Discovering Ancestral Military Veterans

I. Things to know before beginning your search
   a. Determine time and place
   b. Note the rank of your ancestor
      i. Note rank at beginning and end of service if possible
      ii. Officer/Enlisted

II. Places to look for identifying information
   a. Family stories
   b. Newspaper clippings
   c. Correspondence
   d. Scrapbooks
   e. Journals
   f. Diaries
   g. Service medals
   h. Memorabilia
   i. Photographs in uniform
   j. Grave markers

III. Research Strategies
   a. Create a Historical Time Line
      i. Compile a list of ancestor’s known dates and places of residence from birth to adulthood
      ii. Compare your ancestor’s time line with a time line of significant military events and conflicts (Was your ancestor eligible for the Draft, Civil War, World War I, etc.?)
   b. Consult General Research Guides on Genealogy and Family History
   c. Review Published Histories of Military Conflicts and Regimental Histories
   d. Research Family Heirlooms and Photographs
   e. Interview Friends & Family Members
      i. Several helpful resources on Oral History Projects are available in the H&G Dept. of the St. Louis County Library

IV. Information From Military Records
   a. Dates of birth and death
   b. Residence
   c. Names and addresses of family members
   d. Military rank
   e. Military affiliation/branch

V. Types of Records
   a. Draft records
   b. Service records
   c. Pension records
d. Bounty Land records  
e. Claim records  
f. Military histories  

VI. Databases  
a. Ancestry  
b. Fold3  
c. American Civil War Research Database [Alexander Street]  
d. American Civil War Letters and Diaries [Alexander Street]  
e. Findmypast  

VII. FamilySearch  
a. Missouri Military Records  
   i. Missouri, Reports of Separation Notices, 1941-1946  

VIII. National Archives  
a. Military Records at the National Archives  
   i. Compiled Service Records  
   ii. Pension Applications  
   iii. Bounty Land  
b. How to Search the Records  
   i. Revolutionary War-1918-National Archives Building in Washington, DC  
   ii. WWI-present: National Military Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis, Missouri  
   iii. Online Veterans and Military Documents  
c. Obtaining Copies of Military Service Records  

IX. Military Records in the History & Genealogy Department of the St. Louis County Library  
a. Finding Aids & Guides military records  
   i. Civil War Slave Compensation Claims in Compiled Military Service Records of US Colored Troops  
   ii. Descriptive Recruitment Lists of Volunteers for the United States Colored Troops for the State of Missouri, 1863-1865  
   iii. Glossary of terms for Records of the Field Offices of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands  
   iv. Guide to “Organization Index to Pension Files of Veterans Who Served Between 1861 and 1900” (T289)  
   vi. Index to Jewish Service Men From St. Louis  
   vii. Star-Times newspaper title index to special article series  
   viii. US Army Enlistees From St. Louis, 1855  
b. Collection Guide  
   i. Print collection  
   ii. Microfilm collection  
   iii. Library Electronic Databases
X. United States Military Museums, Archives, and Special Collections
   a. US Army
      i. US Army Center of Military History (http://www.history.army.mil/)
   b. US Navy
      i. Naval History and Heritage Command(https://www.history.navy.mil/)
   c. US Marine Corps
      i. Marine Corps-History Division (https://www.usmcu.edu/historydivision)
   d. US Air Force
   e. US Coast Guard
      i. Coast Guard-History Office (http://www.uscg.mil/history/)

XI. International Military Records
   a. Fold3
   b. Ancestry
   c. Findmypast
   d. SLCL collection guide/bibliography