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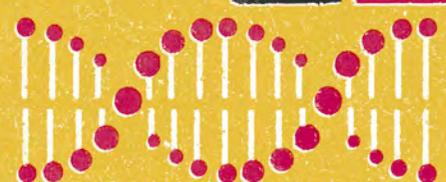
**Comparison Guide**

## the fab four WEBSITES

Ancestry.com, FamilySearch,  
Findmypast and MyHeritage

**Roundup: Free Online  
Records Collections**

**DNA: I've Taken My Test.  
Now What?**



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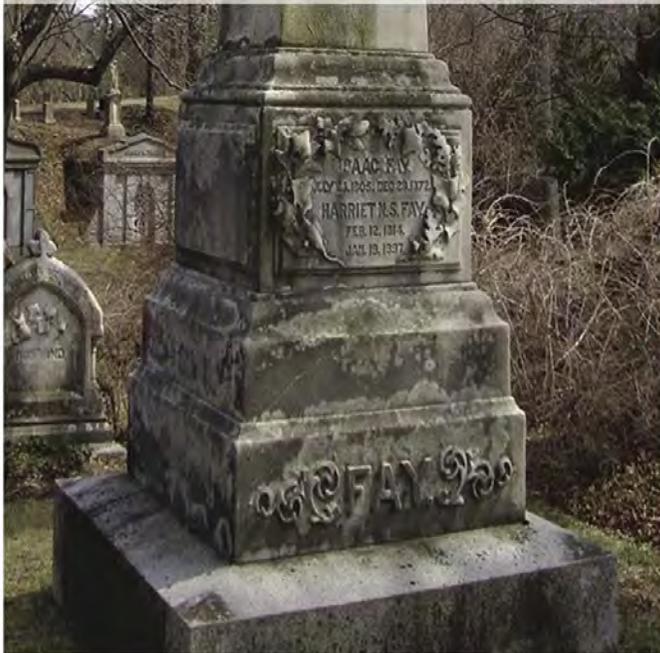
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Before and after photographs of a historic marble monument cleaned with D/2 Biological Solution



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COVER ILLUSTRATION BY MATTHEW HANCOCK  
 ABOVE: ASBE/ISTOCK

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## out on a limb



### Bright lights. Mobs of

screaming fans. The hottest celebrities. No, it's not Woodstock or Lollapalooza—it's RootsTech!

Alright, so genealogy conferences aren't quite as rowdy as rock concerts. But family historians are no less passionate than music fans. And genealogy's "headliners" are just as influential and talented in their own world as rock stars are in theirs.

In the Beatles-themed "The Fab Four" (page 18), Sunny Morton compares the records, family trees, DNA tests and other key features of the big four genealogy websites: Ancestry.com, FamilySearch, Findmypast and MyHeritage. Their "setlists" might be different, but each site hits its own high notes that make it worthy of an encore.

With Sunny's comparison guide, Rick Crume's tips on searching digitized censuses at each of the "Fab Four" websites (page 56), and our online search tracker (page 15), you'll be ready to hit the stage.

Subscriptions to genealogy websites—like ticket prices—can add up quickly. If you're looking for something a little easier on your wallet, you'll love Dana McCullough's list of 50 free records collections at for-profit genealogy websites (page 41). And on page 28, Rachel Fountain (our New Media Editor who manages the *Family Tree Magazine* Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest pages) shares her favorite chart-topping social media accounts that are free to follow and perfect for genealogists.

So sing your hearts out, and dance like no one's watching. For those about to rock (and find your ancestors): We salute you.

## TREE TALK

We asked for your best online research tips. Here's how you responded.

Keep track of where you've researched.

Carla Meier via Facebook

Have your closest friends subscribe to different sites, then get together and have genealogy research parties.

Wendy Wanoyomus via Facebook

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. What you seek may not have been digitized yet.

Beth Hanson via Facebook



**KEEP AN OPEN MIND** to all the information you find on documents, because you might find something that will change the validity of some of it.

Mary Tyler via Facebook

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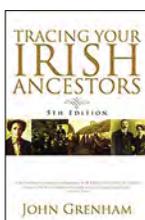
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**Correction:** The New York state research guide in our December 2019 issue (page 33) had the incorrect phone number for the New York State Department of Health, Vital Records Section. The correct number is 855-322-1022.

# everything's relative



**“THE INTERNET HAS BEEN** a wonderful boon to Irish genealogy, but it increases rather than decreases the need for skepticism...Saying ‘I found it on the internet’ is the equivalent of saying ‘I don’t know where I found it.’ And if you don’t know where you found information, you don’t know what it means.”

Genealogist **John Grenham** <[www.johngrenham.com](http://www.johngrenham.com)> writes about the importance of sourcing data and records in online research in the fifth edition of *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors* (Genealogical Publishing Co.). The book, first published in 1992 and updated in 2019, has become a standard for Irish genealogists, covering the major record groups useful to studying ancestors from the Emerald Isle.

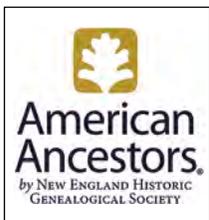
# Spring Fever



**Lisa Louise Cooke** is the founder of the *Genealogy Gems* website and podcast <lisalouisecooke.com>, and host of the *Family Tree Podcast* <familytree magazine.com/podcasts>.

## ▲ Family History on Display

Spring is in the air, and that means spring-cleaning time. Spruce up your walls with this clever picture frame, featuring clotheslines filled with family photos. A quick online search of *clothesline photo display* will bring up several affordable options. I hung mine in my laundry room, then topped it off with an upcycled old shelf filled with vintage household memorabilia. I don't know if I like ironing any more now than I did before, but the display does put a smile on my face every day!



### ◀ Sites to See

A gateway to more than 1.4 billion records, the website of the New England Historic Genealogical Society <[www.americanancestors.org](http://www.americanancestors.org)> is a haven for researchers worldwide—and not just for folks with New England roots. The database spans 22 countries and includes the largest collection of online US Catholic records, the GU272 Memory Project and the interactive Mayflower 2020 companion website. Back on the November 2019 episode of the Family Tree podcast, I interviewed Claire Vail, NEHGS Director of Creative and Digital Strategy for AmericanAncestors.

### ▶ Preserving and Sharing

Not all family photos will find a home in a photo album. Keep loose pics safe with 2-mil Polyethylene Short Side Opening Print Envelopes by Gaylord Archival <[www.gaylord.com](http://www.gaylord.com)>. These strong, stable enclosures have a convenient thumb-cut on the open side for easy access to the precious images held within. These come in a variety of sizes and are a cost-effective alternative to archival polyester.



### ▲ Get a Gadget

When you're on a research trip (whether treading the rows of a cemetery or sequestered in the corner of your favorite archive), the one thing you can't control is the temperature. While dressing appropriately can help, I never leave home without my mini cell phone fan. When the temperature rises, just plug it in, and your phone's battery will make it spin. It's silent and produces just enough air to keep you cool under genealogy research pressure. You'll find them on sites like Amazon <[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)>, and many have built-in adapters for both Android and iPhone.

### ▶ Record Riches

The US government held three WWI draft registrations between 1917 and 1918, and cards from these registrations can hold valuable information about your male ancestors who were between the ages of 18 and 45 during that time period. What I love about these cards is the not-so-obvious details they contain. For example, the three-digit number stamped on the back indicates where the man was drafted: state (first digit), district board number (second digit) and local board number (third digit). A letter followed this number, corresponding to which registration was being recorded: A for the first, B for the second, and C for the third.



### ◀ On the Road

From 1854 to 1929, the Orphan Train Movement placed an estimated 250,000 orphaned and homeless children throughout the United States and Canada. To commemorate the program and the children it helped, the restored 1917 Union Pacific Depot building in Concordia, Kan., houses the National Orphan Train Complex <[www.orphantraindepot.org](http://www.orphantraindepot.org)>, which includes

the Orphan Train Museum and the Morgan-Dowell Research Center. From the website's home page, click Welcome, then Virtual Tour for a video walkthrough of the museum.



### ▲ Podcast

Listen to more great family history finds from Lisa and other genealogy experts with our free monthly podcast <[www.familytreemagazine.com/podcasts](http://www.familytreemagazine.com/podcasts)>. ●

WHAT'S NEW

# DNA Health Tools Expand

**A FLURRY OF NEW** DNA health tools are now available from major genetic genealogy testing companies, including AncestryDNA (AncestryHealth <[www.ancestry.com/dna](http://www.ancestry.com/dna)>), Living DNA (Wellbeing kits <[www.livingdna.com/kit/wellbeing-kit](http://www.livingdna.com/kit/wellbeing-kit)>), and MyHeritage (Health+Ancestry kits <[www.myheritage.com/health](http://www.myheritage.com/health)>). These join the tests from 23andMe <[www.23andme.com](http://www.23andme.com)>, which have long included health information.

Also more prominent is the involvement of oversight from healthcare experts. For example, MyHeritage Health includes review by a physician, who may refer customers to a video consultation (at no extra cost) with a genetic counselor, if specific risks warrant it. See page 69 for individual features and pricing.



# 23andMe Launches Family Tree



**GENETIC GENEALOGY TESTING** company 23andMe has introduced a new family tree-building tool for customers. The tool automatically generates a visualization of your relationships to genetic matches who have opted in to the DNA Relatives feature.

23andMe's tree reconstruction tool differs from those on Ancestry.com or MyHeritage because it's based solely on genetic relationships and age rather than also incorporating tree data provided by testers. Users can add notes such as relatives' names, dates and photos to the tree. In the future, users will be able to edit relationships and share the tree with others.



## NEWSPAPERS.COM ADDS OBITUARIES

Subscription genealogy giant Ancestry.com <[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)> has curated what it's calling the world's largest obituary database. Using artificial intelligence, Ancestry.com extracted and indexed names, relationships and other facts from millions of digitized obituaries on its sister site, Newspapers.com <[www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com)>.

The resulting collection contains almost a billion searchable names pulled from more than 250 million death announcements from the United States and beyond. Ancestry.com subscribers may search the "Newspapers.com Obituary Index, 1800s–current" index on that site <[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61843](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61843)>. Those who have an All Access or Newspapers.com Basic subscription may view full obituaries on Newspapers.com. (Certain newspapers may require a Publisher Extra subscription.)



## MYHERITAGE ACQUIRES SNPEDIA AND PROMETHEASE

MyHeritage has acquired the company that owns and operates SNPedia and Promethease.

SNPedia <[www.snpedia.com/index.php/SNPedia](http://www.snpedia.com/index.php/SNPedia)> is a community-sourced wiki of scientific knowledge pertaining to over 110,000 genetic variants and associated medical conditions or risks. MyHeritage announced plans to keep SNPedia free (it operates under a Creative Commons license), but has acquired the rights to utilize it commercially to enhance future DNA health products.

Promethease <[www.promethease.com](http://www.promethease.com)> has been an inexpensive online platform through which users could compare their own autosomal DNA test results with SNPedia. MyHeritage plans to keep Promethease separate from its own DNA health test offering; see <[blog.myheritage.com/2019/09/myheritage-acquires-promethease-and-snpedia](http://blog.myheritage.com/2019/09/myheritage-acquires-promethease-and-snpedia)> for more information.



### Sunny Jane Morton

is a contributing editor for Family Tree Magazine, content manager at Your DNA Guide and industry expert on the giant genealogy websites.

## GENI.COM ROLLS OUT TREE-CHECKING TOOL



The free family tree-building website Geni.com <[www.geni.com](http://www.geni.com)> has added a valuable Consistency Checker to its online platform. According to a company announcement, the tool "will constantly monitor changes to profiles in the family tree to detect common errors or inconsistencies" and alert users to them. Potential errors that the tool will check for include a child being born before their parent and events occurring after a person's death. This feature is also available on the website of Geni.com's parent company, MyHeritage.

# Comma Drama

**BEFORE THERE WAS PUNCTUATION**, words didn't even have spaces between them. Words all ran together like this, in what was called *scriptura continua*. Spaces and punctuation marks emerged as cues for those trying to read other early documents aloud. The Mesha Stele, created about 840 B.C., is the oldest known example of punctuation. It sings the praises of King Mesha of Moab (in today's Jordan), using dots between words and slashes to separate sections.

Though most modern punctuation was set by about 1650, punctuation has further evolved in the digital age. Formerly obscure marks such as the hashtag (#) and @ sign have taken on powerful new meanings. However, throughout the varied history of punctuation, one thing has remained true: as philosopher Theodor W. Adorno put it, "There is no element in which language resembles music more than in the punctuation marks."



## c. 200 B.C.

Aristophanes of Byzantium introduces **dots** to break up Greek texts. As head of the Library of Alexandria, Aristophanes knew the challenges of navigating scrolls of unbroken text. He came up with the idea of dots aligned with the middle, bottom or top of a line to indicate pauses, similar to the later comma, colon and period.



## c. 800

Alcuin of York adds the **period** to the end of sentences. An author and advisor to Emperor Charlemagne, Alcuin was tasked with developing a writing system that all in Charlemagne's wide, diverse empire could understand. Charlemagne's court also invented the *interrogativus* ("point of interrogation," or question mark).

900 B.C. |

500 B.C. |

100 B.C. |

300 |

## c. 150 B.C.

Aristarchus of Samothrace begins using the **diple** (>), forerunner of quotation marks. A student of Aristophanes, Aristarchus succeeded him as the librarian in Alexandria. He used the diple in margins to mark something of interest in the text. Later Christian writers adopted it to indicate Biblical quotations. After the introduction of the printing press, typesetters replaced the difficult-to-cast diple with double, elevated commas.

### David A. Fryxell

is the son of two English teachers. He collected his favorite glimpses into the past in a new book, *MicroHistory* <[www.microhistorybook.com](http://www.microhistorybook.com)>, available at Amazon.



## 400

Jerome **translates the Bible** into Latin. The early Christian scholar encouraged monks copying his "Vulgate" to adopt a practice used in teaching Roman schoolboys—using colons and comma dots to separate the text. When Jerome's Bible reached Ireland about 500, monks who still struggled with long lines of Latin added a *punctus* (point) between words.

## c. 1350

The **hashtag** is invented as an abbreviation for "pound." Today's Twitter symbol began as "lb," short for the Latin *libra pondo* ("pound weight"). Abbreviations of the time often added a horizontal bar, and hurried clerks turned the barred "lb" into #. When the symbol was added to Touch-Tone phone keypads, centuries later, engineers dubbed it the "octothorpe."

The ampersand (&), which dates to the first century, was taught to 19th-century school-children as the 27th letter of the alphabet.



### 1490s

**Aldus Manutius** introduces the modern comma. A Renaissance man (literally) and printer in Venice, Mantua dropped the virgula to the bottom of a line of text and added a curve to differentiate it from the period. He is also credited with inventing the semicolon, and his grandson and namesake took over the business at age 14 and published a tract on punctuation.



### 1867

Upon its invention, the **typewriter streamlines punctuation**. Christopher Latham Sholes' original typewriter prototype included keys only for the dash, period, comma, question mark, semicolon and slash. His 1878 QWERTY model added an apostrophe and colon. Typing quotation marks involved striking two apostrophe keys, while exclamation points required an apostrophe plus a period.

700 |

1100 |

1500 |

1900 |

### 1476

The **first printer of English books**, William Caxton, sets up shop in Westminster, England. Caxton adopted the colon, period and stroke or "virgule" (/, functioned like today's comma). Though it didn't catch on as a comma, the stroke survived and later became essential to website addresses.



### c. 1530

Geoffroy Tory of Paris popularizes the **apostrophe**. Appointed France's royal printer, Tory introduced accents and apostrophes to improve "corrupted" French spellings. English printers soon adopted his use of apostrophes to indicate missing letters, not only in contractions ("don't") but also in words simplified from Anglo-Saxon origins ("bookes" became "book's").

### 1982

Scott E. Fahlman invents the **emoticon** ("emotive icon"). The precursor of today's emojis was born at Carnegie Mellon University in an early online newsgroup. Concerned that humorous remarks were being taken seriously by his colleagues and students, Fahlman added a sideways smiley face :-)) as well as a frowny face :-(. He failed to patent his idea, however, and never made a dime from it. :-)

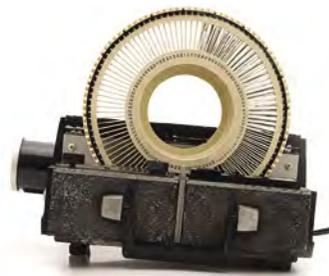






tip

Make slide preservation into an event! Host a retro family slide night to select the best and most meaningful images. Rent a slide projector or small viewer at a local camera shop, or ask friends who may still have older equipment. Set up a projector screen or hang a white sheet for your screen. And don't forget the popcorn!



## 1 Determine which slides to save.

If you have lots of slides, be selective about what you digitize. Slides were relatively inexpensive to make, and many family photographers saved a lot of memories. Don't be surprised to find multiple slides of the same scene. Choose the best one to digitize, and toss slides that are unfocused or with missing heads and arms.

**2 Record the date.** Use an archival acid-free pen to write on the slide box, plastic carousel or paper cardboard mount. Identify people pictured in the slide, as well as the date, event and place the slide depicts. If you have more information than fits on the box or slide, write on a piece of acid-free paper and include it in the box.

## 3 Get organized.

Organize family slides like you would printed photos: by date and event. View the collection (as a whole, and in original order whenever possible) to get an overall sense of who is in the pictures and what events are included. Also number your slide boxes and create a master list with as much detail as possible. Keep one copy with the slides, and another copy with your genealogy work.

## 4 Digitize like a pro.

Digitizing slides is a relatively easy, inexpensive family archiving project. You'll just need a flatbed scanner with film option that will scan paper, photographs and film. You can place several mounted slides in the scanner's plastic carrier, which snaps on top of the glass flatbed. Just close the lid and start the scan. For best results, scan at higher resolutions (3,200 DPI), and wear white cotton gloves when handling film.

## 5 Store the slides safely.

You can safely preserve mounted slides with minimal expense and fuss. Older plastic materials don't harm the slides, but they can be bulky and hard to store. Save space by transferring slides to archival-safe plastic polypropylene slide pages. Store those pages inside an acid-free binder or box for easy viewing and access. Gaylord Archival <[www.gaylord.com](http://www.gaylord.com)> and local camera shops have good options. Cardboard sleeves protect mounted slides from abrasion, so leave the entire mount intact. Never remove film from the mount for storage. Store film in a cool location, away from light, heat, and moisture. A closet shelf on an inside wall is often a good location.



### Denise May Levenick

aka *The Family Curator*  
<[www.thefamilycurator.com](http://www.thefamilycurator.com)>  
is the author of *How to Archive Family Keepsakes*  
(Family Tree Books).

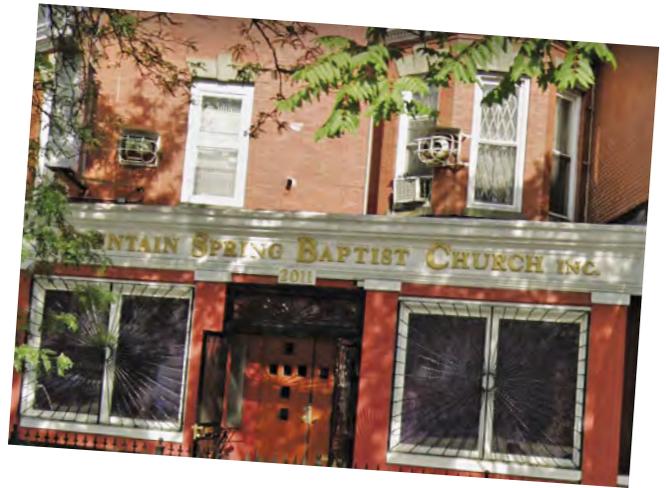
# Small Claims

**A young genealogist reveals his family's long-forgotten legal woes.**

A few years ago, Eli Kirshner made a startling discovery. The then-teenaged genealogist already knew his grandfather's household operated a Jewish wedding chapel in the Bronx, N.Y. But when Kirshner Googled the chapel, he found a surprise tucked away in a Google Books result: The chapel's Hebrew name was the defendant in a court case, *Scott v. Gan Eden*. Someone was suing his family!

According to the case files, an employee fell while setting up reception food for the groom's family in 1935, allegedly slipping on meat grease. She required medical attention, and the jury decided in her favor. Kirshner's family appealed the decision to a higher court—which promptly also ruled in Ms. Scott's favor.

"The jury decided unanimously, in 40 minutes, to award Miss Scott \$2,000, which was a lot of money during the Great Depression," Kirshner says.



Eli Kirshner's great-grandfather faced a lawsuit when an employee of his wedding chapel (now a church, pictured above) was injured on the job. The flyer (left) advertises his officiating services.

Trial records gave Kirshner (now a senior at Oberlin College in Ohio) a window into his family's daily lives, running several weddings a day and apparently living upstairs from the business. He also noticed something peculiar: His great-grandfather, technically a rabbi who officiated weddings, was nowhere to be found during court proceedings.

"He had 'fled to Florida,'" Kirshner says. "That left my great-grandmother to be implicated and cross-examined. She testified that 'in no kitchen of mine could there be grease on the floor.'"

"No one in my family had ever heard this story!" Kirshner continues. "It was not passed down. I found no mention of it in Newspapers.com or Chronicling America or even the local Jewish newspapers printed in Yiddish. Just that mention in Google Books."

Kirshner organized an extended family reunion where he shared the story—then learned more about it. Cousins brought photos of the temple and even of his great-grandfather, performing services before that infamous escape to Florida. ●

**Sunny Jane Morton**



GET ORGANIZED

# Online Search Tracker

Avoid repeating searches by recording where you've searched for your ancestor, and what terms you used.

Collection Name: ..... Website: .....

**Name**

First and Middle Names	Last Name

**Keywords**

--

**Events**

	Date	Location
Birth		
Arrival		
Lived In		
Marriage		
Death		

**Relationships**

Relationship	First Name	Last Name

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**Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical  
Society Library  
[www.stillygen.org](http://www.stillygen.org)**

**Stillaguamish Valley Pioneer Museum  
[www.stillymuseum.org](http://www.stillymuseum.org)**

**Paine Field Aviation District:  
Boeing Future of Flight Museum  
Flying Heritage & Combat Armor Museum**

For other events, visit: [www.seattlenorthcountry.com/events](http://www.seattlenorthcountry.com/events)

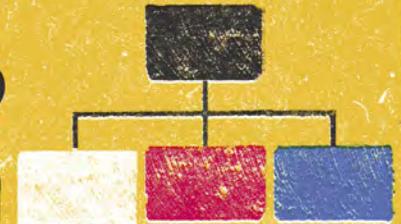


# branchingout



**“WE UNDERSTAND** that the great arc of human history bends towards people coming together in ever greater numbers—from tribes to cities to nations—to achieve things we could not on our own... Progress now requires coming together not just as cities or nations, but also as a global community.”

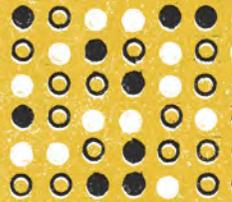
**Mark Zuckerberg**, cofounder and CEO of Facebook, shared thoughts on the importance of connection in his 2017 commencement address at Harvard University. New Media Editor Rachel Fountain shares her favorite genealogy accounts to follow on social media (including Facebook) on page 28, helping you connect with researchers around the world.



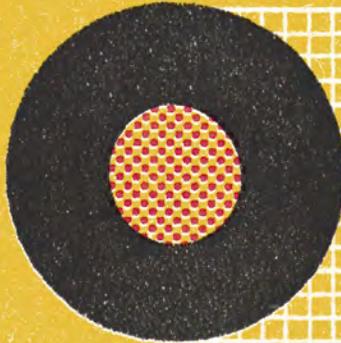
WHERE DO THEY ALL COME FROM?



