

1. Hidden Treasures at FamilySearch

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FamilySearch's website has many free indexes and images to help you research your family. There are many ways to search, plus other useful tools to help you get started.

SEARCH

Records: These are digital indexes and images from the original historical record collection. Many of these come from original sources that were microfilmed and are now digital reproductions of what you would find if you traveled to those locations.

To access this collection, you can either type your ancestor's name in the name field or browse the collection by clicking on the applicable link. *You will get better search results by browsing and selecting the specific database than by entering the names in the main search field.*

To browse the record collection:

- Select ALL COLLECTIONS or just a specific one like UNITED STATES
- Click the collection you want to browse. A list will appear, and in the upper right corner it will list the number of collections in the chosen category.
- To find records in Ohio:
 - Choose UNITES STATES
 - You can type a locality such as OHIO in the box to the upper left under the SEARCH feature, or you can filter the categories below by selecting the specific locality (United States), the date, or category.
 - If you click the state name to the left instead of typing it in the box, then when you use the back arrow, you won't have to retype the state name every time.
 - Click on the link for **Ohio Deaths 1908-1953**.
 - Type your ancestor's name. Make sure that the ancestor you choose actually died between 1908 and 1953, otherwise they won't be found in the index.
 - When the list of names appears, click on the applicable one. For this database you will need to sign in to view the original image as required by the record collection donor.
 - These images easily can be saved to your computer. Click on the SAVE button or right click your mouse on the image and select SAVE TO YOUR COMPUTER.

It is helpful to just browse by scrolling down and seeing what is in the collection and how it is organized.

- Census records are listed under **United States**, then arranged by the census year.
- Many military records are also listed under United States
- The **IGI** or International Genealogical Index is part of the collection again and can be searched by the full name or by typing in IGI into the search box.
- If you see a camera icon next to a collections' name, there is a digital image as well as the transcribed abstract.
- If there is no camera icon, then it is an index only. Once you view the name you want check for the microfilm number to view the original image located in the catalog.
- If it has "browse collection" instead of a number of the size of the collection, then you will have to browse to the specific topic, then search image by image to find the entry. Many of these records have indexes in the front or end of each specified book that can aid in browsing the un-indexed record collections.
- If you are having trouble finding your person, try searching just by location and a date range with the exact filters on to see if your location at that time is included in the online indexed collection. Sometimes you can't find who you want because that location isn't indexed for that time. If it is not part of the record collection, search the catalog to see if the originals have been microfilmed.

Record collections are constantly being added to the historical record collection. Check back often to see what's new.

IMAGES

In order to make more of the digital collections available faster, FamilySearch developed technology to index and load the records via computer imaging. The computer digitized and indexed records are filed in the "Images" category of SEARCH on FamilySearch. These are different than the records filed in the "Records" and "Catalog."

FAMILY TREE

You have to be logged in to use this feature. You can add your own family tree to this site as well as sources, photos, documents, and research notes. Make sure to check to see if you ancestors are already in the database **before** you upload your gedcom. If your relatives are already in the system, you can easily connect everyone using their assigned ID. Documents, photos and source details can be attached to each person, which makes preserving your records and sharing your data super easy! Using FamilyTree is one of the best ways to break through your brick walls because it is easy to collaborate with relatives and share your research online on a free website.

MEMORIES

You can add or find family photos on your ancestors when you are logged in. What a great way to share and preserve family photos, documents and stories with other family members who live far away. People can easily be tagged and linked to the applicable person in the Family Tree. The tagging feature makes it easy for other relatives to help identify people in group photos.

CATALOG

The Family History Library Catalog is a compilation of all the books, microfilms, microfiche, and other records available in the family history center located in Salt Lake City. Copies of original records (vitals, census, church, tax, court, etc.) from around the world are stored on microfilm or microfiche. Data found in the “Record Collections” part of FamilySearch comes from what is contained on the microfilms, microfiche, and books in this collection through the indexing project. “Images” are the new way records are being digitized.

Records can no longer be ordered on microfilm. Instead, they are being digitized with the digital images being loaded into the library catalog, in the historical records, or images. To view the images, search by location or topic. Click on the record category. Scroll down to the list of microfilms / microfiche. If there is a camera icon next to the microfilm, then it is available to view online. If there is a lock next to the camera icon, then those records can only be viewed at a family history center or family history center affiliate. Once these records are digitized, many become part of the indexing project. If you would like to help with indexing, sign up online under the INDEXING tab.

Searches to the catalog can be made by selecting one of the following filters: Place Names, Last Names, Titles, Author Information, Subjects, Call Numbers, Film Numbers or Keywords.

How to search by place / locality

- Select Place Name in SEARCH box
- Type in your locality (e.g. Indiana, Tippecanoe). This will bring up all those localities with Tippecanoe and Indiana. Select the locality you want and hit SEARCH. *(Remember that in the U.S. most records are organized on the county level, so it is very important to know which county you need to research. In the New England states, many records are stored in the towns and a search should be done by town.)*
- A list will then appear with categories and topics for Tippecanoe County, Indiana. There will be a number next to each category. This number is not the number of names in that category but the number of collections for that topic.
- Select the applicable category and title. Click the drop-down arrow and choose from the titles. Click the link and you will be directed to either the digital image found in the historical record collection or the page view that contains information on the microfilm / microfiche.
- Keep in mind that record collections that list the author as County Courts, Probate Courts, Clerk of Courts, District Courts, and the Health Department usually have the original documents in their collection, not just an abstract. Collections with an author’s name are usually abstracts or typed indexes. Although the abstracted indexes are immensely helpful, original records should always be checked.

BOOKS

The Family History Library in Salt Lake City and many other participating libraries are working together to digitize their books and make them available to the public. Many family books, county and local histories, and other type genealogy books have already been completed and can be found on this site. This is a great place to find county histories.

WIKI

FamilySearch's Wiki is a resource similar to an online library like Wikipedia. It can be searched by key word for specific articles or by browsing topics or locations. Many articles and how-to instructions about family history can be found or posted on this site.

Remember that website links and content material is posted by individuals or genealogists who are familiar with records for that specific locality and where to find them. Many times, links to online databases with name indexes are referenced.

For international countries, genealogical word lists, letter writing guides, and beginner's getting started tools are available. Best of all – it's free!

ACTIVITIES

FamilySearch's Family History Activities provide fun in home family activities designed for the whole family. Some fun ones include:

- Where am I from?
- Famous Relatives
- Compare-a-Face
- Record My Story
- In-Home Activities

Solutions Gallery – located at the bottom of the page. This also provides tools and games to help you connect, organize, and explore your family and their heritage. My kid's favorite is *Geneopardy* under the Games section. How well do you know your ancestors?

HELP

- **Contact FamilySearch:**
 - *Call Us:* Provides contact information for FamilySearch via telephone
 - *Live Chat:* Allows you to chat with someone online to answer your questions
- **Help Center**
 - *Search box:* allows you to type in a topic and get links to webinars, articles, etc.
 - *Search by topic:* more focused help for specific topics including:
 - *Family Tree, Memories, Searching Records, FamilySearch Account, Indexing, RootsTech, FamilySearch Wiki, FamilySearch Partners, DNA, Family History Centers, Mobile Apps, and Online Courses*
 - *Other Help Options:* ways to get help with family history questions
 - *In-person Help* –identifies family history centers for one-on-one help
 - *Getting Started* –tutorials for beginning your family history journey
 - *Community* – other users provide help in community forums