Online module: Conducting research on local soldiers.

This module has been created in partnership with the Imperial War Museums 'Lives of the First World War' Project. The core aims of this module are;

- To introduce you to key online research resources
- To enable you to conduct online research
- To support you in developing an online research module for your students

This module will take you through the research process, using the online resources of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and Lives of the First World War. Having completed your own research, the module will then support you in developing an online research module for your students.

Module overview:

Section 1 will show you how to use the CWGC website to identify or to locate information about local soldiers who died in the First World War. As local war memorials are often researched in schools this is often a very useful starting point.

Section 2 will introduce you to the Lives of the First World War website and help you conduct further research using the wealth of source material which is available through that site.

Section 3 will show you how you can add information to the Lives of the First World War website, helping create a lasting memorial to those who served in the First World War.

Section 4 will encourage you to reflect on how you could use these online resources with your students and help them to conduct their own local soldier enquiry.

Getting started…

For many the starting point with local soldier research will be a local war memorial. You might have one in your school or in the nearby locality. These are often found in prominent public spaces or may be housed in a local civic building or church. It is also worth searching online as many names on local memorials have been transcribed and placed online. However, for students, a visit to your local memorial can be an engaging and stimulating start to a project. Many localities also produced a Roll of Honour listing all those who were serving on a certain date. These often record all those who served not only those who died.

A further method for identifying local soldiers to research is by using the records of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The following link will explain the history of this organisation;

http://www.cwgc.org/about-us/history-of-cwgc.aspx

Further additional links to resources and materials from the CWGC and other sites are located at the end of this document.

Section One: Using the CWGC website…

Go to the CWGC website - http://www.cwgc.org/

1. Click on **Advanced Search**

2. The **Advanced Search** function allows you to search by a whole range of criteria.

a) In the **Additional Information** search box, type in the name of place where your school is eg Warminster. This will allow you to start identifying local soldiers who died in the First World War.

b) Try a search for your **surname**, or the name of a local soldier which you have already identified. The more information which you can provide, the better.

3. Now you will have a series of results. By clicking on a name you will access the full record for this individual as held by the CWGC. These record the soldier's service details, such as name, rank, service number and unit. In many cases they also record next of kin details and address. This is vital to any local solider identification and research.

4. A further tool which can be used at this stage is to export your search results. Simply click on **Download Results** and the results will be exported into an Excel spreadsheet. This can be very useful as the results can now be edited to remove those not relevant to your search (ie places with the same name but in other parts of the country or world) and it means that in future you or your students can also explore the data using filters.

Filter Results

| Refine Search | Clear |

Full Name

Surname

◉ Initials
◯ Forename

Country
(commemorated in)
Country

Cemetery or memorial

War
Please select

Date of death: (starting)
---- ---- --------

Date of death: (ending)
---- ---- --------

Served with
☐ United Kingdom Forces
☐ Australian Forces

You have searched for Additional Information: **warminster**

New search

ℹ Export search results in a spreadsheet-friendly format.   Download results

213 record(s) match your search criteria   Page 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 ... 15 ▸▸

Name	Rank	Service Number	Date of Death	Age	Regiment / Service	Service Country	Grave / Memorial Reference	Cemetery / Memorial Name	Docs.
MOODY, BERTIE RICHARD	Serjeant	7430	13/12/1918	34	Wiltshire Regiment	United Kingdom	Old ground, South West.	FROME (HOLY TRINITY) CHURCHYARD	📄
BURROUGHS, GEORGE WILLIAM	Pioneer	222210	08/04/1917	18	Royal Engineers	United Kingdom	A. 49.	SOMERTON CEMETERY	📄
MOORE, ARTHUR	Private	1990	29/02/1916	36	Australian Infantry, A.I.F.	Australian		CHANTRY (HOLY TRINITY) CHURCHYARD	📄
LLOYD, EDWIN	Serjeant	19225	25/02/1919	34	Dorsetshire Regiment	United Kingdom	F. 45.	FROME (VALLIS ROAD) CEMETERY	📄
FLEMING, H G M	Serjeant	WR/25815	21/03/1920	32	Royal Engineers	United Kingdom	P. D. 2.	BATH (LOCKSBROOK) CEMETERY	📄

5. At this stage, you can also refine your results.

Before moving on, you need to ensure that you have the name of soldier and his service details recorded so that you can use in the next section of this module.

Name:	Unit:
Service Number:	Rank:
Additional info...	

