

Records of the United States Marine Corps from the NARA Catalog

(Record Group 127)
1775-1981

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127.1 Administrative History

Established: Under joint administrative control of the U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy, by an act of July 11, 1798 (1 Stat. 594).

Transfers: To exclusive jurisdiction of the U.S. Navy by an act of June 30, 1834 (4 Stat. 712); with the Department of the Navy to the newly established National Military Establishment (NME) by the National Security Act of 1947 (61 Stat. 495), July 26, 1947; with the Department of the Navy to the Department of Defense (formerly NME) by National Security Act Amendments of 1949 (63 Stat. 579), August 10, 1949.

Functions: Provides amphibious forces for service with the fleet and conducts land operations essential to a naval campaign. Provides detachments to serve on naval ships, to protect property of naval activities, and to maintain security at U.S. diplomatic missions abroad.

Finding Aids: Maizie Johnson, comp., *Inventory of the Records of the United States Marine Corps*, Inv. 2 (1970); updated version in National Archives microfiche edition of preliminary inventories.

Security-Classified Records: This record group may include material that is security-classified.

Related Records:

Record copies of publications of the U.S. Marine Corps in RG 287, Publications of the U.S. Government.

General Records of the Department of the Navy, 1798-1947, RG 80.

General Records of the Department of the Navy, 1947- , RG 428.

127.2 Records of The Office of the Commandant 1798-1978

127.2.1 General records

Textual Records: Letters sent, 1798-1801, 1804-1911, with indexes, 1848-1904. Letters received, 1799-1903 (418 ft.). General correspondence, 1904-38 (648 ft.), with indexes and synopsis cards, 1904-12. General correspondence, 1939-50. Orders issued and received, 1798-1886.

127.2.2 Records of the Division of Information and its predecessor, the Division of Public Relations

Textual Records: General correspondence, 1942-50. Individual news release submission files of former public information personnel, 1943-47. News releases, 1941-47. Biweekly production and distribution reports, 1942-46. *Combat Correspondent's Bulletin*, 1944-45. "Public Information Digest," 1945-46.

127.2.3 Records of other staff divisions

Textual Records: General correspondence of the Intelligence Section, Division of Operations and Training, 1913-39. Records accumulated by the Historical Division, including letters received principally by the Commandant of the Marine Corps, 1798- 1915, with a card register; records of overseas units, 1889-1914; records relating to U.S. Marine Corps activities in Nicaragua, 1927-33; scrapbooks of clippings, 1880-1901, 1908-9; reference collection of external military command documents, 1948-78; reference collection of military and State Department documents, 1948-78; and publications and supporting records relating to preparation of *Marines in the Revolution: A History of the Continental Marines in the American Revolution, 1775-83; 1972-79*. General correspondence and war plans of the Division of Plans and Policies, 1915-47.

127.2.4 Other records

Textual Records: General correspondence of the officer in charge of recruiting, 1921-39. Reports relating to engagements of Marine Corps personnel in the Philippines and China, 1899-1901. Captured Japanese records relating to operations at Bougainville, Guadalcanal, and Iwo Jima, 1942-45.

127.3 Records of The Adjutant and Inspector's Department 1775-1971

127.3.1 General records

Textual Records: Letters sent, 1819-26, 1832-1911. Letters received, 1835-49, 1851-99, with registers, 1895-1905. Formerly security-classified correspondence, 1907-36. Orders, 1876-84. Circular letters, 1903-10.

127.3.2 Personnel records

Textual Records: Records relating to officers, consisting of rosters, 1821-50; registers, 1819-48; military histories, 1869- 73, 1899-1911; and monthly reports, 1821-1911, with gaps. Records relating to enlisted men, consisting of service records, 1798- 1906 (490 ft.); size rolls, 1798-1901; descriptive lists, 1879- 1906; and an alphabetical card list, 1798-1941 (367 ft.). Registers of courts-martial, 1897-1906, 1919-33; desertions, 1809-1907, 1910-41; discharges, 1829-1927; and deaths, 1838-1942. Casualty card lists, 1776-1945. Strength and casualty reports, 1775-1971. Muster rolls, 1798-1945 (1,285 vols.) and 1798-1953 (4,172 rolls of microfilm; see note under Related Records below). General returns, 1821-1914. Certificate books containing service information, 1837-1911, with gaps.

