101 BEST WEBSITES for GENEALOGY

DNA TESTING
How to Protect Your Privacy

Trace Hard-to-Find Immigrant Ancestors

5 TOOLS TO FIND FAMILY TOMBSTONES

6 TRICKS Research Like a Ninja

HOW TO Use a Microspatula
YOUR SECRET TO ANCESTRY.COM SUCCESS

WITH THIS UPDATED USER GUIDE, LEARN HOW TO:

- effectively search the website’s billions of records
- quickly find the records you need
- create and manage your online family tree
- use DNA matches to expand your family tree

SAVE 10%!

<bit.ly/unofficial-guide-ancestry>

ENTER CODE ANCESTRYFT AT CHECKOUT. Expires Dec. 31, 2018
## Branching Out 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 18 | Getting Googly-Eyed | You’ll go gaga for this year’s 101 best websites for genealogy.  
by David A. Fryxell |
| 28 | How to Be a Genealogy Ninja | Develop ninja-like research skills with these five family history challenges.  
by Lisa A. Alzo |
| 33 | State Research Guides | Tips and resources for tracing your ancestors in US states.  
ALASKA 33  
by Dana McCullough  
INDIANA 37  
by Diane Haddad |
| 42 | History Mysteries | Genealogy meets danger in Steve Robinson’s book series starring a pro researcher who gets tangled up in age-old mysteries.  
by Rick Crume |
| 48 | Privacy Please | Have the millions of DNA test-takers made a grave mistake when it comes to their personal information? Our legal expert answers 19 crucial questions about DNA testing and your privacy.  
by Judy G. Russell with Sunny Jane Morton |
| 54 | Over the Borderline | Your immigrant ancestors may have arrived over the Canadian or Mexican border—even crossing multiple times. Here’s how to trace them.  
by Sunny Jane Morton |

### ON THE COVER:
- 101 Best Websites 18
- DNA testing privacy 48
- Finding tombstones 69
- Immigrant ancestors 54
- Research line a ninja 28
- Alaska and Indiana research 33
- How to use a microspatula 68

**Cover Photo:** Al Parrish; Design: Julie Barnett

The green arrows throughout this issue guide you to expanded versions, free downloads and related products at familytreemagazine.com.
everything’s relative 5

6 Lisa’s Picks
Family history faves from the founder of Genealogy Gems. LLC.
by Lisa Louise Cooke

8 Timeline
A walk through the history of shoes.
by David A. Fryxell

10 Stories to Tell
A genealogist discovers how historic events during wartime prompted her ancestors’ migrations.
by Sunny Jane Morton

12 Your Turn
Preserve your memories with this love-connection family history prompt.

14 Family History Home
How to preserve cherished sports memorabilia.
by Denise May Levenick

treecracks 61

62 Now What?
Researching old addresses and discovering ancestor occupations.
by David A. Fryxell

64 Photo Detective
How to see clues that reveal identity—and decode the meaning of a hand gesture.
by Maureen A. Taylor

66 Tech Toolkit
by Sunny Jane Morton

What’s New: 23andMe’s breast cancer test, a genetic genealogy lawsuit and more 66
How To: Use a microspatula 68
Roundup: Tools to find burial places 69
Website: FamilySearch catalog 70
DNA Q&A by Diahan Southard 71

IN EVERY ISSUE:
Out on a Limb 3
Tree Talk 4
The Rest is History 72
When I joined *Family Tree* Magazine 15 years ago, digitized images of US censuses were new online. But aside from the 1880 census, which Ancestry and FamilySearch had partnered up to index, searchable databases were rare.

And before that, you scrolled line by line through microfilmed schedules of the family’s enumeration district, or if you were lucky, you found your ancestor on a Soundex index card. (The Soundex system assigned codes to similar surnames.) The card would tell you which state, county, town, enumeration district and sheet number to check for that person. But only censuses from 1880 through 1930 had Soundex indexes, and most weren’t complete. The 1880 index listed only households with children under age 10, and 1910 and 1930 included just parts of the country.

So today, when it’s hard to find an ancestor with sophisticated online searching that automatically looks for spelling variants and age-range combos among every name of every census, talk to those pre-internet searchers from decades ago for perspective.

On page 18 of this issue, the 101 Best Genealogy Websites of 2018 will lead you to censuses and many other kinds of genealogical records you can access from home. Visit the free Best Websites section of FamilyTreeMagazine.com to click right through to these 101 websites and others, all categorized and described to help you find the best ones for your family’s unique history.
I KNEW I WAS NAMED for my mother’s sister Dorothy and my grandmother’s sister Ellen, but it wasn’t until my mid-50s that I learned the true source of my middle name. In 1993, I hired a researcher in Sweden to locate possible living family members. The researcher put me in touch with a third cousin who was as passionate a genealogist as I was. A feverish exchange of information let me know that my great-grandmother named her second-born daughter after her own grandmother, Elin Mansdotter.

Dorothea Ellen Clymer, via email

My sisters and I just returned from the Netherlands where our grandparents grew up. We saw the house our great-great-grandfather built and churches where ancestors were baptized.

Phyllis Maathuis Hall, via Facebook

MY GRANDFATHER, EMIL JULIUS PELZER (1857-1944), and his brother Adolph emigrated from Prussia to Wisconsin in 1881. Adolph became a farmer, but Emil, who had apprenticed as a tailor in Prussia, chose to continue that trade here. Like his grandfather, my father, Otto Wilhelm Herman Pelzer (1892-1968) also chose farming. A common skill back then was trimming a horse’s hooves to keep them in good shape. My father taught me the use of a hoof knife, nippers and rasp in paring down a hoof, something that I use to this day on my horse and donkey. To my knowledge, I am the last of our line to use this skill as none of the relatives have horses.

Nancy L. Pelzer, via email

I HAVE MY PATERNAL GRANDPARENTS’ alien registration booklets which they were required to carry with them during World War II. Grandpa was born in Japan in 1880, and had been on the mainland of the United States since before 1900. Grandma was born in Tennessee in 1890, but had her citizenship revoked when she and Grandpa married in 1917. … I was once told by government archivists that no alien had ever been required to carry such booklets. Yet, I have proof to the contrary. Each booklet contained a photo of the individual, their full name, their place and date of birth, their signature and their fingerprints.

Dorothy McQuestion, via Facebook
BLACK-AND-WHITE PHOTOS are charming but remote, as though from another world. Artist Marina Amal brings them to life in a new book, *The Colour of Time: A New History of the World, 1850-1960* (Head of Zeus) [www.marinamaral.com/the-colour-of-time](http://www.marinamaral.com/the-colour-of-time). After careful research to determine accurate hues, Amal digitally colorized 200 iconic images: Martin Luther King Jr. during the March on Washington, D.C., the D-Day invasion, this peaceful 1905 scene of the Jersey Shore. Historian Dan Jones tells the stories behind them. Viewed in color, the people in the images gain new substance; places, dimension; and events, gravity. Suddenly, these old photos come closer to home.
Aussie Adventures
Lisa Louise Cooke shares her favorite family history books, tips, tools and hot spots.

Sites to See
I visited lush and balmy Queensland, Australia, after speaking at the Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry <affho.org> in Sydney. My husband, Bill, and I snorkeled along the Great Barrier Reef and soared via Skyrail above the world’s oldest continually surviving tropical rainforest. Our gondola drifted past early settlers’ tracks on forested hillsides and by the impressive Barron Falls, to dock in the mountain village of Kuranda. Visitors there can cuddle koala bears at the Kuranda Koala Gardens <www.koala gardens.com> and learn about the pioneering Veivers family, whose descendants operate the gardens.

Recent Reads
Nathan Dylan Goodwin’s short story The Suffragette's Secret is a timely tale for this year’s 100th anniversary of Britain’s first law allowing women to vote in general elections. In the book, genealogist Morton Farrier unravels the truth about his wife’s mysterious great-grandmother Grace Emmerson, a militant suffragist. Readers learn the little-known real-life history of the female suffrage movement.

tip
Were your English grandmothers or great-grandmothers part of the suffrage movement? Visit the British National Archives’ Suffrage 100 website <www.national archives.gov.uk/suffrage-100>.
Heirlooms for Sale
The online auction site eBay <www.ebay.com> might offer pieces of your family history. Sign up for a free account and search for ancestral names, places, events and organizations. If nothing’s up for bid, click “Save this search” to be notified of future matches. I’ve unearthed photos, stock certificates, and even an ancestor’s unopened mail. My recent find is a 50-year-old tablecloth embroidered with handprints, names and birthdates of generations of the Madden family. They’re not my kin, but I hope to reunite the heirloom with descendants.

Smartphone Smarts
Smartphones are becoming our primary computing devices, but the keyboards remain irritatingly small. At least your phone’s shortcuts let you more quickly type out text messages and genealogy searches. For example, I type wax and my phone expands it to Waxahachie, Texas. On an iPhone, go to Settings>General>Keyboard and turn on Shortcuts. Tap Text Replacement, then the plus sign. Enter the long text in the Phrase field and a shortcut of at least three characters in the Shortcut field (shown). Find instructions for Android devices by searching online for android custom text shortcuts.

Top Tools
My daughter Hannah gave me this Qiaya Ring Light, available on Amazon.com <www.amazon.com>. It’s meant to enhance selfies, but I’ve found it quite handy for genealogy. I use it for photographing tombstones in the shade and “copying” records by snapping pics of them. The light clips to my phone around the camera lens and makes my pictures look better than using the phone’s flash.

Free Podcast
In our September episode, Lisa and guests chat about Scottish genealogy, historic events that changed how we do genealogy, and more. Subscribe with your favorite podcast app.
If the Shoe Fits

Some Bright Paleolithic Folks figured out their feet were less injury-prone and more comfortable when protected by shoes. The oldest known shoes, found in an Oregon cave in 1938, are sagebrush-bark sandals dating from 7000 to 8000 BCE. Ötzi, the 5,300-year-old “ice man” discovered frozen in a glacier in 1991, wore shoes of deer and bear skin with grass and linden-tree fibers. Over millennia, scientists have theorized, wearing shoes actually led humans to evolve shorter, thinner toes. Let’s walk a mile in the shoes of, um, shoes.

27 BCE
The Roman empire is founded on the strength of soldiers wearing tough sandals (from the Latin sandalium) called caligae, with open toes and a lattice upper. Emperors, senators and generals wore the campagus, an open-toed boot laced at the front. Slaves and peasants went barefoot. With Christianity, bare toes came to be considered immodest and sandals disappeared in Europe for more than a thousand years, except for cloistered monks.

4000 BCE
Murals depict ancient Egyptians in sandals. Their shoes were made of papyrus and palm leaves; other cultures used rice straw (China and Japan), Yucca leaves (Mexico), rawhide (Africa) and wood (India). Unlike most European footwear until the 1800s, archeological evidence shows Egyptians made shoes customized for right and left feet.

WWII rationing in the United States included rubber boots and work shoes. You had to apply for a new pair and turn in the old pair when you bought them.

c. 1350
Long, pointed shoes known as “poulaines” become status symbols. The wealthy took the style to an extreme, with toes so long they impeded walking. Wearers would support the points of their shoes with a whalebone tied to the knee. “Sumptuary” laws limited the length of the toe depending on the wearer’s station, lest uppity bourgeoisie try to imitate their betters.

c. 900
Shoes in the Middle Ages are typically made at home by the “turnshoe” method: sewn of leather inside-out, then flipped right-side-out. This hid the seam connecting the sole to the vamp (the upper front), for durability and moisture blocking. By about 1500, stiffer sole leather prevented shoes from being turned, and the “welted rand” method (using a strip of leather sewn between the vamp and the sole) largely replaced the turnshoe.

David A. Fryxell is the founding editor of Family Tree Magazine. He prefers loafers, introduced by Gucci in 1953.
Venice limits the height of “chopine” shoes to 3½ inches. The women’s shoe featured a wood or cork platform towering upwards of 6 inches. Gentlemen encouraged the trend, not just to protect their ladies from the dirty streets, but also, it’s said, to make it difficult for them to run off. Chopines lost their cachet when prostitutes adopted them to be more visible to prospective customers.

1858
American inventor Lyman Blake patents a shoe-stitching machine. Blake got the idea working for Isaac Singer, who was instrumental in the development of the sewing machine. Only a year after Blake received his patent, he sold it to Gordon McKay for $8,000 and a share of future profits. The McKay sole-sewing machine remained the state of the art for two decades in the United States and United Kingdom.

1812
In the first step toward mechanized shoemaking, Marc Brunel develops a nailed-boot machine for the British army’s fight against Napoleon. The invention automatically fastened soles to uppers. The machine fell out of use with peacetime, but the Crimean War renewed interest in mechanized footwear. In 1853, Leicester shoemaker Tomas Crick patented a machine that used an iron plate to hammer rivets into the sole.

1892
The US Rubber Co. begins experimenting with rubber-soled shoes, sold beginning in 1916 as Keds. Called “plimsolls” (from the line on a ship’s hull) in Britain, such sporty shoes came to be known as “sneakers” after a 1917 ad campaign masterminded by Henry Nelson McKinney. That same year, Converse produced shoes for basketball. When an Indiana basketball star endorsed them in 1923, they became forever known as Chuck Taylor All Stars.

1890s
Women take heels to new heights with the 6-inch “Cromwell.” Cartoons poked fun at the buckle-topped shoe—named for the mistaken belief that Oliver Cromwell and his Roundheads wore buckled shoes—depicting tottering women unable to walk unaided.

High heels made a dramatic comeback in the 1950s with the stiletto, designed by Roger Vivier for Dior and named for a Sicilian fighting knife.
War Stories

A genealogist discovers how historic events prompted her ancestors’ migrations.

It’s easy to get so absorbed in the details of genealogical research that we forget how our ancestors’ lives reflected—and were impacted by—the events of their times. This point hit home for longtime genealogist Cyndi Wolfl ey, of Chesterland, Ohio, as she researched her family “war stories.”

“I came across a Gwynn family name in Tennessee,” says Wolfl ey, a director of her local FamilySearch Family History Center <www.familysearch.org>. Recognizing the name from her mother’s paternal branch, she traced the family back to Gwynn Island, Va., during the American Revolution. “Gwynn Island was a battleground for the Colonies fighting against Britain’s Lord Dunmore,” Wolfl ey says. Dunmore’s army occupied the island for months before Colonial troops ousted him in the summer of 1776.

Then the war ended in 1783, and the US government lacked sufficient cash to pay its soldiers. “In lieu of offering ‘Continents’ the newly established currency, which was worth very little, the government offered many soldiers land on the frontier,” Wolfl ey says. Tennessee, where the Gwynn family ended up, was then part of this frontier.

War also led to the migration of a later relative, Susannah Owens. As the Civil War began, she lived with her husband, James, and their children in Tennessee. The state joined the Confederacy July 2, 1861, and James, a Union sympathizer, drove his family to Indiana for safety. He joined the Union army—then died almost immediately of illness.

Susannah loaded their goods and children into a two-horse wagon and started back home in the wintry weather. On the way, one of the horses slipped in a frozen stream and broke its hip. “Not only did she have to put the horse down, she also had the task of taking off the heavy collar, bridle and reins, with her clothing drenched in the icy stream,” Wolfl ey says. “I applaud Susannah’s fortitude.”

Sunny Jane Morton

SHARE YOUR STORIES! Tell us about your poignant and surprising genealogy discoveries by emailing ftmedit@fwmedia.com.
Read Your Way to Research Success


THE FAMILY TREE HISTORICAL NEWSPAPERS GUIDE

HOW TO FIND YOUR ANCESTORS IN ARCHIVED NEWSPAPERS

JAMES M. BEIDLER

THIS HELPFUL HOW-TO GUIDE CONTAINS:

- tips for finding rich detail about your ancestors in old newspapers
- steps for searching online papers at websites such as Newspapers.com, GenealogyBank and the free Chronicling America
- real-life success stories from historical newspaper researchers like you

ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY!

<bit.ly/historical-newspapers-guide>

To order by phone, call (855) 278-0408
WRITE THIS

What have you learned about how your parents and other couples in your family tree met?

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

In each issue, Your Turn offers a memory prompt to help you preserve your family’s unique stories. Tear out and save your responses in a notebook, or use our downloadable type-and-save PDF <familytreemagazine.com/freebie/your-turn>. We’d love to hear your responses, too! Send them to ftmedit@fwmedia.com with “Your Turn” as a subject, and we might feature them in the magazine or on Facebook to inspire other genealogists.
Leading Acid Reflux Pill Becomes an Anti-Aging Phenomenon

Clinical studies show breakthrough acid reflux treatment also helps maintain vital health and helps protect users from the serious conditions that accompany aging such as fatigue and poor cardiovascular health

by David Waxman
Seattle Washington:

A clinical study on a leading acid reflux pill shows that its key ingredient relieves digestive symptoms while suppressing the inflammation that contributes to premature aging in men and women.

And, if consumer sales are any indication of a product’s effectiveness, this ‘acid reflux pill turned anti-aging phenomenon’ is nothing short of a miracle.

Sold under the brand name Aloecure, it was already backed by clinical data documenting its ability to provide all day and night relief from heartburn, acid reflux, constipation, irritable bowel, gas, bloating, and more.

But soon doctors started reporting some incredible results...

“With Aloecure, my patients started reporting less joint pain, more energy, better sleep, stronger immune systems… even less stress and better skin, hair, and nails” explains Dr. Liza Leal, a leading integrative health specialist and company spokesperson.

Aloecure contains an active ingredient that helps improve digestion by acting as a natural acid-buffer that improves the pH balance of your stomach.

Scientists now believe that this acid imbalance is what contributes to painful inflammation throughout the rest of the body.

The daily allowance of Aloecure has shown to calm this inflammation which is why Aloecure is so effective.

Relieving other stressful symptoms related to GI health like pain, bloating, fatigue, cramping, constipation, diarrhea, heartburn, and nausea.

Now, backed with new clinical studies, Aloecure is being recommended by doctors everywhere to help improve digestion, calm painful inflammation, soothe joint pain, and even reduce the appearance of wrinkles – helping patients to look and feel decades younger.

FIX YOUR GUT & FIGHT INFLAMMATION

Since hitting the market, sales for Aloecure have taken off and there are some very good reasons why.

