Building Your Genealogical Skills

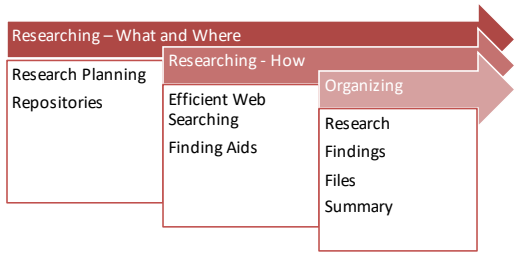
Class 2: Researching

Ann G. Lawthers, Genealogist

THE BRUE FAMILY LEARNING CENTER

American Ancestors
by New England Historic Genealogical Society

Session #2 Roadmap



But First. . .

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Homework Review

Question	Records	Repository
Francis X Gartland, where was he born between 1855, 1860, NJ, Philadelphia, Ireland	Birth record, baptismal record	Catholic church records, Philadelphia, 1860 or 1870 census
James Clark and first marriage, Della Minette Kline, when and where did they divorce? Erie New York? Turn of 20th century?	~~Town records~~, marriage records	Ancestry, online sources.
Thomas Smyth, when did he arrive (NYC??), 1850's and where is he from in Ireland?	Birth in Ireland, immigration, passenger lists.	Catholic church records in Ireland --
Eliza Thomas, where was she born in Wales or Cornwall, 1838	Parish records, Methodist church – Welsh	Online – Welsh archives and other online sources

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

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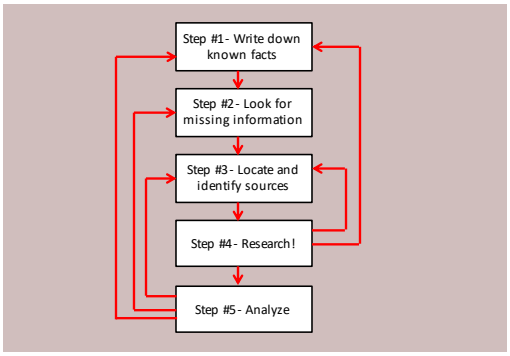

This Class - Focus on Step 4: Research!

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)

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What: Researching Planning

Make a 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

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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?

Research Subject			
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

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Background Homework

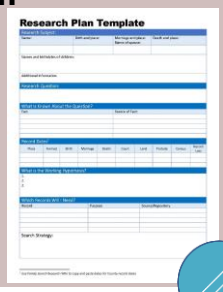
- Learn about the place and time
- Learn about the geography (get a map)
- What do we think happened?
- Which records are most likely to have the answer?
- Where are those records? Which repositories?

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


Research Plan Template

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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

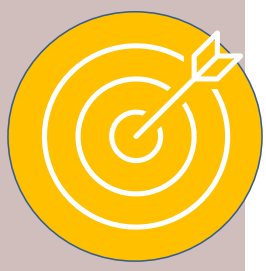
Which Records (Adanced)

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



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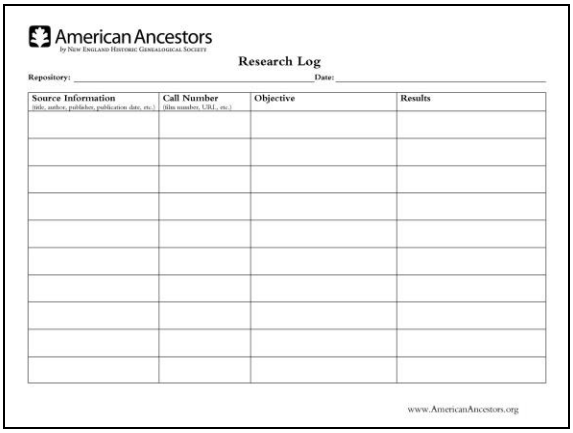


American Ancestors
by New England Historic Genealogical Society

Research Log

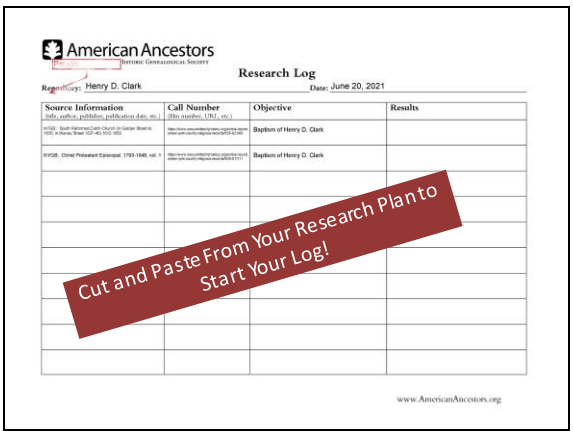
Repository: _____ Date: _____

Source Information (title, author, publisher, publication date, etc.)	Call Number (film number, URL, etc.)	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.



