



INTRODUCTION

Primary sources like letters, diary entries, and newspaper articles can often provide useful concrete information about their creators and the events, people, or ideas they discuss. We can also read between the lines, however, to get a broader sense of what the world was like at the time and place in which the source was created. A flyer with instructions for a practice blackout, for example, can tell us a lot about the blackout itself—when and where it took place, who was in charge, etc. By putting ourselves into the shoes of a housewife, a policeman, a factory owner, or a child as we read the source, we can make many informed inferences about what it was like for different kinds of people to experience that blackout. This activity helps students read primary sources from multiple perspectives, and thereby maximizes the information they can extrapolate from a single source.

GRADE LEVEL

7-12

TIME REQUIREMENT

1-2 class periods

MATERIALS

- + Copies of the **Student Worksheet**
- + Copies of the **Primary Source Documents** for each group

OBJECTIVES

Students will analyze primary sources discussing various civilian defense activities on the United States Home Front, noting the central ideas and information contained in the sources. They will then read the sources from the perspective of a particular type of community member (e.g. factory worker, housewife, business owner, etc.) and make informed inferences about how that person might have been affected by the activities described in the sources.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

ONLINE RESOURCES

ww2classroom.org

- ▶ The Home Front Overview Video
- ▶ America Responds Video
- ▶ Robert Gurr Oral History

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HISTORY

HISTORICAL CONTENT ERA 8, STANDARD 3B

The student understands World War II and how the Allies prevailed.

HISTORICAL CONTENT ERA 8, STANDARD 3C

The student understands the effects of World War II at home.

HISTORICAL THINKING STANDARD 2

The student comprehends a variety of historical sources, therefore the student is able to:

- + Read historical narratives imaginatively, taking into account what the narrative reveals of the humanity of the individuals and groups involved—their probable values, outlook, motives, hopes, fears, strengths, and weaknesses.
- + Appreciate historical perspectives and demonstrate the ability to describe the past in its own terms, through the eyes and experiences of those who were there.

PROCEDURES

1. Start out by reviewing the role of everyday citizens in civilian defense efforts across the United States during World War II. Use information from the overview essay “**Uniting Communities for War**” and the **America Responds Video** as necessary.

2. Review the difference between primary and secondary sources.

Primary sources are textual or visual materials created during the historical moment being studied, such as letters, diary entries, photographs, posters, and newspaper articles.

Secondary sources are materials created well after the events they discuss by someone who did not experience them firsthand. Books, journal articles, encyclopedia entries, and documentaries are good examples.

3. Ask students what kinds of primary sources they might consult to learn more about how everyday Americans contributed to victory by participating in civilian defense activities in their communities. To get students to move beyond the easy answers (e.g. newspapers or magazines), ask them about what kinds of sources might have been created to achieve certain goals, like attracting new air raid wardens, or informing families about new ration stamp procedures.
4. Explain that students will now have the opportunity to examine primary sources from the WWII era in order to better understand what it was like to be an American civilian on the Home Front during the war. You may choose to have students complete this activity individually or in groups. If you decide to use groups, segments of 2-4 students work best. Distribute copies of the **Student Worksheet** and the **Primary Source Documents** to the students.
5. Direct students to look at the primary sources you have distributed and choose one document to analyze more closely. Once students have selected their document, have them complete Part I of the **Student Worksheet** using that document.

NOTE: Some of these primary sources are forms that were either fully or partially filled out by actual citizens. Instruct students to analyze the form itself, not just the information the person wrote on it.

6. Once students have finished Part I of the **Student Worksheet**, ask one or two pupils who read each document to share their responses and explain how they arrived at those observations. This is an excellent opportunity to give students some additional historical context to help them better understand the documents they are analyzing. Use the **Primary Source Documents** on page 49, and on pages 51-54, as necessary. Point out that the questions in Part I were mainly about the documents themselves, not so much the people who were living at the time the documents were created. Explain that while the printed information on the documents can give us a lot of concrete data, it is also possible for us to read these sources imaginatively to make informed inferences about what it was like to live in the world in which these documents were created.
7. Assign each student a “community role.” Suggested roles include housewife, factory worker, downtown shop owner, mayor, high school student, bus driver, elderly person, or police officer. Students may choose their own roles, or you may have students draw for their role, or assign them randomly. The idea is for each document to be analyzed from multiple perspectives, which will come in handy during the class discussion in Step 9.
8. Once students have their assigned community role, have them go back and reread the same document they analyzed for Part I of the **Student Worksheet**, but this time from the perspective of the person they have been assigned. With that in mind, have them complete Part II of the **Student Worksheet**.

