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www.internet-genealogy.com
SUMMER GENEALOGY BOOKS

New!
This is a list of approximately 1,000 persons who are known to have owned land or resided on Jamestown Island between 1607 and 1699. They are listed here alphabetically along with their known dates of residence in Jamestown, their official position in the colony (landowner, burgess, etc.), and their place of origin or county of residence. In addition, the book contains details concerning the settlement of the island, a brief history of Jamestown plantations and hundreds and their evolution into the early counties of Virginia, pen and ink drawings, and maps of the fort and city of Jamestown.

New!
This is a comprehensive survey of virtually all printed sources that establish American genealogical links to medieval kings and their "dark age" and "ancient world" forebears. Of the 650 immigrants treated here, 387 came to the American colonies and left many thousands of descendants. The 2006 edition, containing an Addendum and Coda, outlines descents from kings for nineteen additional immigrants, improves the list of eighteen more, lowers the descent for eight others, fully disproves one, and suggests disproving a seventh for four.

New!
NEW YORK STATE CENSUS & SUBSTITUTES. By William Dollarhide. 8 1/2" x 11". 248 pp., illus., paperback. (2005), repr. 2006. ISBN 0-8063-1766-3. $1494. $32.95
Among other things, this groundbreaking work identifies 448 state census originals for New York's 62 counties, located at 69 different New York depositories; 120 statewide and regional name lists, including tax lists, land records, military lists, and newspaper indexes; over 1,200 census substitutes and selected name lists; over 1,500 online town references to find direct links to census extracts, indexes, or other name lists online; and over 3,700 bibliographic citations in total, each with detailed descriptions and notes, library call numbers, and FHL film numbers. Mr. Dollarhide includes 19 county boundary maps for the period 1683-1925 and 26 New York State Census Extraction Forms, 1825-1925, with all population, military, agriculture, industry, birth, death, and marriage schedules, plus the 1890 New York Police Census.

Back in print!
Ohio has an abundance of sources available for genealogical research—statewide indexes and personal name finding aids, biographies, local histories, vital and church records, probate and court records, census and military records, land records, newspapers, naturalization records, gravestones, genealogical collections, and others. These sources are described in great detail in the second edition, which examines the holdings of the major Ohio archives and libraries and focuses on the many other resources available to the researcher. It also includes a greatly expanded bibliography of Ohio books and periodicals. New to this second edition are Ohio sources on compact disc and the Internet.

New!
Professional Irish genealogist John Grenham has written a book that contains all the best features of a textbook and a reference book—a book that carefully explains the elements of Irish research while at the same time providing an indispensable body of source materials for immediate use.

The new Third Edition of Tracing Your Irish Ancestors features a chapter that deals specifically with the Internet, while a new online subsection showing county Internet sources has been added to each of the county source lists. In addition, the Roman Catholic parish maps have been completely revised and redrawn, a guide to vatic parish names has been supplied, and the reference section has been greatly enlarged.

Back in print!
This work ties up the whole elusive body of documents and printed sources related to the more than 20,000 rank and file South Carolina soldiers who participated in skirmishes with the British and the Tories, the information, which was taken from pension records, bounty land warrants, annuities' claims, audited accounts, muster rolls, pay lists, etc., is arranged under the name of the soldier and includes some or all of the following data: dates of enlistment, service, battles, and skirmishes; names of commanding officers; names or designation of military unit rank attained; nominations indicating whether the soldier was wounded, killed or taken prisoner; source citations; and so forth.

New!
This is the second of three volumes that will eventually comprise the fourth edition of the landmark Adventurers of Purse and Person, the most widely respected of all "first families" studies and the actual starting point of American genealogy (see below). Individuals ranging from G-P (Gaither to Purdy) identified in the work must have been resident in Virginia during the period 1607-1624/5 or members of the Virginia Company of London in order to be designated "adventurers," and it is their descendants alone who qualify for membership in one of the most distinguished hereditary societies in America, the Order of First Families of Virginia. Adventurers of Purse and Person presents the genealogies of all adventurers with proven descents into the sixth generation.

Back in print!
Like Volume II above, Volume I establishes descents—through the sixth generation—of the approximately 150 individuals who can be identified as (1) Adventurers of Purse (i.e., stockholders in the Virginia Company of London) who either came to Virginia in the period 1607-1625 and had descendants or who did not come to Virginia within that period but whose grandchildren were residents there; or (2) Adventurers of Person, 1607-1625 (i.e., immigrants to Virginia) who left descendants. This first volume covers families A-F (Andrews to Freeman).

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Extra Issue!

Obviously we hoped that Internet Genealogy would be a success when we launched in early 2006 — the first issue carried an issue date of April/May — but we had no concept of just how popular we would become.

When we set the print run for the first issue, we ordered several thousand extra copies to use for promotional purposes; for conventions, societies, etc. We have used almost all of these copies to meet the subscription demand.

Reprinting the magazine would have been very expensive. Instead we decided to publish this Extra Issue of Internet Genealogy and make it available only online.

This issue features a lineup of completely new articles, many by the same authors as in the regular magazine, and we’re making this available to everyone! For those who already subscribe, consider this as a “thank-you”. For those of you who have heard about Internet Genealogy, but don’t want to subscribe until you’ve had a look at an issue, this is your chance. We hope that existing subscribers will tell their friends about this Extra Issue so that they can see what Internet Genealogy has to offer.

We’re not sure if any other magazine has ever done this; maybe it is a first, maybe it has been done before. Anyway, enjoy this issue and tell other people about Internet Genealogy if you find it useful.

Six Things You Should Know About Internet Genealogy

There are a number of business practices in the genealogy field that we do not approve of and have no intention of introducing. We just thought we would let you know about Internet Genealogy’s standards.

1. Internet Genealogy does NOT operate any type of “automatic renewal” basis on credit cards.
2. Internet Genealogy does NOT rent, sell or trade subscriber information.
3. Our phone numbers actually connect to our staff — we do NOT use subscription call centers. Call our published numbers (they are toll-free) and you speak to real Internet Genealogy staff — probably the people who maintain the subscriptions. You can renew or cancel your subscription, tell us about a change of address or anything else on our toll-free numbers.
4. We operate a 100 percent satisfaction guarantee on everything we sell. This unconditional guarantee even applies to shipping costs.
5. Each subscription issue is mailed in a protective polybag, which helps ensure that your issue is delivered undamaged.
6. We are consistent with our publishing schedule and subscriber copies have always been mailed on time. In the 10 years we have been publishing genealogy and history magazines, we have never published late. Any delays in delivery (which are very rare) have been as a result of postal or distribution delays outside our control.

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www.internet-genealogy.com
Net Notes

Images of England
www.imagesofengland.org.uk

Have you ever wondered what sort of houses your ancestors lived in? What did the buildings where they worked look like? The Images of England website allows you to peek into yesteryear with more than 250,000 photographs of historical buildings, monuments, parks and other items such as historical telephone boxes and milestones.

Several years ago, the National Monuments Record set up the Images of England project. Their goal was to provide a “snapshot in time” of England’s historical buildings, as of February 2001. At that time, more than 370,000 buildings were in the Listed Buildings database, maintained by English Heritage.

Each building listing features a short description, which includes such information as when the house was built, when it was renovated, and interesting architectural features, both internal and external.

Many of the buildings have photographs with their descriptions, but not all.

With free registration, a search engine allows you to find buildings based on county, town, street address or building name. If your interests are more general, you can also search on building types, materials and grades, as well as the period built.

Typing “house” for building name, “Beverley” for street, and “Hull” for town brings up Etherington House. My ancestors did not live at that house, but they lived nearby. However, the description says the house was built before my ancestors lived there, so now I know what the neighborhood looked like while they were there.

It would be easy to spend many hours looking around Images of England. Perhaps there will soon be similar sites for Canada and the US. — Adele Francks

Genealogy and History Links Library
http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~genealogylinks

The Genealogy and History Links Library (GHLL) website was launched in May 2002 as a free site devoted to history and genealogy.

“This web site is a collaborative effort of a group of ‘Cyber Friends’ who have an interest in Genealogy, and who volunteer their time to this effort,” the site’s statement of purpose reads.

Those of us who contribute to the site feel like extended family and we welcome anyone to join. GHLL is a friendly place. We are willing to help with genealogy problems when we can and have been publishing a newsletter for more than four years. The newsletter is aimed at new genealogists, but there is always something in each issue for the experienced genealogist too. GHLL also has a bulletin board open for discussion.

Another popular feature is our surname lists, which we try to keep up-to-date with no broken links. You can also add surnames to the “Seeking Surnames” file.

Our calendar lists events of a genealogical or historic nature. There is also an area called “Ancestral Charts” where your family chart can be posted. You are also able to update the chart as you discover more about your family history. We offer resources that our group and others have found useful for finding surnames and other aspects of genealogy.

There is also an interactive page that will take you to a chatroom and a bulletin board. Our pushpin map marks the location of all those who have signed our guestbook.

GHLL is a place where people interested in genealogy will find something new and exciting. There is a fun area with information about the contributors.

It is different in that it is not just a list of links to other websites — although there are pages that provide links to other areas. If you have questions or comments, they can be posted on the bulletin board or e-mailed to any of the volunteers and someone will be in touch to help answer your query. — Carol Sanderson of the Genealogy and History Links Library
Land title records are often overlooked as a family history resource, but they can contain many hidden gems — especially since nine of out every 10 adult white males in the US in 1850 owned land.

The General Land Office (GLO) records website, www.glorecords.blm.gov, contains more than two million copies of original land title documents and is projected to have more than five million before the database is complete. The majority of the records are from 1820 to 1908, but some date from as early as 1796 and many are from later than 1908.

Operated by the Bureau of Land Management, which is run by the Department of the Interior, the GLO oversaw the transfer of federally owned land to the general public. Some of this land was sold, some granted to soldiers and some given to homesteaders.

It is the most comprehensive land database online and includes all but 18 states. The site offers resource links to most of these missing states.

Through searching the GLO database, you can find when an ancestor arrived in an area, locate a description of the plot of land where he settled, and discover his friends, family and business partners. Other information has also been added to some documents. For instance, Ohio patentee Charles Scott has a note on his 1796 land title stating that he was a brigadier general for seven years. What an exciting find for someone who has barely begun to research Mr. Scott!

Searching is easy and quick. The user-friendly website has a page for frequently asked questions and a Visitor’s Center with a history of the GLO and a visual tour of the search facilities. Three search pages are offered. The Basic Search page contains fields for first and last names and the states.

The Standard Search also searches by state and lets you input information for both patentee and warrantee names (first, middle and last), section and survey number, and many other criteria, such as the act under which the patentee claimed the land (like the Homestead Act of 1862).

You can also find documents by their accession or serial numbers in the final search method. However, Basic or Standard Search will usually suffice.

After entering data in the search fields, a list of possible matches comes up. When a match is selected, the page displays four options: Patent Description is a summary of facts that shows up on the search list; Legal Land Description provides details such as township and range and makes it possible to pinpoint an ancestor’s land parcel on a map; Document Image lets you view the original document online in TIFF, PDF and large and small GIF formats, which you can then print from your computer; and Certified Copy allows you to purchase a copy of the document that is suitable for framing. Get it on plain or parchment paper for about $2US. You can either order online with a credit card, or print an order form and mail in a check or money order.

I can easily while away an afternoon finding my ancestors, their neighbors and all their wanderings on this website.

— Adele Francks
Celebrating Family History, An Anthology of Prize-winning Stories Sponsored by the Southern California Genealogical Society. Beth Maltbie Uychara. 2005, 5½x8½, paper, index, 284 pp. This anthology demonstrates the variety of ways in which a family history can be recorded and preserved. U4084 - $25.00

Wafis, Foundlings, and Half-Orphans: Searching for America’s Orphan Train Riders. Mary Ellen Johnson. 2005, 5½x8½, paper, index, 102 pp. Two brief, but moving, first-hand accounts precede an examination of the impact of mass migration; orphanages and institutions; and research and resources. References and a reading list add to the value of this work. J0955 - $17.50

To the Front and Back: A West Virginia Marine Fights World War I. Thomas Bryan McQuain. 2005, 5½x8½, paper, 280 pp. The author survived some of the worst battles of the war before returning to Gilmer County, West Virginia. He was an astute observer of both places and people, and his keen eye is reflected in his narrative. Vintage photographs and picture postcards enhance the text. M3148 - $29.00

The Diaries of John Hunton, Made to Last, Written to Last, Sagas of the Western Frontier. Michael Griske. (2005), 2006, 5½x8½, paper, 164 pp. Daily diary entries from 1873 through 1888, enhanced with narratives and commentaries that clarify and expand upon significant events. Contains exploits of Old West characters such as Wild Bill Hickok, Buffalo Bill Cody and others, most of whom were personally known by Hunton. G3804 - $22.00

Genealogical Abstracts of Edgefield, South Carolina Equity Court Records. Carol Wells. (2002), 2005, 5½x8½, paper, index, 92 pp. Equity records are a rich source of genealogical facts. Although one suit concerns a transaction made in 1736, most fall between 1790 and 1820. W2100 - $14.50

United Confederate Veterans of Limestone and Freestone Counties, Texas, Joe Johnston Camp, No. 94, Minute Book 1 and 2. Patricia Bentette McGinty. (2001), 2005, 8½x11, paper, index, 138 pp. Rosters of ex-Confederates of Limestone County; camp minutes; lists of living Confederate Veterans and Confederate widows (1926); possible Civil War veterans buried in Limestone County; and more. M1989 - $24.50

Map: Ireland just before the English Invasion. Reproduction Map, 8½x11, linen paper, color. Shows the boundaries of Ulster, Connaught, Meath, Munster and Leinster. MP0470 - $5.00

Map: Scotland in 1290. Reproduction Map, 8½x11, linen paper, color. Shows Scotia, Galloweida, and the Highlands. MP0440 - $5.00


The Hessian Occupation of Newport and Rhode Island, 1776-1779. Walter K. Schroder. 2005, 5½x8½, paper, index, 222 pp. This well-researched historical narrative portrays the events of the Rhode Island campaign, which lasted from Dec. 8, 1776 to Oct. 25, 1779. S0474 - $25.00

Wilderness War on the Ohio: 2nd Edition. Alan Fitzpatrick. 2005, 6x9, paper, index, 628 pp. While Washington’s patriot armies were battling British redcoats in set-piece actions across the colonies in the East, a war of a far different nature was being conducted in the West to determine who was master of the Ohio and Indian lands of the upper Ohio River Valley, the Ohio Country to its west. F0000 - $24.95

Map: The Colonies of North America at the Declaration of Independence. Reproduction Map, 8½x11, linen paper, color. Provincial and state boundaries of the period. MP0452 - $5.00


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1890 Special Census of the Civil War Veterans of the State of Maryland, Volume V, Parts I and II, Baltimore City, L. Tilden Moore. 2005, 8½x11, paper, index, 2 vols., 614 pp. A substitute for the missing 1890 U.S. Census. Contains name, highest rank held, organization, length of service, address, disability and remarks. M3303 - $86.00


CD: Old Landmarks and Historic Fields of Middlesex [Massachusetts]. Samuel Adams Drake. (1895), 2006, Graphic Images, Searchable, Adobe Acrobat, v6, PC & Mac, 458 pp. The author takes the reader down Colonial highways, recounts traditions and discusses men and events, concentrating on places and people made famous by the events of the Revolution. CD2716 - $15.95

Proud to Say I am a Union Soldier: The Last Letters Home from Federal Soldiers Written During the Civil War, 1861-1865. Franklin R. Crawford. 2004, 5½x8½, paper, index, 272 pp. This unique volume contains the final correspondence written by brave soldiers who did not survive the Civil War. C3189 - $29.50

American Prisoners of War Held at Halifax, During the War of 1812, Volume I and II. Harrison Scott Baker. (2004), 2005, 8½x11, paper, 2 vols., 592 pp. Transcribed from records of the British Admiralty pertaining to American prisoners of war held at Halifax, Nova Scotia, from June 1812 to April 1815. B3323 - $63.00

Hard Time in Concord, New Hampshire: The Crimes, the Victims, and the Lives of the State Prison Inmates, 1812-1883 (Book & CD). Milli S. Knudsen. 2005, 6x9, paper, index, 560 pp and CD. The prisoners, where they came from, what put them behind bars, and what happened to them and their victims. CD contains the original database of all 2,100 prisoners. K3285 - $50.00


Historical and Genealogical Source Material


Heritage Books
Case Study: Who Was Madison Davis?

