

FILES CREATED UNDER THE MILITARY SERVICE PENSIONS ACTS (1924-1934-1949)

● Files Created under the Military Service Pensions Act, 1924 ●

Applicant's file: 24/SP/xxx Series

Applicants completed a six page form (MSP1), setting out details of their continuous service in named Units during seven defined periods commencing on 1 April 1916 and ending on 30 June 1922, naming the relevant Commanding Officer at the time and supplying the names and addresses of three officers (then) serving who could verify their service as claimed. Applications were required to be submitted on or before 1 March 1925, although this deadline was subsequently extended several times. Details of service in the National Forces or Defence Forces {Army/service Number, date of enlistment, place or station at which enlisted, home address at that time, Unit (Coy/Bn/Bde/Div), date of demobilization, rank on 1 February 1924, for example} were required on the same form and would be later verified by the military authorities.

Applicants were also required to state if they were "...a member of the Irish Volunteer Executive or of the Headquarters staff of Óglaigh na hÉireann at any time prior to 11 July, 1921". Each officer named as a reference was written to by the Secretary to the Board and required to complete a six page form (MSP7) verifying the applicant's service in the periods as set out.

Applicants were summoned to appear before the Board of Assessors. Evidence was taken under oath and a half- to one-page summary of service, evidence and other information in manuscript is usually contained on the file.

A successful applicant received a signed "Certificate of Military Service", a report by the Board of Assessors (MSP 2), detailing the periods of service recognised and awarded as equivalent of active service for pension purposes under the Act and setting out the rank defined.

In unsuccessful cases the form MSP 2 is usually stamped "Act does not apply". Appeals were made, forwarded to the Minister for Defence and the result recorded on each file concerned. Files will sometimes contain letters of reference and statements submitted by the applicant as to his character and service from contemporaries in public life or in the Defence Forces.

Associated files

Each successful applicant will have an associated administration or payments file. This file will usually contain such details as changes of address, certified quarterly "Life Certificate", income tax affairs, details of other State remuneration or pension, copy of death certificate, copy wills, invoices for funeral expenses if paid for by the State, family details set out on claim for payment of widows' allowance (after 1971), final death details of relict, executors' affairs and cancelled cheques, for example.

Supporting records

The supporting records are those associated with the administration of the relevant act. The Service Pension General (SPG/XX) and M/MSP file series.

• Files Created the Military Service Pensions Act, 1934 •

Applicants file: MSP/34/Ref/xxx Series.

Each applicant completed a nineteen page form MSP/34/1, which is divided into three parts and provided for Pre and Post Truce service in the Forces during the week commencing 23 April 1916 or continuous service during either the period 1 April, 1916 to 31 March 1921 or the period 1 April 1921 to 11 July 1922 and in addition who served in the Forces at any time during the period 1 July 1922 to 30 September 1923. Replies were required to such questions as: Unit or Units, duration of service, district or districts in which active service was rendered, Officer(s) Commanding at all times, particulars of military operations or engagements or services rendered during the period in question, and the names and addresses of three reputable references were to be supplied.

Form MSP/34/1 is frequently added to with typed or handwritten pages, expanding on the limited space available in the printed version. Sometimes original material such as notebooks, lists of Company members, original documents relating to internment or arrest orders and newspaper cuttings are enclosed. Some individual files also contain copies of sworn evidence in typed format, taken by the Referee in other cases. In some cases the Referee will question a claimant at length, where it appears the evidence given is useful in the broader sense of understanding particular incidents, chains of command and appointments held at critical times.

Associated files

As in the 24/SP/xx s series, payment files are associated with each successful applicant file. Material in these files is as explained earlier and in a great number of cases carry personal information relating to living individuals - the family of the claimant, with dates of birth, addresses, next of kin/executor of will and so on –therefore a certain amount of discretion will be exercised as to abide by Data Protection legislation.

Supporting files

Supporting records are: Brigade Activity Reports, Battalion and Company nominal rolls, Cumann na mBan Nominal Rolls, Fianna Eireann Nominal Rolls.

Military Service
Pensions Collection