NOTE: Depending on the time you have available and the ability levels of your students, you may choose to have them read multiple documents or read the documents from the perspectives of multiple community roles.

9. Once students have finished Part II of the **Student Worksheet**, return to the whole class and review each document, calling on students to share their ideas about what life on the Home Front would have been like for someone in their community role, based on the information in their document. Projecting the documents on a screen will allow you and the rest of the class to follow along and chime in during the discussion. Ultimately, the goal is to think about what each document can tell us about the wartime life of various members of the community—women, factory workers, business owners, etc.—even if that wasn’t the original purpose of the document.

ASSESSMENT

The students’ responses to the questions in Part I of the **Student Worksheet** will indicate their ability to analyze a primary source and determine the central ideas or information it contains. The responses to Part II will indicate their ability to think beyond what the source expressly states to make informed inferences about how the historical events illustrated by the source might have affected various kinds of people.

EXTENSION/ENRICHMENT

1. Have students compare the inferences they made in Part II of the **Student Worksheet** with information from additional primary or secondary sources about the US Home Front during World War II, and take note of remarkable similarities or differences.
2. Have students write a letter from the perspective of someone in their assigned community role, describing their reactions to the historical circumstances suggested by the document(s) they analyzed. For example, a student might write a letter describing the experiences of a factory worker dealing with fuel rationing, or a housewife registering to volunteer for civilian defense activities.

VIRGINIA REGIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL

Given Name Initial Race W C

Business

Citizen of What Country?

High School? Coll

Teach?

Can You Serve? Days

Service Work? What Agency?

Experience? Police?

Is Car Available for Service? Hobbies?

SERVICES FOR WHICH YOU MAY VOTE
List Preferences 1-2-3

Willing to

VIRGINIA REGIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL - VOLUNTEER SERVICE REGISTRATION CARD

Starting well before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the federal government encouraged the states to set up civilian defense organizations to coordinate volunteer efforts like scrap collection, war bond sales, public safety, ride sharing, education about rationing, and air raid warnings. The states in turn encouraged local communities to form their own local civilian defense councils and recruit volunteers. Local citizens turned in cards and forms like this one so the local councils could find volunteers for a wide variety of civilian defense tasks.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Office of Price Administration
V - FUEL OIL RATION
Class I Government Coupon
Not valid for exchange and change (Section 1)

Office of Price Administration
FUEL OIL RATION

NO. V-524248 M-5

COUPON VOID

FUEL OIL RATION CARD

The Office of Price Administration began rationing fuel oil and kerosene in October 1942. Citizens were issued a series of coupons to turn in along with their money when they purchased fuel oil. The dealer also had to sign the coupon booklet. These measures helped ensure that citizens only purchased the amount of fuel oil they were allotted.

CITY OF WHITE PLAINS Orders to Air Raid Wardens in Time of Blackout

Unhesitant cooperation of all citizens of White Plains, and others within the City at the City. The regular Public Safety Departments of the City and the Auxiliary Firemen will coordinate the Air Raid Wardens and the Auxiliary Police in enforcing the blackout regulations during the Period of the Blackout—

(1) All lights in the City including those in houses, apartments, factories and business places their respective windows, doors and other openings (including skylights) are to be in blackout curtains or paint that no light shows through.

(A) Stores and other places of business which are open for business must extinguish all light windows, doors, skylights and other exterior openings with black material or paint in a that no light shows through.

