

The 2 Million “Burnt Documents ” (WO 363)

Unfortunately about 60% of the soldiers’ Service Records were irretrievably damaged or lost completely as a result of enemy bombing in 1940 during the Second World War. The exact number of serving British soldiers is not known because of the loss of the records.

However, about a third, approximately 2 million, were saved from destruction. These records are known as the “Burnt Records”. Officially they are classed as WO 363 records, which is the reference number given to them by the National Archives.(The “WO” in the classification code stands for “War Office”.) As a result of the loss of so many of the First World War Service Records, there is now only a 40% chance that the Service Record of the individual you want to trace will be available to examine.

The surviving 2 million “Burnt Documents” Service Records are for soldiers who were discharged, demobilized at the end of the war, who died between 1914 and 1920 and who were not eligible for an Army pension. Some soldiers who were in the regular army before the outbreak of war in August 1914 may, however, be included in this class of records.

limited engagement reckons from ... 10¹¹/₁₄

Bradford on 12.11.14

B 3 attested 10¹¹/₁₄

213 Appointed P. and Col. 24.2.15

" " of Corporal 7.10.15

" " of Sgt 2. Feb 16

DULL

Transferred to Class 1 Army Reserve on Demobilization

Date February 2nd 1919

Signature [Signature] Capt

Place Woolwich Kent

Home Address Hill of Bath

Brossgate Wiltshire

A 7 1/2 22 Received no claim Serial No 10185

Total Service forfeited as above

Service towards Engagement to (date of discharge) years days Pension to (" ") " "

Report		Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, casualties, etc., during active service, as reported on Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 36, or in other official documents. The authority to be quoted in each case.	Place	Date	Remarks taken from Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 36, or other official documents.
Date	From whom received				

23/5/17
3 AT

Leave 8/5/17 to 19/7/17

8/5/17 to 19/7/17 C 39
17

6/11/17
1 Coy
3 D.T

Promoted Sgt
Original establishment

22-10-17
ASC Sect P 20/8024
B 213 21/10/17, B 45/17

2/1/18

Leave 20/2/18 to 4/3/18.
Transferred to UK for release as a
Coal Miner per §§ Kapoten

B 213 20/2/18 C 70

3/1/19
29
C 3/19

SD- W.W. BARRON

COL Cptn

1/c R.A.S.C. SECTION,
OFFICE AT THE BASE.

Genl. Hd. Qrs.
3rd Battalion
Date 11/1/19

30972_176517-00494

IF FOUND, please drop this Certificate in a Post Office letter box.

Army Form Z. 11.

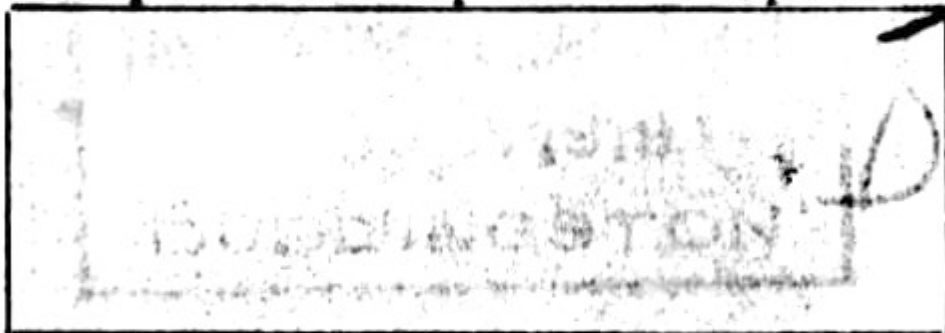
NOTICE.—“This document is Government property. It is no security whatever for debt, and any Person being in possession of it, either as a pledge or security for debt, or without lawful authority or excuse, is liable under Section 156 (9) of the Army Act to a fine of twenty pounds (£20) or imprisonment for six months, or to both fine and imprisonment.”

