

## Military Resources in Eretz Israel for the Genealogical Sleuth

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Though Eretz Israel has been the crossroads of invasions and the arena for wars for thousands of years, available documents that can be of help to genealogical sleuths start with the period of World War I. With the growth of the Jewish settlement and its identity as a new independent factor in the region, the Jewish population organized for its own defense and volunteered for the British army. The lecture will be a survey of the materials now available in various archives in Israel, including the Central Zionist Archives, the Hagana Historical Archives, the Museum of the Brigades and others.

During the period of the Ottoman Empire, most Jews living in Eretz Israel did not have Turkish citizenship. There were a number of efforts made with the first and second *aliyah* (waves of immigration) to Eretz Israel, to organize themselves into groups of defense for the communities. Two of the groups were the *Shomer* and *Bar Giora*. <http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/hashomer.asp> (Hebrew website of the Hashomer museum)

During the period of the First World War, over 11,000 Jews had reached Alexandria, Egypt by September 13, 1915. Some were refugees from Eretz Israel and others were expelled from Eretz Israel by the Ottoman government. The Ottoman government also expelled additional citizens from cities around Eretz Israel as the battle lines with the British moved across Eretz Israel.

One clandestine group which was formed within Eretz Israel was NILI, which collaborated with the British. <http://www.nili-museum.org.il> (Hebrew website of the NILI museum)

### **Archives and Museums**

Following is a list of websites of museums, archives and on-line databases that deal with military and para-military groups in Eretz Israel from World War I to the present.

During WWI five Jewish Brigades Units were formed in the British Army. The volunteers were from the United Kingdom, Canada, United States and Eretz Israel. <http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/gdudim.asp> (Hebrew website of the Gdudim museum). Soldiers of the Jewish religion who fell during WWI can be found on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website. <http://www.cwgc.org/> (Database in English)

While Eretz Israel was under the British Mandate, there were a number of legal and underground groups that protected the citizens and fought the British in our fight for independence.

The Jewish Settlement Police – was set up under the framework of the British Mandate. Under the order of the police in 1926, recruitment was approved for two

sorts of policemen: those who were allowed to carry arms (supplemental police) and guards who were hired by institutions and private people. With the outbreak of the Arab revolt in 1936, settlements were allowed to hire guards and they were equipped with guns. In 1939 the *Notrim* were established as the Jewish Settlement Police. Additional branches were set up to guard the railway, the air field, the northern border, etc.

The para-military units included *Hagana*, *Palmach*, *Etzel*; *Lehi*, for which there are a number of museums around Israel.

**The Eliahu Golomb Hagana Museum**

<http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/hahagana.asp>

**The Hagana** (Database in Hebrew & English)

<http://www.hagana.co.il/>

**Archives for the History of the Hagana** (website in Hebrew)

[http://www.archives.mod.gov.il/default\\_h.asp](http://www.archives.mod.gov.il/default_h.asp)

**The Etzel Museum** - covers the 17 years of its existence

<http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/haetzel-ta.asp>

**The Etzel Museum Tashach** – from 29 November 1949 thorough 22 September 1948

<http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/haetzel2.asp>

Additional material can be found on these websites:

**Jabotinsky Institute in Israel**

[http://www.jabotinsky.org/jabhom\\_e.htm](http://www.jabotinsky.org/jabhom_e.htm)

**Etzel Museum Tashach** <http://www.gal-ed.co.il/etzel>

**The Irgun Site** <http://www.etzel.org.il>

**The Prison for Members of the Underground situated in Acco**

<http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/machtarotAco.asp>

**The Prison for Members of the Underground situated in Jerusalem**

<http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/machtarotYm.asp>

**The Museum of Illegal Immigration and the Navy (1934-1948)**

<http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/haapala.asp>

**Central Zionist Archives**

Volunteers in the British Forces (documents now being catalogued)

<http://www.zionistarchives.org.il/ZA/pMainE.aspx>

**The Abraham Stern Yair Lehi Museum**

<http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/lechi.asp>

**Lehi Amuta** (Non-profit organization) <http://www.lehi.org.il>

**The Palmach Museum**

<http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/palmach.asp>

**The Palmach** (Non-profit organization)

<http://www.palmach.org.il/> Additional information including a database in Hebrew with pictures donated by the families

**The Collection of the Jewish Soldier**

[http://www.archives.mod.gov.il/pages/Jewish\\_soldier\\_collection/Contact.asp?AR=1](http://www.archives.mod.gov.il/pages/Jewish_soldier_collection/Contact.asp?AR=1)  
E-mail: [michael\\_lax@mod.gov.il](mailto:michael_lax@mod.gov.il)

**May 1948 – The Founding of the State of Israel**

**Beit Haosef Museum (History of Zahal)**

<http://www.archives.mod.gov.il/>

**Israel Defense Forces Archives, Ministry of Defense** (website in Hebrew)

<http://www.archives.mod.gov.il/>

E-mail: [archive\\_pniyot@mod.gov.il](mailto:archive_pniyot@mod.gov.il)

**Request in English for Additional Information** (also the form to be allowed to do research) [http://www.archives.mod.gov.il/pages/request/request\\_eng.asp?AR=1](http://www.archives.mod.gov.il/pages/request/request_eng.asp?AR=1)

**Campaign Ribbons, Awards for Military Contribution, Decorations**

[http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/Campaign\\_Ribbons.asp](http://www.mod.gov.il/pages/heritage/Campaign_Ribbons.asp) (website in English)

**Israeli Military decorations**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli\\_Military\\_decorations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli_Military_decorations)

**Additional material on the navy can be found on this site:**

Heritage of the Navy – and e-learning site in Hebrew [www.hi-tech.com/navy](http://www.hi-tech.com/navy)

**IDF Paratrooper's History Site** – first 10 years

<http://www.202.org.il/>

### **Websites with Databases**

**Fallen Soldiers in the Service of the Israel Armed Forces** (website in Hebrew)

<http://www.izkor.gov.il/>

A search in English is available through Steve Morse's website

<http://www.stevemorse.org/hebrew/izkor.html>

**Fallen Citizens in the State of Israel** (website in Hebrew)

<http://laad.btl.gov.il/>

**IGS - Eretz Israel Records Indexing**

<http://www.isragen.org.il/eiri/index.html>

Thanks to:

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<http://www.isragen.org.il/NROS/YY2006/2006-Bib-web.html>