



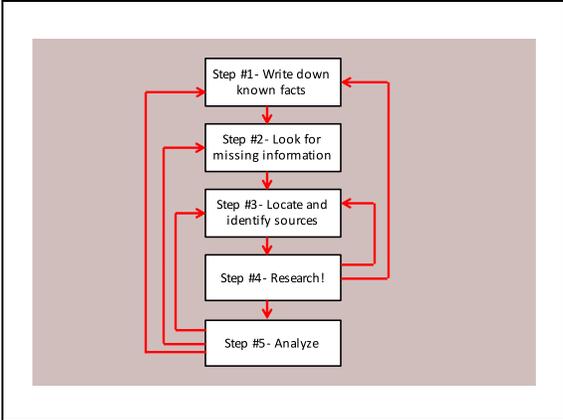
Homework

- What were your research questions?
- What records did you need?
- Where would you look for those records?

Recap

Steps for Researching Your Family

- Step 1 • Identify what you know
- Step 2 • Decide what you want to learn (Research goal)
- Step 3 • Identify and locate your sources
- Step 4 • Research!
- Step 5 • Analyze



This Class - Focus on Step 4: Research!

Step 4: Research!

- Is more than “searching”
- What: Make a plan to begin answering your questions
- Where: Online and other repositories
- How: General principles
 - Consult multiple sources
 - Gather as many records as possible about a family or individual that you can find
 - Track your work! (Research log)

What: Researching Planning

Make a Plan

- Step 1** What do you want to learn? (Goal)
- Step 2** What do you already know?
- Step 3** Do your background homework
- Step 4** Create your plan
- Step 5** Execute and fine tune your plan

Creating Good Research Questions

- Make the question specific, answerable, realistic, timely
- Include name, place and date in the question
- Focus on genealogical questions, e.g.:
 - Identity
 - Kinship
 - Events
- Focus on a person

What Do You Already Know?

- About Subject
 - Identify the *Where* and the *When* for your subject
 - Helpful to list vital events –with *place*
 - Name of spouse(s)
 - Names and dob(s) for children
- About the Question
 - Not just what you know, but HOW you know it
 - Focus on what is relevant to the Research Question



Who Are the Parents of Elizabeth Harris?

Name:	Birth and place:	Marriage and place: Name of spouse:	Death and place:
Elizabeth Harris	Ca 1738, place unknown	1 Mar 1778, Manchester, Vermont Martin Powell	Unknown

Names and birthdates of children:
 Silas b. ca 1779
 Electa b. ca 1781
 Sarah b. ca 1782

Additional Information

What is Known About the Question?

Research Question:	
Who are the parents of Elizabeth Harris?	
What is Known About the Question?	
Fact	Source of Fact:
Her husband, Martin Powell was born in Amenia, NY	Find a Grave
Martin's first wife was Rhoda Thompson who died in 1777	Vermont Vital Records
She may have married in Amenia	Ancestry tree

Background Homework



- Learn about the place and time
- Learn about the geography (get a map)
- What do we think happened?
- Which records are most likely to have the answer?
- Where are those records? Which repositories?

Hypothesis Example

What is the Working Hypothesis?

1. Elizabeth Harris was a widow when she married Martin Powell in 1778
2. Elizabeth Harris was a spinster when she married Martin Powell

Put it Together and Create the Plan

- ✓ Research subject
- ✓ Research question
- ✓ What is known about the question (and how it is known)
- ✓ Record dates – for reference
- ✓ Working hypotheses
 - Which records will I need
 - Search strategy



Which Records (Basic)

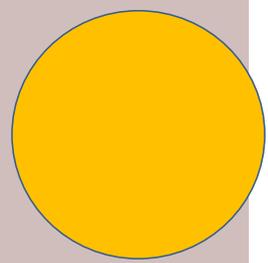
Which Records Will I Need?		
Record	Purpose	Source/Repository
Marriage records of Manchester Vermont	First marriage of Elizabeth Harris	FamilySearch.org, AmericanAncestors.org or Ancestry.com
Vital records of Amenia, NY	First marriage or any mention of Harris family	FamilySearch.org, AmericanAncestors.org or Ancestry.com
Town history of Manchester VT	Any mention of the Harris family	HathiTrust.org or local historical society

Which Records (Advanced)