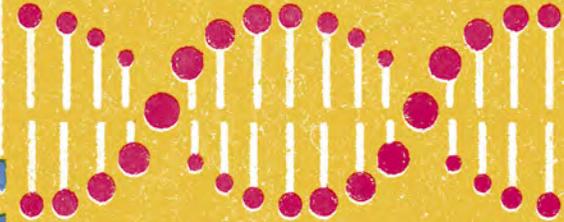
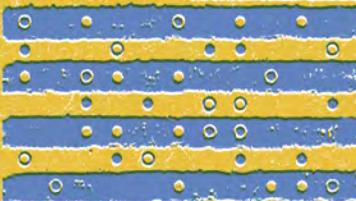
YEAH  
YEAH  
YEAH



HELLO



4



GET BACK!





# the fab four

It was a hard day's night before rockstars **Ancestry.com**, **FamilySearch**, **Findmypast** and **MyHeritage** stepped onto the stage. Here's how the "Fab Four" genealogy websites compare.

by SUNNY JANE MORTON

In the 60s, the Beatles burst into the world of rock 'n roll and changed it forever. Their unique musical style raised the bar for pop music and catapulted John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr to global fame. The lyrics and lifestyles of the "Fab Four" reached well beyond the airwaves to influence fashion, politics and the very culture of an entire generation.

A quieter cultural shift has taken place in the past 20 years—this one in the world of family history. Online resources have democratized genealogy, allowing anyone with an internet connection to participate. And thanks to DNA, many with unknown origins are finally finding answers. History's previously invisible individuals—the poor, the powerless, the enslaved—are gradually being identified and celebrated by their descendants. You say you want a revolution? It's happening.

Headlining *this* change is a different Fab Four: the websites Ancestry.com <[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)>, FamilySearch <[www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)>, Findmypast <[www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com)> and MyHeritage <[www.myheritage.com](http://www.myheritage.com)>. Sure, many websites are crucial to online research efforts, just as many musicians shaped the sounds of the 60s. But these Fab Four are a head above the rest in supplying the billions



- FamilySearch reports 7.2 billion names, made searchable from old records. (The site holds another three billion digital images that haven't yet been indexed, plus 453,000 digitized books that may or may not be keyword-searchable.)

- Findmypast boasts 9 billion historical records, including those that haven't been indexed.

- MyHeritage's Super Search catalog counts about 5 billion names indexed from old records.

What matters most is that a site has records for the *place* and *time period* you're researching. And that it has the specific *kinds of records* that may answer your question. Here's a general description of the records you can expect to find on the Fab Four.

### Places and time periods

All four sites have global reach, but each has identifiable geographic strengths. The for-profit sites—Ancestry.com, Findmypast and MyHeritage—serve audiences (target markets) whose ancestors generally migrated from certain parts of the world:

- Ancestry.com has sufficient records to offer country-level subscriptions for the United States, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

- Findmypast's core content is for England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, with some coverage of places settled by British Isles emigrants.

- MyHeritage is strongest in European records (particularly the Scandinavian countries) and global Jewish content.

As a nonprofit, FamilySearch curates records not for specific markets, but for everyone. They prioritize the most genealogically useful records and also try to digitize records that are at-risk for loss. In addition, FamilySearch is also digitizing a vast trove of microfilmed records from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. These curation efforts make FamilySearch's online historical record collections notable for their size and geographic diversity.

The time periods for record collections at each website vary widely—mostly because of the availability of the records themselves. Privacy laws prevent some records from recent decades, such as censuses and vital records,

## Meet the Stars



Ancestry is a for-profit, US company with roots as a genealogical book and magazine publisher. Its website, Ancestry.com, launched in 1996.



FamilySearch is a nonprofit organization with a global mission to connect families across generations. FamilySearch.org went online in 1999 and is the online presence of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah.



Findmypast is a British-owned for-profit company that started as a team of heir-hunters and genealogists in 1965. The site launched as 1837online.com (with civil registration records) in 2003.



MyHeritage is an Israeli company that began in 2003 as a website for sharing family trees and photos in multiple languages.

from being published online. Some places created more records than other places during particular timeframes, or have experienced more record loss.

That said, we can still make a few generalizations about record coverage in specific places. For example, Ancestry.com has greater numbers of more recent UK records (especially directories), while Findmypast's strengths are in older UK documents.

**tip**

Whichever site you use, consider posting “working” trees online, and keeping a master family tree in the privacy and security of your own desktop software. Lisa Louise Cooke offers advice on this topic <[www.lisalouisecooke.com/2019/04/24/master-family-tree](http://www.lisalouisecooke.com/2019/04/24/master-family-tree)>.

**Kinds of records**

In general, the Fab Four have the most important available genealogical records for their target markets. For example, all four have fairly complete US census collections (population schedules), as well as censuses and civil registration indexes for England and Wales. Beyond these, each has some specialization.

In general, look to Ancestry.com for directories and US special censuses, and to both Ancestry.com and MyHeritage for yearbooks. Ancestry.com has millions of US military records (some of which point to images at sister site Fold3 <[www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com)>). Findmypast reigns over British military records, though Ancestry.com has some, too. MyHeritage has newspaper collections for many US states; Findmypast is

home to millions of digitized British, Irish and US newspaper pages. Ancestry.com and FamilySearch both have excellent obituary databases. All four sites have large collections of searchable digitized books.

When evaluating which website to use, think of your current research questions. Explore the catalogs at each site to see which has records that might answer your questions. (You can do this without paying a subscription fee; see the “Card Catalogs” sidebar on page 23.)

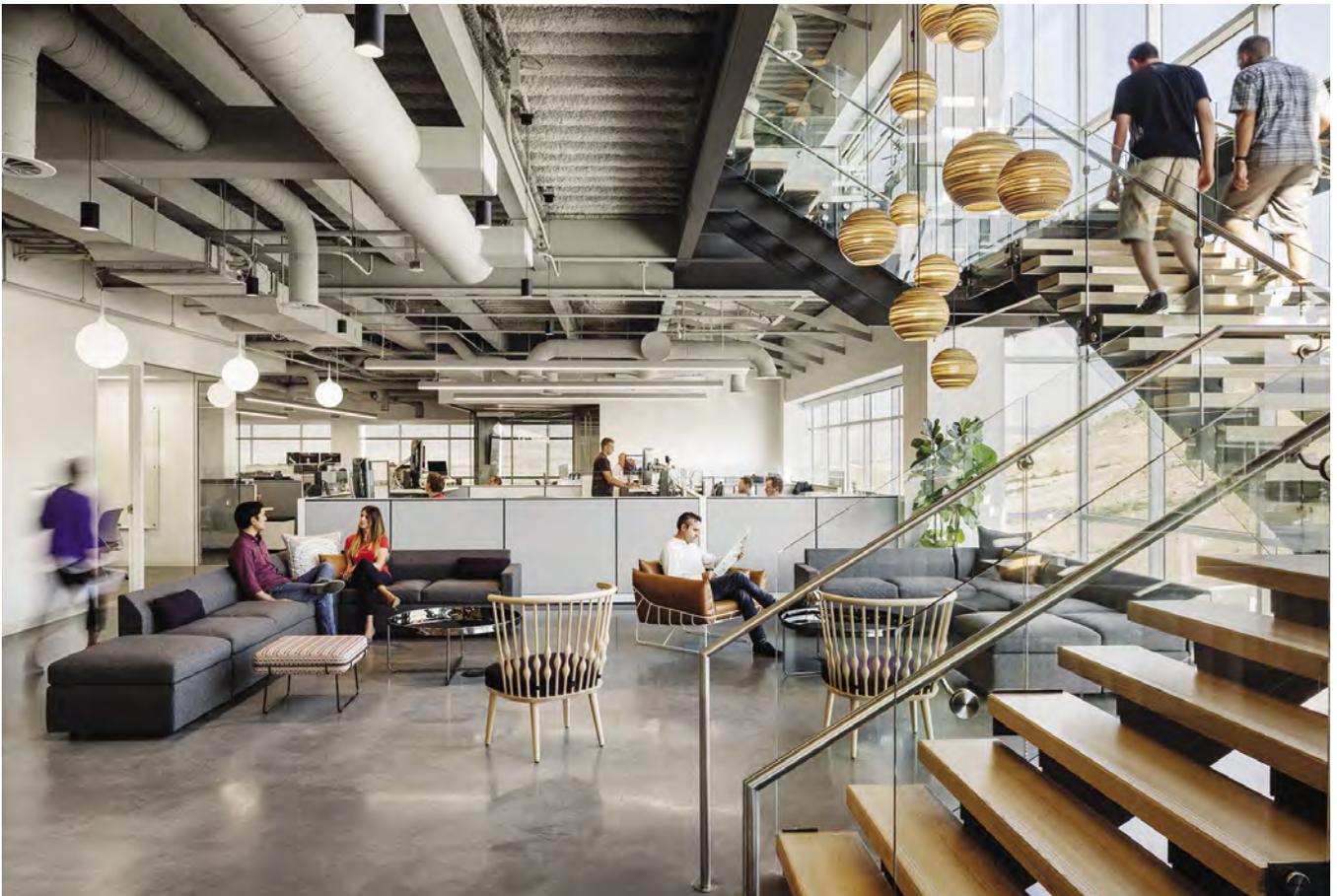
For example, say you’re pursuing the rumor that Great-aunt Eleanor Rigby from Liverpool was a suffragette. You may find answers in Findmypast’s “Suffragette Newspaper Collection.” And electoral registers online at Ancestry.com and Findmypast may reveal her first appearance as an eligible voter.

The search experience and technologies also vary across the Fab Four. Each site uses its own parameters to identify matching search results for you, which means that any given search can

## Money (That’s What We Want)

It can’t buy you love, but an annual subscription fee *can* buy you a year’s worth of access to these sites.

	<b>Basic per-year access</b>	<b>Complete per-year site access</b>	<b>Additional options</b>
<b>Ancestry</b> < <a href="http://www.ancestry.com/cs/offers/subscribe">www.ancestry.com/cs/offers/subscribe</a> >	\$198, US Discovery membership	\$298, World Explorer membership	\$398, All-access (adds Fold3 and Newspapers.com)
<b>FamilySearch</b> < <a href="http://www.familysearch.org">www.familysearch.org</a> >	Free	Free	Additional features for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
<b>Findmypast</b> < <a href="http://www.findmypast.com/subscribe">www.findmypast.com/subscribe</a> >	\$129, Essential British & Irish	\$179, Ultimate British & Irish	Pay-as-you-go credit system
<b>MyHeritage</b> < <a href="http://www.myheritage.com/pricing">www.myheritage.com/pricing</a> >	\$129, Premium \$209, PremiumPlus \$189, Data	\$299, Complete	Special pricing during first year of membership: \$99, Premium; \$159, PremiumPlus; \$139, Data; \$209, Complete



offer up slightly different lists of possible matches, even for the same record collections.

FamilySearch and Ancestry.com allow users to submit edits to indexed record entries, further increasing the possibility of successful searches. MyHeritage automatically translates the names you enter into other languages, extending your ability to identify them in records. Bottom line: If you can't find an ancestor in a particular census (or other collection) at one site, try searching another.

#### DNA TRIPPER

Three of the Fab Four sell autosomal DNA tests: Ancestry.com <[www.ancestry.com/dna](http://www.ancestry.com/dna)>, Findmypast <[www.findmypast.com/ancestry-dna-testing](http://www.findmypast.com/ancestry-dna-testing)> and MyHeritage <[www.myheritage.com/dna](http://www.myheritage.com/dna)>. All provide estimates of ancestral ethnicity, each based on their own algorithms and definitions of ethnic groups:

- AncestryDNA's results pull from more than 1,000 genetically defined geographic and ethnic communities.
- Findmypast, which sells DNA tests provided by Living DNA <[www.livingdna.com](http://www.livingdna.com)>, divides ancestral heritage into 80 categories—

including 21 subcategories within the British Isles alone—and provides basic information on maternal and (for men) paternal haplogroups.

- MyHeritage DNA reports on 42 global ethnic groups.

Utah-based Ancestry.com (corporate office pictured above) began as a genealogy publisher, but has since expanded.

## Card Catalogs: The Fab Four's Setlists

See what each record company has to offer using their card catalogs:

- Ancestry.com: Search > Card Catalog <[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/catalog](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/catalog)>
- FamilySearch: Search > Catalog <[www.familysearch.org/search/catalog](http://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog)>
- Findmypast: Search > A-Z of Record Sets <[search.findmypast.com/historical-records](http://search.findmypast.com/historical-records)>
- MyHeritage: Research > Collection Catalog <[www.myheritage.com/research/catalog](http://www.myheritage.com/research/catalog)>

## You may find yourself visiting the Fab Four frequently—maybe even eight days a week.

All three tests provide lists of your DNA matches (unless you opt out of DNA matching), and all three report the total amount of DNA you share with each match. You may communicate with your matches through the sites.

In addition to total shared DNA, Ancestry.com and MyHeritage also report how many individual DNA segments you share with each match, and MyHeritage tells you the length of

the longest shared segment, too. (Both these pieces of information offer clues about how you may be related.)

Ancestry.com and MyHeritage have robust tools to help you sleuth out your relationships to DNA matches and extend your family tree. On both sites, you may attach a family tree to your DNA profile and compare it to the trees of your matches.

Use the sites' tools to identify DNA matches you share with other matches (e.g., everyone related to your mom's cousin who tested), and to find common ancestral names and places in your matches' trees. MyHeritage also tells you the estimated relationship between your matches (not just between yourself and each match).

Both MyHeritage and Ancestry.com provide tree reconstruction tools, when sufficient data is available. Ancestry's ThruLines tool (page 68)



DNA expert Shannon Combs-Bennett compared the five major DNA testing companies (including AncestryDNA, Living DNA and MyHeritage DNA) in a series of blog posts in 2018 <[www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/dna-test-series-part-1](http://www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/dna-test-series-part-1)>. (Note: Certain aspects of testing services may have changed since these posts were originally written.)

## DNA Services Compared

	<b>AncestryDNA</b> < <a href="http://www.ancestry.com/dna">www.ancestry.com/dna</a> >	<b>Findmypast DNA (Living DNA)</b> < <a href="http://www.findmypast.com/ancestry-dna-testing">www.findmypast.com/ancestry-dna-testing</a> >	<b>MyHeritage DNA</b> < <a href="http://www.myheritage.com/dna">www.myheritage.com/dna</a> >
<b>Test format</b>	Saliva sample	Cheek swab	Cheek swab
<b>Retail price</b>	\$99	\$89	\$79
<b>Ethnicity regions</b>	1,000+ ancestral regions and Genetic Communities	80, including 21 British Isles sub-regions	42 global regions
<b>No. customers tested</b>	15 million	Unknown	2.5 million
<b>DNA match list/tools</b>	Match list, plus robust matching tools	Match list only	Match list, plus robust matching tools
<b>Tree reconstruction tool</b>	ThruLines, showing possible descendants of specific ancestors	No	Theory of Family Relativity, showing possible tree relationship to individual matches
<b>Upload raw DNA for free?</b>	No	Yes; view ethnicity results and match list	Yes; access to features varies
<b>Health options</b>	AncestryHealth Core and AncestryHealth Plus	No (but available through Living DNA website)	MyHeritage DNA Health + Ancestry



places matches who appear to descend from the same ancestors onto a mocked-up tree where Ancestry.com thinks they fit, based on everyone's trees. MyHeritage's Theory of Family Relativity provides possible relationship paths between you and specific matches. (See the July/August 2019 issue's Tech Toolkit for a tutorial.)

In both cases, the tree reconstruction tools may use data from your tree, your match's tree and other trees, as well as historical records. MyHeritage also pulls tree data from the global trees at FamilySearch and Geni <[www.geni.com](http://www.geni.com)>, dramatically extending the scope of its data. On both Ancestry.com and MyHeritage, you can explore the records or tree evidence that support tree reconstructions.

MyHeritage offers another tool to help visualize relationships with your matches: AutoClusters. AutoClusters groups your matches into color-coded clumps that approximate family groups. The clusters also show at a glance whether your matches in each cluster are related to each other. (We featured a tutorial on AutoClusters in the January/February 2020 issue.)

There is some fine print you should know

about for DNA testing. Both Findmypast/Living DNA and MyHeritage allow you to upload your raw DNA results (from an autosomal test) for free. At Findmypast/Living DNA, the free upload comes with access to DNA matches, but not the ethnicity report. The free upload features at MyHeritage vary by when you uploaded your DNA. There's an option to purchase access to the DNA tools for a one-time fee of \$29; see <[tinyurl.com/MHfreeupload](http://tinyurl.com/MHfreeupload)> for more information. Some tools on Ancestry.com and MyHeritage require a subscription, in addition to a test purchase.

DNA test kits from Ancestry.com and MyHeritage both offer health-related add-ons for an additional price. Ancestry.com's (AncestryHealth <[www.ancestry.com/health](http://www.ancestry.com/health)>) offers two options: AncestryHealth Core, which includes printable family health history, as well as wellness and lab reports; and AncestryHealth Plus, which offers screening for more conditions and includes six months of quarterly updates and other tools. (Ongoing AncestryHealth Plus participation has an additional cost.)

Findmypast is based in the United Kingdom and is perhaps strongest for UK and Irish records. In addition, Findmypast has partnered with Living DNA to provide testing services.

tip

Remember that the quality of online family trees varies. Some may have lots of details with plenty of historical documentation attached, but others won't. Review everything carefully, and be vigilant about unsupported claims.

The MyHeritage DNA Health + Ancestry test <[www.myheritage.com/health](http://www.myheritage.com/health)> reports on more than 35 genetic risk and carrier status topics. In the United States, test purchase comes with physician oversight and, if a physician determines increased risk for a specific condition, video consultation with a genetic counselor.

Findmypast's DNA partner, Living DNA, also offers health products when you purchase through its site. But the health features are not available with the Findmypast DNA purchase.

### COME TOGETHER: FAMILY TREES

The Fab Four all have sophisticated tree-building platforms on their websites. The biggest difference between them? Your option to work alone—or with a little help from a friend.

At Ancestry.com, Findmypast and MyHeritage, you build your own individual trees. Other users can't change your trees unless you allow them to.

At Ancestry.com and MyHeritage, you can choose for your trees to be publicly searchable and viewable by others, or private (seen only by you and those you specifically invite). You can search other people's trees, too, which may lead to connections with fellow researchers and new information about your shared roots.

MyHeritage hosts 46 million family trees with about 3.5 billion names in them. In addition, it imports tree profiles from other sites such as FamilySearch (nearly a billion), Geni <[www.geni.com](http://www.geni.com)> (about 300 million) and WikiTree (about 17.7 million). Ancestry.com's got 100 million family trees with more than 13 billion names in them. That's a lot of tree data to explore!

Findmypast trees are private—not searchable by others—but the site does send alerts (tree-to-tree hints) to those who appear to be researching the same relatives. The site doesn't make public its number of trees, stating only that there are millions of names in them.

At FamilySearch, tree-building has a very different structure. The site has just one shared, global Family Tree, with (ideally) a single profile for each deceased person, for a total of about 1.2 billion names. You add private profiles for yourself and living parents, grandparents, etc. Working backward through the generations, you add new profiles for deceased relatives who *aren't* in the Family Tree and connect to the profiles of ancestors who *are* in the Family Tree. Once you've connected to existing profiles, that person's tree data automatically appears.

FamilySearch's tree model prioritizes collaboration over privacy. All the information you (and others) enter about deceased persons is public, viewable and (most critically) editable by anyone. The idea is that multiple descendants entering information about the same person can compare notes and build upon each other's discoveries.

### TICKET TO RIDE

Now that you've glimpsed the breadth of what's available at the Fab Four, you may be wondering how you're going to afford to use them all.





Good news on one of the Four: FamilySearch is completely free, though you'll need to sign up for a free guest user login. Certain record collections are only accessible from a free Family History Center (find one near you at <[www.familysearch.org/locations](http://www.familysearch.org/locations)>) and occasionally from the Family History Library. But these represent a small minority of what's there.

The Beatles famously sang that “money don't get everything.” But it *will* get you access to Ancestry.com, Findmypast and MyHeritage. An annual cost comparison appears in the table on page 22. Breaking down these options further:

- Ancestry.com access starts at \$19.99 per month (\$99 for six months) for US records. Global records access will cost you \$34.99 per month, or \$149 for six months. You can also tack on access to sister sites Fold3 and Newspapers.com <[www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com)> for another \$10 each month or \$50 for six months.

- Findmypast offers two levels of access. An Essential British & Irish subscription (\$14.95/month or \$129/year) comes with access to US, UK and Irish census and vital records, outgoing passenger lists, and UK and Irish parish records.

The Ultimate British & Irish membership (\$19.95/month or \$179/year) adds access to newspapers; military, institutional and will/probate records; and exclusive educational guides and classes. You can also pay as you go by purchasing credits that you use to view individual records. Each record costs between five and 60 credits, and rates start at \$14.95 for 100 credits.

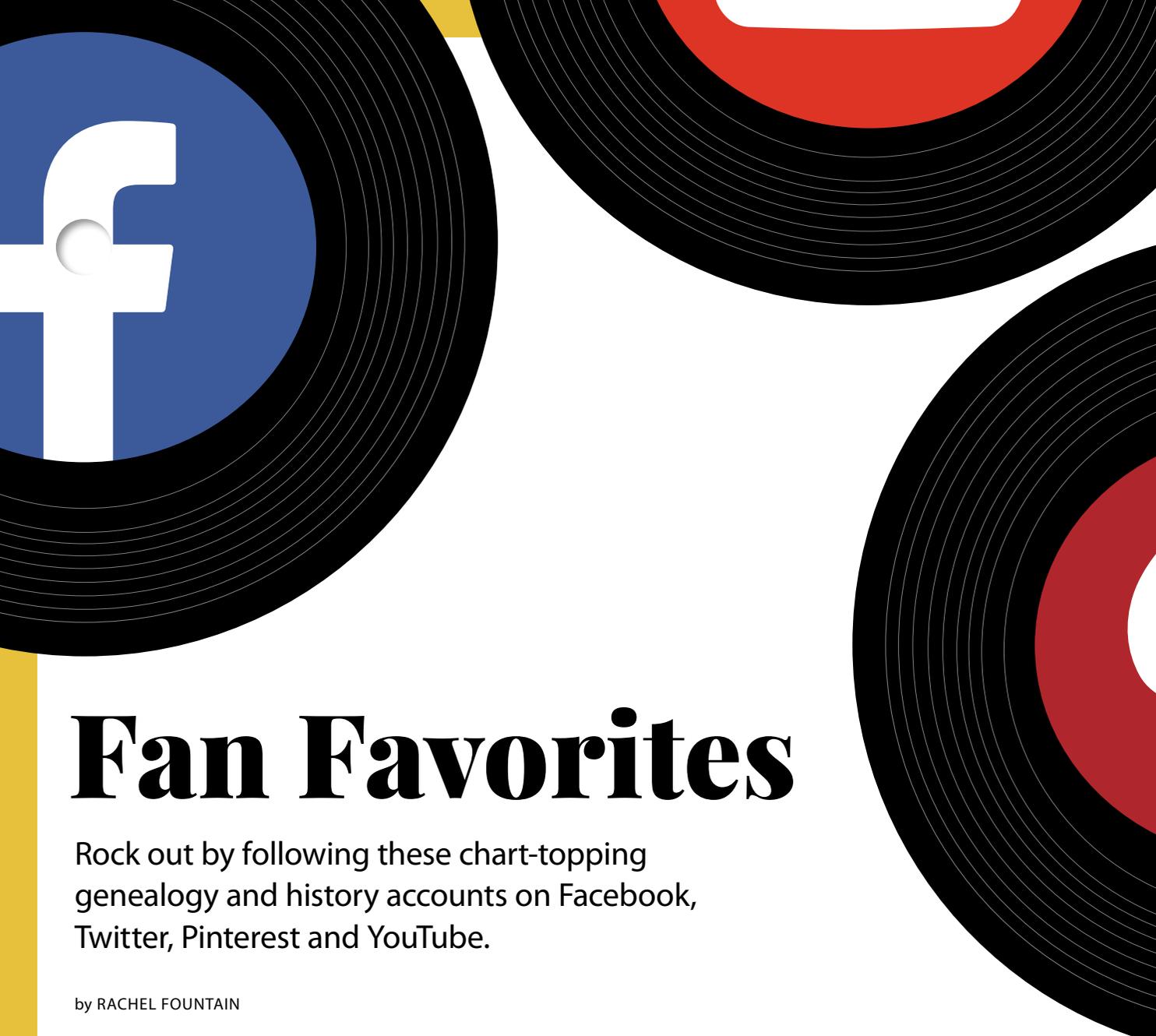
- MyHeritage offers separate plans for its records (the Data plan) and tree-building/family website platform (two varieties: the Premium and PremiumPlus plans). You can bundle the Data and Premium Plus plans into a Complete subscription that gives you everything the site offers. See the table for prices.

