Serviceperson Research Task - Second World War

Teacher Pack

This pack contains all the research guides referred to in the *Second World War Serviceperson Research Guide* plus the VWMS suggested Assessment Rubric and the Teacher Moderation Guide

Name of Serviceperson:

Service number of Serviceperson:

Progress
1 Details
2 History
3 Biographies
4 Photos
5 Links
6 Documents
7 Submit

Where to begin?

Use the following websites to find basic details about your serviceperson. As you find relevant documents about your serviceperson and keep a record of the sources you find for your biography's reference list. Record the links to documents about your serviceperson to the VWMA profile (Step 5. Links). Refer to Contributing Information to a Profile *for more guidance regarding how to enter details to the VWMA.*

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1   Virtual War Memorial Australia

Search Find a person on the home page. Record the details already recorded on the serviceperson's profile on page 2. Search by last name, first name and service number.

Check whether the profile has any "Personal Stories" for your soldier – is there any interesting information recorded there that you could use in your biography? If you use this information, you must directly quote from the story and attribute the information to the contributor with an in-text citation and include it as a source in your reference list.

Personal Details	Service History	Personal Stories

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2   DVA Nominal Roll

Lists basic information about servicepeople. Search using your person's service number. Load the link to the serviceperson's profile (5. Links).

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3   National Archives Australia (NAA)

Search to find your person's Service Record. Click on 'guest' to begin a search session and place the service number into the 'keywords field'. A list of possible matches will be provided. Look for the search result for your serviceperson with a 'digitised item' icon. Click on the icon and an original version of the Service Record will open. Click on the image of the Service Record and it will load so you can navigate through the pages and zoom in and out to read it. If the service record is not yet digitised, request for the NAA to do so by completing an online form at https://reftracker.naa.gov.au/reft100.aspx?pmi=850168077620897052. It can take up to 90 days so complete the request immediately after you begin your research.

Create a timeline of your individual's service. Continue to record information about your serviceperson on page 2 and load information to the profile for your serviceperson (1. Details and 2. History). Add the Service Record to the person's profile (5. Links). For help with reading the service record refer to Reading a Service Record – Second World War. For help with understanding the abbreviations used refer to the VWMA guide Abbreviations and Glossary. The NAA abbreviation guide, and the Australian War Memorial Glossary may also be helpful.

Personal Details

The details in blue below are included on the serviceperson's profile (1. Details and 2. History) this along with other information you discover is needed to write a biography of your serviceperson.

Place of birth:

Job/occupation before enlisting:

Address/hometown:

Unit:

Embarkation details:

Date of death:

Place of death:

Rank on enlistment:

Conflict:

Medals:

Religion:

Marital Status:

Age at embarkation:

Next of kin:

Enlistment date:

Place of enlistment:

Unit name:

Fate:

Date of death:

Other details from their service record (NAA)?

What questions did they answer yes to on their Attestation Form (first couple of pages of their service record)? For example: previous military service on record (e.g., involvement in cadets or another war) or previously been rejected as unfit for service, etc.

Have you recorded the URLs for the Nominal Roll and the Service Record as a link on the person's profile?

Life during the war

Use the following websites to research your serviceperson's war experience. This involves a two-part process:

1. *To research information to build an understanding of what happened to them during the war. Answer as many questions as possible on pages 4 and 5.*
2. *Locate and add links to information specifically about the person to their profile (5. Links)*

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4   [Australian War Memorial (AWM) Advanced Search](#).

Search for both your serviceperson and their unit using the AWM advanced search

Serviceperson Search
Search using the service number of your person. You may find information such as the *Roll of Honour* details and any *Honours or Awards* given to your serviceperson. If your serviceperson was a Prisoner of War (POW) you may find a *POWs and Missing Persons Roll*. There may also be 'Private Records' for your personal including letters or diaries, etc.

Remember to add any missing detail to the serviceperson's profile (2. History) and load the URLs with information about your person to the VWMA profile (5. Links).

Unit search

Search for your serviceperson's unit. You might find heraldry, photographs and other images related to the unit or personal diaries from other people in your serviceperson's unit. Scroll down further to locate 'Digitised Collection', to find the Unit Diary for your person's battalion.

Alternatively, a simpler way to find the Unit Diary, is to google 'AWM Unit Diary [name of the unit]'. Check the results carefully to select the Unit Diary from the Second World War.

Cross check with the person's Service Record to work out when they were active with the unit. Find the monthly sections of the Unit Diary relevant to your serviceperson.

Refer to [Guide to Reading a Unit Diary](#) and/or view [How to Access War Diaries (5:17mins)](#) but be aware that how the researcher in the clip navigates the AWM to find the war diaries has now changed. For help with understanding the abbreviations used refer the VWMA guide [Abbreviations and Glossary](#). The [NAA abbreviation guide](#), and the [Australian War Memorial Glossary](#) may also be helpful

Remember to load the URLs with information about your person's unit to the VWMA profile (5. Links).
The AWM advanced search will also provide a link to information about the unit (ensure that it is WW2). This information will explain where the unit fought and what happened to them. A list of battles the unit was involved with will also be provided. To find out what happened during these battles refer to the VWMA website.

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5   [VWMA Battles](#)

Click on the relevant battles for your person's unit on the right-hand side of the page to find out more, or alternatively use the timeline feature on the VWMA.

6	[Trove](#)

Refine your search to 'Newspapers and Gazettes' and your serviceperson's home state. Many local newspapers published articles about the men and women who went away to war. You may even find articles referencing your serviceperson before and after they went to war. Search with different with different variations of your serviceperson's name and initials enclosed in inverted commas. Try their first and last name; use their initials only with their last name and try including their rank. For example: "Private Hewitt Henry Bell", or "H. H. Bell" or "H. Williams", or "Pte Hewitt Henry Bell", or "Pte H.H. Williams", or "Pte H. Williams".

Click on [i] to find the reference details to use in your biography reference list and the page identifier URL to load to your serviceperson's profile.

7	[VWMA](#)

Revisit your search about your serviceperson. Were there any *Personal Stories* loaded to their profile? The information here could be useful to understand more about their life before, during and after their service.

