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Canadian Genealogy

Centre



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Canadian Forces after 1918 (including Second World War)

Research at Library and Archives Canada

About the Records

Military personnel files include documentation about enlistment, discharge, military units served with, and may also include other documents concerning medical history, medals awarded, personal evaluation reports and dental charts. There is no online database for these records.

Requests for Information

We try to answer inquiries within 30 days; however, due to the large number of inquiries being received, we are currently experiencing delays in our response times. Clients who submit a written request should expect to wait six months for a response. Priority service is given to people who require documentation to prove that they qualify for pensions, allowances, claims and other benefits, therefore, these types of requests should be clearly identified.

For projects involving research in a large number of files, the request will be assessed by our staff to determine if current resources can accommodate such an extensive commitment.

How to Send an Inquiry Concerning Your Own or Another Individual's Records

- Your request must be signed.
- To identify a file, we require surname, full given name(s), date of birth, and service number or social insurance number.
- If you do not know the date of birth, service number or S.I.N. (social insurance number), secondary information (e.g., the names of next of kin, postings, dates of service, place of enlistment) can assist in identifying the correct individual.

- Consult the section below on Access Restrictions.
- Please specify what document(s) you require. If you are doing family history research, we recommend that you request a "genealogy package," which will include copies of selected documents from the file that highlight/summarize the individual's service.
- We do not accept e-mail inquiries for these records. Inquiries must be sent by mail or fax.
- Your request can be written as a letter or you can print off a blank copy of the [Application Form](#), which should be filled in, signed and sent by mail or fax.
- Inquiries should be sent by mail or fax to:

Personnel Records Unit
Library and Archives Canada
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0N3
Fax: (613) 947-8456

If you are an ex-service member released less than five years:

- Please send your request to National Defence Headquarters if you are requesting your entire military personnel file, information under the *Privacy Act* or a complete personal information bank, such as all your medical records, all your pension information or all your performance evaluation and course reports. See the section below on Research in Other Institutions.
- Please send your request to our Personnel Records Unit if you only require a copy of a specific document(s), such as your discharge certificate or immunization records.

Access Restrictions

- Access to personal information relating to an individual who is still living requires that person's signed consent.
- If the individual has been deceased for less than 20 years, limited information may be released to immediate family. Proof of death and relationship must be provided.
- There are no restrictions on access to information relating to an individual who has been deceased for more than 20 years. Proof of death is required.

Proof of Death: A copy of a death certificate, newspaper obituary, funeral notice or photograph of the gravestone. Note that proof of death is not required if the individual died while in service.

Proof of Relationship: A document that clearly demonstrates the relationship between the individual concerned and the person requesting the record. Both names must appear on the document. A newspaper

obituary, baptismal certificate or full-form birth certificate are acceptable. A wallet-sized birth certificate that does not indicate parents' names is not accepted. Please do not send original documents; photocopies are acceptable.

Immediate Family: A parent, spouse, child, sibling or grandchild of the individual.

Should you wish to submit a formal request under privacy legislation, see: [Records of the Government of Canada](#).

Research Online

Personnel files after 1918 and the personal information contained in them are protected by the provisions of privacy legislation. For the same reason, the database and indexes that are used to identify the files cannot be made available on our Web site. Only staff may access them.

[Canada Remembers: The Second World War](http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=history/secondwar) [www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=history/secondwar]
Information about the Second World War (Veterans Affairs Canada)

[Canadian Newspapers and the Second World War](http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/newspapers/intro_e.html)
[www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/newspapers/intro_e.html]
The history of the Second World War as reported in Canadian newspapers. This free newspaper archives of more than 144,000 newspaper articles offers wonderful opportunities for research in every aspect of war.

Research in Other Institutions

Records of individuals still serving or recently released (less than one year for Regular Force service or three years for Reserve Force service) are still in the custody of National Defence. Please submit your inquiry to:

Director, Access to Information and Privacy (DAIP)
National Defence Headquarters
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K2

Armed Forces of Other Countries

The service records of those who served in the Armed Forces of countries other than Canada are held by those countries.

Great Britain:

The [Veterans Agency](http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk/service_recs/service_recs.htm) at the Ministry of Defence [www.veteransagency.mod.uk/service_recs/service_recs.htm] provides a Web page that explains how and where to request documents from service files of Army, Navy and Air Force personnel.

United States of America (All Forces):

National Personnel Records Center
[Military Personnel Records](http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/index.html) [www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/index.html]
9700 Page Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri 63132
United States of America

American Second World War enlistment records and other records relating to military personnel are available online on the Web site of the [National Archives](http://www.archives.gov/aad). [www.archives.gov/aad]

Note: Canada did not participate in the Vietnam War. Records of Canadians who served with the American Forces are held at the above-noted office.

Related Topics

[Merchant Marine/Merchant Navy](#)



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