

Genealogy Basics: Searching

Topics

- Class 1 - Review
- Search Strategy
- Family Search Demo
- Quick Case Study
- Ancestry Demo

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Workshop 1: Review

- **Focus Areas**
- **Taking Stock**
- **Document, Catalog & File**
- **Getting Started**
- **Tools and Software**

Question from last week: the newspaper archive I use is: <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

*The British
NEWSPAPER
Archive*

Easington, E. Yorks.

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Websters Beat Sheet Series 7.3

Review: Sources of information

There are many sources – these are the main ones irrespective of which country your search is in.

Vital Records: Birth, marriage, and death certificates.

Census Records: Most countries and many states carried out regular censuses.

Church Records: Pre-civil registration, BMD, banns, baptisms, volunteers, and wardens.

Cemetery and gravestones. (findagrave.com is an excellent place to start.)

Immigration, Naturalization, and Citizenship. Family groups often traveled together.

Newspapers & Obituaries. There are several sites so research the newspapers first.

Military Records. Generally, records for officers are easier to find than for enlisted men.

Land & Property Records. The Wiki at FamilySearch is an excellent place to start for the next steps by state.

Wills & Probate. Availability varies by location.

Courts, Prisons, and Crime. Public records if you can find them.

Maps. Understanding where your family lived helps in other research (friends, associates & neighbors)

Your family. Often family 'lore' is incorrect but a good starting point for names and relationships.



Search Strategy

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Websters Beat Plot Series No. 3

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Search Strategy

- QUESTION:** What are you trying to find out?
- BACKGROUND:** What facts do you have which will help your search?
- SOURCES:** Which sources will assist in answering your question?
- PLAN:** What is the availability and location of the sources?
- SEARCH:** Execute your search plan.
- DOCUMENT:** Cite and document your results, both positive and negative.

Modify based
on results

Search Strategy: Question

Do not search randomly – have a question you are trying to answer
(write down the question).

If your search does not have a focus, then you will be all over the place
and probably miss essential records.

Some examples:

- Where was [name] who was married to [name] on [date] born
- Who was the mother of [name]
- When and where did [name] immigrate to the USA
- Who were the children of [name] and [name] who married on [date][location]



Don't be distracted

Search Strategy: Background & tips

- Document the facts you know are accurate and will assist your search.
- Some parameters may be estimates, perhaps a date range for birth or death, a state rather than a city.
- Be careful with “exact” searches (most searches default to “similar” or “sounds like”).
- Start with a broad search, then “focus in,” using more parameters.
- Use wildcards. Typically, “*” for multiple characters, “?” for single characters.
- Use nicknames, married names, and abbreviated names.
- Some children are given their stepfather’s last name while in his household and revert to the given name later.
- If you can’t find someone, try looking for their family or relatives.
- Families often reused the names of children who died.
- Baptism date may not have any bearing on birth date.
- Naming conventions often lead to multiple people with the same name (next slide).
- There are errors, omissions, lies, and guesses in numerous “official” records.
- Many family trees online are incorrect. As a rule, the more people in the tree, the less accurate it is.
- A date of 10/12/1845 is 10th December in Europe and 12th October in the USA.
- To avoid confusion, the genealogical convention for recording dates is dd mmm yyyy (12 Oct 1845).
- Family lore (e.g., great-grandfather was at the Alamo) often turns out to be incorrect.

Search Strategy: Family Names

Many countries have naming conventions that may lead to multiple closely related people with the same family name in the same place at the same time. Christian name groupings can help identify families.

- The first son was named after the paternal grandfather
- The second son was named after the maternal grandfather
- The third son was named after the father
- The fourth son was named after the oldest paternal uncle
- The fifth was named after the second oldest paternal uncle or the oldest maternal uncle

- The first daughter was named after the maternal grandmother
- The second daughter was named after the paternal grandmother
- The third daughter was named after the mother
- The fourth daughter was named after the oldest maternal aunt
- The fifth was named after the second oldest maternal aunt or the oldest paternal aunt

(https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/England_Personal_Names)

Search Strategy: Family Names

In this 1841 census example, three Bousfield brothers from the same village have a son called Stephen born around the same time. Their grandfather was called Stephen.