To start, the clinical studies have been impressive. Participants taking the active ingredient in Aloecure saw a stunning 100% improvement in digestive symptoms, which includes fast and lasting relief from reflux.

Users also experienced higher energy levels and endurance, relief from chronic discomfort and better sleep. Some even reported healthier looking skin, hair, and nails.

A healthy gut is the key to a reducing swelling and inflammation that can wreak havoc on the human body. Doctors say this is why Aloecure works on so many aspects of your health.

Aloecure’s active ingredient is made from the healing compound found in Aloe vera. It is both safe and healthy. There are also no known side effects.

Scientists believe that it helps improve digestive and immune health by acting as a natural acid-buffer that improves the pH balance of your stomach.

Research has shown that this acid imbalance contributes to painful inflammation throughout your entire body and is why Aloecure seems to be so effective.

EXCITING RESULTS FROM PATIENTS

To date over 5 million bottles of Aloecure have been sold, and the community seeking non-medicine therapy for their GI health continues to grow.

According to Dr. Leal, her patients are absolutely thrilled with their results and are often shocked by how fast it works. “For the first time in years, they are free from concerns about their digestion and almost every other aspect of their health,” says Dr. Leal, “and I recommend it to everyone who wants to improve GI health without resorting to drugs, surgery, or OTC medications.”

“I was always in ‘indigestion hell.’ Doctors put me on all sorts of antacid remedies. Nothing worked.” Dr. Leal recommended I try Aloecure. And something remarkable happened… Not only were all the issues I had with my stomach gone - completely gone – but I felt less joint pain and I was able to actually sleep through the night.”

With so much positive feedback, it’s easy to see why the community of believers is growing and sales for the new pill are soaring.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND ALOECURE

Aloecure is a pill that’s taken just once daily. The pill is small. Easy to swallow. There are no harmful side effects and it does not require a prescription.

The active ingredient is a rare Aloe Vera component known as acemannan.

Made from 100% organic Aloe Vera, Aloecure uses a proprietary process that results in the highest quality, most bio-available levels of acemannan known to exist.

According to Dr. Leal and several of her colleagues, improving the pH balance of your stomach and restoring gut health is the key to revitalizing your entire body.

When your digestive system isn’t healthy, it causes unwanted stress on your immune system, which results in inflammation in the rest of the body.

The recommended daily allowance of acemannan in Aloecure has been proven to support digestive health, and calm painful inflammation without side effects or drugs.

This would explain why so many users are experiencing impressive results so quickly.

REVITALIZE YOUR ENTIRE BODY

With daily use, Aloecure helps users look and feel decades younger and defend against some of the painful inflammation that accompanies aging and can make life hard.

By buffering stomach acid and restoring gut health, Aloecure calms painful inflammation and will help improve digestion… soothe aching joints… reduce the appearance of wrinkles and help restore hair and nails … manage cholesterol and oxidative stress… and improve sleep and brain function… without side effects or expense.

Readers can now reclaim their energy, vitality, and youth regardless of age or current level of health.

One Aloecure Capsule Daily
• Helps End Digestion Nightmares
• Helps Calm Painful Inflammation
• Soothes Stiff & Aching Joints
• Reduces appearance of Wrinkles & Increases Elasticity
• Manages Cholesterol & Oxidative Stress
• Supports Healthy Immune System
• Improves Sleep & Brain Function

HOW TO GET ALOECURE

This is the official nationwide release of the new Aloecure pill in the United States. And so, the company is offering our readers up to 3 FREE bottles with their order.

This special give-away is available for the next 48-hours only. All you have to do is call TOLL-FREE 1-800-748-5760 and provide the operator with the Free Bottle Approval Code: AC100. The company will do the rest.

Important: Due to Aloecure’s recent media exposure, phone lines are often busy. If you call and do not immediately get through, please be patient and call back. Those who miss the 48-hour deadline may lose out on this free bottle offer.
Order archival supplies online from companies such as Gaylord Archival (<www.gaylordarchival.com>) and Archival Methods (<www.archivalmethods.com>).
Saving Sports Memorabilia

1 **Treat vintage leather gently.** Avoid cleaning with oils or creams. Instead, wipe away dirt with a damp cloth. Let dry away from sunlight or heat sources and use a soft cloth to apply a leather conditioner that’s free of wax and silicone.

2 **Store leather with care.** Sports museums store baseballs, gloves and pigskin footballs in controlled temperature and humidity. At home, keep leather items in an archival box in a living area closet. This provides a stable environment while protecting against light, dust, pests and handling. Cushion items with acid-free tissue paper, padding gloves with crumpled tissue or polyester craft batting.

3 **Keep trading cards under wraps.** As for most paper memorabilia, cards may fade in bright light or sunshine. Store your collection in specially sized acid-free boxes or in archival plastic “pocket pages” inside a binder. Protect valuable cards with individual archival plastic sleeves.

4 **Seek out meaningful memorabilia.** Did your grandfather play for a school, community or pro team? Was dad a die-hard Cubbies fan? Search online auction sites and old newspapers for trading cards, news articles and other artifacts that help you document this family history.

5 **Wash worn items before storing.** Whether the uniform is a replica of your favorite soccer star’s or it’s your peewee-league fullback’s from last season, wash and thoroughly dry it before storing in an archival box or Tyvek garment bag. Dry clean jackets or sweaters with embroidery, patches or other embellishments; just remove the dry cleaner’s plastic bag and let the item air before packing away.

6 **Save signatures.** If you’re the proud owner of an autographed baseball, pennant or football jersey, you might want to display it, but we recommend you don’t. Signatures are apt to fade if left in the light. It’s better to store the item in an acid-free archival box and bring it out to share on special occasions. Before handling, wash your hands well or wear cotton or nitrile gloves to avoid transferring oils from your skin.

7 **Batter up!** Avoid using polishes, waxes or cleaners on wooden bats. Instead, use a soft cloth to remove dust and loose dirt. Avoid handling with your bare hands. Archival suppliers make long, narrow boxes just for collectible baseball bats, or store wrapped loosely in polyester craft batting.

8 **Help ball caps stay in shape.** Have them professionally dry cleaned and store, lightly stuffed with acid-free tissue (don’t fold the hat), in an acid-free archival box.

9 **Make your own trading cards.** Show your family spirit at your next gathering with DIY trading cards featuring relatives. It’s easy using a mobile app such as Rookies <www.rookiesapp.com> or Starr Cards Custom Card Makers <starrcards.com/card-apps>. Just add photos and stats such as birth date, hometown, occupation, favorite family recipe and little-known skill.

---

Denise May Levenick
aka The Family Curator
<www.thefamilycurator.com> is the author of How to Archive Family Keepsakes (Family Tree Books).
Find Your Roots

Reconnect to your birth family with this guide, featuring:

- strategies for adoptees, donor-conceived people, and anyone with unknown parentage to find biological relatives using DNA testing
- help understanding the major DNA tests and testing companies
- tips for identifying and contacting DNA matches

SAVE 10%!
ENTRY CODE AdoptionFTM AT CHECKOUT. Expires Dec. 31, 2018

The Adoptee's Guide to DNA Testing
How to Use Genetic Genealogy to Discover Your Long-Lost Family
Tamar Weinberg

Paperback • 240 pages • $29.99
"WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED YOUR WORK in the Registry of Wills, go to the office of the Recorder of Deeds, and follow the same mode of work as to making your indexes and copying the records. ...

Besides work at County offices ... one should visit the State Capital, and consult general records of the State, such as Land Grants and military lists ... . It is advisable to visit the State Library, always, and there one can easily learn at what offices in the State Capital may be found other general records which should be consulted. ... The actual place where your ancestors lived should be visited, if possible; and endeavor made there to find and examine the records of the Church which they attended. ... In New England, there will be found, in the Town Clerks’ offices of the various Towns, Town Records."

How to Trace and Record Your Own Ancestry, a 1932 genealogy guide by Frank Allaben and Mabel Washburn (National Historical Co.), gives us a brief look at what genealogy research entailed before the Internet.
Getting Googly-Eyed

You’ll go gaga for this year’s 101 Best Websites for Genealogy.

by DAVID A. FRYXELL
Was there really online genealogy—or online anything else—before Google? Today, 20 years after Stanford University PhD students Larry Page and Sergey Brin incorporated their now-ubiquitous company on Sept. 4, 1998, it’s hard to remember online life without it. Sure, there was Yahoo! and AltaVista for web searching, and Cyndi’s List (still one of our 101 top sites) for genealogy links. But Google—and the endless stream of tools it introduced even after revolutionizing online searching—changed everything.

In honor of Google’s remarkable two decades, this year’s 101 best websites looks at online genealogy a bit differently—not only what websites can do for you, but how they came to be. Are they commercial (dot-com) giants? Nonprofit dot-orgs? Online extensions of libraries, archives or Uncle Sam? The next Google or Facebook?

Whatever their origins, these 100 sites—plus, of course, Google—can supercharge your research and make you wonder how you ever got along without them. As always, sites that cost money to reap substantial research rewards are marked with a $.

DOT-COM DATABASES

Access Genealogy
<www.accessgenealogy.com>
This site is a bit more of a scattershot collection than others in this category, but it’s free, and especially strong on Native American research. Recent additions include directories, school yearbooks and local histories.

$ Ancestry
<ancestry.com>
Not cheap, at $149 for six months of global access, but you definitely get what you pay for here. Ancestry offers more than 32,000 collections of genealogical records, from popular datasets such as censuses and passenger lists, to databases with narrower coverage, like Chicago’s 1888 voter registration index. Build your family tree to get hints to matching records and, for another $99, test your DNA.

BillionGraves
<billiongraves.com>
A growing database with a specific focus, the optimistically named BillionGraves claims to be “the world’s largest resource for searchable GPS cemetery data.” Search for your deceased relatives to see if someone has added them, or register—it’s free—to start contributing with your smartphone and the BillionGraves app.

$ FamilyRelatives.com
<www.familyrelatives.com>
Although global in reach, including 200 million US records, this site is strongest on the UK and Commonwealth countries. Less-familiar resources such as trade directories make the collection of more than a billion records a potential brick-wall buster. You can pay per view or subscribe for $49.95 a year.

Find A Grave
<www.findagrave.com>
Another cemetery-specific site, this 101 Best Websites stalwart now boasts more than 170 million searchable grave records from approximately 480,000 cemeteries in 240 different countries.

$ Findmypast
<www.findmypast.com>
Still the go-to destination for British Isles research, Findmypast also has a
Twenty years after Stanford University grad students Larry Page and Sergey Brin incorporated Google, it’s hard to remember online life without it.

solid collection of US and Canadian records and is in the process of digitizing the genealogical journals indexed in the Periodical Source Index (PERSI). The Ultimate package costs $179 a year.

$ fold3
<fold3.com>
This Ancestry-owned site now serves up 523 million records, focused on—but not limited to—military history (hence the name, which is inspired by a flag ceremony). You can set up a “watch” to alert you when new records are added that match anything in your previous searches. Subscriptions cost $79.95 a year, but look for deals if you’re already shelling out for Ancestry.

$ MyHeritage
<www.myheritage.com>
Build your tree here and MyHeritage will search other members’ trees for connections; plans range from free to $119.40 a year. If you spring for a separate data subscription (also $119.40 annually), you can also get emails as MyHeritage’s SuperSearch scours its 8.5 billion records for matches. The site now offers DNA testing; results are integrated with the site’s family trees.

DATA-RICH DOT-ORGS

$ American Ancestors
<www.americanancestors.org>
Although this website from the New England Historic Genealogical Society is richest in its home region, don’t overlook it for more far-flung resources. Full access to its 451-plus databases costs $89.95 a year, but more than 30 databases are free to explore. Those include an index of Revolutionary War pensioners, New York wills and back issues of the society’s magazine.

Castle Garden
<www.castlegarden.org>
US arrivals through the port of New York from 1820 through 1892—before Ellis Island opened (see page 21)—came here, and now you can search all 11 million of them for free.

Daughters of the American Revolution
<dar.org>
For genealogists, the highlight of this organization’s site is the Genealogical Research System. You can research Revolutionary War patriots, their descendants, and the DAR members who’ve proven a link to them. You can also search the catalog of the DAR Library in Washington, D.C.

FamilySearch
<www.familysearch.org>
This huge website holds FamilySearch’s indexes and digitized records, which comprise more than 2,300 free online collections at last count. You also can search the unified Family Tree (where you can plant your own branch for free), historical books, the research wiki and more. Note that some digitized record collections are available only when searching on the computers at a branch FamilySearch Center (find one near you at <www.familysearch.org/locations>.

International African-American Museum Center for Family History
<cfh.iaamuseum.org>
This museum in Charleston, SC, won’t open until 2020, but you can enjoy its gorgeous website now, with digital collections including Bible and marriage records, newspaper obituaries and funeral programs.

Internet Archive
<archive.org>
This nonprofit site hosts everything from your ancestors’ favorite radio shows to digitized books (including New York and other states’ vital records to which Reclaim the Records <www.reclamtherecords.org> has won access in court). Or, you can find vanished and altered websites from yesteryear with the Wayback Machine, which searches more than 327 billion archived sites—sort of like Google time travel.

JewishGen
<www.jewishgen.org>
This nonprofit organization affiliated with the Museum of Jewish Heritage serves up more than 7.3 million records from 6,266 family trees in the Family Tree of the Jewish People, a half-million items in the JewishGen Family Finder and 2.7 million entries on Holocaust victims. A 54-nation gazetteer (handy for anyone of Eastern European heritage) and a database of 6,000 Jewish communities will help you find your family’s places.
Statue of Liberty & Ellis Island
<www.libertyellisfoundation.org>
The Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island Foundation now hosts 51 million passenger records of arrivals from Ellis Island from 1892 through 1957.

UNCLE SAM’S SITES

American Battle Monuments Commission
<www.abmc.gov>
Search for ancestors who served in the military through this database of more than 218,000 American military buried or memorialized overseas.

US Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records
<www.glorecords.blm.gov>
Start looking for your ancestors’ federal land records here by searching the more than 5 million land patents dating from 1788. Click to view the documents in PDF form. Other digitized records here include survey plats, field notes and Control Document Index records.

Civil War Soldiers & Sailors Database
<www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm>
The best place to start researching your Union or Confederate ancestors, this database delivers the basics on more than 6 million soldiers from both sides, plus 18,000 African-American sailors, all hailing from 44 US states and territories.

Library of Congress
<loc.gov>
Thomas Jefferson may have gotten the ball rolling, but the nation’s library has grown quite a bit since his day. Check the online catalog of pretty much everything in print, then explore digital collections of maps (including Sanborn fire insurance, land ownership and Civil War battlefield maps), photos, oral history interviews, sheet music and more. See all digitized collections at <loc.gov/collections>.

National Archives and Records Administration
<archives.gov>
A must for finding and ordering what’s not online—such as veterans’ records—this site also has plenty of clickable treasures if you dig deep: WWII enlistment files, historical photos and maps, passenger lists for German and Russian immigrants, and more. Start with the Research Our Records section for genealogy guidance. Find indexes and digitized collections in Access to Archival Databases <aad.archives.gov/aad> and the online catalog <catalog.archives.gov>.

Nationwide Gravesite Locator
<gravelocator.cem.va.gov>
If a veteran was buried stateside rather than overseas, search this database of those interred at VA National Cemeteries, state veterans cemeteries and other locations where a government headstone was placed.

US Geological Survey
<www.usgs.gov/pubprod>
Click Products and look under Maps for resources that help you put your ancestors’ places on the map: a nifty historical topographic map viewer called TopoView, the National Map, the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), and satellite snapshots.

Google’s original name was Backrub. Imagine saying, “Let me try to Backrub that ancestor.”

VOLUNTEER VENUES AND WIKIS

FreeUKGenealogy
<www.freeukgenealogy.org.uk>
Search for UK ancestors with this volunteer transcription trio of vital and census records, where you’ll find indexes to more than 342 million births, marriages and deaths; 42 million parish records; and 33 million individuals from census data (1841-1891).

GENUKI
<genuki.org.uk>
Another way to power up your British Isles genealogy is the collection of how-tos, FAQs, databases, and more at this volunteer site devoted to GENealogy of the UK and Ireland (hence GENUKI).

USGenWeb
<usgenweb.org>
For more than 20 years, this site by and for US genealogists serves as the hub of county and state sites from Maine to California. Don’t overlook its special-project pages for tombstones, censuses, maps, obituaries and more. Note that at press time, local sites hosted on the RootsWeb domain were inaccessible due to a security breach on that site late last year.

WeRelate
<www.werelate.org>
This free, wiki-style site aims to build “a unified family tree containing the best information from all contributors.” It’s up to 2.8 million ancestral individuals, so you know webmasters are doing something right.

Find your ancestors in free records with our e-book download 38 FamilySearch Search Tips <familytreemagazine.com/freebie/38-familysearch-search-tips-find-free-genealogy-records-online>.
WikiTree
<www.wikitree.com>
This collaborative family tree wiki site boasts more than 17 million people profiles contributed and edited by a half-million researchers worldwide. It’s now incorporating DNA results, with 3.7 million profiles that include DNA test connections.

WorldGenWeb
<www.worldgenweb.org>
What USGenWeb does for US family history, this volunteer-run site aims to do for the whole world. As you’d expect with such a lofty mission, coverage can be sparse for some places. Do keep an eye on this website, as its chairperson promises helpful updates coming soon.

VIRTUAL LIBRARY CARDS

Allen County Public Library
<www.genealogycenter.info>
The nation’s second-richest genealogy library goes beyond its Indiana base to serve up how-tos, American Indian and African-American collections, military records and family Bibles. Check the Surname File to identify others researching your same surname.

ArchiveGrid
<beta.worldcat.org/archivegrid>
Let this offshoot of WorldCat (see page 24) help you find more than 5 million primary source materials in 1,000-plus different libraries and other archival institutions. It even puts these places on the map so you can plan your visit.

Digital Library on American Slavery
<library.uncg.edu/slavery>
Explore this painful chapter of America’s past through runaway-slave advertisements, slave “deeds,” insurance papers, and legislative and court petitions digitized by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Digital Public Library of America
<dp.la>
Search more than 21 million digitized items from many of the nation’s foremost libraries and archives.