As you become better acquainted with the talents of genealogy's Fab Four, you'll find more to make you twist and shout. You may find yourself visiting the Fab Four frequently—maybe even eight days a week. ●

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**Sunny Jane Morton** is known internationally for her lectures and articles comparing the “Fab Four” genealogy websites. She loved brainstorming Beatles references for this article with her son, Jeremy.

MyHeritage, based in Israel, offers billions of online records, an international family tree database, and a DNA testing service. In this photo, sales representatives take a break at the MyHeritage office.



# Fan Favorites

Rock out by following these chart-topping genealogy and history accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube.

by RACHEL FOUNTAIN

**Navigating social media** can be like trying to find a specific book in a vast, disorganized library—where new books are added every second. Facebook <[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)> now reports over 1.5 billion daily users, and more than 70 percent of US adults now use at least one social media site.

With so much information to sift through, it can be difficult to find the best of these platforms. But that doesn't mean you should ignore sites like Facebook and Twitter <[www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)>! As social media use has become more mainstream, more and more users have found ways to make their accounts valuable resources for genealogists—either to share information or facilitate discussion.

We've gathered our favorite Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest <[www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)> and YouTube <[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)> accounts that are fun and informative—and that provide opportunities to connect with experts and other genealogists like you. Social media is constantly changing, but these accounts are a great starting point for making social media a valuable tool for your genealogy research.

## FACEBOOK

One of the main benefits of Facebook is the ability to join global forums such as DNA Detectives <[www.facebook.com/groups/DNADetectives](http://www.facebook.com/groups/DNADetectives)>, national groups such as Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness <[www.facebook.com/groups/raogkUSA](http://www.facebook.com/groups/raogkUSA)> and state- or region-focused



tip

You can like a Facebook page, then choose if and how you want to see that page's posts using the Follow feature. You can remove a page's posts from your feed or (alternatively) tell Facebook to bump the page's posts to the top of your feed.

groups. We could dedicate a whole article to Facebook *groups* for genealogy—the “Facebook Groupies” sidebar names just a few—so instead, this list includes just the Facebook *pages* we really “Like” (pun intended).

### AccessGenealogy

<[www.facebook.com/accessgenealogy](http://www.facebook.com/accessgenealogy)>

AccessGenealogy <[www.accessgenealogy.com](http://www.accessgenealogy.com)> is a vast directory of free records and resources for US genealogy, especially Native American research. The AccessGenealogy Facebook page is a great way to keep up with the latest free resources and news from the site. Both the AccessGenealogy website and Facebook page are tools that every US researcher should keep in their back pocket.

### Evidence Explained

<[www.facebook.com/evidenceexplained](http://www.facebook.com/evidenceexplained)>

Based on Elizabeth Shown Mill's classic book *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace* (Genealogical Publishing Co.), this page is a great resource for those who “use, cite, and seek to understand historical records.” The posts here primarily link to the *Evidence Explained* website <[www.evidenceexplained.com](http://www.evidenceexplained.com)>, which hosts an impressive number of forums for citation issues, evidence analysis and more. The Facebook page functions as a sort of highlight reel of what's

going on in the forums, and is a great place to dive into the nitty-gritty of record use and citation.

### Genealogy Center

<[www.facebook.com/genealogycenter](http://www.facebook.com/genealogycenter)>

Many people are familiar with the Allen County Public Library <[www.genealogycenter.org](http://www.genealogycenter.org)> for its Periodical Source Index (PERSI). But it also sponsors a Facebook page that provides a variety of helpful tidbits and opportunities for genealogists. Even if you can't make it to one of the Center's many in-person events, you can still participate on Facebook

tip

Consider using Twitter's lists to manage your feed. You can add a Twitter profile to a list without following it, which means that person's tweets will appear in the list, but not in your home feed.

by posting in a “Brick Wall Question of the Week.” Or you can watch one of their short, informative videos on everything from finding records to preserving photographs. The admins are responsive and accessible, so this page is also a good place to bring your library research questions.

### GenealogyBank

<[www.facebook.com/genealogybank](http://www.facebook.com/genealogybank)>

Good for a laugh, historical intrigue and solid genealogical info, newspaper database GenealogyBank's Facebook page is a great place to go for new record releases, research tips and more. You need a membership to access GenealogyBank's record collections <[www.genealogybank.com](http://www.genealogybank.com)>, but the site routinely posts links to its free blog, as well.

### TWITTER

Twitter is the 21st-century “little birdy” who tells you the latest news and gossip. But with access to such a wealth of information, this little birdy ends up being more like a whole flock! The accounts that follow are our favorite tweeters whose songs cut through the noise.

In addition, Twitter is a great tool for keeping up with conferences and events, because tweets are often made in real time. To keep up with the latest news from a conference or another genealogical event, follow the event's account or see if there's a hashtag you could follow, such as #RootsTech2020.

## Facebook Groupies

We didn't have time to talk about all of these individually. But here are some of our favorite Facebook groups:

**DNA Newbie** <[www.facebook.com/groups/dnanewbie](http://www.facebook.com/groups/dnanewbie)>

**The Genealogy Squad** <[www.facebook.com/groups/genealogysquad](http://www.facebook.com/groups/genealogysquad)>

**Genetic Genealogy Tips & Techniques** <[www.facebook.com/groups/geneticgenealogytipsandtechniques](http://www.facebook.com/groups/geneticgenealogytipsandtechniques)>

**The International Society of Genetic Genealogy** <[www.facebook.com/groups/isogg](http://www.facebook.com/groups/isogg)>

**The Organized Genealogist** <[www.facebook.com/groups/organizedgenealogist](http://www.facebook.com/groups/organizedgenealogist)>

**Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness** <[www.facebook.com/groups/raogkUSA](http://www.facebook.com/groups/raogkUSA)>

## @LegalGen

<[www.twitter.com/legalgen](http://www.twitter.com/legalgen)>

Judy G. Russell (aka the Legal Genealogist) is a pillar of the genealogy community, and her Twitter feed is a great way to keep up with what's happening over on her blog <[www.thelegalgenealogist.com](http://www.thelegalgenealogist.com)>. Russell tweets about genealogy news, research and more, all with her trademark focus on the legal and civic aspects of the genealogical world.

## @TNArchivist

<[www.twitter.com/tnarchivist](http://www.twitter.com/tnarchivist)>

Melissa Barker is a professional genealogist and an archives manager for Houston County, Tennessee. She regularly posts helpful tips and how-to's about all things archiving over on her blog, *A Genealogist In the Archives* <[agenealogistinthearchives.blogspot.com](http://agenealogistinthearchives.blogspot.com)>. But she also is a regular tweeter. If you're at all interested in archiving or preservation, her account is definitely worth a follow.

## @TodaysDocument and @EllisIsland

<[www.twitter.com/todaysdocument](http://www.twitter.com/todaysdocument)>

<[www.twitter.com/ellisland](http://www.twitter.com/ellisland)>

Historical photo accounts are hugely popular on Twitter—though some are more historically accurate than others. For a daily dose of factual history, Today's Document (@TodaysDocument) is a great account to follow. Run by the National Archives, this account posts timely historical photos

tip

Though social media accounts can be valuable resources for genealogists, remember to always source the information you find there. This is especially true for vital details about your ancestors.

tip

Pinterest has a few functions that can help you either share boards, or keep them to yourself. You can mark your own boards as Secret to make them private, or you can collaborate on "group" boards with other pinners.

along with a link to each photo on the National Archives' website.

A similar account where you can get your daily history fix is the American Family Immigration History Center (@EllisIsland), which regularly posts historical photos of famous immigrants and other passengers, along with a screenshot of a record related to their journey.

## @USNatArchives

<[www.twitter.com/USNatArchives](http://www.twitter.com/USNatArchives)>

This account is not only a reliable stream of useful information, but also a fun way of engaging with the nation's recordkeepers. Beyond sharing interesting historical facts and helpful information on how to use their records, the US National Archives <[www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)> also hosts a variety of events on Twitter. You can participate by using the event's specific hashtag (#), such as #AskAnArchivistDay or each month's Archives Hashtag Party. (We were especially fond of October 2019's party: #ArchivesAncestors.)

You can learn more about past events and how to engage with The National Archives on Twitter in the future by visiting <[www.archives.gov/social-media/twitter](http://www.archives.gov/social-media/twitter)>.

## PINTEREST

More than just cupcakes and wedding dresses, Pinterest is a great platform for anyone looking for inspiration. Our favorite pinners are people who not only provide helpful research tips,

but also give us creative ideas for how to celebrate and share family history.

## Fuzzy Ink Stationery | Genealogy & Storytelling

<[www.pinterest.com/fuzzystationery](http://www.pinterest.com/fuzzystationery)>

<[www.pinterest.com/fuzzystationery](http://www.pinterest.com/fuzzystationery)>

This account is a boon for crafty family history projects, research tips and more. Explore boards for ideas on genealogy scrapbooks, family history websites, DIY family history games, greeting cards and much more. Instead of simply labeling boards *photo crafts* or *scrapbooking*, this account builds its boards around a certain theme. For example, users can find pins on family history postcards in the Connections board, or family reunion checklists in

tip

Have a board that's getting out of hand? Pinterest now allows you to create "sections" within your boards to add another level of organization.

the Celebrations board. There's a lot to explore over at Fuzzy Ink, and you're sure to find some great new ideas.

## Museum at FIT

<[www.pinterest.com/museumatfit](http://www.pinterest.com/museumatfit)>

Pinterest is great for crafts and inspiration, but it is also useful for quick visual references (not to mention a powerful search engine for images). This account is a good example, sharing photos of historical clothing items in its Fashion History boards. Photo sleuths and historical fashion lovers will especially like this account. Because the boards are organized by era, it's easy to browse images of historical garb from specific time periods: 11th–14th century, 15th century, and so on. But the modern boards have much narrower time frames (1800–1825, 1825–1850, etc.).

## Nicole Dyer—FamilyLocket

<[www.pinterest.com/nedyer](http://www.pinterest.com/nedyer)>

Nicole Dyer, the daughter in the mother-daughter duo behind FamilyLocket <[www.familylocket.com](http://www.familylocket.com)>, shares great tips for those looking to engage kids or grandkids in family history. Find pins for family tree templates and coloring pages, as well as family history activities for teachers. Dyer also has a board for teen-friendly genealogy activities. In addition, users can explore her DNA Genealogy board for helpful charts that allow you to visualize genetic inheritance.

## YOUTUBE

Once known for funny cat videos, YouTube has surpassed Facebook as the most widely used social media platform. Free tutorials, historical film and quick history lessons are all a click away on this giant video-sharing site.

## Ancestry

<[www.youtube.com/user/ancestrycom](http://www.youtube.com/user/ancestrycom)>

Ancestry.com <[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)> has a robust YouTube channel that offers educational videos on how to use its products and services—as well as some genealogy entertainment. The Barefoot Genealogist, Crista Cowan, has a whole playlist dedicated to walkthroughs and tutorials. You can also watch bite-sized segments of a variety of Ancestry.com-produced shows including “My Family Secrets Revealed,” as well as watch the full 2019 Sundance film “Railroad Ties.”

**Family Tree Magazine Editor Andrew Koch outlined his 10 favorite genealogy and history YouTube channels in <[www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/best-genealogy-youtube-videos](http://www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/best-genealogy-youtube-videos)>.**

tip

You can now follow certain boards on Pinterest—without following the whole account. Hit the red “follow” next to only the boards you want to appear in your feed (and not the account’s others).

## British Pathé

<[www.youtube.com/user/britishpathe](http://www.youtube.com/user/britishpathe)>

British Pathé, originally known as Pathé News, was a leading producer of newsreels, documentaries and other films in 20th-century Great Britain. It has since become an impressive film archive, with its digital videos available on its website <[www.britishpathe.com](http://www.britishpathe.com)> and on YouTube. Users can browse a library of over 80,000 videos, including (among other historic newsreels) interviews with Titanic survivors. Similar channels include Universal Newsreels <[www.youtube.com/user/universalnewsreels](http://www.youtube.com/user/universalnewsreels)> and a channel of restored archival footage simply called “guy jones” <[www.youtube.com/user/bebopsam1975](http://www.youtube.com/user/bebopsam1975)>.

## US National Archives

<[www.youtube.com/user/usnationalarchives](http://www.youtube.com/user/usnationalarchives)>

Once again, the National Archives has created a valuable resource for genealogists using social media. Their YouTube channel currently boasts nearly 3,000 videos: lectures, historical footage, presentations, behind-the-scene looks at the Archives’ collections and more. And since 2013, the National Archives has hosted a free annual Virtual Genealogy Fair where viewers can listen to presentations from experts and ask research questions. View recordings from past fairs on YouTube or the Archives’ website.

## UsefulCharts

<[www.youtube.com/user/usefulchartsdotcom](http://www.youtube.com/user/usefulchartsdotcom)>

Host Matt Baker first created UsefulCharts <[www.usefulcharts.com](http://www.usefulcharts.com)> as a line of helpful history wall charts. On YouTube, Baker takes viewers on a tour of his charts while simultaneously giving handy history lessons. This channel is a treat for any history lover, and it makes complex historical families and lines of succession easy to understand. Popular UsefulCharts videos include “Line of Succession to the British Throne” and “Who would be King of America if George Washington had been made a monarch?”

For more fun, visual history lessons on YouTube, check out Crash Course (especially the channel’s US history playlist) <[www.youtube.com/user/crashcourse](http://www.youtube.com/user/crashcourse)>. ●

**Rachel Fountain** manages Family Tree’s social profiles. Her favorite account to follow on Twitter is the National Archives—and, of course, all her favorite bands.

## Like, Subscribe, Follow!

We’d be remiss if we didn’t at least mention our own social media channels, where we share our best genealogy advice as well as breaking news:

**Facebook** <[www.facebook.com/familytreemagazine](http://www.facebook.com/familytreemagazine)>

**Twitter** <[@familytreemag](http://www.twitter.com/familytreemag)>

**Pinterest** <[www.pinterest.com/familytreemag](http://www.pinterest.com/familytreemag)>

**YouTube** <[www.youtube.com/user/familytreemagazine](http://www.youtube.com/user/familytreemagazine)>

# STATE GUIDE

## WASHINGTON, DC

by LAUREN GAMBER

**BETWEEN 1776 AND 1800**, Congress met in temporary locations in New York City and Philadelphia. When it came time to pick a permanent US capital, however, the Northern and Southern states couldn't agree. So who ultimately chose the location for our nation's capital, Washington, DC?

George Washington, of course. In 1791, Maryland and Virginia donated 100 square miles straddling the Potomac. Nov. 21, 1800, almost a year after Washington's death, Congress met in the new capital for the first time. Today, the Washington, DC, metro area extends far beyond the original territory, and the local economy revolves around the federal government and tourism. Home to major record repositories such as the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) <[archives.gov](http://archives.gov)>, the Library of Congress (LOC) <[loc.gov](http://loc.gov)> and the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Library <[www.dar.org/library](http://www.dar.org/library)>, DC is a genealogist's dream—and one of the nation's roots research capitals.

### DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH

To create the District of Columbia (then called the Territory of Columbia), Maryland ceded to the federal government parts of Montgomery County (including Georgetown) and Prince George's County, and Virginia gave up part of Fairfax County plus the town of Alexandria. The territory was then divided into two counties: Washington County east of the Potomac, and Alexandria County west of the Potomac. The city of Washington was incorporated in 1802.

In 1846, Alexandria County went back to Virginia. The city of Alexandria resumed its independence (i.e., was not tied to a county) in 1870, and the rest of Alexandria County became Arlington County in 1920. On a modern map, the District of Columbia resembles a diamond with a bite taken out of it. The "bite" is Arlington County and part of Alexandria.

Records of early DC settlers might be in Maryland or Virginia. Virginia kept custody for Alexandria's records, and until the late 1800s, Georgetown's deeds and wills were registered in Montgomery County, Md. In 1871, the city of Washington annexed Georgetown, and Washington and the District of Columbia became coterminous. Today, residents generally say "Washington" when referring to the metropolitan area, and call the city "DC" or "the District."

### FAST FACTS

- ★ **Established:** 1790
- ★ **First federal census:** 1800
- ★ **Birth and death records begin:** 1874
- ★ **Marriage records begin:** 1811
- ★ **Contact for vital records:**

#### *Birth records:*

Department of Health, Vital Records Division 899 N. Capitol St. NE, First Floor, Washington, DC 20002, (202) 442-5955, <[doh.dc.gov](http://doh.dc.gov)>

#### *Marriage records:*

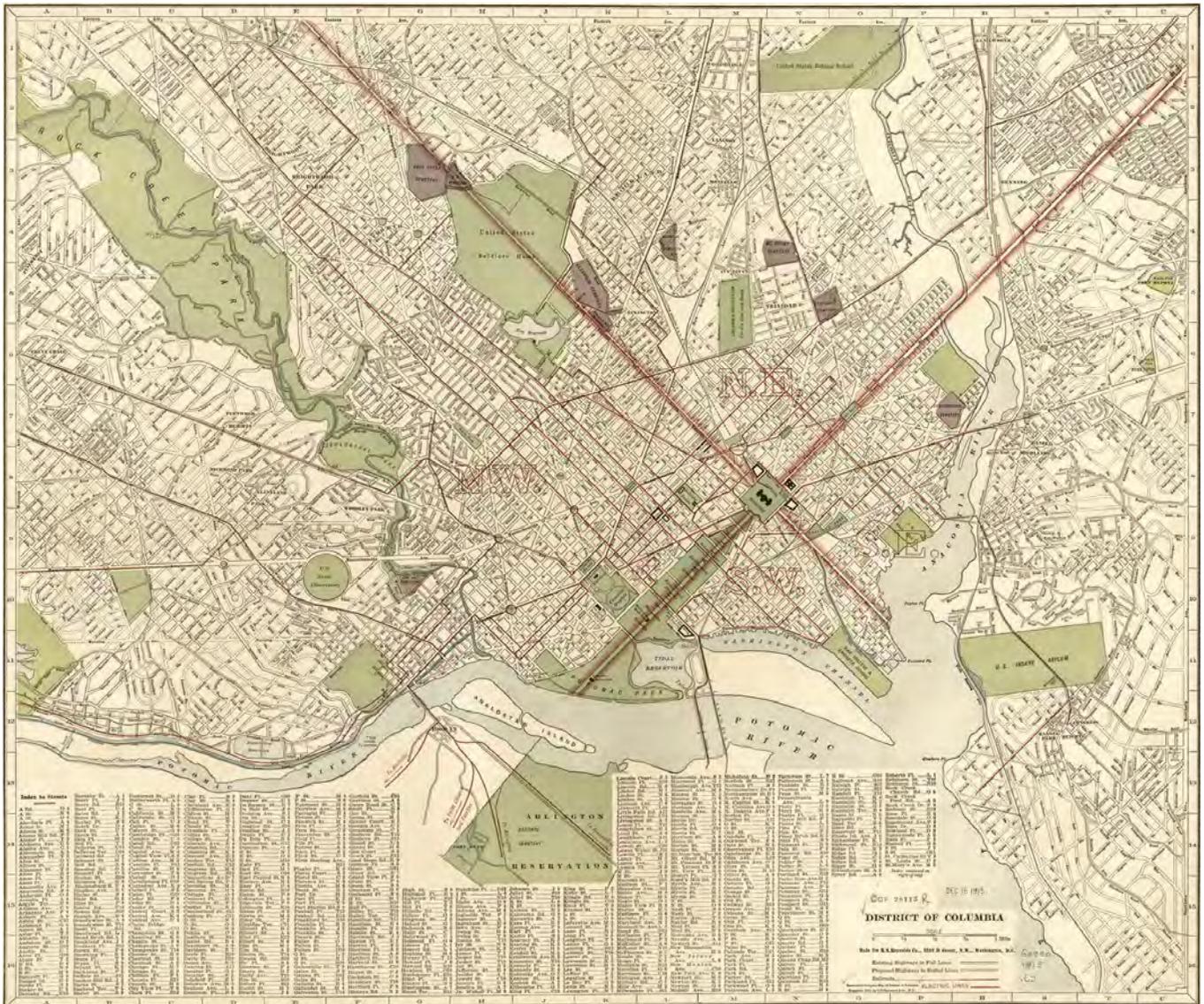
Superior Court of DC, Marriage Bureau Section, Moultrie Courthouse, 500 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001, (202) 879-4840, <[www.dccourts.gov/services/marriage-matters](http://www.dccourts.gov/services/marriage-matters)>

### DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP

In 1663, English settlers received the first land grants in what's now the District of Columbia (at the time, Charles County, Md.). In 1751, Scottish immigrants founded Georgetown, which flourished as a tobacco port, thanks in large part to the black slaves who labored there.

Georgetown was the District's port of entry, but most passenger ships landed in Baltimore or Philadelphia. Arrivals were mostly people from throughout the country who moved to Washington to work for the government.

In the 1860s, DC's population more than doubled. Runaway and abandoned slaves flooded the capital after slavery was abolished there; after the



DC is a genealogist's dream—  
and one of the nation's roots research capitals.

## timeline

**1800**

Washington, DC, becomes the official US capital

**1814**

British troops burn most of Washington's public buildings and records

**1846**

The Smithsonian Institution is founded

**1864**

Arlington National Cemetery is established

**1867**

Congress establishes Howard University

**1899**

Jazz legend Duke Ellington is born in DC

Civil War, African-Americans made up a third of the city's population.

Use these records to track your Washington, DC, kin:

★ **CENSUS:** Access micro-filmed federal censuses for the area starting in 1800 (1810 and most of 1890 have been lost) at large libraries, NARA and its regional facilities, and the Family History Library <[www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)>. Find records online at subscription sites Ancestry.com <[ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com)> and Archives.com <[www.archives.com](http://www.archives.com)>. HeritageQuest Online <[heritagequestonline.com](http://heritagequestonline.com)> (free via subscribing libraries) and the free FamilySearch.org also offer census records and/or indexes.

Remember that in 1790, anyone living east of the Potomac in what's now DC, would've been a Maryland resident. Check the schedules for Prince George's and Montgomery counties. The 1790 Virginia census, which covered the area west of the Potomac, is missing.

★ **VITAL RECORDS:** Districtwide registration of births and deaths began in 1874; marriage records date to 1811. To order copies of birth and death certificates, contact the Vital Records Division of the Department of Health <[doh.dc.gov](http://doh.dc.gov)>. You'll need to contact the Marriage Bureau Section of the Superior Court of DC <[www.dccourts.gov/services/marriage-matters](http://www.dccourts.gov/services/marriage-matters)> for marriage records. Note that birth records become public 125 years after the birth occurred; and death records, 75 years after the death. Only immediate



family members can obtain these records in the interim.

Some vital records are indexed on FamilySearch, while other collections have just images. Here you'll find birth (1874 to 1897) and death (1855 to 1965) returns, plus marriage records from 1811 to 1850. The FHL also has marriage and death notices that appeared in the area's first major newspaper, the *Daily National Intelligencer*, between 1806 and 1858.

★ **COURT RECORDS:** The majority of the District's court records reside at the Washington National Records Center in Suitland, Md. <[www.archives.gov/dc-metro/suitland](http://www.archives.gov/dc-metro/suitland)>; the FHL has some microfilm copies.

