

Mission Report indexing guidelines and policies

This document accompanies videos instructing volunteers (thank you!) indexing 306th Bomb Group WWII Mission Reports (MR).

If a volunteer finds Advanced indexing too confusing, difficult or time consuming see one of the other instructional videos and index the best you can, then our Quality Assurance team will look over your index and correct/enhance it if needed.

Indexing can be done using only the resources on our website. The advanced indexing video assumes the volunteer has been provided (for speed and convenience) the following to be loaded on the volunteer's own computer:

- The Mission Reports they agreed to index;
- A spreadsheet template (Excel) for entering veteran names found in a MR;
- An electronic set of the Russell Strong index card; and
- A copy of Standardized ranks.pdf and Standardized duties.pdf

Keep in mind anomalies occur because men made mistakes, procedures changed and were not always followed and standards were not always adhered to. This document and accompanying video is not intended to answer every possible question. Email the historian or webmaster if you have a question. Remember the 'misc' and 'other' fields in the database and template are available to cover indexer comments and the QA team will review them before uploading the file.

Policies:

1. Index what is on the MR, do not 'correct' the mistakes of the WWII clerk – even if you are confident it is wrong. Opinions and helpful information we learn from our modern day knowledge and review of our extensive records should be entered in the 'misc' or 'other' columns for potential upload to the data base. The only exception is entering the vet's first name when the first name initial matches what the WWII clerk entered AND it is conclusive you have identified the correct vet and know his first name.
2. Do NOT ADD DATA to index entry columns (i.e. rank, serial number, etc.) that is not on the Mission Report except in the 'misc' & 'other' cols.
3. Only index a vet one time for a mission report. The name may appear on the interrogation form and on a loading list but he was either on the plane or not so only list him once.
4. We do not make a distinction between gunners except for tail gunner and ball turret
5. Do not include apostrophes or spaces in names such as O'Malley
6. Do not use periods except in 'misc' and 'other' cols
7. Add suffix to unit names: 367th, 368th, 369th and 423rd

It is not a requirement that you check the Russell Strong index card file for the vet, but it is strongly recommended. The benefit will become clear when you view the instructional video. Russel Strong did his work without the aid of computers and was very good, but not perfect. If you do not find a corresponding card on the set provided to you, try searching for it using the 'search cards' function at our website (access via tab on home page) which often provides alternative spelling suggestions. This may lead to entering in the 'misc' col data such as: "index card spells name ---". This note the difference without saying which is correct. You may also see or add something when there is an apparent misspelling like: "This is likely Gary, not Geary".

Mission Reports are inconsistent in abbreviation of plane duties; try to use standardized duties.
(If you make mistakes the QA team will probably fix them.)

The duties you find on mission reports are usually intuitive; here are some examples:

Typically, officers: P= pilot, CP = copilot, N = navigator, B/bomb= bombardier, RN = radar navigator
Typically, enlisted:

RO= radio operator,

E = engineer/gunner,

WG = waist gunner, but just use gunner;

you might see L or R alone or in combination with 'waist' or 'G', still just enter as gunner

nose= nose gunner, just enter as gunner

TG = tail gunner (usually enlisted but may be an officer observing the rest of the formation)

BT= ball turret

O/observer (extra man on board, often an officer not assigned to 306th – thus no card)

OTHER non-standard - just enter as you read it overwriting