When I offered to research my friend’s family tree as a wedding gift, neither she nor I expected that I would discover such a controversial political figure as Madison Davis among her ancestors. We also didn’t expect that he would be black. This, however, is what I found, relying entirely upon Internet resources for my research.

I began with the information that my friend’s grandmother was Emma Winston Davis, born on 20 September 1899 in Athens, Georgia. Emma was white, but there were some hints that she had creole ancestry. Emma’s parents were believed to be James Perry Davis and Daisy King. James Perry Davis was believed to have been born about 1875, the son of J.M. Davison and Ella Church.

Ancestry.com — 1900 Census

My first search, using the records on Ancestry.com, was for a Davis family living in or near Athens, Georgia at the time of the 1900 census, with a baby named Emma and parents named James and Daisy. I found them recorded in the 1900 census, living in the Third Ward of Athens. A 66-year-old black real estate agent named Madison Davis headed the household. With him were his wife, Ella, daughters Mattie (26, a teacher) and Laura (16), son James (23), daughter-in-law Daisy (20), grandchildren Emma, born in September 1899, and two adopted children, Beula (12) and William (14) Meriweather.

With that one find, I knew I was on to something interesting. Not only was little Emma living in an extended family household, but all of the members were recorded as black. This brought the possible “creole” ancestry into focus, and indicated that it was much more recent than expected. However, it was reasonably clear that even Emma’s grandfather, Madison, did not have entirely black ancestry, as his father’s birthplace was recorded as “Ireland”.

If the occupation of “merchant” didn’t tell me that this man was well-off, the presence of four non-relatives in the household would have.

I knew I was on to something interesting. Not only was little Emma living in an extended family household, but all of the members were recorded as black. This brought the possible “creole” ancestry into focus, and indicated that it was much more recent than expected.

LDS Family Search — 1880 Census

As the vast majority of the 1890 census was destroyed many years ago, the next earliest census to search was from 1880. A full transcription for this census is freely available via the family history website of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), www.familysearch.org. So, if I hadn’t had access to a subscription to Ancestry.com, I might have started by searching the 1880 census for young James. However, at that time I didn’t know his father’s full name. In fact, the family believed that James’ father used the surname Davison. Perhaps this was caused by confusion between his first and last names.

Searching the transcript of the 1880 census of Georgia for Madison Davis, age about 46, I found him, again recorded in the Third Ward of Athens. Madison’s age was then listed as 49, his race as mulatto (mixed black and white), his father’s birthplace as Georgia and his occupation as “merchant”. Living with him were his wife Ella, children William H. (21), Anna E. (17), Lizza C. (14), Mattie B. (10), Mana Ida (7) and James (4), (later examination of the actual manuscript page, via Ancestry.com, revealed a comment indicating that James was paralyzed in one limb). Also in the household were four non-relatives, a 24-year-old female mulatto laundress, a 14-year-old male black laborer, a 58-year-old female black nurse and a 30-year-old male mulatto master mechanic.

If the occupation of “merchant” didn’t tell me that this man was well-off, the presence of four non-relatives in the household would have.
Turning back another 10 years, using Ancestry.com, I searched for the Madison Davis household again in the 1870 census. I found the family in the Second Ward of the City of Athens. Madison was then recorded as 40 years old, mulatto, with the occupation “legislator”. Wow! Did that mean what I thought it meant? It was clearly the same man, as the rest of the household matched. In addition to his wife and three children, then living (Willie, Annie and Lizzie), his 57-year-old mother, Mary, was also living in the household.

Just in case Madison Davis was one of the few “free” blacks living in Georgia before the Civil War, I next tried searching the 1860 census for Georgia for him. This search was unsuccessful, as expected, since slaves were not recorded by name. There was a slave schedule for both the 1850 and 1860 census, but it recorded only the ages and gender of each slave, listed under their owner’s name.


I hit the jackpot when I found a set of pages called “This Day in Georgia History” at the Georgia Info website, www.cviog.uga.edu/Projects/gainfo/. Searching under “Madison Davis”, I found a brief biography on the page for September 27. It read:

“1833 Black politician Madison Davis was born in Athens, Georgia. Until the end of the Civil War, Davis was the slave of a local carriage maker. After the war, he was one of two Clarke County delegates to the convention that framed the Constitution of 1868. Also in 1868, Davis was elected to the General Assembly. Because of their light complexions, he and one other black representative were allowed to keep their seats when the legislature voted to expel black members. In 1870, Davis was reelected to the House. In later years, he served as US customs surveyor in Atlanta and as Athens postmaster. Davis was also active in Republican Party politics.”

The Athens-Clarke County Timeline, www.athensclarkecounty.com, provided similar, although much abbreviated information: “1868: Two former slaves, Alfred Richardson and Madison Davis, are elected in April as the first two black men ever to represent Clarke County in the state legislature.”

I also tried searching a wonderful collection sponsored by the University of North Carolina called Documenting the American South, http://docsouth.unc.edu/. This collection includes a number of first-person narratives, such as letters, memoirs and diaries by Southerners (including slaves, soldiers, laborers and aristocrats); Southern literary works from the colonial period to the beginning of the 20th century; slave narratives from across North America; US Civil War documents such as government publications, personal diaries, and religious pamphlets and autobiographies of religious figures, sermons and church histories.

Using the keywords “Madison Davis Athens”, I found one relevant reference. He was identified in a transcription of a 1916 publication, Centennial Encyclopedia of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, as the father of Elizabeth Davis, who married Rev. A.J. Carey in 1890.

Judging by this information, I now knew that I was on the trail of a prominent citizen of Athens.
I then started searching for records that pertained specifically to African Americans. First, as noted above, Ancestry.com has the slave schedules for the 1850 and 1860 censuses, as well as the “regular” censuses for those years in which white citizens were recorded.

As it seemed that prior to the Civil War, Madison Davis was owned by an Athens carriage maker, I tried searching the 1860 census records for carriage makers and then checking each one in the slave schedules to see if they owned a 26-to-28-year-old male, a 19- to-21- year-old female (Ella) and a two-to-four-year-old male (their son William). Sadly, I did not find any matches. Further work in the census records would have to wait until I could identify his owner.

Another set of useful records for African Americans are the Freedman’s Bank Records (officially named the Freedman’s Savings and Trust Company) for the period 1865-1874. The Freedman’s bank was created to assist newly freed slaves during and after the US Civil War. It was founded in 1865 and collapsed in 1874 due to fraud and mismanagement. However, during the period of operation, the bank created a series of records that are invaluable to the genealogist researching black American ancestors in the Civil War period. The bank’s registers of signatures of depositors collected a wide range of information about them, including their names, ages, places of birth, residences, occupations, names of parents, spouses, children, brothers, sisters, and, in some cases, the names of former slave owners.

Ancestry.com has scanned and indexed these records, so once you find a relevant entry, you can see the actual register with the hand-written information and the depositor’s signature. I searched for Madison Davis and found two records for him:

No 85.
Date: 31 January 1870
Where born: (blank)
Where brought up: (blank)
Residence: Athens, Georgia
Age: (blank)
Complexion: white.
Occupation: Minister of House of Legislature
Works for: (blank)

Husband or wife: Ella
Children: Willie, Anna and Lizzie
Father: (blank)
Mother: (blank)
Brothers and Sisters: (blank)

No 4849.
Date: 25 March 1874
Where born: Athens, Clarke County
Where brought up: do
Residence: Ivey Street
Age: 40
Complexion: (blank)
Occupation: Merchant
Works for: (blank)
Husband or wife: Ella
Children: Willie, Anna, Loiza, Matti, Mary
Father: Dead
Mother: Mary, Athens, Georgia
Brothers and Sisters: (blank)

Despite the blank fields, these records were very helpful in that they confirmed his mother’s name and his birthplace.

It was time to start searching the local genealogical record sites. Surprisingly, I found only one reference to Madison Davis when I searched the archives of the Georgia GenWeb under Clarke County: A paragraph in the 1923 local history, History of Athens and Clarke County, by H. J. Rowe (The McGregor Co., Athens, GA) reads:

“Clarke County sent two negroes to the Legislature, Madison Davis, and Alf Richardson. The former was conservative, sensible, and favored peace and order. He was scarcely a negro, under the definition of our Code, and retained his seat when the negroes were expelled from the Legislature. Alf Richardson was a turbulent and dangerous negro, advocating violent measures against the whites. The Ku Klux killed him in his house, in what is now Oconee County.”

Turning next to the Clarke County, Georgia page of RootsWeb, I searched under “Davis” and “Athens” and found transcripts of two city directories: one for 1889 and another for 1904. In the
1889 directory, four members of the Davis family were listed at the same address on Newton Street: W.H., Lizzie H., and Mattie B., all teachers, and Madison, in real estate. In the 1904 directory, I found two members of the Davis family still living on Newton Street: James P., a bookkeeper, and Laura, a teacher in the city school.

This helped fill out the picture of the Davis family, and confirm its middle-class standing with a strong focus on education. Madison was notably absent in the 1904 directory. This suggested that he may have died between the time of the 1900 census and the 1904 directory (the information for which was likely collected in late 1903).

**NEWSPAPER DATABASES**

I then went looking for online historic newspapers from Athens, Georgia. I did not find any, but the Atlanta newspapers for the relevant period are available through Ancestry.com, ProQuest Newspapers and EBSCO (the last two via the Godfrey Memorial Library). So I searched these and found a huge number of hits for the name Madison Davis (the number varied depending on the collection, despite the fact that the newspapers and dates were the same).

While there are too many to recount here, I did learn a great deal while attempting to read through them. They include short interviews with Davis, listings or announcements of his many appointments to public offices, including postmaster and surveyor, reports of votes in the legislature showing how each member voted and a short death notice (21 August 1902). There was, however, one item that I think provides an excellent example of the difficulties Davis must have faced in attempting to “rise above his station” as a black man in reconstruction Georgia:

“One of the four in trouble — Madison Davis, the colored individual from Clark County, whose name was stricken out of the resolution expelling free persons of color from seats on the floor of the House, on his pretense of having less than one-eighth African blood in his veins, has, it seems, aroused the indignation of his colored constituents. At a meeting of the League on Saturday night last, in Athens, quite a stormy debate occurred, in which said Davis was roundly abused and vehemently denounced for treason to his color. The renunciation of his race and blood and claiming to be a white man, inspired the League with so much indignation and contempt, that resolutions were passed declaring him no longer the Representative of the black man. Alas! Poor Davis! What will become of him now? We advise him to go to Hulburt at once, and secure a place on the State Road.” [i.e. get a civil appointment] — 11 September 1868, The Constitution, Atlanta

I should note that I had difficulty in using the Ancestry.com newspaper database as the search engine seemed to find different items each time I searched it. Items I found one day, I could not find again later. However, since these newspapers are available from several sources, this was not a problem. I found the ProQuest database particularly helpful, as it provided the titles of the articles in the search list rather than just the date and page, as on Ancestry. Also, you have the option with ProQuest to view the entire page in PDF format or just the relevant article.

**CIVIL WAR SITES**

Moving back in time, as Madison Davis was a young adult during the American Civil War, I sought out sites that might mention his participation. The Civil War Soldiers & Sailors System, [www.itd.nps.gov/cwss](http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss), is the best site I’ve found for identifying a soldier’s service in the US Civil War, with its database of information about 6.3 million soldiers (from both sides of the conflict) taken from the General Index Cards in the Compiled Military Service Records at the National Archives.

Searching for the name Madison Davis, I found 19 records. They included three men in Confederate regiments in Georgia — none of which seem to
have recruited in Clarke County) and one man in a Union regiment that recruited in Atlanta (136 Regiment, United States Colored Infantry). The last seems like the most probable match, but further research would be required to confirm or disprove this supposition.

**PEDIGREE DATABASES AND MESSAGE BOARDS**

Next, I decided to see if anyone else has been researching this family, and either contributed a family tree or posted messages about the family with the major online forums. Sadly, I found no mention of Madison Davis in the trees or message boards operated by Genealogy.com, Ancestry.com, or MyTrees.com, or in the LDS church’s International Genealogical Index or Ancestral File.

**Google**

As no Internet search would be complete without Google, I then tried “googling” his name. I found many hits for J. Madison Davis, a mystery writer, and Madison Davis Lacy, a film producer. However, interspersed among them, were a few references to “my” Madison Davis, along with another gem.

The February 2005 issue of *Reflections*, the newsletter of the Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network, included an item on efforts to restore and preserve the Gospel Pilgrim Cemetery in Athens ([http://hpd.dnr.state.ga.us/assets/documents/Reflections_Feb_2005.pdf](http://hpd.dnr.state.ga.us/assets/documents/Reflections_Feb_2005.pdf)). The article included photographs of several gravestones of notable people, including that of Madison Davis, and the description included the following information:

“Madison Davis was born enslaved to an Athens carriage maker in 1833. He began his political career in 1867 as a delegate to the state constitutional convention and was elected to the General Assembly the following year. When 26 African Americans were expelled from the Georgia Assembly in 1868 because of their race, Davis and three others remained due to their light skin color. He served two terms in the legislature and was Athens’ first African American postmaster.”

I also searched the new service, Google Books, which turned up one publication with five references to Davis: *The Way It Was In The South: The Black Experience in Georgia* by Donald L. Grant, 1993 (University of Georgia Press, Athens, GA). Google Books doesn’t let you read the actual pages of this particular book though, as these are under copyright. So following this up will require locating the book through a library or purchasing a copy.

**CATALOGS AND GUIDES TO NON-INTERNET RESOURCES**

While my research on Madison Davis was very successful using just the Internet, I suspect it only scratched the surface of available records. Another great use of the Internet is to identify potential resources for non-Internet research.

One online index I find useful is *The Biography and Genealogy Master Index* (by Thomson Gale publishers, 1980-2005), which is only available by subscription (I used my local public library’s access). The BGMI contained one citation for Madison Davis: Freedom’s Lawmakers. *A Directory of Black Officeholders During Reconstruction* (revised edition) by Eric Foner, 1996 (Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, LA).

Googling “Athens Georgia public library”, I found the Athens Regional Library System website, [www.clarke.public.lib.ga.us](http://www.clarke.public.lib.ga.us), which told me that their Heritage Room contains city directories for most years starting in 1889, confederate pension applications, clipping files, deed and mortgage records, estate records, miscellaneous court records, old newspapers, compiled service records for soldiers who served in the Confederate and Union armies during the Civil War, and something called the “Slaves Bills of Sale Project, two vols”. If I wanted to access these records, but could not go to the library in person, the staff does research for patrons, for a
fee. For residents of Georgia, the fees are $15 US/hour. For non-Georgia residents, the fees are $25 US/hour. They also provide a list of independent researchers who do work in the area.

The website of the state archives for Georgia, www.georgiaarchives.org, also provided a helpful summary of their records, indicating that their holdings include wills, court records, deeds and mortgages, oath books, voters lists, newspapers, church records, pre-1900 county births, marriage and death records, and many typescripts of Bibles collected by the Georgia Society of Daughters of the American Revolution. And, of course, the genealogical library of all genealogical libraries, the Family History Library (FHL) of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah, has a fantastic online catalog, with the vast majority of their records available to borrow on microfilm through your local Family History Center. I searched for records for Clarke County, Georgia and Athens, Georgia and found the following potentially helpful records: Records of the First Methodist Episcopal Church for 1825-84; records of the First Baptist Church for 1830-1913; City Court minutes and writs, 1879-1900/1902; and a wide range of court records including wills and estate records, deeds and mortgages.

**CONTINUING YOUR RESEARCH OFF-LINE**

To continue this research off-line (in addition to the ideas mentioned above), my next goal would be to try to identify Madison Davis’ owner prior to the Civil War. To do that, I would turn to court records for Clarke County. Relevant records might include property records, probates, tax records, civil and criminal case court records. As noted above, these records can be found at the Athens Regional Library, the Georgia Archives and through the FHL.

Another priority, to learn more about Madison Davis’ life and career, would be to read through the surviving historic newspapers for Athens. While this would be a time-consuming task, it would likely be extremely fruitful, especially for the few years during which the first black legislators were being elected, as Madison Davis would likely be mentioned frequently. I would also search the issues following the date of his death, for a detailed obituary, and for those just before and after the marriages of his children, as these would likely be notable social events.

I would also examine the Civil War service and pension records to determine whether or not any of the men I found in the General Index Cards in the Compiled Military Service Records pertained to “my” Madison Davis, and to see what more I could learn about his possible service during the war (these records are available through the National Archives and, to a limited extent, through the FHL). Finally, I would order, through inter-library loan, the publications that I found cited above and other general histories of Athens and Clarke Counties, Georgia, and black politicians and office holders in the south. You can never know too much about the history of the area and local conditions governing your ancestors’ lives; the more you learn, the more potential records you’ll discover. And the search goes on.

