

Seeking Military Records for Former CME Personnel?

If you are looking for military information on a family member, the main source of information will generally be the National Archives of Canada. They hold the Military Records after the Department of National Defence no longer has a need for a member's file due to the individual's release or death. The type of personnel documents that are available online are outlined at: <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/services/005-6010-e.html> .

Other Government files can be located through the Search Tool at: http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/02010502_e.html . For First World War archives, use "Record Group 150" while "Record Group 24" applies for post-WW I records.

The Privacy Act dictates the measures that govern the public's ability to access the documents. As guidelines, for example:

- files of members of WW I are open to the public,
- files of WW II servicemen who were killed in action are open to the public, and
- files of personnel who have been deceased for at least 20 years are open to the public but must first be screened to protect "Third Party" personal information.

The third category (above) is the most common type of search. However, National Archives requires that **YOU** provide the Proof of Death. Proof of Death can be a Death Certificate, Cemetery Record, Newspaper Obituary, picture of a tombstone, etc. See: <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/services/005-6010-e.html> for the address to submit a request for information.

If you are uncertain of a Date of Death, there are a couple of sites that can assist. If the individual died during war, he will most likely be listed on the site: <http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=collections/virtualmem> . If the individual was a member of the Royal Canadian Legion, his death may be listed at the site: <http://www.legionmagazine.com/lastpost/> . If you believe that the individual may have been in a "Casualty List," you can search the extensive online archive of newspaper clippings at locations such as: http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/newspapers/intro_e.html

For most requests for information on a family member, National Archives will generally respond within several weeks and provide what they refer to as their "Genealogy Package." This generally comprises copies about a dozen pages of Enlistment and Discharge documents as well as the Service and Casualty Record. If you want more information, be prepared to wait some time as screening a set of Military Records for Third Party information is a laborious process..

The Service Record will note all postings, promotions and other significant personnel activities. If you wish to learn of the member's activity while in a certain unit, there are several general courses of action:

- Read the appropriate volume of **RCE/CME History**. They are available for purchase from: http://www.cmea-agmc.ca/books_History_e.asp
- or you should be able to borrow them from your local Public Library on Inter-Library Loan.
- **War Diaries** are held in National Archives in Ottawa and provide the record of the day-by-day activity. See: http://www.collectionscanada.ca/02/02010502_e.html . Most of the War Diaries of the First World War units have been microfilmed and digitized. The digitized Diaries are available online at: http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html and the microfilm format

can be borrowed on Inter-Library Loan. Many of the WWII Diaries are also available in microfilm format but the project is ongoing. Completed microfilming may not be indicated on the results of the online Search Tool at:

http://www.collectionscanada.ca/02/02010502_e.html. So it is advisable to consult on the status of microfilming by email to: reference@archives.ca War Diaries are lengthy and often not easy to research so you might consider engaging a freelance researcher in the Ottawa area conduct the research for you. National Archives maintains a list of such individuals.

- A number of Unit Histories exist in various locations across the country. To determine if one exists for a particular unit, submit an inquiry to the CME Museum using the LINK at the bottom of page: http://www.cmemuseum.ca/index_e/rese_e/rese_e.htm