★ **LAND RECORDS:** Contact the Washington DC recorder of deeds <[otr.cfo.dc.gov/service/otr-recorder-deeds](http://otr.cfo.dc.gov/service/otr-recorder-deeds)> for land records. The FHL has microfilm copies covering 1792 to 1886 and a grantor/grantee index for 1792 to 1919. The

## 1954

Washington DC integrates its schools

## 1961

DC residents gain the right to vote for president

## 1963

Martin Luther King Jr. delivers his "I Have a Dream" speech near the Lincoln Memorial

## 1970

DC gains an elected nonvoting delegate to the House of Representatives

## 1992

The House of Representatives approves statehood for Washington DC; the Senate does not

## TOOLKIT

## Websites

**Cyndi's List: District of Columbia** <[cyndislist.com/us/dc](http://cyndislist.com/us/dc)>

**DCGenWeb Project** <[www.theusgenweb.org/dcgenweb](http://www.theusgenweb.org/dcgenweb)>

**The Freedmen's Bureau Online** <[www.freedmensbureau.com](http://www.freedmensbureau.com)>

**Tombstone Transcription Project: District of Columbia** <[www.usgw-tombstones.org/dccolumbia/district.html](http://www.usgw-tombstones.org/dccolumbia/district.html)>

## Publications

***The Guide to Black Washington, revised edition***, by Sandra Fitzpatrick and Maria R. Goodwin (Hippocrene Books)

***The Jewish Community of Washington, D.C.*** by Martin Garfinkle (Arcadia)

***Official Register of the United States, Containing a List of Officers and Employees in the Civil, Military, and Naval Service, 37 volumes*** (Government Printing Office)

***Washington, Past and Present, three volumes*** by John Clagett Proctor (Lewis Historical Publishing Co.)

## Archives &amp; Organizations

**Arlington Historical Society** Box 100402, Arlington, VA 22210, (703) 892-4204, <[www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org)>

**District of Columbia Archives Office of Public Records**, 1300 Naylor Court NW, Washington, DC 20001, (202) 671-1105, <[os.dc.gov/node/41092](http://os.dc.gov/node/41092)>

**District of Columbia Public Library** Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, 901 G St. NW, Washington, DC 20001, (202) 727-0321, <[www.dclibrary.org](http://www.dclibrary.org)>

**Historical Society of Washington, DC** 801 K St. NW, Washington, DC 20001, (202) 516-1363, <[www.dchistory.org](http://www.dchistory.org)>

**Library of Congress** 101 Independence Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20540, (202) 707-5000, <[www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)>

**NARA Washington National Records Center** 4205 Suitland Road, Suitland, MD 20746, (301) 778-1510, <[www.archives.gov/suitland](http://www.archives.gov/suitland)>

**Washington DC Probate Court** 515 Fifth St. NW, Third Floor, Washington, DC 20001, (202) 879-9460, <[www.dccourts.gov/superior-court/probate-division](http://www.dccourts.gov/superior-court/probate-division)>

**Recorder of Deeds** 1101 4th St. SW, Fifth Floor, Washington DC 20024, (202) 727-5374, <[otr.cfo.dc.gov](http://otr.cfo.dc.gov)>

FHL also has copies of deeds for Alexandria County (1783 to 1865; indexed 1793 to 1870), as well as Prince George's County (1696 to 1851; indexed 1696 to 1884) and Montgomery County (1777 to 1854; indexed 1777 to 1863). Remember, Georgetown wills and deeds were registered in Montgomery County until the late 1800s.

For historical maps, look to NARA, LOC, the District of Columbia Public Library (DCPL) <[dclibrary.org](http://dclibrary.org)> and the Historical Society of Washington, DC <[www.dchistory.org](http://www.dchistory.org)>.

## CAPITAL STOPS

Washington, DC, is a must-visit for any roots researcher, especially someone with ties to the capital city. Here's a look at some of the major repositories (see the Toolkit for more website addresses and contact details):

★ **DAR LIBRARY:** Founded in 1896, the library <[www.dar.org/library](http://www.dar.org/library)> has an enormous collection of biographies; genealogies; cemetery, Bible and church records; city directories; manuscripts; and membership applications with supporting files. Start your research online with its Genealogical Research System.

★ **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ARCHIVES:** Part of the Office of Public Records, the archives holds birth, marriage and death records; wills and probates; indentures of apprenticeship; and other records.

★ **DCPL:** The Washingtoniana Division has city directories dating from 1822, newspapers, cemetery records and photos. The Black Studies Division has a wide range of historical materials, as well.

★ **HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, DC:** The society has 100,000 photographs from the 1860s to the present; more than 400 maps; histories of neighborhoods, families and businesses; and more.

★ **LOC:** The Local History and Genealogy Reading Room has more than 50,000 genealogies, 100,000 local histories and a huge collection of city directories. Before you go, find online guides to the genealogy collections <[loc.gov/rr/genealogy/bib\\_guid/bibguide.html](http://loc.gov/rr/genealogy/bib_guid/bibguide.html)>.

★ **NARA:** Records of interest here for African-American research include slave emancipations and manumissions (the FHL has some of these on microfilm). NARA also has censuses, passenger lists, naturalizations filed in federal courts from 1802 to 1906, Civil War service and pension records, WWI draft registration cards and more.

Of course, Washington, DC offers more than libraries and archives. You can get a sense of what your ancestors' lives were like by touring the area's historic neighborhoods. Go online to <[www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/wash](http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/wash)> and <[www.culturaltourismdc.org](http://www.culturaltourismdc.org)> for self-guided travel itineraries. There's no better way to follow in your ancestors' footsteps. ●

# STATE GUIDE

## WISCONSIN

by RICK CRUME

**WHERE CAN YOU** get great cheese and beer, be a subject of a progressive state government and seriously up your chances of meeting a German-American?

Wisconsin, of course. The area's first Europeans actually were French fur traders who trapped in the Green Bay area in the 1700s. Lead miners from the South came in the 1820s, followed by settlers from northeastern states in the 1830s. It wasn't until the 1840s and 1850s that hundreds of thousands of immigrants poured in from Europe, mainly Germany. Catholics from southern Germany dominated until 1847, when eastern German Protestants surpassed them. Before World War I, Rhinelanders made up most of the state's population, though others hailed from the British Isles, Norway and Eastern Europe. In the 2000 US census, 43 percent of Wisconsin's residents reported German ancestry; only the Dakotas had a higher concentration.

Wherever your Wisconsin ancestors started out, a plethora of resources will help you find them. And despite the melting-pot nature of the state's residents, its distinctly Teutonic attention to orderliness makes tracing your ancestors in this state a relatively simple pursuit.

### CENSUS SENSE

Federal censuses, taken every 10 years, reveal places of residence, occupations, years and places of birth, and family relationships. They list only heads of household up through 1840, but everyone beginning in 1850. Residents of what's now Wisconsin were first counted in the 1820 Michigan Territory census; in 1830, they're also grouped with Michigan Territory.

Wisconsin took territorial and state censuses every two years from 1836 to

1842, in 1846, in 1847, and every 10 years from 1855 to 1905. Except for the 1905 count, all list only heads of household. Pre-1865 records are missing for many counties. State census records from 1855 to 1905 are searchable at the free FamilySearch <[www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)>.

### LANDED GENTRY

Land records can help you track a person's movements and identify past residences. These documents often provide occupations, relatives' names and other clues.

Did your ancestors file land claims with the US government? The Bureau of Land Management's General Land Office Records site <[www.gloreCORDS.blm.gov](http://www.gloreCORDS.blm.gov)> has a searchable index and digital images of federal land patents. Use the information on your ancestor's patent to order his land entry case file from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) <[archives.gov](http://archives.gov)>.

Once a private citizen acquired land, subsequent sales of the property would be recorded at the local county courthouse. FamilySearch has deed indexes and some land records for many counties. Run a place search on the FamilySearch Catalog for your Wisconsin county, then look for the subject heading Land and Property.

### ON THE MARCH

During the Civil War, Wisconsin aided the Northern cause with more than 91,000 soldiers. To see if your ancestor was among them, search the WHS' statewide roster linked from <[www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS15252](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS15252)>, along with 1885, 1895, and 1905 veterans' lists.

Subscription site Ancestry.com

### FAST FACTS

- ★ **Statehood:** 1848
- ★ **First federal census:** 1820
- ★ **Statewide birth and death records begin:** 1907
- ★ **Statewide marriage records begin:** 1907
- ★ **Public-land state**
- ★ **Counties:** 72
- ★ **Contact for vital records:** Department of Health, Wisconsin Office of Vital Records, PO Box 309, Madison, WI 53701, (608) 266-1373, <[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/vitalrecords](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/vitalrecords)>

# WISCONSIN

LAKE SUPERIOR



## timeline

**1787**

Modern Wisconsin is part of the Northwest Territory

**1835**

John Phillips opens the first brewery in Wisconsin, in Mineral Point

**1836**

Black Hawk War ends in a massacre of the Sac tribe at the Bad Axe River

**1846**

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin is founded

**1856**

German-speaking children attend the nation's first kindergarten at Watertown

**1861**

Gov. Alexander Randall calls for Civil War volunteers; more than 90,000 answer during the war



## Wherever your Wisconsin ancestors started out, a plethora of resources will help you find them.

<ancestry.com> has indexes to Civil War Union service and pension records; the subscription collection at Fold3.com includes images of Wisconsin General Index cards to Union service records. The free Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System <www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm> has a searchable database of Union and Confederate soldier names. See <archives.gov/research/order> for instructions on getting Union service and pension records from NARA.

Search the “Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers, War of the Rebellion, 1861–1865” <www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS4267>. With that information, you can order a copy of a soldier’s Regimental Muster and Descriptive Rolls from the Wisconsin Historical Society.

You can search a roster of soldiers from the Badger State who died in World War I through the free Access Genealogy <www.accessgenealogy.com/wisconsin/wisconsin-gold-star-list.htm>. The Milwaukee Public Library website has WWI Military Portraits <content.mpl.org/digital/

collection/WWI>, a collection of more than 32,000 photographs, typewritten volumes and service records of military personnel from Milwaukee County. Also consult a list of WWI casualties in John Goadby Gregory’s *Wisconsin’s Gold Star List* (State Historical Society of Wisconsin), digitized at <www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/search.asp?id=1058>.

### VITAL ADVICE

Vital records—government records of births, marriages, divorces and deaths—are some of the most important documents for genealogical research. Some Wisconsin counties started keeping marriage records in the 1820s and birth and death records in the 1850s, but most started later.

Fortunately, you can check statewide indexes even for early years. The Wisconsin Historical Society’s index to over three million family history records <www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS15307> includes birth, marriage and death records. Both FamilySearch and

### 1884

The town of Baraboo hosts the Ringling Brothers’ first circus

### 1932

Wisconsin is the first US state to enact an unemployment compensation law

### 1934

Sons of Wisconsin politician Robert LaFollette form the influential Wisconsin Progressive Party

### 1980

Eric Heiden of Madison wins five Olympic gold medals for speedskating

### 2011

Wisconsin lawmakers make national news when they flee their state to protest anti-union legislation

## TOOLKIT

## Websites

**Central Wisconsin Digitization Project Online Collections** <content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/cwdp>

**County Maps, Wisconsin Department of Transportation** <wisconsin.gov/Pages/travel/road/hwy-maps/county-maps>

**Milwaukee Public Library (MPL) Digital Library** <www.mpl.org/special\_collections/images>

**Recollection Wisconsin** <www.recollectionwisconsin.org>

**University of Wisconsin Digital Collections** <uwdc.library.wisc.edu/collections>

**Wisconsin GenWeb Project** <www.wigenweb.org>

**Wisconsin Historical Society Collections** <www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS15310>

**Wisconsin Land Patents** <www.wigenweb.org/blm-toc.html>

## Publications

**The Atlas of Ethnic Diversity in Wisconsin** by Kazimierz Zaniewski and Carol Rosen (University of Wisconsin Press)

**Germans in Wisconsin** by Richard H. Zeitlin (Wisconsin Historical Society Press)

**Heritage Books Archives: Wisconsin Volume 1** (Heritage Books)

**Wisconsin's German Element: J.H.A. Lacher's Introductory History** edited by Don Heinrich Tolzmann (Clearfield Co.)

## Archives &amp; Organizations

**Milwaukee Public Library** 814 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53233, (414) 286-3000, <www.mpl.org>

**University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Library Archives** P.O. Box 604, Milwaukee, WI 53201, (414) 229-5402, <uwm.edu/libraries/archives>

**Norwegian American Genealogical Center & Naeseth Library** 415 W. Main St., Madison, WI 53703, (608) 255-2224, <www.nagcni.org>

**Wisconsin Historical Society** 816 State St., Madison, WI, 53706, (608) 264-6460, <www.wisconsinhistory.org>

Ancestry.com have a variety of statewide indexes to Wisconsin births, marriages and deaths between 1820 and 1997. The Wisconsin GenWeb Project <www.wigenweb.org> hosts or links to various vital records indexes, such as those covering Sheboygan County from 1841 to 1912 <freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~sheboygan/11.htm> and Richland County deaths through 1998 <rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wirichla/deadintr.htm>.

Once you find a name in an index, you can order uncertified copies of records since 1907 from the Wisconsin Office of Vital Records (see the Fast Facts box). You can order copies of pre-1907 vital records from the Wisconsin Historical Society <www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS4018>.

Browse county-level webpages at Wisconsin GenWeb for local resources, such as Milwaukee County census indexes. FamilySearch has posted a lot of county-level data, such as probates, naturalization records, obituaries and vital records.

## RECORDS ROUNDUP

County and local history books often profile residents, particularly early settlers. Search for a word anywhere in the Wisconsin Historical Society's local and county histories from all of the state's 72 counties <www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS1594>.

Dig deeper with a place search of the FHL catalog for a county name and *Wisconsin*, and look under the topics History and History—Indexes. You also can search Wisconsin county and local histories through HeritageQuest Online's Family & Local Histories collection. *Heritage Books Archives: Wisconsin Volume 1* (Heritage Books) includes five books covering Milwaukee County burials, abstracts from the *Wauwatosa News* (1899 to 1904), and histories of Wisconsin Territory and Milwaukee.

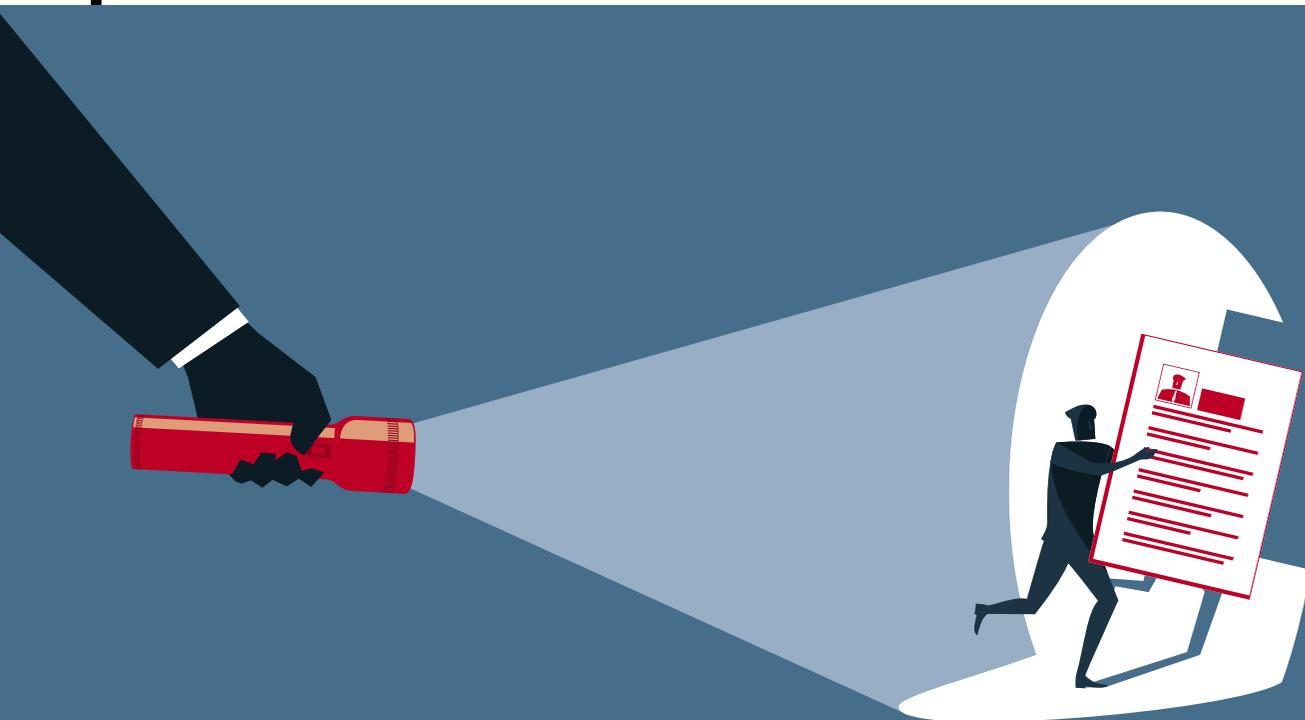
The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee library website lists its genealogy resources and request forms for church, cemetery, naturalization and property records at <uwm.edu/libraries/archives/genealogy>. Look for contact information for local historical societies at <www.wisconsinhistory.org/localhistory-directory>.

All these research resources may keep you at your computer for hours at a time, whetting your genealogical appetite and your actual appetite. Whether or not you are researching German ancestry, you may want to take a cue from the locals and grab yourself some cheese and beer. ●

# FREE AGENTS

Save time and money with these 50 free records collections living “undercover” on subscription websites.

by DANA MCCULLOUGH



**Annual costs of membership** to subscription genealogy sites can add up. But if you dig deep enough, you'll sneak up on several free collections for nonsubscribing visitors. Some include indexed images, and others have indexes that *link* to images (sometimes free, sometimes fee-based) at other websites.

We've gone undercover and scoured the web to find the paid sites' most useful free collections. Some have a narrow focus—such as a single city—while others contain millions of records. Several are free to search on multiple sites.

In making our selections, we prioritized collections that connect you to digital record images or record transcriptions, but several handy index-only collections are included as well. In most cases, you'll need to register or log in with a free account on the subscription website to access the databases (and especially any associated images). See page 42 for passageways to access each site's collections.



## ISPY US GENEALOGY RECORDS

### 1880 US Census

Ancestry.com

FindMyPast

<[search.findmypast.com/search-world-Records/us-census-1880](https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-Records/us-census-1880)>

The 1880 US census was the first to include individuals' relationships to the head of household. The census forms also provide each person's name, sex, race, marital status, birthplace, parents' birthplaces, occupation and more. Search results link to record images.

### 1940 US Census

Ancestry.com

FindMyPast

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2442](https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2442)>

The most recent extant US census is also searchable for free. Search more than 134 million records by name, as well as location, birth year, family member, keyword, relation to

head of household, marital status, occupation and more. Results link to record images.

### U.S., Naturalization Records, 1840–1957

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1193](https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1193)>

This collection links you to images of naturalization records, mostly Declarations of Intention and Petitions for Naturalization from Alaska, Arizona, California, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington and West Virginia.

### US Social Security Death Index (SSDI)

AmericanAncestors

FindMyPast

GenealogyBank

MyHeritage

<[www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10002/us-social-security-death-index-ssdi](https://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10002/us-social-security-death-index-ssdi)>

If your ancestor had a Social Security number and passed away more

than three years ago, he or she may be included in this index. (Most entries are for deaths after 1962.) Indexed entries may include the person's name, birth date, death date, last residence, Social Security number and when/where it was issued.

## ELUSIVE LOCALS: REGIONAL, STATE AND CITY RESOURCES

### AK: Fairbanks, Alaska Cemetery Records

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/4044](https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/4044)>

Search this index to cemetery records by name, birth date, death date and keyword. The database contains 5,600 names of people buried during the 20th century at Fairbanks' Clay Street and Birch Hill Cemeteries.

### CA: California Mortuary and Cemetery Records, 1801–1932

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2054](https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2054)>

The collection covers nearly 50,000 records from books covering northern California, as well as San Francisco, El Dorado and Tehama County cemeteries. Content varies by card, but typically includes the deceased's name, birthplace, age, birth date, death date, location of death and location of burial.

### LA: Louisiana Freed Slave Records, 1719–1820

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7382](https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7382)>

Search more than 4,000 records of slaves from Louisiana who were legally emancipated. Results may include the document date, slave's name, slaveholder's name, who freed the slave, reasons for manumission, if payment was made to free the slave, and more.

## Acquiring Targets

Find additional free collections at each subscription site by following the directions below:

**AMERICANANCESTORS:** From <[www.americanancestors.org/browse-database](https://www.americanancestors.org/browse-database)>, select Only Free Databases underneath the search bar. This will return just results that you can view without a subscription.

**ANCESTRY.COM:** Visit <[www.ancestry.com/search/categories/free-indexacom](https://www.ancestry.com/search/categories/free-indexacom)> to view free collections. The search form at the top of the page allows you to search all free collections at once.

**FINDMYPAST:** View a summary of free collections at <[www.findmypast.com/free](https://www.findmypast.com/free)>.

**FOLD3:** Click Browse from the main menu, then the military conflict you're studying. You'll see a list of databases in the Publications column; free collections have a green "Free" tag.

**MYHERITAGE:** From <[www.myheritage.com/research/catalog](https://www.myheritage.com/research/catalog)>, free record collections are marked with a green "Free" tag.



### MA: Massachusetts Vital Records, 1620–1850

**AmericanAncestors**

<[www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/190/massachusetts-vital-records-1620-1850](http://www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/190/massachusetts-vital-records-1620-1850)>

Search results link to record images from many Massachusetts towns and cities. Search options allow you to select a Record Type to search (e.g., birth, death or deed record).

### MA: Gloucester, MA: Burials in Gloucester Cemeteries

**AmericanAncestors**

<[www.americanancestors.org/databases/gloucester-ma-burials-in-gloucester-cemeteries/about/?filterQuery=page:2~size:100](http://www.americanancestors.org/databases/gloucester-ma-burials-in-gloucester-cemeteries/about/?filterQuery=page:2~size:100)>

Access more than 2,200 records from 1720 to 2003 from Gloucester, Mass., cemeteries. Search results provide a transcript of the record, including at least the person's name and cemetery location.

### MA: Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati

**AmericanAncestors**

<[www.americanancestors.org/databases/massachusetts-society-of-the-cincinnati/about/?filterQuery=page:3~size:100](http://www.americanancestors.org/databases/massachusetts-society-of-the-cincinnati/about/?filterQuery=page:3~size:100)>

This database isn't about the city in Ohio. Rather, membership in the Society of the Cincinnati was open to military officers of the Revolutionary War. Massachusetts officers eligible to join the society are included in this collection.

### NV: Nevada Marriages, 1860–1987

**Ancestry.com**

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7850](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7850)>

Most records in this index come from county courthouse records and four Episcopal churches. If your ancestor's county is included (not all are), you can use the information—bride and groom

tip

Many subscription sites offer free access to additional collections during holiday weekends or special anniversaries of historic events.

names, marriage date, marriage location and source of the indexed information—to locate or request an original copy of the source listed.

### NY: New York Wills, 1626–1836

**AmericanAncestors**

<[www.americanancestors.org/databases/new-york-wills-1626-1836/about/?filterQuery=page:3~size:100](http://www.americanancestors.org/databases/new-york-wills-1626-1836/about/?filterQuery=page:3~size:100)> Search more than 24,000 names in New York wills. Results include images of original book pages. Listings typically include the deceased person's name, his wife and/or heir's name, and the names of children and the executor of (or witnesses to) the will.

## **OH and FL: Ohio and Florida, City Directories, 1902–1960**

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1988](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1988)>

This unlikely combination includes city directories from both the Buckeye (Lorain County) and Sunshine (Jacksonville and St. Augustine) States. Inside each, you'll find names, addresses and occupations.

## **PA: Pennsylvania Archives**

Fold3

<[www.fold3.com/page/88\\_the\\_pennsylvania\\_archives](http://www.fold3.com/page/88_the_pennsylvania_archives)>  
Search nearly 118,000 records from a variety of documents published in the 1800s. The volumes include colonial records, military rolls, tax lists, church records, land boundary disputes and more.

## **PA: Philadelphia Bank Immigrant Passage Records, 1890–1949**

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1366](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1366)>

This collection, provided in partnership with JewishGen <[www.jewishgen.org](http://www.jewishgen.org)>, has more than 125,000 records of immigrants who received assistance paying for their passage to America.

