Researching someone from Undivided India who died in the First World War - guidance sheet

This bitesize guide is designed to help you research someone from Undivided India, or someone who served with the 'Indian Army' who died in the First World War. Firstly, you will need to decide who you will research... this might be a relative, or you could choose a name from a local war memorial, or you might select a name from a Commonwealth War Graves (CWGC) headstone in one of our cemeteries, or within a parish churchyard local to you.
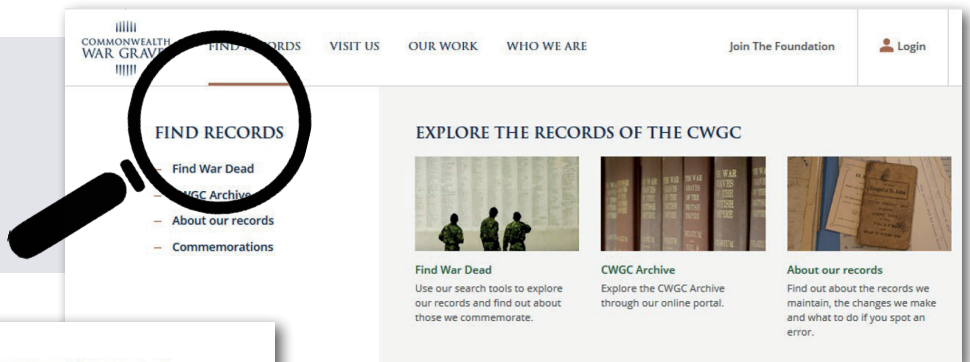
The first stage of your research starts with the **Commonwealth War Graves Commission** Casualty Database. At CWGC, we keep a record of the place of burial or commemoration of all the men and women of the Britain and Commonwealth who died in the First and Second World Wars.

STEP 1: Visit our website at **www.cwgc.org**

Need help..?
Watch the 'How to search' video tutorials

Using the dropdown **FIND RECORDS** menu, select 'Find War Dead'

FIND RECORDS
- Find War Dead
- CWGC Archive
- About our records
- Commemorations

EXPLORE THE RECORDS OF THE CWGC

Find War Dead
Use our search tools to explore our records and find out about those we commemorate.

CWGC Archive
Explore the CWGC Archive through our online portal.

About our records
Find out about the records we maintain, the changes we make and what to do if you spot an error.

FIND WAR DEAD

EXPLORE THE RECORDS OF THE 1.7 MILLION COMMONWEALTH MEN AND WOMEN THAT WE COMMEMORATE

Fill in the name of the individual you are researching

Select **First World War box**

Research tip
Records use different combinations of full names, name and initial, and initials only – you may have to try several of these to find the person you are looking for

If you already have some more details about the person you are looking for such as their age, service number, date of death, or any medals they received, you can add these into the **ADDITIONAL FIELDS** section.

ADDITIONAL FIELDS

Select additional options to add them to your search criteria

⊕ Country (commemorated in)　⊕ Cemetery or Memorial　⊕ Unit　⊕ Rank　⊕ Secondary Regiment　⊕ Age at death　⊕ Date of Death

⊕ Honours & awards　⊕ Additional Information

🔍 Search　　Clear

If you know where the person you are looking for died, for example, you can put this into the Additional Information box.

You will then get a list of the results...

Be aware, CWGC records don't always include details about where an individual was from, or exactly where they died. Our records are centred around where a person is buried or commemorated.

SHOW 10 OF 65 WAR DEAD　　⬇ Download all results　Sort by Relevance ⌄　　Refine Results

Name, Rank & Service No.	Unit, Regiment, Country of Service	Date of Death	Commemorated at	
GAJJAN SINGH Naik Service Number: 514	47th Sikhs Indian	**Died 14 March 1915**	ESTAIRES COMMUNAL CEMETERY AND EXTENSION II. W. 5. France	More details
SUNDAR SINGH Lance Daffadar Service Number: 3241	10th Duke of Cambridge's Own Lancers (Hodson's Horse) Indian	**Died 03 September 1920**	BAGHDAD (NORTH GATE) WAR CEMETERY XVII. A. 1-29. Iraq	More details
FATEH-JANG Subadar	57th Wilde's Rifles (Frontier Force) Indian	**Died 27 April 1915**	VLAMERTINGHE MILITARY CEMETERY I. H. 22. Belgium	More details
BHOLA RAM Sub-Asst. Surgeon	Indian Subordinate Medical Department Indian	**Died 05 November 1918**	TEHRAN MEMORIAL Panel 54. Column 1. Iran	More details
AFSAR KHAN Sepoy Service Number: 3600	129th Duke of Connaught's Own Baluchis Indian	**Died 30 October 1914**	YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL Panel 1. Belgium	More details

If you have not found who you are looking for, you can refine the results

If you think you have found the person you are looking for, select 'More details' and you will get an at-a-glance record

Did you know...? Wherever possible, the relatives of a casualty were offered the opportunity to have a small, personal inscription listed on their headstone.

