



Willowtree Research Genealogy Services

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## FOLD3 FLAIR HANDOUT

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Fold 3 website is <https://www.fold3.com>

### OVERVIEW:

- Reputation for being difficult to use.
- Proven track record of fabulous finds for many researchers.
- Owned by Ancestry since 2010, which was only 3 years after its launch in 2007. Ancestry changed the name from Footnote to Fold3 and limited their mission to military records.
- See the ABOUT FOLD3 button on homepage at bottom left to learn more history.

### NARA CONNECTION

### WHY THE NAME FOLD3?

### HOME PAGE SECTION

**Top ribbon** offers quick tabs to the various sections we will cover:

'Search, Browse', 'Featured' 'Create', Help and Profile / Account.

**NOTE: This orange top ribbon stays in place most places on the site.**

**LOGO:** Can always go back to home page by clicking the Fold3 logo at any time.

**PROFILE:** access My Profile, My Memorials, My Tags, Account Details, Help, or Sign Out. Notice a very similar list, also including Bookmarks & Notifications, appears in the bottom left links under MEMBERSHIP.

**SEARCH** box – begins a search of all Collections and records. Again, more on Searching later.

**FLAG EMBLEMS:** U.S., Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and United Kingdom. Clicking one of these changes the Collections shown below them to anticipate your needs. ***NOTE: It stays in this flag position until you change it – even if you return to the home page!***

**CURATED COLLECTIONS** BY TITLE AND THUMBNAIL PHOTO: Available Collections VARY according to which flag is chosen!

- Overview, Publications, and Description tabs giving you information about that curated Collections group.
- A Featured Publications list for this collection.
- A synopsis of that Collection (filled with links if you'd like to explore further).
- Source Information (perfect for using as a great citation), as well as how many publications are in the collection, and the Total # of Records in the Collection.
- The tall column at right lists Related Collections you may be interested in OR you can click at the bottom of it to 'See All Collections.'

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- A neat feature at the bottom of the column shows you exactly which Search Tags were used, in case you need to duplicate and explore.
- You can Share or Tag the page from the top right by clicking the applicable icon. **NOTE: Bookmarks is now one category of Tags.**

**SEE ALL PUBLICATIONS** button below the Collections list takes you to the main **Browse** page of All Fold3 Content.

**TOTAL RECORDS:** 656,379,997 as of today (1 Nov 2025) and counting. This is more than 71 million more than 2021!

**FEATURED MEMORIALS:** a changing display of personal Memorials for veterans of various wars. Each name is a live link to the full Memorial page.

**SEARCH ALL MEMORIALS** button: opens a Search filtered to Memorials. As always, you can add further Search terms.

**HOMEPAGE LINKS** at bottom: You might want to explore any not mentioned:

- LIST ALL RECORDS – brings up a list of ONLY Publications (not by Collection or any other division) although you can still add Filters and limiters. This list starts out with 965 results rather than millions.
- SEARCH BY STATE – brings up a clickable U.S. map.
- AFFILIATES – become an Affiliate to help promote Fold3.
- In the CONNECT column you can access (with just 1-click) The Fold3 HQ Blog, Fold3 X (Twitter) account, Fold3 FB page, or Fold3 Instagram account.

## SEARCH & BROWSE SECTION

*What is the difference between Search and Browse?*

**Search** is the best way to look for individual records. **Browse** is a great way to see what collections are available and the kinds of documents they hold.

**By default, comes up in SEARCH mode. To browse you need to click on BROWSE at top right.**

### SEARCH

[https://www.fold3.com/search?docQuery=\(filters:!\(\(type:place\)\)\)](https://www.fold3.com/search?docQuery=(filters:!((type:place))))

For additional info go to: Home Page > Help > SEARCH or

<https://www.fold3.com/help/search>

You can start a search straight from the home page's large search box OR click on 'Search & Browse' from the top ribbon.

Begin broad with a NAME or KEYWORD, such as people, records, places, dates, or a service or pension number. Then narrow using places, conflict/war, title, branch, publication, record type, and other available filters at the left.

Once you choose a type of filter, only items of that type will appear in the drop-down box.

Each filter shows up in the search box. Click the X to omit one and try something else.

**NOTE: Remember to 'CLEAR ALL' each time you start a new search. Keep track of the filters you've added so you don't get unexpected results.**

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**Remember to choose the type of record if the drop-down box appears after typing your search term. This designates a search term as a Person, Place, or Keyword.**

**Use the 'Add a Date' or "Add a Place' button' to your filters**

Adding a Date or Place is an easy way to narrow your search. This usually quickly limits your results.