## **RI: Rhode Island Roots**

AmericanAncestors

<[www.americanancestors.org/databases/rhode-island-roots/about/?filterQuery=page:3~size:100](http://www.americanancestors.org/databases/rhode-island-roots/about/?filterQuery=page:3~size:100)>  
Each issue of this newsletter-turned-quarterly journal from the Rhode Island Genealogical Society contains at least one compiled genealogy, as well as transcriptions of original sources and indexes to various genealogical records. Search by name to find specific ancestors or surnames, or use the Keywords field to search article titles.

## **TX: Houston Chronicle Obituaries, 1901–1905**

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7291](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7291)>

This index contains the name of the deceased, death date, age at death, obituary date and section and page of the obituary. To see the actual obituary, use the index information to locate a copy of the newspaper in print or on microfilm.

## **UT: Utah Cemetery Inventory, 1847–2000**

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5232](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5232)>

Search more than 350,000 burial records of Utah residents, including early Mormon pioneers.

## **VA: Virginia, Extracted Vital Records, 1660–1923**

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61462](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61462)>

Taken from four publications, this index of vital records information is free—but you'll need an Ancestry.com subscription to view record images.

## **WA: Washington, Marriage Records, 1854–2013**

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2378](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2378)>

This database has grown to more than 13 million marriage records with record images.

## **IN UNIFORM: MILITARY RECORDS**

### **American Battle Monuments Commission**

Fold3

<[www.fold3.com/title\\_853/american\\_battle\\_monuments\\_commission](http://www.fold3.com/title_853/american_battle_monuments_commission)>  
More than 242,000 records cover individuals with ties to 24 overseas military cemeteries and 25 other

memorials. Results take you to individual memorial pages. You can also search the original American Battle Monuments Commission database <[www.abmc.gov/database-search](http://www.abmc.gov/database-search)>.

### **Bounty-Land Warrant Applications Index**

Fold3

<[www.fold3.com/title\\_918/bountyland\\_warrant\\_applications\\_index](http://www.fold3.com/title_918/bountyland_warrant_applications_index)>  
This index includes more than 360,000 bounty-land warrant applications for soldiers who served in the War of 1812, Indian Wars and the Mexican War. You may find information about the soldier's rank, military unit, year(s) of service, state, warrant number and application approval status.

### **Index of Revolutionary War Pensioners, 1800–1900**

AmericanAncestors

<[www.americanancestors.org/databases/index-of-revolutionary-war-pensioners/about/?filterQuery=page:2~size:100](http://www.americanancestors.org/databases/index-of-revolutionary-war-pensioners/about/?filterQuery=page:2~size:100)>  
Provided in collaboration with Fold3, this index includes approximately 80,000 pension and bounty-land warrant application files for soldiers and sailors of the Revolutionary War. Search results provide a Fold3 ID number, pension number, names of individuals, and state.

### **Korean War Casualties**

Fold3

<[www.fold3.com/title\\_838/korean\\_war\\_casualties](http://www.fold3.com/title_838/korean_war_casualties)>  
These records now include 27,000 Army personnel who died and more than 82,000 Army personnel who were injured during the Korean War. Records include prisoners of war and soldiers missing in action.

### **Medal of Honor Recipients, 1863–2013**

Fold3

<[www.fold3.com/title\\_894/medal\\_of\\_honor\\_recipients\\_18632013](http://www.fold3.com/title_894/medal_of_honor_recipients_18632013)>



If your ancestor received this prestigious award, he may be in this database of more than 3,400 individuals. You may find the recipient's name, rank, organization and, perhaps, personal data.

### **Navy and Marine Corp Officers, 1775–1900**

**Fold3**

[www.fold3.com/title/895/navy-and-marine-corps-officers-1775-1900](http://www.fold3.com/title/895/navy-and-marine-corps-officers-1775-1900)

Records here include the officer's name, service dates, rank and death date. The records were compiled by the Navy Department and published in 1901. Results include record images.

### **Revolutionary War Pension Records**

**MyHeritage**

[www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10021/revolutionary-war-pension-records](http://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10021/revolutionary-war-pension-records)  
Search pension and bounty-land war-

rant application files for men who fought in the Revolutionary War. The database covers 81,000-plus records from 1800 to 1900. Search results provide a basic transcription.

### **Service Records of Confederate Soldiers**

**MyHeritage**

[www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10027/service-records-of-confederate-soldiers](http://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10027/service-records-of-confederate-soldiers)

Search this index for information on 1.6 million ancestors who served in the Confederate army during the Civil War.

### **War of 1812 Pension Files**

**Fold3**

[www.fold3.com/title\\_761/war\\_of\\_1812\\_pension\\_files](http://www.fold3.com/title_761/war_of_1812_pension_files)

The more than 1.2 million records here include full pension application files for soldiers and sailors, widows and children. Among these records, you can find the serviceman's rank,

Learn more ways to save money in your research <[www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/genealogy-money-saving-techniques](http://www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/genealogy-money-saving-techniques)>.

residence, age or date of birth, and time of service. And a widow's application may include her residence, maiden name, date and place of marriage, names of children, and circumstances of her husband's death.

### **World War I Naval Deaths, 1917–1919**

**Ancestry.com**

[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/4022](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/4022)

True, the United States Navy didn't participate in many battles during the Great War. But this collection is a valuable resource for those researching the 7,200 sailors who died during the conflict.

## WWI Draft Registrations, 1917–1918

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/3172](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/3172)>

Search 1.2 million draft registration cards. Coverage is complete for registrants from Alaska, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Mississippi and Nevada, and has “good representation” from 19 other states.

## HIDDEN IMMIGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL RECORDS

### 1851 Scotland Census Extract

MyHeritage

<[www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10323/1851-scotland-census-extract](http://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10323/1851-scotland-census-extract)>

The record transcriptions here include the person’s name, age, birth and death information, names of individuals who lived in the household, marital status and source information. Similar free indexes exist for Scotland’s 1841 and 1861 censuses.

### 1930 Mexico National Census

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1771](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1771)>

Search the 12.8 million names to find a person’s age, birthplace, marital status, religion, occupation, address and more. View record images (in Spanish) from your search results for free. Note that records for the Distrito Federal (Mexico City) aren’t included.

### American Colonization Society

Fold3

<[www.fold3.com/title\\_2/american\\_colonization\\_society](http://www.fold3.com/title_2/american_colonization_society)>

This society was established in 1817 for free people of color living in the United States, and it sent free African Americans to Africa, often to Liberia. This database has more than 347,000 records from the society.



### Australia Convict Index, 1788–1868

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5517](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5517)>

More than 160,000 people were forcibly transported to Australia from the British Isles and colonies after being convicted of crimes. This index includes the convict’s name, age or birth year, birthplace or place of trial, occupation, marital status, ship and arrival year.

### Auschwitz Death Certificates, 1941–1943

MyHeritage

<[www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10460/auschwitz-death-certificates-1941-1943?s=424862771](http://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10460/auschwitz-death-certificates-1941-1943?s=424862771)>

This database indexes more than 65,000 death certificates from July 29, 1941, to December 31, 1943. Search results provide the person’s birth and death dates and locations, and their last residence.

### Baden, Germany Emigration Index, 1866–1911

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/4610](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/4610)>

Search this index of 28,000 people who left Baden between 1886 and 1911. Results include the emigrant’s name, residence or place of birth, and year of departure.

### Boston *Pilot*: Irish Immigrant Advertisements

AmericanAncestors

<[www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/510/boston-pilot-irish-immigrant-advertisements-search-for-missing-friends-1831-1920](http://www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/510/boston-pilot-irish-immigrant-advertisements-search-for-missing-friends-1831-1920)>

The Boston *Pilot* newspaper published more than 45,000 advertisements, placed by friends or family in search of “missing friends.” They may include name, place of origin, ship and immigration route, family relationships or “missing person’s” circumstances.

### Brandenburg, Prussia Emigration Records

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/4121](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/4121)>

This index to more than 61,000 names is a great collection to search if your ancestors emigrated from Germany to the United States in the 1800s and early 1900s. Search results show the

emigrant's name, age, estimated birth year, place of origin, destination and year of emigration.

### Canadian Headstones

MyHeritage

<[www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10110/canadian-headstones](http://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10110/canadian-headstones)>

Results from this collection of more than 951,000 records include headstone photos, burial information and birth and death dates.

### Dachau Entry Registers

Fold3

<[www.fold3.com/title\\_629/dachau\\_entry\\_registers](http://www.fold3.com/title_629/dachau_entry_registers)>

Search this collection to find more than 150,000 prisoners of Nazi concentration camps in Dachau and Flossenburg, as well as records in Mauthausen Death Books. Records may include prisoner names, serial numbers and other details.

### England & Wales Civil Registration Indexes

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8912](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8912)>

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8913](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8913)>

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8914](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8914)>

Here you'll find three free, separate indexes to English and Welsh civil registration records for births, marriages and deaths, covering records from 1837 to 1915.

### JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1411](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1411)>

More than a million records in this collection contain information on burial records and specific cemeteries. The free data is provided courtesy of a partnership with JewishGen <[www.jewishgen.org](http://www.jewishgen.org)>.

### Lithuania, Birth Records Index from Various Towns, 1837–1940

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1416](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1416)>

This index to about 20,000 birth records from 20 Lithuanian towns contains the child's name, parents' names (including mother's maiden name), date of birth, Hebrew date of birth, place of birth, place registered and comments.

### Netherlands Burial Records

MyHeritage

<[www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10335/netherlands-burial-records?s=424862771](http://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10335/netherlands-burial-records?s=424862771)>

Covering more than 1.6 million photographed and indexed gravestones from the Netherlands, your search results here provide the deceased's birth, death and burial information, along with a link to the full record on the Graftombe.nl website <[www.graftombe.nl](http://www.graftombe.nl)>.

### Online *Familieberichten* (Dutch Death Notices)

MyHeritage

<[www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10136/online-familieberichten-dutch-death-notices](http://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10136/online-familieberichten-dutch-death-notices)>

These 1.1 million death announcements from national newspapers, prayer cards and funeral cards include the deceased's name, birth date, death date and location, and age at time of death. You'll also find links to the free full information (which may include burial and spouse data) on Online *Familieberichten* <[www.online-familieberichten.nl](http://www.online-familieberichten.nl)>.

### Piotrków Trybunalski, Poland Births, 1808–1875

MyHeritage

<[www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10171/piotrkow-trybunalski-poland-births-1808-1875](http://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10171/piotrkow-trybunalski-poland-births-1808-1875)> Access more than 27,000 Jewish birth records from this city in

Poland. (According to MyHeritage, alternate names for this location are Petrokov, Petrikau and Piotrkow.) Search results include the person's name, gender, birth year and parents' names.

### Poland, Jewish Records Indexing—Poland Birth Records, 1550–1993

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1367](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1367)>

Find birth information such as year of birth registration, town, parents' names and more in this index to birth records on microfilm at the Family History Library.

### Scotland, Selected Births & Baptisms, 1640–1860

MyHeritage

<[www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10321/scotland-selected-births-baptisms-c-1640-c-1860?s=424862771](http://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10321/scotland-selected-births-baptisms-c-1640-c-1860?s=424862771)>

The information in this index includes more than 19,000 records, which come largely from parish registers in the 17th through 19th centuries.

### Slave Registers of Former British Colonial Dependencies, 1813–1834

Ancestry.com

<[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1129](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1129)>

After Britain outlawed the transport of African slaves to its colonies in 1807, many colonies began to register the "lawfully enslaved" (i.e., those who arrived before the trade became illegal). This collection holds information on nearly 3 million slaves. You may learn the slave's given name, age, gender and nationality, as well as the slaveholder's name and place of residence. ●

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JACOBH/ISTOCK

# GOING DUTCH

With millions of free online records, you won't have to pay your way to Dutch ancestors. These five websites will get you started.

by JOHN BOEREN

**If your ancestors once lived** in the Netherlands, you're very lucky. Not only do you get to visit this beautiful country and enjoy its famous cheeses, windmills, tulips and wooden shoes—but you're also able to do a lot of your research online. What could be better than sitting in your armchair and searching through millions and millions of index entries, plus original record images from archives all over the Netherlands?

Every week, more and more records and images become available. The Dutch legal system is a true blessing for genealogists and other researchers. The law not only prescribes that archives should be accessible for everybody (with some exceptions for more recent records), but also that use of archival collections should be *free*. As a result, every government website in the Netherlands offers its records for free—and in many cases, copies of those records are free, too. Even better, many archives nowadays offer free scanning on demand.

Sure, you can research your Dutch ancestors on the big genealogy websites. (See the sidebar on page 53.) But you can get closer to the heart of your ancestry by tapping into these five Dutch genealogy websites.

## Every government website in the Netherlands offers its records for free—and in many cases, copies of those records are free, too.

1

### OPEN ARCHIVES

As in many other countries, it is difficult to find one database that covers everything. Only two Dutch websites cover the whole country. One of them is the well-known WieWasWie <[www.wiewaswie.nl/en](http://www.wiewaswie.nl/en)>, hosted by the Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie (CBG, or Netherlands Center for Family History).

### Records Highlight: Dutch Civil Registration

Civil registration (vital records) started in the Netherlands in the year 1811—with a few exceptions in the far south, where it began in 1795. Civil records are public after 50 years (deaths), 75 years (marriages) or 100 years (births).

- **Birth records** contain the name of the child, date and place of birth, and the names of the parents (if known). Informants were required to have personal knowledge of the birth. Witnesses were sometimes related, but later records didn't require witnesses. Birth records might show extra remarks—for example, acknowledging an illegitimate child.

- **Marriage records** contain the names of both spouses, date of marriage, ages or dates of birth, places of birth, places of residence, occupations and names of the parent(s). Parents had to consent to marriages if their children were underage; if parents were deceased, grandparents could give consent. Therefore, some records include details about a bride/groom's two parents and four grandparents. Earlier records will have four witnesses, while later have just two.

- **Divorce records** are registered separately, but the original marriage record shows a comment in the margin stating the marriage was dissolved by a decision of a court of law.

- **Death records** contain the name of the deceased and as much extra information as was known to the informant (who was required to have firsthand knowledge of the death). Records frequently mention age, place of birth, place of residence, address where death occurred, occupation, names of parents and name of spouse, but never cause of death. Relatives, neighbors or (in later records) undertakers often served as informants.

The other is OpenArch <[www.openarch.nl/?lang=en](http://www.openarch.nl/?lang=en)>, short for either OpenArchieven (in Dutch) or OpenArchives (in English).

As the name implies, the multilingual website OpenArchives holds Dutch archival records. You'll find a wide variety of records here, including civil records, population registers, church books and military and notarial records. The site is free to use, though you can unlock additional features with a paid Plus subscription.

With more than 215 million historical person references, it is the largest database dedicated to Dutch genealogy. The "open" in the name stems from the fact that all data on the website is shared by around 90 Dutch (and some Belgian) archives and societies. In other words, the site has open data.

Start searching with a name (or two) and perhaps a year. You can sort, download and filter your results by source type, place, role (i.e., how the person is related to the record's event) and year. Click the highlighted text to view details. Each record's page is clean and easy to digest, with a graphic indicating how people mentioned in the record related to each other. Here, you can also view an image of the record if a scan is available. (If OpenArchives doesn't have the record image, the record page will have links to relevant digital collections on FamilySearch.)

A record's page will also automatically pull links to other records related to individuals mentioned in the record. Links include other records on OpenArchives, but also records from external sources like the Dutch Biographical Portal.

Along the right side of a record page, you may also see additional details that provide context for the recorded event: historical weather on the event date, information from the census about the event place, and historical maps showing the event place.



2

**DELPHER**

Several archives in the Netherlands offer digitized newspapers from their town or region, such as the city archives of Nijmegen and Leiden or the provincial archives of Friesland. But, with more than 100 million digitized pages (dating from 1618 to the 1990s), Delpher <[www.delpher.nl/nl/kanten](http://www.delpher.nl/nl/kanten)> boasts the largest collection by far. A collaboration between Koninklijke Bibliotheek (the National Library), university libraries, archives and

**tip** Graves are cleared after a certain period of time (namely, when the family stops paying to lease the space). So most older Dutch gravestones no longer exist.

several other organizations, Delpher also offers books and magazines.

Delpher does not have an English-language side, so non-Dutch speakers will have to use a tool such as Google Translate



<translate.google.com> to navigate. But the extra effort is worth it—in the site’s newspapers, you’ll find important background information on families, places or events that shaped your Dutch ancestors’ lives. For example, newspapers covered the potato disease in 1845 that drove a wave of emigration from the northern provinces (Friesland, Groningen and Drenthe) to the United States. The newspapers also contain passenger lists, death announcements and promotions of army officers.

You can also use this website to learn what Dutch newspapers wrote about regarding events in the United States, Ireland or Australia. The database also contains a few Dutch newspapers that were printed by Dutch emigrants in the United States. One, *De Sheboygan Nieuwsbode* (*The Sheboygan News Messenger*) of Grand Rapids, Mich., presented itself as “the only organ for Dutchmen in North America, dedicated to the news, the situation and the interests of the old and new homeland.”

## Records Highlight: Dutch Population Registers

Unlike many other countries, the Netherlands did not take a nationwide census every 10 years. Rather, from 1850 on, every municipality was obliged to use population registers (*bevolkingsregisters*): an ongoing registration of every person who lived in the municipality.

These registers are an invaluable source when looking for your ancestors, providing: names, birth dates and places, marital statuses, occupations, addresses, family relationships and details about any emigration.

Population registers existed until the beginning of the

20th century, when municipalities started to use one card per family. Shortly before World War II, administrations switched to cards per person (*persoonskaarten*, or “person cards”). In 1994, these paper documents were digitized, and most information was entered in one central database.

Older censuses and population registers are public. Because of privacy regulations, many archives have taken the family record cards offline. Person record cards are not public, but information about deceased persons can be obtained from the Netherlands Center for Family History in The Hague.

### 3 AMSTERDAM CITY ARCHIVES

Amsterdam is the biggest city of the Netherlands, as well as the country's capital. But the city has another distinction, too: The Gemeente Amsterdam Stadsarchief (Amsterdam City Archives) <archieff.amsterdam> holds a huge collection of digitized Dutch records. The website is a true treasure trove, though (like OpenArchive) it's only available in Dutch; there is no English interface.

Among the City Archives' collections, you'll find digitized photos, drawings and paintings that not only show buildings (such as churches and houses), but also people and events <beeldbank.amsterdam.nl>. The site's historical maps can help researchers find their way through 19th-century Amsterdam.

Even more valuable are the indexes of genealogical data <archieff.amsterdam/indexen/index.nl.html>, as well as finding aids <archieff.amsterdam/inventarissen/index.nl.html> that provide background information and links to digitized records. In the indexes, you'll find:

- population registers
- family and person record cards
- patient registers
- alien registers

In addition, the collection's burial, baptism and wedding registers are especially helpful when researching ancestors who lived in Amsterdam before civil registration began in the early 1800s. These collections don't have digital indexes available (FamilySearch volunteers are working on them), but the finding aids do include contemporary handwritten indexes. The index for record group 5009 lists all available registers that have births, marriages and deaths.

### 4 ALLEFRIEZEN

In the second half of the 19th century, many families from the northern provinces emigrated to North America. As such, Americans and Canadians are often looking for ancestors from Friesland, Groningen or Drenthe. The English-language AlleFriezen <www.allefriezen.nl/en> is good place to look for Frisian ancestors.

## Dutch Research on the Big Genealogy Websites

Most genealogists not living in the Netherlands will start their search for Dutch ancestors by using some of the big genealogy websites discussed on page 18:

- **Ancestry.com** <www.ancestry.com/search/places/europe/netherlands>
- **FamilySearch** <www.familysearch.org/search/collection/location/1927059?region=netherlands>
- **MyHeritage** <www.myheritage.nl/research/category-Netherlands/nederland-genealogie-vital-records>

True, these three companies offer large collections with civil records, parish records, court records, notarial records and all kinds of other interesting sources. But the formats of these records vary: indexes without images, indexes with images attached, or images without indexes. Collections that connect the index entry to an image of the original source are the most valuable.

FamilySearch has indexed some records with the help of its volunteers, but most websites offer data that were created by third parties. These records are available as open data, a specific format that enables companies like Ancestry.com and MyHeritage to import large datasets and present them through their own interface. In other words: These records can often be found in their *original* form on Dutch websites, so you'll want to consider researching on Dutch websites to get closer to the original source.

#### tip

You'll only need to visit Dutch archives in-person to view less frequently used records that haven't been digitized. Note, too, that churches in the Netherlands are often not open to the public.

The website offers more than 15 million records from several archives. The core of the website is a database with information from civil records, population registers, parish registers and notarial records. For many index entries, you can view either a digital image or a link to the image's source.

One record highlight is a collection of almost 17,000 Frisian emigrants. From the Advanced Search page, select Emigranten to view just these records. Each entry includes the name of the person, a date of birth, and a date of emigration along with the place, state or country the person moved to.



# Dutch Names

According to Dutch law, each citizen has one or multiple first names, as well as one family name. (Middle names, as such, do not exist.) A birth record gives the official spelling of a person's full name, and an official name can only be changed through a strict court procedure.

Most family names go back for centuries. They are derived from first names (patronymics, occasionally matronymics), occupations, toponyms or characteristics. Family names with *van* refer to toponyms—for example, “Van Buren” (“of Buren,” a town in the Gelderland province)—while names ending in *-sen*, such as “Jansen” (“son of Jans”), are patronymics.

Prepositions and articles are written separately from the core of the family name, so don't use them when searching databases. For example, “Vanderbilt” would be written *van der Bilt*. In a database, only “Bilt” would be used in the field for family name.

By the time civil registration became mandatory (1811), many Dutch were already using consistent family names. Families still using patronymics—mainly Jewish families or those in the northern provinces—had to adopt a (new) family name. Name adoptions were recorded in special registers. If you can't find a surname prior to 1811 or 1812, these registers might be helpful.

You can also use the search box to look for specific places or states (though, of course, not all records include this level of detail). For example, a search for *Montana* yields 50 records, including Lieuwe Westra, who relocated from Oostdongeradeel to Montana and Wyoming on 4 December 1891. In a blue box below Lieuwe's information, you'll see entries for his wife and five children, who emigrated with him.

If your ancestors hailed from the regions of Groningen or Drenthe, rather than Friesland, consider researching similar sites for each: AlleGroningers <[www.allegroningers.nl](http://www.allegroningers.nl)> and AlleDrenten <[www.alledrenten.nl](http://www.alledrenten.nl)>, respectively. Unlike AlleFriezen, neither website is available in English.

**5 GENEAKNOWHOW** The four websites we've discussed thus far have been relatively large, but thousands of smaller websites can contain valuable information about your Dutch ancestors. Some offer databases about a specific location, while others are of societies or individuals publishing transcriptions or digital images.

The Geneaknowhow portal <[www.geneaknowhow.net](http://www.geneaknowhow.net)> will get you in touch with these less-visible websites, containing links to resources for genealogy in the “Benelux” countries (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg). The main menu offers access to seven modules:

- Digitale Bronbewerkingen (digital resources)
- Van Papier Naar Digitaal (images of genealogical resources)
- GeneaScript (indexes and transcripts)
- FAQ Genealogie Benelux (frequently asked questions in the Benelux research)
- Regelgeving in de Nederlanden (historical laws and regulations)

➤ For another in-depth look at researching Dutch ancestors, check out Sunny Morton's guide from the May 2010 issue <[www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/dutch-treat](http://www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/dutch-treat)>.

- Genea-Lokaal (various courses on genealogy and history topics—for example, paleography)
- Het verleden in beeld (illustrations for family histories, for example of old professions)

The main menu of the first module, with links to various genealogical resources, shows all the provinces of the Benelux countries. Each province's page has the same structure: resources on a provincial or regional level, followed by links per town or city—all in alphabetical order.

With thousands and thousands of links to third-party websites, this database is bound to have a couple broken links. Nevertheless, the website is a terrific starting point for finding genealogical gems.

## CONCLUSION

Searching for relatives in the Netherlands is an amazing adventure. So many records are already digitized and published online—not only by the big companies, but also by societies, archives or individuals. All these websites provide rich background information that is invaluable for genealogists.

