A BEGINNER’S GUIDE TO FOLD3 LIBRARY EDITION
Cass County Public Library – Genealogy Branch

About Fold3 Library Edition
Fold3 is the perfect resource for researching your military ancestors. This database provides quick and easy access to over 500 million indexed and digitized military records, including service records, documents, photos, draft cards, and more for those who served. The database is named after “a traditional flag folding ceremony in which the third fold is made in honor and remembrance of veterans who served in defense of their country and to maintain peace throughout the world.”

How to Access Fold3 Library Edition
The Cass County Public Library system provides our patrons with free access to Fold3 Library Edition from any branch and from home! To access this database, you must click on the link provided on the Genealogy Databases page of the library website. This page can be accessed by typing www.casscolibrary.org/genealogy/databases into your browser’s address bar or by taking the following steps from the main page of the library website (www.casscolibrary.org).

**Step One:** Click on Genealogy in the Navigation Bar

![Step One: Click on Genealogy in the Navigation Bar]

**Step Two:** Click on the Databases tile

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**Step Three:** Click on the blue “Fold3” link to access the database

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Fold3: This database is the perfect resource for researching your military ancestors. Fold3 provides quick and easy access to over 500 million indexed and digitized military records, including service records, documents, photos, draft cards, and more for those who served. It is home to U.S. military records from the Revolutionary War to the Vietnam War, as well as those from various international conflicts. Patrons can view, print, and download these records to use in their family research. — Library & Home Use

**Note:** When accessing this link from home, you will be taken to a login page before Fold3’s home page.
Navigating the Main Page

Note: If the home page of Fold3 does not look like this on your computer, then you may be on the subscription version of the database. Return to the library website and repeat the steps outlined above.

Geographic Categories & Quick Links

Use the Geographic Categories navigation bar to browse quick links to record collections by location. Clicking on a category will display the record collections available on Fold3 for specific conflicts related to that location. For example, the United States category contains quicklinks to U.S. military records including conflicts such as the Korean War and the U.S. Civil War, etc. Alternatively, the United Kingdom category has quick links to collections for the Boxer Rebellion, Fenian Raids, etc.
Navigation Bar

Home
Clicking *Home* when on another page of *Fold3* will bring you back to the home page. This is helpful when you want to start fresh with a new search or access the quick links to specific record collections located there.

Search
Clicking here directs users to the basic search form. This page provides a general search of *Fold3’s* records with various filters. Users can search with a variety of keywords including name, record type, location, dates, etc. *More information about searching Fold3 is located below.*

Browse
The *Browse* feature allows users to navigate *Fold3’s* record collections or “publications” by conflict, place, publication type, publication source (“content provider name”), and military branch. This provides a list of publications that can be filtered down and organized as desired.

CW Stories
This links to a page dedicated to *Fold3’s* resources related to the US Civil War, including over 43 million records. Here you can browse and search all relevant record collections for the Civil War in one location.

Memorials
Placing your cursor over this section opens up a drop-down list of *Fold3’s* memorial walls. These memorials are dedicated to veterans of various conflicts contributed to the memorial database by *Fold3* users.

Help
Clicking here connects you to *Fold3’s* Training Center where you’ll find answers to frequently asked questions, tutorials, and informational how-to videos to help you navigate and use *Fold3*’s database.

Searching

**Note:** As you enter keywords into the search form, it will prompt you with additional options to apply to your search.
Advanced Search Features
These search features allow users to filter their search results to create very specific searches or broader searches. Users can utilize just one filter or a combination of filters can be used at the same time to filter out unwanted or irrelevant search results.

Add a Filter
Clicking on the Filter button reveals a drop-down list of various filters to use in your search. Users can also click on the filter categories on the left side of the search page.