American Ancestors
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Research Log

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

Source Information (title, author, publisher, publication date, etc.)	Call Number (film number, URL, etc.)	Objective	Results
NYGB - South Reformed Dutch Church in Garden Street to 1925, in Murray Street 1927-45, 1972-1950	https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/archive-record-screen-pack-county-religious-record-NYGB-2-1921	Baptism of Henry D. Clark	
NYGB - Christ Protestant Episcopal, 1793-1848, vol. 1	https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/archive-record-screen-pack-county-religious-record-NYGB-2-1921	Baptism of Henry D. Clark	

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

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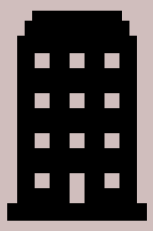
Where: Repositories

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

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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)

Session #2 Roadmap

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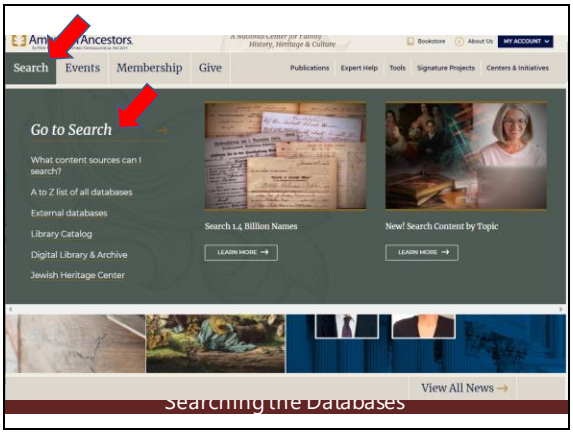
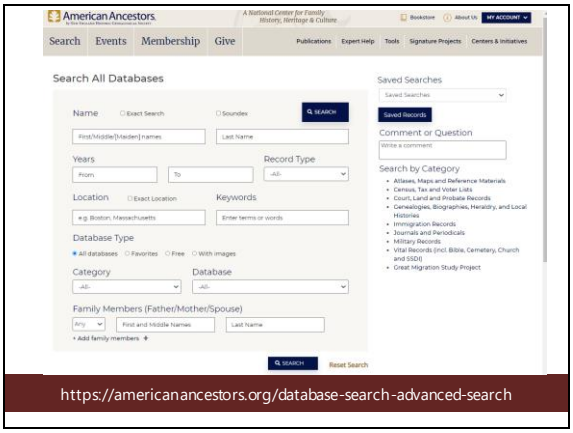
American Ancestors



Searching the Databases



https://americanancestors.org/database-search-advanced-search

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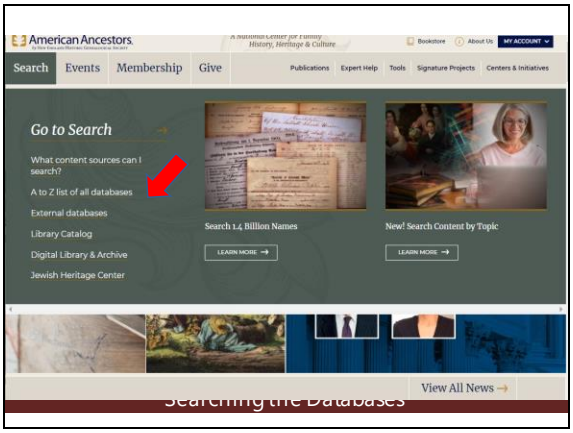
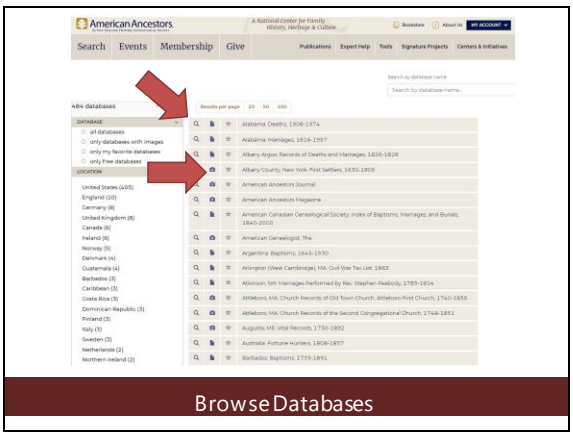


