



# Using NAIL (National Archives Information Locator) and ARC (Archival Research Catalog)

# What are NAIL and ARC?

NAIL is the National Archives Information Locator which is an on-line search of the databases provided by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) of the federal government. It was started in 1998 and contains a variety of things – maps, charts, data files, artifacts, moving images, photographs, textual files, etc. that are housed in NARA's various repositories around the country. NAIL is being replaced by ARC (Archival Research Catalog) which is the new version of NAIL as an online catalog of NARA's nationwide holdings. ARC is a work in progress currently containing only about 50% of NARA's holdings with new material being added every two weeks. This is a source that may or may not be of much worth, but, as the amount of data increases, so may its value to family history researchers. Currently, it seems that for Native American research, it may be a very good search.

# Accessing NAIL and ARC

#### **NAIL**

Go to http://www.nara.gov/cgi-bin/starfinder/0?path=images.txt&id=demo&pass=&OK=OK

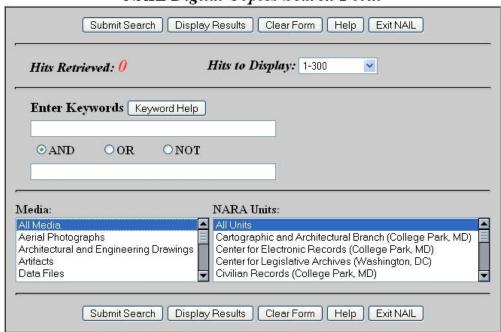
### **ARC**

Go to http://arcweb.archives.gov/arc/basic search.jsp

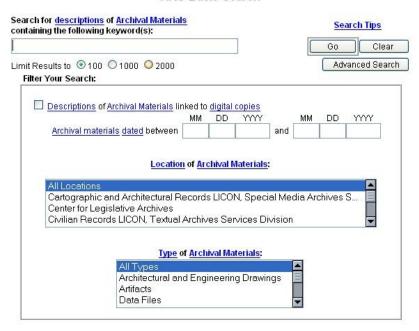
# Searching with NAIL and ARC

- Enter your search term(s) in the field provided.
- Set drop-down menus, if you are only after a specific type of medium or from a specific source. I recommend leaving them set to all.

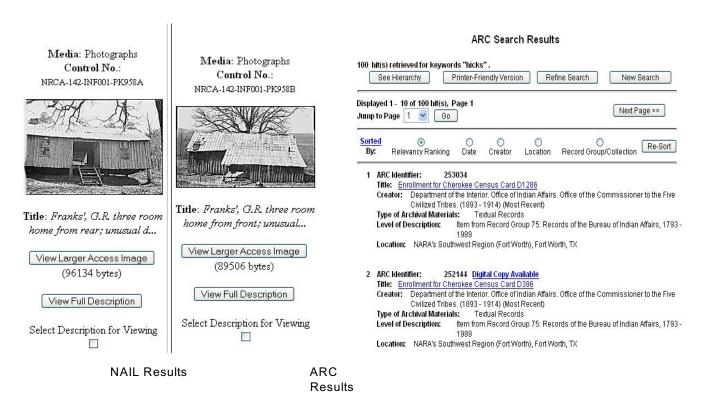
### NAIL Digital Copies Search Form



#### ARC Basic Search



- Press <enter> or click the Submit Search button on NAIL or the Go button on ARC.
- When the results appear, scroll through the results and, if you want to see the details for that particular item, click
  the View Full Description in NAIL or on the blue link in ARC.



NOTE: There are all sorts of things to look at from the NARA home page -- http://www.archives.gov/index.html

There is a link for **Genealogy/Getting Started** and another for **Genealogists/Family Historians**, so start with these, but clicking around will show you all sorts of other things which may be available online in the future as well as what you can use or how to do things right now.