



CUMBRIA'S
MUSEUM OF
MILITARY LIFE

How do I find out more about a soldier who served in the First World War?

Where to begin....



During the First World War, The Border Regiment had 10 Battalions which saw active service, seven of them on the Western Front. In WW1 alone some 45,000 men served.

Before starting out to trace people it is a good idea to gather as much information as possible. Artefacts at home may provide useful clues. For example, First World War medals are all named and contain regimental number and unit details, while letters may contain addresses (with unit information) or

post/censor marks, and photographs may offer visual clues. Family members may also yield useful stories (although beware of 'family lore' – this often contains a grain of truth but may have been embroidered over the years).

The Museum has a large archive of documents and photographs relating to the history of the Regiment and enquiries on any aspect of the Regiment's history are always welcome. The Museum answers hundreds of enquiries annually. Although one of the most important roles of the Museum, it places heavy demands on time and resources. The Museum receives no direct regimental income; most of the expenditure associated with research is met by the Museum Trust from annual visitor income, donations and shop-sales. Detailed information and photocopies will be supplied where appropriate.

Please be aware that many WW1 Service Records were lost or damaged by bombing in 1940.

There are many subscription websites that provide varying amounts of information for the researcher. The biggest sites with First World War military content are:

Ancestry www.ancestry.co.uk
Find My Past www.findmypast.co.uk
Military Genealogy www.military-genealogy.com

Generally these sites provide a free-to-view index of their content, enabling users to ascertain whether potentially relevant records exist in relation to their search. Further access is then available either on a pay-per-view basis, or through a subscription. It is a competitive market and no commercial site can claim to be fully comprehensive in its content.

Cumbria's Museum of Military Life
The Castle, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 8UR
T 01228 532774 enquiries@cmoml.org
www.cumbriasmuseumofmilitarylife.org

Cumbria's Museum of Military Life is run by the King's Own Royal Border Regiment Museum Trust, a Registered Charitable Trust No. 271943, and accredited under the Arts Council of England accreditation scheme.



What records does the Museum have?

The Museum does not have a complete list of all the officers and men who have served in the Border Regiment. The Museum has a database of 25,000+ names of soldiers, including those who were killed in the Border Regiment and Westmorland and Cumberland Yeomanry during WW1; a limited amount of information is held on the Cumberland Artillery (4th East Lancashire Howitzer Brigade). The Roll of Honour generally provides the full name, regimental number, battalion, place of birth, residence and enlistment and date of death, plus Commonwealth War Graves Commission details of where soldiers are buried, or if they have no known grave, on which Memorial they are commemorated.

The Museum can also access, through its own subscriptions, records held at the **National Archives** which include:

- All the WW1 Medal Index Cards which have been digitally copied (both sides) – all ranks who served overseas received service medals – and the Silver War Badge Roll
- All the digitized surviving SERVICE RECORDS & some of the PENSION RECORDS held at the National Archives for both our Regiment and the Army as a whole. Note – very few Officers' papers survive.

Census Returns (every 10 years) for England, Wales & Scotland 1841 to 1911; Births, Marriages and Deaths 1837-2005.

Service Records – Soldiers and Officers - The Museum does not hold copies of Soldiers' and Officers' Service Records, apart from a few documents donated by individuals or their descendants. We can trace most officers through the Army Lists and their names are mentioned in other documents. Service records for personnel whose service continued after 1920 are generally held by the MOD's Army Personnel Centre, Secretariat Historical Enclosures, Mailpoint 400, Kentigern House, 65 Brown Street, Glasgow G2 8EX.

Medal, Nominal and other Rolls - The Museum has the Border Regiment's 1914 Star and 1914-15 Star Medal Rolls, Battalion War Diaries (1st, 2nd, 2/4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th & 11th Battalions), some embarkation rolls, draft and casualty lists (wounded and sick) and general paperwork include names with regimental numbers and other details. Other useful information includes trench maps, a WW1 Regimental History; the CD-ROM of HMSO's *Soldiers and Officers' Died in the Great War* for the whole Army.

Gallantry awards - VC, DSO, DCM, MC, MM, MiDs (Mentions-in-Despatches), foreign and other awards - details including some citations (not MM or MiD) and date of publication in the London Gazette.

Photographs - The Museum holds hundreds of WW1 photographs, very few of which are named.

Maps – The Museum has a number of trench maps in the collections and others held digitally.

Newspapers – The Museum has a lot of information extracted from local newspapers

When making an enquiry to the Regimental Museum it is useful to have..

A soldier's full name, regimental number, battalion number, and any other personal details where known.



PLEASE NOTE - It is virtually impossible to search through any of our records or those in other museums, the National Archives, or other organisations for information without knowing a soldier's regimental/service number, as initials and Christian names are not always given in documents and common surnames are regularly repeated in our lists. Moreover, it is very helpful to know with which Battalion of the Regiment a man served with, so that we can provide relevant background information on where he served (the Border Regiment had 10 Battalions which saw active service, seven of them on the Western Front during WW1).

Records relating to the **King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment (4th Regiment of Foot) 1680-1959** should be directed to:

The King's Own Royal Regiment Museum, Lancaster City Museum, Market Square, Lancaster LA1 1HT Tel: 01524 64637 e-mail: kingsownmuseum@iname.com

What can the Museum provide for someone making an enquiry?

