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Archival Resources on the Web—Emily Symonds Stenberg, Assistant Editor, Washington University at St. Louis

Contact Eric Willey at ericwilley@gmail.com if you would like to guest author a column or have a good idea to share.

Goodbye and Welcome

This is Emily Stenberg's last issue with us as assistant editor of Archival Resources on the Web. Many thanks to her for providing us with great digital tours of archival collections documenting our Annual Meeting sites and informative compilations of digital collections on subjects ranging from comics to medical and Prohibition resources, railroads, and crowdsourcing. Please welcome Eric Willey of the Filson Historical Society as the new editor of this column. If you are interested in writing an article for Archival Resources on the Web, contact him at ericwilley@gmail.com.

An Update of Resources on the Civil War Sesquicentennial

By Ed Busch, Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections

This year is the fourth of five years of the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War (1861–1865), the national experience that shaped the remainder of the nineteenth century with ramifications that continued into the twentieth century and up to today in civil rights and race relations. Many types of events and activities have commemorated what could arguably be the most important period of our history. Among these activities has been the creation of Civil War–related websites highlighting archival materials. Civil War online resources were included in the July 2011 issue of the *MAC Newsletter*; this article presents some additional sites that may be of interest.

Civil War on the Western Border, www.civilwaronthewesternborder.org, is the grant-funded product of a collaborative effort among libraries, museums, and historical societies across the greater Kansas City region. The website is intended for Civil War buffs, scholars, students, and local residents to explore, research, and discuss the Missouri-Kansas Border War, 1854–1865. This searchable website includes over 6,000 pages of digitized primary sources including letters, photographs, and maps from 25 Missouri and Kansas archives. The website is beautifully designed with photographs, an integrated background, and clearly indicated resource choices. The homepage includes the topical resource links and contains a quick pick of A–Z topics, a search box, an overview of the site, a featured document blog, and a preview of contextual thematic essays, as well as links to maps, a time line, a relationship viewer, and a collection browser. The Border War Map integrates location descriptions, and it links to related content and interactive thematic layers. The site's interactive time line shows selectable events related to politics, violence, and the nation as a whole, and includes informational encyclopedic entries, using a simple dragging method for moving through the years. The encyclopedic entries are provided across the

website and link to related primary resource documents. Photographs of people, buildings, maps, and more can also be found. The website's responsive design makes it especially useful for researchers needing quick facts on their mobile devices. Overall, Civil War on the Western Border is a great example for others highlighting valuable resources to follow.

Kentucky Educational Television (KET) has developed a resource called **Kentucky and the Civil War** (www.ket.org/civilwar) for students and teachers studying the history of Kentucky during the Civil War. The site features primary sources, such as letters and diaries, and other useful resources including time lines, maps, speeches, declarations, personalities, and links to other helpful websites. The introductory page provides an overview of the effects of the Civil War on Kentucky, a balanced review of the causes leading to the war, and useful slang and vocabulary lists. The primary sources section includes selected resources on Kentucky citizens and soldiers written during the war about its impact on divided families, soldiers' lives, slavery, and women and children back at the family home. The website also includes multimedia resources on topics such as clothing, medical care, songs, and slavery. The materials and resources are specifically intended for school-age children, so this website is not for those doing detailed research on the conflict, but it provides a good overview for those interested in learning more about this period and specifically its effect on the state of Kentucky.

The University of Iowa Libraries initiated a crowdsourcing project to complete the transcriptions for its Civil War website, **Civil War Diaries and Letters** (digital.lib.uiowa.edu/cwd), which was launched in May 2011 with over 3,000 digitized diaries and letters. To accompany the images, the libraries enlisted the help of the public

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to transcribe the materials. As of February 2014, over 39,000 pages have been transcribed. The website provides a browsing function for diaries, correspondence, photographs, and years. Further refinement of materials can be accomplished by selecting a specific decade, location, personal name, format, or collection. Materials are displayed in a top-down style with the image followed by its associated metadata and the transcription when available. As part of the commemoration of the Civil War Sesquicentennial, the University of Iowa Libraries also initiated a blog with postings from war letters written by Civil War soldier Joseph F. Culver and his wife, Mary, at blog.lib.uiowa.edu/culver.

Civil War Collections at Michigan State University (MSU), civilwar.archives.msu.edu, was developed through a collaboration of the MSU Archives and the MATRIX Center for Digital Humanities. The work began with the transcription of hundreds of pages of letters and diaries and then moved on to scanning the source materials, uploading the images, and entering metadata. The website includes hundreds of pages of correspondence, diaries, musters, reminiscences, and photographs. A unique design feature of this website is the side-by-side display of pages of original materials with their transcriptions. Highlights of the online collections are love letters written by Mark Flowers to Emma Miller and the detailed descriptions of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers by William Eaele. In Eaele's papers, we learn that many of the troops affectionately called George Custer the "Little Poodle." New materials are added to the website monthly.

The Civil War in Art: Teaching and Learning through Chicago Collections (civilwarinart.org) is a website funded and developed by the Chicago-based Terra Foundation for American Art to connect the issues, events, and people of the Civil War period through works of art. This website was developed as a collaborative effort by the Terra Foundation with six Chicago cultural organizations. Highlighted exhibits on the website are *Causes of the War*, *Lincoln*, *The Northern Homefront*, *The Military Experience*, *Emancipation and the Meaning of Freedom*, and *Remembering the War*.

One effort that has taken off during the sesquicentennial is the preservation of Civil War battlefields. **The Civil War Trust** (www.civilwar.org) is the largest nonprofit organization focused on this land preservation. To date, the trust has saved 38,608 acres in 20 states. The organization also promotes educational programs and heritage

tourism. The education resources section of its website includes transcripts and copies of primary resources for Official Records; Addresses and Speeches; Federal Acts, Bills and Orders; Military Correspondence and Documents; Personal Correspondence and Narratives; Prints and Photos; Maps; and Document Collections, as well as links to other online Civil War resources. Some of the popular resources available on the site are Lincoln's and Davis's inaugural addresses, the Union and Confederate constitutions, the Gettysburg Address, and General Lee's farewell speech.

The genealogy website FamilySearch provides many military records that include the Civil War years. The site offers an overview of each state's effort during the war and links to the participating units. For example, **Illinois in the Civil War** (familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Illinois_in_the_Civil_War) includes information on land and naval units, the militia, prisoners of war, and veterans' organizations, as well as regimental histories and service and pension records. Genealogists are very familiar with FamilySearch, but it is also useful for Civil War researchers.

In 1961, the nation marked the Centennial of the Civil War, which coincided with the civil rights movement. Today, the nation is in a different place in race relations, and the sesquicentennial has been met with much less controversy and more reflection on the causes and enduring results of the conflict. Take the time to explore these unique resources during the final two years of the sesquicentennial commemoration. As President Obama proclaimed, "When the terrible and costly struggle was over, a new meaning was conferred on our country's name—the United States of America. We might be tested, but whatever our fate might be, it would be as one Nation."