Information to look out for:

Where did their unit fight and what was the outcome? Create a brief timeline. Remember to cross check with your person's Service Record timeline to ensure your person was not absent during the battles the unit was involved with.

Were they posted (moved) to another unit (Hint: look for TOS or Taken on Strength):

Details of training and detachment to other units:

Did they get sick? How long were they in hospital?

Were they wounded or killed in action? What happened and where? Where are they buried/commemorated?

If they were killed or died, can you find out anything about their family and community? For example, is there an obituary notice in a local newspaper or an account of the funeral that lists family members?

Did they return from service? Die of illness?

Any other information you have found (e.g.: Absent without leave AWL)

Any honours or awards? This may be mentioned in their service record but also refer to [AWM Honours and Awards](#)

If you are researching an ancestor who served it is critical that you interview as many family members as possible to cross check information. Take brief notes for each interview and add these as documents to your ancestor's profile. Add details about who you interviewed, where, and when in your reference list.

Life after the war

Use the following websites to research your serviceperson's life after the war and answer the questions which follow. Record any other interesting information that you could include in their biography. Remember to add links to information that is specifically about the person to their profile (5. Links).

8	Trove
	Check Trove again for any articles about their life after their return from war. Their Service Record (NAA) may also provide some information about their life once they returned to Australia.

9	Find a grave
	Cemetery Search
	If your serviceperson <u>survived</u> the war use the above websites to find where they are buried:

10	VWMA
	Revisit your search about your serviceperson to check if there is an RSL badge showing.
	This indicates that the serviceperson joined the RSL. The RSL records information about their members including details related to their family members. Contact us to find out what information the RSL has schools.program@vwma.org.au or phone 0439 559 759.

Information to look out for:

What did they do when they returned to Australia (if applicable)? There could be articles referring to their involvement in the community or their working life. Did they get married, remain married, have children? Did they serve in another conflict?

If they were killed or died, can you find out anything about their family and community? For example, is there an obituary notice in a local newspaper or an account of the funeral that lists family members?

Any other interesting information you have found?

11	**Finding Photographs**
	Not every serviceperson has an individual photo, but you should be able to find relevant photographs of their unit, ships they were on, places they trained or fought etc. Refer to the guide Finding Photographs. Load photographs to the serviceperson's profile (4. Photos) following the instructions once on the page.
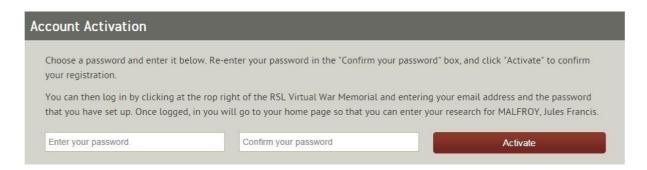
Prepare your biography for your serviceperson – For guidance refer to Writing a VWMA Biography

Activating Your Account

You will automatically receive an email with a link to set up a password and activate your account. **Tip:** Save your password on your device or keep it in your phone.

The next time you sign into the Virtual War Memorial, you will be taken straight to your project.

If you navigate away from your project to look at other information on the site, you can quickly return by selecting the 'Your Project' link in the top right-hand corner of the page.

VIRTUAL WAR MEMORIAL AUSTRALIA

COMPLETING A PROFILE

Completing the Profile

Navigate through the profile by completing fields and clicking 'Save' at the bottom of each section, or by using the links under 'Progress' in the left-hand navigation menu.

1. Details

Complete as many of the personal details about your individual as you can discover from your research. Most of the section is very straightforward; below are some tips to help you with the trickier sections.

Hometown

Start entering the name of the town and then select the appropriate option from a drop-down list. If the town is not listed, add the town by clicking Add Town... and entering the name of the town, state, and country.

Cemetery

As with hometown, start to type in the name of a cemetery and then select from a drop-down list. If the cemetery is not listed, click Add New... and enter the details name, address, state, and country.

Remember to Save what you have done.

2. History

Some details may already be entered, and these will not be able to be altered. These may include enlistment, embarkation, conflict involvements, discharge, or other events. However, this is unlikely to be a complete list.

To build an individual's history:

1. Click Add a History Event
2. Define the type of event by selecting an option from the drop-list. The selection will determine which fields need information. Select from:

- **Discharge** – Leaving military service. Enter the date. In the service field, start typing the service, e.g. 2nd AIF WW2, then select from the drop-down list. Select the conflict from the drop-down list.

- **Embarkation** – The individual was loaded on to transport to be sent overseas. Enter the date, service, rank, conflict, and unit with which they served, e.g. 10th Field Ambulance.

- **Honours and Awards** – This includes medals. Enter the date, conflict, and campaign e.g. Battle of Romani. In the Medal field, start typing the name of the honour e.g. Distinguished Service Order and select from the drop-down list.

- **Involvement** – The conflicts in which they served. Enter the date, service, rank e.g. Squadron Leader and select from drop down list, campaign, unit, and date their involvement ended.

- **POW** – Internment as a Prisoner of War. Enter dates from and to, conflict and campaign.

- **Promotion** – Promotions received from one rank to another, e.g. promoted from corporal to sergeant. Enter date, service, rank promoted to, conflict and unit.

- **Transfer** – Movement of individual between units. Enter date, service, rank, conflict, and unit.

- **Wounded** – Wounds received in service. Enter the date, conflict, campaign.

The required details are very brief. You can enter more information into the details field at the bottom of the page.

3. Click **Save**

4. Add more history events by repeating the process.

3. Biography

Enter the biography you have created for your individual. For help with composing a biography see our 'Writing a VWMA Biography' resource.

It is recommended that you complete this task in a Word document (or similar). Proof-read and edit, before copying and pasting into the Biography field.

You will then need to format the biography using the menu at the top of the field.

4. Photos

To add images:

1. Click **Add a Picture**
2. Select the image from your computer, click Open.
3. Enter details including the date taken, if known, and a caption.
4. Include an attribution. This is where the image came from and who owns it. If you do not add an attribution, the image will not be saved.
5. Set the image as the profile photo by selecting the check box (if there is more than one, select the best one).
6. Click **Save**

5. Links

1. Click **Add a Link**
2. Enter the name of the link in the 'Link Text' section, e.g., Australian War Memorial – Nominal Roll or National Archives of Australia – Service Record
3. Enter the URL
4. Click **Save**

6. Documents

To add files:

1. Click **Add a Resource**
2. Select the file you want to add and click Open.
3. Enter the name of the file, e.g. Diary of Lieutenant Commander CJP Hill HMAS Parramatta.
4. Click **Save**

7. Submit

Click 'Submit to Teacher' button.