If known, the Additional Info can include next of kin details and address

SUBADAR
FATEH-JANG

⚑ Regiment & Unit/Ship
57th Wilde's Rifles (Frontier Force)

⚔ Date of Death
Died 27 April 1915

⚰ Buried or commemorated at
VLAMERTINGHE MILITARY CEMETERY
I. H. 22.
Belgium

COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES

Country of Service	Indian	Awards	Indian Distinguished Service Medal

Additional Info	Husband of Nur Begum, of Mator Village, Kahuta, Rawalpindi.

FROM THE CWGC ARCHIVES

GRAVE REGISTRATION (2)

⤢ Click to zoom in　⤢ Click to zoom in

HEADSTONE (2)

⤢ Click to zoom in　⤢ Click to zoom in

Lower down the page you will find a link to our **CWGC Archives** and any additional information which is held about this soldier. You can find several different types of official CWGC reports here. Find out more about these on page 3.

What are **Headstone Reports?**
These provide details of what is inscribed on an individual's headstone. The main purpose of these reports was to help manage the enormous programme of headstone production and engraving embarked by CWGC during the world wars.

What are **Grave Registration Reports (GRRs)?**
These forms detail the graves we are responsible for within a particular burial site. Each grave is listed by Plot, Row and Grave number. These reports often provide basic details of the individual such as their name, service number, rank, regiment, unit and date of their death, when known to us.

What are **Concentration Reports?**
These record details of individuals who were originally buried in smaller or isolated cemeteries, but who, at a later date, were exhumed and reburied in 'concentrated' war cemeteries. This enabled CWGC to fully commemorate and look after otherwise unmaintainable graves.

Further down on your search page you can find more details about the cemetery where the person you are looking for is buried, or the memorial upon which they are commemorated.

Did you know...?
The CWGC maintains more than 200 memorials across the globe. These record nearly 700,000 names of those who have no known grave, were buried at sea or cremated

BURIED AT

LIJSSENTHOEK MILITARY CEMETERY

West-Vlaanderen
Belgium

Number of casualties: 10786

View cemetery details

Step 2: Exploring additional resources to find out more about the individual

You need to check if there are any the Enquiry Files held by the **CWGC Archives** http://archive.cwgc.org
These contain correspondence between the family of those killed and the Commission. Only a small number of these files still survive.

Enquiry Files cover a range of subjects, including:

- Attempts to locate a missing individual
- Requests for the remains of a casualty to be returned to the country they came from, known as the 'repatriation of remains'
- The addition of a personal inscription to a CWGC headstone
- Requests for a photograph of a grave
- Issues about the maintenance or upkeep of a grave
- The exhumation and reburial of a casualty
- The return of wooden crosses to families

Did you know...?
The Imperial War Graves Commission was founded in 1917. Before that, an army unit, Directorate of Graves Registration and Enquires (DGRE) began the work of recording details of those who had died

Researching WW1 has several useful guides helping you discover more about those who served in the Indian Army in the First World War.

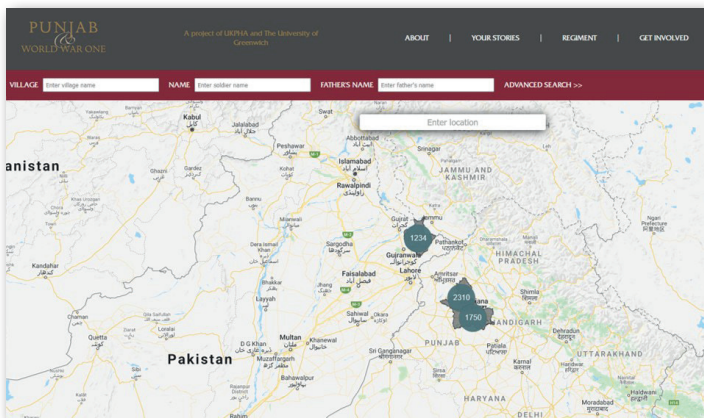https://www.researchingww1.co.uk/indianarmyww1
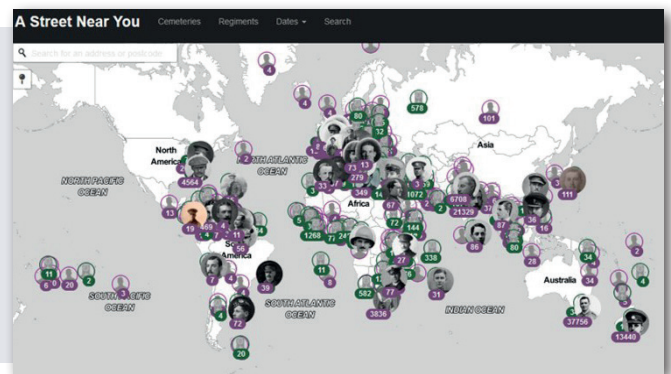

Punjab and World War One
This website from the UK Punjab Association and the University of Greenwich will soon contain the records of more than 320,000 soldiers from the Punjab who served in the First World War. You can search by name and by location.

http://punjabww1.com

A Street Near You uses maps to locate where those who died in the First World War originally came from and where they are now commemorated. You can search by lots of different terms so see what you can discover. It also provides links to other archives.

https://astreetnearyou.org

The **IWMs Lives of the First World War** website is a memorial to those who served in the First World War. Enter the name and service number of the person you are searching for to get the best results. Many stories were added during the First World War Centenary. You might even find a photo!

https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/