

**Searching the Index  
of Massachusetts Casualties  
in World War II**

Massachusetts Archives Digital Repository

## Introduction

This guide details how to search the *Index of Massachusetts Casualties in World War II* within the Massachusetts Archives Digital Repository, accessible at [digitalarchives.sec.state.ma.us](https://digitalarchives.sec.state.ma.us). The Index was created by the Adjutant General's Office, which historically has been responsible for tracking information regarding past military episodes related to Massachusetts. For an expanded agency history of the Adjutant General's Office, please consult the *Collection Guides* on our website.

## Administrative Note

Record Group *PS1 / Series 447X*, or the *Index of Massachusetts Casualties in World War II*, consists of 9,130 index cards for Massachusetts residents who died in service during World War II, and an accompanying booklet entitled *World War II Honor List of Dead and Missing*, dated June 1946, which lists the casualties by state county. The total number of Massachusetts casualties indicated in the booklet is 10,033 (including 31 persons listed as missing), so it is possible that information about some casualties may not be included in the index cards.

## Digital Processing Note

The index cards for Series 447X were digitized in August of 2016. The cards are arranged alphabetically and divided into folders based on the first letter of the last name of the casualty (*Surname A, Surname B, etc.*) in the Digital Repository. Information about military service branch, rank, hometown, and place of death from the cards has been indexed and can be searched using limiters (facets and filters), as well as the search bar, within the Digital Repository. Information about race was not consistently indicated across all cards. This information, if present on the card, has been included in the note field of the metadata.

Archives staff who contributed to processing, indexing, and ingesting Series 447X into the Digital Repository include Veronica Martzahl (Digital Records Archivist), Alejandra Dean (Assistant Digital Records Archivist), and Malcolm Clark (Digital Records Intern).

**Updated by Yolande Bennett, Assistant Digital Records Archivist, October 2024**

### Using Facets

Facets are limiters which appear to the left of content in the repository, and group information together within a given folder. Information captured in facets can also be searched using the search bar.

There are several facets in the Index that can be used to sort cards in a given folder. These are *Service Branch*, *Rank*, and *Place of Death*. Selecting any values underneath these limiters will return only those cards which contain the information selected. If no cards are returned, that means the selected combination of limiters is not represented in any of the cards in that folder. The options underneath each limiter are listed by frequency, with the most common options appearing at the top of the list.

#### Service Branch

There are ten divisions of military forces represented in the Index:

USMC	United States Marine Corps
USMCR	United States Marine Corps Reserve
NAVY	United States Navy
USNR	United States Naval Reserve
USFR	United States Fleet Reserve
ARMY	United States Army
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USCGR	United States Coast Guard Reserve
WAC	Women’s Army Corps
WAVES	Women Accepted into Voluntary Emergency Service

Selecting any one of these values will return only those cards for casualties who served under the selected service branch. For example, selecting *USMC* will bring up all casualties in a given folder who served in the *United States Marine Corps*. Some cards have further subdivisions, such as *Air Force* or *Paratroops*. To search for these groups, use the search bar, which is explained later on in this guide.

#### Rank

Selecting one of these values will return only those cards for casualties with the selected rank. For example, selecting *Pvt.* will only bring up all casualties in a given folder who were identified as *Privates*. All military ranks have been abbreviated and standardized to improve findability, so they may appear slightly differently from what is printed on the card. The class of a *service person*, which ranges from 1st to 6th, is always listed in the format *#/c*. There are several ranks which are quite common across the cards, and they are defined below:

PVT.	Private
SGT.	Sergeant
S/SGT.	Staff Sergeant
CPL.	Corporal
LT. / 1 <sup>st</sup> LT. / 2 <sup>nd</sup> LT.	Lieutenant
S.	Seaman
CAPT.	Captain
T/4G.	Technician Fourth Grade

REFINE YOUR SELECTION

Creator

☐ Massachusetts. Adjutant General's Office

☐ United States. Adjutant-General's Office

Format

☐ cards (information artifacts)

☐ card indexes

☐ registers (lists)

Service Branch

☐ Army

☐ Navy

☐ USNR

☐ USMCR

☐ USMC

Show 5 more

Military Rank

☐ Pvt. 1/c

☐ Pvt.

☐ Sgt.

☐ S/Sgt.

☐ Cpl.

Show 95 more

Place of Death

☐ Europe

☐ United States

☐ Mediterranean

☐ France

☐ Pacific

Show 71 more

T/5G.	Technician Fifth Grade
T/SGT.	Technical Sergeant
ENS.	Ensign
F.	Fireman

For the full list of ranks, which includes additional resources about rankings, abbreviations, and military structure, see *Mass Casualty Index Ranks Glossary & Resources* at the end of this document.