These filters include:
- **Keyword, Name, Gender**
- **Date** (birth date, marriage date, death date, military event date)
- **Place** (general place, birth place, marriage place, death place, military event place)
- **Military** (branch, conflict/war, grade, rank, award, service number, casualty)
- **Other Filters** (cause of death, race/ethnicity, document title, publication details)

Add a Place
Clicking on the Add a Place button opens up a window containing various options for filtering based on location. If you click on a specific Country, the options for States and Cities change. Once you select the Place you want to add to your search. Click on the red Add Place button to apply it to your search results. Clicking on the Filter by: Place located in the top left corner open a drop-down list of various place categories.

Add a Date
Clicking on the Add a Date button open up a window containing an interactive calendar. Users can enter a year and then select a specific month and day; this limits search results to only that date. Clinking on the grey Add a Range button allows users to enter a range of years for a broader search. The range can be manually adjusted with the slider located at the top of the window.

Search Tips
- **Start with a basic search** – if you are unsure which records you are looking for, begin searching with a name or a name and location to see what results show up and begin adding filters from there.
  - **Note:** The more filters/keywords you enter into the search bar, the more specific your search and the fewer the search results. Try starting with a broad search and filter down.
- **Experiment with filters** – try different combinations to see how it changes the results of your search.
- **Sort your results** – Organize your search results with the sort options at the top right corner of the page (does not appear until the user enters a search). This feature is shown in the next section.
Navigating the Search Results Page

**Filters**
From the search results page, users can adjust their results using the filters in the column on the left side of the page. By default, any filters you entered before searching are automatically displayed, but filters can be removed or added.

**Sort Options**
Use the *Sort* button in the top right corner to reorganize the search results. These options allow users to sort by: **Relevance** (results that most closely match what is entered), **A-Z** (alphabetical), **Recently updated** (prioritizes records from collections that are new or recently updated), **Oldest first** (chronological from oldest record), **Newest first** (chronological from newest).

**OCR Toggle**
Some records include **OCR** text (Optical Character Recognition) that is scanned by a computer from a photograph or printed document. This feature can be toggled on and off. When toggled on, there will be a red checkmark here and the results will only include records that have this searchable text.

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**Browsing**

*Publications* are what Fold3 calls its record collections.

*Browsing* allows users to view all *Publications* by title and manually select record collections rather than search for individual records with keywords.

By default, the browse page shows a list of all publications in the database. Using the filters in the far left column will narrow down which publications are shown. These can be combined.

**Filtering**
Each time a filter is selected, a new column appears to the right in the browse window. Each column lists the number of categories it contains at the top in a dark gray bubble. The scroll arrows can be used to view all the categories in a given column. When you reach the last column, it will provide links to individual records and/or images.
How to Browse

**Browse Example:** Civil War (Union) filter selected from the Conflict/War section in far left column on the browse main page. This opens a column of Publication titles to the immediate right.

![Image of Browse Example]

Seen here, the right side of the browse window now prompts users to continue by selecting a Publication from the provided list of record collections tagged with that conflict filter.

Users can scroll through the list to find and select a Publication, or instead, search the list using the search box in the top right corner. **Note:** This search box will only search through this select list of Publications by title.

Filter Sub-Categories

Some Publications have more filter sub-categories and therefore more columns than others. Based on the amount and type of records contained by a record collection, the browse window may provide more columns to help further narrow down your results before finally directing you to the image viewer.

**Example:** Selecting “Civil War Service Index (CMSR) – Union – Missouri” from the Publications list, opening a new column called “SURNAME STARTS WITH,” containing options for the first letter of the surname.

![Image of Filter Sub-Categories]

Selecting a letter from that list will then open a second column of options called “SURNAME STARTS WITH 2” containing options for the first two letters of the surname, with the first letter restricted to the one selected in the previous column.

In this example, this column shows options from Sa to Sz based on what surnames are found in this record collection. **Note:** These lists will not show letter combination options for surnames that do not exist in the record collection.

For example, this list skips from Se to Sh due to the lack of names in this specific publication that begin with the letters Sf or Sg.
Each Publication has a limited amount of sub-categories and eventually the final column will display the Page options.