Searching the Databases



Browse Databases

Clicking on Camera Icon

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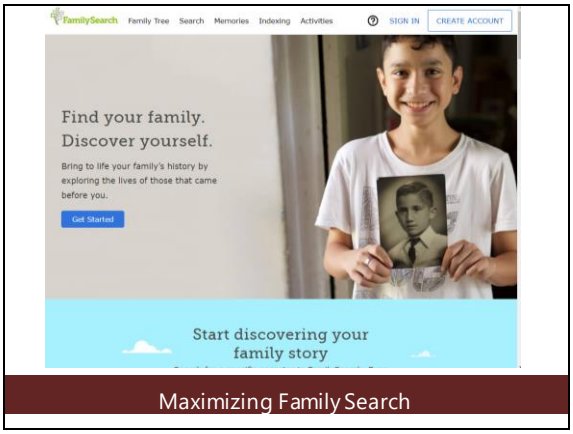
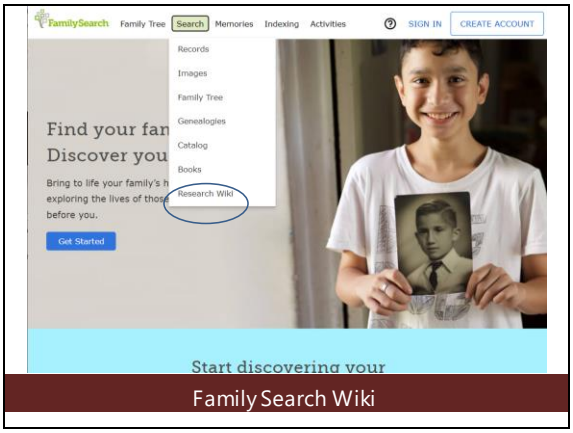
Family Search



Maximizing Family Search



Family Search Wiki

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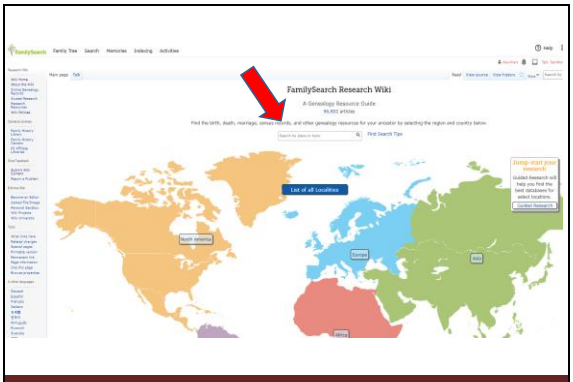
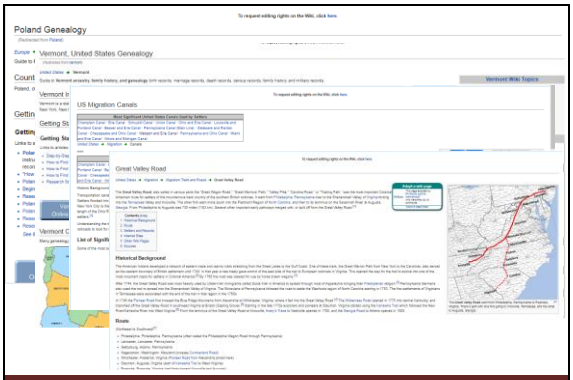
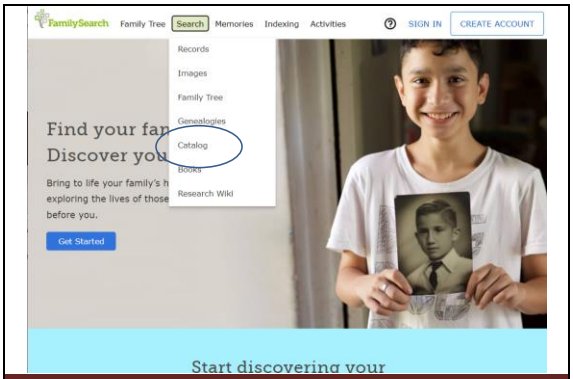