You can never know too much about the history of an area and the local conditions governing your ancestors’ lives. Reading old newspapers and other area histories can give you a glimpse into what life was like back in the day.
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WOULDN’T IT BE great to be able to have access to your favorite bookmarked genealogy websites from any computer? Have you ever found a great tip for breaking through that brickwall, but failed to jot down the site’s web address?

A9.com, a subsidiary site of Amazon.com, not only allows you to perform Google-enhanced web searches, but also gives you the ability to create bookmarks of your favorite websites, take notes that are displayed whenever you visit a particular site and keep track of your Internet browsing history. The best part is that all this information can be accessed from any Internet-connected computer.

When you first visit A9, www.a9.com, you will notice the many Internet search options that are available: You can specify different types of searches for the web, including searches for image files and even blogs. However, to take advantage of all A9’s additional tools, you need to sign in. If you have an Amazon.com account, you can use that site’s login information to access A9; otherwise you can quickly create a new account which can also be used on Amazon.com.

Once you have signed into A9, the first thing you’ll want to do is download the A9 toolbar for your Internet browser. The toolbar, similar to those offered by Yahoo! and Google, is currently only available for Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox and Netscape. You will need the toolbar in order to use all of A9’s features.

The best part is that all this information can be accessed from any Internet-connected computer.

To install the toolbar, click the link in the upper-right hand corner of the A9 homepage and follow the simple download instructions. The installer detects your browser type and walks you through the installation process. You will have to close and re-open your browser in order to see the toolbar.

If you signed in on the A9 homepage, you will notice that the Bookmarks, Diary and Your History buttons are enabled. If they aren’t, click the Sign In button to login and enable them.

Before diving in and exploring the features of the toolbar, you may want to change some of the default settings on the A9 homepage. In the upper-right hand corner, click the Preferences link. I recommend changing the option for displaying tools on the homepage to “Many tools can be open on the homepage” in the Layout section. Changing this setting will allow you to view your history, bookmarks and diary entries all on the same page. Click the Save button and you are taken back to the A9 homepage.

Once back at the homepage, you may want to close the About Tools tab and click the Your History and Your Bookmarks tabs; this will display an empty box for each section. If you plan on taking notes about websites you visit, you may also want to open the Diary tab. You can resize these boxes, similar to the way you adjust boxes on your computer, if necessary.

Now the fun really begins; on to the toolbar.

The first thing you will notice on the A9 toolbar is the search block; this field can be used two ways. First, you can use it to do standard web searches, similar to the search box on Google (see Genealogical Googling in the April/May 2006 issue of Internet Genealogy). To use the box for a typical web search, type in your keyword(s) and click the Search button.

Second, and this can be very useful if you are visiting a site that has a long list of surnames, you can use the search box to highlight every instance of search term(s) that occur on that page. This is also useful if you click on a link from search results and want to find a keyword on the page. To use this feature, enter the keyword (or surname) you are looking for in the search box, then click the Highlight button. Note that each search term you enter in the search box is highlighted in a different color.

The next option on the toolbar is the Bookmark button. This option allows you to create bookmarks of your favorite Internet sites. These bookmarks, along with your browsing history and diary entries, are saved on A9’s servers, so you can retrieve them later by going to the A9 homepage and logging in.
To create a bookmark, go to one of your favorite sites, then click the Bookmark button. A small drop-down menu will appear and you will notice that you have three options: Add a Bookmark, Edit Bookmarks and Import Bookmarks.

If you choose to add a bookmark, a small message box will appear with the website name, the current URL and an In Folder fields. You can accept the default settings by clicking the Add Bookmark button, or you can change them. For instance, you may want to categorize your bookmarks by creating separate folders for sites pertaining to different surnames, blogs, reference sites or podcasts. To create these categories, click the Create New Folder button, give it a name in the title field, then click the Create Folder button. The default location for any new category is in the main A9 folder, but you can create subfolders in any folder you create.

Keep in mind these bookmarks, along with your browsing history and diary entries, are not saved on your local computer, they are maintained on A9’s servers, so if you want a local link to a particular site, you will have to add it to your browser’s bookmarks separately.

You can edit your online bookmarks by selecting the Edit Bookmarks option from the Bookmarks drop-down menu on the toolbar. This option allows you to create new folders, create a diary entry about a site, move bookmarks up or down in a folder, create or delete a bookmark and delete a folder. There is also an option to export your online bookmarks to a file which you can import into your favorite web browser. You can create online bookmarks from links you have saved in your browser by clicking the Import Bookmarks option at the bottom of the Bookmarks menu.

The next button on the A9 toolbar is the Diary. The Diary feature allows you to make notations that appear every time you access a site for which you made an entry. This feature is very useful if you want to jot down a reference about a particular surname or contact information you may need later. To create an entry, simply click on the Diary button and a text box will appear under the toolbar. Any text you enter will appear the next time you visit the site. The diary drop-down menu allows you to see all of your diary entries at once, or to edit and delete previous entries. To hide the diary text field, simply click the diary button a second time.

Perhaps one of the most useful features of the A9 toolbar is the History function. This function, with a few exceptions, keeps track of your Internet browsing and search history. This is a very handy tool if you have found a website at home and forgot to bookmark it, only to need it while at the library. All you have to do is go to the A9 homepage and log in, your browsing history will be there, including previous searches (marked with a magnifying glass), which is great if you can’t remember what search terms got you to a particular site.

There are a couple of important factors you should keep in mind about this particular feature. First, the URLs of secure Internet sites (those that begin with https), file transfer (FTP) sites and pages or documents opened on the local computer are not recorded. Second, unless you toggle the button to Off on the toolbar, it records all other browsing history. This can be a privacy issue for some, so if you are concerned about others accidentally viewing a record of your browsing history at the library, you can turn off this feature. The History feature is somewhat flexible, in that you can delete individual history entries or your entire browsing history from the A9 homepage.

One potential negative is that in order to take advantage of this History feature, you have to have the A9 toolbar installed on the computer you are using, and be logged into the A9 service. This is a slight drawback if you are hoping to track your browsing history while at the library or other public computer, but it is a very useful feature for research conducted from home.

There are a few additional buttons on the toolbar, including an option that allows you to view site statistics, and the ability to make a list of all links on a page.

As you can see, the A9 website and toolbar can be an extremely useful resource as you roam the Internet conducting your genealogical/family history research.

Bill Puller is a freelance writer, amateur genealogist, and technology geek. He is the creator and host of the Genealogy Tech podcast and can be contacted at bill.puller@gmail.com
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RESEARCHING YOUR GERMAN ANCESTORS

Between 1830 and 1880, Germans never made up less than a quarter of all immigrants to America. The percentage peaked in the 1850s when nearly 37 percent of immigrants came from Germany. Today, as a result, a large number of Americans can trace at least a part of their family tree to Germany.

Yet, many researchers feel intimidated to make this leap across the ocean. Tracing your family in a foreign country with unfamiliar words, handwriting, geography and records can be overwhelming. However, the wide variety of resources available on the Internet makes it easier than ever before. Take a minute to learn about the country and the genealogical resources available, and you’ll gain the confidence and knowledge you need to start uncovering your roots from Deutschland.

BUILDING YOUR BACKGROUND

Before delving into German genealogy research, it’s best to have some idea of what you’re getting yourself into. A little background knowledge can make the research go much more smoothly — and be more meaningful to you.

And with the Internet, gathering this basic knowledge doesn’t need to take long.

History. You don’t need to become an expert on German history to trace your family, of course. But a little information can help you understand their lives and the records. For example, did you know that Germany didn’t exist as a nation until 1871? Most of the German states either fell under the jurisdiction of Prussia (the most important German state) or had independent rulers, meaning they had their own unique ways of keeping records. Or, did you know that in some German areas conquered by France around the turn of the 19th century, the local records were kept for several years in French with a calendar that began on 22 September 1792?

Of course, there are many websites with information about all aspects of German history. One that I like best is GermanCulture.com, www.germanculture.com.ua/library/history/bl_german_history.htm. This site contains links to specific periods in German history so you can read about the time period that is

Perhaps your German ancestor lived in a castle like the one below. Probably not, but it is at least worth investigating.
relevant to your research. The website condenses information into a few paragraphs filled with only the most significant events. Reading this will give you a general understanding of German history in a matter of minutes.

**Geography.** The Internet comes in handy when getting oriented to the area in which your ancestors lived, too. This orientation is important for several reasons. First, borders changed frequently. Alsace-Lorraine, now a part of France, was a German state through much of its history. The old German state of Pomerania falls mostly in Poland now, although the western part of it is included in the modern German state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

Also, becoming familiar with the area can help as you follow a family in the parish records. Many families often moved within a small radius. You’ll be able to recognize these place-names if you’ve become familiar with the towns in the area.

One map useful for German genealogy research is a digitized version of *Atlas des Deutschen Reichs* (Atlas of the German Empire) from 1883 found at www.library.wisc.edu/etext/ravenstein. This interactive detailed map provided by the University of Wisconsin enables you to look up specific towns and then focus the map on the relevant area. A guide on the side of the webpage shows you which pages cover which localities. The detail of the map makes it invaluable, but using it requires patience. Downloading the pages takes time and zooming up close can reveal less than top-quality images.

A map that’s easier to use, but without an index, has been posted by the Federation of Eastern European Family History Societies (FEEFHS) at http://feefhs.org/maps/gere/mapigere.html. Click on the correct region to see the images from the 1882 atlas. If you don’t know the region, another option is to use MapQuest, www.mapquest.com. Click on the link at the bottom for “Outside U.S. and Canada”. Here, you can locate towns as long as the names remain the same or you know the modern name of the ancestral town.

**Language.** Wading through records in a new language can seem intimidating when you first begin researching your German family. However, there are resources that can make this manageable.

A good place to start is with a genealogical word list. The Family History Library (FHL) has produced one of the best, long used by people searching for their German roots. You can now download the list at
www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/RG /guide/WLGerman.asp. Before you begin your research, take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with these often-used words. Some Catholic records use many Latin words. If you run into this situation, take a look at the FHL Latin word list at www.familysearch.org/Eng /Search/RG/guide/WLLatin.asp.

Of course, word lists don’t contain every word you’ll come across in your German research. You’ll need to branch out and try some other websites where you can type in specific words in German and have them translated. I’ve always used www.freetranslation.com. It works well for words or pairs of words, but has a harder time translating sentences into anything that makes sense. Another option is the Leo dictionary, http://dict.leo.org/ende?lang=en&lp =ende&search.

Once you get further in the research process, you may want to write to a German parish or archive to obtain records. You can find a good example of how to do this in German through another FHL guide found at www.family search.org/Eng/Search/rg/research/type /Letter-writing_Guide.asp. Choose “German Letter-Writing Guide” from the list provided. This guide gives instructions on how and where to write for records. Then, it lists German phrases and their English translation. All you have to do is link the sentences together and fill in the blanks.

One last FHL page you might want to have a look at is the handwriting guide at http://www.familysearch.org /eng/Search/RG/guide/German_Gothic 99-36316.ASP. Most German records in the 19th century were written in gothic script. The guide provides some information and history about the script. Then towards the bottom, it shows examples of each letter written this way. Another interesting website is Sueterlinstube, at www.sueterlinstube.org /Home_eng/home_eng_neu.htm. This German organization has volunteers who will transcribe documents in the old script free of charge (although they do accept donations).

**Finding How-to Guides**

Once you’ve got a firm background established, it’s time to take the next step: Develop a research plan. To do this, you must first become familiar with what records are available and how you can access them. A few general how-to websites will give you the direction you need.

The site Basic Research Outline for German Genealogy: A Step by Step Guide for Americans of German Descent, http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/outline.html, contains excellent information on how to trace your German family. It has an easy-to-use format arranged by topic with links to many other important sites.

You can find the FHL’s German Research Outline in PDF format at www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/rg/frame set_rhelps.asp. Click “G” on the bar above and scroll down to German Research Outline. This guide contains a little bit of everything from history to explanations of parish records to information on contacting genealogical societies.

**Emigration Records**

After developing your research plan, you’re ready to look in the records themselves. The Internet has a rich supply of records that are constantly being updated. First, a reminder: The value of records found on the Internet varies. Always evaluate the source of information. Also, it’s a good idea to check the original records whenever possible.
To trace your family in Germany, you must first know the town in which your ancestors lived. Some people are lucky enough to already have this information. Others have to spend some time searching. Usually you’ll need to start by looking in North American records. The above how-to guides talk briefly about this. Other information on records and websites is beyond the scope of this article.

Many people look to emigration and immigration records after exhausting North American records. You can find information on the web about immigration and emigration history and records as well as some transcribed original records.

To find out what is available both on and off the web, you’ll need to take a closer look at the state where your ancestors lived. Search for your ancestor in different towns across the German countryside. One of the best ways to find out what records are available for your family’s locality is the German GenWeb Project site at www.rootsweb.com/~wggerman.
similar to the US GenWeb project, but focused on foreign countries. I could have listed this page under almost all the previous headings as well, since the site contains links to a variety of valuable information. You can find their most useful information by clicking on the “States of Germany” link near the top. This brings you to a map followed by a description of how the states in Germany were divided. Then, at the bottom, you’ll find links to pages for each individual state.

Different volunteers maintain each state page. This means that the content and amount of information varies. For example, the page for Mecklenburg-Vorpommern contains wonderful, detailed information about the history of the region, daily life of the people, reasons for emigration, as well as explanations about the types of records available and how to access them. Others are a little more sparse. It’s definitely worth spending some time exploring the pages of your ancestors’ state.

A German group maintains another very useful English language site called Genealogie Netz, www.genealogienetz.de/regio.html. Scrolling down a little on the main page will take you to two maps, one of present-day and one of pre-1945 Germany. Clicking on the appropriate link will take you to a list of the German states. Again, the content on each state varies. However, many have comprehensive pages containing a general history of the area, a description of the divisions of the land, as well as detailed information about the types of sources available, what they contain and how to use them. The site also provides links to other useful webpages specific to your locality.

Always remember the many border changes the German states have undergone. The German GenWeb page, for instance, only contains pages for current German states, as it explains on its front page. You must visit the French page for information on Alsace-Lorraine, since it is now a part of France, or the Polish page for information about West Prussia. The Genealogie Netz site has separate pages for the states of the old German Empire. For the many people whose ancestors lived in a German state which is now a part of Poland, you may also want to try Genealogy and Poland: A Guide, at www.polishroots.com/genpoland/index.htm.

OTHER RECORDS AND INFORMATION
There are many other German records and resources for tracing your German family on the Internet. One can’t-miss site is Joe Beine’s Resources for German Genealogy on the Internet at http://home.att.net/~wee-monster. The site contains hundreds of pages, a few of which are already mentioned specifically in this article, with a wide range of information. Some pages contain detailed instructions and information about certain types of records, others contain searchable databases, while others provide links to useful websites.

If you’ve spent a lot of time on the Internet looking for your family, you’ve probably already become familiar with Cyndi’s List. This comprehensive database of links provides a simple, easy-to-access list to many of the genealogy records available online. You can look through her list of German-focused sites at www.cyndislist.com/germany.htm.

I’ll mention a couple of sites in passing. Find Your Roots in Germany, www.roots-in-germany.de, seeks to combine information for the researcher and traveler on one site. The page contains a number

This German couple married in 1902. Unidentified photos are plentiful on the Internet — they could be your ancestors!
of links in German and English to other sites focusing on the German-American experience as well as to individual states. Karen Huish’s site, http://khuish.tripod.com/german.htm, has a long list of links that contain a little of this and a little of that. Finally, Andreas Hanaceck maintains her own German ancestry site, at http://home.bawue.de/~hanacek/info/edatbase.htm#ddd, a site that provides interesting links not included on many of the sites above, but with a strong leaning toward sites in German — although the site itself is in English.

**Finding Sources Offline**

You probably won’t find everything you need to trace your German family tree on the Internet. Although the collections of records available online grow constantly, many important sources aren’t there yet. Parish records constitute the backbone of German research and only a relatively small percentage of these can be accessed online. At some point in your research, you’ll have to leave the Internet and find original research. However, resources available online can provide vital direction in doing this.

**Family History Library Catalogue.** The Family History Library in Salt Lake City contains the world’s largest collection of genealogical records, including a large amount of original German records, indexes and histories. The microfilmed records can usually be ordered to branch Family History Centers located at LDS churches across the world. Find one at www.familysearch.org/Eng/Library/FHC/frameset_fhc.asp. Checking their catalogue to see what sources are available should be one of the first steps on nearly every German research project. You can access the catalogue online, http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Library/FHLC/frameset_fhci.asp, to see what records are available for your ancestor’s town. Choose “Place Search”, then type in the name of the town (or the name of the nearby town where people attended church) in the blank for place.