Genealogy Gophers
<www.gengophers.com>
Specialized search tools make it a snap to find your family among 80,000 digitized books, all of them focused on family history.

Harvard University Library Open Collections Program
<ocp.hul.harvard.edu>
The 2.3 million pages digitized here, including more than 225,000 manuscript pages, aren’t found elsewhere online. Thematic collections from Harvard repositories tackle such topics as immigration, working women, Islamic heritage and epidemics.

HathiTrust Digital Library
<www.hathitrust.org>
To get the most out of this vast online archive of 5 billion pages, log in with credentials from a participating institution such as a library or university. Collections range from old cookbooks to Detroit’s history, German genealogy to Confederate records.

HeritageQuest Online
<www.heritagequestonline.com>
If your library subscribes, your library card can unlock this free (to you) “Ancestry lite” site that now goes well beyond HeritageQuest’s original half-dozen collections. Dig deep to find US censuses, immigration records, military records, city directories and more at this institutional site “powered by” (but not owned by) Ancestry.

Midwest Genealogy Center
<www.mymcpl.org/genealogy>
This website from the Mid-Continent Public Library in Independence, Mo., was recently redesigned and relaunched. Don’t miss its index of 1.5 million US Railroad Retirement Board pension records, digitized books and how-to guides.

The Newberry
<www.newberry.org/genealogy-and-local-history>
This acclaimed independent library in Chicago is best known by genealogists for its interactive Atlas of Historical County Boundaries. You’ll also find Chicago resources, Freedmen’s Bureau finding aids and a raft of genealogy guides.

New York Public Library Digital Collections
<digitalcollections.nypl.org>
Those with Big Apple ancestry are lucky, as this site’s Map Warper tool
10 Tips to Google for Ancestors

1. Add the word genealogy to ancestor searches. Try adding a location, too, as in Thomas Frost Cincinnati genealogy.

2. Use quotation marks to search for an exact phrase: “Thomas Edward Frost.”

3. Use an asterisk inside quotation marks to specify unknown words: “Thomas * Frost.”

4. Use OR (capitalized) to search for multiple versions of a name at once: “Thomas Frost” OR “Frost Thomas.”

5. Use the minus sign to eliminate results with certain words: “Thomas Frost” -weather.

6. Search for words on specific websites, such as the local library or genealogical society: “Thomas Frost” site:hcgsohio.org.

7. Browse the Google News archive going back to the mid-1880s at <news.google.com/newspapers>.

8. Search for images like the one you have by dragging it onto the Google Images home page <images.google.com>.

9. See if your ancestor has applied for a US patent at <patents.google.com>.

10. Search Google Books <books.google.com> for a person or place to find city directories, family history books and more.
<maps.nypl.org/warper> is only one of the high-tech highlights at this online home to more than 742,000 digitized prints, photographs, maps, manuscripts and videos.

Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County
<www.cincinnatilibrary.org/main/genlocal.html>
This library’s Genealogy and Local History department gives you access to the Digital Library of area city and business directories, Catholic Telegraph newspapers from 1831 to 1862, local atlases, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps and more. You’ll also find the Newsdex index to local newspaper articles.

Slavery in America and the World: History, Culture & Law
<home.heinonline.org/content/Slavery-in-America-and-the-World-History-Culture--Law>
Free registration unlocks information published about slavery, primarily prior to 1880, from HeinOnline, one of America’s top online legal library services.

WorldCat
<worldcat.org>
Connect to the catalogs of 10,000 of the world’s libraries and search 2 billion items with a single click, then find holdings closest to you. An app gives you WorldCat to go on your phone. Sign in to create lists and bibliographies to keep track of your research.

*tip*
Keep a family tree at every genealogy site you regularly use that offers automated record hints. To avoid time-consuming maintenance of multiple trees, designate one “main tree” to log all your info and attach records. The others can be basic “skeleton trees.”

**STATE AND REGIONAL SITES**

AlabamaMosaic
<www.alabamamosaic.org>
This handsome site showcases digitized photos, letters, yearbooks and other documents from institutions across Alabama, all searchable with one click.

Arizona Department of Health Services Birth and Death Certificates
<genealogy.az.gov>
It couldn’t be simpler to find your Grand Canyon State kin in this collection of birth records (1855-1942) and deaths (1870-1967). A few clicks and you’ll be downloading or printing certificates in PDF form.

Arkansas Gravestones
<arkansasgravestones.org>
Browse by cemetery or surname to find your ancestors in a volunteer-uploaded compendium of nearly 1.2 million gravestone photographs.

BYU Idaho Family History
<abish.byui.edu/specialcollections/westernstates/search.cfm>
Not just for locating Idaho ancestors, this Western States Marriage Index searches more than 913,000 matrimonial records from 12 western states.

Calisphere
<calisphere.org>
More than 1 million images, texts and recordings from repositories across California open the golden gate to the state’s past.

Florida Memory State Library & Archives of Florida
<www.floridamemory.com>
Take a virtual visit to the Sunshine State—no sunscreen required—with historical photos, land records, Confederate pension paperwork, maps, WWI service cards and even early auto registrations. While you research, you can listen to streaming old-time radio.

Georgia Archives Virtual Vault
<vault.georgiaarchives.org/cdm>
This portal to some of Georgia’s most important historical documents dating from 1733 to the present, includes Bible records, manuscripts, photos, maps, Colonial wills, Confederate paperwork and deed books.

Illinois State Archives
<www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/databases/home.html>
Indexes to pre-1900 marriages, plus deaths and military records back to the War of 1812, stand out in this collection of databases. Search the Illinois Regional Archives Depositories (IRAD) for offline resources to pursue next.

Massachusetts State Archives
<www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcsrch/SearchWelcome.html>
Even if you don’t have Massachusetts family, you might find ancestors who landed here in the searchable index to Boston passenger arrivals (1848-1891). Indexes to births, marriages and deaths (1841-1910), and the catalog to the archives complete the attractions.

Minnesota Historical Society
<www.mnhs.org>
Particularly nifty here is the People Records Search, a one-stop combing of vital records, state censuses and military records. And don’t overlook the digitized newspapers, maps, place-
name finder and other tools that’d make Paul Bunyan proud.

**Missouri Digital Heritage**
<www.sos.mo.gov/mdh>
Show me, indeed: A single click searches more than 9 million records from the state archives, state library and other institutions across Missouri. Or you can explore individual collections including military records, naturalizations and vital records.

**North Carolina Echo**
<www.ncecho.org>
Search books, photographs, maps, family histories, state documents, newspapers and more from North Carolina institutions, or browse by county.

**Seeking Michigan**
<seekingmichigan.org>
Naturalization records are underway at this site, already home to death records, newspaper index cards, state censuses, historical images and more.

**Virginia Memory**
<www.virginiamemory.com>
Not just for Virginia research, this Library of Virginia site is also strong on all things Confederate. New projects spotlight WWI records and slavery in the commonwealth.

**Wisconsin Historical Society**
<www.wisconsinhistory.org/genealogy>
There’s nothing cheesy about this compendium of more than 3 million records, among them vital record indexes, newspaper clippings, photographs, and old property records.

**ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES ABROAD**

**British National Archives**
<www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>
In addition to the archives’ online catalog and growing collection of digitized records, the handy guides here will show you where to find records at other online sources and how to get the most from them.

**Danish Demographic Database**
<ddd.dda.dk/ddd_en.htm>
This Danish National Archives site searches all the nation’s censuses from 1787 onward, plus it searches selected probate records.

**Digitalarkivet**
<media.digitalarkivet.no/en>
This English-friendly site from the National Archives of Norway includes censuses, parish registers, land and probate documents and emigration lists, many of them searchable.

**Digital Danish Emigration Archives**
<www.udvandrerarkivet.dk/sogeside>
Start by finding your Danish family in Copenhagen police records of nearly 400,000 emigrants (1868-1908) <www.udvandrerarkivet.dk/udvandrerprotokollerne>. Then explore the emigrant experience in digitized letters and multimedia.

**Library and Archives Canada**
<www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng>
Find your ancestors up north in this vast free collection. Click the Databases and Resources tab, and then Ancestors Search to get to the good stuff, like databases of censuses, military records, immigration lists, land records and much more.

**National Archives of Ireland**
<www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie>
Irish censuses for 1901 and 1911 are just for starters here. You won’t need the luck of the Irish to find your ancestors in these databases of pensioners, soldiers’ wills, other wills and administrations, Tithe Applotment Books and more.

**National Library of Ireland**
<www.nli.ie>
Browse 373,000 images of Catholic parish records at <registers.nli.ie>. You can either search for your Irish kin’s parish or click the map.

**ScotlandsPeople**
<scotlandspeople.gov.uk>
Most of the 100 million-plus documents at this National Records of Scotland site are pay-per-view, although wills are free. It’s worth ponying up for censuses, church registers, valuation rolls and legal records, along with vital records—now including more than 233,000 newly released Scottish records of births in 1917, marriages in 1942 and deaths in 1967.

**Wie Was Wie**
<www.wiewaswie.nl/en>
Originally launched as a database of Dutch civil registration records (similar to US vital records), this website from the Centrum voor familiegeschiedenis (Center for Family History) in The Hague now totals 160 million individuals, including military and criminal records. Basic searches and results are free, but power users can use wildcards and advanced searching for about $23 a year.

**OTHER FOREIGN FINDS**

**AfricaMap**
<worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap>
This eye-popping site from Harvard’s Center for Geographical Analysis tracks the slave trade with historical overlays and geographical data.

**ArkivDigital**
<ArkivDigital.net>
Though pricey at about $167 a year, this Swedish site serves up church records (scanned in color) along with estate inventories, court records and tax/census records—78 million images in all.
Bremen Passenger Lists
<www.passengerlists.de>
Find later-departing ancestors among 738,000 searchable entries, mostly from 1920 to 1939; some date from as far back as the mid-19th century.

Canadiana
<www.canadiana.ca/en/home>
Researching ancestors in Canada? Put their lives in context with this archive of 40 million pages from some of Canada's most popular historical collections. The directories, newspapers, manuscripts and more range from the 1600s to the mid-1900s.

Foundation for East European Family History Studies
<feeefhs.org>
Celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2018, FEEFHS is an ideal starting place for your research for this region, with a site packed with maps, how-tos and databases.

Genealogyindexer.org
<genealogyindexer.org>
Focused on Central and Eastern European records, this site totals 1.8 million pages, including historical directories, memorials to destroyed Jewish communities, military lists, histories and school sources.

GeneaNet
<en.geneanet.org>
A new English-friendly home page makes it easier to research your French ancestors here, using archive guides, 850,000 uploaded trees and FamilySearch finds.

Meyers Gazetteer
<www.meyersgaz.org>
This essential German gazetteer, now online and searchable, lists every place name in the German Empire (1871-1918). Once you find an ancestral village, view it on a map and learn the location of the civil registry office and parishes, if any.

ONLINE TOOLS AND TIPS

Cyndi’s List
<cyndislist.com>
Still the go-to site for genealogy links after more than 20 years, Cyndi’s List organizes more than 336,000 sites into 220 categories for easy finding and clicking.

Evernote
<www.evernote.com>
Think of Evernote as an omnipresent digital scrapbook for all your genealogy finds. Clip or copy that census page or family photo on one device, then access on your PC, Mac, tablet or even your phone. Basic accounts are free, though you’ll be tempted to upgrade for more features ($69.99 annually).

Genealogy Gems
<lislouisecooke.com>
Become a better genealogist by listening to Lisa Louise Cooke’s “genealogy radio” site, home to 200-plus podcasts and her tip-packed blog.

Genea-Musings
<www.geneamusings.com>
Keep up with the latest additions to your favorite genealogy websites at Randy Seaver’s frequently updated blog, where he also shares his own research lessons.

Google
<google.com>
Now 20 years old, Google remains an essential tool for genealogists, helping you leverage the power of the internet to trace your family tree. Search, Maps, Books, Translate, Photos, Earth and Gmail are just a few of its tools.

HistoryPin
<www.historypin.com>
Search by place, or explore individual contributors’ collections, or add your own pictures to this collaborative project of “pinned” historical photos, plotted on Google Maps and matched to modern street views.

International Society of Genetic Genealogy Wiki
<www.isogg.org/wiki>
Curious but confused about genetic genealogy? Let the ISOGG, founded by DNA project administrators, explain everything from all those acronyms to making sense of your results.

One-Step Web Pages
<stevemorse.org>
From censuses to vital records, foreign calendars to alphabets, Steve Morse empowers visitors to drill down into genealogy and related databases. You can skip intros and tedious forms and use more-flexible search options. To view results on a fee-based website, you do need a subscription to that site.

RootsTech
<www.rootstech.org>
FamilySearch hosts this high-tech genealogy conference each year in Salt Lake City. If you couldn’t make it to the 2018 confab—or you just want to watch a class you missed—this site lets you rewind selected sessions and highlights. It also offers how-to articles on its blog.

REAL NEWS ONLINE

The British Newspaper Archive
<www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>
This fast-growing paid site now boasts more than 25 million pages dating
from as early as the 1700s, documenting doings in England, Wales, Scotland and (newly added) Ireland. Full access costs about $110 annually, or you can pay as you go.

California Digital Newspaper Collection
<cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc>
All the news about your Golden State ancestors fits in this site from the University of California, Riverside. It’s now up to a whopping 271,000-plus issues comprising more than 3.6 million pages and 19.5 million articles, which you can search or browse by keywords (“tags”), date, county or title.

Chronicling America
<chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>
More than 13 million pages have now been digitized in this Library of Congress project, stretching from 1789 to 1963. Advanced search tools let you zoom in on states, titles, front pages only, date ranges or words by proximity to each other.

Elephind
<www.elephind.com>
Elephind doesn’t host digital newspapers; rather, like its more-or-less namesake elephant, it never forgets where the best collections reside online. Smart search scours more than 181 million items from 3,566 newspaper titles for your ancestors.

$ GenealogyBank
<www.genealogybank.com>
Can’t find your ancestors’ hometown newspaper anywhere online? This redesigned subscription site hosts more than 7,500 digitized newspapers and 250 million obituaries—95 percent not available elsewhere online—plus historical books and directories.

GenDisasters.com
<gendisasters.com>
Did an old newspaper report on your ancestors’ involvement in a disaster? Browse by state, year or type of disaster (train wreck, fire, flood, shipwreck, etc.) to read all about it.

$ Newspapers.com
<www.newspapers.com>
This Ancestry-owned site claims to be the largest online newspaper archive, with pages from 7,500 publications from the 1700s to 2000s. Viewing and clipping tools make it easy to save and share your finds once you’ve invested $74.90 a year (discounted if you’re an Ancestry member).

MAPS AND HISTORY TOOLS

Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States
<dsl.richmond.edu/historicalatlas>
A classic 1932 atlas comes alive online, with nearly 700 clickable maps augmented with underlying data or animated to show changes over the years.

David Rumsey Map Collection
<www.davidrumsey.com>
View the 85,000-plus historical maps multiple ways, including Google Earth, making it easy to see how yesterday’s places relate to today’s.

eHistory
<ehistory.osu.edu>
Timelines, maps and the searchable 128-volume Officials Records (the “OR”) of the Civil War make this your first stop for digital history documents.

$ Historic Map Works
<www.historicmapworks.com>
Put your family history on the map with more than 1.6 million historical maps. You can pay per view or subscribe for $124.99 a year.

Twile
<www.twile.com>
See the Twile tutorial in our July/August 2017 Family Tree Magazine for help creating a timeline at this free site, now owned by Findmypast (see page 19), that enhances your ancestor timelines with world events.

SOCIAL AND SHARING SITES

Facebook
<www.facebook.com>
Recent controversies aside, the world’s biggest social-networking site can connect you with cousins as well as with your favorite genealogy institutions.

GEDMatch
<gedmatch.com>
Sort of a matchmaking site for genetic genealogy, a free registration lets you match your autosomal DNA results with others who’ve uploaded data from AncestryDNA, 23andMe or Family Tree DNA’s Family Finder.

Geni
<www.geni.com>
Geni’s World Family Tree connects more than 121 million individuals. It’s free to add your own family and invite kin to collaborate.

Pinterest
<pinterest.com>
Share anything visual with this online tagboard, from family photos to census images. You can upload and comment on digitized images or link to images elsewhere on the internet.

YouTube
<www.youtube.com>
Your favorite Family Tree Magazine authors, “Genealogy Roadshow” and other family-history TV shows, Ancestry experts and more are in the quarter-million videos that pop up when you search for genealogy.

Before founding Family Tree Magazine, David A. Fryxell covered the launch of a site called “Google” as technology editor of the St. Paul Pioneer Press in Minnesota.
The action-packed TV show “American Ninja Warrior” follows competitors as they tackle an impossible-looking obstacle course of physical challenges with names like the Cliffhanger and the Jumping Spider. If someone’s grip slips or muscles give out, she’ll plunge into a giant swimming pool—and won’t move on to the next round. The strongest and speediest ninjas battle it out for a million-dollar prize on a grueling, four-stage course modeled after Japan’s famed Mount Midoriyama.

Family history research can present you with obstacles of a different kind. Your genealogy journey might seem like a 75-foot rope climb back to the past, with pitfalls and brick walls at every turn. You finally find Great-grandma’s birth record, but her mother’s maiden name is missing. Or the 1870 census has three Nathaniel Morrises who could be yours, or you have to jump through 12 hoops to get the church record showing your great-great-grandparents’ marriage. But if you focus your family-history training regimen on conquering the five challenges outlined here, you’ll get better at building your family tree and earn the title of Genealogy Ninja.

Develop ninja-like research skills with these five family history challenges.

by LISA A. ALZO
1 BOOST YOUR SEARCH SPEED.

In the age of online genealogy, we want our records and we want them fast. But there’s no Easy Button to press for the answers to all your family tree questions. Finding a birth or marriage document in the few minutes you have can trip you up faster than the Rolling Log can dump a Ninja Warrior into the drink.

So how do you get to census returns, passenger manifests and vital records without getting sunk online? First, know your databases. Take some time to learn which online provider has the records you need to use, keeping in mind there will be overlap in websites’ online collections. That’s because FamilySearch <www.familysearch.org> has content partnerships with subscription sites Ancestry <ancestry.com>, Findmypast <findmypast.com> and MyHeritage <myheritage.com>. You may see the same results if you search all of these databases for the same records. For example, when I view a record in the collection Slovakia, Census, 1869 on Ancestry, I see the pop-up message “This collection provided in collaboration with FamilySearch. Images are hosted on www.familysearch.org.” So both sites have a searchable index to this record set, but Ancestry links to FamilySearch for document images. To find websites that have the records you need, try searching online for the type of record (as in Slovakia census).