Wiki Search Page



Wiki Page



Family Search Catalog

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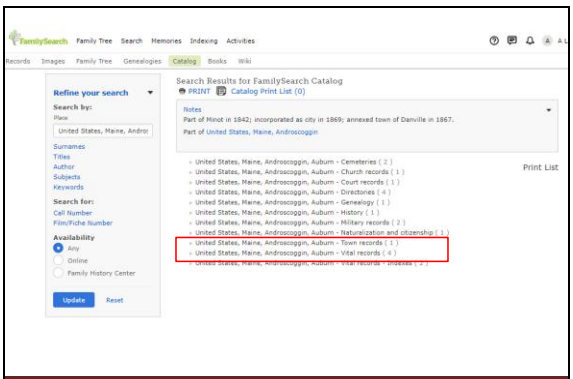
https://www.familysearch.org/search/

Using the Family Search Catalog



Town of Auburn, formerly Danville, Maine at FamilySearch

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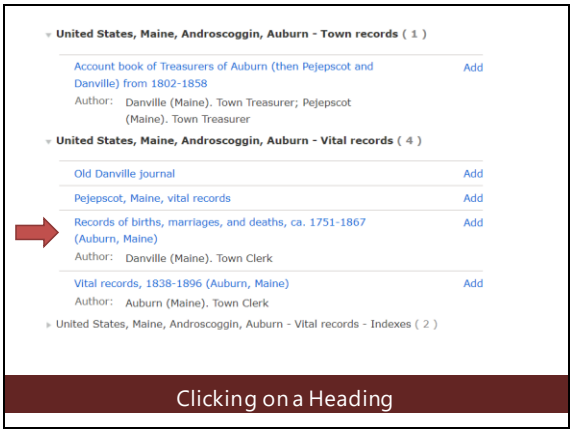
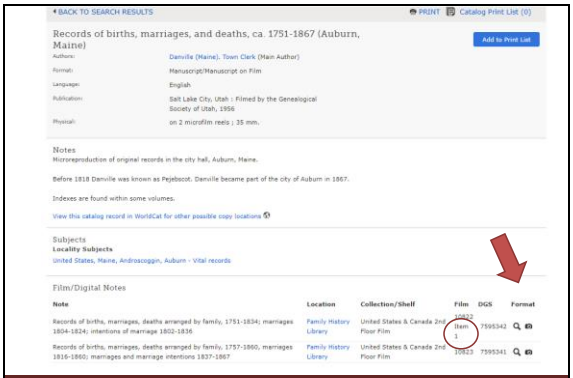
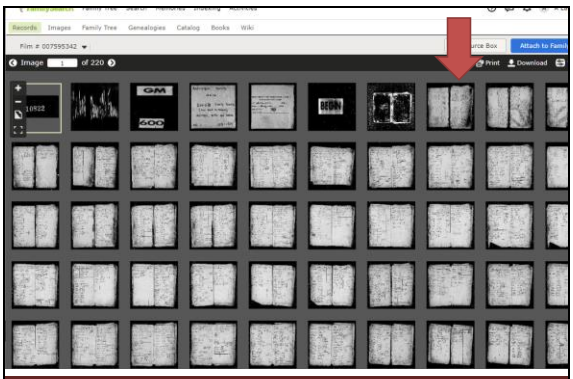


Clicking on a Heading



Clicking on a Listing



Clicking the Camera

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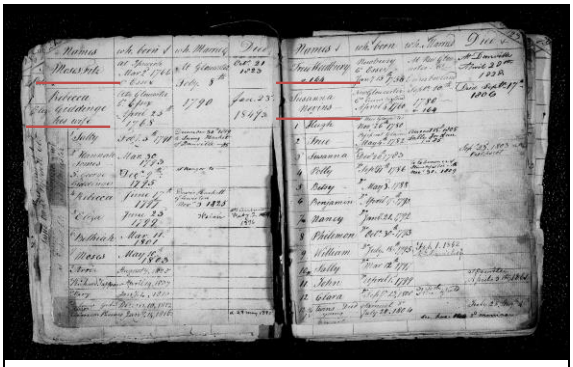