**Genealogical and Research Societies.** The Internet can also help you locate genealogical and research societies. Perhaps the society has a center located near-by where you can access records. Some have volunteers available to answer your questions or do quick look-ups for you. Others offer services where they check certain records for a fee.

One useful society to check out is the Immigrant Genealogical Society, http://feefhs.org/igs/igs-igs.html. This society has numerous records for people tracing German families — available for research three days a week. They also do record searches for a fee. FEEFHS has links to other societies under the heading Germany/Germanic Genealogy, www.feefhs.org/ethnic.html.

The websites mentioned in this article, of course, represent only a small sampling of the sites available to help you trace your German family. I’ve chosen some of the ones I believe are the most useful for getting started. However, I recommend doing a little exploring on your own. You might find some new favorite research sites.
Save Your Pictures Today!
Are your family photographs falling apart, breaking into pieces or changing color? Old-photograph expert Maureen Taylor’s tips and techniques will help preserve those precious pictures.

Marc Skulnicky looks at using the modern-day technology of the Internet to help with organizing, digitizing, sharing and even identifying the subjects of your old photographs.

Ships of Our Ancestors:
We show you where to find information about, and pictures of, the ships that brought our ancestors to North America.

In a special feature, Halvor Moorshead dates reader-submitted old photographs such as this one from the early 1870s.

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Halvor Moorshead
Editor & Publisher
Family History Online has over 60 million records!

One of my favorite sites for UK research is Family History Online at www.familyhistoryonline.net. This website is run by people associated with the Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS). It is a compilation of online records contributed by various Family History Societies. These records cover counties in England and Wales. Not all counties have data on this site and not all counties have the same records; some list only one resource while others list more than a dozen. The main page includes a graphic illustrating for which counties data is included.

The site currently has more than 60 million records! To find out exactly what databases are included, click on Databases, then Available Databases and this takes you to a page that gives you an up-to-date list, arranged by county. Remember that many of the databases include transcriptions of actual records; others are only an index of available records.

Some of the more popular databases found are the National Burial Index (NBI), the 1851 census and records of other censuses, memorial inscriptions (MIs), vital records, poorhouse reports, wills indexes, and more. Additionally, there is free access to the 1881 census.

What is great about this site is that you can search for free and, if you choose, purchase additional details for near-nominal sums. The price to view the details varies, ranging from index entries that cost £0.04-0.06 (about $0.10US) to transcriptions that cost £0.08-0.1 (about $0.16US). Another nice feature is that you don’t have to spend more than £5 (about $9.30US) at a time and you have a long time to use your deposited money. I have used this site, ignored it for months, come back and my funds are still available and waiting to be used.

Note that before accessing the databases, you will need to sign on as a new user. You will be asked for your name, e-mail address and country and then provide a username and a password.

When you log onto the site and choose to search, you are presented with the screen shown left. The information that can be entered includes surname, forename, county, time period and record type (you can narrow your search to one type of record or search on all records for the geographic area identified). A nice feature about this search is that you can put as little or as much information as you want. Additionally, you can choose whether to include name variants, or not, in your search and do so either on surname, forename or both. And, there is a wildcard search feature as well.

I have used these records for many families across many counties. Let’s look at an example of a real-life search. I searched on James Hutchinson of Glamorgan. I knew that this was not a common name in Glamorgan and so hoped that I would not find too many records. The search yielded:

1. Benjamin James HUTCHENSON found in Glamorgan Burial Index — 1 entry in Glamorgan during 1899 — details £0.06
2. David James HUTCHINSON found in Glamorgan 1881 Census — 1 entry in Glamorgan during 1881 — details free
3. Henry James HUTCHINSON found in Glamorgan 1851 Census — 1 entry in Glamorgan during 1851 — details £0.10
4. James HUTCHINSON found in Glamorgan 1851 Census — 1 entry in

The entry for David James Hutchinson in the Glamorgan 1881 census.
Glamorgan during 1851 — details £0.10
5. James HUTCHINSON found in Glamorgan Monumental Inscription index — 2 entries in Glamorgan between 1829 and 1862 — details £0.12
6. James HUTCHINSON found in Glamorgan Marriage Index pre-1837 — 1 entry in Glamorgan during 1830 — details £0.06
7. James HUTCHINSON found in Glamorgan Burial Index — 2 entries in Glamorgan between 1845 and 1862 — details £0.12
8. James HUTCHINSON found in Glamorgan 1881 Census — 1 entry in Glamorgan during 1881 — details free
9. James HUTCHINSON found in Glamorgan 1841 Census — 2 entries in Glamorgan during 1841 — details £0.16

What does this tell me? First, notice that I gave James as a forename and it was considered both as a first and a middle name. Second, notice that it lists the “type” of record found. You can click on the type and it will give you details which include: Transcription and conventions used (number of records and data included), Coverage (parishes, counties, etc), Checking (whether done or not), Grouping (whether grouped or not), Abbreviations and codes, Contact details (who supplied the data), How to buy and Copyright. Third, you are told how many entries were found and during what time period. Fourth, you are told the cost to access the details. Notice for the last entry that “2 entries” were found. You can access the details of both entries. This means that the results could not be more narrowly distinguished.

A great feature is that the time period is given for the records found. So, for my James Hutchinson, I know that he did not die until after 1862, therefore, the MI and burial records may not be for him. Though, I may want to examine these anyway as this individual could be related.

If you decide to access the details for an entry, click where indicated and you will see something like the entry for David James Hutchinson in the Glamorgan 1881 census (see illustration on previous page).

This tells us the details of the entry. Notice that you can now view everyone in the household (if this was one of the other databases, instead of price “£0.00” you would see an amount listed). You also have the option to “View as table”. I personally prefer the table view, but there are times when the original view is useful — it’s easier to cut and paste into a document and still fit on a regular size page.

Besides the records available, which are wonderful, the flexibility of the search agent is great. You can define your search to be as narrow or as broad as you wish.

Another feature is called “Recent Searches”. Say you searched sometime in the last two weeks and you just don’t quite remember the details of what you searched on, then under Searches you can look at Recent Searches and find a listing of your recent searches.

Two last notes: Remember that the amount of data provided varies database to database and, as the site tells you, “as with all indexes and transcriptions, the details should only be used as a ‘finding aid’ to identify the original source material. We therefore advise you to visit the appropriate County Archives/Record Office or other information source (as shown in the database description) to verify the information for yourself.”

Diane L. Richard has been doing genealogy research for about 18 years. She is now the Wake County, NC GenWeb coordinator, does professional research and can be found online at www.mosaicrpm.com/Genealogy.
Forensic Genealogy Online

A photograph can provide an interesting window into an ancestor’s life. All too often, however, the ancestor has left no information about a picture, so it is up to us to deduce its story.

The photograph shown below was submitted by Linda Williams, one of our regular visitors to the weekly photo contests we host at www.forensicgenealogy.info. The picture is rich in detail and full of clues about its origin. It depicts an event in a small town around the turn of the 20th century. It seems the crowd in the picture is waiting for a parade to begin. There are flags flying and two columns of men lined up in the middle of the street ready to start the march, each with a ribbon on his vest. Yet Linda did not know why it was among her great-grandmother’s papers nor what role, if any, her great-grandmother’s family played in the event.

A good first step in analyzing a photograph is to note any writing that appears in or on the picture. The writing on our photograph offers a number of tantalizing clues. There are several buildings that can be identified: The New York One Price Clothing House, the Capitol Hotel and a wholesale and retail grocery. A high-resolution scan of the far right of the photograph reveals a sign reading “stationery”. There is also writing on the back of the photograph that provides a specific location for the photographer’s studio: Mitchell and DeGroff’s Pioneer Photograph Studio, Harrison Ave., Guthrie, Ind. Ter.

Searching Google on the keywords Guthrie and history yields numerous websites describing Guthrie as a key town in the Oklahoma Land Run that occurred on 22 April 1889. Guthrie was soon to become the Oklahoma Territorial capital, and later, the first state capital.

For example, the website www.sandplum.com/guthrie/landrun.htm offers a historical background on the Land Run compiled by the Oklahoma Historical Society. The website says that on 2 March 1889, two days before he left office, President Grover Cleveland signed the Springer Amendment to the Indian Appropriations Bill, opening the Unassigned Lands of the Indian Territory to permanent settlement. The new president, Benjamin Harrison, set the date and the time for the Land Run as noon, 22 April 1889.

The land was available to homesteaders on a first come, first served basis. Landseekers were allowed to enter the district at that time, find a claim, and file at the US Land Office in Guthrie or Kingfisher, approximately 30 miles to the west. These were the only locations designated under the Indians Appropriations Act. Later in 1889 an additional Land Office was established in Oklahoma City.
An estimated 50,000 to 75,000 people participated in the Land Run, entering the territory on noon of that day by foot, in covered wagons, on horseback, and by train. They joined a significant number who had illegally entered the territory earlier to get the best claims. These early arrivals were called “sooners”. The population of Guthrie before the run consisted of soldiers, deputy marshals, government officials and railroad personnel; by nightfall, it had swelled to 10,000 to 15,000 people living in tents or shacks. The earliest date the photo could have been taken was 22 April 1889, although the appearance of the town with streets and businesses implies that it was taken somewhat later.

Among the websites listed by Google were several that had photographs of early Guthrie. A picture on www.treasurenet.com/images/americanwest/westok.html taken in 1893 from E. Harrison Avenue at 1st Street shows many brick and stone buildings. The structures in our photo are not as sophisticated, indicating that the picture was probably taken earlier. Further supporting this earlier date, the website http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~tammie/hotels/hotels.htm reports that the Capitol Hotel (seen to the left in the main photo, previous page) burned down 15 April 1893. We now know the photo was taken between 22 April 1889 and 15 April 1893.

Another website, http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~tammie/logan.htm offers several early Guthrie city directories that list some of the businesses in the picture. The 1890 directory includes the Capitol Hotel and Cohen and Strauss’ New York Clothing House. The empty lot in the middle of the picture can be identified as part of the government acre and the crowded building to the left as the US Government Land Office.

The locations given for these establishments allow us to draw a preliminary sketch of the layout of the town, shown right. The government acre was the rectangle bounded by 1st and 2nd Streets on the east and west, respectively, and Oklahoma and Harrison Avenues on the north and south. The US Land Office was located at the northwest corner of the government acre and the Capitol Hotel on the southeast corner. The 1890 directory lists the NY Clothing House as being on the southwest corner. But according to other directories and city maps, the clothing store was located on the east side of 2nd Street between Oklahoma and Harrison and the Bluebelle Saloon was located at the southwest corner of the government acre, several buildings to the south of the clothing store.

A modern map of downtown Guthrie found on www.mapquest.com shows that the town still has the same layout today. Combining the information provided by the map with the identification of the various businesses in the picture using the city directories, we can say that the picture was taken from the location of the Commercial Bank on the northwest corner of Oklahoma Avenue and 2nd Street. The photographer was facing south-southeast.

Amazon, www.amazon.com, is a valuable research tool for identifying books on just about any topic. A search on Amazon for books on Guthrie produced Birth of Guthrie: Oklahoma’s Run of 1889 and Life in Guthrie in 1889 and the 1890s, by Lloyd H. McGuire, Jr.

A search on Google produced contact information for the author on www.sandplum.com/guthrie/more.htm. McGuire has researched Guthrie for many years, and proved to be very generous in sharing his wealth of knowledge about the town.

The August 1889 city directory found in McGuire’s book provides the names of the businesses with the lowest street numbers along 2nd Street just south of Oklahoma Avenue. The street
numbers are all even, reflecting the fact that there were no establishments located across the street in the vacant area included in the government acre. (There were other businesses on the east side of 2nd Street between Oklahoma and Harrison Avenues, but they cannot be matched with the photo because they are listed in the directory without street numbers. These include Hamilton, Rowan, and Co. stationers that might account for the sign to the far right of the photo.)

The website www.sandplum.com/guthrie/hm03.htm offers a clue that our mystery photo was taken before the end of 1890 when the DeFord building was constructed at the original location of the NY Clothing Store. The wall of the DeFord building that would have been facing the camera is described as “featuring contrasting-colored arched windows with worked wooden fans above corbelled brick, with a small turret marking the south”. It is clear that the DeFord building had not yet been built, so that we can narrow the date of the photo to between 22 April 1889 when the Land Run occurred, and sometime in late 1890, before the NY One Price Clothing Store’s frame building was torn down.

One clue that we have not used yet is the photographer’s logo on the back of the photograph. Mitchell and deGroff photographers were listed in the 1889 Guthrie directory as one of the earliest photography studios in town. McGuire’s book has 180 photographs of Guthrie including 88 “then-and-now” photos. He contracted with Guthrie photographer Bob Bozarth for use of early day “then” pictures from Bozarth’s collection, and for Bozarth to photograph the modern-day “now” pictures in matching locations.

Two of the early-day pictures might have been taken at the same event as the one in the picture we are investigating. The first photograph apparently shows the same parade a few moments after our picture was taken, with many people standing in the same places. The book also provides a picture of the Reeves Bros. Casino taken from a different location further down 2nd Street facing northeast. The writing in the corner of this casino picture states that it
was taken on 4 July 1889. If we can show that the mystery picture and its twin feature the same parade as the casino picture, and if we can verify that the date on the casino picture is correct, we will have a date for our photo.

According to McGuire’s book,’ there were four known parades held in Guthrie between the date of the Land Run in April 1889 and early-to-mid 1890, when the NY Clothing House frame structure was torn down. These were Decoration Day in May 1889 (now known as Memorial Day), 4 July 1889, 22 April 1890, the first anniversary of the run, and 4 July 1890. While the organization of the Oklahoma Territory would also have been cause for celebration, none was held. On 22 April 1890, Guthrie’s first anniversary, its citizens awaited a rider from the telegraph office at the train depot to bring word that Congress had made the “Unorganized Territory” into an “Organized Territory”, thus creating the Oklahoma Territory with Guthrie as its capital. But no word came until 2 May. Because it was not certain when the news would arrive, the town could not have held a parade on this date, eliminating it as a possible occasion for the picture.

The rapid construction of the town during its first few months provides a valuable timeline against which we can compare our three pictures to determine a date. Between May 1889 and July 1889 many new buildings were constructed. By July 1890, there was an enormous difference in the appearance of the town compared to its early days. If the same buildings (and only the same buildings) appear in the three photos, we can be reasonably certain that they were all taken at the same parade.

The views of the town offered by the two matching photographs and the Reeves Bros. Casino photograph partially overlap, so that many of the buildings along the east side of 2nd Avenue between Oklahoma and Harrison Avenues are visible in all of them. In the Reeves Bros. Casino photograph, the US Land Office, located on the northwest corner of the government acre, appears to the center right, the first building north of the gap on the opposite side of 2nd Street. In the mystery picture and its twin, both the US Land Office and the government acre are across the street from the photographer. These two photos show buildings of three different heights on the other side of the government acre along 2nd Street, the smallest one identified as the New York Clothing House and the tallest one with the “Wholesale and Retail Groceries” sign across the top. All three of these buildings (and no others) also appear in the casino photograph. Because the three photographs show the same number and arrangement of buildings (and many of the same paraders and spectators), it’s reasonable to say that they were taken on the same date and depict the same parade. Now the task is to determine if the parade was the one held on 4 July 1889.

Confirming the date on the Reeves Bros.’ casino picture as 4 July 1889 would probably be easier if more of the town were visible in the mystery picture or its twin. The brick Commercial Bank building was completed in October 1889 on the northeast corner of Oklahoma Avenue and 2nd Street. Being able to observe the stage of construction of the bank building could have given us an approximate date when the photo was taken, but the corner is just out of view to the left of the photograph. Also in Guthrie was a very progressive new city that developed rapidly during its first few months.
1889, the Merchants Bank was established on the southwest corner of the intersection across Oklahoma Street from the photographer. However, it is not visible either. The two-story porch-like structure seen to the far right of our picture is not a building in the process of being constructed, it is probably a viewing stand for the parade. The Merchants Bank building was already completed by 4 July 1889 and did not have a second story porch.

There is still a clue we have not used. Some of the photographs in McGuire’s book have numbers written on them along with the dates they were taken. Since they are all written in the same handwriting, they were probably all taken by the same photographer. Presumably these numbers represent the order in which the pictures were taken. By tracking the numbers on the photographs as a function of their dates, we can see if the number on the Reeves Bros.’ photo is consistent with the 4 July 1889 date.