### Place of Death

Selecting one of these values will return only those cards that indicate the selected value as the place where the deceased died. Cities, islands, and states were standardized to country or autonomous region, such as *Belgium* or *Marshall Islands*, to improve findability. Locations as they appear on the cards themselves are listed in the note field. Many places have changed names or boundaries since WWII, such as *Indochina*, and in these cases the older names are used for clarity. Furthermore, any death on domestic soil was listed under *United States*; specific locations within the US can be found in the relevant note field per card.

### Using Filters

Filters narrow keyword searches and are available through a dropdown menu to the right of the main search bar. Filters sort data differently from facets in that filters must be selected from the *+Filter* dropdown menu next to the main search bar, and they are applied to the entire Index, as opposed to facets which sort by *Surname* folder.

To use a filter, select the *+Filter* button next to the main search bar at the top of the page. Select an option from the dropdown menu. The options from the dropdown menu that are relevant to the Index are the same as the facet limiters but additionally include *Hometown*, which is described at the end of this section. Once an option is selected, enter in keywords in the *Matches* text bar and click *Add*. With the filter selected, the search will only return results where the keyword(s) entered appear in the specified filter field. For example, if the Hometown filter is selected, a keyword search of *Boston* will only return cards where Boston is specified in the Hometown field.

To search a specific folder with a filter, enter *surname [letter]* into the main search bar and then follow the process above. For example, to filter to all casualties from Boston in the C folder, enter *surname c* into the main search bar, open up the filters menu, select *Hometown*, and then enter *Boston* into the *matches* text bar. Filters also show up as links within the descriptive metadata attached to collections, folders, and items. Clicking on linked data is the same as searching that value using a filter.

### Using the Search Bar

There are two ways to search the digital repository. To search across multiple collections, use the search bar that appears at the top of the page to the right of the *Browse Archive* button. This search bar returns results across the entire repository, querying all collections and series. The submit button for this search bar says *Archive*, which indicates that keywords entered here will apply to the whole archive.

To search within a specific collection, series, or folder, first navigate to the desired collection, series, or folder. There will be an option to use a search bar located underneath the metadata for that collection, series, or folder, and this search bar only returns results within that particular collection, series, or folder. The submit button for this search bar either says *collection*, *folder*, or *record*, which indicates that keywords entered here will apply to a particular collection, series, or folder.

BROWSEARCHIVE

↑UP

←SEARCHRESULTS

Search

ARCHIVEQ

+FILTER

WWII Index Hometown ▾

matches

Boston

ADD

Surname C

Object Type: Folder  
In Folder: **Adjutant General's Office**  
(Record Group PS1)

Browse Archive > Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (Record Group PS) > Adjutant Gene...

Sort by Title ▾▲☰☲☳☴

**Index of Massachusetts ...**  
The adjutant general of the Comm...

**Description:** The adjutant general...  
**Digital Origin:** The Index of Massa...  
**Date:** 1941-1946  
**Type of Resource:** Text  
**Format:** *card indexes*  
**Extent:** Physical materials: 1.6 cub...  
**Subject:** *United States--Army--Re...*

**Subject:** *Massachusetts--Politics ...*  
**Subject:** *Massachusetts--History,...*  
**Subject:** *World War, 1939-1945--...*  
**Collection Information:** Part of Co...  
**Language:** en  
**Preferred Citation:** Index of Mass...

**Rights Information**  
**Access Restrictions:** none  
**Terms of Use:** Those records cre...

**Record Identifiers**  
**Record Group:** PS1  
**Series:** 447X  

Show more ▾

Search within

FOLDERQ



**Surname A**  
Abair, Clarence E. - Azarva, Benjamin  
1942-1955



**Surname B**  
Babb, John J. - Byron, William C. Jr.  
1942-1945

Both search bars can be used to search for any information in the Index, including information specified in the note field. This can be done by running a keyword search in the main search bar and filtering your results (*see the above section on Filters for more information*), or you can navigate to the Index collection page and run a keyword search using the Collection search bar (*the search bar located underneath the collection’s metadata*).

### Searching for Additional Details

A note field is included in the metadata for each card in the Index. This field primarily contains information transcribed from the comments written under *Engagements* on the cards. Below is a list of additional information that is included in the note field if present on the card:

- Information from the reverse of the card
- Information specifying accompanying materials (*such as a copy of the letter sent to the next of kin*)
- Date of birth
- Date active duty began
- Race
- Organization within Service Branch (*such as Air Force, National Guard, SeaBees, etc.*)
- The ship or air base a casualty was affiliated with (*such as USS St. Augustine or USS Neosho*)
- Specific battles the casualty engaged in (*such as Los Negros Island, Normandy, Leyte, Corregidor, etc.*)
- If any residences were standardized, the residence as transcribed directly from the card is included in the note field
- If a casualty was related to another casualty in the index; this is indicated by *Brother* in the note field

Since the above information has been recorded in the note field, it will be returned in keyword searches. For example, to search for various battles, use *Normandy* as a keyword to bring up all cards that mention Normandy; use *Leyte* to bring up all cards that mention Leyte. If a term yields no results, that means it is not present on any of the cards within a given folder.

