

## MILITARY SERVICE & ACHIEVEMENTS

# 904th Quartermaster Company

*African American Service at Camp Blanding During World War II*

**African American Historical Society of Clay County, Florida (AAHSCCFL)**

*A downloadable history guide with active links for further exploration*

## A Documented Camp Blanding Connection

The 904th Quartermaster Company is part of the documented history of African American military service at Camp Blanding during World War II. The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) records that Alphonso Church, an African American soldier from Florida, traveled to Camp Blanding in Clay County on August 20, 1941. Following his induction into the U.S. Army, Church was assigned as a private to the 904th Quartermaster at Camp Blanding. ABMC notes that the exact length of his assignment there is unclear.

### DOCUMENTED CAMP BLANDING CONNECTION

**Private Alphonso Church • 904th Quartermaster • Camp Blanding • August 20, 1941**

## The Quartermaster Mission

Quartermaster Corps soldiers performed essential supply and transportation work. ABMC explains that Quartermaster personnel handled and transported supplies needed by military organizations, including food, clothing, ammunition, and fuel. Their work sustained the enormous movement of troops and materiel required by the wartime Army.

## The 904th and Its Detachments

ABMC explains that the 904th Quartermaster Company was divided into smaller detachments to support larger military organizations in different locations. This is important when tracing the unit's history: records may identify a detachment of the 904th at a particular installation without establishing that the entire company moved there.

## Documented Service Beyond Camp Blanding

A period Army Air Forces station directory dated November 1, 1942 provides additional evidence of the unit's dispersed wartime service. The directory identifies a detachment of the 904th Quartermaster Company at Hondo, Texas, in connection with the Army Air Forces Navigator School. This source is evidence of a 904th detachment at Hondo; it should not be interpreted as proof that the entire company moved from Camp Blanding to Hondo.

## African American Soldiers in a Segregated Army

The men of the 904th served while the U.S. military remained segregated. African American soldiers faced restricted assignments, unequal treatment, and limited opportunities for advancement. Yet Quartermaster and other support organizations were indispensable to the war effort, ensuring that military units received the supplies necessary to train, move, and fight.

## The Story of Alphonso Church

Alphonso Church provides a named, documented connection between African American military service, Camp Blanding, and the 904th Quartermaster. After his Camp Blanding assignment, ABMC records that he was transferred to Mitchel Field, New York. He was hospitalized following a non-combat vehicle accident in July 1944 and remained in the Army until his honorable discharge on January 31, 1946, as a Technician Fifth Class.

Church's story is especially valuable because an official federal historical source connects a specific African American serviceman, a specific Quartermaster organization, and Camp Blanding. His experience helps place the 904th within the larger history of Black military service during World War II.

## What We Can Confirm

- Alphonso Church traveled to Camp Blanding in Clay County, Florida, on August 20, 1941.
- Following induction, Church was assigned as a private to the 904th Quartermaster at Camp Blanding.
- ABMC states that the 904th Quartermaster Company was divided into smaller detachments.
- Quartermaster personnel handled and transported essential military supplies.
- A November 1, 1942 Army Air Forces station directory identifies a detachment of the 904th Quartermaster Company at the Navigator School in Hondo, Texas.
- The Hondo record documents a detachment; it does not by itself establish the movement of the entire 904th Quartermaster Company.

## What Requires Additional Research

The sources reviewed for this guide do not yet provide a complete company-level chronology for the 904th Quartermaster Company. Additional archival research is needed to identify the full roster of personnel who served at Camp Blanding, the exact duration of the company's presence there, the locations and designations of all detachments, and the complete wartime movement history of the organization. AAHSCCFL therefore distinguishes documented facts from areas where the historical record remains incomplete.

## Quick Historical Timeline

| DATE               | DOCUMENTED MILESTONE                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| August 20, 1941    | Alphonso Church traveled to Camp Blanding in Clay County, Florida.                                                                      |
| 1941               | Following induction, Church was assigned as a private to the 904th Quartermaster at Camp Blanding.                                      |
| World War II       | ABMC records that the 904th Quartermaster Company was divided into smaller detachments to support larger military organizations.        |
| November 1, 1942   | A period Army Air Forces station directory identifies a 904th Quartermaster Company detachment at the Navigator School in Hondo, Texas. |
| Later World War II | ABMC records Church's transfer from Camp Blanding to Mitchel Field, New York.                                                           |
| July 1944          | Church was hospitalized following a non-combat vehicle accident.                                                                        |
| January 31, 1946   | Church was honorably discharged as a Technician Fifth Class.                                                                            |

## Explore the History

Continue exploring the 904th Quartermaster Company, African American military service at Camp Blanding, and the broader experience of Black service members during World War II through these resources.

### [American Battle Monuments Commission — Sergeant Alphonso Church](#)

The principal source for the 904th's documented connection to Camp Blanding. It records Church's arrival at Camp Blanding, his assignment to the 904th Quartermaster Battalion, his Quartermaster duties, the company's detachment structure, and his later service.

### [Army Air Forces Station List — November 1, 1942](#)

A period station directory identifying a detachment of the 904th Quartermaster Company at the Army Air Forces Navigator School in Hondo, Texas. This provides additional evidence of the unit's dispersed wartime support assignments.

### [U.S. Army Center of Military History — African Americans in the U.S. Army](#)

An official Army research collection providing broader context on African American military service, segregated units, World War II service, individual soldiers, photographs, and military integration.

### [U.S. Army Center of Military History — Integration of the Armed Forces, 1940–1965](#)

An official Army history by Morris J. MacGregor Jr. examining racial policies, segregation, and the changes that ultimately led to integration of the U.S. armed forces.

## Additional Archival Research

Because the 904th was divided into detachments, future research should search not only the company name but also detachment designations, installation names, and individual soldiers. Useful records may include morning reports, unit rosters, personnel records, Quartermaster Corps files, Army Air Forces station directories, photographs, correspondence, and individual service records.

### RESEARCH NOTE

The American Battle Monuments Commission currently provides the clearest documented connection between the 904th Quartermaster Company and Camp Blanding. The November 1, 1942 Army Air Forces Station List adds evidence of a 904th detachment at Hondo, Texas. Additional records may identify other members of the unit and provide a more complete company history.

## Historical Context

Period military records may contain racial terminology that is outdated and offensive today. When such language appears in archival titles or original documents, it should be understood in its historical context rather than adopted as modern terminology.

## Principal Sources

[American Battle Monuments Commission — Sergeant Alphonso Church](#)

[Army Air Forces Station List — November 1, 1942](#)

[U.S. Army Center of Military History — African Americans in the U.S. Army](#)

[U.S. Army Center of Military History — Integration of the Armed Forces, 1940–1965](#)

*Preserving the stories of service, sacrifice, achievement, and legacy.*

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