Microfilm Publication: T1118.

Related Records: National Archives maintains security copy of microfilm of muster rolls, 1893-1953 (4,074 rolls). Reference copy available only at Marine Corps Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC. Muster rolls for 1945-53 exist only on microfilm.

127.4 Records of The Paymaster's Department 1808-1939

Textual Records: Letters sent, 1808-14. Press copies of letters sent, 1886, 1898-1902. Letters received, 1809-14. General correspondence, 1909-39.

127.5 Records of The Quartermaster's Department 1813-1942

Textual Records: Letters sent, 1813-14, 1823-53, 1857-60, 1860- 63. Press copies of letters sent, 1860-1903, with registers, 1870-73, 1878-99. Letters received, 1827-99, with gaps; and registers, 1870-99. Letters sent and received, 1900-12, chiefly 1900. General correspondence, 1918-42, with indexes, 1918-26, and filing guides, 1927-42.

127.6 Records of The Marine Corps Finance Center 1968-73

Textual Records: Administrative directives and related manuals, 1968-73 **(in Kansas City)**.

127.7 Records of Marine Barracks and Other Shore Establishments in the United States 1802-1938

Finding Aids: Fred G. Halley, "Preliminary Checklist of the Records of the United States Marine Corps, 1798-1944," PC 50 (Sept. 1946).

127.7.1 Records of the Marine Barracks, Washington, DC

Textual Records: Letters sent, 1837-48, 1874-1912. Reports, 1802- 68, 1908-18. Sergeant of the Guard daily reports, 1907-27. Records of courts-martial, 1892-1904. Rifle range qualification data, 1915-17. Conduct record book, 1903-4. Muster books, 1906- 11. Log book of government property entering or leaving Washington Barracks, 1909. Record book of discharged and deserted personnel, 1909-11. Order book, 1900-4. Clothing and supply requisition records, 1837-48.

127.7.2 Records of other marine barracks

Note: Additional records described below are candidates for transfer to regional archives. Please consult the National Archives to determine current locations.

Textual Records: Records of the Marine Barracks, Boston (Charlestown), MA **(in Boston)**, consisting of letters sent, 1828- 1912, with gaps; letters received, 1896-1913; orders, 1867-1905; muster rolls, 1825-1911, with gaps; reports, 1815-1913, 1937-38; and records of summary courts-martial, 1870-75. Reports of a detachment stationed at the Marine Barracks, Key West, FL, 1898, and at the Marine Barracks, Norfolk, VA, 1899 **(in Atlanta)**. Reports of the Marine Barracks, New London, CT, 1910-11 **(in Boston)**. Records of the Marine Barracks, New York, NY, consisting of letters sent, 1848-51; and size rolls and clothing returns, 1822-25. Records of the Marine Barracks, Norfolk, VA **(in Philadelphia)**, consisting of letters sent by the commanding officer, 1817-1909, with gaps; and reports, 1865-1915. Letters received by the Marine Barracks, Pensacola, FL, 1882-84 **(in Atlanta)**. Records of the Marine Barracks, Philadelphia, PA **(in Philadelphia)**, consisting of letters sent, 1847-1911; orders, 1825-59,

1865-66; register of letters received, 1904-11; muster rolls, 1839-59; requisitions, 1904-5; and reports, 1865-66, 1876-77, 1898-1902. Records of the Marine Barracks, Portsmouth, NH (**in Boston**), consisting of reports, 1824-26, 1897-98; descriptive lists of marines joining the barracks, 1897-1908; and muster roll of officers and enlisted man, 1908.

127.7.3 Records of other shore establishments

Textual Records: Records of the Depot of Supplies, Philadelphia, PA, consisting of reports, 1859-1911; and accounting records of purchases made for Haiti, Nicaragua, and Santo Domingo, 1921-34. Reports of the Marine Officer's School, Port Royal, SC, 1910-11 (**in Atlanta**).

