



British Army Service; other ranks (and NCOs) 1760-1913

Information From Archives M5

Search No.1. Service Records, 1760-1913

Catalogue References: WO 97, WO 96, WO 119, WO 121, WO 400

These records are usually the best starting point for research for soldiers. A search will be made in the following series as appropriate:

- WO 97 Royal Hospital Chelsea, Soldiers' Papers 1760-1913
 - WO 96 Militia Papers 1806-1915
 - WO 119 Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Discharge Documents 1783-1822
 - WO 121 Discharge Documents of Pensioners 1782-1887
 - WO 400 Household Cavalry, Records of Service 1799-1920
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Information that this source should reveal:

Surviving information may include:

Age; place of birth; physical description; any former service and occupation; next of kin; medical records; date of enlistment, postings, promotions, awards, leave and transfers; date of discharge and intended place of residence.

Not all the information is always recorded.

Factors affecting success of a search:

Prior to ca.1898 the record of service of any soldier who died in service, was discharged by purchase or who only served a limited period engagement, were not usually kept.

The first name and surname of the soldier is essential for a search to be feasible (ideally any 'middle names' should be included).

The name of at least one unit or regiment is also essential. A service number is highly desirable in order to uniquely identify the correct entry.

For soldiers discharged between 1873-1900, all papers were filed alphabetically, for the whole army. Search by name and download digitised [Royal Hospital Chelsea pension records](#) for 1873-1900 (WO 97/1722 to WO 97/4231) on www.findmypast.co.uk

Details required to carry out a search, and our charge for a search:

In order to carry out a search for our normal fee, the following information is required:

- the first and surname of the serviceman*
- the unit(s) he served with*
- his service number (s)
- any middle names of the serviceman

Our normal fee for one search in the Service Records, providing the information requested above is supplied, is £60.

Please note, however, if the soldier has a very common surname then the standard charge may not apply. We will only search for the name as it has been provided to us. If you wish a search to be undertaken on a variation of the soldier's name (such as with or without middle names, or middle names used as first names) , the fee is likely to be higher. For example, if we have been asked to search for a Charles Marshall Burr, we would not search under the name Charles Burr. Likewise, if we were asked to search for a Fred Cheeseman we would not search under the name Frederick Cheeseman.

Search No.2. Disability and Pension records, 1854-1979

Catalogue Reference: PIN 71

The most important series for disability pensions. It covers the period 1854-1979 and contains a number of files concerning disability pensions and widow's pensions granted before 1914.

Information that this source should reveal:

A file will normally include a basic record of service, medical reports and assessments, pension calculations and awards, and in many cases death certificates.

Factors affecting success of a search:

Success depends on quality of the starting information and the popularity of surname. If there are several soldiers with same name in same unit, TNA will produce a report on the results.

There are some gaps, but overall the index available in The Catalogue (<http://www.catalogue.nationalarchives.gov.uk/default.asp>) is reliable. It is useful to know the nature of the disability when undertaking a search.

This series does not contain a file for all pensioners.

Details required to carry out a search, and our Charge for a search

In order to carry out a search for our normal fee, the following information is required:

- the first and surname of the serviceman*
- the unit(s) he served with*
- his service number (s)
- any middle names of the serviceman

Our normal fee for one search in the Disability and Pension Records, providing the information requested above is supplied, is £45.

Search No.3. Royal Hospital Chelsea: Personal Files of Deceased,
1923-1981

Catalogue Reference: WO 324

This is a small collection related to in-pensioners who were admitted to the Royal Hospital Chelsea before 1933.

A name index to this series is available in our online Catalogue (<http://www.catalogue.nationalarchives.gov.uk/default.asp>) by surname and first initial(s).

Information that this source should reveal:

These files contain details of military service, death and testamentary instructions.

Factors affecting success of a search:

Details such as service number, rank and corps/regiment/unit will help.

Relatively few pensioners were in-pensioners (residents of the Royal Hospital Chelsea).

Details required to carry out a search, and our Charge for a search:

In order to carry out a search for our normal fee, the following information is required:

- the first and surname of the serviceman*
- the unit(s) he served with
- his service number(s)
- rank
- any middle names of the serviceman

Our normal fee for one search in the Royal Hospital Chelsea: Personal Files of Deceased, providing the information requested above is supplied, is £30.

Search No.4. Regimental Muster and Pay Lists, 1708-1898

Catalogue References: WO 10-WO 16

The following series will be searched as appropriate:

WO 10	Artillery	1708-1878
WO 11	Engineers	1816-1878
WO 12	General (Infantry & Cavalry)	1732-1878
WO 13	Militia and Volunteers	1778-1878
WO 14	Scutari Depot	1854-1856
WO 15	Foreign Legions	1854-1856
WO 16	New series – all units	1877-1898

If a man died in the service, the musters can be used to build up a career by showing where a man was at any given quarter, what rank he held and where he was stationed.

Information that this source should reveal:

These lists are quarterly pay accounts that show the names of all men serving in a given unit and where they were at the time the list was compiled. When a man first joined a unit it was usual for a very brief biographical description to be entered in the list. From 1879, less information is recorded.

Muster books and pay lists were not compiled after 1898.

Factors affecting success of a search:

It is essential to know the specific unit in which a man served.

The first name and surname of the soldier is essential to make a search feasible.

Details required to carry out a search, and our Charge for a search:

In order to carry out a search for our normal fee, the following information is required:

- the first and surname of the serviceman*
- the unit(s) he served with*
- his service number(s)
- rank
- the dates of service

Our normal fee for one search in the Regimental Muster and Pay Lists, providing the information requested above is supplied, is £45 for first list and £30 for each subsequent roll.