Sometimes sites may have slight differences in how you can search the record set. For example, both Ancestry and MyHeritage have databases of New York Passenger Lists. But there’s a difference in the MyHeritage database, titled Ellis Island and Other New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957. It contains additional indexed fields with information that immigration officials collected from passengers. Starting in 1897, they asked for the name and address of the relative or friend whom the passenger was joining in the United States, and starting in 1907, the name and address of the closest relative or friend in the home country. On MyHeritage, you can now search with the name of the “going to meet” relative to find the passenger, by placing that relative’s name in the main search box. Also, many passenger manifests span two pages, causing unaware genealogists to miss the second page. MyHeritage solves this problem by stitching the two pages into one image.

All these sites let you keep online trees and send you hints to possible matches in record collections or others’ online trees. While not always correct, the hints can be a speedy shortcut to records naming your ancestors. See the March/April 2018 Family Tree Magazine for a guide to getting the best hints and deciding which hints to accept.

2 KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE.

Genealogy research is distracting by nature: You’re looking for one person or piece of information, and some other clue in your search results tempts you away from your mission. One way to maintain ninja-like focus on the information you seek is to identify a category or record set that should have it—and then search only that specific category or record set. In addition to narrowing your search results, you’ll also get more-specific search options. For example, if it’s a passenger list you want, search Ancestry’s Immigration and Passenger Lists collection for options to enter an arrival year and port. To find datasets on popular websites:

- **Ancestry**: Use the pull-down menu under the Search tab to choose a category. Use the Card Catalog <search.ancestry.com/search/cardcatalog.aspx> to search for an individual database.
- **Findmypast**: Click the tab for Our Records to select from categories or search for a database. <search.findmypast.com/historical-records>.
- **MyHeritage**: Click Historical Records at the bottom of the home page, then choose from the categories on the right. On the resulting category search page, you can further drill down to specific collections.
- **FamilySearch**: Click on the Search tab, then the link to Browse All Published Collections. Filter the list of collections (on the left) by place, date and type of collection to find what you’re looking for. Let’s say you’re researching an immigrant...
to the United States in the 1870s. After choosing United States from the Place filter, scroll down and filter by date (1850-1899) and by collection (Migration & Naturalization). More than 90 collections match those criteria. You can’t search just those collections at once, but you can browse through the titles and pick out the ones that look the most promising, based on what you already know about your ancestor.

To remove a filter, click on the X to the right of it. You can also use the “Filter by Collection Name” box to type in a keyword or term (such as naturalization) to see only collections with that term in the title.

Finally, streamline your searching using the unique features of each site. On Ancestry, you can customize your home page to show the collections and tools you use most, such as a Jewish Community Locator, your to-do list and your Shoebox (where you can save records that need additional perusal). On MyHeritage, use your account settings to display a preview of random photos from your family site, pick the family tree and root individual to display on your home page, and more. On FamilySearch, sign in to select people to watch and whose record hints you want to see. Findmypast lets you use My Records, a storage area for your family history records, to see a list of everything you’ve already looked at.

These features also give you a place to save clues you come across while you’re looking for someone else. Another option is to note these clues in your research log or to-do list with the website, collection title and relative’s name.

WORK YOUR MENTAL MUSCLES.
Scaling the records wall is just the first step. Once you find the records, you need to really study them to make sure they’re about your ancestor and evaluate the information. You’ll want to search for multiple records about a life event, such as death (on page 32, I share how I used this technique to locate my great-uncle’s unmarked grave). Professional genealogists call this a “reasonably exhaustive search.” Just as “American Ninja Warrior” challenges strain competitors’ stamina, analyzing all the genealogical record possibilities may strain your brain. Conflicting records, variant name spellings and
common names can leave you indecisive, unsure whether a record really is for your relative.

Whether you’re trying to learn your great-great-grandmother’s maiden name, determine if you’ve found the right Sam Figlar buried in an unmarked pauper’s grave in a rural Ohio cemetery, or map your chromosomes from a DNA test, you can shape your analytical skills with in-depth study and working step by step through your evidence.

To reach a sound conclusion, genealogists strive to meet all five components of the Genealogical Proof Standard, as outlined on the website of the Board for Certification of Genealogists <bcgcertification.org/ethics/ethics-standards>:

1. **Reasonably exhaustive research**: Check all possible records.

2. **Complete and accurate source citations**: We’ve given this important step a challenge all its own (see page 32).

3. **Thorough analysis and correlation**: Determine the reliability of the record and try to corroborate the information in other sources.

4. **Resolution of conflicting evidence**: Determine which records (if any) are closest to the correct information.

5. **Soundly written conclusion based on the strongest evidence**: Using your research, draw a conclusion about your ancestors.

Even if you’re doing genealogy for your own enjoyment, not preparing to become a pro, the Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS) can help you be confident that you’re tracing the right ancestors—that your understanding of who they were is as close as possible to the truth. You’ll find examples of how the GPS applies to real genealogy research problems on the BCG website <bcgcertification.org/learning>.

A research tool I like for analyzing information is Evidentia <evidentiasoftware.com>. It works with my genealogy software to serve as an extra pair of eyes for highlighting missed connections, evaluating sources and pointing out inconsistencies in my research. A 14-day free trial lets you give it a try.

Genetic genealogy is becoming a standard element of family history research, and it’s worth learning how to make the most of the possibilities. Options for mastering the essentials include books such as *The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy* by Blaine T. Bettinger <familytreemagazine.com/store/best-sellers-home-page/guide-to-dna-testing-and-genetic-genealogy>, online classes such as Family Tree University’s Genetic Genealogy 101 <familytreemagazine.com/university>, and genetic genealogy articles like “DNA Direction” in the May/June 2018 *Family Tree Magazine*.

**FLEX YOUR SOURCE STRENGTH.**

What’s more intimidating than the Floating Monkey Bars challenge? Crafting source citations that meet the standards of certified professional genealogists. If you struggle with how to cite your grandparents’ marriage record, your uncle’s WWII draft registration card, or your own DNA test results, a little training can help. Learning to document your work correctly can help you notice conflicting information in records and avoid errors, like accepting a marriage record hint for some unrelated person who has the same name as your relative.

Genealogy websites including FamilySearch and Ancestry give you a good starting point by providing some source information when you view a record on those sites, but they don’t always include all the elements you need for a complete citation. First, relax: you’re citing sources to make your own research the best it can be, not to impress the family history judges. The book *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace* by Elizabeth Shown Mills (from Genealogical Publishing Co. and available at <familytreemagazine.com/store/citing-history-sources-from-artifacts-to-cyberspace>) explains how to analyze a source and what details you’ll want to record about each one. In general, that’s what the record is, who created it and when, in
A “reasonably exhaustive search” means looking for every possible record. When researching the death of my great-uncle Sam Figlar, for example, I searched for a death certificate, obituaries, coroner report and cemetery records. I finally learned he was buried without a headstone.

What format you found it, and where and how you found it. For example, if you’re always using an online collection of birth records for the city where your family is from, format a citation like this one:


As you get a handle on creating source citations, you can set up a spreadsheet or Word document with templates for frequently used sources. Next time you find a record in this database, just copy the template and fill in the specifics, such as the person’s name and the record number. If you use genealogy software, it’ll help you create source citations. But I’ve found that citing sources the long way, at least initially, helps me understand the process and better evaluate the record. This is one area where slow and steady wins the race over ninja-like speed.

CLIMB RESEARCH ROADBLOCKS.

At some point in your research, a seemingly unsolvable brick wall will make you feel like an American Ninja Warrior poised before the 14-plus-foot, concave Warped Wall. Many genealogists encounter such a roadblock in identifying an immigrant’s overseas hometown, a person’s parents before official vital records begin, an African-American born during slavery, or family living in a “burned county.” Wherever you look, you find no answers.

Ninja contestants prepare to scale the Warped Wall by analyzing it, studying how others have approached it, and practicing different techniques. You can prep similarly to face genealogy brick walls. Revisit all your research related to the question, get expert input, identify new resources and sometimes go back to the drawing board to find that one clue or puzzle piece that makes a difference. A new record set that comes online, a missed probate document or a DNA match to a new relative might be the key to unraveling a family history mystery.

These are my tried-and-true, brick-wall-busting strategies:

• Going over records for the ancestor in question one by one, using them to create a timeline for the ancestor’s life.
• Researching the person’s distant relatives, in-laws, friends and neighbors, because our ancestors stuck together, and their associates’ records can tell us about our families.
• Learning more about genealogy research in the place the person lived by consulting guidebooks, asking genealogical society members and history librarians about local resources, and searching Facebook for relevant genealogy groups where I can post questions. For more expert advice, see our how-to-bust-brick-walls video classes, cheat sheets and books at familytreemagazine.com/store/genealogy-topics>.

Sometimes genealogy seems to call for the determination and stamina of an “American Ninja Warrior” contestant. But don’t give up: New records become available and technology advances our search capabilities. With some planning and effort, you, too, can be a Genealogy Ninja.

Author and instructor Lisa A. Alzo shares her genealogy journey on her blog, The Accidental Genealogist <www.theaccidentalgenealogist.com>. She coaches others to success through Family Tree University online courses.

tip

It sounds counterintuitive, but limiting your research time can help you stay focused on one ancestor or question. Make a calendar appointment to research for 30 minutes to an hour. Set a timer when you begin, and stop when it goes off.
EVERYTHING’S BIGGER IN ALASKA, or so it seems. The state is gigantic—nearly one-fifth the size of the other 49 states combined—and it’s home to Mount Denali (aka Mount McKinley), the highest point in North America. Practically the only thing that’s not big in Alaska is its population: It’s the third least-populated state, with a mere 739,795 residents. More than half of them live in the Anchorage area.

Alaska became a US territory in 1912 and joined the Union in 1959, but its heritage stretches back thousands of years, when Asians from Siberia crossed the Bering Strait on the Beringia “land bridge.” Their descendants include today’s Athabascan, Haida, Tlingit, Aleut and Inuit (Eskimo) peoples, who make up a seventh of Alaska’s population. The remainder of the population claims a variety of heritages, particularly German, Irish, English, Norwegian, Russian and Asian.

This young state with a deep history offers many gems for genealogists. The sooner you get started, the faster you’ll reap big research rewards.

FINDING EARLY ALASKANS
Those researching American Indian heritage in Alaska should consult Bureau of Indian Affairs records at the National Archives in Seattle <archives.gov/seattle/finding-aids/bia-subject-guide>. Visitors to the Family history Library in Salt Lake City can view the records on microfilm <www.familysearch.org>. This includes records of boarding schools, such as Mount Edgcumbe and the Wrangell Institute.

Russian fur traders settled on Kodiak Island in 1784 and had landed in Sitka by 1799. Russia governed the area until the United States purchased it in 1867 for $7.2 million. The acquisition, engineered by Secretary of State William Seward, was mocked by critics as “Seward’s Folly.” In 1896, fortune seekers in Canada’s Klondike Gold Rush traveled through Alaska; later strikes in Nome (1898) and Fairbanks (1902) spurred the state’s own gold rush. Opportunity continued to inspire northward migration: During the Great Depression, the US government relocated 203 Midwestern farming families to Palmer.

Alaska gained a strong armed presence in World War II, when the military population jumped from 1,000 to 35,000. That number eventually topped 100,000, and the economy flourished. Many soldiers stayed after the war. The 1968 discovery of the continent’s largest oil field at Prudhoe Bay sparked a “black gold rush” that further buoyed the economy. If your ancestors were prospectors, their nomadic behavior can present a genealogical challenge. Prospectors poured in and out of mining towns, following lodes and rumors of lodes. You’ll need to follow the same lodes and rumors in the historical record to guess where your gold-mining great-grandpa may have gone next. Then sift through court records, newspaper accounts of strikes and topographical maps for mentions of his name. Learn more miner research strategies at Finding Your Gold Rush Relative <library.alaska.gov/hist/parham.html>.

Finding genealogical records in your ancestors’ locales can take some serious mining of your own. Alaska started out with a tribal culture that left no written records. When the Russian government took over, churches recorded residents’ information. During the state’s territorial years, the US government kept track of denizens.
Those responsibilities eventually shifted to the state, its 18 boroughs (Alaska’s version of counties), cities and native corporations. Portions of the state not covered by boroughs are divided into census areas (see a list at <usgwarchives.net/ak/akfiles.htm>.

That means you won’t find records at a county clerk’s office, as you would in the lower 48 states. Instead, you’ll have to learn the district-, city- or state-level office that had jurisdiction over an area at the particular time and place of

**timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>Russian fur traders establish the first European settlement on Kodiak Island.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>United States pays Russia $7.2 million for “Seward’s Ice Box.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>An August gold discovery in Canada sparks the Klondike Gold Rush.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>Hudson Stuck leads the first successful ascent of Mount Denali (aka Mount McKinley).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>The United States authorizes construction of the Alaska Railroad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Japanese occupy three outer Aleutian Islands.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Critics mocked the acquisition of Alaska, engineered by Secretary of State William Seward, as “Seward’s Folly.”

interest. You can get contact information for cities and boroughs at <alaska.gov/communit.html>; most court records are in the Alaska State Archives <archives.alaska.gov>.

CENSUS RECORDS
Alaska’s first mostly extant federal census is the 1900 count (those from 1880 and 1890 were lost). You can search censuses up through 1940 on subscription sites Ancestry.com, Findmypast <www.findmypast.com> and MyHeritage <www.myheritage.com>.

Alaska took territorial censuses in a variety of places and years, including Sitka in 1870 and St. George Island in 1881. These are available on microfilm at the Family History Library (FHL) <www.familysearch.org> and indexed in Ancestry’s Alaska, Compiled Census and Census Substitutes Index, 1870-1907. Keep the state’s terrain in mind: If your ancestor trekked to the remote bush, censustakers probably couldn’t reach him.

VITAL RECORDS
Statewide birth, death and marriage registration began in 1913. Birth records are restricted for 100 years; marriage and death, for 50 years. Request copies from the Bureau of Vital Statistics (BVS) <dhss.alaska.gov/dph/VitalStats>. You’ll also find searchable Alaska vital records indexes on FamilySearch and Ancestry.

Churches are an important source of pre-1900 records. The Library of Congress <loc.gov> translated and indexed Russian Orthodox parish records in the Alaskan Russian Church Archives. Microfilm copies covering 1816 to 1936 are at the FHL, Rasmuson Library in Fairbanks <library.uaf.edu> and BVS.

BVS also created delayed birth certificates from records of churches, including Moravian, Episcopalian, and Methodist. Follow the instructions for requesting BVS records at <dhss.alaska.gov/dph/VitalStats/Pages/birth>. BVS has records for Catholics and Presbyterians, but those churches kept their own records, so you might get around restrictions by contacting parish offices.

NEWSPAPERS
Alaska’s newspapers date to the 1860s, so you may be able to use them for tracing prospectors on the move or finding an

STATE HISTORY HIGHLIGHT

★ Northwest American Indians erected totem poles—a term adapted from the Algonquian odoodem, for a clan or family—as a kind of family crest.

★ Think of totem poles as a visible way to tell important family or cultural stories.

★ The poles, made of rot-resistant cedar, range from 10 to 60 feet tall. Carvers used sharp stones, sea shells, bones or even beaver teeth.

★ See stunning totem poles on display at the Sitka National Historical Park <www.nps.gov/sitk>, the Alaska State Museum in Juneau <museums.alaska.gov> and the Totem Bight State Historical Park in Ketchikan <dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aspunits/southeast/totembigshp.htm>.

1964
The Good Friday Earthquake is America’s strongest recorded temblor to date.

1967
Teller resident Isaac Okleasik wins the first Iditarod sled-dog race.

1971
Congress gives Alaska Indians 44 million acres and $962.5 billion for renouncing native land claims.

1977
The 799-mile Alaska Pipeline is completed.

1989
Exxon Valdez spills 11 million gallons of oil into Prince William Sound.

2008
Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin runs for vice president alongside John McCain.
obituary in lieu of an official death record. You can search pages from 33 digitized Alaska newspapers on subscription site GenealogyBank <www.genealogybank.com> and several on Newspapers.com <newspapers.com> and the free ChroniclingAmerica <chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>. Search an online index to several Juneau and Fairbanks publications as far back as 1901 at <education.alaska.gov/ lam/newspapers.cfm>. Ancestry also has indexes with more than 150,000 names mentioned in Alaska newspapers, and the FHL has a microfiche index to Anchorage obituaries from 1915 to 1980. The Anchorage Genealogical Society <anchoragegenealogy.org> publishes birth and death information from early newspapers in its quarterly newsletters.

OTHER USEFUL RECORDS
These records also can pay big in your ancestor search:

★ LAND RECORDS: The US opened its Sitka land office in 1885. Search the Bureau of Land Management site for land patents at <glorecords.blm.gov>. Land entry case files containing patent applications are with the National Archives. Visit Alaska's BLM field offices <blm.gov/alaska> to see tract books and township plats; find mining claim maps at the state archives; and look for even more maps, plats and charts at the FHL and the Rasmuson Library.

★ PROBATE RECORDS: District courts handled probate matters in Alaska from 1885-1960. (Today, probate is handled through the state court system.) These records are now at the state archives. Search a surname index, which includes the district in which cases were administered, at <archives.alaska.gov> (click on For Researchers, then Probate Index).

★ MILITARY RECORDS: Alaskans' draft registration cards are on Ancestry, with a free index and images on FamilySearch. Check Army enlistment registers for 1798 to 1914 on FHL microfilm. Use the Nationwide Gravesite Locator <grave locator.cem.va.gov> to search for data on military personnel and their families buried in Alaska's national cemeteries at Fort Richardson and Sitka.