(B) Stores and other places of business which are closed must either have turned off their lighting signs and have curtains or sleep or all stores which will not light one immediately as a signal is given. As regards "safe" or "night" lights inside the store—these can be left on one of the one way lamp stop or as so thoroughly shaded that they cast a light away from or other openings comparable to a one way lamp.

(C) All public buildings, pumping stations, etc., will be completely blacked out—either using light or by the use of blackout curtains or black paint.

(D) Theaters will extinguish their marquee, advertising, ticket office, and other outside lights will be extinguished or so thoroughly shaded that they do not cast more than a

CITY OF WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK - AIR RAID INSTRUCTIONS

Protecting citizens from a potential attack by enemy aircraft was a major priority for civilian defense organizations, especially those located near the coast. Communities developed intricate plans for blackouts and shared them with local citizens through newspapers and posters like this one.

Manpower Shortages,
Here and Abroad

The Evening Times
July 15, 1944

Sayre, Pennsylvania—Manpower, the tangible factor by which the nation can win or lose this war, has come under the public scrutiny of one of America's top military leaders, at home and abroad.

Acting Secretary of War Robert Patterson disclosed in Washington that while Germany has started to show the pinch of a manpower shortage on her fighting fronts, the world's arsenal of democracy itself—America—is feeling the same shortage in its war production plants.

Patterson was brutally outspoken about the manpower

EDITORIAL - "MANPOWER SHORTAGES, HERE AND ABROAD"

This editorial from *The Evening Times* of Sayre, Pennsylvania, touches on an issue critical to the success of American production throughout the war—manpower. Getting the right number of workers with the appropriate skills to the right places to manufacture enough material to support the war effort was a serious challenge, as the editor explains.

OFFICE OF PRICE ADMINISTRATION
WAR RATION BOOK No. 3
3941348

Identification of person to whom issued: PRINT IN FULL

NAME (First name) JACK (Last name) SWABIDA

Street number or rural route 2327 N. WRIGHT ROAD

City or post office EARLEDALE, State N.Y.

AGE 57 SEX MALE WEIGHT 170 HGT 5' 8" HAIR BRN EYES BRN OCCUPATION MAINTENANCE

SIGNATURE J. Swabida

WARNING: This book is the property of the United States Government. It is loaned to you to use it as a receipt against rationed goods in accordance with regulations of the Office of Price Administration. If you lose this book you will be liable to a fine of \$10.00 and the rationing board which issued it. Persons who make improper use of this book are liable to \$10.00 fine or imprisonment, or both.

LOCAL BOARD AT

Issued by (Local board number)

Street address

City

Signature of holder, or

G.P.A. Form No. 35-132

WAR RATION BOOK NO. 3

The Office of Price Administration began issuing books of rationing stamps to citizens in 1942. Buyers had to turn in stamps along with their money to receive rationed goods like fuel, food, and shoes. Thousands of volunteers helped local rationing boards issue the books and stamps to citizens each month.

NAME:

DATE:

PART I: PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS

Directions: Carefully examine the primary source that has been assigned to you, and answer the following questions:

1. What kind of document is this? What do you think its purpose was?
2. Who do you think created this document, and what about it makes you think so?
3. Based on the information in this document, what are three inferences you can make about what was going on in the community where the document was created?

PART II: ON A PERSONAL LEVEL

Directions: Reread your primary source from Part I, but this time think about it from the perspective of the community role you have been assigned. Then answer the following questions:

1. Your community role is:
2. From the perspective of your community role, why might this document be significant to you? How might you or people connected with you come in contact with it?
3. Think about the inferences you made in Part I about what must have been going on in the community where this document was created. What are two possible ways that this document and the issues it discusses might affect your life?

VIRGINIA REGIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL—Volunteer Service

Northern
Region

County va. [1941]

Name 202-120 Last Name [1941] Given Name [1941] Initial [1941] Race W C Sex M F Age Group 16-20 21-30 31-40 over 40

Address: Home Business Phone: Home Business

Country of Birth Citizen of What Country? First Papers?

Education: Grade School? High School? College? Special Training?

What Subjects Can You Teach?

What Days and Hours Can You Serve? Days Hours

What Is Your Occupation? Are You Employed 8 Hours Daily?