Those of you with Dutch ancestors are up for a great journey: online by browsing all the records or on-site when visiting this beautiful country. Don't wait until tomorrow—start today! ●

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# COUNTING UP

Discover your ancestors in online census collections  
with these 26 practical search tips.

by RICK CRUME

**By my reckoning**, US federal census records are the best source of information on American ancestors. Taken every 10 years since 1790, the census reveals names, relationships and occupations—not to mention details on military service, immigration and marriage.

Starting with the 1940 census, you can work your way back through each enumeration to put together a rough outline of your family tree to the early 20th century. The loss of nearly the entire 1890 census was a tremendous blow for genealogists. But get past that gap, and you can continue to mine every-name enumerations back to 1850. While the censuses from 1790 to 1840 list only heads of household, they still provide valuable clues that can lead you to discoveries in other records.

Four huge genealogy websites—yes, the same four we compare beginning on page 18—have the entire collection of US federal census records from 1790 through 1940, complete with digital images of the original records and every-name indexes. (One of them, FamilySearch <[www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)>, is free.) And if your public library has a subscription to HeritageQuest Online (provided by Ancestry.com), you can go to your library's website, log in with your library card number and access federal census records for free.

The following 26 tips will help you locate your ancestors in the census—despite poor handwriting in some records, the occasional misspelled name and many incorrect transcriptions. Most of these tips are geared toward researching censuses on specific websites, but the first three are universal.

## Taken every 10 years since 1790, the census reveals names, relationships and occupations—not to mention details on military service, immigration and marriage.

### GENERAL TIPS AND STRATEGIES

#### 1. Try different combinations of search terms.

If searching on first name, last name, birth year and birthplace doesn't work, use different fields, such as the first name and year of birth *combined with* place of residence.

#### 2. Search on abbreviations for given names.

Just in case the search engine doesn't find matches when a name is abbreviated in the original census, try shortened forms of common

names. For example: *Chas* for Charles, *Jas* for James, *Jno* for John, *Robt* for Robert, *Thos* for Thomas and *Wm* for William.

#### 3. Follow up on clues.

When you find dates and places of birth, marriage and death in census records, look for copies of the corresponding records from the county or state for more details. Furthermore, an *Na* in the citizenship column of the census indicates the person was naturalized, so take that as a hint to look for naturalization records and citizenship papers. Likewise, if the census gives a year of immigration or indicates military service, check passenger lists and collections of service and pension files, respectively.

### Looking Ahead: The 1950 Census

Mark your calendars: The 1950 census is scheduled to come out on April 1, 2022, 72 years to the day after it was taken. That's still a couple of years away, but you might be curious about what to expect.

The 1950 census asked fewer questions than the 1940 census did. The enumeration recorded responses to just 20 questions, including name, age, address, relationship to head of household, marital status, state or country of birth, occupation and (if foreign-born) whether a naturalized US citizen. A 5-percent sample was asked additional questions, including the country of birth of the person's father and mother and whether the person had served in the US military.

When it was released in 2012, the 1940 census was placed online and made available for free, but indexes took several months to be created. The release of the 1950 census will probably follow the same pattern.

Without an index to the 1950 census, you'll need to know the enumeration district (E.D.) so you can browse records once they're released. To find the E.D. for your ancestor's place of residence, go to the Unified Census ED Finder from Stephen P. Morse and Joel D. Weintraub <[www.stevemorse.org/census/unified.html](http://www.stevemorse.org/census/unified.html)>. Select 1950, a state, county and city or town. Then click Get 1950 ED Number(s).

### ANCESTRY.COM

Ancestry.com <[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)> has the most complete collection of US federal census records and the most powerful tools for searching them. Select Census & Voter Lists from the Search tab, then U.S. Federal Census Collection from the Narrow by Category sidebar on the right. You can search all the federal censuses at once or select a specific year or collection.

#### 4. Save time with hints.

Working in the background, Ancestry.com searches its record collections for census and other records pertaining to people in your Ancestry Member Tree. A green leaf indicates a potential match. Once you verify a match, Ancestry automatically creates a new Residence fact and a source citation, then links them to the record image.

#### 5. Filter your results.

The census search forms include the option to "Match all terms exactly" or to specify how closely each individual term must match. Using the default settings, most of the top matches in a search for *William Fleming Morgan* are just William Morgan without a middle name or initial.



But my relative was usually known as William F. Morgan, so to limit matches to that version of his name, I can enter *William F* in the First & Middle Name(s) box and check just the box for Exact matches on that term. The top three matches appear to be the right guy in the 1880, 1910 and 1930 censuses. On the results page, you can also use the Search Filters sliders to adjust how close the given name, last name, year of birth and place of birth must match.

#### 6. Use a wildcard.

My ancestor John Robertson lived in Worcester, N.Y., from 1826 to 1864. However, he doesn't show up when searching for that name and place in the censuses from 1830 to 1860 even when using the "Sounds like, Similar and Sounded" options to broaden matches on last names. An asterisk wildcard substitutes for zero or more characters, so matches for *Rob\*son* could include Robson, Robison, Robinson and Robertson. A wildcard search turns up matches on John Robertson recorded in the 1830 and 1850 censuses of Worcester as John Robinson, the

tip

The National Archives—not the United States Census Bureau—manages the 1790 to 1940 US censuses. For more on how to access these historical headcounts, visit [www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/census](http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/census).

1840 census as "Jno. Robbinson" and the 1860 census as "John Robison."

#### 7. Add keywords.

Searching on a keyword finds matches anywhere in a person's census record transcription, so it covers all the place fields, including the father's and mother's places of birth. Just about everyone with the surname Pennington who was born in New Brunswick, Canada, in the 19th century was a relative of mine, and several migrated to the United States. To find my Pennington relatives in Minnesota, I search on the last name *Pennington* and add Lived In *Minnesota, USA*, plus the keyword "*New Brunswick*" (in

quotation marks to search on the exact phrase). This finds people who were born in New Brunswick or who had at least one parent born there.

### 8. Add a family member.

You can search the 1870 census with father, mother, spouse or child, and later census years with all those options plus sibling. A 1900 search on *John G. Robertson*, born in about 1845 in New York, produces a match on my relative of that name. From this, I learn he was a fruit-grower with his wife Louisa in San Jose, Calif. Adding Louisa's name to the search (this time, of all censuses) reveals the family in the 1885 state census in Belle Plaine, Iowa.

### 9. Add parents' birthplaces.

A search of Ancestry.com's US federal census records for my relative William F. Morgan, who was born in 1863 in Pennsylvania, finds him living with his parents and siblings in the 1870 and 1880 censuses of New Brighton, Pa. But later census years show many William Morgans born in about 1863 in Pennsylvania. To zero in, I add

*Wales* as the father's birthplace and *Pennsylvania* as the mother's to the 1930 census search form, both requiring exact matches. Among the results is a widowed locomotive engineer living in Los Angeles in 1930, which I believe to be a match.

### 10. Browse the census.

If searching the census doesn't work (and you have a lead about where your ancestor lived), try browsing. Begin by choosing a census year. Then select a state, county and locality in the Browse This Collection box, and click on the link for the images. Use the left and right arrows to move from image to image.

### 11. Search the mortality schedules.

These list everyone who died in the 12 months prior to the 1850 and 1880 federal censuses (i.e., between June 1 of the preceding year and May 31 of the census year), plus a few states in 1885. The 1880 mortality schedule for Brooklyn, N.Y., shows that my relative John F. Robertson died of stomach cancer in February 1880 at age 60.



## 12. Search the 1890 veterans schedules.

While only a small fraction of the regular 1890 census still exists, the special veterans census taken that year <[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8667](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8667)> has extant records for DC and states alphabetically from Kentucky through Wyoming. Among the records, I find my relative Henry J. Hall, whose listed details include company, enlistment date and discharge date. With that information, I can get copies of his Civil War service and pension files, which will provide many more details on his military service and life after the war.

## 13. Search the agricultural schedules.

Part of the “U.S. Census Non-Population Schedules, New York, 1850–1880” collection <[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1791](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1791)>, the agricultural schedules include farmers’ names and statistics about their farms. The 1860 agricultural schedule provides details on my ancestor Jonathan Hall’s farm, giving rich information about his life there: acreage (both “improved” and “unimproved”), farm value, livestock inventory and value, and the value of implements and machinery. The listing also tallies the year’s harvest, down to the last bushel of wheat and pound of butter.

## FAMILYSEARCH

From the home page <[www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)>, select Records from the Search tab to search all the indexed records on FamilySearch, including US federal census records. To search an individual census, enter *United States Census* in the Collection Title box under Find a Collection, then click on a title from the matches.

## 14. Scan selected census years at once.

From Search>Records, click the United States on the map. Then click on United States of America and, under Indexed Historical Records, click on Show All next to Filter by Collection. Scroll down to the collections beginning with the words “United States Census” and select the checkbox for the census year(s) you want to search. For example, you could select the 1920, 1930 and 1940 censuses. Scroll back up to the search form, enter a name and any other search terms, then click search. Results will include entries from only the censuses you’ve selected.



David A. Fryxell’s article “Find Ancestors Hiding in the Census” gives even more strategies for tracking down hard-to-find people in censuses <[www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/hiding-in-the-census](http://www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/hiding-in-the-census)>.

## 15. Work from the FamilySearch Family Tree.

Instead of filling out census search forms, go to someone’s profile in the Family Tree and click the Details tab. From the right-hand “Search Records” column, click FamilySearch. This will automatically plug the person’s information in a search form. To view just census results, scroll down to “Restrict Records By” on the left, then check the box for “Census, Residence, and Lists” under Type. Click Update to filter your results.

## 16. Fill out search forms carefully.

The census searches use generic forms, with some fields that don’t work with census records. When searching censuses from 1790 through 1840, focus on the fields for First Names, Last Names and Residence Place. For later census years, you can also use the fields for Birth Place and Birth Year. Usually, you should specify a range of at least two or three years for Birth Year so you don’t miss relevant matches.

## 17. Look for relatives *with* relatives.

Because only later censuses asked about relationship to head of household, the option to search with a relationship (spouse, father, mother or other person), works only on the 1880 censuses and later. You can also search these later census years by father’s birthplace and mother’s birthplace. Under “Search with a relationship,” click on Father or Mother and enter the birthplace. When you search on a parent’s birthplace, you can leave the field for the parent’s name blank.

## FINDMYPAST

Though perhaps best known for its UK records collections, Findmypast <[www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com)> offers US federal censuses as well. You can find them listed among the site’s full list of record sets <[search.findmypast.com/historical-records](http://search.findmypast.com/historical-records)>.



Great! You've found a bunch of details about your ancestor. Now what? Learn how to interpret information from the census <[www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/cracking-census-code](http://www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/cracking-census-code)>.

### 18. Scan multiple census years at once.

To search more than one US federal census year at a time, select Census, Land & Substitutes from the Search tab, then the Census subcategory on the left. Click Browse Record Set (next to the Record Set field) and enter *US census* in the Search Filters box. Click on all the years you want to search, then click Apply filters.

### 19. Use wildcards.

An asterisk can stand in for zero or more characters. A search on *John Robertson* in Schoharie County, N.Y., produces no matches in the 1810 and 1820 censuses, even when I search for name variants. But using a wildcard, a search for *John Rob\*son* should return any name starting with Rob and ending in *-son*. Indeed, the search turns up “John Robinson” in the 1810 and 1820 censuses of Middleburg, Schoharie County, N.Y.

### 20. Add a family member.

A search on Thomas Morgan, born in 1818 in Wales, produces 18 results. To focus on my relative, I click on Advanced Options, enter *Martha* in the Other Member's First Name(s) box and click on View Results. The first one is my second great-granduncle, a 52-year-old grocer born in Wales and living with his wife Martha and their four children in the 1870 census of New Brighton, Pa.

### 21. Add a keyword.

You can search the 1850 and later censuses by keyword, and it covers the father's birthplace in the censuses of 1880 and later. A search of the 1930 census for *Minnie E. Smith*, born in 1869 in Pennsylvania produces 83 matches. Add the keyword *Wales*, and it zeros in on my relative, apparently the only one whose father was born in Wales. She was age 61 and living with her sister and brother-in-law in Los Angeles.

### MYHERITAGE

To search MyHeritage <[www.myheritage.com](http://www.myheritage.com)> for all the US federal census records from 1790 to 1940 at once, select Census Records from the Research tab, then U.S. Census under “In Census & Voter Lists.”

### 22. Omit township and county.

When entering a township or a county in the Residence Place box, do not include the words *county* or *township*. Enter *Clay, Minnesota* or *Riverton, Clay, Minnesota*, not *Riverton Township, Clay County, Minnesota*.

### 23. Take advantage of Record Matches.

A brown icon beside a name in your family tree on MyHeritage indicates that potential record matches, such as census records, have been found for that person. Click on the icon to review and either confirm or deny the match, then (if a match) save to your tree.

### 24. Explore similar names.

Using the default search options, a search for my ancestor *Tobias Schaubhut* in the whole census collection produces just a few matches, none of which are my ancestor. So I need to revise my search. This time, I select all the options under “match similar names” beneath the last name field, then click the Search button again. That expands the results, including Tobias “Shafwood” in the 1800 census. While the spelling is way off, I'm sure he's my ancestor based on his other details.

### 25. Add a keyword.

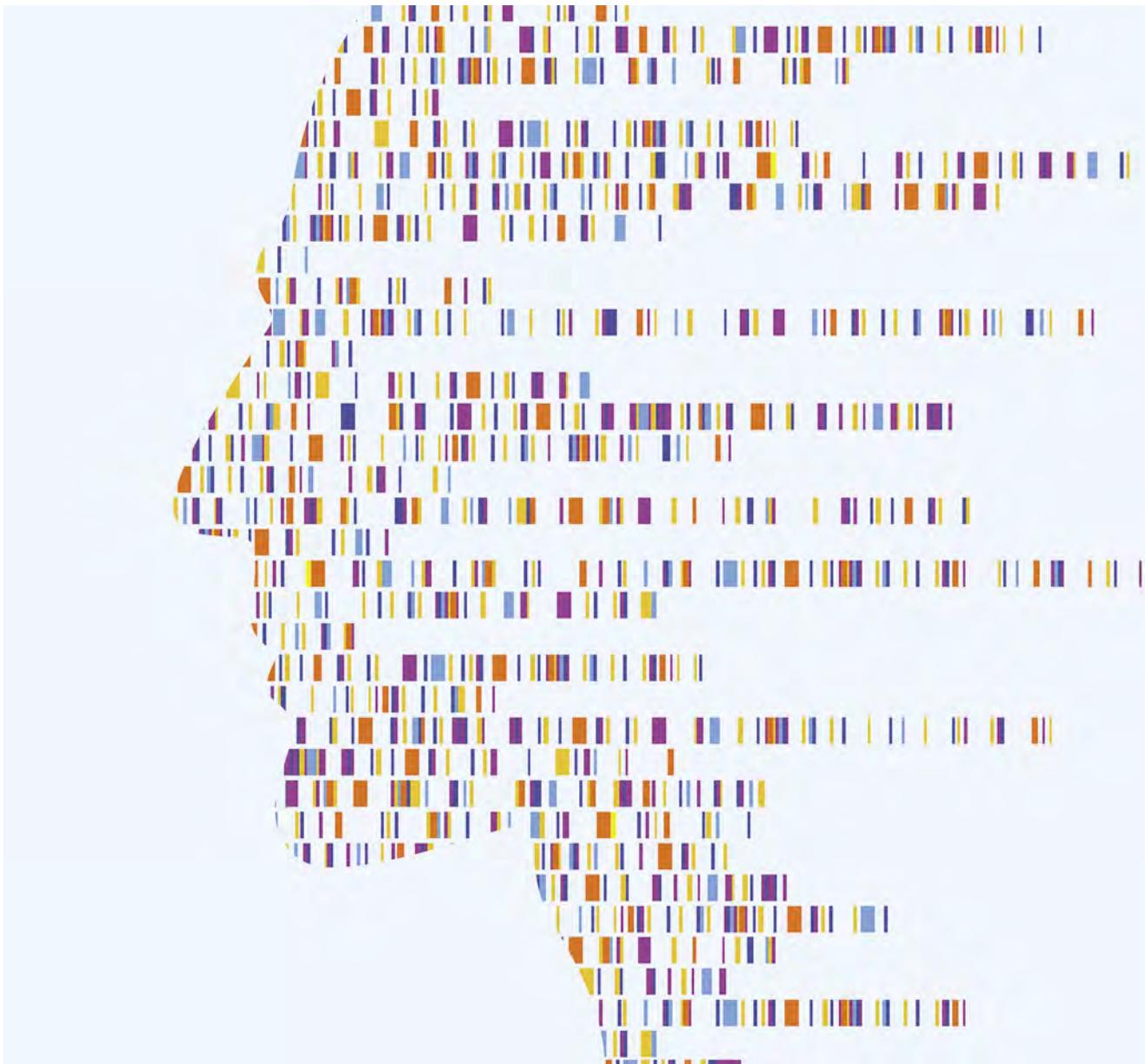
You can search on keywords for any census year (as well as occupation in the 1880 census). Search on my last name *Crume* and the keyword *teamster*, and I find my great-grandfather John Crume, whose occupation is recorded as teamster (someone who drives a team of draft animals such as horses or oxen) in the 1880 census of Mankato, Minnesota.

### 26. Add a relative.

The advanced search options for the 1880 and later censuses let you search on the name of the target person's father, mother, spouse, child or sibling. Searching for my relative *James S. Robertson*, born in 1853 in New York, I find him and his wife Jennie in the 1880 census of South Worcester, N.Y. The family moved to Minnesota, but I lost track of them around 1900. Add spouse *Jennie* to the 1900 census search, and I find the family in Schuyler City, Neb. ●

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**Rick Crume** began his research years ago, scrolling through census records on microfilm.



**GEDMATCH HAS A NEW OWNER.** In December, forensic genomics firm Verogen, Inc. announced its acquisition of GEDmatch. A free genetic genealogy database, GEDmatch <[www.gedmatch.com](http://www.gedmatch.com)> allows users to upload raw DNA results and analyze them using several tools (as well as compare results with its database of 1.3 million DNA kits). In 2018, the website made headlines when law enforcement agencies used genetic information from the site to identify the Golden State Killer.

According to a press release from Verogen, users can expect improvements to the website's speed and performance, and that GEDmatch's terms of service "will not change, with respect to the use, purposes of processing, and disclosures of user data." As before, users will be able to choose whether or not they want to opt in to allow law enforcement to access their uploaded files. ●

**Q** I saw on “Finding Your Roots” that German immigrants in the US during World War I were required to register as “enemy aliens.” Do those records still exist?

**A** In November 1917, seven months after the United States entered World War I by declaring war on Germany, President Woodrow Wilson issued an executive order requiring the registration of all German-born men ages 14 and older who were not naturalized American citizens. A similar requirement was extended to German-born women in April 1918. Registration took place at the nearest US district court.

The resulting forms—“Registration Affidavit of Alien Enemy” for men and “Registration Affidavit of Alien Female” for women—include a wealth of information useful to genealogists: birth date, birthplace, employment information, date of arrival, names and residences, names and birth dates of spouse and children, previous military service, physical description, a photo and even fingerprints.

Unfortunately for researchers, today these records are scattered among regional branches of the National Archives, and some no longer survive. The FamilySearch Wiki has collected links to extant records <[www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Alien\\_Registration\\_Files](http://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Alien_Registration_Files)>, some of which have been digitized.

To learn more about German-Americans in World War I, see the National Archives’ *Prologue* article at <[www.archives.gov/files/publications/prologue/2014/summer/germans.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/files/publications/prologue/2014/summer/germans.pdf)>.

**Q** My father-in-law served on a minesweeper in World War II. Where can I learn more about this type of service? He remembers photos being taken of the crew.

**A** You might start with some of the first-person accounts of serving on minesweepers, or by reading about specific minesweepers such as the *USS Inaugural* <[www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/uss-inaugural.htm](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/uss-inaugural.htm)> and the *USS Hazard* <[www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/butowsky1/warships7.htm](http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/butowsky1/warships7.htm)>.

The Navy History and Heritage Command has a handy guide to finding crew lists and muster rolls for all types of ships, including minesweepers <[www.history.navy.mil/research/archives/research-guides-and-finding-aids/crew-lists.html](http://www.history.navy.mil/research/archives/research-guides-and-finding-aids/crew-lists.html)>. You can search WWII Navy muster rolls at Ancestry.com <[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1143](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1143)>. That collection contains lists of enlisted naval personnel attached to each ship, station or activity. Information usually available on muster rolls includes

- name of enlistee
- rating (occupation/specialty)
- service number
- date reported for particular duty or on board



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- date of enlistment
- name of ship, station or activity
- ship number or other numeric designation
- and date of muster roll

If you know (or can use this collection to find) the name of your father-in-law's ship, you can search the collection by ship name to find his crewmates. The muster rolls for the *USS Inaugural*, for example, are at <[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/navymuster/?count=50&f-F0005FD7=Inaugural](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/navymuster/?count=50&f-F0005FD7=Inaugural)>.

Ancestry.com also has a searchable collection of US Navy "cruise books" from 1919 to 2009, which might contain photos of the ship and crew <[www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2348](http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2348)>. These are volunteer-generated, yearbook-style books that usually include: portraits of the sailors, officers and other personnel aboard the ship; surnames and naval rates; candid photographs of crew members at work and recreation; details and history of the ship; and short biographies of captains, commanders and other prominent officers. The collection is searchable by ship name, ship ID, year and name of crew member.

A wealth of information is also available on British minesweepers and their sailors, including an overview of these ships <[www.harwichanddovercourt.co.uk/warships/minesweepers](http://www.harwichanddovercourt.co.uk/warships/minesweepers)> and a clickable index with links to photos and names of officers <[www.navy-source.org/archives/11/02idx.htm](http://www.navy-source.org/archives/11/02idx.htm)>. ●



**David A. Fryxell** is the founding editor of Family Tree Magazine. His newest book is The Family Tree Scandinavian Genealogy Guide.

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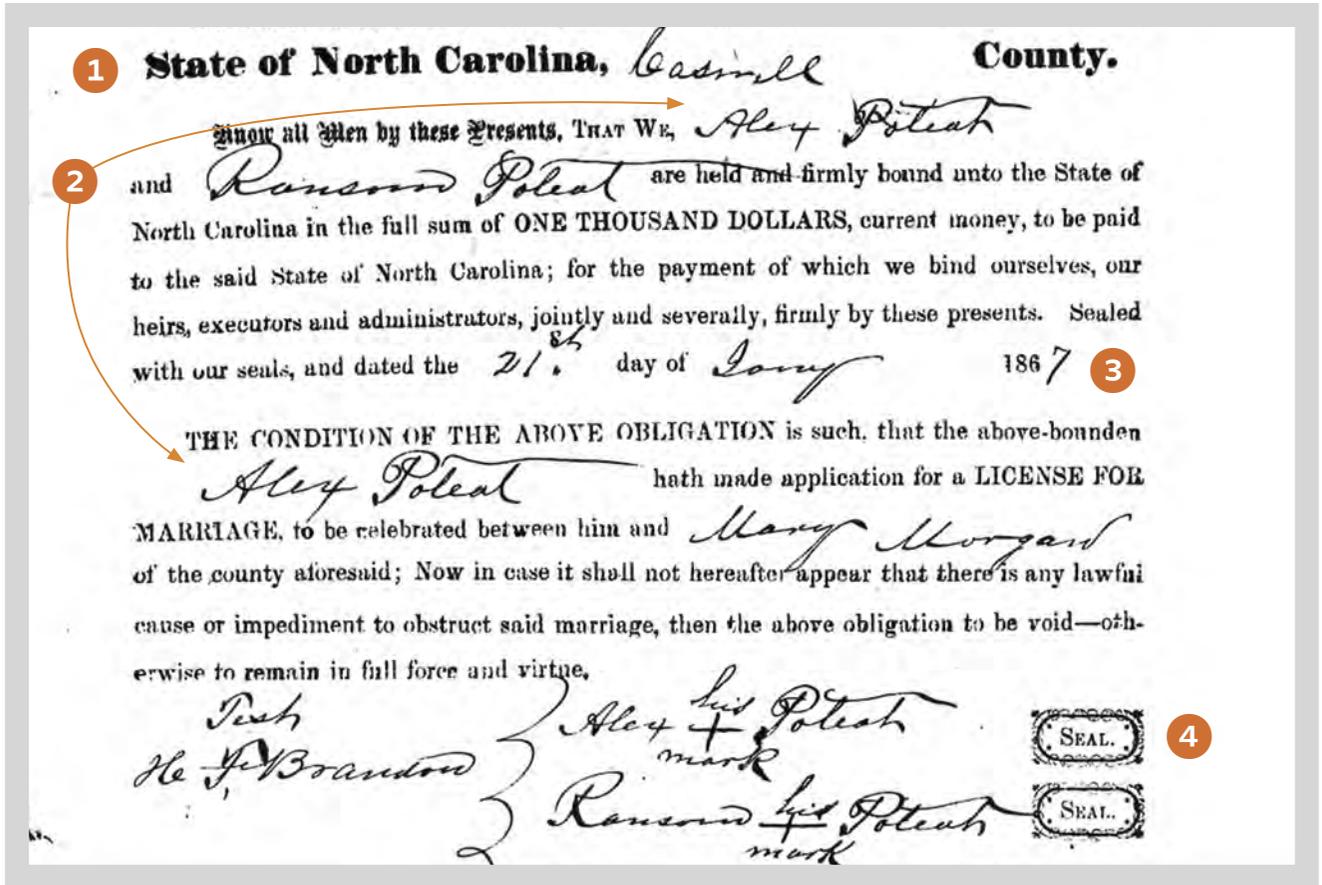
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 FamilyTreeDNA



# Marriage Bonds and Licenses

Page 1: Marriage Bond/Allegation



**1** Look here for the state and county in which the bond was filed. Many locales discontinued marriage bonds in the 1800s, though similar documents were created after that date.