127.8 Records of Expeditionary Forces and Detachments 1835-1949

127.8.1 Records of U.S. Marines in Haiti

Textual Records: General correspondence, 1923, 1925; and intelligence reports, 1921-34, of the Gendarmerie d'Haiti and Garde d'Haiti. Special correspondence, 1919-20; general correspondence, 1921-23; reports relating to operations in Haiti and Santo Domingo, 1915-21; and selected subject files, 1929-34, of the Chief of the Gendarmerie. Correspondence, 1927-34; and a biographical file, 1926-34, of the Office of the Chief of Police. General correspondence, 1915-25, 1930-34; selected subject correspondence, 1926-29; condition estimates and inspection reports, 1920-23; patrol reports, 1924; and daily reports of guard mounts, 1932-34, of the 1st Marine Brigade. Copies of the newspaper *Le Moniteur*, Port-au-Prince, 1910-23.

127.8.2 Records of U.S. Marines in Nicaragua

Textual Records: Correspondence of the Jefe Director, 1927-32; Intelligence Department (GN-2), 1928-32; and Operations Department (GN-3), 1928-32, of the Guardia Nacional. Guardia Nacional correspondence relating to civilian complaints, District of Matagalpa, 1928, and to bandit prisoners, 1929-31. Intelligence reports and other Guardia Nacional records, District of Leon, 1928. General correspondence, intelligence reports, and patrol reports, 2d Marine Brigade, 1927-32; and correspondence of the brigade Intelligence Office (B-2), 1927-29, and Operations Office (B-3), 1928-29. Intelligence reports, 1927-29, and other records, 1927-32, of the 5th Marine Regiment; and records of its 1st and 3d Battalions, 1927-30. Reports from Marine units in Nicaragua, 1927-32.

127.8.3 Records of other field organizations and detachments

Note: Additional records described below are candidates for transfer to regional archives. Please consult the National Archives to determine current locations.

Textual Records: Records of detachments aboard coastal vessels in Florida, 1835-38, and aboard U.S.S. *Preble*, 1840-43. Records of the marine guard on U.S.S. *Guerriere*, 1867-69. Letters sent and received by the marine guard at the Paris Exposition, 1878-79. Records of

U.S. Marines in Cuba, 1898-99, 1908-9, 1911. Letters sent and received, Marine Provisional Battalion, U.S.S. *Dixie*, 1904. Morning reports of the Panama Battalion, 1909-10. Records of Marine Corps companies, Guam, 1927-31. General correspondence of the marine detachment at the American legation in Peiping, 1930-34. Administrative file, Marine Corps Air Station, St. Thomas, VI, 1942-47. Administrative file, Marine Corps Air Station, Ewa, HI, 1942-49 (**in San Francisco**).

127.9 Records of Marine Units 1914-49

Textual Records: Records of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, including general correspondence, 1942-46; and "geographical" operation file ("Area File"), 1940-46. Geographical and subject files of the 2d Brigade, Fleet Marine Force, 1933-42. General correspondence, 1st-6th Marine Divisions, 1941-46. Organization records of ground combat units, 1941-46. Correspondence and reports of Headquarters, 2d Marine Division, 1942-49. Correspondence of the 1st, 3d, and 10th Marine Defense Battalions, 1943-44. Issuances, 1914, and correspondence, 1917- 19, of the 5th Marine Regiment. Administrative records of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, 1942-47. Aircraft action reports of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, 1944-47. Records of the 2d Marine Aircraft Wing, consisting of correspondence and reports, 1941-45; and administrative file, issuances, and miscellaneous personnel reports, 1946. Selected general correspondence files, 1933-34, and logbooks, 1931-34, of Marine Aircraft Squadrons VS-14M and VS-15M.

127.10 Cartographic Records (General) 1883-1944

Maps: World War I published topographic maps of France and Germany, annotated to show operations of the 4th Marine Infantry Brigade, 1918-19 (213 items). Published maps, some with annotations, relating to Marine Corps operations during World War II on Bougainville, Mono, Saipan, New Ireland, New Georgia, Rendova, and Kolobangara islands, 1942-44 (99 items). Airfields in the Western Pacific Ocean, 1941 (1 item). Marine Corps School maps of the Battle of Gettysburg, 1932 (1 item). Strategic map of the Pacific Ocean, 1920 (1 item). U.S. island possessions, 1885-1926 (9 items).

