

# Tracing Pasts: More new records going digital

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When I started searching the Internet for something to share with all of you in this column, the most exciting thing I found was a lot of listings for new records being collected or digitized. This is a great time to be a genealogist! We will have to wait patiently for some, but others are available now.

If you had ancestors in St. Louis and Missouri after the Civil War, a new set of documents has been opened to the public. These 11,200 court documents from 1866 to 1868, which have been stored unused in drawers since they were created, have been cleaned and prepared for public use. They should be available at the Missouri Digital Heritage Initiative Web site by 2011. According to the article at [www.stltoday.com](http://www.stltoday.com), "The cases are available for review at the state archives' St. Louis office in the Globe-Democrat building at 710 North Tucker Boulevard, Room 213. The office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, call 314-588-1746 or visit [www.sos.mo.gov](http://www.sos.mo.gov)."

Dick Eastman has reported at [www.eogn.com](http://www.eogn.com) that the National Archives and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services are working together to make Alien Files available: "The new agreement authorizes the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services/ Department of Homeland Security to send A-files to the National Archives when 100 years have passed since the birthdate of the subject of a file. The National Archives expects to receive the first transfer of A-files later this year, and will store the files at National Archives facilities in San Francisco and Kansas City.

"Researchers will be able to access the files at these two sites, or request copies of files. An index will be available to support research use." These files concern aliens living in the U.S. before 1944 and who came here after that. The information in these files is terrific! You can read more about these files at [www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2009-06-04-immigration-files\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2009-06-04-immigration-files_N.htm).

Note that the index mentioned is attached to a fee service. Hopefully we will get free access at some point.

Another piece of good news also shared by Dick Eastman concerns more Civil War records. The staff at the Atlanta branch of the National Archives is working with Kentucky and Tennessee Union records that were formerly housed at the Archives in DC. According to archivist Maureen Hill, "the documents illustrate the nation's first wartime draft, which began in 1863." This includes "names of soldiers who deserted the army; the names of African Americans — mostly slaves at the time — who served as substitutes for other people who were eligible for the draft; acts of violence committed in protest of the draft, and the condition of barracks for African-American soldiers in the Union Army".

For more information on these records, see [www.ledger-enquirer.com/251/story/733209.html](http://www.ledger-enquirer.com/251/story/733209.html).

[Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com) has announced that records will be available from the London Historical Records, 1500s-1900s on [Ancestry.co.uk](http://Ancestry.co.uk). These rich records which include parish records, workhouse records, school records and many others will be a fabulous resource for those working on London families. For more information, see the Ancestry Blog at <http://blogs.ancestry.com/circle/?p=3305#more-3305>. It looks like a World Membership should include this database. I have only the U.S. membership, so I can't verify this myself.

It's always great news when we get access to new research materials. Thanks are due to all the staff at all these institutions and services that do the painstaking work that helps us all.