STATE ARCHIVES
 Holdings at Alaska's repositories are as vast as the state itself. Besides maps, the Rasmuson Library has photos, manuscripts and an index to 8,000 members of the Pioneers of Alaska. Most materials date from the 1880s and later, but some cover earlier times. The state archives holds records of pioneer (nursing) home residents, veterans and teachers. Indian documents are at the Consortium Library <consortiumlibrary.org>; its microfilmed Alaska Mission Collection (also on FHL microfilm) features missionaries' diaries, censuses and church records. With all these resources, your Last Frontier research is headed for big success. •
**SAY "HOOSIER" AND** the guy sitting next to you thinks of Indiana basketball. If he’s from those parts, he might exhibit signs of Hoosier Hysteria. But the word “hoosier” was around way before basketball. Indiana historian Jacob Platt Dunn speculated in a 1907 study that it came from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning “hill.”

Regardless of its origins, though, hoosier became a term for small farmers. It first appeared in print when the Jan. 1, 1833, *Indianapolis Journal* ran John Finley’s poem “The Hoosier’s Nest.” Now it’s part of Indianans’ identity. Your Hoosier ancestors’ heritage is as intriguing as their nickname, and a range of resources hold their stories.

“County-level research in Indiana is imperative,” says Curt Witcher, director of the genealogy department at the Allen County Public Library (ACPL) in Fort Wayne. “Visit virtually—if not in person—all local repositories for counties where you’re researching.”

The resource-rich ACPL and its digitized records from across the state may reasonably be your first stop for Indiana research, but also look to local repositories. For example, the Kokomo-Howard County Public Library offers more than 20 databases, including county mortality schedules, vital records and burials.

**EARLY HISTORY**
As you might guess, Indiana means “Land of the Indians.” The Miami, Delaware, Wea, Potawatomi, Shawnee and other peoples once made homes there. After the Revolutionary War, the US made Indiana part of Northwest Territory. American Indians tried to set the northern US boundary at the Ohio River, but Gen. Anthony Wayne’s 1794 victory at Fallen Timbers pushed Indians west.

After the 1809 Treaty of Fort Wayne and other accords gave the entire area to the United States, most Indians migrated further west. The National Archives and Records Administration’s (NARA) Fort Worth, Texas, facility holds censuses, registers and other records for the Miami, Delaware and several other Indian tribes—learn more at <archives.gov/research/native-americans>. See the October/November 2016 *Family Tree Magazine* for American Indian research help.

**TERRITORIAL-ERA RECORDS**
Most of the Northwest Territory became Indiana Territory in 1800. A mad rush of settlers, largely from Kentucky and Ohio, helped Indiana become a state in 1816—a free state with Knox as the only county and Corydon as capital. Surveyors planned the new capital of Indianapolis with four avenues emanating from a circular street. Some lots were saved for a variety of purposes; the rest went for sale starting in October 1821.

If your ancestor was an early Indiana arrival, search the Indianapolis Donation Database at <in.gov/aira/2641.htm>. Buyers’ certificates, exchanged for deeds once the land was paid for, are at the state archives.

Search for other public-land sales between 1810 and the 1960s at the Bureau of Land Management General Land Office site <glorecords.blm.gov>. See the title or patent there, then request copies of your ancestor’s land application, or land entry case file, from NARA (learn how at <archives.gov/research/land>).
1679
French explorer René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle claims Indiana for France.

1763
The Treaty of Paris awards land including Indiana to Britain.

1779
Col. George Rogers Clark and the Kentucky militia take Fort Sackville from the British at Vincennes.

1832
Work begins on the Wabash and Erie Canal.

1842
The Rev. Edward Sorin founds the University of Notre Dame.

1863
Corydon sees Indiana’s only Civil War battle.
Your Hoosier ancestors’ heritage is as intriguing as their nickname, and a range of resources hold their stories.

CENSUS RECORDS
The 1800 and 1810 federal censuses included Indiana Territory, but of those records, only the 1810 Harrison County count survived. Search for early Indianans in the 1790 Northwest Territory census, 1807 Indian Territory census, 1840 military pensioners and various other records on Ancestry <ancestry.com>.

The first federal census of Indiana as a state was in 1820. You can search federal censuses through 1940 (except for the 1890 census, which was nearly entirely destroyed after a fire) on subscription genealogy websites Ancestry, MyHeritage <www.myheritage.com> and Findmypast <www.findmypast.com>, as well as the free FamilySearch <www.familysearch.org>.

The Indiana state archives has fragments of several state censuses taken between 1852 and 1877, as does ACPL (1836-1895). Some counties also enumerated African-American men between 1853 and 1865. Search these indexes at <secure.in.gov/apps/iara/search>.

VITAL RECORDS
Some Indiana counties started keeping birth and death records in the 1880s, but the state didn’t mandate the practice until January 1900 for deaths and October 1907 for births. Look for these early birth and death records with county health departments, and later ones from the Indiana State Department of Health.

The state didn’t keep track of marriages until 1958, but county court clerks generally did so from the counties’ inception dates. You can search the Indiana State Library’s database of pre-1850 marriages at <statelib.lib.in.us/IN Marriages1850/marriages_search.asp> and request certificate copies from the county circuit court where your ancestors were married.

Those researching Indiana families have several options for finding birth and death information—both before and after state records begin—online and on microfilm. Ancestry has indexes and/or record images for hundreds of thousands of statewide births (1880-1940) and deaths (1882-2011), plus millions of marriages before 2005. To find county datasets, go to the card catalog <search.ancestry.com/search/cardcatalog.aspx> and run a keyword search for the county name. FamilySearch’s Indiana records aren’t quite as robust,

STATE HISTORY HIGHLIGHT

🌟 Starting in 1888, the Ball Co. of Muncie used sand from dunes near Lake Michigan to produce canning jars.

🌟 Ball introduced its iconic blue “Perfect Mason” jar in 1913. Minerals in the sand used to fire the glass caused the blue color.

🌟 In 1917, the Ball brothers bought the Indiana Normal Institute of Muncie out of foreclosure for $35,100; it later became Ball State University.

🌟 By 1920, more than 13 million tons of Hoosier Slide dune sand had been shipped off to glassmakers, leveling the dune.

1911 Ray Harroun wins the first Indianapolis 500 in a Marmon Wasp.

1957 The Music Man has Broadway fans humming “Gary, Indiana.”

1982 “Jack and Diane” by Seymour son John Mellencamp spends a month atop the pop music charts.

1986 The film Hoosiers portrays 1950s Indiana high-school basketball.

2011 Wind causes a stage at the Indiana State Fair to collapse, killing seven.

2016 Indiana Gov. Mike Pence is elected vice president of the United States.
but they’re free. The site also has some births and christenings, two marriage indexes containing a million-plus records each, and an index to nearly 800,000 deaths (1882-1920).

Indiana’s lenient laws earned it a reputation as a divorce mill until the state revised statutes in 1873. Check with county court clerks for divorce records from 1852 to the present. Before then, the state legislature granted divorces.

**MILITARY RECORDS**

Researchers have published a wealth of indexes to Indiana veterans. Start your search at <in.gov/iara/2722.htm>, which has indexes to military records and descriptions of the archives’ holdings for just about every war in which state residents have fought. In the Civil War section, you’ll also find an index for the Indiana Soldiers and Sailors Children’s Home, which served offspring of soldiers beginning in the post-Civil War era. There are also numerous veterans’ indexes at <secure.in.gov/apps/iara/search>. Search the free Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System <nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm> and Ancestry indexes of service records for the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Spanish-American War (Indiana soldiers), as well as for Civil War pensions.

Books like *Index to Revolutionary Soldiers of Indiana and Other Patriots* by Barbara Schull Wolfe (Ye Olde Genealogy Shoppe) and *Indiana Militia in the Black Hawk Wars* by Carrie Loftus (Mountain Press) are also helpful. Search WorldCat <worldcat.org> for additional books and order titles through interlibrary loan if your local library participates.

In 1886, 1890 and 1894, Indiana townships enrolled veterans (or their widows and orphans) of the Civil War, War of 1812 and Indian wars. The records are at the state archives; the Indiana State Library has a card index to the 1886 listing. The data also are in the FHL microfilm Index to Indiana Enrollments of Soldiers, Their Widows and Orphans; the records themselves take up 89 microfilm reels beginning with film 1605057. You can search the 1890 count at Ancestry.

**REPOSITORIES**

Besides repositories in your ancestral county, add the state archives and library in Indianapolis to your Hoosier research tour. Witcher praises the Indiana Historical Society (<indianahistory.org>) for its vast library and its County Historians program, for which you can access contacts at <indianahistory.org/across-indiana/hometown-resources/find-who-you-need-by-county>. The Indiana Genealogical Society (<indgensoc.org>) has started a similar County Genealogists volunteer list (find it on the society’s website under “Research”). Also check the IUPUI website’s atlases, plat books and Sanborn Fire Insurance maps at <www.ulib.iupui.edu/collections/sanbornjp2>. With each family tree find, you’ll generate some Hoosier Hysteria of your own. •
SCIATICA
BACK PAIN?
Are radiating pains down the back of your leg, or pain in your lower back or buttocks making it uncomfortable to sit or walk? Millions of people are suffering unnecessarily because they are not aware of this proven treatment.
MagniLife® Leg & Back Pain Relief combines four active ingredients, such as Colocynthis to relieve burning pains and tingling sensations. Although this product is not intended to treat sciatica, it may help with the pain. “I am absolutely amazed at how it works and how fast it works.” - T Martin. Tablets dissolve under the tongue. “Those little tablets are like relief in a snap.” - Patsy, CO.
MagniLife® Leg & Back Pain Relief is sold at Walgreens, CVS, Rite Aid and Walmart. Order risk free for $19.99 +$5.95 S&H for 125 tablets per bottle. Get a FREE bottle when you order two for $39.98 +$5.95 S&H. Send payment to: MagniLife S-FT2, PO Box 6789, McKinney, TX 75071 or call 1-800-730-4173. Satisfaction guaranteed. Order now at www.LegBackPain.com

BURNING
FOOT PAIN?
Do you suffer from burning, tingling or stabbing pain in your feet? You should know help is available. Many are suffering from these symptoms and live in pain because they are not aware of this proven treatment.
MagniLife® Pain Relieving Foot Cream contains eucalyptus oil and yelow jasmine, known to relieve tingling, burning, and stabbing pain while also restoring cracked, damaged, and itchy skin. “It’s the ONLY product that helps relieve the burning, and tingling feeling in my feet!” - Mable NY.
MagniLife® Pain Relieving Foot Cream is sold at Walgreens, CVS, Rite Aid, Kroger, Target and Walmart, in the footcare and diabetes sections. Order risk free for $19.99 +$5.95 S&H for a 4 oz jar. Get a FREE jar when you order two for $39.98 +$5.95 S&H. Simply send payment to: MagniLife NC-FT2, PO Box 6789, McKinney, TX 75071, or call 1-800-730-4173. Satisfaction guaranteed. Order now at www.MDFootCream.com

OVERACTIVE
BLADDER?
If you experience minor leaks or a sudden urge to urinate, help is now available. 25 million Americans suffer from incontinence problems, which may lead to a limiting of social interactions to avoid embarrassment.
MagniLife® Bladder Relief contains seven active ingredients, such as Castcicum for adult incontinence, and Sepia for the urge to urinate due to overactive bladder. Tablets can be taken along with other medications with no known side effects. “Love these pills. It is the first thing in a long, long time that is helping me. Thank you!” - Margeret S., FL.
MagniLife® Bladder Relief is available at Rite Aid, located in the vitamin section. Order risk free for $19.99 +$5.95 S&H for 125 tablets per bottle. Get a FREE bottle when you order two for $39.98 +$5.95 S&H. Send payment to: MagniLife U-FT2, PO Box 6789, McKinney, TX 75071 or call 1-800-730-4173. Satisfaction guaranteed. Order now at www.BladderTablets.com

AGE SPOTS?
Are unsightly brown spots on your face and body making you uncomfortable? Liver spots, also known as age spots, affect the cosmetic surface of the skin and can add years to your appearance. Millions of people live with dark spots and try to cover them with make-up or bleach them with harsh chemicals because they are not aware of this topical treatment that gently and effectively lightens the shade of the skin.
MagniLife® Age Spot Cream uses botanicals, such as licorice root extract to naturally fade age spots, freckles, and other age-associated discolorations, while protecting skin from harmful external factors. “It is fading my liver spots. This product actually works!!!” - Patricia C, NJ.
MagniLife® Age Spot Cream can be ordered risk free for $19.99 +$5.95 S&H for a 2 oz jar. Get a FREE jar when you order two for $39.98 +$5.95 S&H. Send payment to: MagniLife SH-FT2, PO Box 6789, McKinney, TX 75071, or call 1-800-730-4173. Money back guarantee. Order now at www.AgeSpotSolution.com

FIBROMYALGIA
JOINT PAIN?
Are you one of 16 million people suffering from deep muscle pain and tenderness, joint stiffness, difficulty sleeping, or the feeling of little or no energy? You should know relief is available.
MagniLife® Pain & Fatigue Relief combines 11 active ingredients to relieve deep muscle pain and soreness, arthritis pain, aching joints, and back and neck pain. Although this product is not intended to treat fibromyalgia, it may help with the pain and fatigue caused by fibromyalgia. “These tablets have just been WONDERFUL. I’d recommend them to anyone and everyone!” - Debra, WV.
MagniLife® Pain & Fatigue Relief is sold at CVS/pharmacy and Rite Aid Pharmacy. Order risk free for $19.99 +$5.95 S&H for 125 tablets per bottle. Get a FREE bottle when you order two for $39.98 +$5.95 S&H. Send payment to: MagniLife F-FT2, PO Box 6789, McKinney, TX 75071 or call 1-800-730-4173. Satisfaction guaranteed. Order now at www.PainFatigue.com
Genealogy meets danger in author Steve Robinson’s book series starring a pro researcher who keeps getting tangled up in age-old mysteries.

by RICK CRUME
Genealogical mystery author Steve Robinson says his first novel, *In the Blood*, was inspired by a verse that an unidentified Cornish farmer wrote in 1803.

When you think of classic mystery novels, you think of British authors such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie and P.D. James. Now, a growing subgenre, the *genealogical* mystery novel, once again showcases writers from Great Britain.

The books’ protagonists, all amateur or professional genealogists, use their research skills to solve family mysteries extending across generations. Flashbacks might transport the reader to an earlier era, perhaps in the 19th-century industrial revolution or during World War II. The main character might face off against rivals in a race against time to uncover a hidden family secret or claim an inheritance.

Three books into his self-published genealogical mystery series, British author Steve Robinson (<www.steve-robinson.me>) landed a four-book deal with Amazon Publishing’s mystery thriller imprint, Thomas & Mercer. Robinson just released the seventh volume in his popular series starring American professional genealogist Jefferson Tayte. In *Letters from the Dead*, Tayte sets out to identify his client’s black-sheep ancestor, only to be drawn into a murder investigation that takes him to the Scottish Highlands and India in search of a legendary ruby that’s been missing for generations. We talked with Robinson about how he brings his stories to life.

**Family Tree** Searching the web, scrolling microfilm and other genealogy tasks don’t look exciting from the outside. How did you overcome this impression for publishers and readers?

**Steve Robinson** It was actually the reverse, in that the genealogy angle helped to sell the idea because crime fiction with a professional genealogist as the main character was something new in 2004, when I first began writing *In the Blood*. To my knowledge, at the time no one else was using family history in fiction in this way—digging up cold cases, solving past and present-day crime mysteries through genealogical research.

The fact that genealogy was experiencing something of a boom, and continues to do so, also helped. So many people the world over are interested in family history, and there I was proposing a series of mystery thrillers, an ever-popular genre, with a protagonist doing all the things genealogists love to do, though perhaps without the element of trouble.
Jefferson Tayte often finds himself in. It was this new angle for the genre that drew interest from both publishers and readers.

FT How do you appeal—and explain research intricacies—to nongenealogists among your readers?
SR Although my books are about a genealogist going about his research, it’s the story that comes first, and that’s as it should be. My books are about people’s lives, past and present, and my job as author is to engage you in their story. There has to be genealogical research, of course, and there’s plenty of it, but I try not to let the story get bogged down in it. The same is true of the vast amounts of historical research required to write each book.

When I’m writing about the genealogical aspects in particular, though, I try to keep the reader interested in what Jefferson Tayte may or may not find, creating intrigue along the way to help keep the pages turning. If something is a bit complicated, it’s explained in the story, such as when Jefferson Tayte talks about ahnentafels in *The Last Queen of England*, so nongenealogists never struggle. Even genealogists have said in reviews that they picked up a tip or two.

FT You’ve said that you might one day share the story of your family history. Could you give us a preview?
SR I was particularly interested in my maternal grandfather. He was an American GI stationed in England during World War II. Very little was known about him, or what happened to him after he left England several years later, leaving my grandmother and their two children behind. I started looking into him while I was writing *In the Blood*, and I found his US Army enlistment record. From that, I learned more about him and that he was born in Arkansas.

The information proved useful later on when an American amateur genealogist got in touch after reading my books and my author bio, and she offered to help. She discovered that he moved to Los Angeles and died in 1990. He’s buried in the Riverside military cemetery, and I was very grateful for her help, and from one of the members of Find A Grave (<www.findagrave.com>) for taking a photo of his headstone, which, although my mother was never reunited with her father, gave her some comfort just to know where he went and was finally laid to rest. My second book, *To the Grave*, was inspired by the story of my grandmother and her American GI, my grandfather. Although the events depicted in the story are, for the most part, entirely imagined, I tried to capture what I’ve come to believe is the essence of what happened with my grandparents, in that secrets can have devastating repercussions.

FT How do the other genealogical twists and turns Jefferson Tayte encounters reflect your own family history?
SR Thankfully, very little of what goes on in my books is drawn from my own family history, apart from in *To the Grave*. It’s drawn more from the notion that every family history has a secret or two waiting to be discovered. I try to imagine...
those secrets, or find real past secrets, for Jefferson Tayte to uncover, typically while someone is trying to stop him. Genealogy as a means to finding those skeletons in the closet and bringing them to light is the perfect profession for a mystery protagonist to have.

**FT** Are your plots typically laid out before you begin to write, or do they develop along the way?

**SR** I rarely have an entire story plotted before I begin to write, but I like to know how it begins and how it will end before I start. Then I work toward the conclusion, plotting more detail in sections as I go. I always have a general idea, but I like being surprised by the twists and turns my stories take as I write, and I think that can help to surprise the reader, too. After all, if I don’t know what’s going to happen next, how can the reader hope to? In one or two books, I’ve written a character in as the villain only to find toward the end that he was someone else entirely.

