

# Tracing Your Lineage

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# HAVE MUCH PATIENCE!

## Types of Genealogical Evidence

- Direct Evidence – Directly addresses the matter at hand and offers an answer; it may or may not be complete or even accurate. It may come from an original or derivative source.
- Indirect Evidence – Does not provide a specific answer, but may support or refute direct evidence. When accumulated, it can be convincing in the absence of direct evidence or resolve errors in direct evidence.
- Negative Evidence – The absence of a record that should exist.

# Where do I begin?

- ▶ Begin by stating in concrete terms what you want to accomplish - be specific.
- ▶ Example: I want to discover when and where my maternal g-g-grandparents arrived in the US. I want to trace my XXXX family back to their home country.
- ▶ Next, start with what you do know - Yourself (Start a Family Group Sheet)
- ▶ Chronicle yourself and research backwards - because you are the easiest to find information on! Success breeds happiness in genealogy.
- ▶ Tell a few relatives what you are doing. Use a Family Questionnaire worksheet, if possible, to capture details. If they are hesitant to divulge information, move on.
- ▶ Talking to “Aunt Marjorie” - it may result in unknown information about family secrets
- ▶ Find “patterns” with names, locations, and hidden tips. If looking at a census record, look for neighbors who may be relatives. (next slide)
- ▶ Don't worry about surname variations



## RECORDS AND KEEPING TRACK -

- ▶ Use templates to record what you have found. Saves time and avoids “where did I finish last time I worked on this line?” (oh, those rabbit holes)
- ▶ Check out our forms at: <https://lakesregiongenealogy.wordpress.com/>
- ▶ Use what you are comfortable with, but be consistent
- ▶ If you are using paper: Use the Family Group Sheet and a Research Plan form (display)
- ▶ If you are familiar with Google Sheets or Excel - these are great for tracking location of a family over time, esp if they are listed in city directories and for identifying gaps. (Show my Mooney Directory Spreadsheet)
- ▶ Free forms are also available:
  - ▶ [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Use\\_Appropriate\\_Forms](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Use_Appropriate_Forms)
  - ▶ <https://www.irishfamilyroots.com/getting-started> (generic use)

See the Next slide for saving your information

## WHERE AND HOW WILL I SAVE WHAT I HAVE FOUND? - So Many Options!

- Save precious papers in a binder, set up by Family Name but scan and save important items which, if lost, would be difficult to recreate
- Use a software program, which allows you to attach images and documents
- Free software programs, such as RootsMagic.com - their essential program is free; FamilySearch.org is free to sign up for. Remember that much of the information in FamilySearch or in Ancestry Trees are entered by individuals/volunteers so verify what has been done. Watch out for “duplicate” individuals/families. In FamilySearch, living individuals are “privatized” - In Ancestry, set up your “Privacy Settings” (publicly viewed or private)
- If keeping paper files, use different color folders to identify family surnames/lines and have a portable file if you plan to visit a library - Easy to identify later!
- If using your laptop or desktop, where are you saving your information/scans? Structure your folders under “Documents/Genealogy/FamilyName” and then set up subfolders by Generation #s to separate your items.
- Keep family stories you have written in a separate subfolder such as “XXX Family Stories” - same with cemetery photos, family photos, etc
- THE RULE OF THREE 1) Keep hard copy only for what is very important or difficult to recreate 2) Scan or Save to your PC/Laptop 3) Back up your folders on a thumb drive or external drive OR Save to the Cloud for posterity - Dropbox, Google Drive or a program such as Carbonite.
- Look for ideas at: [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Organizing\\_Your\\_Files](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Organizing_Your_Files)

## WHAT IS NEXT? YOUR RESEARCH, OF COURSE!

- ▶ Complete all of your US research - HOW? (I assumed you have located Vital Records!)
- ▶ Find your ancestor(s) in every US and State Census & online documents - Use FamilySearch “wiki” to locate state census information
- ▶ Remember that town, county and state boundaries changed over time
- ▶ Look into city and town directories, tap into town annual reports for birth, marriage and death information (State libraries, Historical Societies)
- ▶ Example: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/researchaids#family-history-research>
- ▶ Where did they live, what were their occupations? - Why was the occupation of “boilermaker” important in the mid-1800s? Use Google to find out.
- ▶ Review your copies of marriage, birth and death records - seek CLUES to the past
- ▶ Review baptism records (hints - godparents/witnesses may be relatives) Family Bibles?
- ▶ Use the FAN method: Friends, Associates, Neighbors
- ▶ Once you locate the country of origin, learn about migration patterns (show FamilySearch.org Research Wiki)
- ▶ Great free resources: - <http://thfhguide.com> - <https://www.cyndislist.com>  
<https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy>
- ▶ Use your local library - either in person or via internet - what subscription databases can you access for free? WPL carries FamilyTree Magazine.

