
Glossary of Terms

FAMILY HISTORY TERMS

Ancestral File: lineage-linked database from patron submissions of over 35 million records.

FamilySearch: Church website collection of databases and resource files. Contains Ancestral File, IGI, Censuses, Social Security Death Index, FHLC, and other records. (More than 1 billion names online.)

FHC: a Family History Center; a branch of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

FHLC: Family History Library Catalog. Catalog of more than 3 million items available at Family History Library in Salt Lake City, and at FHC's. Searchable online.

GEDCOM: standard file format for exchanging information between genealogical programs. Developed by the Church.

IGI: International Genealogical Index: contains 725 million records from extraction & patron submissions (primarily temple submissions).

New FamilySearch: Church website available only to members, linking church membership records, IGI, Pedigree Resource File, Ancestral File, etc., for purposes of temple name submissions.

PAF: the Church's Personal Ancestral File software, for recording genealogical data. Version 5.2 is available as a free download (or for \$8.25 for 2 CDs).

Pedigree Resource File: lineage-linked pedigrees submitted over FamilySearch, containing over 80 million names.

INTERNET TERMS

Browser: software used to view documents on the internet (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Google Chrome)

Home: (or home page). a web page that is used as the title page or table of contents for a website.

HTML: "HyperText Markup Language": the language used to design web pages.

Hyperlink: [highlighted](#) text that you can click on (one click) that allows you to jump to other information in a file or on a web page or another website.

Internet: a system of computers connected together by high-speed data lines, containing vast amounts of information. Includes World Wide Web.

ISP: Internet Service Provider. A company from which you receive or purchase a dial-up connection to the internet.

Modem: device used to connect computer to telephone system

Web page: A multimedia document created and viewable on the Internet with a browser.

Web site: a web page or set of web pages belonging to a particular individual, organization, or company.

World Wide Web: the part of the internet written in HTML.

ANY OTHER TERMS

Try the FamilySearch glossary at:

<http://www.familysearch.org/eng/search/rg/glossary/glsryidx.asp>

Reliability of Sources

Primary Sources: “A *primary source* is a document written by an eyewitness or another person closely connected with the event [which] was recorded soon after it happened. Information from primary sources is usually very reliable. You should use primary sources whenever possible.” (*From You to Your Ancestors*, 3rd ed., p. 44.)

Examples: Vital records (birth certificate, marriage certificate, death certificates [regarding death information])
Family records (Bibles, journals, diaries, photos)
Church records (christenings, marriages)
Probate records
Cemetery records
Immigration records
Military and pension records
Land records
Census records

Secondary Sources: “A *secondary source* is a document written by a person not closely involved with the event or by an eyewitness who recorded the event a long time after it happened. Secondary sources are less reliable than primary sources.” (*From You to Your Ancestors*, 3rd ed., p. 44.)

Examples: Vital records (death certificates [regarding birth information])
Family records (memoirs, Bibles, journals, diaries)
Probate records
Cemetery records
Pension records
Census records
Family histories
County histories
Obituaries
Books
Websites
Other researchers

Original Records: “An original record or document is the first transcription of an event or circumstance in a particular manner.” (Wright, Norman E. and Pratt, David H., *Genealogical Research Essentials*, 1967, p. 88.)

Transcribed Records: “[A] copy is any subsequent transcription resulting from the original.” (*Ibid.*)

What about photocopies or digital images?

Which documents would be more reliable and which would be less reliable?

	Primary Source	Secondary Source
Original Record	1	3
Transcribed Record	2	4

Types of Sources

1. Personal and Family Sources. These sources include interviews, letters, photographs, journals, diaries, personal histories, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, baby books, wedding albums, funeral albums, address books, books of remembrance, personal files, family Bibles, household goods, heirlooms. Availability depends entirely on the family and the person. Reliability depends on whether they were created soon after the event, or from memory much later.
2. Vital Records. These records include civil registration records (birth, marriage, and death). Generally, civil records in the United States began to be kept in the late 1800's, although a few jurisdictions began keeping records a little earlier, and some did not begin until after 1900.