Clicking on an Image

FamilySearch Database Searching

Tip

Spelling DOES NOT count – Sound does

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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

FamilySearch Search Page – BASIC SEARCH

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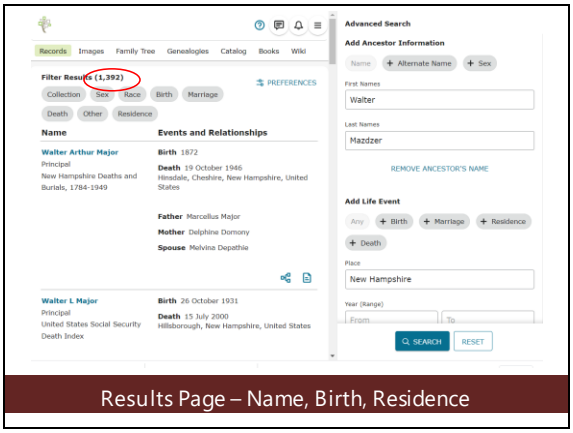
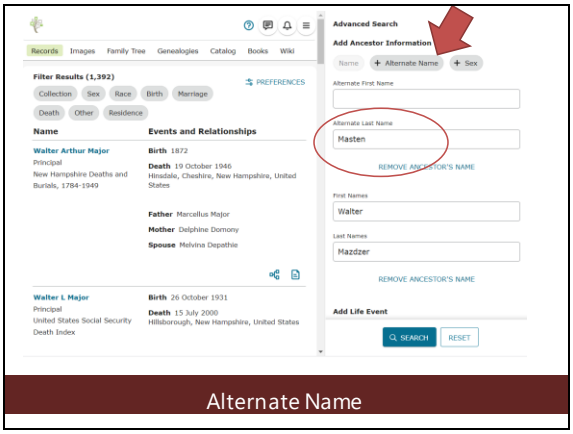
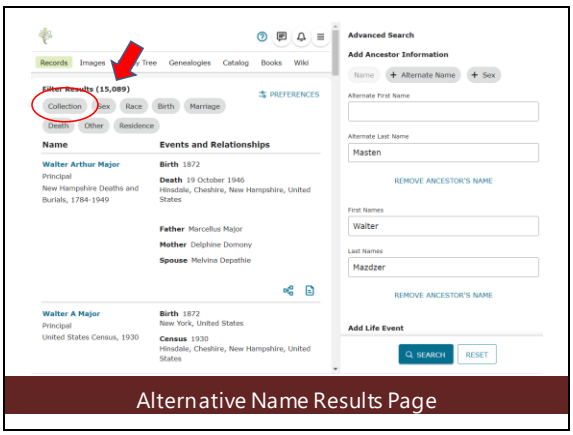


Results Page – Name, Birth, Residence



Alternate Name



Alternative Name Results Page

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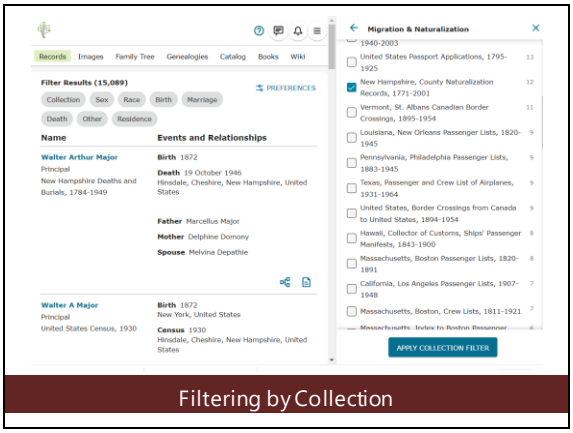
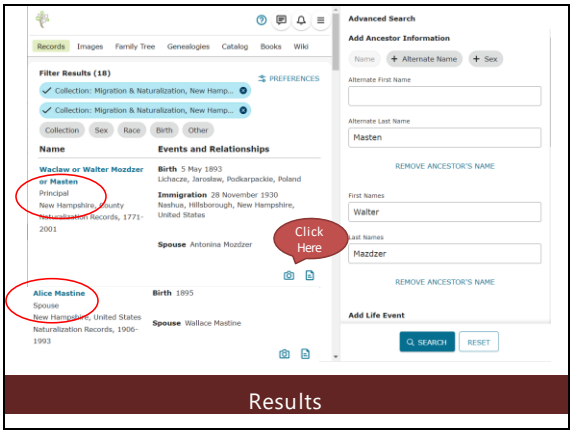


