send your written request to the address provided above, or by fax to the number above. More information is available on their web site at [www.sss.gov/records2.htm](http://www.sss.gov/records2.htm).

*Additional Sources of Information*

Meier, Michael T. "Civil War Draft Records: Exemptions and Enrollments," *Prologue*, Winter 1994, Vol. 26, No. 4.

Yockelson, Mitchell. "They Answered the Call: Military Service in the United States Army during World War I, 1917–1919," *Prologue*, Fall 1998, Vo. 30, No. 3.