Here users will find thumbnail tiles of any digitized images available for the combination of filters selected in the previous columns.

For this specific browse example, this Publication “Civil War Service Index (CMSR) – Union – Missouri,” contains one image for Scrivner, James (Pvt).

Browsing each Publication creates a unique combination of filters in order to help users reach specific records within that record collection.

**Alternate Browse Example:** Selecting the US Civil War conflict filter rather than the filter shown in the example above resulted in a different list in the Publications column. Selecting the Publication “Southern Claim – Approved - Virginia” results in different sub-category columns as well (PUBLICATIONS > COUNTY > CLAIM > PAGE). Also, this example still narrowed down to the Page column; however, rather than one image, here we see 100 images.

**Viewing the Pages**
The last step when using the Browse window is to click on a Page thumbnail to view the associated image. This directs to the same image viewer that the search feature uses. See below for more details on using Fold3’s image viewer.
Using Fold3’s Image Viewer

Accessing from the Browse Window
As mentioned above, the Page column of the Browse Window provides thumbnails that direct users to the digitized images. Clicking on the thumbnail opens up the image viewer.

Accessing from the Search Results Page
Each result on this page with a digitized image attached to the record will have a thumbnail, as seen here.

Clicking on the image thumbnail or the blue link to the right will direct you to the image viewer.

Record Summary Column
The column on the left side of the viewer provides a comprehensive transcription of the record or image being viewed. This may include names, rank, regiment, birth and death dates, casualty information, additional service details, locations, family members, and more.
When using Fold3 specifically for Civil War research, users can utilize their CW Stories feature. This page facilitates quick and easy access to over 43 million Civil War records.

**Searching**

To search for records within this collection, use the search bar located on the Overview Tab. This will direct you to the search results page with Civil War filters already applied.

**Publications Tab**

All relevant record collections are listed here alphabetically. Users can also search this list by publication name, description, or ID with the search bar at the top of the publication list.

This feature is currently in beta, which means that it is an ongoing project and therefore subject to change. It is unclear if any changes will be made or when they will occur.

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**Memorials**

**What are Fold3 Memorials**

Placing your cursor over this section opens up a drop-down list of Fold3’s memorial walls. These memorials are dedicated to veterans of various conflicts contributed to the memorial database by Fold3 users. To **Create a Memorial**, users must be logged into their personal subscription Fold3 separate from the library's access.

**U.S. Honor Wall**

Fold3 created a database of millions of veteran memorials with information pulled from their records from various conflicts. Users can add information to existing memorials or create new memorials. These profiles often contain photos, biographies, stories, records from Fold3, and facts about your veteran ancestors and family members can be connected to each other’s memorials.

**Example: William Douglas Bush**


This memorial page provides photos, service details including branch, rank, dates, awards, and casualty date, location, and cause. A Fold3 member has also attached a story to this profile that directs users to a biography for this veteran.
U.S. Vietnam Memorial
This feature allows users to search the over 58,000 names featured on the United States Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall.

Search results direct users to a digital image of the name on the wall, as seen in the example records in the image to the left. Each profile includes name, grade, rank, and specialty, residence, race, religion, marital status, gender, date of birth, age, casualty date and type, and various other details.

From here, users can also utilize a list of Related Publications and Related Collections that contain other record collections of Vietnam veterans in the column on the right side of the page.

Example Search: Carter Redmond

Full Name: Carter Redmond
Rank: Private
Grade: E1
Specialty: Light Weapons Infantry (ARMY)
Residence: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Race: African-American
Religion: Baptist
Marital Status: Single
Gender: Male
Date of Birth: 24 Jun 1943

Tour Start Date: 8 Sep 1965
Casualty Date: 20 May 1966
Death Date: 20 May 1966
Age: 22
Casualty Type: Hostile
Died of: Gun, Small Arms Fire
Ground Air Sea: Ground
Body Recovery: Recovered
Place: Province and Military Region Unknown, South Vietnam
Enlistment Type: Selective Service
Years Served: 1
Major Command: 173rd Abn Bde
Company: A Co
Battalion: 1st Bn
Regiment: 503rd Infantry
Panel: 07E
Line: 90