### **SEARCH TIPS:**

- Don't start your INITIAL search with quotes, middles names, or initials – **THINK MORE GLOBALLY TO START YOUR SEARCH.**
- Since the search box on the home page tends to return an overwhelming number of hits – **BROWSE A CATEGORY** rather than All Publication Titles. This may lead you to a promising Record Set or Publication.
- **SEARCH THAT SPECIFIC RECORD SET OR PUBLICATION.** Narrow the search by adding filters, hopefully reducing the number of initial results to something manageable.
- **CHECK WHETHER THERE IS A MEMORIAL** for the person you are seeking, not simply for information, but rather to find **WHO POSTED IT AND WHY.** Then **CONTACT THEM!**

### **BROWSE**

[https://www.fold3.com/search?view=BROWSE&columnStates=!\(\(facetType:general.title.id\)\)](https://www.fold3.com/search?view=BROWSE&columnStates=!((facetType:general.title.id)))

For additional info go to: Home Page > Help > BROWSE or <https://www.fold3.com/help/browse>

Benefits are finding your ancestor mentioned in another soldier's record, finding the names of others in your soldier's regiment. What about exploring all records for a single battle?

### **FEATURED SECTION**

- **WAR STORIES** US Civil War page.
  - **OVERVIEW:** We are invited to explore either Civil War Battles or Regiments through stories gathered. We also have a search box for the Collection.
    - A Source citation is given as well as more Source Information.
  - **PUBLICATIONS:** Opens a list of Civil War Publications. Basically, this is browsing with a search box still available at the top.
  - **DESCRIPTION:** A wonderful synopsis of the Civil War Collection (filled with links if you'd like to explore further). The last sentence gives you links to easily jump right to photographs, maps, or Pensions index cards!
  - **INCLUDED UNDER ALL THREE TABS:**
    - A helpful list of links to Related Collections.
    - Visual list of Search Tags used to help us with further searching.
- **HONOR WALL** is a place to search for veterans by name only, although you can filter by conflict. Memorials containing a military event automatically appear on the Honor Wall.
- **US VIETNAM WALL** searches names included on the Memorial Wall in Washington, DC. You can also make comments and communicate with other users here.

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- **U.S.S. ARIZONA MEMORIAL** is like the Vietnam Wall section in that it searches by names on the Memorial in Hawaii plus allows comments and communications between users. People add queries here.
- **US MEDALS** – this area does not search by soldier's name but rather is a place to learn about the various medals offered throughout United States history.

### CREATE SECTION

- **CREATE A MEMORIAL** – <https://www.fold3.com/memorial/create>

For additional info go to: Home Page > Help > MEMORIALS OR

<https://www.fold3.com/help/memorials/about>

Be certain there is not a duplicate one already in the system. Choose private or public. If public, then others can collaborate with you by adding more content over time. If private, only you can change.

Memorials help us remember **PEOPLE, TOPICS, EVENTS, PLACES and ORGANIZATIONS** both current and past. Typically, Person Pages are termed Memorials; all the other types are referred to as Subject Pages.

Create one **from scratch, from any record** on Fold3, or **add to an existing Public Memorial.**

If it is a military Memorial, you can add their service information and watch all the pertinent details filter in.

**TIP: To use Memorials for veterans in your family tree, look for [generally] males born during the optimum years on the CHART in the READ section of the Resources pages of this handout.**

### Managing Memorials

- **Edit Memorial Settings** – click Edit to change Title, Description, Profile, Background, or privacy info. You can delete from the button at the bottom of the dialog box.
- **Link to Ancestry** – link your Memorial on an Ancestry person page.
- **Share your Memorial** via email, FB, X (Twitter) or Google OR embed elsewhere.
- **Tags & Bookmarks** – any Memorial is bookmarked automatically when created. Just hover over your username and choose My Tags to get there quickly.

### Add Facts

- Facts are only available for **PERSON Memorials**. Can add birth, death, and/or military details; all of which helps others find your Memorial easier.
- **Facts tab on Memorial page** – Only access from a logged in Fold3 account.
- **Custom Facts** – create and name a new fact, such as Christening Date.
- **Add Military Events** – select country, and other details. Adding a military event turns your Memorial into an Honor Page, with a conflict-specific background image, other icons, and additional facts.

### Stories

- **Can personalize ANY Memorial** – Can contain formatted text, HTML links, or even photos. Stories can be associated with a location or date.
- **For Subject Pages** – the first story added is the one displayed on the Summary tab.
- **To Add / Edit** – Click on the Stories tab at top of the Memorial; click the RED '+ Add' button. Add title, text, or images along with location or date info. Can add multiple text and image areas within a single story.

