

Useful links for research

During the Second World War, soldiers of many nationalities were present in Belgium. You can find information about all nationalities but the way you can find information varies considerably from one country to another. Here is a summary of some sources of information by country. It is likely that you will find other sources. We encourage you to explore all sources in depth.

United States of America

1. www.abmc.gov

The site of the American Battle Monuments Commission gives an overview of all cemeteries and monuments U.S. military in the world, including Belgium. An online database provides you with information about 176 399 Americans who died during the war.

Your soldier is in the database? Then you will find the following information: name, surname, rank, service number, his regiment, his military term, his burial place and possibly even the decorations he received.

2. www.wwiimemorial.com

You arrive on The World War II Memorial. The (online) monument was erected in honor of the 16 million who served in the U.S. military, and more than 400 000 who died during the Second World war. Via the WWII Registry button you can search your soldier in the online database.

If your soldier is in the database, you will find the same information as the site of the American Battle Monuments Commission.

3.

<http://aad.archives.gov/aad>

The website of the US National Archives. Click on 'World War II' and you arrive at the foundation 'World War II Army Enlistment Records', created between June 1st, 2002 and September 30, 2002, containing documents on the period from 1938 to 1946. This database includes 9 039 840 archive files on the men and women who served in the U.S. Army during the Second World War.

If you find your soldier in the database, you are sure to find a great deal of information.

Great Britain

1. www.cwgc.org

The website of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission allows you to perform an online search for your soldier. It includes information on more than 1.7 million men and women who lost their lives during the First and Second World War. There is also information on the 23,000 Commonwealth cemeteries around the world.

A successful search on this site will give you the following information: name, nationality, rank, regiment, age at death, date of death, number, place of burial. You can then click on 'More Info' for more information on the cemetery.

For Great Britain, we have no other sources to recommend. All public information have been grouped on the site of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Canada

1. www.cwgc.org

Canada is part of the Commonwealth and information on Canadian soldiers are on the site of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. For a description of the instructions refer to the paragraph 'Britain' above.

2.

www.collectionscanada.gc.ca

The National Archives site contains a search engine limited to personal records of soldiers who died during the Second World War. The result is concise but nonetheless offers some useful details.

3. www.vac-acc.gc.ca

'Canadian Virtual War Memorial'. You can find your soldier through the search engine.

Australia

1. www.naa.gov.au

On the site of the National Archives of Australia, you can find the file of "your" soldier. Look on the homepage top right and click 'Record Search'. You will be redirected to a page below you will find a link to the database. Most of the time the records are digitized and you get only a very limited overview. If you are lucky and the file of your soldier is already digitized, then you will find a wealth of information.

2. www.awm.gov.au

This site, very extensive and very useful, contains several biographical databases, where you might find your soldier.

3.
<http://www.ww2roll.gov.au>

This site contains information about 1 million soldiers who served during the Second World War.

France

1.
<http://www.memoiredeshommes.sga.defense.gouv.fr/>

This site is owned by the French Ministry of Defense. It does not have an online database for the victims of the Second World War, but perhaps you can try a written request via their website

2.

www.sepulturesdeguerre.sga.defense.gouv.fr

The home page offers you a search field where you can find the exact place of burial of your soldier. If biographical information is available, you will also find it there. .

In general

Here are other useful sources, independent of the nationality of your soldier.

1. Local history associations

Many municipalities are home to a history society, where people study their local history. Perhaps you could find useful information from them, eg. where your soldier was born or where he died.

2. Communal services

Municipalities have a record of each resident. If you can provide the place of birth or last residence of your soldier, please contact their office through the website of the municipality.

3. Online forums

Sign up and run a number of specific questions on the forums about the Second World War. Ask for help from historians, amateur historians and other interested persons from various backgrounds. Keep in mind that anyone can distribute information on a forum and a good sense of historical criticism is always welcome.

4 Google

Do not hesitate to start a random search on the Internet. Many military units have their own site. Many local researchers have published on the Internet and blogs with a bit of luck you'll find many information in this way or you will meet people who can help you.