The project will be ready to be assessed and moderated.

No changes are possible unless the teacher sends it back to you.

Curating MALFROY, Jules Francis

Step 7: Submit

Draco, your name will ALWAYS be associated with Jules Francis MALFROY.

So to honour his memory make sure that you have done your best in finding all you can and that the information is correct and presented properly.

If you are satisfied that you can do nothing more, please submit to your teacher.

Submit to Teacher
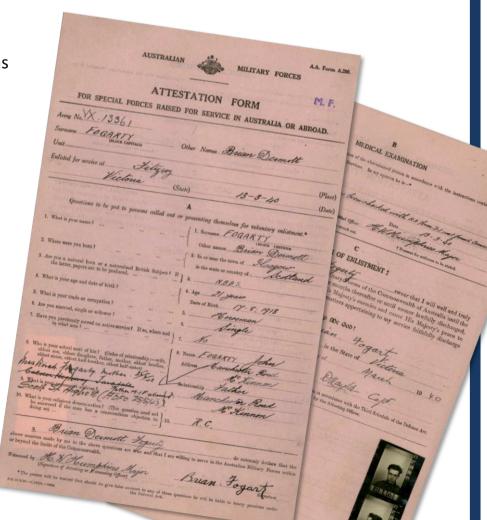
Second World War (1939-45)

Service Records often hold the key to understanding the experiences of men and women before, during and after conflict. But they are not always easy sources to read.

This guide will help you to understand Australian service records from the Second World War. It contains:

I.   AIF/CMF Service Records (i.e. the land forces)

II.   RAAF Service Records (air force)

III.   RAN Service Records (navy)

IV.   Reading handwriting

V.   Keywords and abbreviations

VI.   Handwriting exercise

VII. Where to go for more help

AIF/CMF SERVICE RECORDS
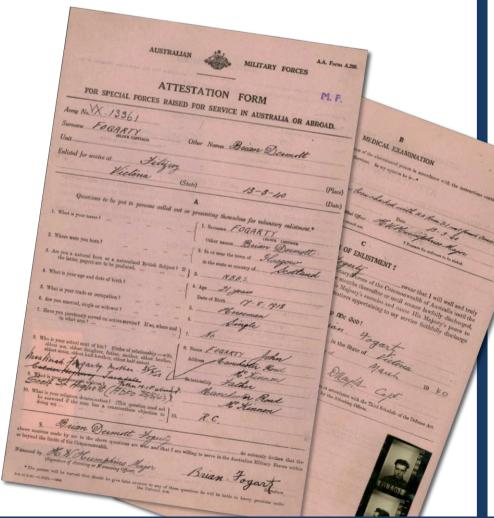
Parts of AIF/CMF Service Records

*During the Second World War, Australia maintained two armies: the **Second AIF** (for overseas service) and the **CMF** (also known as the **Militia**, for service in Australia and New Guinea). **AIF members' service numbers contain an X.***

Service Records normally contain three groups of documents:

1. Attestation Paper. In the CMF this was the *Mobilization Attestation Form* and in the Second AIF it was the *Attestation Form for special forces raised for service in Australia or abroad*. It was completed on enlistment and normally gives address, next of kin, age as well as date and place of birth.

2. Service and Casualty Form. For officers, this was the *Officer's Record of Service*, which had a slightly different format. This form shows movements, transfers between units, absences through wounds or illness, promotions and decorations.

3. Other documents. These include discharge forms, correspondence with the serviceperson or their family, and receipts for medals.

AIF/CMF SERVICE RECORDS

The **Attestation Paper** is a two sided form, sometimes compressed into one page. The front page gives personal information, such date of birth, address, occupation, and next of kin. The person enlisting signed the form at the bottom; if the signature is readable, you can use it to check the spelling of his or her name. The second page records the medical examination and (sometimes) the oath. Soldiers had to be passed medically fit (Class I) or an explanation given for how they could serve. The actual enlistment date is the day the oath was taken.

Date of enlistment

Date of birth & Occupation

Next of kin, address and relationship

This is the date Reg Sheehan took the oath: 13/10/39. This made him legally a soldier.

AIF/CMF SERVICE RECORDS

The **Service and Casualty Form** (or **Officer's Record of Service**) is where you will find most of the information about what happened during the period of service.

- Transfer from one place, hospital or unit to another

- Changing status (e.g. promotion, disciplinary action, decorations)

- Wounded, missing, dead

It often also contains other medical information. Please treat this information with respect when writing your biography, particularly if it is not related to service. So instead of stating specific illnesses, you could write that the serviceman was hospitalised for an infection.

A Casualty Form was written on by many different military clerks, often with quite different handwriting, and contains many abbreviations and acronyms. It is often hard to read.

| When the event was reported, not when it happened. **Note the unit**; otherwise ignore. | This is the most important field: **what actually happened**. | When and where the event actually happened: **this is important.** Often quite generic: O'seas, ME (Middle East). | References to the military filing system; this can be safely ignored. |

AIF/CMF SERVICE RECORDS

Service Records sometimes contain discharge papers, which can provide a wealth of information. This man served in the CMF 1940-42 and in the Second AIF 1942-46, before being discharged for disciplinary reasons.

This document shows the **service** (or **campaign**) **medals**, issued to all soldiers who met the eligibility criteria.

Charles Coombs served in the Pacific Theatre and so received the **Pacific Star**. He also received the **1939/45 Star**, the **Defence Medal**, the **War Medal** and the Australia **Service Med- al**. See www.defence.gov.au/Medals/Imperial/WWII.