Filtering by Collection



Results

Tip

Always look at the original

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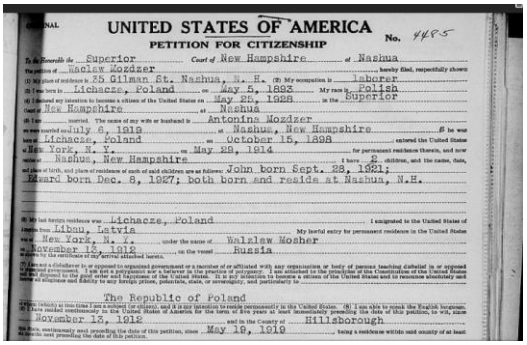


UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
PETITION FOR CITIZENSHIP

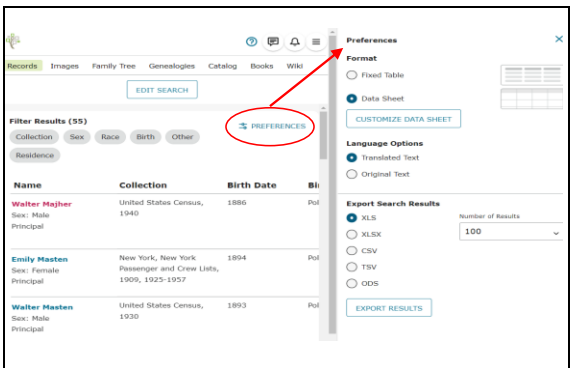
No. 4485

To the Honorable the Superior Court of New Hampshire of Nashua
The petition of Waclaw Mozdzer hereby filed, respectfully shown
(1) My place of residence is 35 Gilman St. Nashua, N. H. (2) My occupation is laborer
(3) I was born in Lichacze, Poland on May 5, 1893 My race is Polish
(4) I declared my intention to become a citizen of the United States on May 25, 1928 in the Superior
Court of New Hampshire at Nashua
(5) I am married. The name of my wife or husband is Antonina Mozdzer
we were married on July 6, 1919 at Nashua, New Hampshire (6) he was
born at Lichacze, Poland on October 15, 1898 entered the United States
at New York, N. Y. on May 29, 1914 for permanent residence therein, and now
resides at Nashua, New Hampshire I have 2 children, and the name, date,
and place of birth, and place of residence of each of said children are as follows: John born Sept. 28, 1921;
Edward born Dec. 8, 1927; both born and reside at Nashua, N.H.

(7) My last foreign residence was Lichacze, Poland I emigrated to the United States of
America from Libau, Latvia My lawful entry for permanent residence in the United States
was at New York, N. Y. under the name of Walzlaw Mosher
on November 13, 1912 on the vessel Russia
(8) I am able to speak the English language.
(9) I have resided continuously in the United States of America for the term of five years at least immediately preceding the date of this petition, to wit, since
November 13, 1912 and in the County of Hillsborough
(10) I am able to read, continuously next preceding the date of this petition, since May 19, 1919 being a residence within said county of at least
six months next preceding the date of this petition.

Click Through To Image

Export search results into Excel



Mazdzer or Masten; New Hampshire or Vermont or New York

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Sample Search Result Export

Ancestry

Power Searching at Ancestry

- Use wildcards
- Filter by database type (Categories on Ancestry)
- Use sliders
- Use the card catalog

