

A SERVICE OF ODD PITTSBURGH

The Intake

To begin a commissioned military biography — the questionnaire

HONOR A VETERAN • A SERVICE OF JOHN SCHALCOSKY

This questionnaire takes about **fifteen minutes** to complete by hand. The more you can tell at the outset, the better the finished monograph will be — but no field is wasted if left blank. What I do not know, I will find.

After you submit, I will review carefully and respond within **seven days** with a project scope, expected timeline, and a fee estimate. There is no obligation at intake; submitting this form begins a conversation, not a contract.

I. The Patron

Who is commissioning this work, and how shall I reach you?

YOUR FULL NAME *

EMAIL ADDRESS *

PHONE (OPT.)

CITY

STATE

YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE VETERAN *

e.g., grandson, widow, great-great-granddaughter, fellow regimental member, no biological relation

II. The Veteran

The essential facts. Estimates are fine — write "unknown" where genuinely unknown.

FULL NAME OF THE VETERAN *

Include middle name(s) and any known nicknames

BIRTH DATE (APPROX. FINE)

PLACE OF BIRTH

DEATH DATE (IF APPLICABLE)

PLACE OF BURIAL (IF KNOWN)

CONFLICT / ERA OF SERVICE *

e.g., Revolutionary War, Civil War (Union or Confederate), Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Gulf War, Post-9/11. If multiple conflicts, list all.

BRANCH OF SERVICE

RANK AT DISCHARGE (IF KNOWN)

UNIT / REGIMENT / SHIP / SQUADRON (IF KNOWN)

Even partial information — "an infantry unit in Patton's Third Army" — gives me a starting point.

ENLISTMENT DATE (APPROX.)

DISCHARGE DATE (APPROX.)

SERVICE NUMBER (IF ON DISCHARGE PAPERS)

III. The Family Archive

What does the family already hold? Even a single photograph or a story passed down can change a monograph entirely. **Check all that apply.**

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Discharge papers (DD-214, etc.) | ☐ Photographs in uniform |
| ☐ Letters home / from the front | ☐ Diary or journal |
| ☐ Medals, ribbons, or insignia | ☐ Unit patches or uniform items |
| ☐ Newspaper clippings | ☐ Commission papers / orders |
| ☐ Pension records | ☐ Oral history / recorded stories |
| ☐ Written memoir or account | ☐ Other documents |
| ☐ Nothing — only the name | ☐ Other: |

TELL ME ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE

Brief description — quantity, condition, where items are stored, and whether you can share scans once a project begins.



IV. The Story As You Know It

Tell me what the family knows. Family memory is uneven — exact dates blur, battles get confused, a unit becomes "his outfit." Write what you remember; I will sort accuracy in research.

KNOWN BATTLES, CAMPAIGNS, OR ASSIGNMENTS

e.g., "He was at the Battle of the Bulge" — "He flew B-17s out of England" — "Family says he was wounded in the Argonne."

STORIES THE FAMILY TELLS

The stories he told — or wouldn't tell. The friend he kept in touch with. The wound he carried. The moment that defined his war. Anything passed down.

WHAT CAME AFTER — CIVILIAN LIFE

Did he return to family? A profession? Was he wounded, disabled, or changed by the war? VFW, reunions, parades? A complete monograph traces the life, not just the uniform.

V. The Commission Itself

What you most want from this monograph, and on what timeline.

WHAT DO YOU MOST WANT THIS WORK TO ACCOMPLISH? *

A gift for a parent before they pass. A memorial for a veteran already gone. A record for grandchildren who never knew him. A submission for a hereditary society. Recovery of a story that has been lost. There is no wrong answer — but the answer shapes everything.

IS THERE A DATE BY WHICH YOU NEED THIS COMPLETED?

Honest timelines: World War II and later projects typically run 3–4 months. Pre-WWI projects can run 4–6 months because of archive access. Tell me your hope and I will tell you whether it is realistic.

HOW DID YOU FIND THIS WORK?

ANYTHING ELSE I SHOULD KNOW

Family sensitivities, contested histories, gaps in the record, things to handle with care, or anything else that would help me approach this work properly.

TO SUBMIT THIS INTAKE

Return the completed form

By **EMAIL**: Scan or photograph the completed pages and send to the address below. Phone photos are perfectly acceptable.

By **PHONE**: If you would rather walk through the questions in conversation, call and we can complete the intake together.

By submitting, you are beginning a conversation — not a contract. I will read your intake personally and respond within seven days with a scope, a timeline, and an honest estimate.

ODDPITTSBURGH@GMAIL.COM • (412) 638-0995

Thank you for entrusting this work to me. — **John Schalcosky**