The graph above plots the numbers on the photographs versus their dates. By tracking the numbers, we can show that the number on the Reeves Bros.’ photo is consistent with the 4 July 1889 date.

Looking north on 2nd Street toward wood frame Commercial Bank building, right, across Oklahoma Avenue. The photographer was probably standing on its roof behind the false front on the second story when he took the mystery picture.

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1. Lloyd H. McGuire, Jr., telephone conversation.
2. www.mapquest.com
4. www.amazon.com
5. Ref. 3, p. 280.
7. Ref. 3, p. 194.
8. This and the subsequent photograph are used with the permission of Lloyd H. McGuire Jr. See Ref. 3, p. 126 and 128.
10. Lloyd H. McGuire, Jr., telephone conversation.

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8. This and the subsequent photograph are used with the permission of Lloyd H. McGuire Jr. See Ref. 3, p. 126 and 128.
10. Lloyd H. McGuire, Jr., telephone conversation.

The graph, left, plots the numbers on the photographs versus their dates. It’s clear that the date and number on the casino picture, July 4, #364, fit in well with those of the others. The photographer seems to have taken a large number of photographs in the first few weeks after the Land Run, but as the town settled in, the number seems to have tapered off along with the initial excitement. Even so, if the casino photograph had been taken at either of the parades in 1890, the number recorded on it would presumably have been much higher.

One last bit of interesting information that McGuire’s book’s photographs provide is the location of the photographer when he took the picture. The building listed on the northwest corner of Oklahoma and 2nd was the wooden building that housed the Commercial Bank before the bank moved late in 1889 into its more permanent location across the street. The photographer must have taken the picture from the roof of this building. He was high above the street, on a level with the tops of the telephone poles, higher than the second stories of other structures.

Although our analysis of Linda’s photograph has not produced any personal information about her family, it has given her an interesting link to an important and colorful chapter in American history. According to what Linda knows about her family, her great-grandmother’s brother lived in Oklahoma in the 1890s. Her great-grandmother must have received the picture from him as a souvenir of the first 4th of July parade held in Guthrie in 1889. An interesting topic for further research would be to investigate the possibility that Linda’s great-great-uncle was one of the settlers who participated in the Oklahoma Land Run of 1889.

The authors would like to thank Linda Williams for allowing us to publish the analysis of her family photograph. The authors would also like to thank Lloyd H. McGuire, Jr. for his generous assistance with this article. Mr. McGuire’s book can be purchased at www.amazon.com and at shops and museums in Guthrie and Oklahoma City. Mr. McGuire can be contacted via e-mail at m8725r@aol.com.

For more information or to contact Dr. Fitzpatrick and Mr. Yeiser, please visit their website at www.forensicgenealogy.info.
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For many of us, surfing the Internet for information has become an integral part of our daily lives. We can easily shop for just about anything, get the news with a click of a button, and many of us rely on web-based applications to do our jobs. As for genealogy, there’s no doubt that the Internet has revolutionized the way we conduct our research, interact and share information with fellow roots-seekers the world over. Perhaps it is no coincidence that online access to key pieces of data for our family history puzzles has helped genealogy become the fastest growing hobby today.

But the scope of the Internet’s potential affect on genealogy does not end with simple hobby status. Halvor Moorshead, Editor of Family Chronicle Magazine convinced me of this when he asked me to contribute an article to Internet Genealogy by saying, “I have become more and more convinced that the future of genealogy is going to lie with the Internet. Certainly the majority of people doing their genealogy are starting there.”

Apart from aiding our own individual research pursuits such as searching online databases, perusing newspapers, scouring online message boards, subscribing to mailing lists and looking for the latest genealogy links on Cyndi’s List, the Internet can be a highly interactive forum where you can collaborate with other researchers across the globe. This article will discuss the benefits of building an online genealogical research community.

I like to think of an online genealogical research group as a useful format for extending your research beyond your own family, utilizing various resources to identify a community-oriented research protocol that can produce mutually beneficial results. Typically, an online genealogical research group will exhibit the following characteristics:
- Consist of a group of researchers with common interests or descendants of a particular village or cluster of villages
- Use the Internet as a “home base” (i.e. members meet primarily online)
- Provide a forum for collaborative research projects/sharing of genealogical data and information
- Encourage interaction and collaboration with other researchers
- Enable you to recruit members from all over the world
- Provide an opportunity for you to assist others with research problems and/or receive help with your own brickwalls
- Help to keep the sense of community originally initiated by immigrant ancestors

Why Form an Online Research Community?

Having a forum where you can connect with other researchers who share your interests — whether surname, village/locality, or subject based — offers a valuable opportunity to share your findings and perhaps locate that missing piece of information. Certainly, many researchers do this type of networking through message boards or other types of online forums, but building an actual “group” provides...
more stable and predictable (and often more private) venue for collaboration.

**Cluster Genealogy and Cluster Communities**

Genealogists often hear the term “cluster genealogy” in which we search for ancestors based on the places they have settled. During the immigration influx of the 19th and 20th centuries, our immigrant ancestors often traveled together and put down roots among relatives, friends or neighbors from their native land, settling in enclaves within cities and towns (often called cluster communities). It was within these communities that the immigrants preserved their culture, lifestyle and traditions. In these new surroundings they formed their own churches, schools and boarding houses. Athletic, charitable, fraternal and social groups were founded and ethnic presses were established. A cluster community can be defined using one or more key genealogical resources. These include censuses, church and immigration records, historical newspapers, cemetery gravestone inscriptions, records of fraternal groups and social clubs and other sources.

**Key Sources**

The first step to forming your online community is finding others who share your interests. In order to do this, it helps if you can assemble a list of surnames that are common to your village. Following the principle of the cluster community, start your search for common surnames by perusing those records you normally check anyway to locate your own family members.

**Census Records**

I like to begin with census records because they give a good picture of family life during a particular time period. I make it a habit to look at the 1930 US census first because it is the most recently released and the most likely to contain family names I will recognize. Since this publication focuses on using the Internet, I use my online subscription to Ancestry.com’s US Census Records Collection, www.ancestry.com, and utilize the “every name index” feature for my searches. You can also opt to check other sites that offer access to online census records, such as Genealogy.com, www.genealogy.com, Heritage Quest Online (only available to members of subscribing institutions such as libraries and educational facilities) www.heritagequestonline.com, LDS Family Search (1880 US census), www.familysearch.org, and MyTrees.com, www.kindredkonnections.com/census.html. Once I locate a familiar surname, I note the neighbors, paying close attention to the nationality columns to get a sense of whether or not immigrants from the same country have clustered together.

I also check previous census years, both to see how far back I can follow a particular family with regard to their time in the US and to get a sense of how, and if, the community changed from decade to decade. Next, I like to take a leap forward and look at the latest profile data tables available from the American Community Survey on the US Census Bureau’s website, www.census.gov/acs/www/index.html.

Another fun census tool is the 1990 US census file of surnames found at www.census.gov/genealogy/names/, which gives an indication of the most common surnames in the 1990 US census. You can type in your own surname, or that of an ancestor’s, to see its ranking. No specific individual information is given, but you can get a sense of the frequency of various surnames to help guide you as you search for others to join your online community.

**Immigration Records**

I also like to scour immigration records, using both the Ellis Island Database and Ancestry.com’s Immigration Collection for additional insight into cluster com-
Online Research Communities

Communities. I try to determine if there is a pattern of where immigrants came from and where they went. A simple way to do this is to use the One Step Webpages by Stephen P. Morse, www.stevemorse.org, to find others from the same village. If your ancestors came through Ellis Island, go to “Searching the Ellis Database in One-Step” and choose the “Gray Form”. You can either search for known immigrant ancestors and look on the manifests for others from the same place, or use the “Town Name Starts With” field in Morse’s tool to find such people. If you want to narrow the search, use both the town search and immigrant’s name. What if your family came to the US pre-Ellis Island? You can still apply this strategy as there were almost always later immigrants. If you have a subscription to the Ancestry.com Immigration Collection, you can use the search pages for other ports of immigration: Baltimore, Boston, Castle Garden (New York’s main immigration station prior to Ellis Island), Galveston, Philadelphia or San Francisco. For assistance, be sure to read the FAQs on Morse’s site.

Readers should note that the above searches are for US communities. Those trying to locate cluster communities in Canada should check out Ancestry.com’s Canadian records and also obtain information from the Genealogy Center available on the Library and Archives Canada website at www.collectionscanada.ca/index-e.html.

**Other Tools**

Online collections of historical newspapers are excellent sources of information that give you a sense of “who was who” in your ancestor’s community.

Online collections of historical newspapers are excellent sources of information that give you a sense of “who was who” in your ancestor’s community. Additional sources such as church records (check actual documents as well as church histories and anniversary booklets for common surnames) and cemetery records. In addition, your local genealogical/historical society or local library may have a collection of town histories, city directories or other documents that might provide clues about the make-up of a particular community during a specific time period.

Looking at clusters can give you a useful historical perspective about your ancestors’ lives and may provide clues for solving research mysteries in a particular family line. While descendants of those who formed these early cluster communities may have moved away and many such communities may no longer exist in the physical sense, the Internet allows for clusters to form in cyberspace — empowering the concept of the “virtual cluster community”.

**Steps for Creating “Virtual Cluster Communities”**

If you’re interested in setting up your own online genealogical research community, here are a few key steps to follow to ensure its success:

1. **Decide On Your Objective.**
   What is the goal of your online community? Do you want your site to be locality based or subject based? For example, one of the sites I co-administer is the Saris County Villages website. We invite members whose ancestors hailed from a handful of villages at the base of the Cérgov Mountains in Saris County, Slovakia (formerly Saros, Hungary). The same can be accomplished if your ancestors came from Liverpool, England, or Donegal, Ireland or any other specific geographical location. You can also set up sites based on common interests, such as “Descendants of Civil War Soldiers” or “Athletic Ancestors”.

2. **Find/Recruit Members.**
   To have a group, you need to find members. First, look to your own family (both immediate and extended) to build your membership base. Next, contact fellow researchers. Have you met someone at a genealogy conference or local genealogy society who shares your surname, or perhaps someone whose ancestors came from the same village as your own? Contact this person and ask if they would be interested in participating in an online group and if he/she has

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Also, you should not overlook traditional sources such as church records (check actual documents as well as church histories and anniversary booklets for common surnames) and cemetery records. In addition, your local genealogical/historical society or local library may have a collection of town histories, city directories or other documents that might provide clues about the make-up of a particular community during a specific time period.

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other contacts who may be interested as well. The word of mouth approach typically works well. If you’ve done your homework and did a bit of research to identify cluster communities as discussed above, you can search telephone directories for common surname listings.

3. Identify Your Content.
Will the site be fully interactive, where all members are encouraged to submit and share information or data? Will you include data from research projects, such as extracting Census data or photographing cemetery tombstones? The site should be designed as a mutually beneficial experience, not just a place for people to post an occasional photograph or news item. Some key components you may want to have on your site may include:

- A listing of members and their contact information
- A section just for photographs
- A File Cabinet or designated area for downloadable Data files (e.g. Microsoft Word or Excel files, and Adobe PDF documents), sound and/or video clips.
- A news section
- A calendar listing important dates (birthdays, anniversaries, special events, etc.)
- A working chat room to hold group discussions or weekly chats.

Keep in mind, the more substance your site possesses, the more interest it will generate for those who visit.

4. Decide on Public or Private Hosting.
Would you like your group to be open to the public (i.e. anyone who has internet access can view the contents)? A couple of good examples of such websites are Nick Benyo’s Litmanova Roots, www.benyo.com/litmanova, Paul Bingham’s Tatra Area Research Group (TARG), http://mytarg.net, and Rich Pettit’s Maybole, www.maybole.org.

Perhaps you prefer to keep your group private, where you can limit access to those you invite? You can set up a private, password-protected Web site at MyFamily.com, www.MyFamily.com. A basic site costs $29.95 US per year and is set up via a standardized template, so you do not need to know anything about computer programming or HyperText Mark-up Language (HTML) — the language of writing web pages — in order to create your site.

5. Determine group-based research projects.
In order to develop and sustain a positive group dynamic, it will be useful to initialize a number of ongoing research projects that utilize the interests, knowledge and skills of individual members. For example, scanning and labeling old photographs, taking pictures of and/or transcribing from cemetery stones, searching and documenting church records, creating a searchable database of names and addresses from old city directories, or extracting data from Census or immigration records into an Excel spreadsheet that everyone can access or reference on the site.

Tips for Finding and Recruiting Members
- Check traditional phonebooks in key cities and towns (check the local or public library for copies if you don’t have your own copy)
- Perform a Google search, www.google.com, try searching on surnames and/or place name (many individual towns and villages in our ancestral homelands now have their own websites)
- Join local genealogical or historical societies and/or national ethnic-based organizations; check Cyndi’s List Societies and Groups Index, www.cyndislist.com/society.htm
- Tell your relatives, friends and neighbors (i.e. “word-of-mouth” approach)
- Find “new blood” via networking efforts of other members
- Advertise via online message boards and mailing lists/postings in traditional print media

To the Future
Online genealogical research groups based on common villages of origin or research interests provide a forum for meeting and interacting with fellow researchers, and may lead to a mutually beneficial community research protocol to further your own genealogy, and break through research brickwalls.

Lisa A. Alzo, M.F.A. is the author of Three Slovak Women, Baba’s Kitchen: Slovak & Rusyn Family Recipes and Traditions and Finding Your Slovak Ancestors. Lisa teaches online genealogy courses for MyFamily.com, Inc. and the National Institute for Genealogical Studies. She can be found online at www.lisaalzo.com.
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When I first started researching genealogy, the Ellis Island website did not exist. I remember my first search of the Soundex microfilms at the National Archives and my first ‘find’ on the passenger list microfilms. But there were still some ancestors that seemed to elude the indices. No matter how many times I searched, I couldn’t find them. When Ellis Island put the lists online, I thought it was wonderful. Now researchers can find information in a fraction of the time it took to look through microfilm — not to mention being able to search in the comfort of your living room versus driving to the nearest library with passenger list films. However useful, the site still lacked in its search capabilities. Then came ‘Morse Code’.

Stephen Morse used the Ellis Island databases, but wrote a code to enable users to search in varied ways that the official site did not. Suddenly, I could narrow my search to specific years, specific ages or even a specific town! Those misspelled ancestors really did come through Ellis Island after all. I was finally able to find several people that had eluded my earlier searches.

One elusive ancestor was ‘Elizabeth Miller’. I found countless women with this name from Ireland, England, Poland, Russia, Hungary and Germany. Morse’s site helped me find the correct one. Because you can search on a surname with some other parameters, I was able to find ancestors’ siblings that I hadn’t known existed.

The site has since grown to include search tools for other databases and is a highly effective tool for researchers.”

“Now researchers can find information in a fraction of the time it took to look through microfilm.”

Diane L. Richard picks The PolishRoots website
“The PolishRoots website, www.polishroots.org, is a remarkable resource, and all the more so as it is a volunteer-maintained project! Whether you are researching in Poland, had Galician ancestors — maybe they were called Ruthenians, Lemkos or something else — if they came from anywhere in the vicinity of modern-day Poland, this is the website to check out!

I first learned about this site while researching my ancestors from Galicia (now the southeast tip of Poland, near the border with Ukraine). I was challenged in that they had Polish names, spoke Russian, said they came from Galicia or the Austro-Hungarian Empire, were called Ruthenians and belonged to the Russian Orthodox Church… yikes! I needed some help. I then also revisited the website when researching my husband’s ancestors from Kalisz.

This site helped me ‘get grounded’
by having informative articles to help me figure out what everything I had learned meant. And, if the website didn’t have an article, it provided reference to one somewhere else. You can find maps, learn about the history of Poland, find translation tools, information on archives and other resources, and so much more.

There is also quite a collection of databases on this website and it’s not shy about sharing links to other related databases! The funny thing is that I never ‘found’ my family in these databases. What I did gain was an understanding of Poland and its people and so better understood my family and then later, my husband’s family. They now offer limited ‘research assistance’. This is a service I could have used all those years ago.

And, a nifty e-mail newsletter, Gen Dobry!, is produced, which I still receive many years later, though I haven’t done any Polish research for a few years. Besides keeping you up-to-date on the world of Polish research, it has a great feature called ‘More Useful Web Addresses’. I read each web address listed. Though the focus is often Polish research, many listed websites are also pertinent to much of Eastern Europe or are just great general research resources. I learned about many great websites that I have used in my research!