View Record	Stephen Bousfield	abt 1831	Westmorland, England	Orton, Westmorland	
View Record	Stephen Bousfield	abt 1839	Westmorland, England	Orton, Westmorland	
View Record	Stephen Bousfield	abt 1834	Westmorland, England	Orton, Westmorland	

Household Members	Age
William Bousfield	45
Nancy Bousfield	45
Stephen Bousfield	10

Household Members	Age
John Bousfield	50
Margaret Bousfield	40
Elizabeth Bousfield	11
Agnes Bousfield	9
Sarah Bousfield	6
Stephen Bousfield	2

Household Members	Age
Robert Bousfield	35
Agnes Bousfield	30
Stephen Bousfield	7
Mary Bousfield	4

How would you determine his father if you had a relative called Stephen Bousfield, born between 1830 – 1840 in the Village of Orton, Westmorland?

1841 England Census, Class: HO107; Civil Parish: Orton; County: Westmorland; Enumeration District: 6; Page: 11; Line: 21; (Ancestry.com : accessed 05 Aug 2022); GSU roll: 464189. This census rounded adult ages down to the nearest 5.

Search Strategy: Sources

Decide where and what records you will search first; for instance, you may decide that you should look for vital records (birth, marriage, death), wills, censuses, land records, etc.

You will need to know what records are available and where you can search. **Google** is always helpful. For instance, you could Google: “*New York Birth Records 1800-1900*,” which would lead you to the “New York Genealogical and Biographical Society,” which will assist in your search. Typically, when using Google (or Bing etc.), ignore the **Ad links** that pop up first in the results.

Don't forget you can also search by image.

Search Strategy: Sources

The **Family Search Wiki** is particularly helpful in suggesting **where** to search for records by state and country (other sites have research guides, too, <https://www.genuki.org.uk/> for UK & Ireland, for example).

The screenshot shows the FamilySearch Wiki page for "New York, United States Genealogy". The page features a navigation menu at the top with links for Family Tree, Search, Memories, Get Involved, and Activities. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area includes a "Getting Started" section with links to "New York Online Genealogy Records" and "Ask the FamilySearch Community". A sidebar on the right lists "New York Wiki Topics" such as Adoption, Bible Records, and Census. The page also includes a "Getting Started" section with links to "New York Information" and "Getting Started".

FamilySearch Family Tree Search Memories Get Involved Activities Help SIGN IN CREATE ACCOUNT

Research Wiki Page Talk Read View source View history Search by place or topic

New York, United States Genealogy

United States → **New York**

Guide to **New York ancestry, family history, and genealogy** birth records, marriage records, death records, census records, family history, and military records.

New York Information [\[edit\]](#) [\[edit source\]](#)

New York is a state in the northeast part of the United States. It is divided into 62 counties. New York State was the 11th state to join the Union on July 26, 1788. It came from the Crown Colony of New York. The State Capital is Albany.^[1]

Getting Started [\[edit\]](#) [\[edit source\]](#)

Getting Started with New York Research

Links to articles on getting started with New York research.

- [Guided Research](#)
- [Step-by-Step New York Research, 1880-Present](#)
- [How to Find Birth Records](#)
- [How to Find Marriage Records](#)
- [How to Find Death Records](#)
- [Research Strategies](#)

New York Research Tools

Links to articles and websites that assist in New York research.

- [New York Record Finder](#)
- [Boundary Changes for New York Counties](#)
- [New York Archives and Libraries](#)
- [NYGenWeb](#)
- [Geographical Names Information System](#) - U.S. gazetteer of places, cemeteries and post offices in New York.
- [New York Genealogical and Biographical Society](#)

New York Wiki Topics



Beginning Research

- [Guided Research](#)
- [Research Strategies](#)
- [Record Finder](#)

Record Types

• Adoption	• Naturalization & Citizenship
• Bible Records	• Newspapers
• Biography	• Obituaries
• Cemeteries	• Occupation & Business Records
• Census	• Online Genealogy Records
• Church Records	• Orphans & Orphanages
• Colonial Records	
• Correctional Institutions	
• Court Records	

Tools: [What links here](#) [Related changes](#)

Search Strategy: Plan

You should document your search plan in your **Research Log**.