Have You Done Social Service Work? What Agency? Have You a Physical Disability?

Have You Had Military Experience? Police? Fire Fighting?

Do You Drive a Car? Is Car Available for Service? Hobbies?

SERVICES FOR WHICH YOU MAY VOLUNTEER
List Preferences 1-2-3

Auto Mechanic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trained	<input type="checkbox"/>	Willing to Train	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ambulance-Motor Corps	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trained	<input type="checkbox"/>	Willing to Train	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation Work	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trained	<input type="checkbox"/>	Willing to Train	<input type="checkbox"/>	Photography	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trained	<input type="checkbox"/>	Willing to Train	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blood Donor	<input type="checkbox"/>					Knitting	<input type="checkbox"/>					Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>					Map Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>				
First Aid	<input type="checkbox"/>					Sewing	<input type="checkbox"/>					Stenography	<input type="checkbox"/>					Emergency Services:					
Home Nursing	<input type="checkbox"/>					Bandage Making	<input type="checkbox"/>					Typing	<input type="checkbox"/>					Fire Warden	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Nurses Aid	<input type="checkbox"/>					Messenger	<input type="checkbox"/>					Clerical Work	<input type="checkbox"/>					Demolition Worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Canteen Work	<input type="checkbox"/>					Communications	<input type="checkbox"/>					Telephone Operator	<input type="checkbox"/>					Air Raid Warden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/>											Radio Operator	<input type="checkbox"/>										

Will You Do General Defense Work? (Drives, Campaigns, etc.).....

Other

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
OFFICE OF PRICE ADMINISTRATION

WAR RATION BOOK No. 3 394/348 B

Identification of person to whom issued: PRINT IN FULL

Jack C. Svoboda
(First name) (Middle name) (Last name)

Street number or rural route 2322 ENRIGHT ROAD

City or post office FAR ROCKAWAY State N.Y.

AGE	SEX	WEIGHT	HEIGHT	OCCUPATION
<u>53</u>	<u>MALE</u>	<u>170 Lbs.</u>	<u>5 Ft. 8 In.</u>	<u>MAINTENANCE MASHINIST</u>

SIGNATURE Jack Svoboda
(Person to whom book is issued. If such person is unable to sign because of age or incapacity, another may sign in his behalf.)

WARNING

This book is the property of the United States Government. It is unlawful to sell it to any other person, or to use it or permit anyone else to use it, except to obtain rationed goods in accordance with regulations of the Office of Price Administration. Any person who finds a lost War Ration Book must return it to the War Price and Rationing Board which issued it. Persons who violate rationing regulations are subject to \$10,000 fine or imprisonment, or both.

LOCAL BOARD ACTION

Issued by (Local board number) (Date)

Street address

City State

Book it
(Signature of issuing officer)

OPA Form No. R-139

Form OPA R-1105B

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
OFFICE OF PRICE ADMINISTRATION
V-FUEL OIL RATION
Class 1 Consumer Coupons
(One-unit Coupons, and Change Coupons)



Copy this number in ink on each coupon in the space provided. After each 5 or 10 entries, check against original number for accuracy.

No. **V-524248 M-5**

V-524248M-5

Date issued Oct 1, 1942 Date expires Sept 30, 1943

These coupons are issued to Miss Abbie F. Stevens to be used at

20 Riverside Ave. Fallham
(Number and street or R. F. D.) (City or post office)

Mid (County) Mass. (State)

and consists of change coupons of a total value of 50 gallons and 10.0 ONE-UNIT coupons.

Dealers in fuel oil or their representatives are hereby authorized to deliver fuel oil to the above person or his agent for use at the above address, and are required to detach from this sheet coupons having a gallonage value equal to the quantity of oil delivered, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Office of Price Administration in effect at the time of such delivery. At the time of delivery, the dealer or his agent must fill in the delivery record below.