So, this website and its companion newsletter have been a tried and true friend for many years. Though it has often not had any data that helped me, it has guided me to some wonderful sources and given me very useful information.”

You cannot discount the amazing finds that exist at lesser-known sites located off the virtual beaten path.

**Remarkable Research Resources**

**Daniel M. Lynch praises several classic genealogy websites**

“Attend any genealogy meeting in North America and ask attendees for the top 10 online resources — chances are good that at least 7 of 10 names will be familiar to many reading this magazine. Sites like www.ellisisland.org, www.familysearch.org and www.cyndislist.com have certainly earned their place on the list, but you cannot discount the amazing finds that exist at lesser-known sites located off the virtual beaten path.

My own definition of ‘favorite resource’ changes quickly and often depending upon what I’m searching for. Sites that top my list for researching my maternal lines (Italian) are of little value when working on my paternal side (Irish). Similarly, the towns where my ancestors settled were completely different to those where my wife’s family settled. For these reasons, I always encourage researchers to make time to find the roads less traveled!

If several members from your family settled in a city or town, create a folder on your ‘Favorites’ list by that name and seek out the sites dealing specifically with this area. At minimum, you should locate the websites for the local genealogy club or historical society, the local library, the local newspaper and the official municipal site serving current residents of the area. Once you find these local sites, you can use them as a springboard to find other materials and also other individuals who share your interest in that locale.

While the major sites will have censuses, vital records and other useful, but common, information — the smaller, local sites are likely to have unique content posted by dedicated volunteers with specialized knowledge of the area. In this case, a few well-placed e-mails can introduce you to an entire network of other like-minded researchers happy to share their knowledge. Keep in mind that for as much content as is available on the web, it pales in comparison to the material sitting on the shelves of local archives.

I often turn to www.usgenweb.org to quickly locate one or more sites as a starting point, but also use carefully crafted Google queries to see what else turns up. It isn’t long before I have several new favorites marked for closer inspection. A great example of a surname-specific site I found several years ago is www.walterpalmer.com for descen-
Cindy Thomson “Roots” for the USGenWeb Project

“When I first began researching my ancestry online, I discovered the USGenWeb Project. By going to www.usgenweb.org, I found the Indiana site and then visited several county sites. Most family records, whether published biographies or vital records, will mention the county an ancestor lived in. Staffed by volunteers, each county site is unique. You may find online links to family Bible records, cemetery records and photographs of tombstones, links to local libraries and archives, online scans or transcriptions of biographical sketches, historical maps, town and church histories, local military records, deeds and more. There are usually several volunteers that will look up information for you in resources they either own or have easy access to. Some counties have special projects such as tombstone transcription projects (recording and photographing the county’s cemeteries.)

Don’t overlook the state sites which have resources listed such as state archives, lists of US Civil War units from the state, lists of genealogical and historical societies, and queries from unknown counties.

The USGenWeb project is dedicated to providing free genealogy access for all. I always make it a point to thank the volunteers. The states are always looking for volunteers to staff county sites, and the county hosts are happy to find others who are willing to help with projects. If you’d like to help, contact the coordinator, whose e-mail can be found on the page.

The most valuable part of these sites, in my opinion, is the queries. Lost cousins can often be found there.

For me, these sites were a goldmine. They provided local information to help me piece together my ancestors’ lives and saved me time by providing links to records mostly relevant to my search.”

Elizabeth Lapointe Cheers for Three Genealogy Websites

“The first place I check before I do any genealogy research on the Internet is what I call the triumvirate, the trinity of online genealogy research websites — RootsWeb.com (which includes WorldConnect), Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org.

‘Share Your Family History’ is the primary purpose of RootsWeb.com and WorldConnect is a big part of that. It is where you take your first step in finding the connection to your family tree.

While all searches on RootsWeb.com are free, many of the searches on Ancestry.com are fee based. FamilySearch.org is good for checking birth, marriage and death dates, offering census and ancestral information and is free.

WorldConnect has over 420 million names along with (if the information is available) the place and date of birth, date and place of death and the e-mail of the submitter of the information. Other possible matches in census, newspapers, DNA and ancestry are available.

There is also the date the file was last updated and a Post-It note to add your own notes to what has already been posted. If you are not able to get the correct spelling of your ancestor’s name, there is also a Fuzzy Search option, which uses Soundex, so you can search phonetically.

The reason I check here first is because I want to see if anyone has researched the person before I start. That way I don’t duplicate their work or, alternately, if the result is not quite what I was looking for, then I know where I have to improve the genealogy.

So far, I have had great success in checking the sources for my two progenitors — Andrew Barclay, a Scottish bookbinder who came to Boston c.1760, and...
Henry Blades, who came to the US from England. Both eventually came to Shelburne, Nova Scotia between 1783-85 as American Loyalists, and helped settle the town.”

PAT WOHLER VOTES FOR THE UK NATIONAL ARCHIVES
“I have never crossed the threshold of the National Archives in the UK, but I visit them often online at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk. Our first contact was when I was searching for some military records from WWI and I found that they had the medal cards online. What I did not expect was some of the other material that is available.

They have census data (1851-1901), Merchant Seaman’s medals from WWII, over one million wills (1384-1858) and Victorian Prisoners Photograph Albums.

A recent addition to the site is ‘Access to Archives’. This is a collaborative project of about 500 record-holding institutions who have pooled their catalogs into an integrated online resource. You can do a ‘Keyword’ search for all of them or for one in the area of the country you are interested in. This really makes finding archival information on English ancestors a lot easier.

Another aspect of the National Archives website that I find very exciting is the research help that is available. It is worthwhile to check this out before going too much further into the site. There are 271 ‘Research Guides’, so it is unlikely that there is not at least one to help you. They also have four ‘In Depth Learning Guides’. There is one each on ‘Family History’ and ‘Local History’. These are fairly basic. Then, they have two excellent online courses that I am very enthusiastic about: ‘Beginners’ Latin’ and ‘Palaeography’. These are full-blown tutorials with automatically corrected self tests.”

SUSAN MEATES SINGS THE PRAISES OF THE GUILD OF ONE-NAME STUDIES
“The first place I look when a new surname joins my family tree through marriage is the Guild of One-Name Studies website, http://one-name.org/. It is always worth a look, in hopes that a family member has registered the surname.

The Guild of One-Name Studies is an organization headquartered in London, England, whose members are spread around the world. Members register a surname of interest, and research all occurrences of the surname and variants worldwide. The members have often researched for decades, and if the surname is registered, an inquiry should produce more information about the person in my family tree, and will save me a substantial amount of time and effort. Most of the surnames registered are rare or low-frequency surnames, due to the commitment involved. There are a few members researching high-frequency surnames, such as Gray and Wells.

The surnames registered by members of the Guild of One-Name Studies can be searched from the home page, or by clicking on the selection ‘Registered Names’ on the menu bar at the top of the page. This latter selection also provides an option to view all the names registered for a letter of the alphabet.

Members register the primary form of the surname and typically up to five variants, so if you don’t find your surname, check possible variants.

In my family tree, a Meates married a Nevitt. A search of the Guild register shows that surname is registered by a member, who has an e-mail address, making contact easy.

Many members also provide a profile about their research, and/or a website address. The profile usually includes information about the origin of...
the surname. A member may also provide an archive of data, which can be searched.”

**Halvor Moorshead loves online old newspapers**

“This is an easy one for me to answer: Old newspapers. My first encounter with these was while researching a family story. In May 1886 in Attica, Indiana, my paternal great-grandparents apparently lost almost everything when a tornado destroyed their home. The story went that my grandfather (six-years-old at the time) was only saved by his mother hanging onto him and a staircase newel post was the only thing standing after the tornado had passed.

When I was researching this, back in 1997, I visited Attica’s library and manually searched the microfilm of the local papers from that time. To my surprise, the real story turned out to be true and, if anything, the family story was less dramatic than was reported 120 years ago.

Subsequently, I found several other snippets of family history in newspapers where the family had lived. But microfilmed papers are not indexed and, even with a specific date to narrow the search, each item took hours to find.

I really became hooked on old newspapers when I visited the booth of the Godfrey Memorial Library at a genealogy convention. I plugged in my family name to search for newspaper stories and was rewarded with 169 hits! I spent hours reading all the references, over half of which referred to my direct ancestors. The stories included social events, letters to the editor, being a witness at a trial and so on.

None of the stories added to the family tree, but they gave a wonderful insight into family history.

I have found photos of my father in a 1933 paper from Kingston, Jamaica. I was aware that a distant relative had been to prison, but it took a newspaper account of his brief trial to tell me his crime (forging a check for $25!). I found a story about an uncle, whose whereabouts had been unknown, living in the Bahamas.

At the moment, some 150 million newspaper pages are available online, but this is a tiny fraction of the potential considering that almost all old newspapers have been microfilmed and held in libraries somewhere. The process of scanning them and then getting computers to index every word is almost automatic.

Already, almost all of us can find some family history in old newspapers in a few years time, as more and more of them come online, I suspect this resource will be as important to family researchers as the census has become.”

**The Panel:**

Elizabeth Lapointe is a columnist and freelance writer. She can be found on the web at www.genealogycanada.com.

Daniel Lynch is a technology marketing consultant and professional genealogist based in Connecticut. A frequent lecturer, he is an APG member and also serves as vice president for the Connecticut Society of Genealogists. He can be found online at www.danlynch.net.

Susan Meates is conducting a one-name study, researching all occurrences of a surname and variants worldwide, combined with a large DNA Project with over 200 participants in 15 countries. Susan is also a member of the Guild of One-Name Studies, London, England.

Halvor Moorshead is the Editor of Internet Genealogy and Family Chronicle and is actively researching his own roots.

Donna Pointkouski has been researching her Polish and Bavarian ancestors for almost 20 years. She has taught genealogy classes and maintains two province pages on PolandGenWeb.

Diane L. Richard has been doing genealogy research for about 18 years. She is the Wake County, NC GenWeb coordinator, does professional research and can be contacted at www.mosaicrpm.com/Genealogy.

Cindy Thomson is a full time freelance writer from Ohio. Her articles have appeared in Family Chronicle, History Magazine and others. Visit her online at www.cindyswriting.com.

Patrick Wohler is a certified genealogist whose weekly column, “The Family Historian”, appears in six newspapers. He has written several books on history and the management of heritage resources and institutions. His latest book is about the early commercial photographers of Lanark and Renfrew Counties in Ontario.

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Halvor Moorshead
Editor & Publisher
Have you ever thought about how all that wonderful information made its way onto the Internet? Someone, or more likely a team of someones, went to a lot of work to get it there. If you’ve got a little spare time and a love for family history, why not join a team of transcribers and make a valuable contribution to the world-wide genealogy community? In most cases, you need no special knowledge or skills, just a computer with Internet access, good vision and careful attention to detail. If you happen to have some extra skills, such as the ability to read and write in a foreign language, or familiarity with old-fashioned scripts, so much the better; you’ll be in great demand! Here are just a few of the projects that are currently under way. Check with your local genealogy society to learn about more projects going on in your area.

**FAMILY SEARCH INDEXING**
www.familysearchindexing.org
The biggest genealogical project ever is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS)’s new indexing program. Over the next 30 years, they plan to digitize and then index, all the microfilmed records in their vault. That’s millions of records. They are starting small to make sure they get all the “kinks” worked out of their system. So for now, indexing is only being done in English and Spanish.

First, you register as a volunteer. Once you’re accepted, you’ll be sent a username and password. Then you’ll download a special indexing program to your computer. Whenever you want to do some indexing, you go to their site and choose from a set of available projects. The records are already divided into manageable batches, with each batch of records expected to take you from 30 to 60 minutes to index.

The records will appear on the top half of your screen and the indexing form on the bottom, so you can always see what you’re working on at the same time as you are typing in the data.

A detailed guide is provided to help you get started and answer your questions.

**BYU’s IMMIGRANT ANCESTORS PROJECT**
http://immigrants.byu.edu
Another large project underway is being run by the Center for Family History and Genealogy at Brigham Young University (BYU) in Utah. This project involves locating, filming, scanning and transcribing emigrant records. Scholars at BYU are doing the locating and filming. They are currently scouring archives and record repositories across Europe for records that identify emigrants who left their homes in Europe for the New World in the 16th-20th centuries. When they identify these records, they arrange for them to be filmed.

Students at the university then scan the films, and organize the scanned records into small batches. Volunteers around the world, like you, can then download batches of images and enter the information into a specially designed extraction program.

You can choose the level of difficulty you want to work with. The easiest records are those that are available in typed or printed form. The next level are mostly typed or printed (a standard form) with handwritten elements (less than a paragraph each). The most difficult records are entirely or mostly handwritten, such as diaries and journals, describing the emigration experience.

Each time you start work on a new type of document, you are provided with a document-specific tutorial and a set of reference information to help you along. Reference tools include lists of commonly used abbreviations, common names, occupations and locations, and handwriting guides and tutorials.

**USIGS BOOKS ONLINE TRANSCRIPTION PROJECT**
www.usigs.org
This isn’t, strictly speaking, a web-based project, as it is done almost...
entirely via e-mail, but the principles are very much the same. This project is being co-ordinated by the United States Internet Genealogical Society. The USIGS collects old texts with genealogical information, scans them and posts the images online. They then scan the images using optical character recognition (OCR) software to create text files. Sadly, OCR programs are not 100 percent accurate, so they are looking for volunteers to proofread transcripts that have been created by using OCR. Files are e-mailed to you and you return them by e-mail. You simply compare the image of the page with the transcript and make whatever changes need to be made to the text file.

Once you send the edited files back, they format them for the web, add illustrations from the original publication, and post them online. The goal is to eventually replace all the images with textual transcripts so that they are easier to read and search, and also to save disk space on their server so they can add more material. The original images will then be made available on CD for those who wish to see them in their original format.

**Preserving Our Heritage at FamilySearch.org.**

**The Alachua County Clerk’s Ancient Record Transcription Projects**

- The Alachua County Archives (Florida) has several ongoing online transcription projects. It appears that the first project was an index to the marriage licenses for 1837–1973. This project is complete, so now volunteers are being asked to help transcribe deeds, mortgages, minutes, judgements and probate records. Volunteers are welcome to transcribe any of the online records that have not already been transcribed. There is a very brief sign-up form. Then you get a username and password to enter the system. Images of the records and an online entry form are used for transcription.

**Automated Genealogy**

- This Canadian group has recently completed the transcription of the 1901 census for Canada and is now in the proofreading stage (nearly 50 percent done). The 1906 census of the western provinces (Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba) is about 80 percent complete, and volunteers are now working on transcribing the 1911 census of Canada.

These census projects involve transcribing only the first few fields of the census (names, relationships, marital status, birth dates and ages). Each transcribed page is then linked directly to the source image, so that researchers can click on a link from the indexed transcript to see the entire original image.

The transcription process involves working with a split screen with the top portion showing the images of the census as they appear on the website of Library and Archives Canada, and the bottom portion showing a form where you type in what you see. You can choose to transcribe as much or as little as you wish and you can select any location that has not already been done (or proofread those that have been done).

This project is unique for many reasons. First, transcribers are credited with the work they have done (the FreeBMD project, see below, also does this). Second, comments can be linked to specific entries (in case a researcher has more information about the family in question, or wants to draw attention to an odd spelling, etc.). Third, there are additional projects in the works that involve record-linking, where transcribed pages of information about the same family in different censuses or other records are linked together. Records currently being linked to the census entries include: the Halifax Explosion Book of Remembrance, the Library and Archives Canada’s British Home Children Database and the

**The Immigrant Ancestors Project**, sponsored by the Center for Family History and Genealogy at Brigham Young University.
Library and Archives Canada’s Soldiers of the First World War Database.

**FREEBMD**  
[www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)  
This British project is probably the oldest collaborative online genealogical index. The goal is to create a free online searchable index to all the birth, marriage and death records for England and Wales from the beginning of civil registration in 1837 up to 1983 (originally, I think it was going to stop at 1910, but then it was expanded). This is a huge project, with over 8,000 volunteers contributing so far. Some volunteers have indexed over a half a million entries (although most only contribute a few hundred or thousand), and a quick check of the coverage charts suggests that they are probably over 75 percent complete for the period 1837 to 1910.

With this project, you elect to join a “syndicate”, or group of volunteers with an experienced coordinator. Some syndicates do their transcribing based on online digital images, while others use microforms, paper copies or e-mailed images. Volunteer transcribers can use either one of the FreeBMD’s own specially designed indexing programs, or any basic spreadsheet program, such as Excel. The information involved is very basic: a person’s name, a registration district name, volume and page number. Aside from difficulties in deciphering handwriting, this is an easy project on which to work. And you needn’t worry about possible mistakes, as every entry is indexed twice by two independent volunteers. If there’s a discrepancy between the two interpretations, a third checks the image again.