DATE	RESEARCH GOAL	
17 April 2022	Identify the parents of John Beaumont (husband of Julia and father of Ida) who was born <i>circa</i> 1827 in England and lived in Conneaut, Erie, Pennsylvania in 1860.	
SOURCE	PURPOSE OF SEARCH	RESULTS/FINDINGS/NOTES
[original search for the head of household] "1860 United States Federal Census," database with images <i>ancestrylibrary.com</i> (https://www.ancestrylibrary.com : accessed 17 March 2022), search for John Beaumont, born between 1820 and 1830.	Examine the original census page image to see if there are any neighbors or family members that would help identify the parents of John Beaumont	
"Erie County, Pennsylvania Genealogy," research Wiki familysearch.com (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Erie_County,_Pennsylvania_Genealogy : accessed 17 March 2022).	Look for marriage record sources for John and Julia, which may name John's parents.	
"1850 United States Federal Census," database with images <i>ancestrylibrary.com</i> (https://www.ancestrylibrary.com : accessed 17 March 2022), search for John Beaumont born 1827 +/- 2 years, Erie Pennsylvania.	Locate John with his parents. He may be in his parent's household.	
"U.S., Newspapers.com Obituary Index, 1800s-current," database index <i>ancestrylibrary.com</i> (https://www.ancestrylibrary.com : accessed 17 March 2022), search for John Beaumont born 1827, lived in Conneaut, Erie, Pennsylvania.	John's obituary may name his parents.	
"England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," database index <i>ancestrylibrary.com</i> (https://www.ancestrylibrary.com : accessed 18 March 2022), search for John Beaumont born 1827, father: Thomas Beaumont, Mother: Alice. And , search for Thomas Beaumont born 1830, father: Thomas Beaumont, Mother: Alice.	Based on 1850 and 1860 census information find if there are birth records for John (1827) and Thomas (1830) for parents Thomas and Alice Beaumont in England.	

* There are Research Log templates readily available on the internet



FamilySearch Demo

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Family Search – Quick Demo

The screenshot shows the FamilySearch website's search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Family Search, Family Tree, Search, Memories, Get Involved, and Activities. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for Records, Images, Family Tree, Genealogies, Catalog, Books, and Wiki. The main content area features a large banner with the text "Search Historical Records" and a sub-headline: "Records create a paper trail for your ancestors and can lead you to important details about their life. Enter a name, and we'll look for it in birth certificates, marriage registrations, census records, and other official documents." A search form is overlaid on the banner, containing fields for First Names, Last Names, Place (City, County, State, Province, or Country), and Year (Birth or Death Year). A yellow "SEARCH" button and a "MORE OPTIONS" link are also present. A small box on the left of the banner contains the text "TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE SEARCHES".

Things to remember.

- Explore the collections.
- Read “Using this collection” notes.
- Nearly every family tree has errors.
- Not all records have images.
- Not all images are indexed.
- Some images are available at FHS.
- Use the Wiki.



Find a Collection

Your ancestor's record belongs to a collection of similar documents—Argentina Baptisms, for example, or United States Census, 1940. Searching a specific collection is one way to narrow your search. If you don't know the collection's exact title, start typing, and we'll try to help you.

Collection Title

[BROWSE ALL COLLECTIONS](#)

