

A Guide to Researching your Military Service Personnel

Your Journey Starts Here



Step 1: SERVICE RECORDS

Every person who enlisted into the New Zealand Forces has a Service Record. This is the record that was kept on them throughout their time in service. Anything significant that happened to them was recorded and dated. The service record will not tell you which battles they fought in, you will need to refer to the official history of the unit they served in and link up dates from the service record.

On the **Cenotaph Database Pod** you can search using their name or service number. Once you have found the entry, scroll down to the end of their page and you will find a direct link to Archives New Zealand, this is where the original WW1 service record is kept and the link will give you access to the digitised copy on-line.

Contact details to Archives New Zealand - www.archway.archives.govt.nz

Access Services, Archives New Zealand - Telephone: **04-499-5595**

PO Box 12 050, Wellington 6144, New Zealand

For those who served after 1st January 1921 please contact **New Zealand Defence Force Archives** for the service record. For more information and to download an application form, please visit their website:

www.nzdf.mil.nz/personnel-records

Step 2: DECIPHERING THE SERVICE RECORD

The service record is made up of a series of forms in which brief statements of service are entered. The numerous abbreviations can make the record difficult to read and understand, but perseverance is the key.

The main forms are:

- The History Sheet
- The Attestation Sheet
- The Casualty Sheet

These forms all hold the key information to your person's military service:

- Dates of enlistment, attestation and discharge
- Dates of wounding and/or sickness
- Embarkation and disembarkation details
- Dates of when they were "In the field"
- Names and dates of training camps
- Medical and personal details

Step 3: FILLING IN THE GAPS

Family is always a good place to start, they may have stories they had been told, photos to share, diaries, letters and photos. They have recollections of the person who they may remember from their childhood.

The following information will also help you with your research.

- Paperspast – digitised New Zealand Newspapers, articles about parades, training, departures, listings of those who were missing, wounded or died were published in the papers, this is an excellent resource for researching.
- Personal narratives – published, held in libraries or unpublished, held in Archives. This is the details written by the soldiers, at a soldiers level describing their everyday life - What they saw, what they felt, what they did and what it smelt like. This all helps to bring your person's history alive.

For further help & information please contact the staff at the
KIPPENBERGER RESEARCH LIBRARY p:06 387 6911
e:armymuseum@nzdf.mil.nz w:www.armymuseum.co.nz



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MORE RESOURCES TO HELP WITH YOUR RESEARCH

National Library of New Zealand and Alexander Turnbull Library: Holds a wealth of published and unpublished material including the letters, diaries and memoirs of individual service personnel and a large photographic archive - www.natlib.govt.nz

New Zealand History On-line - www.nzhistory.net.nz

Paperspast: A collection of digitised New Zealand papers and periodicals from 1839-1948, and includes 119 publications from all over New Zealand - www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz

World War 100 - www.ww100.govt.nz

The long, long trail - www.1914-1918.net

Your local library

Check out what information your local library holds, what books they have available on World War I, these may be of help to get you started:

- **Bloody Gallipoli: the New Zealanders Story/** by Richard Stowers
- **Behind the Lines: the Lives of New Zealand Soldiers in the First World War/** by Nicholas Boyack
- **The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Military History/** edited by Ian MacGibbon
- **Scars on the Heart/** by Christopher Pugsley
- **New Zealanders at War/** by Michael King
- **Warrior Nation/** John Thomson

WORLD WAR - UNIT DIARIES

New Zealand Electronic Text Collection

Includes the New Zealand Official History books of the Units who served during World War I and World War II. The Commanders of the units were required to keep a daily account of their unit and from these the Official Histories were published after the wars. These histories have been digitised and are available to read on:

World War1

www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/subject-000003.html

World War2

www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/subject-000004.html

WAR DEATHS AND GRAVES

Commonwealth War Graves Commission - This website lists all commonwealth soldiers who have died on Active Service in World War I and World War II. www.cwgc.org

New Zealand Wargraves Project - The New Zealand Wargraves Project has over 11,000 photos of New Zealand war graves headstones and Primary Memorials. This site can provide a colour photo of the headstone for all those who died on Active Service and has a known grave or a photo of the memorial in which they are remembered on. www.nzwargraves.org.nz

MEDAL INQUIRES

All inquiries regarding medals should be directed to:
Staff Officer Medals, Medals Office:
P: 04-527 5280, e: personnel.archives@nzdf.mil.nz
<http://medals.nzdf.mil.nz>

REPLICA MEDALS

Replica medals can be purchased from a reputable medal dealer. The service record will tell what medals were issued or entitled to receive

For further help & information please contact the staff at the
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e:armymuseum@nzdf.mil.nz w:www.armymuseum.co.nz