Once you’ve submitted your batch of entries, your name, e-mail address (if you wish) and number of submitted records are linked to them forever, so you get credit for the work you’ve done, and users can send you congratulatory messages!

**THE CENSUS NAME-INDEXING PROJECT**  
[www.thegenealogist.co.uk/indexer.php](http://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/indexer.php)  
This UK project, although not strictly web-based, is special because when you volunteer, you get benefits! As it is run by a commercial provider of online records and indexes (and publisher of CD-ROM record compilations), volunteer indexers receive free subscriptions to their site (including census records, birth, marriage and death indexes, parish record indexes, tax records and trade directories) and vouchers you can use to purchase S&N Genealogy products such as CD-ROMs.

The project involves indexing the names and ages of people recorded in British censuses from 1841 through 1901. When you sign up, you are sent a CD-ROM containing the census images. You then type in the name, age, piece number and folio (pages) for each person into a basic spreadsheet. When you’re done with a set, you then upload your file to the Internet site (or if that’s a problem, you can e-mail it).

When the indexes are complete, they’ll be offered free online, and your name will be acknowledged.

**WHY GO TO THE TROUBLE?**

If you need more reasons to get involved, aside from the good feeling you get knowing you’ve helped make genealogical records available to others, consider that participating in projects like these can really help your own research. You learn new skills such as reading old handwriting, recognizing common abbreviations for names and places, and even understanding the basics of a foreign language. And, the more you become familiar with original records, the better you will understand how each individual record fits in the overall context and you’ll start to notice when your own records fit the pattern, and when they don’t. And that can help you break down those brickwalls!
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Using War Graves to Extend Your Research

Military conflicts are documented back to ancient times. The Chinese accounts are probably the oldest, followed by those of the Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Jews and other Eastern and Middle Eastern cultures. The Visigoths and Ostrogoths appeared in the third century AD, followed later by Charlemagne, William the Conqueror, the Medieval Crusades and the Norman Conquest of England. These are only a few of the most well-known and documented historical military events. There were many others of lesser renown.

Beginner genealogists and family historians are always encouraged to start with what they know about the present and to work backwards, generation by generation, to learn and document as much detail as possible. Military service records are accessible through government facilities in Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States and elsewhere, for every branch and unit of the armed forces. As we move backward with our research, we typically discover some ancestor or relative who served in the military and, in order to learn more about him or her, we have to learn where and how to access the records.

Military casualties whose injuries resulted in death are documented better than you might think. The apse in St. Paul’s Cathedral in London, for example, is home to the American Memorial Chapel. It honors American servicemen and women who died in WWII. The “Roll of Honour” contains the names of the more than 28,000 Americans who gave their lives while on their way to, or stationed in, the UK during WWII. The Roll is kept in a glass case in front of the chapel’s altar and a page in the book is turned each day to display names of the American war dead.

There are other resources available to us to help locate information about service personnel killed in the line of duty. Military service records are, of course, useful if you have all the information needed to request them from the appropriate government repository. However, there are numerous places on the Internet where you can locate detailed information about these military personnel. This article focuses on those sites and, as you will see, the information to be found can substantially further your research.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission
One of the largest and most detailed websites is the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), at www.cwgc.org. It is an online database that lists information about the 1.7 million men and women of the Commonwealth forces who died during the two world wars. It also lists the 23,000 cemeteries, memorials and other locations worldwide where they are interred and/or commemorated. The register can also be searched for details of the more than 67,000 Commonwealth civilians who died as a result of enemy action in WWII.

A simple search using only the surname and initial(s) of an individual yields search results that include the following details:
- Surname, forename(s) or initials
- Rank
- Service number (if available)
An Internet query tells me that the memorial is dedicated to the 24,000 personnel who perished in WWII.

With this information, you have details to isolate the military service record of the individual and perhaps order copies. In addition, you now know the location of the interment or memorial for that person. In the image below left, a search for Morgans, S yielded 69 records. I located Morgans, Sydney as record 66. You can see the details displayed for him.

Sydney Morgans was a civilian on a fishing fleet. There is, therefore, no service number for him. However, he is memorialized on Panel 125 at the Tower Hill Memorial, just north of the Tower of London. An Internet search engine query for “tower hill memorial” tells me that the memorial is dedicated to the 24,000 Merchant Navy and fishing fleet personnel who perished in WWII.

Another search for Captain Philip Edward John Hugh Weatherly of the Queen’s Own Royal West Kent Regiment brings up just as many details. He died on 19 March 1944 and is buried in the Cassino War Cemetery in Italy. A search for the Cassino War Cemetery on the Internet tells you that it is the largest WWII Cemetery in Italy. The cemetery contains 4,265 grave markers of soldiers who died in battles against the German army. It also states that 855 Canadians are buried there. However, going back to the main page at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission site, use the drop-down box where you typed the Casualty name before and select, instead,

Cemetery. The search window changes and here you can type in “cassino”. You will be presented with two links: the Cassino Memorial and the Cassino War Cemetery. Clicking on each link provides a description of the entry. You may notice that the number of identified casualties at the memorial is 4,046, while the number of identified casualties buried in the cemetery is 3,985. This discrepancy may be explained by the fact that the bodies of some casualties were either not recovered or that they were returned to their families for burial elsewhere. Don’t overlook the clickable buttons, at the bottom of each of these detail screens. “Cemetery Reports” provides an alphabetical listing of personnel. The “Cemetery Plans” button provides a graphical map of the cemetery that can be enlarged and magnified. The “Cemetery Photos” button takes you to a page with at least one photographic image of the cemetery or memorial.

Also at the CWGC site is a large collection of links to other websites where you may find other helpful information.

**THE BRITISH WAR MEMORIAL PROJECT**
The British War Memorial Project, at www.britishwargraves.org.uk, is a volunteer project whose goal is to build an online International War Memorial to British Service Personnel from 1914 to the present day, including those personnel killed in recent conflicts and peacekeeping operations. A search of this growing database will produce a list containing a person’s name, rank, unit and the cemetery where interred. Click on the name and another page with a photo of the grave or a status of the photo is displayed. In addition, there is a very detailed textual box, such as that for Quartermaster Serjeant A.H.W. Morgan shown at left.

Not only is Morgan’s military service detail here, there often is genealogical data, such as the names and address of Morgan’s parents and of his spouse. You can see that he was buried in Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey, and that you may also request a copy of a photograph of the actual gravestone. The photo is available in JPG format via e-mail or, for a small donation to cover costs, as a photographic print sent via postal mail.

**THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES — UK**
The National Archives (TNA) in Kew, Richmond, Surrey, at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk, has a tremendous collection of materials dating from the time of William the Conqueror’s Domesday Book to the present. Among their records collections are rosters of medals awarded to members of the British Armed Services and Civilian Gallantry. While the records and rosters are not available online at the TNA site, you can learn how to access the materials there and TNA provides helpful Internet links in its records group descriptions to other locations, including newspaper sites where medal awards may have been published.

At the TNA site, you may either use the Search box at the top of the page and enter “medals” or look down the page for the Popular Searches drop-down box and select Medals from the list, and then click the Go button. This latter method will take you to a category list in TNA’s catalog. Go to the letter M and click on the Medals link that seems most appropriate to your research.

The Canadian Virtual War Memorial
The Canadian Virtual War Memorial, at www.virtualmemorial.gc.ca, is accessible in both English and French, as you would expect. It is a searchable database of information about the graves and memorials of more than 116,000 Canadians and Newfoundlanders who served and gave their lives for their country. Memorials to more than 100 soldiers who died in service since the Korean War, including in peacekeeping and other operations, are also included.

You must specify the surname in the search template. Given name, initial(s) and year of death are optional. An advanced search template allows you to enter a date range and, additionally, select a Unit/Regiment from a drop-down list.

The search results produced by entering surname only provides a list of Surname, Initial(s), Given Name, and date of death. You may then click on a name of interest and a detailed page is displayed. A search for the surname “Holder” listed 13 persons with that surname, and one each for the surnames Holderness and Holderson. On this list, I selected the first name, that of C.P. (Charles Percy) Holder who died on 1 July 1917 and viewed the screen with details about him. If you look at the image to the right, you will see the information contained on that page.

Private Holder served in the Army in the Canadian Infantry (Central Ontario Regiment), 19th Battalion. He is listed in the First World War Book of Remembrance on page 257. You can click on a link to see the page itself and you can even order online a copy of the specific page to be mailed to you.

Private Holder is interred at the Klein-Vierstraat British Cemetery in Belgium and the burial reference, II. D. 4., is given. By clicking on the cemetery plan, you can quickly locate his burial site in Section II, Row D, and you would find his grave as number four in that row. Directions to the cemetery are also provided.

A search on the Internet for the “Klein-Vierstraat British Cemetery” provides a link, in this case, to a website devoted to this cemetery. A photograph of the cemetery and the cemetery plan are included on the page, as well as a request for photographs of the casualties to be posted on this site.

The National Archives of Australia
The National Archives of Australia, at www.naa.gov.au, holds military service records. If, however, you want to order copies of the service dossiers for WWI, WWII, Post-WWII (after 1946), or Navy records (after 1911), you can do so by completing an online form and pre-payment is required for Army and Air Force records before copies will be delivered to you. Standard black-and-white photocopies of Navy service records are free.

The Australian War Memorial
The Australian War Memorial, at www.awm.gov.au, has a rich website with a vast amount of research resources. If you are looking for details about an ancestor or family member who died in military service, click on
The link labeled “Roll of Honor” at the top right corner of the main page. You can complete boxes in the search template to obtain a detailed record for your service person. If you use only a surname, a search results list will be returned. You may click in the little box at the top of each record to mark it. Scroll to the bottom of the page to request the display of the record(s) you selected.

The details for Gunner Hugh Ross Dalgleish show his Army service unit, date and cause of death, and the Ypres Reservoir Cemetery in Belgium at which he is memorialized on Panel 19. The genealogical information about his parents and place of nativity, as well as the place of enlistment, may take your research further. Again, an Internet search will yield websites about the cemetery.

THE AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION
The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) website at www.abmc.gov is another tremendous site and commemorates those Americans killed overseas from WWI and later. The Commission was established by the United States Congress in 1923 at the request of General John J. Pershing. Its purpose at that time was to honor members of the American Armed Forces in Europe in WWI. Since that time, the ABMC has expanded its scope to include all military conflicts from WWI onwards and even includes some listings for the Mexican War, the US Civil War and the Spanish-American War in which military personnel died and were buried outside the US. It also has responsibility for maintaining the grave sites of Americans who are interred in cemeteries anywhere on foreign soil.

The website contains a vast collection of information. Links on the left side of the main web page will help you locate cemeteries and access the databases of those service personnel buried and/or memorialized overseas.

Clicking on the “Cemeteries” link presents a web page that contains links to each of the 24 permanent American burial grounds on foreign soil. A click on any link brings you to a photograph, detailed description, history and operational details of each location. Back on the Cemeteries page, there are links at the bottom to maps of specific geographies that show the physical location of each cemetery.

Another link labeled “Memorials” contains links to the 25 memorials or markers administered and maintained by the ABMC, as well as links to maps that show the physical location of each memorial. Some, but not all, of the memorials are also a part of a cemetery.

The links under the Search ABMC Databases section on the left side of the main page of the ABMC site contain the heart of your research. The Burial Listings link provides links for each of the wars. It specifically lists the names of all foreign casualties of the Mexican War, the US Civil War and the Spanish-American War, as well as the statistics for WWI, WWII and the Korean War. Specific databases for these last three wars for the casualties buried overseas are accessible through the other links under the Search ABMC Databases section on the left side of the page.

The “Commemorative Events” button gives information about Memorial Day activities at each cemetery or memorial location, and other events scheduled to commemorate the military dead overseas.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
The United States’ National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), at www.archives.gov, is the repository for a huge volume of American military service records up to and through the 1800s and some military pension records from the 20th century. Twentieth-century service records may be obtained from the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri. NARA has other records of interest for this period as well. Military units’ official administrative records may be of help. NARA also has a collection of records relating to “Casualties from World War II” accessible through its website at www.archives.gov/research/arc/ww2. The link to the "World War II Honor List of Dead and
Missing Army and Army Air Forces Personnel” will take you to a web page with state and territories listed. You must select the state from which your quarry came, click on that link, and another page presents you with a list of counties. There are usually one or more links for each county. Each link represents a digitized page in the state’s honor roll book. The entries are in alphabetical sequence by surname within county, and you will find the name, serial number, rank and report of death. Some of the codes used are:

- DNB — Died, non-battle
- DOI — Died of injuries
- DOW — Died of wounds
- FOD — Finding of death
- KIA — Killed in action
- M — Missing
- MIA — Missing in action

Refer to the foreword of the state’s book for a full list of the codes used as there may be others used that vary by state.

NARA also has a “State Summary of War Casualties from World War II for Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard Personnel” that is similar to the “World War II Honor List of Dead and Missing Army and Army Air Forces Personnel” above. These books, however, are organized by Dead (Combat), Missing, Wounded and Dead (Prison Camp) and Released Prisoners.

**Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System**

Going back to the US Civil War, you should know that there are many printed indexes of both Union and Confederate military personnel. The National Park Service (NPS), however, has compiled a detailed database called the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System. It can be accessed at [www.civilwar.nps.gov/cwss](http://www.civilwar.nps.gov/cwss) and allows you to search for either soldiers or sailors. The Soldiers System, for example, allows you to search by name or by regiment, resulting in a short history and the ability to search for a specific name or browse the full list of soldiers who served in the unit. The Sailors System is similarly organized. The Cemeteries search is incomplete, part of a continuing indexing project.

The Battles page allows you to display, by state, a list of battles fought there. Click on a battle link and you will see a page with a summary of location, date(s), commanders, forces engaged, estimated casualties for each side (and a total), a description of the conflict, the result(s) and additional NPS reference information.

The Prisoners search only includes, at this time, two prison camps: Fort McHenry (Confederate Soldiers) and Andersonville (Union Soldiers). You can search either of these for the names of prisoners or you can see a historical account of the prison. The site also has a facility that allows you to search for Medal of Honor recipients among the Union soldiers.

This site continues to grow as the NPS continues to research and index the records. If you have Civil War ancestors or family members, you will want to research at this site and return often. In addition, check the websites of the online archives of the state from which your ancestor served. You may find that some or all records have been indexed and/or digitized, and you can learn how to obtain copies of extant records that are only in paper format.

**Advance Your Research Using the Records of the War Dead**

We have seen that there are a number of sites relating to military conflicts and personnel, and the ones I’ve listed here are among the most prominent and prolific at a national level. There are, of course, other sites that have been created for individual states, provinces, counties and territories. Other nations may also have created similar sites. The fact is that, by using these online websites and the databases they contain, you can extend your genealogical research, locate your ancestors, determine what happened to them, learn more about their military experiences and gather more details that may allow you to locate other records. There really is a lot more out there for you than you may have thought, and the online resources for the war casualties may be just what you need to get past a brickwall or two.

**George G. Morgan** is the author of numerous books and articles about genealogy. He speaks at conferences and is the current president of the International Society of Family History Writers and Editors (ISFHWE) and a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists (APG).

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Using Your Digital Audio Player For Family History

CONSUMERS TODAY love portability. This fact is clearly illustrated by the newest devices out on the market for downloading and listening to music and audio programs, and recently, for watching video clips of our favorite shows. This portable digital music player craze can be seen everywhere from college campuses and malls to buses and trains. Adults and teenagers alike are sporting the instantly recognizable earbuds and tiny pocket-sized devices, along with any number of other accessories specifically designed for use with such players.

I must confess that I love gadgets and couldn't resist buying one of these portable devices myself. However, I must also admit that I am a compulsive multi-tasker — I’m always trying to do at least two things at once. Plus, I never have enough time to work on my own family’s genealogy, so I try to sneak in family history tasks whenever I am able. This includes while commuting, exercising or when I am on the road giving lectures or conducting research for my latest project. I consider myself pretty resourceful, so I’ve found a few ways to use my new toy for genealogy.

Whether you opt for a brand name Apple iPod or a generic MP3 player, perhaps you can apply one or more of these uses in your own family history research.