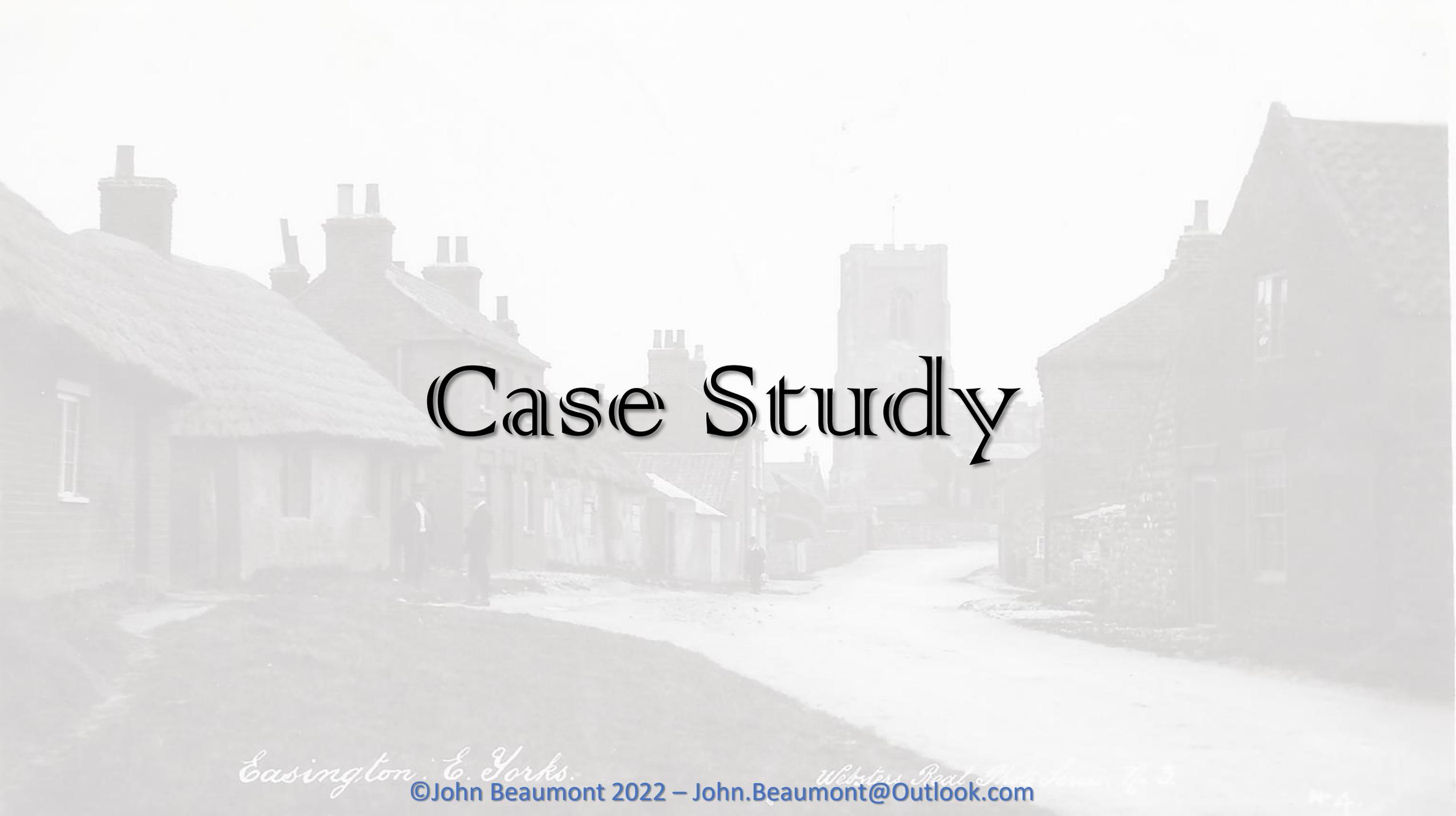


Search by Place

Different regions of the world call for different research strategies. Enter a place, and we'll show you the tools and resources we have to help you discover your ancestors who lived there.

Find a Country, Province, or State

[BROWSE PLACES](#)



Case Study

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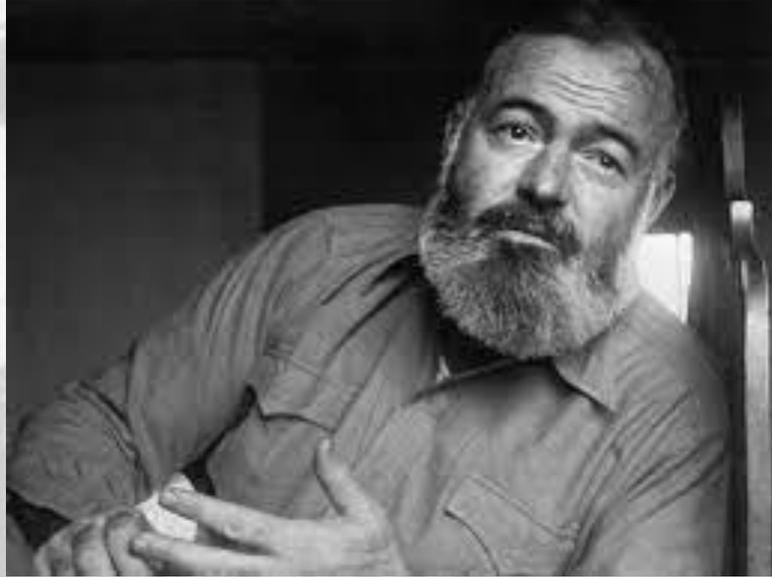
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Case Study

Research and Genealogy: **Using FamilySearch**



Ernest Hemingway

Question: “What was the name of Ernest Hemingway’s father?”