War Price and Rationing Board No. 36 at Fallham

Mid (County) Mass. (State)

By H. E. Paul

Received by _____ (Signature of coupon holder)

COUPONS VOID IF DETACHED

PERIOD 1 PERIOD 2 PERIOD 3 PERIOD 4 PERIOD 5

Date	Gallons of Oil Delivered	Number of Coupons Represented by Coupons	Gallonage Represented by Coupons	Name of Dealer	Signature of Deliverer
4/10/43	7.00	7	7.00	W. J. ...	[Signature]
5-29-42	1.75	1	1.75	W. J. ...	[Signature]
11/18/42	2.5	2.5	2.5	W. J. ...	[Signature]
12-23-42	16	16	16	W. J. ...	[Signature]
12-19	18.8	18.8	18.8	W. J. ...	[Signature]
12-14	11.0	11	11	W. J. ...	[Signature]
1-12-43	1.90	1.90	1.90	W. J. ...	[Signature]
1-25-43	3.8	3.8	3.8	W. J. ...	[Signature]
1-26-43	1.52	1.52	1.52	W. J. ...	[Signature]

I certify that I have delivered to the user and premises named above the amount of fuel oil entered by me opposite my signature below, and that upon such delivery I removed from this sheet the coupons stated opposite my signature, in accordance with the provisions of the Fuel Oil Rationing Regulations. (Use ink or indelible pencil)

RECORD OF DELIVERIES

I CERTIFY THAT I VACATED OR TRANSFERRED THE PREMISES AT _____ ON _____, 1942, and that the attached Coupon Sheet No. _____ issued to me for use in connection with said premises was on or before the above date surrendered to _____

Signed _____ (Name of landlord, transferee, court officer, etc.)

and that at the time of surrender said sheet contained _____

Upon request, the person to whom the coupon sheet is surrendered shall give in exchange a copy of the above certificate

By _____ (Officer, agent, etc.)

Signed _____ (Landlord, transferee, court officer, etc.)

GALLON COUPONS

change coupons having a total value of _____ gallons, and _____ one-unit coupons.

Signed _____ (Tenant, transferee, or other designation)

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS COUPON SHEET WAS SURRENDERED TO ME AS AFORESAID.

Signed _____ (Landlord, transferee, court officer, etc.)

By _____ (Officer, agent, etc.)

Signed _____ (Landlord, transferee, court officer, etc.)

GALLON COUPONS

CITY OF WHITE PLAINS

Orders to Air Raid Wardens in Time of Blackout

Wholehearted co-operation of all citizens of White Plains, and others within the City at the time is necessary. The regular Public Safety Departments of the City and the Auxiliary Firemen will co-operate fully with the Air Raid Wardens and the Auxiliary Police in enforcing the blackout regulations.

During the Period of the Blackout—

(1) All lights in the City including those in homes, apartments, factories and business places are to be either extinguished—or windows, doors and other openings (including skylights) are to be so darkened by blackout curtains or paint that no light shows through.

(1-A) Stores and other places of business which are open for business must extinguish all lights or cover their windows, doors, skylights and other exterior openings with black material or paint in such a manner that no light shows through.

(1-B) Stores and other places of business which are closed must either have turned off their lights and advertising signs or have someone on duty at all times who will put lights out immediately when a blackout signal is given. As regards "safe" or "night" lights inside the stores—these can be left on only if they are of the one watt lamp size; or are so thoroughly shaded that they cast a light away from all windows or other openings comparable to a one watt lamp.

(1-C) All public buildings, pumping stations, etc., will be completely blacked out—either by extinguishing lights or by the use of blackout curtains or black paint.

(1-D) Theatres will extinguish their marquee, advertising, ticket office, and other outside lights. Vestibule lights will be extinguished or so thoroughly shaded that they do not cast more than a one watt light.

(1-E) Building wardens, and apartment house owners, superintendents and/or janitors will see that all skylights are properly covered with suitable material, painted, or otherwise completely blacked out.

(1-F) Hospitals and sanitariums will carry out their routine blackout procedure as arranged.

(1-G) Janitors and cleaning personnel who are at work cleaning apartments or office buildings, will extinguish all lights.

(1-H) Illuminated outdoor advertising signs will be turned off.

(1-I) Street lights and Parkway lights will be turned out by proper authorities.