Maps and Plans (627 items): Marine Corps installations in the United States, 1910-39 (51 items). Manuscript and published maps and plans, relating to the Azores, 1918 (1 item); Caribbean, 1883, 1913-40, and n.d. (7 items); Central America, 1904-35 (70 items); China, 1921-43 (75 items); Cuba, 1906-33 (35 items); Dominican Republic, 1916-33 (48 items); Haiti, 1915-34 (115 items); Ireland, n.d. (1 item); Korea, 1913-14 (1 item); Mexico, 1914-20 (6 items); Nicaragua, 1910-33 (215 items); and Venezuela, ca. 1936 (2 items).

Charts (3 items): Marine Corps organization, 1926-28.

Finding Aids: Charlotte M. Ashby, comp., *Preliminary Inventory of the Cartographic Records of the United States Marine Corps*, PI 73 (1954).

127.11 Motion Pictures (General)

1939-60

Unedited documentary black and white and color film footage from the U.S. Marine Corps Motion Picture and Television Archives, Quantico, VA, of significant activities of the Marine Corps, including combat footage from World War II and Korea, aviation, amphibious landings, and important military leaders, 1940-60 (2,913 reels); with supporting documentation (5 rolls of microfilm and 15,450 microfiche). World War II training films and films of combat in the South Pacific, 1939-45 (21 reels).

127.12 Sound Recordings (General)

1942-43

Marine Corps recruiting broadcasts, 1942-43 (5 items). Audio tapes of radio program "Marine Diary," 1978-80 (93 items).

127.13 Still Pictures (General)

1870-1981

Photographs (197,904 images):History and activities of the Marine Corps, 1905-41 (G, 16,650 images; EX, 30 images), including photographs of artwork depicting events dating back to 1775. Commandants of the Marine Corps, 1941 (PC, 15 images), including photographs of portraits dating back to 1776. Marine officers, 1905-45 (PG, 80 images), including photographs of portraits dating back to 1804. Presidential administrations from Theodore Roosevelt to Lyndon B. Johnson, 1905-68 (PR, 1,000 images), including photographs of portraits of earlier presidents dating from 1789. Marines and government officials, 1870-1941; landing fields in Haiti and Santo Domingo, 1923, and the 3d Marine Brigade in China, 1927-29 (M, 150 images). Marine activities in Nicaragua, 1912-31 (NP, 97 images). Marine aviators and aircraft, 1931-37 (MA, 25 images). Combat and noncombat activities, principally Pacific theaters of operations, World War II, and postwar occupation of Japan, 1939-58, but primarily 1942- 45 (GW, 52,164 images). Combat and noncombat activities in Korea, 1950-58, but mainly 1950-53 (GK, 14,007 images). Training, combat preparedness activities, support services, and ceremonies, primarily in the United States, 1939-58 (GC, 40,492 images). Training and other activities, including the Alfred A. Cunningham Collection (aviation), the David D. Duncan Collection (Pacific theater, World War II), and the Hans Knoff Collection (Parris Island, SC; Camp Lejeune, NC; Quantico, VA; and Guantanamo, Cuba), 1939-58 (GS, 15,453 images). Photographs of Navajo Indian "Code-talkers" in the U.S. Marine Corps, 1943-48 (20 images). Photographs of African Americans and women in the U.S. Marine Corps, 1943-69 (MM, 18 images). Black and white photographs of Marine Corps activities in Vietnam, 1962-75 (GVB, 10,100 images). Color photographs of Marine Corps activities in Vietnam, 1962-75 (GVC, 4,700 images). Ready-reference file, duplicating photographs in other series, selected by the Marine Corps as representative of its activities and used and maintained by the Still Media Records Center, Department of Defense, 1940-81 (GR, 3,000 images; GG, 40,000 images).

Photographic Negatives and Color Transparencies (318,038 images): U.S. Marine Corps central photographic file ("General File"), consisting of images documenting the history of the Marine Corps, including those used to produce photographic prints described above, 1871-1958 (N, 263,200 images).

Finding Aids: Photographic negative logbooks for U.S. Marine Corps photographs, 1943-81. Indexes to photographs of Marine Corps and noted civilian personalities, 1927-81.

Bibliographic note: Web version based on Guide to Federal Records in the National Archives of the United States. Compiled by Robert B. Matchette et al. Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1995.
3 volumes, 2428 pages.

[Ordering information](#)

This Web version is updated from time to time to include records processed since 1995.