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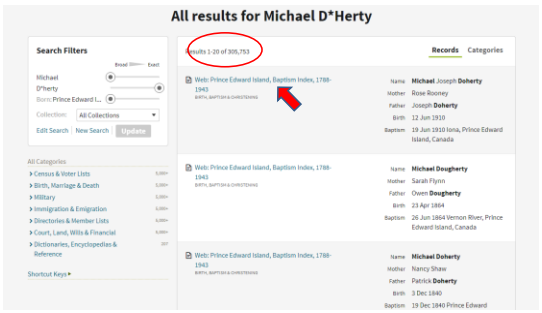
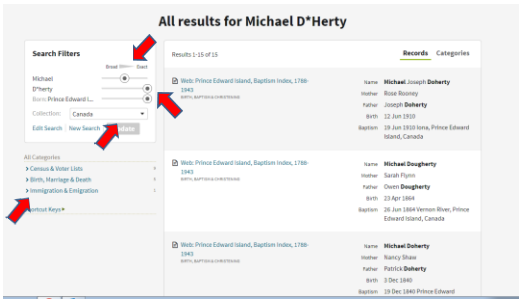


Ancestry Results for Michael D*herty, born PEI



Using Sliders to Focus Search

Filter on Categories

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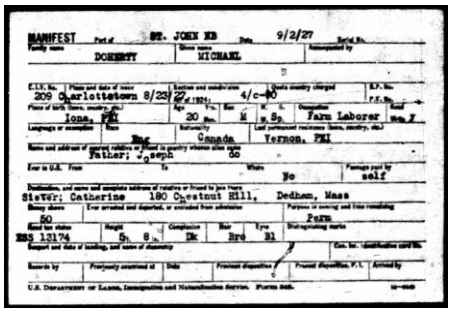
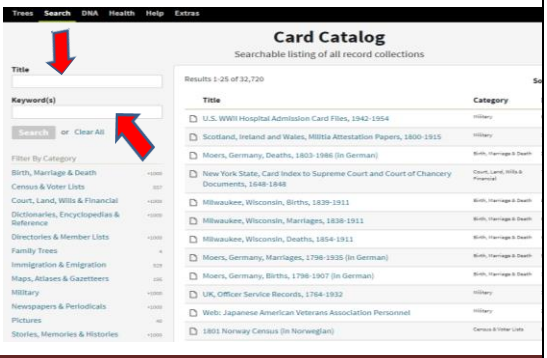

MANIFEST Port of ST. JOHN NB Date 9/2/27 Serial No.
Family name DOHERTY Given name MICHAEL Accompanied by
C.I.F. No. 209 Place and date of issue Charlottetown 8/23/27 Section and condition of 1924 4/c-40 Quota country charged
Place of birth (town, country, etc.) Iona, PEI Age 20 Yrs. Sex M M. S. Occupation Farm Laborer Seed
Language or exemption Race Eng Nationality Canada Last permanent residence (town, country, etc.) Vernon, PEI
Name and address of nearest relative or friend in country whence alien came Father; Joseph do
Ever in U.S. From To Where No Passage paid by self
Destination, and name and complete address of relative or friend to join there Sister; Catherine 180 Chestnut Hill, Dedham, Mass
Money above 50 Ever arrested and deported, or excluded from admission Purpose in coming and time remaining Perm
Head tax status ESS 13174 Height 5 8 Complexion Dk Hair Brn Eyes Bl Distinguishing marks
Support and date of landing, and name of steamship Can. Ins. identification card No.
Records by Previously examined at Date Previous disposition Present disposition, P.I. Arrived by
U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration and Naturalization Service. Form 548.

Pre-Examination Manifest for Michael Doherty

Tip
Don't Forget the Card Catalog



Using the Card Catalog

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Other Research Aids

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

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Session #2 Roadmap

KIS: Rule #1 for Organizing

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

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Organizing Your Research Process

Reminder – Use the Basic Tools!

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

Organizing Your Findings

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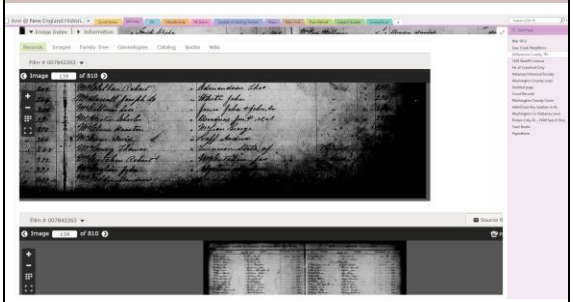
Tasks Lists and To-Dos

- 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

One Note Parking Spot



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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)

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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

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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