# Other Resources to investigate:

- ▶ School records and yearbooks are now being digitized (Ancestry.com)
- ▶ Search newspapers for obituaries, marriage announcements, probate notices, court records, ask your librarian Examples: Library of Congress: Chronicling America for major newspapers - free; newspapers.com – a subscription required – see Cyndi’s list website; theancestorhunt.com - free
- ▶ Use “Google” – Books, records, images
- ▶ <https://www.worldcat.org/> - find books and publications in libraries near you.
- ▶ <https://www.archives.gov/> for military records (Fold3 – subscription or visit a Family History Center)
- ▶ Need access to images in FamilySearch.org that you can’t view online? If your library is an “Affiliate” member of this organization, you can view more images than an at-home version. OR make an appointment to visit a Family History Center. (Wolfeboro, Exeter, others open by Appt)
- ▶ [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Introduction\\_to\\_Family\\_History\\_Centers](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Introduction_to_Family_History_Centers)
- ▶ See next slide for a list of what is available via their portal

# Family History Center Information - subject to change:

## Contents [hide]

- 1 Access to Family History Center Portal
- 2 Premium Websites Available
  - 2.1 19th Century British Library Newspapers
  - 2.2 Alexander Street Press - American Civil War
  - 2.3 American Ancestors
  - 2.4 Ancestry - Institution Version
  - 2.5 ArkivDigital
  - 2.6 British Newspaper Archive
  - 2.7 FamNet
  - 2.8 Findmypast
  - 2.9 Fold3 - formerly Footnote
  - 2.10 Geneanet
  - 2.11 Kinpoint - Premium
  - 2.12 MyHeritage - Library Edition
  - 2.13 Newspapers.com
  - 2.14 Paper Trail
  - 2.15 Puzzilla - Premium Services
- 3 Other helpful websites

# I think I have completed my US Research - What is NEXT?

- ▶ Did you find an immigration record or ship manifest via your research? Many records were from the port of departure, not the arrival.
- ▶ Was there a naturalization record? Prior to 1906, many could be in a court record, after 1906 they tend to contain more specific information.
- ▶ Save time and use the Research Wiki in FamilySearch.org
- ▶ Then, narrow down by country and specific documents you are seeking
- ▶ (Example: Azores)
- ▶ [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Azores,\\_Portugal\\_Genealogy](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Azores,_Portugal_Genealogy)
- ▶ Search for databases specific to the nationality you are researching.
- ▶ Facebook has many heritage groups which are helpful. Example: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/323211144363>
- ▶ Subscribe to Family Tree Magazine (Yankee Publishing) they include many research guides
- ▶ <https://www.cyndislist.com/us/>
- ▶ Join a local Study Group or ask your research librarian if the library will start a study group.
- ▶ Attend webinars and zoom meetings to pick up tips relating to your brick wall.

# DNA Testing - is Genetic Genealogy

## Are you ready?

- ▶ DNA testing has been very helpful to many individuals
- ▶ You can locate cousins, siblings, even biological parents and make connections if traditional genealogy research is limited by privacy rules or lack of records
- ▶ If you locate “matches” those individual may have completed a family tree and are willing to share, or answer questions
- ▶ Many list their contact info, often email address.
- ▶ Join a “group” to broaden your scope and connect with like minded researchers
- ▶ Not an answer by itself, but helpful. Go to YouTube for many beginner sessions on using DNA, GEDMATCH, etc
- ▶ Always be respectful of another person’s desire “not to talk about it.”

# What will happen to my Records?

- ▶ Consider that your records and research are as valuable as your other assets
- ▶ Discuss your interest in family history with family members
- ▶ Who has the interest in preserving your research? Ask!
- ▶ Complete a Genealogy Codicil to your will
- ▶ Share this upfront with those who will be named
- ▶ OR, speak with your local historical society to determine if their repositories would hold your books, family bibles and your research papers

GO DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE AND ENJOY THE JOURNEY!



# Use a genealogy workflow to keep organized. Here is a sample outline:

- Use a Research Plan document: <https://lakesregiongenealogy.wordpress.com>
  - Research plan reviewed.
  - Search for the needed record(s).
  - Source citations recorded – Do this now! You won't remember later.
  - Read/analyze the record.
  - Download the record.
  - File the record.
  - Add the record to the family tree, if applicable
  - Repeat *the above process for each record*
- At the end of the research session:*
- *Review the findings*
  - *Update the research plan*