

When searching for a National History Day Topic, I started by looking at my favorite time periods in history and seeing how they connected with this year's topic. I immediately dismissed Ancient Greece and Rome because they were too far in the past and primary resources would be difficult to obtain. In addition, too many wars and rebellions had destroyed libraries and important information. After extensive research, I was satisfied with my topics: The Magna Carta, The Salem Witch Hunt, The Japanese Internment, and the Montford Point Marines. After spending some time reading about each historical event, I decided on the Montford Point Marines due to my interest in the Marines and the armed forces in general.

My first step in conducting research was to read the Marine and Montford Point Marines Association websites. Then, I focused on reading secondary books and listening to firsthand accounts by Montford Point Marines on the web. The second month, I continued reading and interviewed Marine Museum teacher-in-residence as well as the President of the Quantico Chapter of the Montford Point Marines Association; I gained an abundance of information from both gentlemen. To more deeply understand the Montford experience, I traveled south to Jacksonville, North Carolina to where Montford Point was established. While I was there, I interviewed Dr. Melton McLaurin who wrote a book and directed a documentary on the subject. This was helpful because I had already finished his book and could ask him more in-depth questions. While in Jacksonville, I interviewed the Montford Point Museum Assistant Deputy Director and one of the original Montford Point Marines. Then I continued reading more primary and secondary resources. After winning regional and state, I continued researching as well as conducting more interviews with Montford Point Marines and other knowledgeable experts.

I decided on a website because I have never done one and thought it would be an enjoyable experience. Also, I would develop skills that I could use in the future. I spent considerable time learning the different parts of building a website. Then, I organized my research into sections and created tabs. Next, I started writing the history and gathering photos to tell the story visually. Subsequently, I reviewed my notes for quotes, primary resources and watched my recorded interviews as well as other videos to select information that would more fully tell the history. Afterwards, I kept revising my website to make it historically stronger and visually appealing.

The American Revolution would be the only time that African Americans would serve in the Marines until President Franklin Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 allowing them to join. The first Negroes to serve in the Marines after 167 years ban were known as the Montford Point Marines. These brave men took the responsibility to break the color barrier and prove that they had the right to serve and fight as a Marine. They discredited racial prejudices and paved the way for Negroes to receive full military rights and responsibilities.

Word Count: 498