PROTECTION CERTIFICATE AND CERTIFICATE OF IDENTITY (SOLDIER NOT REMAINING WITH THE COLOURS).

Dispersal Unit Stamp and date of dispersal.

Surname MITCHELL
(Block letters)

Christian Names GEORGE.



Regtl. No. 028958 Rank Sgt.

Record Office Woolwich Dockyard

Unit 3rd Div. Train Regt. or Corps R.A.S.C. (HT)

Pay Office Woolwich Com.

I have received an advance of £2.

† Address for Pay Hill of Beath
Crossgate Fifeshire

(Signature of Soldier) Geo. Mitchell

Theatre of War of Command France

The above-named soldier is granted 28 days' furlough from the date stamped hereon pending* (as far

Born in the Year 1894

as can be ascertained) which will date from the last day of furlough after which date uniform will not be worn

Medical Category A.I.

except upon occasions authorized by Army Orders.

Place of rejoining in case of emergency Edinburgh

* If for Final Demobilization insert 1.

Disembodiment insert 2.
Transfer to Reserve insert 3.

Specialist Military Qualification

† As this is the address to which pay and discharge documents will be sent unless further notification is received, change of address must be reported at once to the Record Office and the Pay Office as noted above, otherwise delay in payment will occur.

214/555 ✓

Handwritten signature

Certificate must be produced when applying for an Unemployed Soldier's and Soldier's Donation Policy or, if demanded, whenever applying for Unemployment benefit.

Office of Issue

Policy issued No

Trans. class 2
2-2-19

11/013207

(3)

...in this Form. Should he not
 ...of a Disability due to Military
 ...founder to this effect, in the presence
 ...he is serving, who will witness the
 ...made or not, this Form will be forwarded
 ...the case of every Officer, direct to the Secretary,
 ...of every Soldier, to the Record Office of his Unit.

If the Officer or Soldier has previously been discharged from the Army, Royal Navy or the Royal Air Force, he will state:—

- (a) Former Regiments or Corps with Regimental Numbers—
- (b) Dates of discharge.....
- (c) Causes of discharge
- (d) Particulars of Pension or Gratuity received (if any)——

Rank..... *Sergeant*
 Name..... *MITCHELL*
 (Block letters.)
 Surname..... *GEORGE*
 Present address..... *Mill of the Beath*
2 Fishie
 Date of birth..... *24 years*
 Date joined (Date)..... *10 Nov: 1914* at (Place)..... *Cowdenbank, Fife.*
 Local Category or Grade in which joined..... *A.I.*

I do not claim to be suffering from a disability due to my military service.

Place of Examination..... *KREUZAU*..... *Geo. Mitchell*
 Signature of Officer or Soldier.
 Date..... *27. 12. 15*..... *J. H. G. G. G.* *Captain*
 Signature of Officer witnessing.
9/14/16: 31010: 13000

Before the claimant answers questions 1—8 the following should be read by, or to, him:—
 "Your statement will be checked by Official Records. In answering question 2, any special matters which in your opinion caused or aggravated any unfitness from which you are suffering, must be clearly stated."
 The claimant will answer the questions in his own words and after completing the form will sign it. The Officer will witness the signature. If the claimant cannot write, he will affix his mark, such act being witnessed.

<p>1. (a) In what countries have you served during this war and for what periods? (b) In what capacity?</p>	
<p>2. If you are suffering from any disease, wound or injury, state what it is, the date upon which it started, and what in your opinion was the cause of it. (If more space is required a sheet of foolscap should be used and attached firmly to this form).</p>	
<p>Give the names of any Hospitals in which you have been treated for the above disabilities during this war.</p>	
<p>Did you suffer from the disease or injury mentioned in above answer to Question 2, or anything like it before joining the Army? If so, give details and dates.</p>	
<p>Give the names and addresses (if you know them) of any hospitals you were in or doctors who attended you before you joined the Army.</p>	
<p>Give the name of your National Service Approved Society and, if applicable, your membership number.</p>	

to be used for Special Reserve
servists enlisting into the Regular Army.