Which Records Will I Need?		
Record	Purpose	Source/Repository
Card index to vital statistics in the early land and town records books	First marriage of Elizabeth Harris	https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/664510?availability=Family%20History%20Library
Vital records, 1749-1786 of Amenia, NY	First marriage or any mention of Harris family	https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/380341?availability=Family%20History%20Library
John S. Pettibone, "Early History of Manchester," Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society 1930 Vol 1 (4), page 158	Any mention of the Harris family	https://vermonthistory.org/journal/misc/EarlyHistoryOfManchester.pdf

Keep a Research Log

- Keeps track of what you have searched and what you have found
 - Write down search strings
- Prevents rework
- Record negative findings
- Cites sources
- Can be a roadmap for the research process



AmericanAncestors
By New England Historic Genealogical Society

Research Log

Repository: _____ Date: _____

Source Information <small>(URL, author, publisher, publication date, etc.)</small>	Call Number <small>(file number, VRI, etc.)</small>	Objective	Results

www.AmericanAncestors.org

What to Fill In Before Viewing a Record

- Person/Place/Event focus of search
- Date
- **Source/Repository** – e.g. Ancestry: 1870 census – New Albany, Indiana
- Call Number (if any)
- **Objective** - write the person or event you seek for **each** search so you will later know whether you need to search the same source again for a different person or event.

AmericanAncestors
By New England Historic Genealogical Society

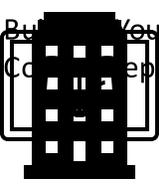
Research Log

Repository: Henry D. Clark Date: June 20, 2021

Source Information <small>(URL, author, publisher, publication date, etc.)</small>	Call Number <small>(file number, VRI, etc.)</small>	Objective	Results
<small>URL: http://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3?i=102&cc=102&cat=102&cc=102</small>		Baptism of Henry D. Clark	
<small>URL: http://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3?i=102&cc=102&cat=102</small>		Baptism of Henry D. Clark	

www.AmericanAncestors.org

Cut and Paste From Your Research Plan to Start Your Log!



Where: Repositories

Types of Repositories

Brick and Mortar **Online**

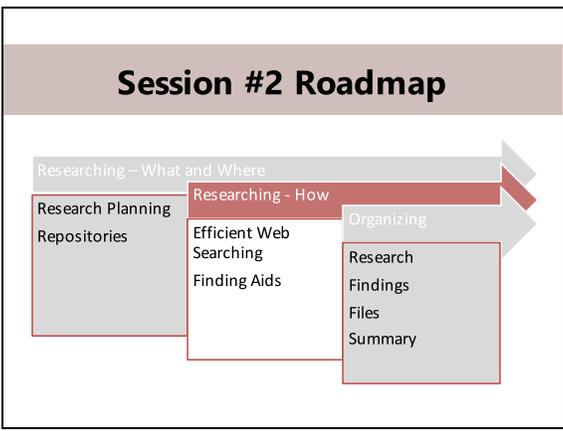
- ### Selected Types of Brick-and-Mortar Repositories
- Your house!
 - Federal and State Archives
 - Town or City Halls
 - Local Historical Societies
 - Public or Private
 - Libraries
 - College or University Archives
 - Lineage Societies
 - Genealogical Societies
 - Regional Museums

Online Repositories

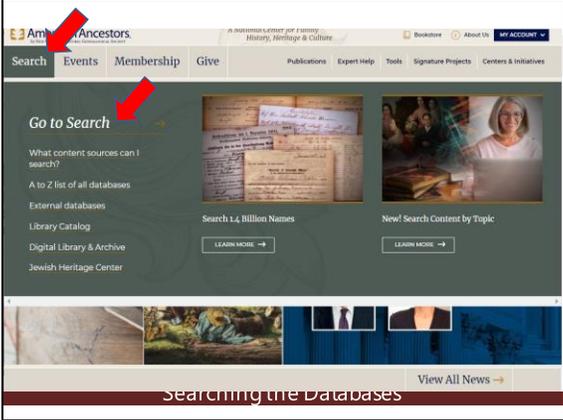
- "Big 3" general genealogy websites
 - *Ancestry.com* (\$)
 - *FamilySearch.org* (free)
 - *AmericanAncestors.org* (\$, guest option)
- Location-specific websites
 - Archives of a particular state, county, or city, e.g., Washington State Digital Archives, Missouri Digital Heritage, Baton Rouge Digital Archive
 - Also applies to other countries, e.g., *IrishGenealogy.ie*
- Record-specific websites
 - *Fold3.com* (military records)