Birth records state the person's name, sex, birth date, birth place, and the names of the parents. Marriage records give the name of the groom, the maiden name of the bride, and the marriage date and place, and sometimes more information, like birthplace, age, and names of parents. Death records give the person's name, date and place of death, burial information, and often birth date, birth place, and names of parents (as far as the person reporting the death knew such information).

Some vital records have been microfilmed and are available at the Family History Center (check the Family History Library Catalog for the locality). Other records have been transcribed and are available on the internet (see, for example, the list at Cyndi's List, <http://www.cyndislist.com/usvital.htm>). To determine how to get photocopies of original vital records, go to the website "Where to Write for Vital Records," <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.htm>.

3. Census Records. In the United States, a census has been taken every 10 years, starting with 1790.

From 1790 through 1840, the census only included the names of the heads of households, with the numbers of others in the household broken down by age groups.

Starting with 1850, the census listed the names, ages, and state of birth of all members of the household.

Starting with 1880, the census included relationships, and the states of birth of each person's parents. The 1890 census was destroyed by fire.

Only the 1900 census included the month and year of birth of each person.

The other censuses now available (1910, 1920, and 1930) are similar to the 1880 census, although each one included various other items of interest.

Census records provide a great deal of useful information, and can allow you to trace a family back in time, at 10-year intervals. They are available on microfilm through the Family History Center, and digital images and indexes of the censuses can be accessed through www.ancestry.com (for free at the county library), or through HeritageQuest (through the county library website: www.sclld.org, click on Research, then Information Databases, then HeritageQuest Online). Indexed transcriptions of the 1880 U.S. Census, plus the 1881 Canadian and U.K. censuses, are available online at www.familysearch.org.

Searchable digital images of various federal and state census records are now available at FamilySearch Record Search (Pilot Site) at pilot.familysearch.org.

4. Libraries. Various information is available at the library. The Family History Library is the best source of all. Access its catalog at www.familysearch.org by hovering over Library, then click on Library Catalog. Microfilms and microfiche (not books) can be ordered for a nominal fee to be viewed at the local Family History Center. The Spokane Public Library has an extensive genealogy collection of books and microforms (go to <http://www.spokanelibrary.org>, click on Research, then on Genealogy). On computers at the Spokane County Public Library, you can access the Ancestry Library Edition database ("Contains over 4 billion names, more than 4,000 databases, primary-source documents, and a variety of features for family history research"). The Washington State Archives and Washington State Library also have resources available (see <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/history/genealogy.aspx>.)
5. Other sources. There are many other types of sources that may be consulted. These include military records, land records, wills and probate records, cemetery records and tombstone inscriptions, church records, public governmental records, emigration/immigration records, county histories, family histories, Internet databases, pension records, and others.

Research Guidance

The FamilySearch website can be used for conducting searches of databases, but it also contains a large amount of explanatory information derived from the experience and expertise of family history research professionals.

If you go to the www.familysearch.org website, and click on Research Helps, you can choose from the topics of "Articles" and "Guidance". The Articles link will

take you to a list of free publications on every topic imaginable, which can be sorted by place, title, subject, or document type. The Guidance link will take you to step-by-step instructions and explanations on how to find and use records to get information about your ancestors.

Internet Family History Research — General

The Internet is like an old library card catalog that has just been hit by a tornado, throwing all the cards in a totally haphazard manner across a large field. If you are looking for a book in the library, you may end up wandering the field randomly, picking up a card here and there until you happen to trip across one relevant to your search.



Unlike a library, there is no single, unified catalog to what can be found on the Internet. When searching for genealogical information, you can try a variety of potential sources of information on the Internet. These sources include various types of websites, e-mail, and newsgroups.

1. **Websites** – you can find the following types of things on various websites:

- Searchable databases (some free, some pay)
- Name indexes
- Query forums/message boards
- Linked pedigrees
- Library catalogs
- Category indexes
- Family histories
- Lists of researchers
- Search engines
- Historical information
- Geographic information
- Photographs
- Government documents
- General information/instructions
- Software

2. **E-Mail** – you can use e-mail for family history research in various ways:

- Contact family members for information
- Join e-mail discussion groups/collaboration lists
- Reply to those who post queries for further discussions
- Join general e-mail mailing lists

3. Newsgroups – you can use newsreader software to view genealogy newsgroups (similar to e-mail discussion groups)

- See <http://www.cyndislist.com/newsgrps.htm> for more information.