MEDICAL HISTORY of

McKell Christian Name *George*

TABLE I.—GENERAL TABLE.

Parish *Dunfermline* County *Fife*

Examined ... on *10* day of *Nov* 191*4*

at *Cowdenheat*

Declared Age ... *20*

Trade or Occupation ... *miner*

Height ... *5* feet *7* inches.

Weight ... *130* lbs.

Chest Measurement } Girth when fully Expanded. *36 1/2* inches.

Range of Expansion ... inches.

Physical Development and Pulse rate } *good*

Vaccination Marks { Arm..... Right Left. *ml*

When Vaccinated ... *6*

Vision ... (R.E.—V = *6*) (L.E.—V = *6*)

(a) Marks indicating congenital peculiarities or previous disease ...

(b) Slight defects but not sufficient to cause rejection ...

Approved by... (Signature) *W. J. ...*
(Rank) *Medical Officer.*

Enlisted ... at *Cowdenheat*
on *10* day of *Nov* 191*4*

Joined on Enlistment ...	<i>8</i> Corps.	Regtl. No.
	<i>A.L.B.</i>	<i>1/3/0 25958</i>
Transferred to ...		

Became non-effective by ...
on ... day of ... 191

(Signature) _____
(Rank) _____

ATTESTATION OF

George Mitchell

Corps...

Questions to be put to the Recruit before enlistment.

Parish or Town were you born? ...
and past ...
furlough ...
our Father's house for three years ...
yearly ...
in either case, if so, state where?

1. *George Mitchell*
2. In the Parish of ...
near the Town of ...
in the County of ...
3. *Yes*
4. *20* Years ... Months
5. *never*
6. *no*

You are hereby warned that if after enlistment it is found that you have given a wilfully false answer to any of the following seven questions, you will be liable to a punishment of two years' imprisonment with hard labour.

- 7. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? if so, where? to whom? for what period? and, when did, or will, the period of your Apprenticeship expire?
- 8. Are you Married?
- 9. Have you ever been sentenced to imprisonment by the Civil Power?
- 10. Do you now belong to the Royal Navy, the Army, the Royal Marines, the Militia, the Special Reserve, the Territorial Force, the Army Reserve, the Militia Reserve, or any Naval Reserve Force? if so to what unit and Corps?
- 11. Have you ever served in the Royal Navy, the Army, the Royal Marines, the Militia, the Special Reserve, the Territorial Force, the Imperial Yeomanry, the Volunteers, the Army Reserve, the Militia Reserve, or any Naval Reserve Force? If so, state which unit, and cause of discharge.
- 12. Have you truly stated the whole, if any, of your previous Service?
- 13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for the Military or Naval Forces of the Crown? if so, on what grounds?
- 14. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated?
- 15. Are you willing to be enlisted for General Service?
- 16. Did you receive a Notice, and do you understand its meaning, and who gave it to you?
- 17. Are you willing to serve upon the following conditions provided His Majesty should so long require your services?

7. *no*
8. *no*
9. *no*
10. *no*
11. *no*
12. *yes*
13. *no*
14. *yes*
15. *yes*
16. *yes* Name *H. J. Cairns*
Corps *Recruits*

For a term of three years, unless War lasts longer than three years, in which case you will be retained until the War is over. If employed with Hospitals, depots of Mounted Units, and as Clerks, etc., you may be retained after the termination of hostilities until your services can be spared, but such retention shall in no case exceed six months. If, however, the War is over in less than 3 years, you will be discharged with all convenient speed.

17. *yes*

I, *George Mitchell* do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements made.

George Mitchell SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT
H. J. Cairns Signature of Witness.

OATH TO BE TAKEN BY RECRUIT ON ATTESTATION.

