

Are You Seeking Military Records for Former Canadian Military Engineer Personnel?

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If you looking for military information on a former Serviceperson, the main source of official information will generally be Library and Archives Canada. That agency is responsible for holding the military records of a Service Member after the Department of National Defence no longer has a need for these files due to the individual's release or death. The type of personnel documents that are available online are outlined at:

<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/Pages/military-heritage.aspx>

Other Government files can be located through the Search Tool at:

http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/lac-bac/search/arch_adv. See, also:

http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/02/02010502_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 protocols 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. National Archives currently has a digitization project underway for all WW II fatalities. Completed files are evident when the SEARCH Tool at: <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/second-world-war/second-world-war-dead-1939-1947/Pages/search.aspx> is consulted, and
- files of personnel who have been deceased for at least 20 years are open to the public but those files must be requested through an "Access To Information" request. The files will be screened to protect "Third Party" personal information.

See: <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/022/f2/022-909.007-e.pdf> to submit a request for information on a deceased individual. When requesting such information, 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.

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://legionmagazine.com/en/index.php/last-post/>. If you believe that the individual may have been published in a "Casualty List," you can search the extensive online archive of newspaper clippings at locations such as:

http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/newspapers/intro_e.shtml

For most requests for information on a family member, National Archives will provide what they refer to as their "Genealogy Package." This generally comprises copies about a dozen pages of the Service and Casualty Record as well as the Enlistment and Discharge documents. It may take several months to receive this information – depending on the backlog at the time. If you want more information, be prepared to wait some time as screening a set of Military Records for Third Party information requires additional work.

The Service Record will note all postings, promotions and other significant personnel activities. Much of these entries will be in cryptic notation with numerous abbreviations. One of the better sources to help understand these military abbreviations is:

<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/Pages/military-abbreviations.aspx> .

If you wish to learn of the member's activity while in a certain unit, there are several general courses of action:

- **Official Histories.** Read the appropriate volume of RCE/CME History. Copy may be available on InterLibrary Loan from your Public Library. See: <http://cmea-agmc.ca/history-canadian-military-engineers>
- **War Diaries.** War Diaries are held in National Archives in Ottawa and provide the record of the day-by-day activity. The War Diaries of the First World War units have been microfilmed and digitized. Those digitized Diaries are available online at: <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/Pages/war-diaries.aspx> . A number of the WWII Diaries are also now available in microfilm format and a digitization project is ongoing. This is a 10-year partnership project with Heritage.Canadiana.ca. Information on the status of each War Diary is available at: <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/Pages/war-diaries-ship-logs-operations-records.aspx#c> . If a Diary has not yet been digitized, Contact the CME Historian for advice and assistance.
- War Diaries are lengthy and often not easy for an inexperienced person to research. One might consider engaging a freelance researcher in the Ottawa area conduct the research for you. National Archives maintains a list of such individuals.
- **Unit Histories.** 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 to the Research Staff at the bottom of page: http://www.cmemuseum.ca/index_e/rese_e/rese_e.htm

For more assistance, please contact:

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