RAAF SERVICE RECORDS
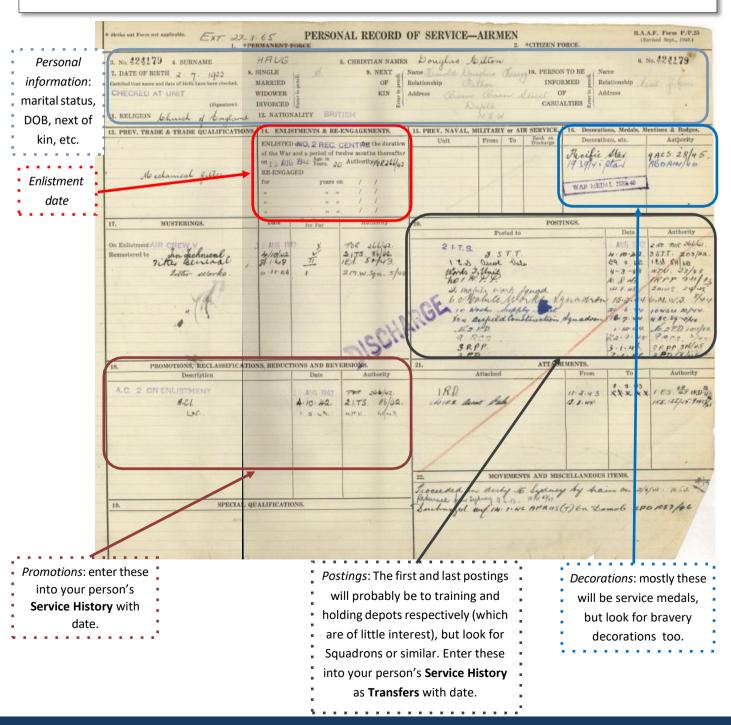
Personal Record of Service

This was a printed A3 sheet. The **Airmen** and **Officers'** forms record much the same information but with a different layout: basically, the Airmen form has numbered sections and the Officers' does not. If your person was promoted from Airman to Officer the file will contain both forms, and you will need to read both to find all the relevant information.

This form gives most key information about a person's service. Pay particular attention to these areas:

Personal information: marital status, DOB, next of kin, etc.

Enlistment date

Promotions: enter these into your person's **Service History** with date.

Postings: The first and last postings will probably be to training and holding depots respectively (which are of little interest), but look for Squadrons or similar. Enter these into your person's **Service History** as **Transfers** with date.

Decorations: mostly these will be service medals, but look for bravery decorations too.

RAAF SERVICE RECORDS

The RAAF personnel file may contain other documents: enlistment or attestation papers, conduct sheets, and RAF documents if the person was seconded to the RAF.

The file often contains a head-and-shoulder **photograph** of the person taken at enlistment. Zoom in as far as you can and take a screenshot of this photo, so you can use it as your person's **Key Image**. Make sure you note information for the **Caption** (in the format "Enlistment Photo of Person X, Service Number") and the **Attribution** ("From NAA Personnel File" with link).

RAN SERVICE RECORDS

RAN service cards are short and simple but provide good high-level information about service. The first page will give all the relevant personal information: date and place of birth, height and appearance, next of kin, enlistment date and occupation. Beyond that it will normally only give changes in rank, the ships or depots he or she served on and the dates for each. This information can be entered into your person's **Service History**.

READING HANDWRITING

This can be the trickiest part of reading Second World War service records, but don't let it stop you from understanding the document. Think of it as a puzzle or a coded message: start by finding words that you can read easily. Write it all out; this ensures you read every word and helps you spot gaps.

Follow the steps below, stick with it and you will get there.

 = r

 = is = is

 = pp

 = L

 = v

 = k

Disembarked
Appointed L/Cpl
Evac 1 A Gen Hosp (Papill…
Promoted Cpl
Discharged 1 AGH.

A few techniques for reading those difficult words:

- **Use the context**. Can you guess the uncertain word from those around it? Can you at least work out what sort of word it is (e.g. a name, a rank).

- Bear in mind this was written by a clerk who was probably in a hurry. He may not have crossed his t's or dotted his i's. He may have had difficulty fitting his letters into the space.

- **Compare** the difficult letters with other letters in words you can read. Perhaps the clerk has an unusual way of writing an *S* or a *D*, and you've seen it written in another word. **Writing out these letters to form a "letter key"** (as above) is a really helpful technique. But not foolproof: note the similarity between *k* and *L* in the example above.

- Beware of letter combinations. The letters *in* often look like *m*; *h* can look like *k* or *d*; *n* can look like *u*.

- **Write down the possibilities** in a difficult word: (1) the letters you're certain of, (2) the letters where it might be a *d* or a *h* or a *k*, and (3) the letters you have no idea of. Work through the various combinations until you have one which fits.

- Isolate the difficult words and **get someone else to look at them** – without telling them what you think the word is.

Although it is great to be able to read every word in a Service Record, sometimes even professional historians find this difficult. You can get around this by looking for important keywords that will help you to discover and tell the story of your soldier. Below are some of the main keywords and their common abbreviations, so you know what to look for. Remember: different clerks might use different abbreviations.

Term	Common abbreviation	What it means	Example
Lines of Communication Area	L of C Area	An Australian state (e.g. Qld, SA), for army support purposes.	
Marched In/Out	M/I, M/O	To join or leave a unit (often with ex = 'from, our of').	
Admitted	Adm	Admitted to hospital, sick or wounded.	
Take on Strength	T.O.S.	Transferring to a unit, and so being counted as part of its 'strength'.	
Absent Without Leave	A.W.L	A crime: being away from one's unit without permission.	
Transferred	Tfd or Transfd	Moved to another unit or hospital.	
Embarked / Entrained / Emplaned	Emb.	Got on a ship (or train or aeroplane)	
Ditto	do or "	The same as above	

EXERCISE

Those are the techniques.
Let's practice.

Here are five lines from a Casualty Form for a Second AIF soldier who fought in New Guinea. Bearing in mind there are abbreviations here, make a list:

- Which words can you read easily?

- Which can you probably read, or read with difficulty?

- And which can't you read?

Let's narrow down that middle list, the words you can read with difficulty:

- Which letters are you sure of? **Write them out**.

- Of the letters you're not sure about, **do any resemble letters in the words you know?**

- **Apply the techniques** we learned on previous pages. Look at the list of common abbreviations.

- What was his offence? And what was the punishment?