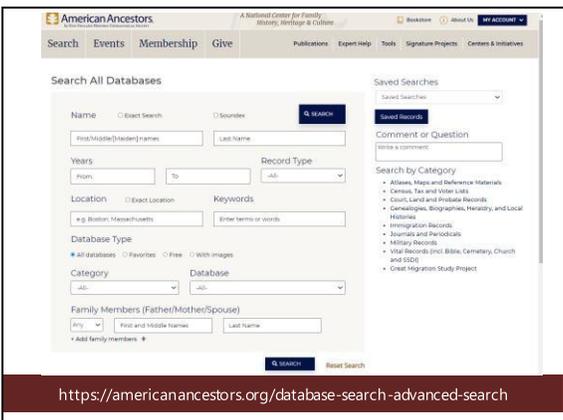


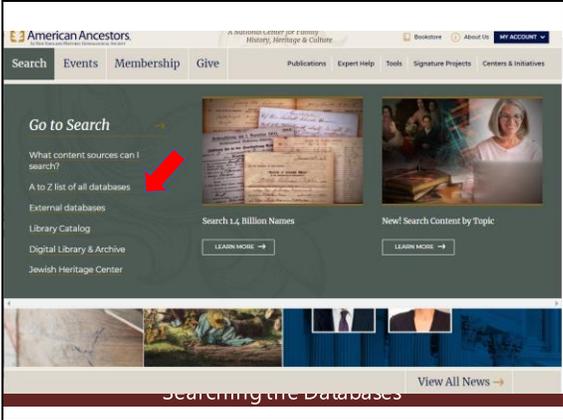


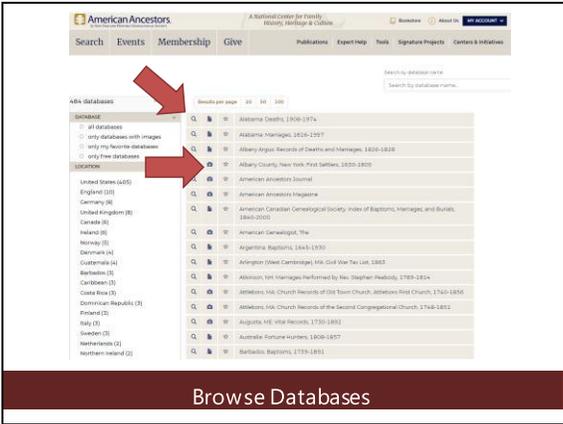


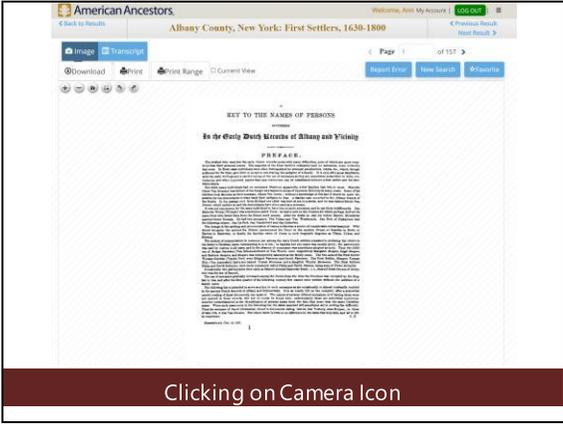








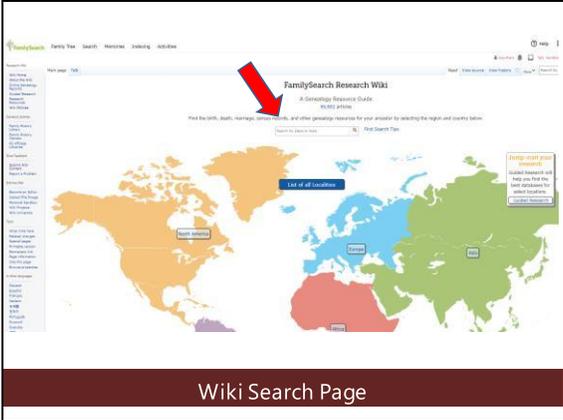


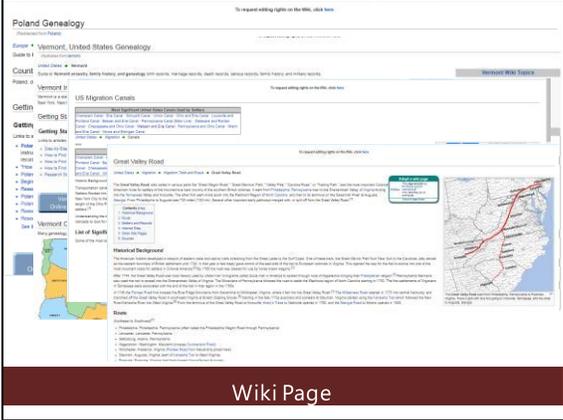


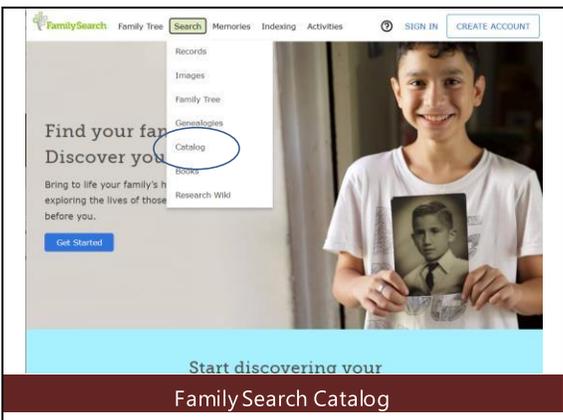












Unique Family Search Features

- Alternative names
- Search with relationship
- Search by more than one collection
- Export results to Excel

Wildcards

- Symbols used to replace or represent one or more characters
- ? = 1 character
- * = 1 or more character
- Ex. To search for "Lawthers", you can use some of the following variations:
 - L*W*s
 - L*W*r*
 - L?wthers

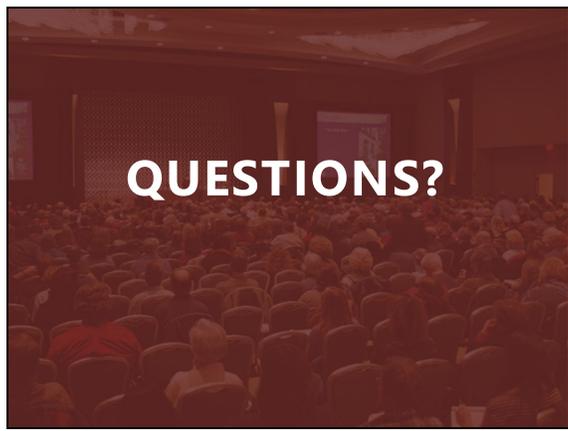


Finding Aids

- Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research
- New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer
- County and town histories

Digital Book Sources

- <https://www.hathitrust.org/>
- <https://books.google.com/>
- <https://archive.org/index.php>
- <https://openlibrary.org/>
- <https://books.familysearch.org>
- <http://library.si.edu/digital-library>



QUESTIONS?



KIS: Rule #1 for Organizing

- KIS – “Keep it simple”
 - Make it easy to do the right thing
- Organizing Your
 - Research
 - Findings
 - Files
 - Summary

Organizing Your Research

Reminder – Use the Basic Tools!

- Pedigree chart
- Family Group sheet
- Research Plan
- Research Log

Organizing Your Findings

Tasks Lists and To-Dos

- Suggestion 1: Keep a dedicated research notebook
- Suggestion 2: Use a word processing program, spreadsheet or database program
- Suggestion 3: Use your genealogy software program's task lists, etc.

Evernote or OneNote

- **Note:** A single item stored in Evernote or OneNote software
- **Notebook:**
 - Evernote – a collection of notes, stacks of notebooks
 - OneNote – a collection of sections, pages, notes
- **Tags:** Descriptive topic words, e.g.
 - Probate
 - Connecticut
 - Patrick Higgins
 - Birth records

What to Do With "Orphan" Documents?

- Paper:
 - File in a folder under something like "work in progress" or "holding file" or "ongoing research"
- Digital
 - Folder with "holding" or similar name
 - Subfolders by surname
 - Excel sheet
 - Three columns
 - Surname
 - Citation and document link
 - Why important – track your thought process!!!

