

Handout for Beechwood Researching your Military Ancestor

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British Military Collections on Ancestry

In addition to the former soldiers who took advantage of the military settlements to re-settle in Upper Canada, the British Army was a source of settlers throughout the nineteenth century. Thousands of discharged soldiers, many of whom had served in the Canadas, can be found throughout the province. Ancestry has several collections that provide personal and service information for British soldiers, information that supplements the land records and may provide additional details on ex-military settlers.

These collections are described here in detail for easy reference.

UK Military Collections for Canada			
Pre Confederation Collections			
DB Title	TNA Series	Status	Notes
British Regimental Registers of Service, 1756-1900	WO 25	Indexed	Records in this database include regimental description books, statements of service, registers, returns, and other lists documenting the service of soldiers and officers. Most deal with Canadian military units. These records document things such as enlistment, commissions and appointments, dates of service, service history, casualties, desertion, pay and pensions, and discharges. URL: http://search.ancestry.ca/iexec/?htx=List&dbid=3253
Records of British Military Headquarters 1775-1856	WO 28	Browse only	This database contains images of letters, returns, and memorials from field officers and military departments in Canada, as well as general orders issued in the Canada and Nova Scotia Commands. These documents can contain names, dates, locations, and other details and relate generally to the American Revolution, the War of 1812 and the early decades of the 19 th century. Loyalist lists and records can be found here. These records can be browsed by region and title. URL: http://search.ancestry.ca/iexec/?htx=List&dbid=3387
Pension Applications For Widows and	WO 42/52 -63	Indexed	Pension claims submitted by widows of officers of the King's German Legion and British Regiments, who died in service or while on half-pay. Files include copies of

Family of British Military Officers, 1776-1881			<p>wills, birth certificates and personal papers, etc. German Legion and Loyal American and Canadian Corps.</p> <p>URL: http://search.ancestry.ca/iexec/?htx=List&dbid=3353</p>
Muster Rolls and Pay Lists, British Navy Ships, 1757-1836	ADM 32, 37, 38, 42	Indexed	<p>These records are made up of pay lists and muster rolls for both ships and naval yards in Canada and elsewhere (eg. Cape of Good Hope) during an era when Great Britain was establishing itself as the dominant naval power in the world. Documents include records relating to the War of 1812 and ships on the Great Lakes.</p> <p>URL: http://search.ancestry.ca/iexec/?htx=List&dbid=3252</p>
Muster Rolls and Pay Lists, British Army and Canadian Militia, 1795-1850	WO 12, 13	Indexed	<p>This database contains muster rolls and pay lists relating to troops who served in the British Army in British North America. It also contains records of the "de Meuron" and "de Watteville" regiments, which were comprised of Swiss mercenaries who contracted to serve with the British Army in the 1790s. Both regiments transferred to British North America at the time of the War of 1812 and were disbanded in 1816. In addition, records for a number of Upper and Lower Canada militia units are included, specifically for the years during the immediately following the rebellions in 1837-1838. Note that some pay lists include additional details on individual militiamen such as duties, special tasks and so on.</p> <p>URL: http://search.ancestry.ca/iexec/?htx=List&dbid=3230</p>
UK, Royal Hospital Chelsea Pensioner Registers of Soldiers Who Served in Canada, 1743-1882	WO 97, 120	Indexed	<p>The Royal Hospital Chelsea was the administrative office for the British army and was responsible for distributing pension payments to British soldiers since the 1680s. While some pensioners surrendered their pension to the hospital and lived there ("in-pensioners"), many more lived outside the confines and received their pensions elsewhere ("out-pensioners"). This database contains records for soldiers who served in Canada and were in receipt of their pension after service in the British military. The records also include records of discharge.</p> <p>Regimental Registers of Pensioners & Soldiers Service Documents</p> <p>URL: http://search.ancestry.ca/iexec/?htx=List&dbid=3255</p>
Registers of Prisoners of War, 1803-1815	ADM 98, 103	Indexed	<p>Records in this database come from a time when the Royal Navy established its unquestioned rule of the seas during the wars surrounding the French Revolution, the Napoleonic wars, and the War of 1812 in America. Most of the records are registers of prisoners taken between 1812 and 1815 and held in Canada. They include prisoners of war from all services held by the British, British prisoners held in enemy custody, and prisoner exchanges. You will find French, American, and British citizens among the prisoners.</p> <p>URL: http://search.ancestry.ca/iexec/?htx=List&dbid=3299</p>
British Army Regimental Rolls of Non-commissioned Officers and	WO 67	Indexed	<p>These registers of non-commissioned officers and enlisted men include details such as name, age, place of birth, physical description, trade, reasons for leaving the service and promotions.</p>