I, *George Mitchell* swear by Almighty God, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will as in duty bound, honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs, and Successors, in Person, Crown, and dignity against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs, and Successors, and of the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE OR ATTESTING OFFICER.

The Recruit above named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.
The above questions were then read to the recruit in my presence.
I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered as replied to, and the said recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me.

Cowdenbeck on this *10* day of *Nov* 191*4*
Signature of the Justice *George Pennington*

If any alteration is required on this page of the Attestation, a Justice of the Peace should be requested to make it and initial the alteration under Section 8 (6), Army Act.
The Recruit should, if he requires it, receive a copy of the Declaration on Army Form B. 2065a.

Engagement reckons from 10-14
10-14 on 10-14
 attested 2 10-14
 213 Appointed R. Capt 24.2.15.
 213 Appointed 4 Corp 4 Oct. 15
 213 Appointed 2nd Lt 2 Feb. 16
 213 Promoted Sergt 22 Oct. 17

Transferred to Class 7 Army
 Reserve on Demobilization.

Date February 2 1919

Signature [Signature]
 For Officer in Charge

Place Woolwich Headquarters 1st Div

Home Address Hill at Beatt

Brookline Signature

147 22 Beaconsfield

110 10185

Total Service forfeited as above

Service towards Engagement to (date of discharge) years days
 Pension to (" ") " "

Home
For mode of
Service Abroad,
Regulations.

Initials
making

classes of
action
any authorized
instruction, e.g., in
chiropraxy, &c.

Campaigns (including
Actions)
and
decorations

Wounded

Effects of Wounds

Special instances of
gallant conduct and men-
tions in public despatches

Annuities

Injuries in or by
the Service

Name and Ad-
dress of next of
kin

Home = 10. 11. 14 to 6. 11. 15 6. 2. 16
Expeditionary
force France 7. 11. 15 to
7. 2. 16 to

W.N.K.
752

BRITISH WAR MEDAL
VICTORY MEDAL

W.N.K.

Father Peter Mitchell
9 Bark Row
Hill o' Beath
Glasgow

Marriage

(a) Christian and Surname of Woman to whom married, and whether spinster or widow, (b) place and date of marriage, (c) name of officiating Minister or Registrar, and (d) names of two witnesses.				Date of being placed on Marriage Roll	Initial of Officer
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)		

as to Children

Christian Names	Date and Place of birth	Date and Place of Baptism, and Name of officiating Minister

Note.—These entries are to be made from time to time as they occur, and initialled by the Officer making the entry.
To be ruled through (a) in the case of a soldier, married without leave whilst serving with the colours, who desires the entry to be made
(b) when a soldier is married whilst in the Reserve.

.....inches.
lbs.
 Girth when fully expanded 36 1/2 inches.
 Range of expansion 2 inches.
 Complexion Fresh
Grey
Brown
 Church of England.....
 Presbyterian yes.....
 Wesleyan.....
 Baptist or Congregational.....
 Other Protestants.....
 Denomination to be stated,
 Roman Catholic.....
 Jewish.....

(Should the Medical Officer have served before, or in previous service, or in the opinion of the approving officer)

Religious Denomination

Certificate of Medical Examination.

I have examined the above-named man and find that he does not present any of the causes of rejection specified in the Regulations for the Army Medical Services.
 He can see at the required distance with either eye: his heart and lungs are healthy: he has the free use of his joints and limbs, and he declares that he is not subject to fits of any description.
 I consider him *.....for the Army.

Date.....1914.....
 Place.....
 * Insert here "fit" or "unfit."
 Medical Officer.

Note.—Should the Medical Officer consider the Recruit unfit, he will fill in the foregoing Certificate only in the case of those who have been attested, and will briefly state below the cause of unfitness:—

Certificate of Primary Military Examination.

I hereby certify that the above-named recruit was inspected by me and I consider him Fit for service in the Army Service Corps and that due care has been exercised in his enlistment.