**FT** What kind of genealogy research do you do in order to make the novels authentic?

**SR** I carry out all the research any genealogist would have to do in Jefferson Tayte’s situation. I like to ensure that what I’m asking him to do is both plausible and achievable in the ways I’m describing. Sometimes the time frame has to be shortened to keep the pace of the story going, or he’ll know someone who can get him access to a record faster than is possible in the real world, such as when he’s working with the police, or the FBI in the case of *Dying Games*. Essentially, whenever Jefferson Tayte needs to find a record of any kind, I do the necessary research to ensure that it can be found just as he finds it.

**FT** Jefferson Tayte has used the resources of the Chronicling America newspapers site and the B&O Railroad Museum, among others. What are his favorites?

**SR** I think that has to be newspaper archives in general. There are few better places to help piece a puzzle together and expand on someone’s life, and Jefferson Tayte has used them to good effect many times. The person you’re looking into has to have been involved in something newsworthy, but then murder usually is, as are the other subjects Jefferson Tayte typically finds himself embroiled in—scandal and most things crime related.

Other than that, the census can of course tell a genealogist a great deal, so he’s keen on that,
and he referenced the FIBIS (Families in British India Society) database <www.fibis.org> a number of times in *Letters from the Dead*, which got him around the potentially difficult problem of checking ships passenger lists during the latter half of the 19th century. [Editor’s note: The British National Archives has incoming passenger lists starting in 1878, but they aren’t indexed by name.]

**FT What resources do you use for your historical research?**

**SR** First and foremost has to be the Internet, although it’s important to double-check the facts. I also read books on certain subjects and listen to audiobooks, fiction and nonfiction. It’s rare that I have to visit anywhere in person for historical research. Movies and historical programs on television can also be a good source, particularly when I want to immerse myself in a given time period.

**FT When researching for a book, have you ever traveled to view a setting or to use distant archives?**

**SR** Yes, I like to visit the places I’m writing about whenever I can, although the Internet is useful. With applications such as Google Earth <www.google.com/earth> and Maps Street View <www.google.com/maps>, it’s possible to visit areas, visually at least, and “walk” the streets without actually leaving home. I used Street View for much of the action that takes place in Munich for *Kindred*. I spent a lot of time in Cornwall, where *In the Blood* is set, and I made a location research trip there to see the churches Jefferson Tayte visits when he’s looking for records. I also visited many of the locations in *The Last Queen of England*, which is set in London.

Most of my genealogical research for the books is carried out online, largely because there’s now so much information out there, and because it only has to be real for the story, making it less important for me to physically see the records I’m writing about. Jefferson Tayte always prefers to see original documents where possible, aware that transcripts can sometimes contain incorrect information, but that’s less important when it comes to records for the lives of fictional characters, who of course have no real records to see.

**FT Your books are known for being suspenseful, with realistic characters and dialogue. Could you give us some tips on writing a nonfiction family history that nongenealogists would enjoy?**

**SR** I would probably set out to write it as a work of fiction, even though the people, places and events were real. Life is full of drama, and the drama that presumably makes the nonfiction story worth telling still has to unfold in an engaging way for it to hold any reader’s interest. I think if you’re telling the story of real lives in a family history context, you can still write with suspense and create intrigue in much the same way as any fiction book. The fact that the lives being written about were real people’s lives can surely only serve to make the story more poignant.

My job, of course, is to breathe life into fictional characters, and make their lives seem real. Perhaps the nonfiction writer has something of a head start in that area: To bring a character to life, first it’s important to fully understand the person you’re writing about, whether he or she is real or imagined. Having a good ear for dialogue helps, and I think that’s one of my strengths. Snippets of conversation pop into my head all the time. If it’s something you struggle with, there’s a simple way to get your characters sounding real, and that’s to

---

**More Genealogical Whodunits**

In *The Wicked Trade*, book seven in Nathan Dylan Goodwin’s Forensic Genealogist series, a client’s 1827 letter from a criminal ancestor starts professional genealogist Morton Farrier’s quest to solve a 19th-century murder.

Police detective Jayne Sinclair uses genealogy research to identify the biological father of an adopted American billionaire in *The Irish Inheritance* by M. J. Lee.

In *Three Times Removed* by M. K. Jones, Maggie Gilbert uncovers details about the disappearance of her ancestor in South Wales. The story draws on historical facts, but supernatural forces also come into play.

Browsing an antique shop, amateur genealogist Peter Sefton buys a marriage certificate from 1900. About the same time, an elderly man dies without heirs in London. The two story lines intersect in *The Marriage Certificate* by Stephen Molyneux.
act out your own scenes, reading all the dialogue aloud. Get someone to do it with you. You'll soon hear whether a character sounds real.

**FT** What advice would you give aspiring authors considering self-publishing?

**SR** Once you’ve finished writing your book, do lots of editing, and then do some more. You really can’t edit and proofread a book too much, and it has to be as perfect as it can be. It has to stand up against not only many other self-published books, but also the great many books edited and published by traditional publishers. If you have the means, hire an editor. The same is true for the cover design.

That said, I did all my own editing and designed my own covers initially, although the books had had an agent’s eyes over them and were improved as a result before I published them myself. I had to cut more than 50,000 words from *In the Blood*, but I’m very glad I didn’t publish the entire 168,000-word tome as it was originally. I was so fond of some of the scenes I had to cut that I’ve put them on my website under the Cut Scenes tab.

Nowadays, I’m fortunate to have a structural editor, who helps me tell the story in the best way it can be told, a copyeditor, who handles all the grammar and consistency from book to book, and an army of proofreaders who make sure the work is error-free before it hits the bookshelves, and a professional cover-design team. It’s quite a list, and if you’re self-publishing, you should expect to spend a lot of time getting your book ready after you’ve written “the end.”

**FT** A Japanese translation of *In the Blood* recently came out. Have your books been translated into any other languages?

**SR** I’m fortunate to find my books also now available in French, Italian, Spanish, German and Czech. Harper Collins published the Japanese edition and I was sent six copies of the book, which are beautiful and small enough to fit in the palm of my hand. I love them. My Czech editions, published by Mystery Press, are also lovely in hardback, each with a different colored silk ribbon for a bookmark. It’s always a special day to receive a new translation, or a new release, in the post.

**FT** With the Golden State Killer case highlighting the use of genealogy to solve real-life crimes, will DNA testing make an appearance in a future Jefferson Tayte mystery?

**SR** When a fan on my Facebook page <www.facebook.com/SteveRobinsonAuthor> drew my attention to the case, my jaw literally dropped. Surely, this was fiction, right? Just like in my books? But no, it was real genealogical sleuthing, and right up Jefferson Tayte’s alley. I honestly wasn’t surprised to read that genealogical research had helped to track down a killer. DNA has been at the forefront of criminal investigation for a while now, and it goes hand in hand with family history. It would be great if the Golden State Killer case boosted awareness of the genre. I’ve hinted at DNA being used to confirm a bloodline in *In the Blood*, but it’s not yet been used as the central focus. I’m sure there’s scope for it in a future Jefferson Tayte Genealogical Mystery, though. Stay tuned, as they say.

**FT** A customer review of *The Last Queen of England* on Amazon says, “I can see this as a movie.” Who would you pick to play the main character?

**SR** I run monthly competitions on Facebook to win signed copies of my books, and when I asked this, I received some great suggestions. For Jefferson Tayte, who is tall and heavyset, I think Ben Affleck would be perfect. He has the build to carry it off, and I’ve seen some online images of him in tan suits just like Jefferson Tayte wears. His hair is the same color, too. Ben, if you read this and want to make a movie or seven, do get in touch. ●

Contributing editor **Rick Crume** is an avid fan of British genealogical mysteries.
Have the millions of DNA test-takers made a grave mistake when it comes to their personal information? Our legal expert answers 19 crucial questions about DNA testing and your privacy.

by JUDY G. RUSSELL with SUNNY JANE MORTON

As DNA testing services kicked off their sales last Thanksgiving weekend, US Sen. Charles E. Schumer of New York issued a warning about the possible dangers of testing. “Popular at-home DNA test kits are putting consumer privacy at great risk,” according to a Nov. 26, 2017, statement in the senator’s online newsroom. “Different policies amongst the most popular DNA kit firms grant unknown third parties broad access to your most sensitive info.” The release accuses AncestryDNA, in particular, of claiming the rights to monetize customers’ DNA without revealing how they’ll do so. Schumer calls for the Federal Trade Commission to “ensure that the privacy policies of all DNA test kits are clear, transparent, and fair to consumers.”

A few months later, news broke that California police used genetic genealogy to identify the Golden State Killer, whose rape and murder spree terrorized the state in the 1970s and 80s. Privacy advocates warned that genealogists could become unwitting informants against their relatives—even their yet-unborn grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
It's true that even basic consumer DNA tests can reveal a lot about you: your ethnicity, how you’re related to other test-takers and some physical and health traits. Your testing company does have access to this information, as well as any personal data in your member profile. They might use customer data for medical or genetic research. And, yes, your DNA results can potentially identify relatives (even future descendants) who are “persons of interest” in criminal investigations.

Should you be worried that your genetic genealogy test—or that of a relative—could put your privacy at risk? In this article, the “Legal Genealogist” Judy G. Russell offers answers to your questions about DNA testing and privacy, along with some guidelines to help you make decisions about DNA testing and using your results.

Q What determines how companies can use your DNA test results?
A Several different types of rules may be in place: laws, terms of service (TOS) agreements, genealogical ethics and your own good sense. Laws in the United States, Europe and elsewhere provide some level of protection for your DNA results. They may control whether an employer or insurance company can use a genealogical DNA test to make decisions about employment or benefits, and whether law enforcement agencies need court approval to obtain your data (see page 52 for more on this). But these laws aren’t in place everywhere, and they don’t cover every possible use of your DNA.

TOS agreements—also called “terms and conditions”—are rules companies and websites put in place to which you must agree in order to use their services. Just about any genealogy website has TOS, whether you’re purchasing a DNA test kit or subscribing to a website where you search for ancestors’ old records. These agreements affect your legal rights, so you should always read them (see page 50 for more details on TOS). Clicking that little box to agree to a company’s TOS is akin to signing a contract, and it’s generally enforceable by the terms of contract laws.

Q Do any laws protect you from misuse of your genetic information?
A The answer varies depending where you live. Laws are pretty much a patchwork around the world that can change in unpredictable ways.

In the United States, current federal laws offer a fairly low level of protection against misuse of your DNA test results. The Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act of 2008 says health insurers can’t use genetic tests to refuse (or charge more for) coverage, and companies with more than 15 employees can’t use them to discriminate at work. But life, disability and long-term care insurance isn’t included in this law, and small employers aren’t covered either unless a state law steps in to fill the gap.

In Europe, the new General Data Protection Regulation directly controls access to genetic information. Elsewhere, tests and test-takers are subject to the laws of each country. And of course, you may give up some or all of these legal protections when you agree to a testing company’s TOS.

Q Do you have to agree to a DNA company’s terms of service?
A Yes, if you want to use the services of that particular DNA company. TOS are offered on a take-it-or-leave-it basis; whether you like it or not, whether you think it’s fair or not. The TOS may offer you options about whether your results can be used for medical research, but you’ll still have to sign the TOS before you use the services of that company.

5 Privacy Musts for DNA Testers

1. Carefully read terms of service (TOS) before using a DNA testing or analysis site. Test or upload data only if you completely agree with the privacy standards.
2. Read any research consent forms, too, before deciding whether to agree.
3. Guard access to your data according to your risk tolerance level. This includes sharing logins and uploading results to third-party DNA analysis sites.
4. Share your information only with those who will respect your wishes—and get assurance in writing before you share.
5. Use your own good sense and the genealogical community’s guidance to make ethical choices regarding testing relatives, sharing test results, contacting matches, and other aspects of DNA testing.
DNA testing involves a trade-off: You have to share information with DNA cousins to use your results, and that means accepting some level of risk.

can register for the site. So particularly when it comes to DNA testing, please stop, read the terms carefully, and be sure you can live with them before you check that “Agree” checkbox.

**Q** What rights do you give up when you test with a genealogy DNA testing company?

**A** Every DNA testing company has its own TOS, and provisions vary. They all have one thing in common: You grant the company the right to analyze your DNA and use it, combined with the results of all other testers, for basic research. At AncestryDNA, for example, agreeing to the TOS means you give AncestryDNA the right to “perform genetic tests ...; compare your DNA results with other DNA data in the Ancestry database...; disclose to you, and others that you authorize, the results of the tests performed; [and] allow certain ... laboratory partners to use ... samples to calibrate or validate instruments, equipment, or laboratory methods....”

Customers also must agree that AncestryDNA can use their results in “studying aggregated Genetic Information to better understand population and ethnicity-related health, wellness, aging, or physical conditions; conducting scientific, statistical, and historical research; and, improving features and functionality in our existing DNA-related products...and building new products and services, including services related to personal health and wellness.” This means customer results can be used in research to provide and improve the DNA testing product. You’ll see essentially the same terms at any of the testing companies, including 23andMe <www.23andme.com>, MyHeritage DNA <www.myheritage.com/dna>, Family Tree DNA <www.familytreedna.com> and Living DNA <www.livingdna.com>.

To withdraw permission for atesting company to use your results according to the TOS, you have to ask the company to destroy your sample and remove your test results from its database.

**Q** What about third-party websites like GEDmatch, Promethease or DNA.Land? Do they have TOS, too?

**A** Yes, they do, and the TOS make it clear that your data doesn’t have as many protections as they might at a testing company:

- **GEDmatch** <www.gedmatch.com> a site that lets testers compare results across companies, bluntly says in its TOS that: “...if you require absolute privacy and security, we must ask that you do not upload your data to GEDmatch. ... While the results presented on this site are intended solely for genealogical research, we are unable to guarantee that users will not find other uses. If you find the possibility unacceptable, please remove your data from this site.”

- **Promethease** <promethease.com>, which compares DNA markers to medical databases, notes that its system was designed to maximize privacy, but adds: “Visitor uses this information and related software at their own risk.”

- **DNA.Land** <dna.land>, which provides genetic reports in return for participation in research, says in its policy statement, “We will do our best to protect the information you provide to us. Despite our efforts, we cannot guarantee that your identity and/or data will never become known, which could have significant implications in some scenarios. We estimate that the risk for such a confidentiality breach is low but not zero.”

An estimated 12 million people have taken genetic genealogy tests. Use the tips at <familytreemagazine.com/articles/dna/best-dna-test-tips-genetic-genealogy-101> to choose the best DNA test for you.
**Q** Is there any way to be completely safe online with my DNA data?

**A** Yes—don’t take a test. There’s no way to be 100 percent sure that your data won’t ever be exposed in a way you wouldn’t like. DNA testing inevitably involves a trade-off: You have to share information with DNA cousins in order to use this tool effectively in your research, and that means accepting some level of risk.

**Q** Are testing companies selling our DNA data to pharmaceutical companies or other organizations?

**A** Some testing companies have partnered with pharmaceutical, medical and other research firms and will use anonymized, aggregated data to try to make scientific breakthroughs. You have the option to fill out an online consent form (separate from the TOS you must agree to) that allows the testing company to disclose personally identifying information, which can be helpful in researching diseases with a genetic component.

23andMe explains that it may share anonymous, aggregated information such as “30 percent of our female users share a particular genetic trait,” without providing any data or testing results specific to any individual user.” It also makes it clear that it “will not sell, lease, or rent your individual-level information (i.e., information about a single individual’s genotypes, diseases or other traits/characteristics)...without your explicit consent.”

Similarly, AncestryDNA explains, “We share your Genetic Information with research partners only when you provide us with your express consent to do so through our Informed Consent to Research. Research partners may include commercial or non-profit organizations that conduct or support scientific research, the development of therapeutics, medical devices or related material to treat, diagnose or predict health conditions.” At Family Tree DNA, individually identifying information is disclosed only to research partners with express consent of the test taker.

**Q** What does this additional research consent involve?

**A** The research consents that some companies ask for allow them to use and disclose personally identifying information to their research partners. That includes individual DNA results for a variety of research purposes, including medical and pharmaceutical research. At 23andMe, that consent covers test results, age, ethnicity and health information provided by consumers. At AncestryDNA, the consent covers DNA samples, test results, personal and family health information provided by testers, medical conditions, diseases, lifestyle or other traits and family tree data. Those who consent receive no financial benefit for participating in research, even if the research results in commercial products.

**Q** Do you have to give consent to this research in order to take a DNA test?

**A** No. Unlike the TOS to which every test-taker must agree to, this additional level of research consent is voluntary. You can say no and, if you begin by saying yes, you can change your mind later on and opt out of further research by third-party companies.

**Q** Does withdrawing consent wipe out all your data?

**A** No. The hitch is that all of the companies combine your data with the data of all others who test (with identifying information stripped off) to conduct scientific research. Because identities are removed from the data, the company can’t pull back an individual’s data once it’s been combined with that of other testers. And once you consent to use of personally identifying information in a research study, the company can’t pull that back either.

---

**Where to Read DNA Websites’ Terms of Service**

- 23andMe <www.23andme.com/about/tos>
- AncestryDNA <www.ancestry.com/cs/legal/termsandconditions>
- DNA.Land <dna.land/consent>
- Family Tree DNA <www.familytreedna.com/privacy-policy>
- GEDmatch <www.gedmatch.com/policy.php>
- MyHeritage DNA <www.myheritage.com/FP/Company/popup-terms-conditions.php>
- Living DNA <www.livingdna.com/terms-conditions>
- Promethease <promethease.com/terms_of_use>, <promeathease.com/privacy>
How can law enforcement use your DNA information?

Law enforcement can use genealogical DNA test results to identify suspects, in the same way you might use your results to identify a cousin or a birth parent. In the Golden State Killer case, police had a lab generate a DNA profile from crime scene DNA. They uploaded the profile to GEDmatch (<www.gedmatch.com>), a free DNA analysis and matching site (not a testing service) that works with users’ raw DNA data. They researched the family trees of matches until they found a descendant who fit the killer’s profile. They then confirmed the identification using DNA from the suspect. The same strategy also can be used to identify “John Doe” and “Jane Doe” crime victims and unclaimed remains. Laws governing these uses aren’t fully developed and the courts may have a lot to say as time goes on about what constitutes proper use of genealogy databases.