Now you probably have most of the words figured out, with a few you're still not sure of. What type of word needs to go in that spot? Is it a place name? Ask other students, or your teacher. If you still can't work it out, take a screenshot, attach a link and email the Schools Program Manager: schools.program@vwma.org.au.

Sometimes no matter how hard you try, you just cannot find the information you need. That is ok; there is a lot of help out there.

For help with understanding abbreviations, see our Abbreviations and Glossary on the VWMA website, plus:

Australian War Memorial Glossary: https://www.awm.gov.au/learn/glossary

National Archives of Australia Abbreviations used in WW1 and WW2 Service Records:

https://www.naa.gov.au/explore-collection/defence-and-war-service-records/researching-war-service/abbreviations-used-world-war-i-and-world-war-ii-service-records

Can't find the answer there, or have other questions about the service records? Visit the Virtual War Memorial Schools Program page on Facebook and post your question. We will answer your questions as quickly as we can. Or email us at: schools.program@vwma.org.au

A group at Headquarters 11 Division listening to the radio for news of the projected Japanese surrender.
Australian War Memorial, 095256 .

VIRTUAL WAR MEMORIAL AUSTRALIA

Ground Floor
Torrens Training Depot
1 Victoria Drive
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Phone: 0493 559 759
www.vwma.org.au

Unit Diaries
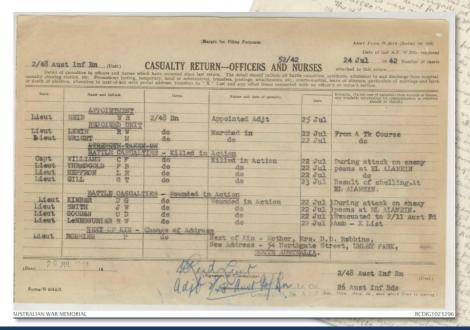
Service records can only give you a limited amount of information. For example, they rarely tell you exactly where someone was wounded or killed and don't really give you any idea of what they actually did. This is where the unit diaries are important.

Unit diaries kept track of the daily activities of headquarters, formations and units and casualty lists. The appendices at the end of the diary may also include orders, reports, intelligence, photos, maps and sketches, but they are not always easy sources to read.

This guide will help you to understand Australian unit diaries from World Wars One and Two. It contains:

I.   Finding what you need

II.   Understanding casualty Lists

III.   Reading handwriting

IV.   Looking for keywords

V.   Where to go for more help

Finding What you Need

Official unit diaries may contain a lot of information. There is a simple way of finding what you want quickly without having to read every single page from beginning to end.

Look for dates

This is the key to finding out the extra information that does not appear in the individual's service record. Look for specific dates on which your individual was wounded/killed.

Use the unit diaries to fill in "gaps" in the service record. For example, if your serviceperson was with the 2nd/10th Australian Infantry Battalion during World War Two in April 1941, he was probably involved in the siege of Tobruk, which lasted from 10 April to 25 October. Read what the unit was doing in its diary at that time. This will give you a better idea of what your serviceperson experienced.

Remember it wasn't all about firing machine guns and being hit by artillery shells. The unit diary gives you a great idea of the overall experience of service.

1. Look for dates ←

PURIATA RIVER AREA

On night 21/22 Nov flashing lights were observed near the mouth of the PURIATA RIVER. Air reconnaissance over the area the following day revealed 3 Japanese dragging stores across the beach towards the jungle 300 yards north of the river mouth. Nearby were skid marks in the sand from the water line to the jungle. Later, numerous fires were observed in the vicinity and up river as far as HAIGI MISSION. Presence of considerable numbers of enemy in the area was also confirmed by air sightings of new gardens, some being several acres in extent.

Enemy casualties to 21 Nov are:-

Killed   9890
Captured   103

The unit diaries provide clear descriptions of the nature of warfare and the situations soldiers ←

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information
TOBRUK	8 Apr	0500	Stand to. Coys. consolidating. 3 ITALIAN 100 mm. guns put into commission in Bn. area Our patrols out all night along Bn. front.
"	9 Apr	0930	Heavy air raid on TOBRUK. Another ITALIAN 100 mm. gun put into commission; and 3 47 mm. A/Ts put into commission. Coys. consolidating.
		2000	Heavy A/A barrage over TOBRUK. Our patrols out all night.
"	10 Apr	1000	Bad dust storm German plane machine-guns "C" Coy.
		1200	Preparations for relief commence.
		1730	Relief by 43 and 48 Bns. begins.
	11 Apr	0030	Bn. embussed; relief completed except for "A" Coy.
		0230	Bn. arrives at WADI AUDI. Troops settle down for night.
	12 Apr	0300	Bn. preparing to move.
		0330	Embuss proceed to area at X-roads BARDIA -EL ADEM Rds.
	13 Apr		Coys. settling down -digging on inner perimeter. 3 Tommy guns and gunners sent to BDE. H.Q.
	14 Apr	0325	Enemy break through on night at EL ADEM RD.
		0700	Shells falling on X-Roads. Air raid in progress. Tank battle in valley approx. 1 mile from our B.H.Q.
		0840	German planes machine-gunned Bn. area - no casualties.
		0910	Mobile patrol sent out. 1 platoon motorized inf and 1 se carriers

Understanding Casualty Lists

As well as recording what happened in and to the unit on a daily basis, unit diaries contain the casualty lists. This is the number of service personnel sick, wounded, or killed according to their status; commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers and "other ranks", ie. everyone else.

For frontline units such as infantry and artillery, these lists were incredibly important for commanding officers, as they needed to know the "strength of the regiment", ie. how many men they would have for future actions.

Commissioned officers, such as Lieutenants and Majors were often listed by name.
Non-commissioned officers (NCOs) such as Corporals and Sergeants, and other ranks (ORs), eg. Privates, were often just numbered.

For example, from the fighting in Monash Valley at the beginning of the August Offensive on the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1915, the 2nd Australian Light Horse Regiment had 1 Major and 2 Lieutenants, 1 non-commissioned officer and 13 other ranks killed,

	Killed	Wounded
Majors	1	0
Lieutenants	2	1
Non-commissioned officers	1	9
Other Ranks	13	27

Casualty lists were not just for killed and wounded men. The fighting strength of units could be just as badly affected by illness.