Search Strategy – Ernest Hemingway

- QUESTION:** What was the name of Ernest Hemingway's father?
- BACKGROUND:** Ernest was born around 1900; his mother was called Grace.
- SOURCES:** 1) Birth/baptism records, 2) census records
- PLAN:** Source records are available on FamilySearch
- SEARCH:** Execute your search plan.
- DOCUMENT:** Cite and document your results, both positive and negative.

Modify based
on results

Exercise 1- Birth & Baptism Records

Question: “who was the father of Ernest Hemingway”

Exercise 1:

Log onto FamilySearch.Org and search for the birth or baptism records of Ernest Hemmingway to find his father.

>> 10 minutes.

You may not be successful.

Don't panic

**Don't use
GOOGLE or
any other
search
engine**

>> Look at all the differences between the register and certificate:

- Ernest's last name is different
- Father has different first names
- Mother has different last names
- Mother's first name is missing from the register

Search as described – did anyone use “Exact Search”?

What would have happened?

Collection Sex Race Birth

Name	Events	Relationships
Ernest Miller Heiningway Principal Illinois, Cook County, Birth Certificates, 1871-1949	Birth 21 July 1899 Chicago, Cook, Illinois, United States	Parents Charles Edmonds Heiningway, Grace Hall
Ernest M Hemingway Principal Illinois, Cook County Birth Registers, 1871-1915	Birth 21 July 1899 Oak Park, Cook, Illinois, United States	Parents Clarence E Hemingway, Halt
Earnest Hemingway Principal New York, Birth Indexes outside of New York City, 1881-1942	Birth 10 August 1893 Tyrone, Schuyler, New York, United States	
Virginia E Hemingway Principal Massachusetts State Vital Records, 1841-1920	Birth 11 October 1917 Taunton, Bristol, Massachusetts, United States	Parents Frank S, Grace P Miller

Do we know the name of his father?

NOT REALLY

Let's examine census records close to his birth date, which possibly include his father.

Search

Add Ancestor Information

NAME ALTERNATE NAME SEX

First Names Ernest

Last Names Hemingway

Add Life Event

ANY BIRTH MARRIAGE RESIDENCE DEATH

Place United States

Year (Range) 1890 1910

Add Family Member

SPOUSE FATHER MOTHER OTHER PERSON

Mother's First Names Grace

Mother's Last Names

Add Record Options

LOCATION TYPE BATCH NUMBER

IMAGE GROUP NUMBER (DGS) OR FILM NUMBER

Record Type

Birth, Baptism, and Christening

Marriage

Death

Census, Residence, and Lists

Immigration and Naturalization

Military

Probate

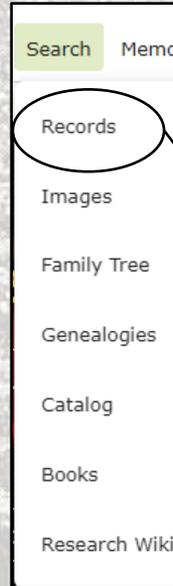
Other

SEARCH RESET

Exercise 2- Census Records

Question: “who was the father of Ernest Hemingway”

Don't use
GOOGLE or
any other
search
engine



Exercise 2:

Search for the **1900 US census image** for Ernest Hemmingway's entry to find his father.

>> 10 minutes.

You may not be successful.

Don't panic

Tip:

This time to focus on the **1900 census** filter by **collection**

Click on  to see the image

What else might the census image tell us?

(Hint: Pay attention to the column headings)

Census Search Results:

Activities

Wiki

Filtered Results (15)

Collection: Censuses & Lists, United States Census, 1900 (15)

Collection Sex Race Birth Marriage Other Residence

Name	Events	Relationships
Ernest M Hemingway Principal United States Census, 1900	Census 1900 Cicero, Cook, Illinois, United States Birth July 1899 Illinois, United States	Parents Clarence Hemingway, Grace H Hemingway Siblings Marcellin Hemingway

Online Image is available.