One major drawback to Internet research: the collection of the Family History Library (like most libraries) is not YET on the Internet (although the catalog is). However, the Church is working on it (see the FamilySearch Record Search site).

Recommended Websites

www.familysearch.org (free)

research: Ancestral File
 FHLC
 IGI / Ordinance Index
 Social Security Death Index
 1880 U.S. Census / 1881 Canada & U.K. Censuses
 Pedigree Resource File
 Vital Records Index (Mexico & Scandinavia)
 Search/browse websites

resources: Software (download PAF for free)
 Purchase various CDs (censuses, vital records indexes)
 Research Guidance ★★★ & Research Helps
 Glossary (definitions of any word you can imagine)
 (at the main page, hover over Search Records, then click on
 Web Sites, click on Research Support, then on Glossary)
 Preserve & share your genealogy

pilot.familysearch.org (free) ★★★

research: an ever-increasing number of various databases, including censuses, vital records, military records, etc., from all over the world, including links to images of the actual documents.

labs.familysearch.org/ (free)

see the new stuff the Church Family History Department is working on.

www.rootsweb.ancestry.com (free)

research: automated surname search (multiple databases)
 Rootsweb surname list (find other researchers)
 WorldConnect Project (user-submitted pedigrees)
 Social Security Death Index (sophisticated searches)
 query forums/message boards (great)
 keyword search
 mailing lists (surnames, regions, topics)
 surname research pages (incredible)

resources: free website hosting

www.usgenweb.org (free)

volunteers organized by state and by county to provide information
a page for every state and a page for every county
wide variety of available information; queries, indexes, etc.

www.cyndislist.com (free)

“Cyndi’s List of Genealogy Sites on the Internet”
research: more than 264,000 links
category index (over 180 categories)
pages for each state & Canadian province

www.ancestry.com (pay site; free at county library)

research: paid databases, some free
new databases free for 10 days from creation
OneWorldTree (user-submitted pedigrees)
Genealogy mailing lists
resources: create a free family site (MyFamily.com)
Preserve your genealogy

Other Sites of Interest (samples of what can be found on the Internet):

State Government Sites

Washington State Archives Search,
<http://www.secstate.wa.gov/archives/search.aspx>

Illinois Statewide Marriage Index, 1763–1900,
<http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/marriage.html>

Michigan Death Index, 1867-1897
<http://www.mdch.state.mi.us/pha/osr/gendisx/search2.htm>

Florida Confederate Pension Application Files
<http://www.floridamemory.com/Collections/PensionFiles>

Federal Government Sites

Nationwide Veterans’ Gravesite Locator,
http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL_v1

Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System,
<http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/>

The Official Federal Land Patent Records Site,
<http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/>

Private Sites

Brigham Young University Family History Archives,
(images of published genealogy and family history books)
<http://www.lib.byu.edu/fhc>

Overstreet Homestead
(a sample of a great site dedicated to research on a particular surname),
<http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~overstrt/index.htm>

The Overstreet DNA Project
(a sample of how DNA research can be used to further genealogy research)
<http://www.familytreedna.com/public/Overstreet>

The Fort - Livingston County, Illinois
(a sample of a site dedicated to research on a particular county),
<http://www.lexingtonillinois.org/fort/livingstoncounty.htm>

Black Sheep Ancestors
(search prison and convict records)
<http://blacksheepancestors.com>

Google
www.google.com

Sites where You Can Learn More about Family History Research:

How to Start Your Family History
http://www.familysearch.org/eng/Home/Welcome/frameset_information.asp

Finding Your Ancestors (free BYU online course)
<http://ce.byu.edu/is/site/courses/freecourses.cfm>
(click on "Finding Your Ancestors")

Introduction to Family History Online Lessons
<http://261.byu.edu>

RootsWeb's Guide To Tracing Family Trees
<http://rwguide.rootsweb.ancestry.com>