Note: If a memorial exists for this veteran on Fold3’s U.S. Honor Wall, it will be attached to bottom of this profile as seen here.
U.S.S. Arizona Memorial
Similar to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall page, this feature allows users to search the memorial wall dedicated to the casualties of the U.S.S. Arizona at Pearl Harbor. This database contains the names of the 1,177 service members who were killed aboard the Arizona on December 7, 1941.

Search results direct users to a digital image of the name on the wall, as seen in the example records in the image to the right. Each profile contains the service member’s full name, rank, home state, death date, death place, conflict period, military branch, etc.

From here, users can also utilize a list of Related Publications and Related Collections that contain other record collections of World War I service records in the column on the right side of the page.

Example Search: John Ervin Lake, Jr.
Full Name: Lake, John Ervin Jr. (“J.E. Lake, Jr.”)
Service: Navy
Rank: Warrant Officer – WO (PYCLK) [Pay Clerk]
Home State: California
Death Date: 1941
Death Place: Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
Conflict Period: World War I
Branch: Navy
Connected Memorial: Yes

Note: Using the viewer controls, users can zoom out to view larger portions of the wall, or zoom all the way out to see the wall in its entirety.
Help — Fold3 Training Center

The sections that are of most help to researchers are in the top row: **Search, Browse, Viewer,** and **Memorials.** The sections on the bottom row are beneficial to Fold3 users who have a personal subscription account.

**Using Fold3 Training Center**

Clicking on any of the links directs users to the **Training Center.** The column on the left side of the **Training Center** page allows users to navigate the information.

This page helps patrons learn how to use the database more effectively and troubleshoot any issues they might be experiencing.

Here users can explore resources for searching, browsing, using the viewer, and the user-contributed Honor Wall memorials.

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**Search Tips**

Here Fold3 provides a series of tutorial videos about various search tips when using the search form. This includes much of the information already provided by this guide and more.

These videos cover topics such as “*Four Different Ways to Search for Records in a Specific War,*” and “*Using Keywords Effectively in Fold3 Search.*”

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**Browse Tips**

This page features a brief video detailing how to use Fold3’s Browse feature. It also covers the benefits of browsing as an alternative to searching.

The bottom of the page also provides a link to a Fold3 blog post with further details.
Using the Viewer

This section walks users through how to use Fold3’s image viewer when searching and browsing the database. It contains practical tips for navigating digitized collections with the viewer’s various buttons and tools.

Here users can also find step-by-step instructions for saving documents and images from the viewer to your computer or flash drive as well as directions for printing copies.

Note: Users can also explore instructions for placing annotations on a specific record with the viewer, creating bookmarks for personal reference, and saving a record to your Ancestry Family Tree. However, these functions require a personal Fold3 account.

Managing Memorials

Here users will find information about creating and managing memorials on Fold3’s U.S. Honor Wall. This includes basic tips for how these Memorials can be used, what type of information can be found using them, and how to add stories and photo galleries to a memorial.

Note: It is important to remember that in order to create new memorials or add facts and resources to existing memorials, users must be logged into a personal Fold3 account.

While using the library’s subscription, patrons can search and view memorials in the U.S. Honor Wall as well as the Vietnam Veterans and U.S.S. Arizona memorial walls.

Visit the library’s locations page (www.casscolibrary.org/locations) for CCPL Genealogy’s location, contact information, and hours of operation.

Information regarding our digital collections, access to online databases, submitting inquiries, and more, can be found on Cass County Public Library’s Genealogy Resources page, located here: www.casscolibrary.org/genealogy

Send Research Inquiries to: askgenealogy@casscolibrary.org

Cass County Public Library – Genealogy Branch
400 E. Mechanic St. Harrisonville, MO – 816.884.6285