READING HANDWRITING

This can be the trickiest part of reading World War One unit diaries (the World War Two unit diaries are often typed), but don't let it stop you from understanding these documents. Think of it as a puzzle; follow the steps below, stick with it and you will get there.

1.   Think of it like a coded message and start by finding words that you can read easily.

2.   Use the letters in these words to start to read other words. You can even create an alphabet (by hand or with the computer).

Route March—Full Marching Order

Inspection & Gas drill. Firing practice

3.   Some letters can look similar, eg. "r" and "n", so look at the surrounding letters and think logically. "M a n c h" doesn't make sense, but "M a r c h" does.

4.   Remember that joining letters together might make them look like something different. Eg. "in" might look like an "m".

5.   Show the word to someone else, without telling them what you think the word is.

Tried all of the above and still stuck? The RSL Virtual War Memorial team is here to help. Turn to page 6, to find out how to get in touch with us.

LOOKING FOR KEYWORDS

Although it is great to be able to read every word in a unit diary, sometimes even professional historians find this difficult. You can get around this by looking for important keywords that will help you to discover and tell the story of your service person. The following list includes some of the keywords should help you to understand the soldier's experiences from the unit diary.

1. **Casualty** - this is usually associated with a list of the number of personnel who have killed, wounded or hospitalised due to illness.

2. **Attack** - this could refer to an action by the Australians or by the enemy.

3. **Engaged/contacted** - when the Australian forces fight with or are attacked by enemy forces

4. **Patrol** - when a group go out to scout or survey territory for signs of enemy. This will show up often in unit diaries for World War Two where Australians were fighting in environments like jungles.

5. **Enemy** - this is an obvious one, but very important for understanding both attacks, and the preparations that troops would make.

Unit Diary of the 2nd Australian Light Horse Regiment, August 1915.

War Diary of the 2nd Australian Corp General Staff (Intelligence), November 1944.

Note: this assumes you have already researched your person's Service Record and other war service documents.

What about my person's life before and after the war?

You know some of your person's pre-war life already: where they were born, their next of kin, their occupation, where they lived. That's a good starting point for researching their life before the war and, if they came home, afterwards as well.

Trove (https://trove.nla.gov.au/) is the best way to find information on your person's life in Australia, especially the "Newspapers and Gazettes" search. Many local newspapers published articles about the men and women who went to war.

Select "Newspapers and Gazettes" from the dropdown menu in the search bar or select it from the *Advanced Search* option under the search bar and refine your search to your serviceperson's home state.

Search with different with different variations of your serviceperson's name and initials enclosed in inverted commas. Try their first and last name; use their initials only with their last name and try including their rank. For example: "Private Hewitt Henry Bell", or "H. H. Bell" or "H. Williams", or "Pte Hewitt Henry Bell", or "Pte H.H. Williams", or "Pte H. Williams".

Click on [i] to find the reference details to use in your reference list and the page identifier URL to load to your person's VWMA profile.

See the Appendix at the end of this file for more about Trove.

Refer to the model searches on the following pages, to show you practical ways to find information.

Example 1: Stanley Quicke 6574, 10th Battalion AIF (World War 1)

We know from the Embarkation Roll and the Attestation Paper that Stanley was born in Hamilton SA, lived in Magill SA, and was a labourer when he enlisted in August 1916. He was 23, single, and gave his Next of Kin as his mother Charlotte Quicke of St Bernards Rd, Magill:

| 6574 | Quicke, Stanley Hubert .. | ,, | .. | 23 | ,, | .. | S. | Magill. South Australia | .. | Mother, Mrs. C. Quicke, St. Bernards-road, Magill, South Australia | Meth. | 14.8.16 | .. |
| 6575 | Rhue, Thomas Edward Lindsay | ,, | .. | 21 | Farm labourer | .. | S. | Tailem Bend, S.A. | .. | Mother, Mrs. A. Rhue, Tailem Bend, S.A. | Meth. | 13.4.16 | .. |

Here are the searches and some possible results:

"Stanley Hubert Quicke". *The Advertiser*, 17 Sep 1907, Stanley's results in the Public Service Examination. Hmm, he would have been 13 at the time – too young to be taking that exam. This is probably another person of the same name, maybe an uncle or cousin.

"Stanley Quicke". This produces many results with "quick" which are no good, but also this: *Barrier Miner*, 21 Apr 1923. A reference to the death of "Stanley H. Quicke (late 10th Battalion)".
That's him – so he died in 1923. But hang on – that says "Mrs W.J. Quicke" and we know his mother's name was Charlotte. What's going on? Answer: in 1923 the

social custom was for married women to be referred to by their husband's name, e.g. "Mr and Mrs Thomas Jones". So W.J. are Stanley's father's initials.

"S.H. Quicke", "Stan Quicke". Some useful ones from during the war: references to him entering camp (15 Aug 1916), being wounded (10 Sep 1918) and being about to return home (24 Jul 1919). An unexpected gem: a notice he put in the paper for a "dear friend" who died in France (6 Mar 1918).
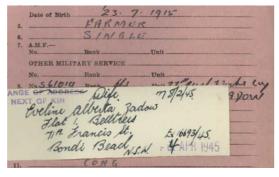
That's probably as much as we can get from his name. Other combinations: quicke magill; quicke Hamilton; "charlotte quicke" "w.j. quicke". Again, "quick" annoyingly complicates the results, but we learn the father was William James and he died in 1920.

Example 2: Donald Zadow S61014/SX35345 (World War 2)

Donald served within Australia from late 1941 onwards. We know from the Service Record he was born in Mannum SA and lived at Bakara SA as a farmer. His original Next of Kin was his father Gustav Reinhold Zadow, but he married Eveline Alberta Zadow during the war; she was living at Bondi Beach in Sydney.
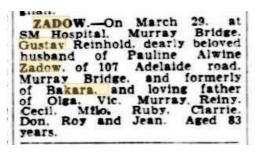
Searches for "Donald Lyle Zadow" and "Donald Zadow" show he was allocated 493 acres at Mt Burr as a war service lease (*The South Eastern Times*, 30 May 1952) and that he underwent a spinal operation (*The South Eastern Times*, 12 Oct 1954). The second article says he lived at a property called "Wavalie", Mount McIntyre, which is very close to Mt Burr; presumably this was the land he was granted. But this is the point at which Trove cuts out, so we won't learn much further about that property.