Search

Add Ancestor Information

NAME ALTERNATE NAME SEX

First Names
Ernest

Last Names
Hemingway

Add Life Event

ANY BIRTH MARRIAGE RESIDENCE DEATH

Place
Illinois

Year (Range)
1901 1901

Add Family Member

SPOUSE FATHER MOTHER OTHER PERSON

Mother's First Names
Grace

Mother's Last Names

Add Record Options

LOCATION TYPE BATCH NUMBER
IMAGE GROUP NUMBER (DGS) OR FILM NUMBER

Record Type

- Birth, Baptism, and Christening
- Marriage
- Death
- Census, Residence, and Lists
- Immigration and Naturalization
- Military
- Probate
- Other

SEARCH RESET

FAMILY NUMBER.		NAME of each person whose place of abode on June 1, 1900, was in this family. Enter surname first, then the given name and middle initial, if any. INCLUDE every person living on June 1, 1900. OMIT children born since June 1, 1900.	RELATION. Relationship of each person to the head of the family.	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION.								NATIVITY. Place of birth of each person and parents of each person enumerated. If born in the United States, give the State or Territory; if of foreign birth, give the Country only.		
Number of household.	Number of family, in the order of visitation.			Color or race.	Sex.	DATE OF BIRTH. Month. Year.		Age at last birthday.	Whether single, married, widowed, or divorced.	Number of years married.	Mother of how many children.	Number of these children living.	Place of birth of this PERSON.	Place of birth of FATHER of this person.
1	2			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
20	20	Homer Owen H	Head	W	M	July 1830	70	M	39			New York	New York	New York
		— John E	Wife	W	F	Sept 1839	60	M	39	7	5	Illinois	England	England
		— Julia	Daughter	W	F	March 1870	30	S				Illinois	New York	Illinois
		Peteren Christin M	Servant	W	F	Apr 1872	28	S				Germany	Germany	Germany
20	21	Hall Earnest H	Head	W	M	Feb 1840	60	M				England	England	England
		Hancock Benjamin J	Born	W	M	Feb 1848	52	S				England	England	England
		Stetson John B	Servant	W	F	Nov 1864	35	S				Germany	Germany	Germany
22		Hemingway Clarence H	Head	W	M	Sept 1871	28	M	4			Illinois	Connecticut	Connecticut
		— Grace H	Wife	W	F	June 1872	27	M	4	2	2	Illinois	England	England
		— Marcelline	Daughter	W	F	June 1878	2	S				Illinois	Illinois	Illinois
		— Ernest M	Son	W	M	July 1899	10 1/2	S				Illinois	Illinois	Illinois
22	23	Ingersoll George H	Head	W	M	July 1844	57	M	18			Michigan	New York	New York

Associated Image – 1900 census Cicero Township, Cook Co. Illinois



The Hemingway family in 1905
(from the left): Marcelline, Sunny,
Clarence, Grace, Ursula, and Ernest

Ernest Miller Hemingway was born on July 21, 1899, in Oak Park, Illinois, an affluent suburb just west of Chicago, to **Clarence Edmonds Hemingway**, a physician, and **Grace Hall Hemingway**, a musician. (Wikipedia - <https://www.wikipedia.org>)

Even official records have incorrect information



Document your Search

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Websters Beat Plot Series 7.3

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Search Strategy: Documentation

You should document the results of your searches in your **Research Log**. You should note at least the basic details so that you or a fellow researcher/family member can reproduce the search and find the record; this will give legitimacy to your work and, if you go on to document more formally, will form the basis of a citation.

You should also document (and cite) where you searched unsuccessfully. This will prevent you from constantly repeating the same search and let others know where you have searched. Include the parameters you used for your search and the date you searched.

A basic genealogical citation is based on five components: *Document Archive Example*.

