

The Allied Air Forces Memorial & Yorkshire Air Museum Starter Guide to Research

This research document has been designed to assist individuals who are at the starting point of conducting their own research with a bias in particular on former service personnel, but as well as for those looking to begin more generic family research. This has been done through providing an overview via frequently asked questions for ease of use, with links to both further and tailor your research more effectively. The questions detailed below have been especially selected as they represent logical and effective focal points within which to begin your research, which can in turn, be easily progressed as your research naturally develops. Please note this document is a condensed version of a more in-depth, publicly available document.

This document breaks down the different avenues of research publicly available and how and where to access them, with an index listing at the rear of this document for ease of consultation. The majority of the sources listed on the following pages offer free access to their data, however, please be mindful of charges that may apply to obtain particular records, and that some sites may offer a free trial period. For example, Ancestry offers a free 14 day trial and then begins charging a subscription service thereafter. Where a charge applies this has been cited, however, of course, it is down to the individual to confirm such matters at the time of research. Naturally, there is an overwhelming array of online resources available to consult. This document has been broken down in to the following Frequently Asked Questions format:

1. How do I obtain information on Service Numbers?
2. How do I obtain information on Service Records?
3. How do I locate information on Forces War Records?
4. How do I find out about Aircraft losses?
5. How do I locate information on Family history Sites?
6. Generic Information

The Yorkshire Air Museum and Allied Forces Memorial hosts a wealth of information supported by a very well-resourced and proactive Archive department. The Archive is accredited under the National Archive scheme which means that all material has to be catalogued and preserved in a particular format. Contact information for the Archive team is located in the Closing Information section at the rear of this document.

The Museum's primary objective is the education of all who come to visit the Museum, ensuring that the history of aviation is well documented in the public domain, from aviation's birth, through both world wars (particularly WW2), right through to present day; this is reflected in the collection of aircraft on display at the Museum which spans the ages. It is hoped that a visit to the Museum, which is also recognised as a memorial to all allied forces, acts as a way of people continuing to remember and honour the sacrifices made by all sectors of the armed forces; inclusive of the sacrifices continuing to be made in recent and ongoing armed conflicts.

1. **How do I obtain Information on Service Numbers?**

This is essential for obtaining any information attaining to service records. If you haven't got a service number for example the following link may help www.nationalarchives.gov.uk and click on "help with your research". From here you can begin filtering your search parameters. This is a freely available resource, however please be aware this is a time consuming process.

2. How do I obtain Information on Service Records?

The following website www.gov.uk/get-copy-military-service-records provides forms which you download and populate. You can apply for information either for yourself if you are a former serving officer or for another. Please bear in mind that you may need to support your application with official supporting documentation i.e. birth certificates; each submitted application costs £30.

The records are dated from 1920. With each approved application you receive information regarding date of birth and date of passing and brief service information i.e. the regiment they were assigned to for example and their length of service.

3. How do I locate information on Forces War Records?

The genealogy collections list includes over 30 completely exclusive collections and information is currently being added at a rate of around 250,000 new records each month. As well as their own digitisation projects, they also license collections from a variety of sources.

The website is as follows <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/collections/>

Please note that they are constantly cross referencing and adding new data, and they will almost certainly hold more collections than are listed below as they update the site.

4. How do I find out about Aircraft Losses?

A very good resource for this is www.forces-war-records.co.uk you can search 10 million records for information on WW1, WW2, Crimean war, Boer war, the Napoleonic war and the post war period from 1946 to 2017.

This resource displays Fighter Command Losses in 1940; you can search their records which return the names of officers, their rank, service number, any awards, flying service and detailed aircraft information.

In addition, there are of course books, available to purchase for example:

RAF Fighter Command Losses of the Second World War by Norman L.R. Franks, with three volumes available in three distinct time periods as follows, Volume 1: 1939 - 1941, Volume 2: 1942 - 1943 and Volume 3: 1944 - 1945.