"D.L. Zadow" is quite fruitful: we learn of Donald's land allocation and that he worked with the Land Development executive after 1947 (*The Pennant*,. 12 Oct 1950), and that he was selling his dairy cows "because of his health" (*The South Eastern Times*, 28 Jul 1953). However, because this last piece is an advertisement it is even less trustworthy than anything else you would find in a newspaper.

"Gustav Zadow" Bakara. This brings up his father's death notice (*The Advertiser*, 30 Mar 1954), which gives a lot more family information. You could search for these family members if you wanted. There is a good chance some of them also served.

"Eveline Zadow" and "Eveline Alberta" (because we don't know her maiden name) produce nothing of use.

Other possible searches: "zadow mannum", "zadow bakara", "don zadow".
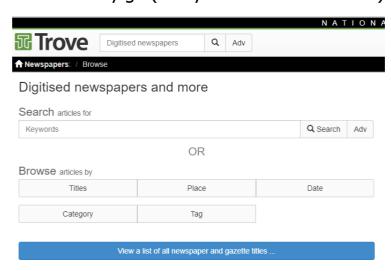
Appendix: What is Trove?

Trove (trove.nla.gov.au) is a digital database of historical resources from Australia, maintained by the National Library in Canberra. It is especially useful because of its collection of *digitised newspapers* from all over Australia, from as long ago as we had newspapers. It has all the major city papers and many of the country ones, and it has their complete runs: every page of every day.

It's a fantastically useful resource for Australian history, but there are two downsides:

1. Most newspapers only go up until 1954 for copyright reasons.
2. The basis of Trove is images of newspaper pages. This is turned into machine-readable (and -searchable) text by a process called Optical Character Recognition (OCR). OCR is pretty accurate, but works on the Garbage In, Garbage Out principle: if the original image is blurry, it won't produce accurate text. Volunteers often correct the OCR'd text as they go (and you can volunteer too!)

All this means that you can search Trove's newspaper collection for information about your person, but you probably won't find anything after 1954 and you will miss some references because the OCR hasn't recognised their name correctly. But it's still pretty good.

For more practical help in using Trove, view this help video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aykJojiO3Vk&t=10s) and refer to this guide from the State Library (www.slsa.sa.gov.au/searching-trove).

And remember you are dealing with newspapers; they aren't always going to tell the truth.

This Research Guide will show you how to find photographs of Australians in war. Not every person will have an individual photograph. But you should at least be able to find relevant photographs of their unit, ships they were on, places they trained or fought etc.

SEARCH TERMS

When searching for an individual, try their name in a variety of formats. For instance, for James Holmes Fleming, 3107 of the 57th Infantry Battalion, search for:

- Fleming 3107
- James Fleming
- James Holmes Fleming
- J. H. Fleming
- Fleming 57th

The titles below are hyperlinked.
Click to go to the website

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1 | ## Australian War Memorial

The AWM is your best source with over 300,000 photos in its collection. You can filter and browse through relevant photos. The left-hand column allows you to filter by Conflict, by Unit, and by Place. Filtering for (e.g.) "First World War" and "10th Australian Infantry Battalion" gives you about 260 photos. You will probably be able to find something relevant to your person's service.

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2 | ## Trove

Refine your search to 'Newspapers and Gazettes' and your serviceperson's home state. Many local newspapers published articles about the men and women who went away to war. You may even find articles referencing your serviceperson before and after they went to war. Search with different with different variations of your serviceperson's name and initials enclosed in inverted commas. Try their first and last name; use their initials only with their last name and try including their rank. For example: "Private Hewitt Henry Bell", or "H. H. Bell" or "H. Williams", or "Pte Hewitt Henry Bell", or "Pte H.H. Williams", or "Pte H. Williams".

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3 | ## VWMA Flickr   See the VWMA photo collection on Flickr.

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4 | ## National Library of Australia

Enter your search terms. Limit the format to "Picture". Set the date published between to e.g., 1914 and 1918 for contemporary photos.

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5 | ## Imperial War Museum

The IWM in the UK has its own massive collection of photographs: nearly 11 million. These cover Australian troops as well as British. If your searches bring up too many results, add "Australian" or "AIF"

6	**State Library of South Australia (SLSA) / State Records of South Australia (SRSA)**

Both organisations have put most of their photo collections online. However, they are loaded as albums, so it is difficult to search for specific names or terms.

Try the SRSA collection of *World War 1 Soldier, Sailor, and Nurse Photographs*. Look for your serviceperson's name in the [Special List](#) and if they are listed, go to the [State Records Flickr](#) page to find the photograph in the album.

Part of the SLSA WW1 collection, can be found here: [collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/find/world+war+1914](#).

Other SLSA WWI albums: [www.flickr.com/photos/state_library_south_australia/albums](#).

You can also search the SLSA and SRSA collections from anywhere in [Flickr](#) by adding SLSA or SRSA to your search terms. This works well when searching for units rather than individuals, for example: '10th Battalion SLSA' or '10th Battalion SRSA'.

7	**Other State Libraries**

NSW State Library of NSW / NSW State Archives and Records

The [State Library of NSW](#) has some photographs. Limit the search to 'Pictures' by clicking on the format dropdown menu.

The NSW State Archives and Records has a [NSW and Anzac Centenary](#) collection, which includes many photos.

State Library of Queensland

The State Library of Queensland has an extensive soldier portrait collection: Use the [One Search](#) option and search with the 'soldiers surname' and the word 'soldiers' to limit the search to the correct collection (e.g., Tunney soldiers)

Libraries Tasmania

Libraries Tasmania has a [World War 1 Soldiers Collection](#) of over 10,000 soldiers and nurses from First World War, including many portraits taken from newspapers. It's best to search by surname only:

State Library of Victoria

Search the [State Library of Victoria](#)'s main page and in the search bar, change the type to "pictures & photographs". You can also filter the searches by date range (select e.g., 1910 - 1950) and restrict the results to online-only.

Western Australia

The [State Library of Western Australia](#) also many photographs, complete a catalogue search and limit the search to 'keyword' and 'State Library Pictures'. You will only be able to access the results that are online.