- Who? – who created the source *(The Author)*
- What? – what is the source *(The Title)*
- When? – when was the source created *(Date Published)*
- Where is (it)? – the location of the source *(The Archive's name)*
- Where in? – whereabouts in the location *(The Document's location in the Archive)*

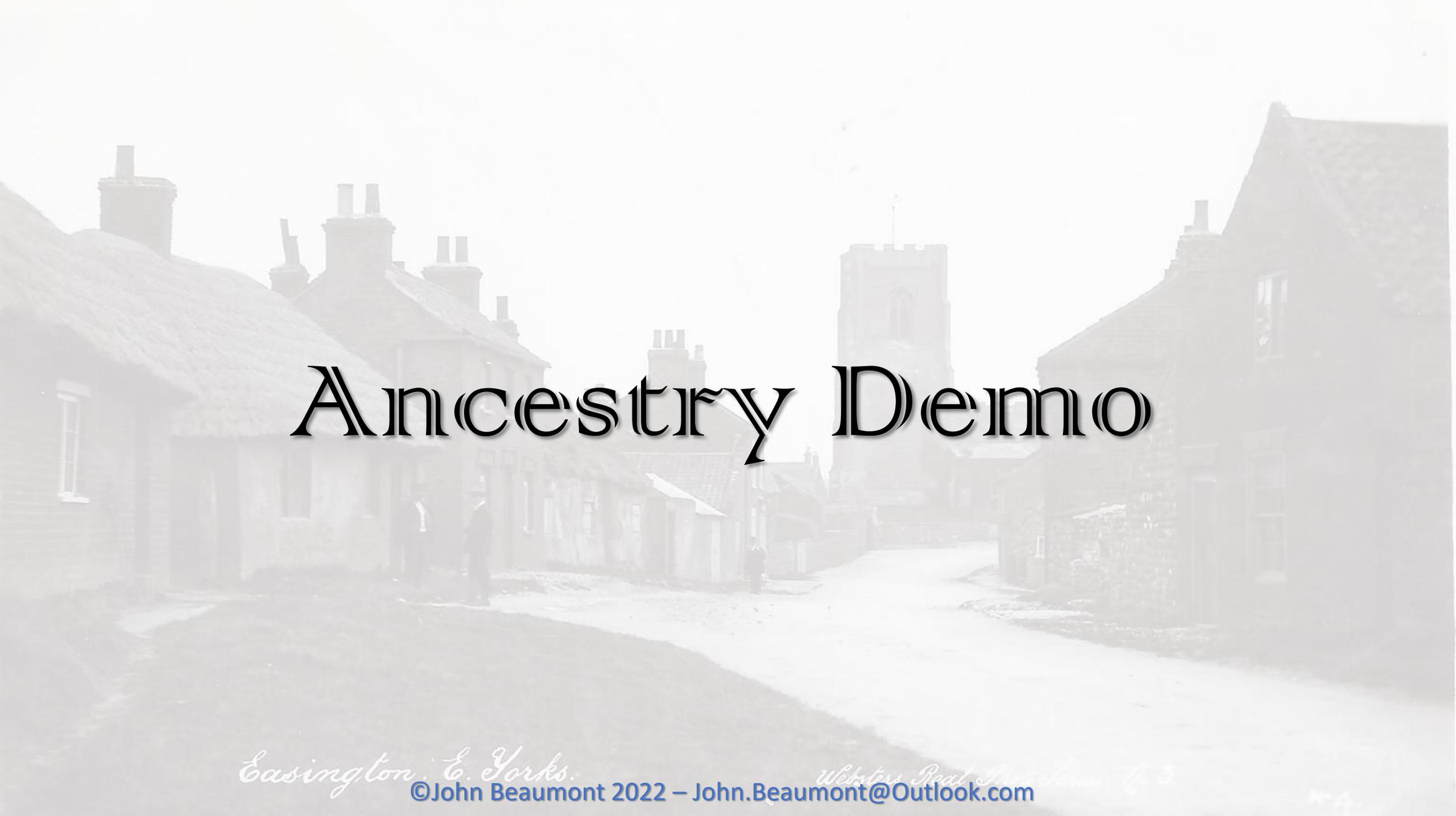
Search Strategy: Research Log Example

DATE 17 April 2022	RESEARCH GOAL Identify the parents of John Beaumont (husband of Julia and father of Ida) who was born circa 1827 in England and lived in Conneaut, Erie, Pennsylvania in 1860.
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Research Plan