(1-J) Flashlights in civilian hands must be directed toward the ground.

(1-K) Fires (rubbish, leaves, etc.) must be extinguished.

(1-L) All other lights not specifically referred to must be turned out—or completely shielded from outside view.

(2) Pedestrians will get off the streets and sidewalks and seek shelter inside buildings, in doorways, etc. or other places of safety—being careful however, not to stand near glass windows, or doors.

(3) Automobiles, buses, and trucks on the streets will promptly pull over and park at the curb, avoiding blocking fire hydrants, alley ways, etc.; shut off motors; turn out lights; and occupants will seek shelter in nearby doorways, against building walls or other sheltered positions but are cautioned not to seek shelter against glass windows or doors. Passengers and operators should not remain in vehicles.

(3-A) Automobiles and trucks left in parking lots must have all lights out.

(4) Railroad stations and platforms will be blacked out on orders of the operating divisions of the railroad.

(5) Dogs not confined to quarters must be leashed.

(6) Do not use the telephone during the blackout period, unless called.

(7) Do not turn off gas.

(8) Do not fill bathtubs or other receptacles with water.

(9) Ambulances, Police Cars, Fire Apparatus, Doctors cars, U.S. Mail, and other Official United States, State, City owned, Utility Emergency trucks, and Civilian Defense cars, shall be allowed to move on Streets and Parkways during the blackout with dimmed lights.

APPROVED:

R. W. HEBARD
Chairman Civilian Defense Council



J. WALLACE SLAWSON
Chief Air Raid Warden

Manpower Shortages, Here and Abroad

The Evening Times

July 15, 1944

Sayre, Pennsylvania —Manpower, the tangible factor by which the nation can win or lose this war, has come under the public scrutiny of one of America's top military leaders, at home and abroad

Acting Secretary of War Robert Patterson disclosed in Washington that while Germany has started to show the pinch of a manpower shortage on her fighting fronts, the world's arsenal of democracy itself—America—is feeling the same shortage in its war production plants.

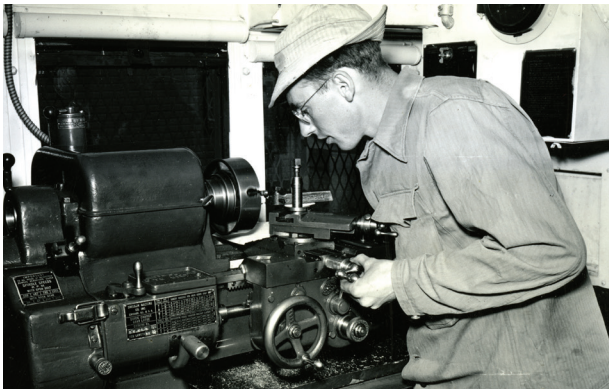
Patterson was brutally outspoken about the manpower situation on the Home Front. In the second quarter of this year, production was some 400 million dollars, or roughly eight percent, behind schedule. Outright shortages have developed in important weapons of war, shortages directly traceable to shortages of manpower to build them.

Germany, on the other hand, is faced with a manpower shortage of a military nature now that Allied ground and air forces are tightening the ring of steel around her fighting men.

It is comforting, of course, for us to learn that the German military strength is being affected by a shortage of manpower. That is only natural, but there is nothing comforting about Secretary Patterson's disclosure that a manpower shortage is threatening our war production schedule, particularly when the shortage results from a mistaken impression that the war is nearly over

While the military picture, as far as the United Nations is concerned, looks good, the boys who are over there fighting require all the material we can produce for them if they are to carry the war through to a successful conclusion.

SUGGESTED COMMUNITY ROLES



Shop Owner

(Image: The National WWII Museum, 2011.065.1039.)



High School Student

(Image: The National WWII Museum, 2011.076.012.)



Housewife

(Image: The National WWII Museum, 2011.076.013.)



Nurse

(Image: The National WWII Museum, 2007.048.297.)



Factory Worker

(Image: Signal Corps.)



Elderly Person

(Image: The National WWII Museum, 2007.048.297.)