Do testing companies encourage police to use genealogical tests?

Not at all. In fact, 23andMe's web page for law enforcement (<www.23andme.com/law-enforcement-guide>) states that “use of the 23andMe Personal Genetic Service for casework and other criminal investigations falls outside the scope of our service's intended use.” But testing companies may not be able to stop such use. The TOS require people who submit tests to guarantee the samples they submit are theirs (or that they have legal authority over them). Courts may rule that police have legal authority over crime scene samples, and may rule that they don't have to identify themselves as police if they submit crime scene profiles to DNA databases.
Is this happening a lot?

No. Through 2017, AncestryDNA had received one search warrant relating to the identity of a DNA tester from a public database, and in 2018, Family Tree DNA received one law-enforcement request. This method of identifying criminal suspects may become more common. Shortly after the high-profile Golden State Killer arrest, Snapshot DNA Analysis <snapshot.parabon-nanolabs.com> launched with renowned genetic genealogist CeCe Moore on staff to help investigators identify DNA samples. GEDmatch reminded its users that “It is important that GEDmatch participants understand the possible uses of their DNA, including identification of relatives that have committed crimes or were victims of crimes. If you are concerned about non-genealogical uses of your DNA, you should not upload your DNA to the database and/or you should remove DNA that has already been uploaded.”

I’d like my relatives to take DNA tests for my research, but I’m worried privacy concerns will scare them off. What can I do?

Ethics is at the core of DNA testing. It’s crucial that when you test or ask others to test, you’re doing it only with “informed consent.” At a minimum, anyone who tests has to be aware of and consent to the risks—not just related to privacy, but also the risk of learning unexpected information about themselves and their families. That includes misattributed parentage, adoption, unknown heritage, health problems, previously unknown family members, and errors in family tree research.

Other risks include breaches in privacy or security. There’s no way to guarantee DNA results will always be protected, identities will never be known, a testing company’s security won’t fail, or a third-party database won’t be hacked. Anyone who tests must personally and individually consent to these risks—including relatives who test at your request, or whose test results you may manage online. You can’t ever consent for someone else unless you’re the parent or legal guardian of that person, acting with full legal authority.

What does informed consent mean when it comes to sharing results?

It means, in a word, permission. Get informed consent before sharing what you learn through DNA testing. Never share anything about living people without their approval. That includes names, addresses, emails, all aspects of the DNA results themselves, and more. If you’re taking a screenshot of your results, blur out your matches’ names and emails (if you haven’t gotten their permission to share their information in this way). Don’t publish any identifying information about them, even in email or social-media posts, unless they agree. And never upload another person’s DNA test results to another website (like GEDmatch, Promethease, DNA.Land or another testing company’s website) without getting the test-taker’s permission.

How can I ensure I have a relative’s informed consent?

Leading genetic genealogists including Blaine T. Bettinger, author of The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy <familytreemagazine.com/store/guide-to-dna-testing-and-genetic-genealogy>, have created templates to help you explain the risks and benefits of testing. They also have space for a relative’s signature as proof of permission. You’ll find examples and a link to Bettinger’s form on the International Society of Genetic Genealogy wiki <isogg.org/wiki/Project_consent_forms>. These templates aren’t intended as legal advice—only a lawyer can provide that—but they do give you a starting point.

Where can I get more information on DNA and privacy issues?

Genetic Genealogy Standards <www.geneticgenealogystandards.com>, a free guide by a team of genealogists and geneticists, covers most ethical concerns about testing and sharing results. Another free guide that applies to all genealogical research, not just DNA testing, is the National Genealogical Society’s Guidelines for Sharing Information with Others. Go to <www.ngsgenealogy.org>, look under Research References, then select NGS Guidelines.

The best guide of all to respecting DNA privacy may be your own good sense of right and wrong. You know the Golden Rule: treat others (and their DNA) as you’d want yourself (and your own DNA) to be treated.

Judy G. Russell is a legal expert who blogs at the Legal Genealogist <www.legalgenealogist.com>. Contributing editor Sunny Jane Morton has helped two adopted-out relatives find their places on her family trees.
Your immigrant ancestors may have arrived over the Canadian or Mexican border—even crossing multiple times. Here’s how to trace them.

by SUNNY JANE MORTON

In years past, millions of US immigrants arrived by ship at East and West Coast ports—so many that it’s easy to ignore other travel routes. But a significant number arrived from the North or South by land, including many who weren’t from Canada or Mexico at all. In fact, beginning in the 1880s, many European and Asian immigrants found it easier to enter the United States over land than by sea.

 Relatives also may have crossed US land borders for reasons other than immigration. Thousands of workers did so for business or seasonal work. Some vacationed over the line or hopped the border to marry at destinations such as Niagara Falls, Canada. And reaching further back in time, some of our Spanish, British or French ancestors came from the south or north before US borders existed.

If you suspect your ancestor crossed national boundaries or you can’t find evidence of an immigrant’s arrival at a seaport, we’ll show you how to research records that document these migrations.
BEFORE THE BORDERS
“A big portion of my ancestors [from Mexico] didn’t come to the United States: the United States came to them,” says Colleen Greene <www.colleengreene.com>, a librarian, university instructor and author of Mexican and Hispanic genealogy guidebooks. “They were already living there when our present-day borders were finalized.”

“The same applies to a large percentage of our ‘immigrant’ ancestors,” she continues. “They migrated into what was still colonial Spain, or Mexico after it obtained independence and before it lost a third of its land to the United States.” Colonial Spanish settlements in the American Southwest are some of the oldest European-founded towns within US boundaries today. Juan de Oñate’s expedition into what is now New Mexico dates to 1598, and the city of Santa Fe was founded in 1610.

From the north, French-Canadian trappers and traders began settling the greater Midwest in the 1600s. French troops founded Detroit, Mich., on the shores of Lake Erie in 1701. French Acadian exiles fled Nova Scotia in the mid-1700s for new homes in New England or further south, including to Louisiana, where their descendants became known as Cajuns. Traffic didn’t just flow south, though. For example, during the Revolutionary War, about 35,000 British Loyalists bolted north to Upper Canada (the northern shores of the Great Lakes). Some later returned to the United States.

The new nation emerged from the Revolution with its land doubled, and growth continued. The Northwest Ordinance in 1787 formalized settlement of the Great Lakes region. In 1803, the Louisiana Purchase added what’s now Montana, the Dakotas, the rest of Minnesota, and a narrowing swath of land south to Louisiana. Spanish cessions in 1819 added Florida and part of Louisiana. In the mid-1800s, the country finally reached the Pacific Ocean, creating new borders with Mexico, extending the 49th parallel boundary with Canada, and finalizing most of its modern boundaries. Sometimes, the French, Spanish, indigenous and other residents already living in each of these areas fought for respect of person and property. Other times, they left, were killed or were driven out.

Learning the history of these regions during your ancestor’s lives can help you better understand what may have happened to them—and where to look for related records. For example, says Greene, “Part of the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo [with Mexico] in 1848 were that Mexican citizens living on the US side of the border had the choice of either becoming US citizens or returning to what became Mexico. Their land rights were supposed to be protected and respected after that change, but that didn’t happen.”

In these cases, record availability and access depend on the time and who had jurisdiction over the place in question. Land and other records may be in US state archives, library and university collections, or foreign archives. Look for guidebooks and articles covering research in an ancestor’s time and place. Consulting historical maps of the area during times of border transition can help. If you’ve tested your DNA with AncestryDNA <ancestry.com/dna>, study the list of migratory communities suggested by your test results to see whether any may pertain to your family.

SETTING BOUNDARIES
The nation’s boundaries gradually settled into place, but they were porous. Industries throughout the country recruited laborers from overseas. The government welcomed immigrant homesteaders to help fill its western lands. Immigrants poured in by the millions.

Throughout the early-to-mid 1800s, they entered and departed the United States relatively unchecked, including at land borders. Political refugees came from Canada in the 1830s, and from Mexico about 80 years later. The Mexican

**TIMELINE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1818</td>
<td>A convention with the United Kingdom establishes the northern boundary of the Louisiana Purchase at 49 degrees north.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>The disputed Maine-Canada border is finalized.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 1839, when this map was published, the United States’ southern border stopped at the Republic of Texas, and Mexico extended north to Oregon Territory. Government sponsored US settlers in what became Texas. Prospectors rushed to the California gold fields in the 1840s and 1850s, and then to Alaska—via Canada—a half century later. Escapées from slavery followed the Underground Railroad to freedom in Canada. Homesteaders of all nationalities flocked to western lands in the United States. In the late 1800s, Mormon settlers of Utah colonized parts of both Canada and Mexico. During this time, your ancestors may have rejoiced in their relative freedom of movement. However, the lack of records can make tracing them difficult. Try these strategies:

- For historical context that can help you identify their migratory group, consider reading a good history of border migration, such as Crossing the 49th Parallel: Migration from Canada to the United States, 1900-1930 by Bruno Ramirez (Cornell University Press) or North from Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States, 3rd edition, by Carey McWilliams, Matt S. Meier and Alma M. Garcia (Praeger).
- Contact genealogical societies and libraries in your ancestors’ areas to ask about resources on early pioneers, including lineage society applications filed by other descendants.

**CLOSING THE OPEN DOOR**

In 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act passed, reinforcing earlier restrictions against Chinese workers. Then the Immigration Act of 1882 added restrictions for other groups. Those barred from entry into the country included convicts and people judged to be insane, mentally handicapped or unlikely to be financially self-sufficient. Later laws excluded anarchists and polygamists.

Initial immigration control efforts focused on ship passengers. After all, that’s where the greatest numbers were arriving. It was easier to monitor ship traffic at designated ports of entry than to monitor land borders against individual travelers. The main US-Canadian border is nearly 4,000 miles long (plus another 1,500 miles along the boundary with Alaska, which the United States acquired in 1867). The Mexican border runs nearly 2,000 miles, much of it across a desert. That’s a lot of possible crossing points.

Immigrants quickly recognized land borders as a “backdoor” entry option. During the 1880s, hundreds of thousands of US-bound European immigrants booked passage to Canada and then came south to cross the border. Greene says a similar phenomenon occurred in Mexico, with European and Asian travelers.

In 1895, US officials began cooperating with the Canadian government and with shipping and rail-road lines to document ship passengers to Canada who declared their intention to continue to the United States. Between about 1895 and 1906,
immigration inspection stations (“land ports”) opened along borders with Canada and Mexico.

Due to the sheer length of the borders, though, they remained unsecured. Inspection stations often opened only in high-traffic areas. And, at least in the early years of border inspection, travelers didn’t have to prove who they were or where they came from. Before the 1930s, if admissible persons told inspectors they planned to stay in the United States for less than six months, they may not have been documented at all. So entering the country by land continued to be a preferred option for those worried about rejection if traveling by sea.

Eligible workers crossed Canadian and Mexican borders regularly for their jobs well into the 1900s. Some migrated to farm cheap, fertile US acreage; others, to labor on farms. Merchants visited business contacts. French Canadians, including many single women, worked in New England textile factories. Shipbuilding jobs along the Atlantic coast attracted workers from the Maritime Provinces. By 1930, nearly 3 million Canadians lived in the United States, a huge number considering Canada’s population of just 10 million. Meanwhile, the railroad, mining and agricultural industries recruited heavily from Mexico. In the mid-1900s, the Bracero Program regarding labor agreement brought even more Mexican workers.

CROSSING ON THE RECORD

“You won’t find lots of records for earlier migrations,” Greene says. But once border-crossing records begin, you may see lots of back-and-forth. Greene describes a pattern for seasonal employment similar to the “birds of passage” workers from Europe. “Some of my ancestors from that period have eight to 10 crossings over 20 years. You’ll find a man crossing over for six to eight months of work, then returning home for a time, and then another border crossing. Nine months later, a child is born.”

Border-crossing records varied based on the time period, place and the entrant’s citizenship status and planned duration of stay in the United States. Instead of recording travelers on lists, inspection agents created individual cards for each. They used different versions of the cards over time, but all included basic information such as the traveler’s name, age or birth date, sex, national origin, race and US entry date. Sometimes for a single border crossing, you’ll find both a short-form record on a card, and a long-form record on a register. Look at both.

The long-form manifest includes places to note important personal and genealogical details. From these, you might be able to reconstruct a basic physical description of your traveling ancestor (especially if a photo was attached). The names and places provided could help you identify relatives and residences on both sides of the border. You may even discover details that can help you understand the whys and wherefores of their migration stories.

Millions of border-crossing records are searchable on both Ancestry <ancestry.com> and FamilySearch <www.familysearch.org>. You can search them all simultaneously at Ancestry by hovering over the Search tab and choosing Immigration and Travel, then clicking Border Crossings and Passports on the left. At FamilySearch, look under Search>Records. After you search,
Clues in Border-Crossing Records

Like other passenger lists, border-crossing records added information over time. The preprinted text on border-crossing record images can be difficult to read. Use the blank form at <archives.gov/files/research/genealogy/charts-forms/manifest-immigration.pdf> for reference and to transcribe your ancestors’ records. Here’s what we can learn from this card.

1 This card documents the arrival of Joseph Ganem, accompanied by six children.

2 Joseph entered at the land port of Laredo, Texas, on July 19, 1927. For those crossing by rail, you may find the name of the railroad line.

3 Personal details include age (50), occupation (merchant) and place of birth (Kobeh, Liban, Syria; likely a misspelling).

4 Though hard to read, this question asks the amount of “money shown.” Those with little money might be deemed a “likely public charge,” indicated by the notation LPC.

5 Joseph previously lived in Monterrey, Mexico (“MX”), also the home of his nearest relative, brother Amen. He was headed for New York.

6 Joseph visited the US in 1925, 1926 and 1927; a clue to look for records of those crossings.

7 Some immigrants were subject to a head tax at various times, or their entry fulfilled part of their country’s quota under the Immigration Act of 1924.

8 Check the image of the reverse side of the card for immigration inspectors’ remarks.

Some border-crossing databases are specific to individual border stations, and some include both land and sea arrivals. For example, Ancestry’s collection of Detroit crossings <search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1070> contains about 1.7 million passenger records with both card manifests from border crossings and lists of ship passengers and crew who landed at the port of Detroit. (A fun related collection is the Niagara Falls, Ontario, hotel register <search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=60714>, where you may find US relatives vacationing or getting married.)

1924
Congress establishes the US Border Patrol to secure borders between inspection stations.

1925
A treaty with the United Kingdom clarifies the Canadian boundary through part of Minnesota.

1932
The Border Patrol is given two directors, one at the Mexican border office in El Paso, the other at the Canadian border office in Detroit.
FINDING FAMILY AT THE BORDER
You’ll better recognize your relatives in border-crossing records if you can learn where they crossed. “Pay attention to maps,” advises Greene. “Where were the established settlements and travel routes? Where did the railroads run? I was looking at the border crossing nearest where my family settled in California, based on WWI draft registrations and the 1920 census. [But] they all crossed at Laredo, Texas. I figured out why from a map of the railroads in Mexico. The railroad ran from where they lived directly north to Laredo.”

The Library of Congress collection Railroad Maps, 1828 to 1900 <www.loc.gov/collections/railroad-maps-1828-to-1900> may prove helpful. Under Location, click More Locations and then select your geographic area of interest (such as Mexico or Ontario).

When searching for relatives with Mexican or Spanish surnames, be aware of naming traditions. Spanish-speaking countries use a dual surname system, with the father’s paternal surname as a person’s primary surname and the mother’s paternal surname as a second surname. “At the border, a woman may have rattled off two surnames, and the official may have recorded the first surname as a middle name,” Greene says. “A child may have crossed with the parent, but been misrecorded under the parents’ second surname, because border agents thought the last surname was the family name.” You might find similar mistakes in compound given names, such as María Elena or José Francisco.

The same principle may apply for border crossers who originate from any country with distinct naming traditions. French Canadians, for example, might use dit names, which function as second surnames (see <familytreemagazine.com/premium/take-a-dit-tour>). Greene advises searching immigration records under all possible name combinations. She adds that once you find a relative’s crossing, you should look for family by searching for all who crossed the same day. “Also, try partial searches on Ancestry,” she suggests. “Enter different partial-name combinations, with whatever other information you know.” Adding a hometown, especially if it was small, can help you find relatives and identify their kin and friends.

When viewing images of border-crossing records, know that they aren’t sorted consistently. They may be alphabetized roughly by surname, and might be further sorted by given name.

Border-Crossing Records At a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crossing</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Find at …</th>
<th>Ancestry: Indexes and Images</th>
<th>FamilySearch: Indexes only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US to Canada</td>
<td>1908-1935</td>
<td>&lt;search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1344&gt;</td>
<td>1908-1935</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1952
Border Patrol agents are first permitted to search a conveyance for illegal immigrants anywhere in the US.

1965
US immigration policy switches focus from country of origin to family ties inside the United States.

1993
Under President Bill Clinton, Operation Gatekeeper begins work on a 13-mile border wall between San Diego and Tijuana, Mexico.
MIGRATION MYSTERIES
Even for the time period when border-crossing records exist, you might stumble into some challenges. Consulting regional, ethnic and migration histories can help you understand what you see (or don’t see) in records. For example, Greene tells of a largely unknown period during the Great Depression called Mexican Repatriation. Between 1929 and 1936, more than one million US citizens (including those by birth) and other residents of Mexican descent were deported to Mexico. See <www.stateoftheunionhistory.com/2017/11/1930-herbert-hoover-mexican.html> for information.

Knowing this history could help you figure out what happened to your family. “Researchers find that their ancestors just disappeared from US records without explanation,” Greene says. “Some eventually came back; a lot stayed away.” This wasn’t an official federal program, so little documentation exists. But Greene says that if your family filed a certificate of residency with a Mexican consulate in the United States prior to leaving, you might find records in the national archives of Mexico <www.alaarchivos.org/national-archives-of-mexico>.

