# Navigating Fold3:
# Your Gateway to Researching Military Ancestors and Beyond

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## Basic Tips

- **Don't search the entire database**
  - I would start by narrowing down your search to see publications by either the conflict/war, geographic location, publication type (i.e. service records, applications, non-military, etc.), or branch.
- **Read the publication descriptions!**
  - When you find a publication you want to search through (ex: Civil War Pensions Index), *read the entire description*. Oftentimes the titles of these publications are misleading, but the description will let you know exactly what is in that publication as well as how complete/incomplete a publication is.
    - For example, the Civil War Pensions Index (which is 99% complete) includes more than Civil War pensions because covers 1861 through 1900 and include Spanish American War and Philippine Insurrection veterans
- **Browse instead of search**
  - Fold3's algorithm can be even more finicky with name variations than other databases. I've found way more records by browsing within individual record publications than by searching because I can easily scroll through all of the similar name variants and potentially find records of my direct ancestor's siblings or cousins.
- **Look for your people in the records of others**
  - Even if a record doesn't immediately jump out to you as relevant, take a minute and read through it to make sure your ancestor isn't mentioned somewhere. For example, records such as pension applications or southern claims often include affidavits written by the applicant's friends, neighbors, family, etc. and can provide a goldmine of information.
- **Don't limit yourself to Fold3**
  - Record sets that you might find on Ancestry, Fold3, or FamilySearch are not created equal. You might find nuggets of additional info in each, so you lose nothing by searching multiple indexes.

- **<u>Be patient with yourself!</u>**
  - Despite being the go-to resource for military research, Fold3 isn't always the easiest database to use, so if you're struggling to find something– it is okay!
  - Check out the Fold3 Training Center for instructional videos
    - https://www.fold3.com/help
  - *Feel free to send us an email if you are stuck and need some guidance!*

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## <u>Additional Resources</u>

United States Mexican War Pension Index, 1887-1926
- https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1979390

Veterans Administration Pension Payment Cards, 1907–1933
- https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Veterans_Administration_Pension_Payment_Cards,_1907%E2%80%931933

Anatomy of a Union Civil War Pension File
- https://www.archives.gov/files/calendar/genealogy-fair/2010/handouts/anatomy-pension-file.pdf

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## <u>Publications/Pages Mentioned in the Program</u>

Revolutionary War Service Records
War of 1812 Pensions
Pension Numerical Index
Bounty Land Warrant Applications Index
Civil War "Widows' Pensions"
Civil War Pensions Index
Civil War Service Records - Union
Civil War Service Records - Confederate Government
Civil War Service Records - Union - Former Confederate (CSA)
US Veterans Administration Pension Payment Cards
US Air Force Photos

Army & Army Air Force Casualty Reports
Korean War Casualties
Native American Records
Army WWI Transport Service, Passenger Lists
Native American Collection
- https://www.fold3.com/collection/native-american

Black History Collection
- https://www.fold3.com/collection/african-american

FBI Case Files
- https://www.fold3.com/publication/74/fbi-case-files