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- **CREATE A SUBJECT PAGE** – <https://www.fold3.com/subject/create>  
Subject Pages are just Memorials that are NOT for a Person. The subject can be an Event, Organization, Place, or Topic.
- **UPLOAD AN IMAGE** – <https://www.fold3.com/gallery/content/IMAGE?activeView=grid&upload=true>  
'Drag and drop' your image into the box provided OR browse your computer to find the file.
- **MY GALLERY** –  
**Home Page > Hover on Username > My Gallery OR from links at bottom of Homepage (under Membership) > Your Gallery**

For more info: Home Page > Help > Your Gallery  
<https://www.fold3.com/help/gallery/about>

Here you can gather and organize images found on Fold3 or upload your own.

- **Photos for Memorials** –
  - Can be easily ADDED from the Create tab to upload a new image.
  - OR an already uploaded image can be LINKED to another Memorial by going to My Gallery and selecting from Recently Viewed images.
  - Once you begin adding images you can go to My Gallery from the Profile section to:
    - sort them alphabetically by file name
    - sort by recently updated
    - browse through them
    - look at all your contributions to the site
- **Uploading is FREE** – Good way to preserve and share historical photos or documents you have.
- **Details** – Must be < 10 MG in size. Supports JPG, GIF, TIF, or PNG formats.
- **After uploading** – Edit names, add descriptions, and connect to other images.

### HELP SECTION

Home screen > Help – get started with some great tutorials! <https://www.fold3.com/help>

Help is divided into NINE areas:

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| ➤ <b>Search</b>       | ➤ <b>Fold3 Tags</b>    |
| ➤ <b>Browse</b>       | ➤ <b>Profile Pages</b> |
| ➤ <b>Viewer</b>       | ➤ <b>Your Account</b>  |
| ➤ <b>Memorials</b>    | ➤ <b>FAQ</b>           |
| ➤ <b>Your Gallery</b> |                        |

### VIEWER

Home Page > Help > VIEWER <https://www.fold3.com/help/viewer/viewing>

**Viewing Documents or Images** – Using the sophisticated Viewer Tool on Fold3 is one of the best ways to explore any documents and images you find.

**BUILT-IN TOOLS (from any document OR image > Actions tab):**

- **Tags** – help you organize all your content and research.
  - Can be added from My Gallery, Memorials, or any record.
  - Click on the ACTIONS tab from any record or image > click Tag icon.

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- Choose a previously used Tag or add a new custom one. *NOTE: Clicking the Tag again removes it from that document or image.*
- To see all your Tags go to Homepage > Profile > My Gallery. To Edit or Delete a Tag from here just click Manage Tags.
- Bookmarks have become one type of Tag! You can create new Tags and reassign images.
- Access Bookmarks directly by clicking in the homepage bottom links to View or Edit.
- Tagging automatically adds the image to My Gallery.
- **Download OR Print –**
  - Choose a portion of the document or image or the entire thing.
  - Choose .PDF or .PNG format.
  - Automatically saved to your computer's Downloads folder. Also FOR A FEW DAYS view all Downloads from within My Gallery. But, they do expire!
  - Follow Print instructions to choose printer and other features.
- **Annotate records –** Annotation is the ability to mark and/or label an image. Annotations can be flagged as Name, Person, Date, Location, Transcription, or Comment.
  - Helps you find documents and images again quickly.
  - Annotating any document or image on Fold3 automatically generates a sharable link for you. Annotations are also searchable. Annotations then become part of your Contributions window. **To see ALL your Contributions: go to Home page > Profile > click your username > click See all Contributions by ...**
  - Add an Annotation by either clicking 'Actions' near the top OR the shortcut Annotate button and choose your type. Even add a Transcription right on the image!
  - To Annotate > Drag the selection area to the desired location > Resize it to match your highlight area OR click and drag a new selection OR click Select entire image > Choose the type of annotation from the drop-down box at top > Type your text in the annotation box. Be sure to SAVE!
- **Share –** easily done from any document or image page within Viewer.
  - Either click 'Actions' near the top of the page OR use the shortcut Share button.
  - Copy the link to send to someone OR share directly to a post on FB or X (Twitter).
- **Save your finds to an Ancestry person page –**
  - Click the upper right GREEN button on any document or image!
  - Login to Ancestry (if you haven't already). Choose your tree and person and SAVE.