**WWII Casualties Index Information**

**Name:** A'Hearn, Joseph J.

**Hometown:** *Salem, MA*

**Service Branch:** *USMC*

**Military Rank:** *Pvt.*

**Note:** Died in service -- Release of March 28, 1945.

Show less ▲

## Glossary for All Divisions of Service

<b>2<sup>ND</sup> OFFICER</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Officer	<b>G/SGT.</b>	Gunnery Sergeant
<b>AMM</b>	Aviation Machinist's Mate	<b>HA</b>	Hospital Apprentice
<b>AOM</b>	Aviation Ordnanceman	<b>LT. COL.</b>	Lieutenant Colonel
<b>APP. S.</b>	Apprentice Seaman	<b>LT. COMM.</b>	Lieutenant Commander
<b>ARM</b>	Aviation Radioman	<b>LT. INSTRUCTOR</b>	Lieutenant Instructor
<b>ART</b>	Aviation Radio Technician	<b>LT. JG.</b>	Lieutenant Junior Grade
<b>AVN. CADET</b>	Aviation Cadet	<b>LT. (SG)</b>	Lieutenant Senior Grade
<b>B.</b>	Boilermaker	<b>M</b>	Metalsmith
<b>BKR</b>	Baker	<b>MAJ.</b>	Major
<b>BM</b>	Boatswain's Mate	<b>ML</b>	Moulder
<b>BOMBARDIER</b>	Bombardier	<b>MM</b>	Machinist's Mate
<b>CADET</b>	Cadet	<b>M/MM</b>	Master Machinist's Mate
<b>CBM</b>	Chief Boatswain's Mate	<b>MOMM</b>	Motor Machinist's Mate
<b>CCM</b>	Chief Carpenter's Mate	<b>M/SGT.</b>	Master Sergeant
<b>CCS</b>	Chief Commissary Steward	<b>PHM</b>	Pharmacist's Mate
<b>CM</b>	Carpenter's Mate	<b>PM</b>	Patternmaker
<b>CGM</b>	Chief Gunner's Mate	<b>P.O.</b>	Petty Officer
<b>CH. COOK</b>	Chief Cook	<b>PR</b>	Parachute Rigger
<b>CH. YEO.</b>	Chief Yeoman	<b>P/SGT.</b>	Platoon Sergeant
<b>CK</b>	Cook	<b>QM</b>	Quartermaster
<b>CMM</b>	Chief Machinist's Mate	<b>RM</b>	Radioman
<b>COL.</b>	Colonel	<b>SC</b>	Ship's Cook
<b>COMM.</b>	Commander	<b>SF</b>	Shipfitter
<b>COX.</b>	Coxsawin	<b>SK</b>	Storekeeper
<b>CPHM</b>	Chief Pharmacist's Mate	<b>SM</b>	Signalman
<b>CPO</b>	Chief Petty Officer	<b>SOM</b>	Sonarman
<b>CQM</b>	Chief Quartermaster	<b>SP</b>	Specialist
<b>CSK</b>	Chief Storekeeper	<b>SSM</b>	Ship's Serviceman
<b>CSM</b>	Chief Signalman	<b>STM</b>	Steward's Mate
<b>CTC</b>	Chief Turret Captain	<b>T.</b>	Telegrapher
<b>CWT</b>	Chief Water Tender	<b>TECH.</b>	Technician
<b>EM</b>	Electrician's Mate	<b>TM</b>	Torpedoman's Mate
<b>FC</b>	Fire Controlman	<b>W.O.</b>	Warrant Officer
<b>FLIGHT CADET</b>	Flight Cadet	<b>WT</b>	Water Tender
<b>F.O.</b>	Flight Officer	<b>YEO.</b>	Yeoman
<b>GM</b>	Gunner's Mate		

## Resources

*Various websites with rank reference information.*

### **Guide to the United States Armed Forces (1942)**

*Includes ranks, specializations, patches, and organizational descriptions.*

### **A Pocket Reference Guide to Army, Navy and Marine Corps Insignia (1943)**

*Similar to the guide above.*

### **USS Enterprise CV-6 All Hands Guide**

*Contains a list of all ranks and their acronyms aboard the Enterprise CV-6.*

- Enlisted Men's Ratings
- Officers' Ranks

### **US Navy Enlisted Rating Insignia of World War II**

*Full list of specialists and rankings across all naval branches with images of patches and uniforms.*

### **National Park Service Guide**

### **Naval History and Heritage Command U.S. Naval Abbreviations**

*Alphabetized list containing a wide range of possible meanings for abbreviations.*

