

Footnote.com

The Bottom Line

Important historic documents from the U.S. National Archives are now making their way online due to an agreement with Footnote.com. Digitized copies of documents such as Revolutionary War pension records and Civil War service records can be viewed and even annotated through what is possibly the best image viewer I've seen on the Web. You can also create free personal story pages to track your research or share your documents and photos. Search results are also free, although you'll have to subscribe to view, print and save most of the actual document images. In my opinion, Footnote.com is a bargain for the money.

Pros

- One of the best image viewers I've seen for accessing images online
- Offers access to millions of historic documents previously unavailable online
- The ability to annotate and/or add comments to any individual document page
- 7-day free trial available

Cons

- Requires the latest version of Flash. In some cases, the site won't even load without it.
- No soundex search. Some advanced search features are available, but not obvious.
- No FAQ or easy answers to support questions such as the Flash issue.
- Many document series are still "in progress"

Description

- Over 5 million images of historical American documents and photos from the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.
- Records include: Revolutionary & Civil War pension & service records, state naturalization records and case files of the FBI.
- Annotate, comment, print and save digital document images.
- Story pages allow you to create a simple Web page with point and click editing.

- Upload and post your own historical documents for free.
- Under the nonexclusive agreement, Footnote's images will be available on the National Archives' Web site after five years.

Guide Review - Footnote.com

Footnote.com allows you to search and view over 5 million digitized documents and photos from American history. Members can view, save and print the documents they find. A nifty feature allows you to highlight a name, place or date and add an annotation. Comments can also be added to post corrections or add additional information for anyone else who views the same image. The image viewer works as quickly and seamlessly as any I've seen, and the jpeg images are of very high quality. Since many of the titles are "in progress," I recommend that you use the "Browse by Title" feature to view the full description of the each document series, as it includes a nice completion status feature. Titles and documents are being added quickly and regularly, however.

If you have a problem with the site loading slowly or hanging your browser, be sure you have downloaded the latest version of [Flash player](#) for your browser. This appears to fix many such problems.

Simple search is just that - simple. You enter search terms and then choose whether to search across all documents, or within a specific document set, such as PA Western Naturalizations. There is presently no soundex search, but you can narrow the search by document type, such as across all naturalization records, or within a particular title (first browse to the document subset you wish to search, and then enter your search terms). [Advanced search hints](#) can be accessed by clicking on the ? next to search.

Footnote.com has the framework in place to be one of the most flexible and user-friendly sites on the Web for American genealogists. Once they add more records (and there are many in the works), upgrade the search feature, and do some tweaking, it has the potential to be a 5 star site. Despite being a newcomer to the world of digitized historic documents, Footnote has definitely risen the bar.

http://genealogy.about.com/od/digital_documents/gr/footnote.htm

Find out more about Footnote and the National Archives on the next page.

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Footnote and the National Archives

National Archives Documents Available on Footnote.com

The National Archives and Footnote.com are working as partners to bring unprecedented access to selections of the vast holdings of the National Archives.

- Learn more about how this partnership helps you [access records of American history](#).

Through our partnership, a selection of historical records is available for viewing and downloading (via [subscription](#)) on the www.footnote.com web site.

Visit our Research Rooms and Presidential libraries to access the documents *free of charge*.

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