Search Results

SOURCE	PURPOSE OF SEARCH	RESULTS/FINDINGS/NOTES
<p>[original search for the head of household] "1860 United States Federal Census," database with images <i>ancestrylibrary.com</i> (https://www.ancestrylibrary.com: accessed 17 March 2022), search for John Beaumont, born between 1820 and 1830.</p>	<p>Examine the original census page image to see if there are any neighbors or family members that would help identify the parents of John Beaumont</p>	<p>Named on the same census page (two dwellings prior), Thomas Beaumont Snr, aged 67, farmer, born England; Alice Beaumont, aged 70, born England; Thomas Beaumont, aged 30.</p>
<p>"Erie County, Pennsylvania Genealogy," research Wiki <i>familysearch.com</i> (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Erie_County,_Pennsylvania_Genealogy: accessed 17 March 2022).</p>	<p>Look for marriage record sources for John and Julia, which may name John's parents.</p>	<p>Marriage records for Erie County did not begin until 1885. State records did not start until 1905. No records are available.</p>
<p>"1850 United States Federal Census," database with images <i>ancestrylibrary.com</i> (https://www.ancestrylibrary.com: accessed 17 March 2022), search for John Beaumont born 1827 +/- 2 years, Erie Pennsylvania.</p>	<p>Locate John with his parents. He may be in his parent's household.</p>	<p><u>John Beaumont</u>, aged 24 found in the same township of Conneaut, Erie, Pennsylvania. He is in the home of Thomas Beaumont, aged 57, a farmer born in England, Eliza [Alice] Beaumont, aged 61, born in England, and Thomas, aged 24 born in England. This appears to be the same family that are neighbors to John in the 1860 census.</p> <p><i>Based on the 1850 and 1860 censuses, it is possible that John's parents were Thomas and Alice Beaumont, and he had a brother called Thomas.</i></p>
<p>"U.S., Newspapers.com Obituary Index, 1800s-current," database index <i>ancestrylibrary.com</i> (https://www.ancestrylibrary.com: accessed 17 March 2022), search for John Beaumont born 1827, lived in Conneaut, Erie, Pennsylvania.</p>	<p>John's obituary may name his parents.</p>	<p>A record that is possibly John's obituary is found but is at Newspaper.com. Subscription needed. Index: Name: John Beaumont, Death Age: 62, Birth Date: abt 1827, Residence Place: Wellsburg, Erie County, Obituary Date: 25 Jul 1889, Obituary Place: Conneautville, Pennsylvania, USA, Newspaper Title: The Conneautville Courier.</p> <p><i>Look for other sources for this newspaper or consider <u>subscription</u>.</i></p>



Ancestry Demo

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Ancestry – Quick Demo



Search

First & Middle Name(s) Last Name

Place your ancestor might have lived Birth Year

[Show fewer options](#) Match all terms exactly

Add event: [Birth](#) [Marriage](#) [Death](#) [Lived In](#) [Any Event](#) [More](#)

Add family member: [Father](#) [Mother](#) [Sibling](#) [Spouse](#) [Child](#)

Keyword

Gender Race/Nationality

Collection Focus

Historical Records Family Trees
 Stories & Publications Photos & Maps

Your recent searches

Jump back in

[U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918](#)
[UK, City and County Directories, 1766 - 1946](#)
[U.S., School Yearbooks, 1900-1999](#)
[UK and Ireland, Masters and Mates Certificates, 1850-1927](#)
[West Yorkshire, England, Electoral Registers, 1840-1962](#)

Explore by collection

[Birth, marriage & death](#)
[Birth, baptism & christening](#)
[Marriage & divorce](#)
[Death, burial, cemetery & obituaries](#)

[Census & voter lists](#)
[U.S. Federal Census Collection](#)
[UK Census Collection](#)
[Canadian Census Collection](#)
[More...](#)

[Immigration & travel](#)
[Passenger lists](#)
[Citizenship & naturalization records](#)
[Border crossings & passports](#)
[More...](#)

[Military](#)

Things to remember.

Explore the Card Catalogue.
Read “About this collection” notes.
Nearly every family tree has errors.
NEVER copy a tree into your tree.
Fully research **HINTS** before accepting.



Questions?