Organizing Your Files

Paper Versus Digital Organization

- Use a system you can maintain. There is no one “right” way to organize. It has to work for you.
- Consistency is key
- Leave a “paper” trail
- Write down your organizing decisions

Rhonda R. McClure, *Portable Genealogist: Organizing your Research*, (Boston, MA: NEHGS, 2013)

FamilySearch.org Tips

- Do NOT change your old files to a new note keeping system all at once.
 - Start slowly with just the one family you are researching right now.
 - Wait to organize the file of another family until you start research on that family.

https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Organizing_your_Files

Paper Choices

- Option 1: One folder per person
- Option 2: One folder per couple
 - Individual stays with birth family until marriage
 - Family group sheet
 - Photocopies of records with source citations
- Option 3: Binders

Paper System Color Coding

- Mary Hill created the system
- Organize according to the five-generation chart
 - Father’s father’s line is BLUE
 - Father’s mother’s line is GREEN
 - Mother’s father’s line is RED
 - Mother’s mother’s line is YELLOW
- Start by sorting your “stuff” into four groups/piles/boxes based on grandparent surnames

Digital File Organization Example

- Top Level - Branch
 - First Level – Surname
 - Second Level – Given name and birth year
 - Third Level – Type of record, e.g. Vitals, Military, Land, Probate

Sample Digital Structure

Family Structure	Record Type Structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higgins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Higgins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John_1950 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – [List of Record Types] • John_1903 • Patrick_1876 – Crotty – Cassidy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census • Vitals • Church • Military • Newspaper • Immigration • Land • Probate

File Naming

Who, When, What, Where

- HomerJacobJr-1837-will-MercerPA.jpg
- HomerJacob-1810-landsale-EmmitsburgMD.pdf
- HomerFred-1903-newspaper_death-GreenvillePA.pdf

Other Templates

- Date First
 - Material automatically sorts by chronological order
 - 1837-HomerJacobJr-will-MercerPA.jpg
 - 1810-HomerJacob-landsale-EmmitsburgMD.pdf
- Place First – state/county/place
 - Very helpful when have multiple surnames

Digital Tree – Lawthers Family

Name	Date modified	Type	Size
Lawthers-James-Census-1900-Cambridg...	4/5/2017 10:49 AM	JPEG image	1,538 KB
Lawthers-James-Census-1910-Cambridg...	4/5/2017 10:47 AM	JPEG image	1,576 KB
Lawthers-James-Census-1920-Cambridg...	4/5/2017 10:55 AM	JPEG image	1,713 KB
Lawthers-James-Census-1930-Cambridg...	4/5/2017 10:56 AM	JPEG image	1,832 KB
Lawthers-James-Census-1940-Cambridg...	4/5/2017 10:59 AM	JPEG image	3,197 KB
Open Notebook.anetoc2	4/5/2017 4:47 PM	Microsoft OneNot...	4 KB

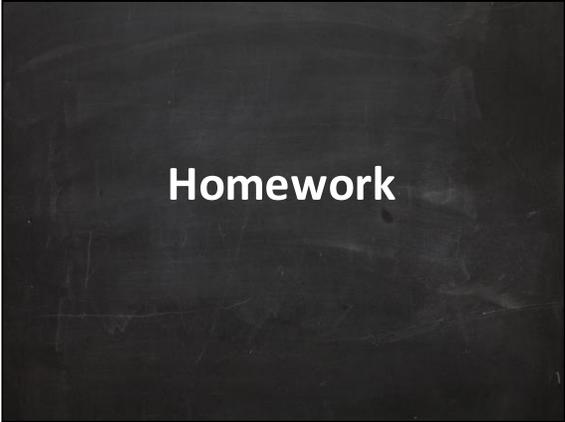
Organizing Your Summary

Genealogical Numbering Systems

- Why bother?
 - You need to be able to use compiled genealogies
 - If you write your history for family, you will need to use a system to organize the presentation
- Numbering systems
 - Ahnentafel
 - Register
 - NGSQ/Modified Register

Ahnentafel

- Starts with a person and works back – see pedigree chart
- Males always even number, females always odd number
 - Father's number, take the subject's number and double it
 - Mother's number, father + 1



Research Plan and Log

- Retrieve your 5 generation chart for your family
- Complete a full research plan template for one of the questions you want to answer
- Execute your plan
- Use a research log to track your progress
- Come prepared to talk about both the negative and positive aspects of using both a plan and a research log

QUESTIONS?

Hire Research Services
research@nehgs.org

Chat with a Genealogist
AmericanAncestors.org/chat