Upload to VWMA

Load relevant photographs to the person's VWMA profile (4. Photos). Further instructions regarding how to upload the photos are available on the upload page.

A biography is the story of a person's life, told by someone else. You have already completed the difficult task of collecting the information. Now, the aim is to convert that information into an interesting story people will want to engage with!

Step 1 – Gather your information

Bring together all the information you have discovered on your person. You may have completed this in your serviceperson research guide template. You will need to complete a reference list so ensure you have all the details you need.

Is anything missing? Could there be letters, diaries, oral histories, interviews available? A general internet search might help.

Step 2 – Prepare an outline and consider how to present your work

Presentation: Do you want to present your work in a written or audiovisual format?

Create a **timeline** of your person's life – which events would you like to talk about in more detail? Which events sound more interesting or exciting? Plan your work.

If preparing an audiovisual presentation gather the images, you will use to complete it.

Remember! A biography is a recount – events need to be in **chronological order** and in the **past tense**.

Step 3 - Prepare the biography

If preparing a written biography, complete it in Word to assist with the checking of spelling and grammar. Tell a story using continuous prose with short paragraphs, rather than using dot points. There is no need to have titles in your biography, but you can use them if you wish.

What to include:

Life Before the War

Birth, parents, siblings, and residence. Relationships to others who served Australia are also helpful.

School records and previous employment help set the scene of your person's life before the war. Did they serve in the cadets or militia before going to war?

Life During the War

Enlistment, embarkation, re-assignment (where and when it took place). Many soldiers embarked with one unit and ended up in another.

Absences such as illness, courses/training and detachment to other units are generally recorded in the service record. Before you assume that they were involved in a particular battle, check to make sure that they were not absent.

Any decorations (Honours or Awards)? These are a great opportunity to tell the story of why your person was awarded that honour.

Life after the War

Did your person make it home? If not, what were the events surrounding their death?

If they did make it home, what kind of life did they lead after the war? Did they get married, have children, start a business, serve in another war or conflict?

Step 4 - Added Extras

Quotations are great evidence of your individual's life and service – but one or two are generally enough, so pick the best ones.

Personal details are a great way to add depth to your biography. Some questions to consider:

- What did the person like, and dislike?
- What did others think of them?
- What was important to them?
- Why did they sign up for service?
- Who did they leave behind?

Checklist – Have I...

Written the biography as a recount using past tense? Kept to the verifiable facts?
Referenced the sources used to write the biography? Uploaded links to documents and sources you used?
Uploaded the photographs and images you have found with referencing?

Virtual War Memorial Australia

Monitoring Student Progress

Use your school admin page to monitor what information students have added to their serviceperson's profile.

1. Log-in to your school admin page at the VWMA and scroll down to the list of students near the bottom of the page.

   You will be able to see the 'Status' of the student's work. For example, below the student Todd Hainsworth has not entered any information to his serviceperson's profile.

   If a student has begun adding to the profile, their 'Status' will change to [Started]

Name ▲	Status	Year	Group	Parental Permission	Curating				
Hermione Grainger	Published	2015	Gryffindor	Yes	GRAINGER, Alexander	✏️ ⬇️		🔍 ✏️	
Todd Hainsworth	Not Started	2015	Gryffindor	No	BENSON, Albert	✏️ ⬇️		🔍 ✏️ 🗑️	
Harry Potter	Awaiting Review	2015	Gryffindor	No	POTTER, Harry	✏️ ⬇️		🔍 ✏️ 🗑️	

2. Click ✏️ next to the name of the serviceperson the student has researched to view what information they have entered. You will be able to see the history entered and related links, documents and images submitted by the student.

Moderation

Teachers are asked to mark* the biography prepared by the student and carefully check what the student has loaded to the serviceperson's profile before it can be considered for publishing by the VWMA. Please ensure that students have included a reference list and loaded any documents or links to sources used to complete the biography. This is particularly important for students who research a family member. Short summaries of interviews, including who was interviewed and the date it was conducted, is required. Where possible, students should consult with as many family members as possible to cross check facts. They should then 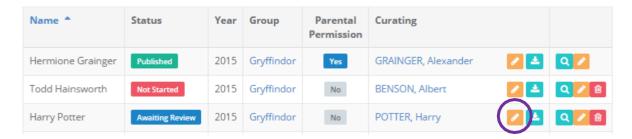verify facts with available historical documents.   *Refer to the suggested assessment rubric provided by the VWMA

To assist with editing, students are advised to complete the biography of their serviceperson in Word before they add it to the profile. You may have already drafted this work before the student loads it to the profile for their serviceperson.

When students have added all the information they have researched about their serviceperson to the profile, they will submit their work to their teacher, and it will appear as "Awaiting Review".

To moderate and approve work entered by students:

1. Log-in to your school admin page at the VWMA and scroll down to the list of students near the bottom of the page

Name ▲	Status	Year	Group	Parental Permission	Curating		
Hermione Grainger	Published	2015	Gryffindor	Yes	GRAINGER, Alexander	✏️ ⬇️	🔍 ✏️
Todd Hainsworth	Not Started	2015	Gryffindor	No	BENSON, Albert	✏️ ⬇️	🔍 ✏️ 🗑️
Harry Potter	Awaiting Review	2015	Gryffindor	No	POTTER, Harry	✏️ ⬇️	🔍 ✏️ 🗑️

2. Click ✏️ next to the name of the serviceperson the student has researched. You will be able to view and edit the biography the student has written and any of the fields relating to the serviceperson's personal details. You will also be able to view the history entered and related links, documents and images submitted by the student.

3. Check over the information and biography entered by the student to the profile.

4. To give the student moderation feedback go to the bottom of the page. Select a status from the "Action" drop-down menu and provide the student with a comment in the "Email to Student" box.
   - If you believe that the profile is ready choose "Approve"
   - If the student needs to revise or add to their work select "Send Back" and they will be able to continue working on their project and resubmit when ready.

   The "Publish" and "Reject" fields are used by the VWMA admin so just ignore them.

   To download a copy of what the student has entered, go back to your school admin page, and click ⬇️ to download a pdf copy of the project which can be saved or printed.