## PROFILE SECTION

**Home Page > Hover over profile photo > click Username OR from homepage bottom links (under Membership) > Your Profile**

For more info: Homepage > Help > Profile Pages <https://www.fold3.com/help/profile>

Every Fold3 Member has a public Profile Page, giving basic info and that person's contributions.

## PROFILE PAGE

**From Your Profile > click Edit**

- **Add a Photo**
- **Location –** specify your general location, if desired.
- **Interests –** share interests in the About section.
- **Contact –** choose whether others are allowed to contact you.
- **Contributions –** Click 'See all Contributions by ... ' to see everything you have added to Fold3: Annotations, Connections, Comments, Memorials created, or Images uploaded.

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### Other Member Profiles

- **Member name** – appears along with their image (if added) next to any interesting contribution you may find on a Memorial OR Subject Page.
- **Click that Member's name** – to see their full list of contributions.
- **Contact** – people sharing your interests or possessing information (if this feature is enabled by them).

### ACCOUNT DETAILS

**Homepage > Hover on Username > Account Details OR in links at bottom of Homepage (under Membership) > Account Details.**

For more info: Homepage > Help) > Your Account

<https://www.fold3.com/help/account/managing>

Make all changes and updates here.

**FINAL SECTION: NON-MILITARY COLLECTIONS – See separate handout.**

## RESOURCES

### WATCH

#### SHORT VIDEOS ON ANCESTRY ACADEMY ABOUT FOLD3:

<https://www.ancestryacademy.com/search?q=fold3>

NOTE: if the video below is not shown, search by title.

- *Adding In Details About Service*
- *Adding New Documents onto Your Memorial Page*
- *Background Photos for Your Memorial Page*
- *Downloading Images on Fold3*
- *Finding a Record Using Filters in the Fold3 Search Bar*
- *Finding a Record Using Filters in the Side Panel*
- *Finding Your Military Veterans on Fold3*
- *Fold3*
- *Fold3 Search Basics*
- *Fold3 Browse*
- *Fold3 Search*
- *Fold3 Memorials*
- *Fundamentals of Fold3 Browse*
- *How Do I Add Military Events to a Memorial Page?*
- *How Do I Create a Memorial Page for a Veteran?*
- *How to Add Birth and Death Events to a Fold3 Memorial Page*
- *Serving Together: Joining Memorials Together*
- *Updates to Fold3 Browse*
- *Using Keywords Effectively in Fold3 Search*
- *Viewing Images on Fold3*
- *What is New in Fold3 Search*
- *Which Wars Did Your Ancestor Serve In?*

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### OTHER HELPFUL VIDEOS:

***A Quick Tour of Fold3 | Military Records for Genealogy***

(Family Tree Magazine, 2021, 10 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Daxl3aOM55c>

***Branching Out Series, Non-Military Records in Fold3 Library Edition***

(CityofCarlsbadCA, 2020, 12 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mNJJux8PvyM>

***Create a Memorial on Fold3***

(Fold3, 2023, 4 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40eWyLj09SU>

***Fold3 | Midwest Genealogy Center***

(Mid-Continent Public Library, 2024, 16 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DAAfgxI1ZwM>

***Genealogy on the Internet: Fold3.com***

(EvokeSpark, Mar 2021, 61 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1m0O2-aEUg>

***Getting to Know Fold3 (Library Edition)***

(Fountaindale Public Library – Debra Dudek, 2020, 55 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7GKMU88ucE>

***How to Maximize Your Search Using Fold3***

(Allen County Public Library, 2022, 47 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oBv7-Zt5YGs&t=958s>

***Navigating Fold3: Your Gateway to Researching Military Ancestors***

(Allen County Public Library, 2023, 47 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4apsxGhRqY>

***Searching on Fold3***

(Fold3, 2024, 2 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjEr5nVIMEA>

***The War of 1812: Researching Second Revolution Ancestors***

(Fountaindale Public Library – Debra Dudek, 2020, 68 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHxs3GylEOo>

***Using Fold3 to Your Advantage \$\$***

(Legacy Family Tree Webinars- Craig R. Scott, 2020, 59 min)

[https://familytreewebinars.com/download.php?webinar\\_id=1248](https://familytreewebinars.com/download.php?webinar_id=1248)

### READ

***[CHART] What War Did Your Ancestors Serve In?***

(Family Tree Magazine blog, 2025)

<https://www.familytree.com/blog/what-war-did-your-ancestors-serve-in/>

***How to Use Fold3.com in 5 Steps***

(FamilyTree Magazine – Rick Crume, Feb 2021)

<https://www.familytreemagazine.com/websites/fold3-guide/>