Undocumented arrivals increased in the 20th century as laws restricted legal immigration based on country of origin. It’s challenging to trace these people back over the border, in part because their later lives in the United States also may be less documented. “You might find them on a census record, or you might not,” says Greene. “You’re often looking for indirect or negative evidence—gaps in records that should be there—to tell you that this family was flying under the radar, attempting to avoid being noticed by authorities.”

Start by gleaning whatever knowledge you can from living relatives, Greene suggests. Ask about the first relatives to enter the United States, where they came from, when other relatives arrived, what kind of work the family did, what life was like, and how connected the family stayed with relatives at home. If relatives seem anxious about divulging information, you may have to be patient, build trust and accept answers as they become more willing to share.

For Catholic ancestors, Greene recommends researching US parish records. “Faith was important, and immigrants might not have gone through the process of generating US vital records but would have sought after the sacraments.” Catholic sacramental records of baptism, marriage and extreme unction for the dying often mention overseas hometowns of immigrants.

Benevolent societies also assisted immigrants, generating records in the process. Consider from what churches, ethnic organizations or urban aid societies your family may have sought aid. “The Knights of Columbus provided assistance to Mexican immigrant groups as well as Mexican-Americans,” says Greene. “These can be good leads for undocumented families, especially if you already know your family was affiliated. The records aren’t always accessible or easy to find, and they may not be willing to give you access, but those are good places to look.”

Some undocumented ancestors eventually naturalized, too. Between 1929 and 1944, immigration officials created Registry Files for naturalizing US residents with undocumented entries or missing entry documents. These files are packed with evidence about the person’s US arrival. Order copies at the US Citizenship and Immigration Services website <www.uscis.gov/genealogy>; under Records Available, click Registry Files.

US borders have been busy with traffic for centuries. Knowing your ancestors may have crossed those lines—perhaps multiple times—opens up possibilities for understanding their storied pasts.

Contributing editor Sunny Jane Morton lives within walking distance of Lake Erie, just across from Canada.
IF IT’S BEEN AWHILE SINCE YOU LAST USED THE FREE FAMILYSEARCH WEBSITE <www.familysearch.org>, you might notice something new next time you visit. You’ll now need to register for a free account—or sign in if you already have one—in order to view the results of your record searches. (Previously, only select record collections required sign-in.) This allows FamilySearch to provide the level of data security its content partners require, and enables better user authentication. Yes, it’s another password to remember, but at least you can opt to stay signed in for two weeks.
Q The 1910 census lists my great-grandmother at 8 Eisenbeis Court in Pittsburgh. Despite much research, I’ve been unable to locate Eisenbeis Court. Can you steer me in the right direction?

A Small streets (as “Court” suggests) can be devilishly hard to find. They weren’t well-known and might be missing from indexes. Like other streets, they may have changed names over time.

City directories and censuses might help narrow your search by naming nearby and cross streets. We searched an 1895 Pittsburgh directory in Google Books <books.google.com>, and found an Eisenbeis Row, not Court. Keep in mind that census enumerators sometimes misspelled street names, just as they did your ancestors’ names. So we might also have searched for Eisenbeiz (a German variant), Eisenbeisz, and so on.
In city directory and census collections like Ancestry’s <ancestry.com>, try using street names as keywords, with quotes around the entire street name. Check “exact” to find residents of only that street over the years.

Searching the 1910 Pittsburgh map at <esriurl.com/pittsburgh>, we struck out on “Eisenbeis,” Row or Court. But searching for the adjacent streets (Belmont, Hopkins and Rebecca) listed on the 1910 census page, we found the little unnamed side street shown on the opposite page. This is an excellent candidate to be the elusive Eisenbeis Court.


Q: How can I find out what my great-grandfather did for a living?

A: As with so many genealogy questions, the answer starts with the US census, which first began asking for the “profession, occupation or trade of each person over 15 years of age” in 1850. That question stayed essentially the same through 1910. The 1920 census added “Industry, business or establishment in which the person works.” For help understanding how occupations were recorded over the years, see <usa.ipums.org/usa/vollii/tocccode.shtml>. Decipher the occupation codes used beginning in 1910 at <stevemorse.org/census/codes.html>.

City directories are another essential tool, as these annual or biannual books typically list a person’s occupation, and sometimes the employer’s name or address. If you suspect your great-grandfather worked on the railroad, as many men did, hunt for him in the Midwest Genealogy Center’s index of railroad retirement records at <quicklook.midwestgenealogycenter.org/index.php>. US military draft cards for World War I (regardless of whether your ancestor got called up) give the occupation and employment for men born between about 1872 and 1900. WWII enlistment data, online at the National Archives <aad.archives.gov/aad/fielded-search.jsp?dt=893&tf=F&cat=all>, give a “civilian occupation.”

If your ancestor applied for a Social Security number as an adult, his SS-5 application should include his employer at the time. Order these records at <faq.ssa.gov/en-US/Topic/article/KA-02585>. Old newspaper stories sometimes identified people with an occupation. Advertisements might name shop owners and tradesmen. Obituaries also are worth a look, although early papers often gave short shrift to common laborers in their obits, skipping occupational details.


David A. Fryxell is the founding editor of Family Tree Magazine. He now writes and researches his family tree in Tucson.
Sign of the Times

Our expert seeks clues to this family’s identity—and the meaning of the man’s hand gesture.

1. When it’s present, photographer’s information (on the front or back of a photo) provides the name of the photographer and location of the studio. City directories, censuses and newspapers tell us Collison lived from 1859 to 1907 and invented the instantaneous shutter for cameras.

2. The peaked shoulders on the woman’s dress and her short-bangs hairstyle date the image to about 1890.

3. This tie style also dates to about 1890.

4. The baby’s dress suggests the image was taken in warmer weather, when sleeves and socks were unnecessary.

5. Cream-colored mats with rounded corners were common in the 1890s.

6. This hand position may represent the man’s membership in a fraternal organization. Searching city directories or newspapers for the area would provide the names of groups to investigate. (If you recognize this hand sign, let us know by emailing ftmedit@fwmedia.com.)

7. This unidentified image came from the area of Erin, Tenn. It’s important to label your photographs so the images don’t end up as mysteries. Write gently on the back with a soft-lead pencil.

Maureen A. Taylor is Family Tree Magazine’s Photo Detective blogger <familytreemagazine.com/articles/news-blogs/photo_detective> and author of Family Photo Detective (Family Tree Books) <familytreemagazine.com/store/family-photo-detective-u9824>.
Take your research to the next level!

Join the **Family Tree VIP** program today for the advice, tools and resources to enhance your genealogy research.

- **Family Tree Magazine one-year subscription (7 issues):** Get the tips you need to trace your roots from America’s #1 family history magazine.

- **Family Tree Premium one-year subscription:** Get members-only access to thousands of how-to articles on FamilyTreeMagazine.com.

- **Members-only savings:** Log in before you shop to save even more on every order from the Family Tree Shop with your automatic 10% discount! Plus, enjoy free shipping on every order.

- **Family Tree University discount:** VIPs save an extra 10% off registration in live online courses and workshops.

- **Family Tree Toolkit:** This VIP-exclusive PDF includes the 101 Best Websites for genealogy, project forms and decorative family tree charts.

**BECOME A VIP TODAY!**

<familytreemagazine.com/vip>

Visit the **Family Tree Shop** for more great savings on books, magazines, webinars and research guides for genealogists!
23andMe Sues Ancestry

DNA TEST PROVIDER 23ANDME <www.23andMe.com> has sued rival Ancestry <ancestry.com> in California federal court, alleging false advertising and patent infringement. 23andMe is seeking to invalidate Ancestry’s trademark for the “Ancestry” name, arguing that the term is generic. Further, it claims that the AncestryDNA test infringes on 23andMe’s patented technology for identifying DNA matches who share long stretches of identical or nearly identical genomic regions. The lawsuit also claims that Ancestry.com has been misleading customers by running a “perpetual sale” on its DNA test, and by falsely claiming in ads that it reports on five times more geographic regions than its rivals.

This isn’t the first genetic genealogy industry lawsuit. In 2017, AncestryDNA settled with DNADiagnostics over the latter company’s “AncestryByDNA” test. Ancestry also paid a company called OraSure Technologies $12.5 million to settle a patent infringement lawsuit over its saliva collection technology. However, this suit between two industry leaders could have more impact in the market by changing how DNA test kits are marketed and distracting the companies from technological innovation.

CAN A DNA TEST DETERMINE YOUR CANCER RISK?

DNA testing service 23andMe has received FDA authorization for the first-ever direct-to-consumer genetic test for cancer risk, for its BRCA1/BRCA2 (selected variants) report. This report covers three variants in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes associated with increased risk for breast, ovarian and prostate cancer. These variants are most common in those with Ashkenazi Jewish roots. See <blog.23andme.com/health-traits/majormilestone-consumer-health-empowerment> for details.

The new report doesn’t diagnose or rule out cancer. According to 23andMe, “It doesn’t cover most of the thousands of BRCA1 and BRCA2 variants associated with increased cancer risk, variants in other genes associated with hereditary cancer, or nongenetic factors such as environment and lifestyle.” 23andMe urges testers to take their reports to their healthcare providers.

The company also has updated its Ancestry Composition report to cover more than 150 populations and regions around the world, up from the previous 31. The report gives customers a more-detailed visualization of the geographic origins of DNA.
MyHeritage Launches Health Family Tree

SUBSCRIPTION GENEALOGY WEBSITE MYHERITAGE <www.myheritage.com> has released a beta version of Health Family Tree, a new, free tool that helps users organize family health information entered as a subset of their online MyHeritage trees. Users can annotate health conditions of living and deceased relatives (first- and second-degree blood relatives, plus spouses). The tool allows users to generate a report that can be easily downloaded, printed or pulled up on a mobile device to reference during health care visits.

The Health Family Tree is a secure area on MyHeritage family websites, available only to family site managers (not to other members of family websites). Additional opt-in access categories may become available in the future. However, as spelled out in MyHeritage's Terms and Conditions <www.myheritage.com/terms-and-conditions>, data you share may be used in research projects: “The Health Family Tree is designed to facilitate research (both internal and through third-party organizations) with the aim to make and support scientific discoveries and publish some of those discoveries in scientific journals.” Additionally, the terms and conditions state that “before providing information about others, you must obtain any necessary consent from anyone about whom you want to provide Health Family Tree Information.”

SERVICE HELPS POLICE USE GENETIC GENEALOGY

Not long after California police announced they’d caught the Golden State Killer using genetic genealogy, a company called Parabon Nanolabs <parabon-nanolabs.com> launched a new service to help other criminal investigators repeat that success.

The Snapshot Genetic Genealogy Service, directed by genetic genealogy expert CeCe Moore, bills itself as “a cutting-edge forensic DNA analysis service that provides a variety of tools for solving hard cases quickly.”

The new service will offer genetic genealogy analysis (using genetic profiles to research DNA matches), DNA phenotyping (predicting a person’s physical appearance and ethnic ancestry based on DNA evidence), and kinship inference (determining the kinship between DNA samples). When it launched, Snapshot had already piloted the service by screening DNA samples for nearly 100 investigative agencies. Less than three weeks later, Washington state police reported the company’s work led to an arrest in a 1987 double homicide outside Seattle.

FINDMYPAST AND FAMILYSEARCH COLLABORATE ON COMMUNITY TREE

Findmypast <www.findmypast.com> is attempting to find a happy medium between private online family trees (such as those on Ancestry and MyHeritage) and a single, community tree with one profile per ancestral person.

Findmypast has partnered with FamilySearch <www.familysearch.org> to bring the latter site’s enormous, collaborative family tree into the Findmypast environment. The Global Family Tree is in beta, but you can search it at <www.findmypast.com/worldtree>. Findmypast members with private trees on the site will eventually get the option to merge their trees into the global tree, and add to ancestor profiles there.
HOW TO Use a Microspatula

1. Photo preservationists use microspatulas to remove photos stuck to album pages.

2. Gently work the narrow end of the tool beneath the stuck photo, starting at the edges and moving it toward the center.

3. Position the microspatula horizontally to minimize bending the photo.

4. Work slowly and patiently around the entire photo, repositioning it as often as needed for best results.

5. You also can use microspatulas to lift photos gently, without digging your fingers under the edges; remove labels; separate book pages; and apply adhesive in hard-to-reach areas.

in the SHOP
Save your family photos before it’s too late with this easy-to-follow, downloadable guide <familytreemagazine.com/store/photo-rescue-digital-download-w6457>. 

PHOTO: RACHEL FOUNTAIN
5 Tools to Find Your Family’s Tombstones

1 American Battle Monuments Commission
<www.abmc.gov/database-search>
Look here for information on more than 200,000 burials and memorials in overseas US military cemeteries (most for the World Wars). Also find names from the Walls of the Missing at the East Coast Memorial, West Coast Memorial and Honolulu Memorial.

2 BillionGraves <billiongraves.com>
BillionGraves collects crowdsourced gravestone images, transcriptions and GPS data. A partnership with MyHeritage <www.myheritage.com> has made the site and mobile app (iOS, Android and Windows) available in 25 languages. Register to search the site for free; additional perks (including GPS searches for nearby relatives’ burials) come with a BillionGraves+ membership.

3 Find A Grave <www.findagrave.com>
This free Ancestry-owned site, which has an app for iOS and Android, compiles user-contributed gravestone inscriptions and other data. Be sure to verify any biographical information and “calculated relationships” provided in your relatives’ memorials.

4 Interment.net <www.interment.net>
This fast-growing, free website sources cemetery records from government offices, genealogical and historical organizations, and individuals. You’ll find “Special Collections” of burials and deaths related to flooded cemeteries, mine disasters and the Woodmen of the World fraternal organization. The site’s search form allows for name variants and misspellings.

5 Nationwide Gravesite Locator
<gravelocator.cem.va.gov>
The US Department of Veterans Affairs runs this database. Search for burials of veterans and their family members in VA national cemeteries, state veterans cemeteries, other military and Department of Interior cemeteries, and private cemeteries (with graves marked with government grave markers).
The free FamilySearch Catalog <www.familysearch.org/catalog/search> is an underused portal to more than 765 million browse-only historical record images—images that aren’t yet indexed, so you won’t find them by searching for a person’s name. But the catalog gives you a key to these freshly harvested record images from the Family History Library and from FamilySearch camera teams in archives around the globe. Here’s how.

Sunny Jane Morton

**WEBSITE**

FamilySearch Catalog

**A** From the FamilySearch home page, look under the Search tab to find the catalog (as well as the Research Wiki, book search and other parts of the site).

**B** You can search the catalog without signing in, but you’ll need a free account to access FamilySearch record collections.

**C** You’ll search the catalog for genealogical resources that may name your family—not for your ancestors’ names *within* those resources.

**D** Search by Place for records and indexes pertaining to a location (country, state or province, county or city). The more specific the location you enter, the more local the records.

**E** Surname searches bring up books and other materials in which the last name you type is prominently mentioned.

**F** Use Keywords to search for materials about an organization or event. You also can use this field to add a record type (such as marriage) to a place search.

**G** Search results include digitized items as well as printed items held at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. You can opt to find only items available online. Some online records are further restricted for use at FamilySearch Family History Centers <www.familysearch.org/locations>.

**H** If you don’t find the resources you need in the FamilySearch Catalog, click on WorldCat to look for published materials in other libraries. Click on ArchiveGrid to search for manuscripts in archives.

*In the shop*

This four-week online class helps you use FamilySearch like a pro <familytree magazine.com/store/university>.
Confidence Intervals

What do confidence ratings on my DNA test results mean? Are low-confidence matches meaningful?

DNA testing companies use advanced biology and fancy math to determine with whom you match and to estimate your relationship with those matches. Each company has a matching threshold that must be met before it will say two people are related.

In an effort to provide an understandable explanation of how matching works, AncestryDNA <ancestry.com/dna> shows test takers a Confidence Interval (CI) ranging from Extremely High to Moderate. You’ll see it in your DNA match list just below the Predicted Relationship Range. When clicking on your match’s name, it’s also on the person’s profile page. Essentially, the CI expresses how likely it is that you and this person share a single recent common ancestor.

To learn more, find the CI on the match’s profile page, click on the little “i” next to confidence interval, then click the “What does this mean?” link. Scroll down to the table and you’ll see that Extremely High means AncestryDNA is 100 percent confident you and the match have a single recent common ancestor (or ancestral couple), while High indicates a 95 percent chance. If you keep your investigation limited to matches with a High confidence level or above, there’s a good chance that the lead you’re chasing will produce a solid genealogical connection.

The CI relies heavily on the amount of shared DNA with a match, but that’s not the only factor. If you expand your search to include Good matches, you need to be careful, as these matches produce a single recent common ancestor only 50 percent of the time. This means that the DNA you share with many of your Good matches came not from a single recent common ancestor, but possibly from several more distant ancestors. They would be much harder to identify.

To make the best use of your genealogy time, restrict your use of Good matches to those that give you some other reason to investigate: Perhaps the match has a surname of interest, or also shares DNA with one of your High matches. I recommend not dabbling in Moderate matches unless you’re really desperate and you have the time.

Diahan Southard
Having a deep understanding of your own personal history is a wonderful way to contextualize the present and look forward to the future. ... It makes me make more sense. This is who I’ve become and this is how I’m living my life, because this is where I came from.

Actress Laverne Cox, who learned about her maternal family history as a guest on TLC’s “Who Do You Think You Are?” during the spring 2018 season.
fall 2018 virtual conference
SEPT 21-23

REGISTER NOW!
http://bit.ly/Fall18VC

RAVE REVIEWS

“Every subject that was put into this conference is very pertinent, no matter what kind of genealogy is practiced.”  Grace W.

“The Virtual Conference was wonderful! Live webinars were easy to attend including listening on my phone while out running a few errands. The courses were full of so many helpful tidbits that I can’t wait to incorporate into my research plans. Thanks again!!”  J.B.

“There were several topics I knew little or nothing about that were fascinating. Looking forward to exploring further. Loved the diversity of the topics.”  Theresa D.

3 days · 15 classes
UNLIMITED RESEARCH BENEFITS

- 30-minute recorded video classes to watch & download
- Live keynote presentation
- Live Q&As with genealogy experts
- New tips on DNA testing, researching your family history, and searching genealogy websites
Circle your wagons against unfocused research and use GenSmarts to fire your research rocket directly at high priority searches. Quick, reasoned and logical research – that’s what GenSmarts does best!