- Higgins
  - Higgins
    - John _1950
      - [List of Record Types]
    - John_1903
    - Patrick_1876
  - Crotty
  - Cassidy

Record Type Structure

- 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

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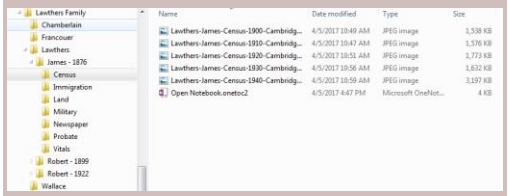
Other Templates

- 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



Organizing Your Summary

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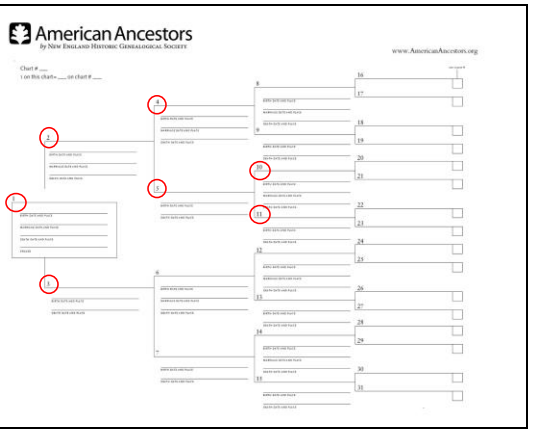
Genealogical Numbering Systems

- 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



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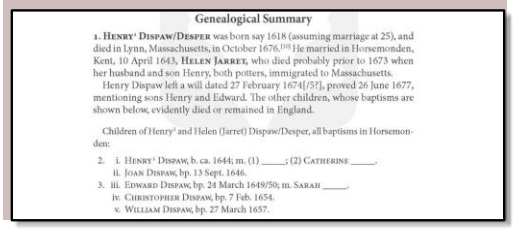
Register

- Descending numbering system with children assigned numbers if they have their own sketch



Genealogical Summary

1. HENRY[1] DISPAW/DESPER was born say 1618 (assuming marriage at 25), and died in Lynn, Massachusetts, in October 1676.[10] He married in Horsemonden, Kent, 10 April 1643, HELEN JARRET, who died probably prior to 1673 when her husband and son Henry, both potters, immigrated to Massachusetts.

Henry Dispaw left a will dated 27 February 1674[/5?], proved 26 June 1677, mentioning sons Henry and Edward. The other children, whose baptisms are shown below, evidently died or remained in England.

Children of Henry[1] and Helen (Jarret) Dispaw/Desper, all baptisms in Horsemonden:

2. i. HENRY[2] DISPAW, b. ca. 1644; m. (1) _____; (2) CATHERINE _____.
   ii. JOAN DISPAW, bp. 13 Sept. 1646.
3. iii. EDWARD DISPAW, bp. 24 March 1649/50; m. SARAH _____.
   iv. CHRISTOPHER DISPAW, bp. 7 Feb. 1654.
   v. WILLIAM DISPAW, bp. 27 March 1657.

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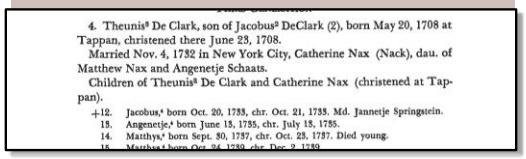
NGSQ (AKA Modified Register)

- Descending numbering system, every child receives a number based on birth order
- Plus signs or asterisks show children with their own sketch



4. Theunis[3] De Clark, son of Jacobus[2] DeClark (2), born May 20, 1708 at Tappan, christened there June 23, 1708.

Married Nov. 4, 1732 in New York City, Catherine Nax (Nack), dau. of Matthew Nax and Angenetje Schaats.

Children of Theunis[3] De Clark and Catherine Nax (christened at Tappan).

+12. Jacobus,[4] born Oct. 20, 1733, chr. Oct. 21, 1733. Md. Jannetje Springstein.
13. Angenetje,[4] born June 13, 1735, chr. July 13, 1735.
14. Matthys,[4] born Sept. 30, 1737, chr. Oct. 23, 1737. Died young.
15. Matthys,[4] born Oct. 24, 1739, chr. Dec. 9, 1739.

NYGBR, Vol 96:196

Homework

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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

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