Soldiers, 1803-1892			URL: http://search.ancestry.ca/iexec/?htx=List&dbid=3383
Rideau Canal Rents, Property and Employment Correspondence, 1827-1855	WO 44	Browse only	These records include correspondence, estimates, payments for lots acquired from individuals, descriptions of buildings and property transferred from the Naval Department to the Ordnance Department, and other documents related to building the canal and the defense of Kingston. URL: http://search.ancestry.ca/iexec/?htx=List&dbid=3478&bm=C
Registers & Certificates of Military Instruction, 1867-1932		Indexed	This collection includes certificates granted by Schools of Military Instruction. Details available on each certificate typically include the name and rank of the recipient, residence, certificate type and date, and the name and location of the school where any training and/or examination took place. URL: https://www.ancestry.ca/search/collections/61081/

Library and Archives Canada – British Colonial Records - <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/Pages/british-colonial-era.aspx>

British Regiments in Canada - <http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~crossroads/genealogy/regiments/>

Military Settlements: Perth, Richmond and Lanark

The military settlements in eastern Ontario were organized soon after the War of 1812 and the settlers and settlement process are well documented in Upper Canada Land Petitions, Upper Canada Sundries and in more specific records at LAC such as the Perth Military Settlement fonds, 1816-1822 (reference: MG 9, D8-27), the Lanark Military Settlement collection, 1820-1822 (reference: MG 9 D8-16 and a collection of documents relating to Scottish immigration to the settlements, 1815-1838, especially Lanark (reference: MG 9, D4). In all of these resources, one can find names of settlers, family members, settlement location and more.

A list of known 99th Regiment privates who became farmers in the Richmond area can be found on the [Bytown or Bust](#) site.

Registration of Children born to regimental members

Children of soldiers were registered at the Garrison chapel, normally the closest Anglican parish to the place where that company was stationed. So that the Anglican Churches in Amherstburg, Niagara, Kingston, Montreal, Quebec, St. John's etc. are where these records are located (or of course the Archives). The local Catholic, Presbyterian or Baptist clergy baptized those of their religion. Some of the Richmond pioneer's marriages took place at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Quebec City. Check out the Quebec Vital and Church Records - <https://www.ancestry.ca/search/collections/1091/>

Military History and Service – First and Second World Wars - Generally

Library and Archives Canada (LAC):

“Military Heritage”(<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/Pages/military-heritage.aspx>)

- First World War, War Diaries (available online)

- Second World War, War Diaries (some, but not all, available online)
- Second World War, Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), Operations Record Books
- Guide to Records Relating to Units of the Canadian Expeditionary Force

Service in the First World War, 1914-1919

Ancestry: Canada, World War I, CEF Personnel Files, 1914-1918

(https://www.ancestry.ca/search/categories/ca_military/)

LAC:

Personnel Records of the First World War (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/Pages/introduction.aspx>)

Service in the Second World War, 1939-1945

All service records (Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Air Force, Royal Canadian Navy) are in the custody of Library and Archives Canada (LAC). Files can be requested by the veteran him or herself. For other researchers, family included, the service person has to have been deceased for twenty years and any request requires proof of death. For service persons who have deceased for more than twenty years, files are generally open upon request. All records of those who died during the war are open and available for research.

Use Access to Information for file requests.

For more information on Second World War resources at LAC, see LAC, “Military Heritage” noted above.

Documenting the Fallen

For the First World War, see Ancestry: Canada, CEF Commonwealth War Graves Registers, 1914-1919

Canada, War Graves Registers (Circumstances of casualty), 1914-1918

(https://www.ancestry.ca/search/categories/ca_military/)

For the Second World War, see Ancestry: Canada, World War II Service Files of War Dead, 1939-1947

For war dead, see also:

Veterans Affairs Canada: Canadian Virtual War Memorial

(<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial>)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission (<https://www.cwgc.org/>)

Honours and Awards – First and Second World Wars

Ancestry: Canada, Military Honours and Awards Citation Cards, 1900-1961

- Index searchable by surname with images of the citation cards

(https://www.ancestry.ca/search/categories/ca_military/)