1. Play Genealogy Podcasts — There are several great genealogy podcasts available on the web for your listening pleasure. If you are new to this phenomenon, podcasts — a blend of the words iPod and broadcast — are audio recordings (and video files) that are downloaded onto a subscriber’s home computer, laptop or portable MP3 player and can be played at anytime once they’ve loaded. (MP3 stands for “MPEG-1 Audio Layer-3.” It is the most popular compressed audio file format.) Although it is possible to create a podcast requiring payment for download, most podcasts are available free of charge, and a typical podcast runs for 30-to-60 minutes. Two of my favorite Genealogy podcasts are “The Genealogy Guys”, www.genealogyguys.com, and “DearMyrtle’s Family History Hour”, www.dearmyrtle.com. I don’t always get to listen to these shows when they first become available online, so by downloading them to my MP3 player, I can listen to them at my leisure. It is a great way to keep up-to-date on the latest happenings in the genealogy world and pick up tips for solving some of my own research problems.

2. Listen to Oral History Interviews — I began conducting oral history interviews back in 1991 before it became the popular component of family history that it is today. I interviewed over 30 relatives and extended family members about my maternal lines (Straka, Figlar) for my first book. I used a mini-cassette recorder and used a transcriber to play back each taped interview and prepare typed transcripts. Last year, I began transferring each of these interviews over to audio files that I can store on my hard drive or on a CD, share with family members on our family website, or copy to my portable player. Most genealogists start researching one family line and then move on to another once they locate most of the information they are seeking or, alternatively, encounter a brickwall during the research process. While I moved on to other family lines since I started my research in 1990, I’ve uncovered additional information about particular ancestors in both the Straka and Figlar families and have had to refer back to many of the interviews from all those years ago. The ability to have the audio files of these interviews readily available while taking a walk, or sitting at my computer is quite convenient.

Also, several of the individuals I interviewed have since passed away, including my mother and father, and several aunts and uncles. It’s both comforting and educative to hear their voices again when reminiscing about good times, or when I want to recall a special story. For example, I have on tape my mother’s brother, John Figlar, who was one of the co-founders of our family reunion, talking about...
its importance: “We just keep it going every year, and hopefully I would like to see it keep going until I can’t go anymore, I’ll be dead, but I hope you guys will keep on doing the same thing every year — try to get there for the reunion.” Sadly, my uncle passed away in 1995, but through the wonder of technology, I can still hear him, inspiring us to keep having our yearly get-togethers.

3. Record Notes for a Family History Project or Research Task — There are so many times when an inspiring idea, memory, or thought will come to me out of the blue — typically when I don’t have a pen and notebook handy. My player has a built-in voice recorder, so when these moments happen I can simply hit “record” and dictate notes about an ancestor, a research task, ideas for an article or anything else that I will want to remember later on.

4. Use as Portable Storage for Photographs or Other Electronic Files — Many of the latest devices have large storage capacity for various types of digital files. If your player has a color screen, you can easily store and display photographs. For example, the new iPod Nano, that sells for around $149 US, has one gigabyte (GB) of memory and can store up to 15,000 images, or 240 songs or a mix of the two (two-GB and four-GB models that store up to 25,000 images are available at higher prices). This comes in handy if you plan to interview Aunt Sally and want to take along some photographs of her siblings or childhood home to show her, but don’t want to bring your original bulky photo album. You can simply pull out the player with the pictures on it (but keeping in mind that you are working with a 1.5-inch screen), or if you have one of the higher end models that connects to a TV to display images, you could show the images that way. Newer models are being developed all the time, some even with the capacity to play video. I also sometimes use my device to temporarily store or transport key data files I need for my library research or when I go to a conference. Using the USB connection, I can plug it into any computer that has a USB port. There are some limitations, but what I like about my digital audio player is the “one-stop” portability. If I am taking my player with me, I don’t necessarily need to carry a separate “Jump” or “Flash” drive, too.

5. Listen to Inspirational Music — Let’s face it, genealogy can be a tedious process at times. After I’ve spent several hours persistently searching all of my favorite online databases for 10 possible variations of a particularly tricky family surname, I admit that my enthusiasm starts to wane a bit. I often find that listening to a few family history-themed tunes helps to put the joy back in the genealogy and will usually inspire me to keep plugging away. A few of my favorites include:• “Lady Liberty” by Orleans
• “America” by Neil Diamond
• “Ellis Island” by Marc Cohn
• “Hands That Built America” by U2
• “We Are Family” by Sister Sledge

While each digital audio player device operates differently depending on the manufacturer, in general you don’t need to be a technological whiz kid to use one of these players. Technology has revolutionized in so many ways how we approach our family history research, but when it comes down to it, both as consumers and as genealogists, we like things that make our lives easier. We want easier access to more data faster, and for me, the digital audio player is just another way to take my “genealogy to go”.

So, chances are, if you see me walking down the street, or sitting in the airport, with earbuds in place, I may be listening to my favorite band, but I may be catching up on the latest news in the genealogical world, or perhaps even listening to the recorded voices of one of my family members for clues that may help me to solve a family history puzzle.

Who knew that genealogy in the new millennium would include, from top, Podcasts, USB memory sticks and U2?!

Lisa A. Alzo, M.F.A. is the author of Three Slovak Women, Baba’s Kitchen: Slovak & Rusyn Family Recipes and Traditions and Finding Your Slovak Ancestors. Lisa teaches online genealogy courses and she can be found online at www.lisaalzo.com.
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Like Internet search engines, using quotation marks around phrases narrows the search results to just those that contain the exact phrase. For example, Samuel Pepys brings back 6,591 hits in the keyword search, but “Samuel Pepys” produces 5,781 results. Unfortunately, wild card searching doesn’t work in the search feature.

If you don’t have success finding a title, searching for books can be easy if you use your imagination. Just like with censuses, death records and other familiar genealogical records, some listings in Abebooks contain errors, so be sure to check your spelling, enter only the title or part thereof, or just the author as one of the criteria might be wrong in the listing. For example, 38 books were listed under the author Smith, most of which appeared to be there as typographical errors of the name Smith. Indeed, one of the Smith listings also featured an error in the title, so be sure to make your search as open as possible.

If you are searching for a popular title, which brings up multiple hits, you can narrow your search from worldwide, to country, then to state/province by using the column on the right. Most of the booksellers at Abebooks have actual stores, so you can save on shipping for local purchases by going to the store directly.

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One drawback to Abebooks is that some booksellers are not diligent in keeping their listings up to date. More than once, I have ordered a book from a bookseller only to be told in an e-mail that the book is no longer available. Additionally, I have contacted sellers with questions about book listings who have not responded. However, these faults seem to be with the individual sellers and not Abebooks as a whole.

Once you have set up an account, you can also create a Book Want, which is an e-mail notifying you if a book matching your criteria has been listed by a bookseller. Note that a Book Want only searches for new items listed for Abebooks, so it’s best to search for the book before setting up a Book Want.

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I recently received a query from a lady in Australia who wanted to find someone in the 1891 census of Montreal (this census is unindexed). Doing that would be a full-time job for a couple of months, and you might go either blind or mad in the process. This highlighted for me the importance of city, county, provincial and state directories.

Publication of these directories began in the late 1700s and were commonplace by the late 19th century. I think they are often underestimated as a resource for the family historian. Usually directories supply the name, address and occupation of the homeowner. In another section, they identify the electoral ward where the house lies. The ward identifies the section of the census where you will find an ancestor. With a map of the city, you can now find the neighborhood church where the ancestor’s vital records might be found. By scanning the directories at five-year intervals, you can track the family moves, changes of occupation, etc. You can also find out what funeral parlors were in business when a relative died — their records may still be available. Personally, I discovered what year my grandfather was promoted from prison guard to sergeant.

I also appreciate that many directories provide information on the location of the community by township and county. They often will include notes on the history, geography and economy of the area. Sometimes you will be lucky enough to find information on transportation routes and costs to the community from major centers. All these flesh-out the picture of an ancestor’s life in that community.

Abbreviations are often used in city directories to save space, so it would be a good idea to make a copy of the legend to help you remember the notations later. Local libraries can usually be counted on to have some of the directories for their area; larger repositories, like national libraries and university research libraries, have extensive collections of them.

The major problem for researchers is finding and gaining access to these directories. There is clearly a role for the Internet here and an increasing number of archives are making some of their directories available online.

Some organizations physically transcribe the text and though this makes for the cleanest and easiest-to-read versions, it has a reliability problem because errors can creep in.

Other agencies prefer to scan the pages. This is perhaps more efficient in terms of time but OCR (Optical Character Recognition) programs can have difficulty transcribing directories, especially with older fonts. A very careful proofing of the results is required.

I feel most confident with direct digital photography. Sometimes the visual quality is not great, but it is more reliable.
WHERE ARE THESE DIRECTORIES?
Many directories are held by membership or subscription sites. Ancestry.com has a phenomenal number. I counted 100 directories for Massachusetts alone. Cyndi’s List includes 190 directory sites, but a number of my favorite ones are not included. There is also the recurring problem of broken links.

My favorite way to find a directory is to go to the county’s GenWeb site. You can get there from the World GenWeb site at www.worldgenweb.org. You can select the part of the world, country, state/province and county you want. Usually, if there are online directories available for your area, they will be listed under a heading like “Resources” or “Links”.

If there is nothing there, try the local genealogical society’s link. If a directory has been put online, they are likely the people who produced it. Another advantage of the GenWeb site is that if local URLs have changed, they will know about it long before the rest of us.

I selected the following sites because I feel they are, in some way, special. If you can’t find your directory here or with the strategies above, then the next step would be to visit www.cyndislist.com, where you can do a search for city directories.

BOSTON DIRECTORIES
Tufts University has produced a website that is worth surfing just for the joy of it. They do have city directories from 1845 to 1925, but they also have maps, atlases, photos and interactive tools. You can trace the history of a street or a district, find your ancestors and where they lived and see what the city was like in their time. It is truly an inspired Internet venture, which you can be a part of at http://dca.tufts.edu/features/bostonstreets/people/directories.html.

ROCHESTER DIRECTORIES
If you had relatives in Rochester, New York, you will be interested to know that the city directories from 1827 to 1930 are being digitized and put online. To date, the site has reached the 1850s. This is being done by New York’s Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County.

You can either browse through a directory or select alphabetical divisions of names. A great advantage is that the images are printable and downloadable. To have a look at these directories, go to www.libraryweb.org/rochcitydir/citydirectories.html.

LONG ISLAND DIRECTORIES
The Suffolk County Historical Society has a number of directories in its library and the ones from 1868 to 1925 have been placed online by the Longwood Genealogy Group. Some of the directories are searchable by name and others are divided by village.

I have a few concerns about the site’s maintenance because the last advertised meeting took place in September 2002. It might be a good idea to visit it soon at www.rootsweb.com/~nygglshp/Long_Island_Directories.html.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA
Canada’s National Library is experimenting with online city directories. When I was researching, there were 95 directories from as early as 1790 and from all parts of the country. You just might be lucky enough to find your own Canadian ancestor. Check the directories out at www.collectionscanada.ca/canadiandirectories/index-e.html.

When you arrive, select “Search the Database”. You can chose the directory you wish to consult, then type in your search term(s).

I chose Lovell’s Province of Québec
Directory for 1871 and typed in “Hickey” and “Montreal” as the search terms. Four hits appeared. Some of the pages seemed inappropriate as they were not in the “H” range. However, closer examination showed that Hickey appeared as the second name in a business, e.g. Sleath and Hickey.

The site offers two viewing options: standard and “DjVu”. The standard view displays a basic image and if you have no trouble reading it, don’t worry about DjVu. DjVu allows zooming and panning of the page so you can magnify it to a more comfortable level. The program works much the same as Adobe Acrobat does and is very simple. I found, however, that it worked better with Internet Explorer than Mozilla Firefox.

**MONTREAL DIRECTORIES ONLINE**

Lovell’s City Directories of Montreal have long been a treasured resource of mine and I have spent many hours in the archives tracking people and their movements in the city. The directories often include the occupation of the person, which is otherwise difficult to establish.

One technique I use is to check for an ancestor every five or 10 years until there is a change in the entry or they disappear. Then I work backwards to find the year when this change occurred. This can provide leads to when someone married, died or moved away from the city, all of which are very important to the family researcher.

These directories are now being made available online by the Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec. So far, they have completed the directories from 1842 to 1930 and they plan to continue to 1999. Although this is a French site, knowing the language is not necessary. My wife, who does not speak French, had no difficulties using the site.

I also found it easy to use. All you have to do is select the year that you want to research and then the category. If it is a people search, you can select the surname letter range. The top edges of the pages will now start appearing on your screen in sequence. They give you the beginning and ending name on that page. Scroll down until you find the page you want and click on it. It will appear on a reduced screen and will be barely legible. I maximized the screen and had no difficulty reading it, but you also can use the magnifying lens icon.

I expect to spend a lot of time at this site and I am sure that anyone else with ancestors who once lived in Montreal will be doing the same. It is available at http://bibnum2.bnquebec.ca/bna/lovell/index.html.

**TORONTO DIRECTORIES**

The Toronto Public Library has 27 19th-century city directories (from 1838-81) online at http://digit.tpl.toronto.on.ca:8000. It is a rich site that has been made more user friendly since the first time I visited. You can do a simple search by selecting a directory and typing the name in the dialogue box. Results appear up at the left of the screen, showing the number of hits in each directory. Select a directory, then click on the page icon beside the entry to see an image of the actual page. If you have too many hits, you can refine the search by adding keywords. There is also a sorting function, but I did not find this very helpful.

**UNITED KINGDOM**

The University of Leicester has undertaken a large scale city directory project ranging from 1750 to 1919. It covers England and Wales and focuses on the 1850s, 1890s and 1910s. It’s not a difficult site to use and they have a help page in case you run into difficulty.

The site offers you the option of using “Fuzzy Logic”, which searches for similar sounding words — like the Soundex option used by other sites. This is a very popular site with British researchers and I have sometimes had my access blocked because of the volume of traffic on the site, www.historicaldirectories.org/.

Patrick Wohler is a certified genealogist whose weekly column, “The Family Historian”, appears in six newspapers. He has written several books on history and the management of heritage resources and institutions. His latest book is about the early commercial photographers of Lanark and Renfrew Counties in Ontario.

www.internet-genealogy.com
Before I Sign Up: Getting Your Money’s Worth

There is nothing like sitting down in your pajamas after everyone else in the house is asleep and discovering a new database to explore for family connections. Those online materials are available any time you have a few moments to fit in a little genealogical research. But unless you’re able to find what you need on free sites like RootsWeb.com or those sponsored by genealogical groups or maintained by dedicated individuals, you’ll likely have to either: a) subscribe to a group of databases, or b) obtain a membership for special access to more sophisticated information. After all, someone has to bear the cost of putting all that information online.

So it’s confession time. How many databases do you pay for? I’ll bet that you subscribe to at least two; a web-based service like Ancestry.com and one sponsored by a non-profit group like the New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS). Back in the old days of the Internet, when databases weren’t so plentiful, there wasn’t much overlap between memberships. Now, however, that’s a different story. Here are six tips to help you find what you need without going broke.

Free vs. Fee
Think about the information you’re looking for, then try to find a free source for that information. Before you spend a penny, explore the links on Cyndi’s List, www.cyndislist.com, under the subject Databases. Both free and fee-based services are listed.

Visit the Library
Another good source of no-cost or low-cost access is a library. Most public and private libraries subscribe to online resources that can be used by members onsite or from home. If you need to access a specific database sponsored by a bricks-and-mortar organization, ask about non-member usage. For instance, anyone can pay the day fee at the NEHGS and use all the online resources on www.newenglandancestors.org while they are in the library. Need access to an academic resource? Try your local college library. They subscribe to special scholarly online sites for their students that aren’t available through individual membership. Ask the reference staff about their policies regarding visitor access.

Compare, Compare, Compare
Explore the databases offered by different organizations before you sign up. Some duplication may be unavoidable, but try not to subscribe to two services that offer the same material, unless you really require the unique resources that are also available.

Limited Memberships
A few sites offer short term memberships or pay-per-view. For instance, you can sign up for a month with the Origins Network, www.originsnetwork.com, while the Canadian Programme de recherche en démographie historique (PRDH), www.genealogie.umontreal.ca/en/, bases their rates on the number of hits.

Buy What You Need
Rather than subscribing to several networks all at once, use one for awhile, then add other memberships as your research warrants. Some sites will allow you to tailor your subscription. Since you usually have to use a credit card to sign up, watch for automatic renewals to any subscription — don’t get charged for something you no longer want!

Weigh the Costs
If you only subscribed to a particular database to gain access to one or two items, it might be less expensive to hire a researcher that already has a membership to retrieve the material for you.

Online research is fun with immediate rewards if you hit it genealogically rich using a database or two. Just don’t let your desire for material put you in the poorhouse.
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