Finding Civil War Primary Sources

Finding Primary Sources

Primary Source – a definition

- Was created during the time period being studied
- Creator has first hand knowledge of the events being described
- Can be a document, photograph, painting, picture, recording...

Secondary Source – a definition

- Comments on, builds upon or cites a primary source
- Hindsight
Finding Primary Sources

• To find primary documents, combine your topic with keywords such as:
  o sources
  o diaries
  o personal narratives
  o memoirs
  o correspondence
  o speeches
  o treaties
  o sermons
  o songs
  o cartoons
  o papers
  o photography
  o letters

• If your topic is a person, then do an AUTHOR search.
• Remember to use the keywords that would have been used during that time period.
• Use the **Date Range** filter to find articles written during the war.
• Indexes articles from nine major U.S. newspapers, most back to the 1800’s.

• Remember to use the keywords that would have been used during that time period.

• Use the Date Range filter to find newspaper articles written during the war.

• You can limit your search to specific sections of the newspaper.
An index to Black-owned newspapers
The **Advanced Search** in Google Books allows you to restrict your search to FULL VIEW (the entire book is available online).

The full contents of many books published during the war are available.
Websites – Documenting the American South

Documenting the American South

Thanks for attending!

Rhonda Courtney
Public Services Librarian
St. Lawrence University
ODY 114
315-229-5479
rcourtney@stlawu.edu