5. How Do I locate Information on Family History Sites?

The following are very good starting points when looking to compile a family tree or research an individual:

Ancestry: please use the following link:

<http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/CardCatalog.aspx#ccat=sbo=1&hc=25&dbSort=1&title=&keyword=air%20force&>

The following table indicate the records retained in line with the collection and number held:

Title	Collection	Records
UK, De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour, 1914-1919	Military	26,928
UK, Royal Air Force Muster Roll, 1918	Military	194,814
UK, Royal Air Force Airmen Records, 1918-1940	Military	616,118
Web: UK, Women's Royal Air Force Index, 1918-1920	Military	31,086

Find my Past: please use the following link:

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/historical-records?SearchedRecordsetName=r+a+f&Region=World&subcountry=&subcountryfieldname=>

The following table indicate the records retained in line with the number held:

Title	Category	Subcategory	Records
British Royal Air Force, Airmen's Service Records 1912-1939	Armed Forces & Conflict	Service Records	342,825
British Royal Air Force, Officers' Service Records 1912-1920	Armed Forces & Conflict	Service Records	101,266
British Women's Royal Air Force Service Records 1918-1920	Armed Forces & Conflict	Service Records	31,090
Royal Air Force Muster Roll 1918	Armed Forces & Conflict	First World war	181,625

www.myheritage.com

www.familytree.co.uk

Each listed site above contains a wealth of information, with the majority offering either free access or a free trial period to access the information. But please bear in mind, this is a time consuming process having to cross reference the information.

Researching Scottish Ancestry:

Scotland's People is a good resource for researching Scottish ancestry <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk> you can search their indexes for free, however, to view and download images a small fee is to be paid.

6. Generic Information

The British Newspaper Archive has records going back to the 1700's; you can access hundreds of newspapers from all over Britain and Ireland. This service is initially offered for free with a subscription service in place once your trial period is over.

The web address is as follows https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/?gclid=EAILQobChMIh-bPqcP1gIVaSjTCh1rlgbHEAAYASAAEglo_vD_BwE&gclid=CKHn96rD_9YCFQOIUQodBOcMAA

Closing Information:

The Yorkshire Air Museum hopes that the aforementioned reference sources are of some assistance to you; if however you still cannot locate answers to your research questions, you can either download the full Yorkshire Air Museum Research Resources document, or please feel free to get in touch directly with the Archive department on 01904 608595. The Archive department is operated by volunteers and is open on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10.00 and 15.00. Please note the volunteers are unable to carry out research on an individual's behalf due to the time and resources this would require, however, they may be able to direct you to further sources of information upon enquiry.

Index Listing

This index has been compiled for your ease of reference so that you may consult sources cited in the pages above:

1. This is a link to Ancestry to begin family history research:

[http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/
CardCatalog.aspx#ccat=sbo=1&hc=25&dbSort=1&title=&keyword=air%20force&](http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/CardCatalog.aspx#ccat=sbo=1&hc=25&dbSort=1&title=&keyword=air%20force&)

2. This is a link to the British Newspaper archive for more generic research:

[https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/?gclid=EAlaIQobChMIh-
bPqcP_1glVaSjTCh1rlgbHEAAYASAAEglo_vD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds&dclid=CKHn96rD_9YCFQOIU
QodBOcMAA](https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/?gclid=EAlaIQobChMIh-bPqcP_1glVaSjTCh1rlgbHEAAYASAAEglo_vD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds&dclid=CKHn96rD_9YCFQOIUQodBOcMAA)

3. The two following links, Family tree and Find My past enable family history research:

www.familytree.co.uk

[https://search.findmypast.co.uk/historical-records?
SearchedRecordsetName=r+a+f&Region=World&subcountry=&subcountryfieldname=](https://search.findmypast.co.uk/historical-records?SearchedRecordsetName=r+a+f&Region=World&subcountry=&subcountryfieldname=)

4. The three following links will enable research on an individual's service record:

<https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/collections/>

www.forces-war-records.co.uk

www.gov.uk/get-copy-military-service-records

5. The following three links will enable research on family history:

www.myheritage.com

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>