The Museum will provide as much information about an individual as can be traced in our records and a detailed reply will include, where relevant, photocopies from our WW1 Regimental History, War Diary or other documents.

Enquiries can be made in writing to Cumbria's Military Museum, Border Regiment & King's Own Royal Border Regiment, Alma Block, The Castle, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 8UR, by E-Mail to enquiries@cmoml.org (PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR POSTAL ADDRESS), electronically via the website www.cumbriasmuseumofmilitarylife.org by telephone 01228 532774, or fax (01228 521275). Personal visits are also welcome, but preferably by appointment.

Where can you find more information other than in the local regimental museum?

The Museum staff are happy to help with your enquiry, but please be aware there is a lot of research that you can do yourself!

Family - for documents and paperwork, photographs, medals and memorabilia - medals and paperwork will give details of a man's name, number, Regiment and possibly the battalion in which he served.

Local Libraries and Record Offices - copies of regimental histories, local studies information, local company, local authority and parish records; copies of the Absent Voters Lists 1918 (by parliamentary constituency). These list servicemen still in the forces eligible to vote from an area often with regimental number and unit details.

Local newspapers for WW1, original, on microfilm, or digitized format - an excellent source of information and may be available from the nearest local library with a reference/local studies section, or appropriate County Record Office.

Local War Memorials and Rolls of Honour - check these for details. www.warmemorials.org

Soldiers' Service Papers (National Archives ref. WO364) – original service & other personal records for soldiers and officers serving up to 1920, which survived bombing in WW2 are held by the National Archives at Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU; tel. 020-8876-3444; fax 020-8878-8905; www.nationalarchives.gov.uk; e-mail enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Officers' Service records – any surviving documents are held by the National Archives.

Medal Index Cards (National Archives ref. WO372) and Medal Rolls (Ref. WO329) - the National Archives hold the WW1 Medal Index Cards, which list the medals a man was awarded and may confirm name, number, rank or regiment; and the Medal Roll Books in Regimental or unit order - 1914 Star, 1914-15 Star, British War and Victory Medal and the Silver War Badge (for those discharged usually as a result of being wounded/injured), which may confirm which battalion he served with, when he arrived in a particular theatre of war and when he left the army (killed, discharged etc). The Index Cards can be accessed via web-site and cards down-loaded as a PDF file for a fee.

Other Regimental and Military Museums - the Museum in Carlisle Castle has contact details for all the other military museums in the UK – Visit the Army Museums Ogilby Trust website for contact details - www.armymuseums.org.uk or simply GOOGLE the name

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission at 2 Marlow Road, Maidenhead in Berkshire SL6 2DX tel. 01628 634221 web-site www.cwgc.org will provide details of where servicemen from all Regiments and Corps of British & Commonwealth Forces are buried or commemorated and the location/directions to any of their cemeteries and memorials. The Commission covers military deaths from 1914-1921 and 1939-47. They also record the names of the UK civilian war dead from WW2.

The Museum is also interested in any research you may have undertaken on soldiers that served with the Border Regiment to add to its database. If you would like to share your information with us, please contact the Museum.

Useful Websites

The Western Front Association	www.westernfrontassociation.com
The Long, Long Trail: The British Army in the Great War	www.1914-1918.net
University of Birmingham: Centre for First World War Studies	www.firstworldwar.bham.ac.uk
The War Memorials Trust	www.warmemorials.org

Helpful Books

***Tracing Your First World War Ancestors* by Simon Fowler**

(Newbury, Berkshire: Countryside Press, 2003)

A very useful general book covering all aspects of First World War ancestry, including those not really dealt with elsewhere, such as the home front.

***First World War Army Service Records: A Guide for Family Historians* / William Spencer (fourth edition)**

(Richmond, Surrey: The National Archives, 2008)

This is the fourth edition of an essential guide to using the First World War records at TNA written by their subject specialist. The earlier editions retain some value but this is the most detailed and up-to-date book.

Tracing Your Family History: Army /compiled and edited by Sarah Paterson (second edition)
(London: Imperial War Museum, 2006)

Although this is now out of print it is still widely available in some libraries and the Explore History Centre at IWM London. It was produced in response to the many frequently asked questions received at IWM and has helpful listings of abbreviations, information about military structure and records and a useful bibliography.

The AMOT Guide to Military Museums in the UK / edited by Colin Sibun (second edition)
(London: Third Millennium Publishing, 2010)

Handy paperback with brief information about and contact details for over 140 museums in the United Kingdom.

CHARGES How much does it cost and how do I pay?

The charge is £25.00 per soldier. This is to cover the time a researcher devotes to looking into your enquiry and preparing a response, as such, this fee is non-refundable even if no information can be found. We accept payment via cash, cheque, credit/debit card or PayPal.

Payment must be made before one of our researchers can begin looking into your enquiry. Additional postage charges may be necessary if posting outside of the UK.

How long does it take to get a response?

We aim to get back to you within 30 days of receiving payment. We receive a large quantity of research enquires and our small team of staff and volunteers will get through them as quickly as possible. If it is likely to be longer than 30 days, we will inform you at the time of enquiry. Payment may be made by credit card, or by cheque/PO payable to CUMBRIA'S MILITARY MUSEUM.

