

Search Tutor

As explained in this website's "Site Overview" page, the objective of this website is to make available to the public the thousands of letters that Mr. Tong Zeng received from the early 1990s from thousands of Chinese victims of atrocities suffered at the hands of the Japanese military during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1931-1945). This website provides a permanent digital archive of that part of written history that will remain available to the world as these victims pass away with age.

As discussed in the "Letters" page, the contents of each letter are captured in an Index File with nine indices:

1. Letter ID (also known as Sequence Number)
2. Nine types of atrocity (an event can be associated with more than one type):
 - a. Slave Laborers (SL)
 - b. Murders (MU, not part of Nanking Massacre or Other Massacres)
 - c. Air Bombings (AB)
 - d. Rapes (RA, not part of Sex Slaves)
 - e. Other Massacres (OM)
 - f. Biological/Chemical Warfare (BC)
 - g. Sex Slaves (SS), also commonly referred to as Comfort Women
 - h. Nanking Massacre (NM)
 - i. Others (OT).
3. Date of event
4. Name(s) of victim(s)
5. Location of event
6. Date of letter
7. Name of author
8. Address of author
9. Other details (information such as the number of people killed, raped, or injured, amount of property damaged, etc.)

This page discusses the search capabilities that facilitate the user to find those letters that contain certain information associated with an atrocity, e.g.,

- A particular kind of atrocity
- That occurred within a certain time frame
- That occurred in a certain locality
- Name(s) of victims
- Name of letter author
- A specific letter ID
- Etc.

In other words, a search that is based on any of the first eight indices of the Index File. Because the "other details" index may contain more flexible information of unspecified format, in the initial release the search capability based on the indices of the Index File does not include searches based on the "other details" index.

However, in a future release (time to be determined), we plan to provide search capabilities based on “word match” or “word phrase match,” similar to a Google search. Then searches can be done on the “other details” index, as well as on other contents of the letter.

We now describe the procedure to do a search:

1. First choose one or more of the 8 indices (excluding the “other details” index) that you want to search against, then click “search.”
2. The screen will display a list of Letter IDs that match your search criteria, and for each letter, the contents (or value) of the other 7 indices are displayed.
3. If you want more detailed information on any of these letters, then click on that Letter ID.
4. Then the screen will display again the values of the 8 indices (the order of display is not the same as in the previous screen, but the contents are identical); it will also display the contents of the “other details” index. In addition, it will display the transcribed digital letter.
5. If you want to see the scanned images of the original handwritten letter and envelope(s), click on the button “see scanned images” at the end of the transcribed digital letter. It will display the envelope(s) and all the pages of the letter in sequential order. [These handwritten letters are often difficult to read. You may want to use your browser capability to zoom in or expand to greater than 100%.]
6. If you want to see the next (or previous) letter in the list of Item #2, then click on the button “next letter ID” (or “previous letter ID”) at the bottom of the screen.
7. This completes the search. If you want to do another search, go back to the “Search” page and start all over again with Step #1.

In the initial release, this website does not contain any form letters. Later when form letters are included, then one can also do similar searches on the form letters.