Section Two: An introduction to Lives of the First World War…

Section Two will introduce you to the IWMs centenary commemoration project *Lives of the First World War* and give you an insight into the research material which is available on the Lives website.

Task 1: Follow the link below and watch the 4 minute film to find out about the Lives project, what its aims to achieve and how you can be part of it: www.livesofthefirstworldwar.org/about

NB every teacher and students involved in the programme will be sent an access code giving them up to three months free access to Lives.

Task 2: Follow the link below to read the Quick guide to searching records. Note the difference between 'Life Stories' and 'Official genealogy records.' Now follow the 4 steps in the guide to find a Life Story and records related to a person you selected in Section 1:

livesofthefirstworldwar.org/quick-search

> BEFORE MOVING ON:
>
> 1. **Find a Life Story** for a person you identified in Section 1.
> 2. **Search records and find more information** about that person.

Having trouble?

- The vast majority of CWGC casualties have a Life Story in Lives of the First World War. If you can't find your person, see the Guide to finding people. In the unlikely event that they do not yet have a Life Story, please go back to Section 1 and choose a different person from the CWGC database.
- If you are not getting useful results, you can read the Expert advice for searching records or try a different person.

Additional links:

- Guide to **finding** people: livesofthefirstworldwar.org/finding-a-named-individual
- **Expert advice** for searching records: livesofthefirstworldwar.org/expert-advice

Section Three: Adding to a Life Story of Lives of the First World War…

Section Three will show you how to add and attach information to a Life Story on Lives of the First World War. Read the short Guide to adding to a Life Story. Connect a record you have found in Section 2 and use that record to add facts:

livesofthefirstworldwar.org/adding-to-a-life-story

Not sure what to add?

Try adding an address fact from the '*Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Casualty Records*' record set. Or find them in the *Soldiers died in the Great War 1914-1919 Transcription* record set – here you will find additional facts to add, including: place of birth, hometown and, often, battalion and place of enlistment.

Section Four: Planning an enquiry for your students to investigate a local soldier…

Now that you have been through the process of researching a local soldier, we would like you to consider how you will support your students in carrying out a similar investigation. The following prompts may help you gather your thoughts and ideas and to plan an enquiry for your students.

What will the main focus of your enquiry be?

Will your students research local soldiers, a war memorial, a roll of honour, or even their own ancestors?

→ What enquiry question(s) will your students investigate?

What will the main outcome of this enquiry project be?

A Lives Community created? A school display? A community presentation? Local newspaper coverage? A Leagacy110 project?

→

What additional support will the students need?

What addition materials might they need?

How will this fit into my current scheme of learning?

→

Additional links and resources to explore:

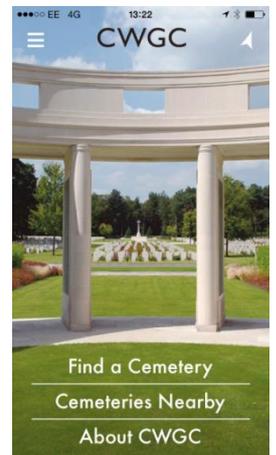### The Lives of the First World War Teachers Hub

The Teachers Hub is an excellent resource for schools. Providing free resources aimed at KS3, the site is divided into some of the key themes which are likely to be covered in the classroom or on battlefield visits. Using enquiry based historical enquiries you can explore themes such as Trench warfare, the war beyond the Western Front and the role of the British Empire. Each theme is also supported by a number of personal stories which are told through contemporary sources, all of which can be downloaded for free.

https://livesofthefirstworldwar.org/teachers

The CWGC App

The CWGC has an excellent app which can really add to local soldier research by helping you locate war graves in your area. This could then result in a class visit to local graves or to students conducting their own visits. The app is very simple to use, allowing you to search for war graves at more than 23,000 locations, in 153 countries and makes it easy to find and visit these places with your students. The app is available free for both iOS and android platforms.

http://www.cwgc.org/app.aspx

The Long Long Trail: The British Army in the Great War 1914-1918 website

This website has a wealth of information to help you and your students find out more about your local soldiers. Although it will not mention soldiers by name, you will be able to use this site to find out more about the units, regiments and battles in which they fought.

http://www.1914-1918.net/

British Newspaper Archive

A fantastic source of information on local soldiers can be the local newspapers. While your local library or archive may be able to give you access to these, there is also a project by the British Library to make more and more newspapers available online. Although this website has a subscription element, the search feature can be used free of charge.

http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/