Date.....11.....1914.....
 Place.....
 * Insert here "fit" or "unfit."
 Recruiting Officer.
 † Insert the "Regiment" or "Corps."

*** Certificate of Approving Officer.**

I certify that this Attestation of the above-named recruit is correct, and properly filled up, and that the required forms appear to have been complied with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to the

If enlisted by special authority, Army Form B. 203 (or other authority for the enlistment) will be attached to the original attestation.

Date.....16 11.....1914.....
 Place.....
 Approving Officer.

* The signature of the Approving Officer is to be affixed in the presence of the Recruit.
 † Here insert the "Corps" for which the Recruit has been enlisted.

Squadron, Troop, Battery and Company Conduct Sheet.

W. F. Griffith & Sons Ltd., Printers, Old Bailey, E.C. 4.
 Total W8042/1105 100m 12/14/55 58

Forms
 B. 121
 39.

213 Co

Regiment of A. S. C.

Number 116
 Signature of O. C. Company [Signature]

COMMANDING OFFICER

Regimental Number and Name		Enlistment	Trade	Good Conduct Badges, Service Pay or Proficiency
No.	<u>025958 Mitchell George</u>	Age <u>20</u> years - months	Trade <u>Miner</u>	
Joined <u>asc</u>	Date <u>10. 11. 14</u>	Place and Date of Enlistment <u>Cowdenbeath</u>	Religion <u>Presb.</u>	
Joined	Date	Period of { with Colours years. with Reserve years.	Place of Birth <u>Dunfermline</u>	

Place	Date of Offence	Rank	Case of Drunkenness	OFFENCE	Names of Witnesses	Punishment awarded	Date of award or of order dispensing with trial	By whom awarded	REMARKS

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To be carried over

feet... 7... inches

130... lbs.

Girth when fully expanded... 36 1/2... inches.

Range of expansion... 2... inches.

Complexion... Fresh
Hair... Grey
Build... Bony

Religious Denomination

- Church of England.....
- Presbyterian *Yes*.....
- Wesleyan
- Baptist or Congregational.....
- Other Protestants
- Denomination to be stated,
- Roman Catholic.....
- Jewish.....

(Should the Medical Officer have served before, in previous service, attach a certificate of the approving Officer.)

Certificate of Medical Examination.

I have examined the above-named man and find that he does not present any of the causes of rejection specified in the Regulations for the Army Medical Services.

He can see at the required distance with either eye: his heart and lungs are healthy: he has the free use of his joints and limbs, and he declares that he is not subject to fits of any description.

I consider him * *fit* for the Army.

Date... *10 11 1914*.....

Place... *Cowdubeth*.....

Wm. G. King
Medical Officer

Medical Officer.

Note.—Should the Medical Officer consider the Recruit unfit, he will fill in the foregoing Certificate only in the case of those who have been attested, and will briefly state below the cause of unfitness:—

Certificate of Primary Military Examination.

I hereby certify that the above-named recruit was inspected by me and I consider him

* *Fit* for service in the *Army Service Corps* and that due care has been exercised in his enlistment.

Date... *11 11 1914*.....

Place... *Dunfermline*.....

W. G. King
Recruiting Officer

Recruiting Officer.

† Insert the "Regiment" or "Corps."

* Certificate of Approving Officer.

I certify that this Attestation of the above-named recruit is correct, and properly filled up, and that the required forms appear to have been complied with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to the

†..... *ASC*.....

If enlisted by special authority, Army Form B. 203 (or other authority for the enlistment) will be attached to the original attestation.

Date... *16 11 1914*.....

Place... *Brighton*.....

W. G. King
Approving Officer

DCMDG. DLPO. A. S. CORPS.

Approving Officer.

* The signature of the Approving Officer is to be affixed in the presence of the Recruit.
† Here insert the "Corps" for which the Recruit has been enlisted.