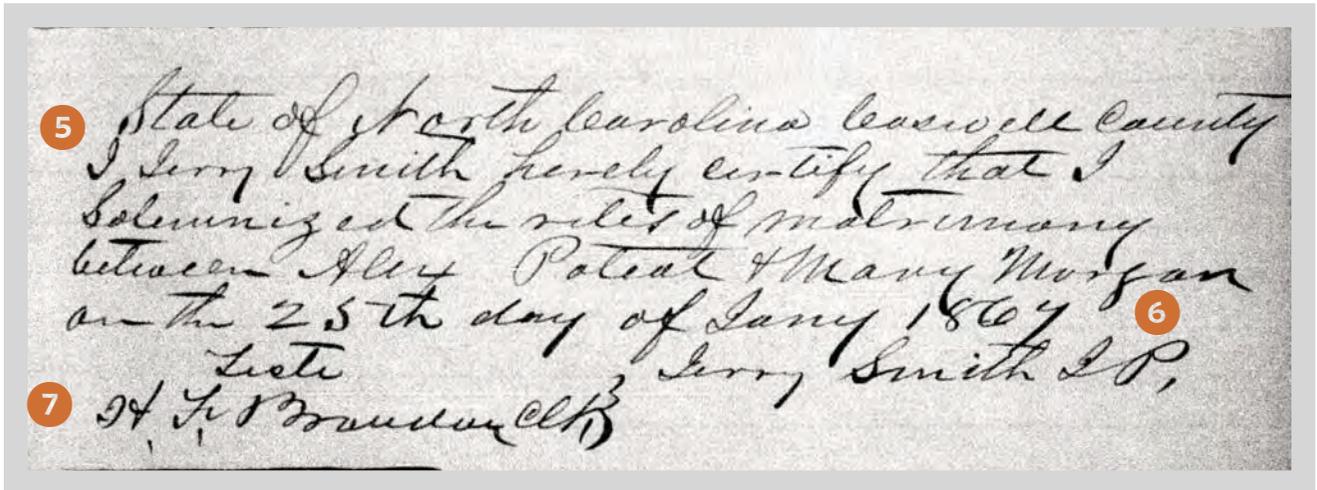
**2** You'll find the names of the prospective groom and his bondsman (often a close friend or relative) here. The groom's name appears a second time later in the document, alongside the name of his prospective bride.

**3** This indicates the date of the application (in this case, 21 January 1867). Note that some online records databases incorrectly index list this as the marriage date, even though the wedding almost always occurred at a later date.

**4** Bond formats varied by location. This North Carolina bond contains the signatures of the court official before whom the document was sworn as well as the applicant and his bondsman. Bonds might include witness names and signatures from the bride, groom and officiating clergy/government official. Or (as in this case) they might have a separate section or document for that information.

**tip** The presence of a marriage beyond merely indicates an intention to wed. It does not guarantee that the couple went through with the marriage.

## Page 2: Marriage License



**5** Though bonds and licenses vary in format, they all contain a version of this phrase: "I [name of officiant] hereby certify that I solemnized the rites of matrimony between [name of groom] and [name of bride]."

**6** Note the date of the ceremony (25 January 1867) is different from the date of the bond.

**7** The *J.P.* here indicates the justice of the peace. An alternative might be *M.G.*, indicating a "minister of the gospel." This document also lists the name of the clerk who recorded the wedding in the county marriage book. ●

## Banns vs. Bonds

A handful of documents could have recorded your ancestors' marriage. Couples intending to marry in the church published marriage banns on three successive Sundays. But those who wanted to marry in a hurry and/or in private petitioned the church to wed using a marriage bond.

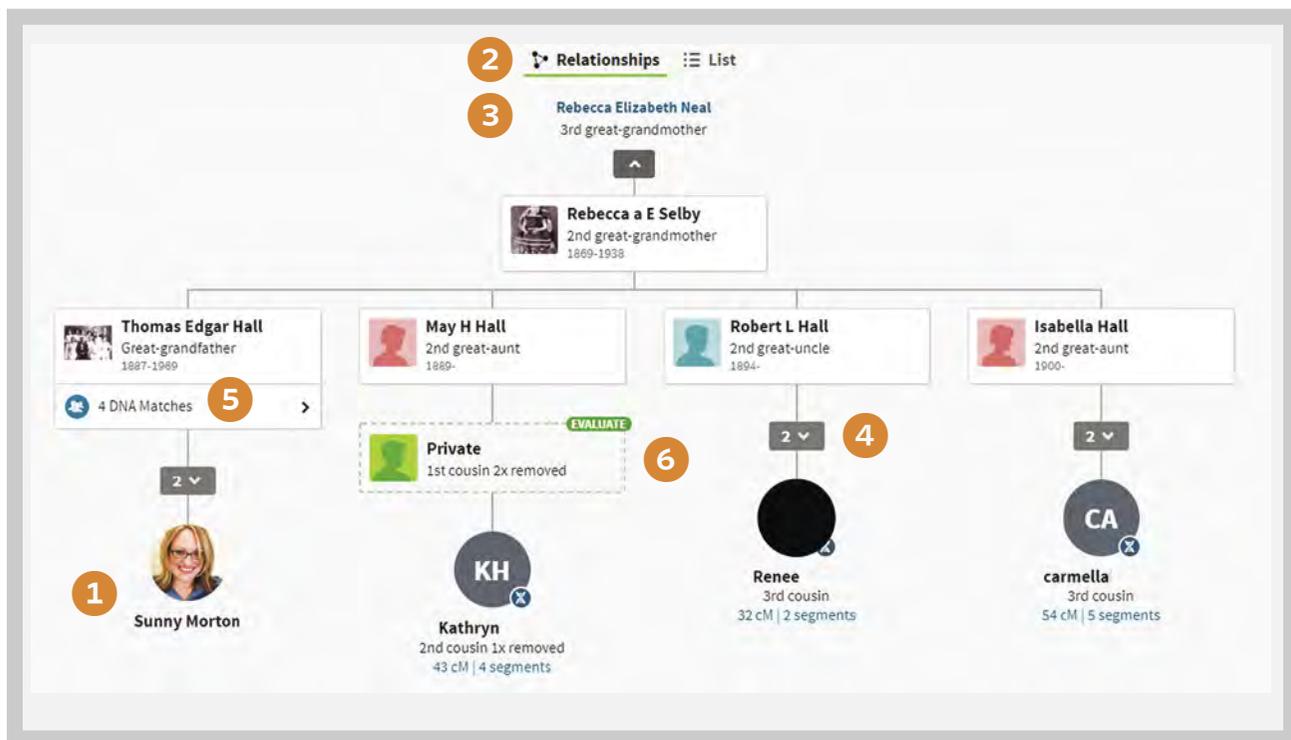
Marriage bonds were written declarations of a man's intention (or "allegation") to marry a woman. A man who had proposed to a woman went to the courthouse with a bondsman and posted a financial bond indicating his intent to marry. The bond set a financial penalty on the groom and his bondsman in the case that the allegation should not occur.

Bonds and allegations only exist for couples who applied by license, and don't exist for couples who married by banns.



**George G. Morgan** is a genealogy speaker and author. He also cohosts the Genealogy Guys podcast with Drew Smith <[www.genealogyguys.com](http://www.genealogyguys.com)>.

# HOW TO View Ancestry ThruLines



**1** AncestryDNA <[www.ancestry.com/dna](http://www.ancestry.com/dna)> customers can take advantage of ThruLines, which identifies DNA matches who may descend from a specific common ancestor based on tree data. After logging in, click DNA from the main toolbar, then select ThruLines. Choose an ancestor of interest. (Note that not all ancestors on your tree may have ThruLines available.)

**2** View the ThruLine in Relationship view (shown) or in a List view. The Relationship view creates a sample descendency chart.

**3** Navigate to additional ThruLines views for your ancestor's siblings, children or parents.

**4** Based on tree data, this DNA match is two generations down from the ancestor shown here.

**5** Click the arrow to see multiple matches (four, in this case) who are believed to descend from this ancestor.

**6** Verify these theorized tree connections yourself! Click the green Evaluate buttons, then the name of a DNA match to view the evidence upon which this connection is built.

## ROUNDUP

## Health Add-Ons for DNA Tests

**1 23andMe Health + Ancestry**

<[www.23andme.com](http://www.23andme.com)>

This newly redesigned kit includes reports on Type 2 diabetes, selected variants of BRCA1/BRCA2 that are linked to certain cancers, celiac disease, Parkinson's disease and late-onset Alzheimer's. The test also includes carrier-status reports for more than 40 conditions and wellness reports for several health and lifestyle topics. Retail price: \$199.

**2 AncestryHealth Core and Plus**

<[www.ancestry.com/dna](http://www.ancestry.com/dna)>

AncestryHealth Core <[www.ancestry.com/health/core](http://www.ancestry.com/health/core)> uses genotyping-array technology to produce a printable family health history and wellness and lab reports on common health conditions that can be shared with healthcare providers. A companion service, AncestryHealth Plus <[www.ancestry.com/health/plus-membership](http://www.ancestry.com/health/plus-membership)>, delivers more-comprehensive screening for additional conditions using next-generation sequencing technology, and includes six months of quarterly screening updates and other tools. Retail price: AncestryHealth Core, \$149; AncestryHealth Plus add-on, \$98 for first six months (\$49 for subsequent six months).

**3 Living DNA Wellbeing + Ancestry**

<[www.livingdna.com](http://www.livingdna.com)>

The "Wellbeing" part of this new test focuses on actionable reports that can help users improve quality of life through diet, exercise and lifestyle choices, rather than reporting risks for medical conditions. For example, reports indicate how the tester's body responds to different stimuli: vitamins, foods containing gluten and lactose, and different types of exercise (including what exercise best supports the tester's body). The test comes with an 180-day update service that incorporates any new reports that may be released. Retail price: Wellbeing + Ancestry, \$179 (\$39 for additional 180-day updates).

**4 MyHeritage Health+Ancestry**

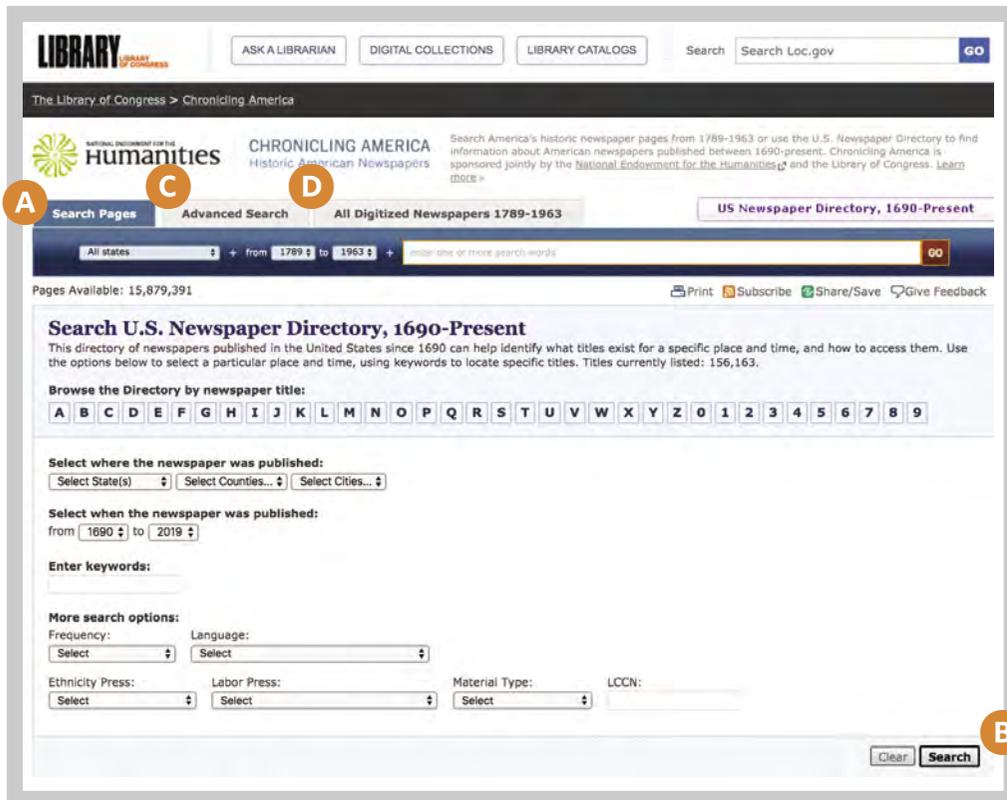
<[www.myheritage.com/health](http://www.myheritage.com/health)>

As its name implies, the Health+Ancestry test adds a health report component to the ethnicity estimates and DNA matches of a baseline MyHeritage DNA test. More than 35 genetic risk and carrier status reports are included, including polygenic risk reports for heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and 15 variants for BRCA1/BRCA2 genes. In the United States, test purchase includes physician oversight, along with video consultation with a genetic counselor if a physician determines increased risk for a specific condition. Retail price: \$199.

# WEBSITE U.S. Newspaper Directory

The **Library of Congress'** *Chronicling America* <chroniclingamerica.loc.gov> is known for its growing collection of digitized historical newspaper images—more than 15 million from nearly all 50 states and Puerto Rico. But significantly more newspapers remain available *offline*. *Chronicling America* is also the place to find these, with a comprehensive, searchable directory of US newspapers and where you can find them.

Sunny Jane Morton



**A** Search a catalog of all known historical US newspapers. Select the state, county and/or city of publication, a range of years and additional options such as the language or ethnic group associated with the paper.

**B** Hit the search button to generate a list of newspapers with these parameters. Click again on individual newspaper titles to see details such as the geographic coverage, dates of publication, and holdings information for libraries that have that publication.

**C** Use the Advanced Search to keyword-search among specific digitized newspaper pages. Limit searches by place, time period, language and even by specific pages within an issue.

**D** Under All Digitized Newspapers, browse papers by state, ethnicity or language—or click to download or view a list of all digitized titles, organized by state.

For more on using free resources to find historical newspapers, see <[www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/free-press-using-free-online-historical-newspapers](http://www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/free-press-using-free-online-historical-newspapers)>.

## DNA Q&amp;A

## Next Steps with DNA Results



**Q** I've tested with most of the companies, but I don't know where to start my research.

**A** As more of us are testing at multiple companies, we're naturally faced with the question of how to handle so much information. Thankfully, testing companies are making it easier to identify cousins and find ancestors by making their websites more navigable and creating tools that streamline searches.

If you want to make some progress with your research, the first step is to find a subset of your matches that you want to work with—instead of trying to work with the full list at each company. 23andMe <[www.23andme.com](http://www.23andme.com)>, AncestryDNA <[www.ancestry.com/dna](http://www.ancestry.com/dna)>, and MyHeritage DNA <[www.myheritage.com/dna](http://www.myheritage.com/dna)> have built-in tools that can help, and Family Tree DNA <[www.familytreedna.com](http://www.familytreedna.com)> and Living DNA <[www.livingdna.com](http://www.livingdna.com)> offer navigation solutions.

### 23andMe

The Family Tree tool at 23andMe (see page 8) attempts to create a family tree using your relationships to top matches, as well as their relationships to each other. While the reconstructed tree doesn't contain any ancestral names, you can start working with the matches listed there who seem to be descendants of a particular line. Try to determine how they are related to you and to each other.

### AncestryDNA

If you have a family tree linked to your DNA sample, AncestryDNA's ThruLines tool (page 68) will use its database of family trees to identify DNA matches who are also descendants of your ancestors. ThruLines will often have

to fill generational blanks, which you'll want to review and confirm. Even so, this tool can help you confirm lines you already know, and sometimes even provide hints at connections you may not have. Reach out to these newly found cousins to share family history resources, including documents and pictures.

### Family Tree DNA

When you upload a family tree into its system, Family Tree DNA activates your Ancestral Surnames column (viewable from your matches page). When Family Tree DNA finds surnames in your matches' list that are the same or similar to your own, those names are bolded and brought to the front of your list. Scroll down your match page with your eyes only on that last column, and you can easily identify matches who have suggested surnames (indicated in bold).

### Living DNA

Living DNA's database of test takers is still relatively small, so you'll likely have a manageable number of matches. Look for the flag icon to help you quickly identify matches in a particular country of interest.

### MyHeritage DNA

MyHeritage DNA's Theory of Family Relativity pulls information from other users' trees as well as genealogy records to provide you with possible connections between you and your match. To view your constructed trees, click the Filters icon, then "All tree details" and select "Has Theory of Family Relativity." Start your search with these to help you zero in on the matches that are most likely to yield connections. ●

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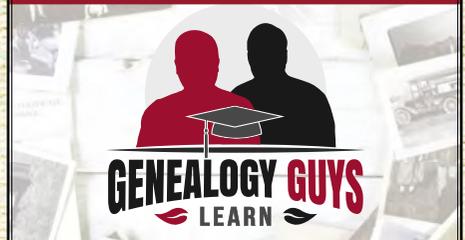


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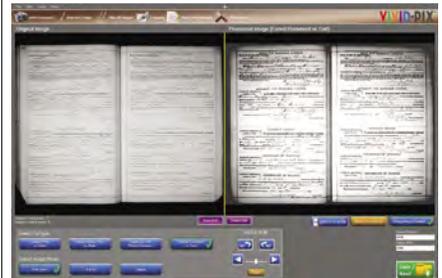
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## Geography of Ireland

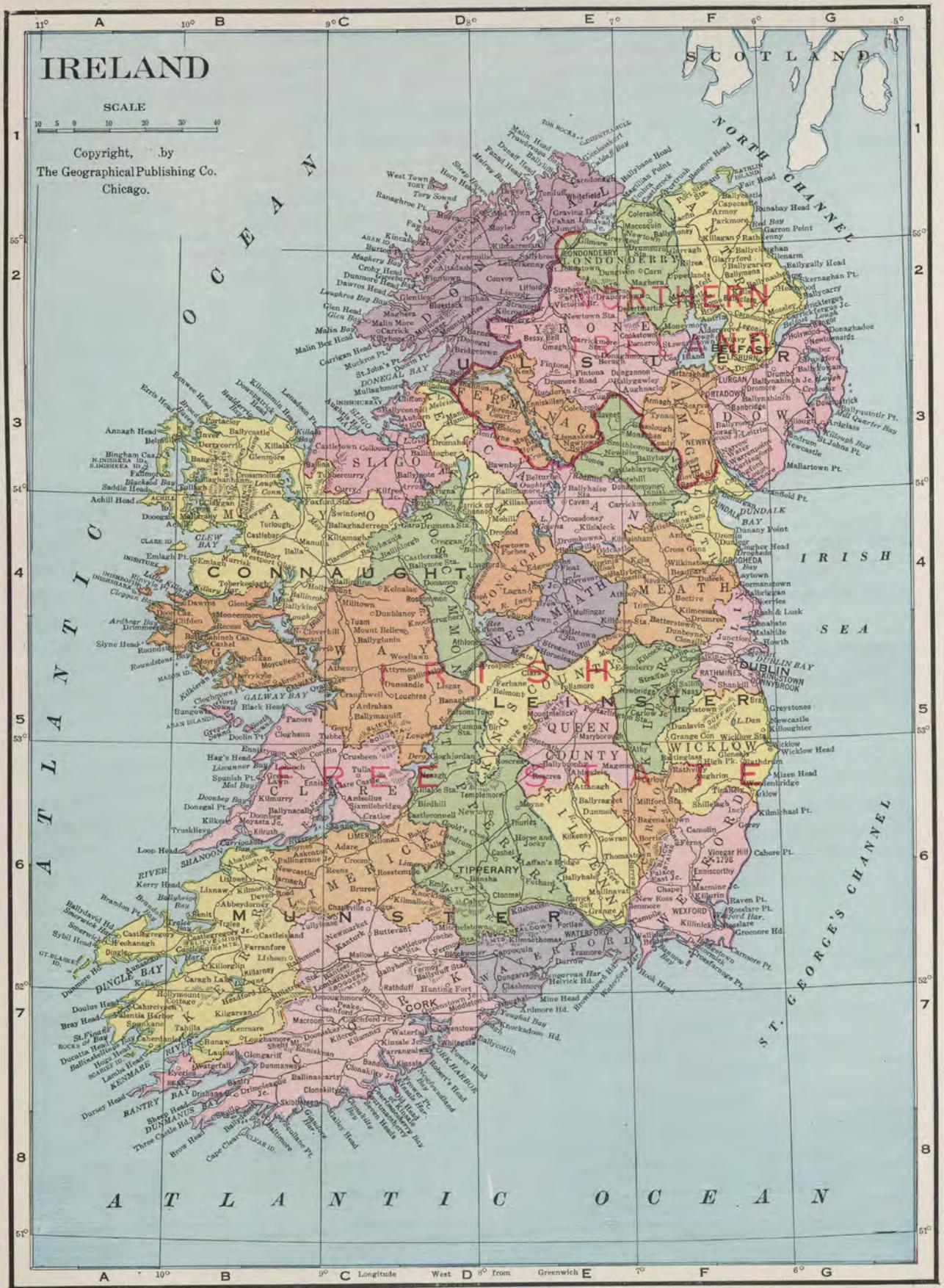


ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS	
Division	Notes
province	Ireland's largest administrative division. Ireland has four provinces: Connacht, Leinster, Munster and Ulster (which encompasses Northern Ireland).
county	This subdivision of a province is the main unit of local government, in use since the 1100s. The Republic of Ireland has 26 counties; Northern Ireland has six.
civil parish	Subdivision of a county. Parishes referred to in government records are civil parishes; note that these aren't the same as Roman Catholic church parishes (see below).
townland	Subdivision of a civil parish or poor law union and the smallest administrative division in Ireland, averaging 200 to 400 acres. View lists of townlands by county and parish at < <a href="http://www.townlands.ie">www.townlands.ie</a> >.
barony	A now-obsolete unit of a county used during the 1600s to 1800s.
poor law union	Poor law unions originated in 1838 as a system for providing for the poor. Each of the 163 poor law unions had a workhouse where paupers could receive relief. They became Ireland's primary county subdivision in 1898.
superintendent registrar's district	Another name for a poor law union.
church parish	A division of a Roman Catholic bishop's diocese. Catholic records were kept by church parish, not civil parish.

COUNTIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	
County	Province
Carlow	Leinster
Cavan	Ulster
Clare	Munster
Cork	Munster
Donegal	Ulster
Dublin	Leinster
Galway	Connacht
Kerry	Munster
Kildare	Leinster
Kilkenny	Leinster
Laois	Leinster
Leitrim	Connacht
Limerick	Munster
Longford	Leinster
Louth	Leinster
Mayo	Connacht
Meath	Leinster
Monaghan	Ulster
Offaly	Leinster
Roscommon	Connacht
Sligo	Connacht
Tipperary	Munster
Waterford	Munster
Westmeath	Leinster
Wexford	Leinster
Wicklow	Leinster

COUNTIES OF NORTHERN IRELAND	
County	Province
Antrim	Ulster
Armagh	Ulster
Down	Ulster
Fermanagh	Ulster
Londonderry	Ulster
Tyrone	Ulster

# MAP OF IRELAND



# TIMELINE OF IRISH HISTORY

- 432** St. Patrick travels to Ireland, according to legend
- 795** The first Viking raids on Ireland take place
- 841** The Norse set up permanent encampment at Dublin
- 1171** Irish kings submit to the British King Henry II
- 1315** Edward Bruce arrives in Ireland and rallies many Irish lords against Anglo-Norman rule
- 1607** The Flight of the Irish Earls sees the exile of Ulster's Gaelic aristocracy
- 1609** The Plantation of Ulster colonizes land with people from England and Scottish lowlands
- 1649** Oliver Cromwell's forces massacre Irish townspeople in Drogheda
- 1652** Cromwellian Settlement results in confiscation of Catholics' land
- 1660** The English King William defeats the exiled English King James II at the Battle of the Boyne
- 1691** Penal law bans Catholics from membership in Parliament
- 1737** Boston's Charitable Irish Society holds the first St. Patrick's Day parade in the Thirteen Colonies
- 1740** Weather-related famine results in widespread deaths
- 1759** Sir Arthur Guinness takes over a brewery at St. James' Gate
- 1791** The Society of United Irishmen is formed to fight for political, economic and social rights for all Irish
- 1793** Catholics can vote
- 1801** Great Britain and Ireland unite
- 1816** Potato crop failure contributes to famine and typhus epidemic in the Year Without a Summer
- 1832** Asiatic cholera in Belfast and Dublin spreads throughout Ireland until the following year
- 1845** Potato blight leads to massive crop failure (the Great Potato Famine) and emigration
- 1848** Patrick Kennedy, great-grandfather of President John F. Kennedy, leaves for America
- 1849** The Potato Famine draws to a close
- 1859** The *Irish Times* newspaper is launched in Dublin
- 1887** The Gaelic Athletic Association holds first All-Ireland Hurling Championship
- 1914** The home rule bill becomes a law, but is delayed until the end of World War I
- 1916** Irish Republicans stage Easter Rising for independence from Britain
- 1921** The Anglo-Irish Treaty establishes the Irish Free State from 26 counties; the six counties of Northern Ireland opt out
- 1922** The Irish Civil War begins; the Four Courts Fire in Dublin destroys many 19th-century historical records
- 1923** The Irish Civil War ends; poet William Butler Yeats wins the Nobel prize for literature
- 1937** The constitution abolishes the Irish Free State and establishes Éire
- 1949** Éire becomes the Republic of Ireland
- 1960s** The Troubles begin in Northern Ireland
- 1972** British troops fire on crowd of civil rights protesters on Bloody Sunday; protesters destroy the British embassy three days later
- 1993** The Prime ministers of Great Britain and Ireland sign a declaration promising peace to Northern Ireland
- 1997** Frank McCourt wins the Pulitzer Prize for *Angela's Ashes*
- 1999** Ireland adopts the euro

# RECORDS QUICK GUIDE

## CENSUS

- **Dates:** 1901 and 1911 (census were taken every 10 years starting in 1821, but earlier years were lost or destroyed)
- **Privacy Restrictions:** Records from 1921 and later are closed to the public.
- **Research Tip:** Access both available censuses for free online at <www.census.nationalarchives.ie>. Look for tax records as substitutes.

## CIVIL REGISTRATION (BIRTH, MARRIAGE, DEATH)

- **Dates:** 1864 to present (Protestant marriages date back to 1845)
- **Privacy Restrictions:** none
- **Research Tip:** The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland began keeping separate civil registrations in 1921. Find civil registration indexes online at FamilySearch <www.familysearch.org> and Ancestry.com <www.ancestry.com>.

## PARISH REGISTERS

- **Dates:** vary by denomination, but generally stretch back earlier through the 1800s than civil registrations
- **Privacy Restrictions:** none
- **Research Tip:** Check for online records through <www.rootsireland.ie> and <www.findmypast.co.uk> (both fee-based).

## TAX RECORDS

- **Dates:** Tithe applotment books cover 1814–1855; Griffith's Valuation of Ireland covers 1847–1864
- **Privacy Restrictions:** none
- **Research Tip:** These two key tax record groups serve as census substitutes for tracing 19th-century Irish ancestors. See the Griffith's Valuation page for more on this record type, and view tithe applotment books at <titheapplotment.books.nationalarchives.ie> and <www.familysearch.org>.

**CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1911.**  
 Two Examples of the mode of filling up the Form are given on the other side.  
**FORM A.**  
 RETURN of the MEMBERS of this FAMILY and their VISITING BOARDERS, SERVANTS, &c., who slept or abode in this House on the night of SUNDAY, the end of APRIL, 1911.  
 No. of Form B. \_\_\_\_\_

NAME AND BIRTHDAY	RELIGION	RELIGION	AGE AND SEX	MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, OR SEPARATION	PARTICULARS AS TO MARRIAGE		MARRIAGE BOND	MARRIAGE	MARRIAGE	MARRIAGE	MARRIAGE	MARRIAGE	MARRIAGE
					WIFE	HUSBAND							
1. <i>John Barry</i>	Protestant	Protestant	30 M	Married	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878
2. <i>Mary Barry</i>	Protestant	Protestant	28 F	Married	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878
3. <i>John Barry</i>	Protestant	Protestant	6 M	Single	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878
4. <i>Mary Barry</i>	Protestant	Protestant	4 F	Single	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878
5. <i>John Barry</i>	Protestant	Protestant	2 M	Single	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878
6. <i>Mary Barry</i>	Protestant	Protestant	1 F	Single	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878
7. <i>John Barry</i>	Protestant	Protestant	1 M	Single	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878
8. <i>Mary Barry</i>	Protestant	Protestant	1 F	Single	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878
9. <i>John Barry</i>	Protestant	Protestant	1 M	Single	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878
10. <i>Mary Barry</i>	Protestant	Protestant	1 F	Single	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878
11. <i>John Barry</i>	Protestant	Protestant	1 M	Single	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878	1878

1911 census return, Dublin County

**APPLIEMENT of the Amount of Composition of the payable to the Vicars Choral STEPHEN BARRY 2000.**

DESCRIPTION	ACRES	PER ACRE	TOTAL	COMPOSITION	COMPOSITION	TOTAL	REMARKS
<i>Amount bought from...</i>	10	10	100	10	10	100	
<i>Amount bought from...</i>	20	20	200	20	20	200	
<i>Amount bought from...</i>	30	30	300	30	30	300	
<i>Amount bought from...</i>	40	40	400	40	40	400	
<i>Amount bought from...</i>	50	50	500	50	50	500	
<i>Amount bought from...</i>	60	60	600	60	60	600	
<i>Amount bought from...</i>	70	70	700	70	70	700	
<i>Amount bought from...</i>	80	80	800	80	80	800	
<i>Amount bought from...</i>	90	90	900	90	90	900	
<i>Amount bought from...</i>	100	100	1000	100	100	1000	

1833 tithe applotment book, Cork County

**1 Know the place.** Although online databases and digitized records have made Irish research faster and easier, it's helpful to know from where in Ireland your ancestors came before you begin searching them. A county name is good, but if you can discover the name of the townland—the smallest geographic locality in Ireland, similar to an American neighborhood—that's even better. For more information on the administrative divisions of Ireland, go to [www.rootsireland.ie/help/help-administrative-divisions-in-ireland](http://www.rootsireland.ie/help/help-administrative-divisions-in-ireland).

**4 Be aware of name variants.** Sometimes the Irish (or US clerks) who recorded their names, dropped an *O'*, *Mc* or *Mac* surname prefix. You might find your ancestor listed in records variously as O'Riordan and Riordan. When you're searching records and indexes, look for the surname both with the prefix and without it. Also check for alternate spellings in an Irish surname dictionary. McGarr in America could be McGirr in Irish records. The surname MacGanly could also be Gantley, but the Gaelic spelling is Mag Sheanlaioich, so a variant English form is Shanly. And Knockton could be Naughten. Two helpful books to help you sort out Irish surnames are Edward MacLysaght's *The Surnames of Ireland* (Irish Academic Press) and Robert E. Matheson's *Special Report on Surnames in Ireland* (on the free Internet Archive [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)) or in print.

**2 Thoroughly research American sources.** “Start with what you know and move backward in time” is a basic rule of genealogy. Be sure to research every possible record in the United States for your immigrant ancestor, as well as his family members and associates. Records of those relatives and associates might give you that townland name. And when you search Irish records, those details from your ancestor's and other folks' records can be invaluable. There are thousands of Mary Kellys, Joseph O'Briens and Michael Donovans. Knowing as much as you can about your ancestor from American records can help you make a positive ID in Ireland.

**5 Watch for misinterpreted answers.** Where do you come from? It seems a simple enough question, but to your ancestors, there were many potentially correct answers. They may have responded with the name of their civil parish as a place of origin on civil documents after immigration. But they're just as likely to have recorded the name of their local Church of Ireland parish or Roman Catholic parish when completing ecclesiastical documents (e.g., noting their place of baptism or marriage, rather than their place of abode or origin). If they took the question literally, they may even have stated their Irish port of embarkation. As a result, don't assume that the town of your ancestor's origin given in records is correct.

According to the company Britain's DNA, 34.7 percent of the Irish population carry genes for red hair. About 10 percent actually are redheads.

**3 Tap living relatives.** Family members might have clues to where your relatives came from in Ireland, as well as other genealogical leads. Don't overlook childless couples or unmarried relatives. In Irish families, almost as many people stayed single as married, and these maiden aunts and bachelor uncles (and even relatives who became nuns and priests) might be the genealogical gatekeepers.

**6 Use gazetteers to find parish names.** To identify the name of a Roman Catholic parish for a specific location, search a gazetteer using the name of the civil or Church of Ireland parish, which are usually easy to find. For example, the townland of Curragh near Clonakilty is in the civil parish of Kilkerranmore. Searching this parish name in Samuel Lewis's *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* reveals that Kilkerranmore is “in the barony of Ibane and Barryroe, county of Cork, and province of Munster, 2½ miles (S. by E.) from Clonakilty, on the road from Cork to Skibbereen.” The entry goes on to say: “In the R. C. [Roman Catholic] divisions the parish is partly in the union or district of Rosscarbery, partly in Kilmeen, and partly in Rathbarry,” which means that research for Catholic ancestors in this area will need to cover three parishes: Rosscarbery, Kilmeen, and Rathbarry.

# GRIFFITH'S VALUATION

Griffith's *Primary Valuation of Ireland* is perhaps one of the most valuable complete sets of records for Irish research. The multi-volume survey records all of Ireland, organized by barony (1847–1851) or townland (1852–1864). Each page documents the name of the property's occupier, the leaser's name, the acreage, the value of the property, and the amount of tax assessed.

## FIND GRIFFITH'S VALUATION ONLINE

**Ancestry.com** <[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)>: Links to Griffith's Valuation images, Griffith's Ordnance Survey maps, and modern Ordnance Survey maps

**AskAboutIreland.ie** <[www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/index.xml?action=nameSearch](http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/index.xml?action=nameSearch)>: Links to Griffith's images and modern maps

**FindMyPast.com** <[www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com)>: Links to Griffith's images and maps

**RootsIreland.ie** <[www.rootsireland.ie](http://www.rootsireland.ie)>: Free database to Griffith's Valuation (but no images or maps)

The Valuation distinguishes between renters (Townlands & Occupiers) and landowners (Immediate Lessors).

The Valuation uses now-archaic land-measurement units: the acre (4,840 square yards), the rood (a quarter acre, or 1,210 square yards), and the pole (1/40 of a rood, or 30.25 square yards).

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*Parish of Killeedy*

Reference to Map	Names		Description of Tenement	Area	Net Annual	
	Townlands & Occupiers	Immediate Lessors			Land	Buildings
	<i>Killeedy North</i>					
6	Thomas Dunlop	Major R. B. Hammett	Lease-yard	0 3 0	0 10 0	
	Major R. B. Hammett	Thomas M. Dunlop	W. and horse garden			0 7
7	Thomas M. Dunlop	For James Dunlop	Land	125 1 7	38 5 0	38 5 0
	Major R. B. Hammett		Land	57 3 32	18 0 0	18 0 0
8	Thomas M. Dunlop		Woods-horse offing			1 5 0
9	Simon Scanlon	Major R. B. Hammett	House			1 5 0
10	John Kelly	Thomas M. Dunlop	House			0 4 0
	Major R. B. Hammett		W. office land	1 4		0 4 0
	Major R. B. Hammett	William Macky	House			
	Vacant		House			
	Major R. B. Hammett		Woods office & land	20 1 2		
	Thomas M. Dunlop		W. office & land	31 3 2		
			W. office & land	109 2 0		
		Robert Macky	House			
			House			
	Margaret Fitzgerald		House			0 5 0
	Patrick Kelly		W. & garden	1 0 8	0 1 0	0 8 0
	Thomas M. Dunlop		House			0 9 0
	John Leane	Major R. B. Hammett	House and land	21 2 24	12 10 0	0 15 0
		Thomas Dunlop				13 5 0
			<i>Total</i>	625 2 32	412 13 0	21 2 0
						433 15 0

Each entry includes a reference to a map, which can help you visualize the survey.

Griffith's provides rich details, including a brief description of the land and a statement of taxes owed. This entry was assessed as owing one pound and 15 shillings.

## TIPS FOR USING GRIFFITH'S VALUATION

### SEARCH FOR NAME VARIANTS.

Spelling hasn't always been standardized, so search the Valuation for various forms of your ancestor's names. Be sure to run searches for names like Connell/O'Connell both with and without apostrophes, as this prefix (along with Mc/Mac) were frequently added and dropped.

### COMPARE MAPS.

Many websites that feature Griffith's Valuation will allow you to view the maps Griffith created as he surveyed Ireland, and some even allow you to compare these to modern maps. Doing so will let you see where your ancestor lived in today's context.

### MAKE AN EXCEPTION FOR URBAN-DWELLERS.

Griffith's Valuation typically only named one head of household. As a result, your ancestor might not be listed in the Valuation if he lived in a tenement with many people, as the Valuation would have only named one person per property.

# COMMON IRISH SURNAMES

In 1847, the first big year of Potato Famine emigration, 37,000 Irish arrived in Boston and 52,000 in New York.

What were the most prominent surnames in Ireland when your ancestors immigrated? In 1890, Irish Registrar-General Robert Matheson authored the *Special Report on Surnames in Ireland* detailing the most common names and their origins. It reflected demographics following the Famine era, when so many Irish emigrated. Below are the top 20 most common Irish surnames.

SURNAME	COMMON VARIATIONS	GAELIC SPELLING	MEANING	COUNTIES WHERE MOST COMMON IN 1800S	RANK IN 1800S
BYRNE	O'Byrne	ó Broin	son of Bran, king of Leinster; raven	Carlow, Dublin, Wexford, Wicklow	7
DOYLE	Dougall, MacDougall	ó Dubhghaill	dark foreigner (likely referring to Vikings)	Carlow, Dublin, Wexford, Wicklow	12
DOHERTY	Daugherty, Docharty, Docherty, Dougherty	ó Dochartaigh	son of Dochartach; unlucky	Derry, Donegal	15
GALLAGHER	Galagher, Gallacher, Gallager, Gallaher, Gallaugher	ó Gallchobhair	lover of foreigners	Donegal, Mayo	14
KELLY	Kelley, Kellie, O'Kelly	ó Ceallaigh	bright or red-headed; strife, contention	Galway, Mayo, Roscommon	2
KENNEDY	Kannady, Kenardy, Kennaday, Kenneday, Kenneyday	ó Cinnéide	helmet head, ugly head	Tipperary	16
LYNCH	Linch, Lynch, Lynche, Linskey, Lynskey	ó Loingsigh	mariner	Cavan, Clare, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Meath	17
MCCARTHY	Carthy, Carty, MacCarthy, MacCarty, McCarty	Mac Carthaigh	son of Carthaigh; loving	Cork, Kerry	13
MOORE	More	ó Mórdha	son of Mórdha; majestic, proud, stately	Antrim, Down, Tyrone	20
MURPHY	Murphie	ó Murchadha, MacMurchadha	sea warrior	Cork, Kilkenny, Wexford	1
MURRAY	MacMurray, McMurray, Moray, Murray, Murrey	ó Muireadhaigh	son of the follower of the Virgin Mary; sea settlement	Cork, Down, Galway, Meath, Roscommon	18
O'BRIEN	Brien	ó Briain	son of Brian (referring to Brian Boru); exalted one, eminence	Clare, Cork, Limerick, Tipperary	6
O'CONNOR	Conner, Conor, Connor, Connors, O'Conner	ó Conchobhair	patron of warriors; lover of hounds	Cork, Kerry, Galway, Wexford	9
O'NEILL	Neill, O'Neile, O'Neal	ó Néill	champion; from Niall of the Nine Hostages	Antrim, Cork, Kilkenny, Tyrone, Wicklow	10
O'REILLY	Reilly	ó Raghailigh	sociable tribe or group	Cavan, Meath	11
O'SULLIVAN	Sullivan	ó Súilleabháin	dark, hawk-eyed	Cork, Kerry, Tipperary	3
QUINN	O'Quinn, MacQuinn	ó Cuinn	wisdom, chief	Galway, Tipperary, Tyrone	19
RYAN	Rian	ó Maoilriaghain	little king	Kilkenny, Limerick, Tipperary	8
SMITH	Smithe, Smythe	Mac Gabhann	son of the smith	Antrim, Cavan, Down, Meath	5
WALSH	Brannagh, Walsh, Walshe, Walch, Welch, Welche, Welsh, Wellish	Breatnach	from Wales	Cork, Galway, Kerry, Kilkenny, Mayo, Wexford	4

## Websites

### Ancestry.com: Irish Records

<[www.ancestry.com/irish](http://www.ancestry.com/irish)>

### AskAboutIreland: Griffith's Valuation

<[www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/index.xml](http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/index.xml)>

### Belfast Newsletter Index, 1737–1800

<[www.ucs.louisiana.edu/bnl](http://www.ucs.louisiana.edu/bnl)>

### Cyndi's List: Ireland and Northern Ireland

<[www.cyndislist.com/ireland.htm](http://www.cyndislist.com/ireland.htm)>

### Emerald Ancestors

<[www.emeraldancestors.com](http://www.emeraldancestors.com)>

### Eneclann

<[www.eneclann.ie](http://www.eneclann.ie)>

### FamilySearch Wiki: Ireland

<[www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Ireland\\_Genealogy](http://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Ireland_Genealogy)>

### Fianna Guide to Irish Genealogy

<[rootsweb.ancestry.com/~fianna](http://rootsweb.ancestry.com/~fianna)>

### Findmypast Ireland

<[www.findmypast.ie](http://www.findmypast.ie)>

### GENUKI: Ireland

<[www.genuki.org.uk/big/irl](http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/irl)>

### Griffith's Valuation, 1848–1864

<[www.failteromhat.com/griffiths.php](http://www.failteromhat.com/griffiths.php)>

### Immigrants at Grosse Île Quarantine Station, 1832–1937

<[www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/immigration/immigration-records/immigrants-grosse-ile-1832-1937/Pages/immigrants-grosse-ile.aspx](http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/immigration/immigration-records/immigrants-grosse-ile-1832-1937/Pages/immigrants-grosse-ile.aspx)>

### Information Wanted: A Database of Advertisements for Irish Immigrants Published in the Boston Pilot

<[dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/UNJU3N](http://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/UNJU3N)>

### Ireland Old News

<[www.irelandoldnews.com](http://www.irelandoldnews.com)>

### The Ireland Story

<[www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland](http://www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland)>

### Ireland's History in Maps

<[rootsweb.ancestry.com/~irlkik/ihm](http://rootsweb.ancestry.com/~irlkik/ihm)>

### Irish Genealogy

<[www.irishgenealogy.ie](http://www.irishgenealogy.ie)>

### Irish Genealogy News

<[www.irishgenealogynews.com](http://www.irishgenealogynews.com)>

### Irish History Links

<[www.irishhistorylinks.net](http://www.irishhistorylinks.net)>

### Irish Times Digital Archive

<[www.irishtimes.com/archive](http://www.irishtimes.com/archive)>

### National Archives and Records Administration: Irish Famine Immigrants Search

<[aad.archives.gov/aad/fielded-search.jsp?dt=180&](http://aad.archives.gov/aad/fielded-search.jsp?dt=180&)>

### National Archives of Ireland: 1901 and 1911 censuses

<[www.census.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie)>

### RootsIreland.ie

<[www.rootsireland.ie](http://www.rootsireland.ie)>

### Ulster Historical Foundation

<[www.ancestryireland.com](http://www.ancestryireland.com)>

### What's What in Irish Genealogy

<[indigo.ie/~gorry](http://indigo.ie/~gorry)>

## Books

### Army Records for Family Historians

by Simon Fowler and William Spencer (Public Records Office)

### Directory of Irish Archives, 3rd edition,

edited by S. Helferty and R. Refaüssé (Irish Academic Press)

### The Family Tree Irish Genealogy Guide

by Claire Santry (Family Tree Books)

### Finding Your Irish Ancestors:

*A Beginner's Guide* by David S. Ouimette (Ancestry)

### Genealogy at a Glance: Irish Genealogy Research

by Brian Mitchell (Genealogical Publishing Co.)

### The Great Famine and the Irish Diaspora in America

edited by Arthur Gribben and Ruth-Ann Harris (University of Massachusetts Press)

### A Guide to Irish Parish Registers

by Brian Mitchell (Genealogical Publishing Co.)

### The Irish in America: A Guide to the Literature and the Manuscript Collections

by Patrick J. Blessing (Catholic University of America Press)

### Irish Christian Names: An A-Z of

*First Names* by Ronan Coghlan (Johnston and Bacon)

*Irish Church Records* edited by James G. Ryan (Irish Books & Medi)

*The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* by Donald Harman Akenson (P.D. Meany Publishers)

*In Search of Your British & Irish Roots* by Angus Baxter (Genealogical Publishing Co.)

*Varieties and Synonyms of Surnames and Christian Names in Ireland* by Robert E. Matheson (Genealogical Publishing Co.)

*Sources for Irish Genealogy in the Library of the Society of Genealogists, 2nd edition*, by Anthony J. Camp (Society of Genealogists)

*A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland* by Brian Mitchell (Genealogical Publishing Co.)

*The Surnames of Ireland, 6th edition* by Edward MacLysaght (Irish Academic Press)

### Tracing Your Irish Ancestors,

*5th edition* by John Grenham (Genealogical Publishing Co.)

## Organization and Archives

**The Irish Ancestral Research Association** <[www.tiara.ie](http://www.tiara.ie)>

**Irish Genealogical Society International** <[www.irishgenealogical.org](http://www.irishgenealogical.org)>

**General Register Office (Republic of Ireland)** <[www.groireland.ie](http://www.groireland.ie)>

**General Register Office of Northern Ireland** <[www.nidirect.gov.uk/general-register-office-for-northern-ireland](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/general-register-office-for-northern-ireland)>

**National Archives of Ireland** <[www.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.nationalarchives.ie)>

**National Library of Ireland** <[www.nli.ie](http://www.nli.ie)>

**Public Record Office of Northern Ireland** <[www.proni.gov.uk](http://www.proni.gov.uk)>

**Registry of Deeds** <[www.prai.ie](http://www.prai.ie)>

**Representative Church Body Library** <[www.ireland.anglican.org/about/about-us](http://www.ireland.anglican.org/about/about-us)>