

Digging for your Roots

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Heritage Library

8 Tips and a few sample sites to help you start digging for your roots!

1. Start with the information you already have about yourself, parents, children, and grand-children.

- a. Scan photos, newspaper clippings, documents as jpg's (required for most genealogy programs)
- b. Label and save them in a folder on your computer where you can find them.
- c. Family Stories: parts true, parts false...goal is not to PROVE them, but to identify what is accurate.

2. Use the usual sources

- a. <https://www.familysearch.org/search/> (free)
- b. <https://www.ancestry.com/search/> (some free; best data is with a subscription; 2 weeks free)
- c. <https://www.ancestry.com/cs/offers/freetrial> set up a free trial
- d. <https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/free-resources/charts/> Free charts you can print out and fill in if you want
- e. <http://www.usgenweb.org> (free)
- f. www.findagrave.com (free) data added by volunteers
- g. <https://heritage.statueofliberty.org/> (free)

3. Escape from the usual sources

- a. <https://ldsgenealogy.com/dir/> (free) search by state, category
- b. <https://www.cyndislist.com/> (free) A treasure trove of information; lots of sites, most free; info as lists and definitions of unusual occupations
- c. <https://stevemorse.org/> many immigration ports in addition to NY such as Baltimore, Galveston, etc. (free)
- d. <https://acpl.lib.in.us/explore-genealogy/our-resources> (Fort Wayne Library in Allen County, IN one of the best collections; not just for IN, some data on line, with more at the library itself (free)
- e. <https://www.gengophers.com/#/> searches old books (free)
- f. www.fultonhistory.com/ An absolute MUST if you have relatives from NY: best newspaper collection of any state; all free and maintained by one man in his garage (free) The site can be a bit quirky, but it is fantastic!

4. Google is your friend.

<https://www.google.com/> (free) search ALL and also just IMAGES

5. Add historical context

- a. <http://www.gendisasters.com/> (free) Was there a disaster in your ancestor's lifetime? Did they live where there was a major earthquake? The Johnstown Flood?

- b. <https://loc.gov/collections/> (free) Wonderful images from the Library of Congress; Good place to find historical images.

6. Reach out to others

<https://www.ancestry.com/boards/>

7. Reorganize, Rethink, Recheck!

Don't "assume"! Look with fresh eyes, especially if you hit a brick wall.

8. Never Give Up!

New material and new sites are posted; old sites change or disappear.

Also not EVERYTHING is online! Just because you don't find something online doesn't mean the info doesn't exist!

HERITAGE LIBRARY – Suite 100, 2 Corpus Christi, Hilton Head Island, SC 29928

<https://heritagelib.org/>

As a **Member** (\$85 annually), you will have full access to the physical library as well as the talents and expertise of our volunteers who will help with your research project.

- You can **use all our facilities**: computers, Internet access, printers, and microfilm readers.
- You will receive our **regular publications, The Heritage Observer**.
- You will receive a discount on ancestry and history classes you attend at the Heritage Library.
- At the library, you can take advantage of the **Library's subscriptions to Heritage Quest Online, Ancestry, American Ancestors, and fold3 (formerly Footnote)**. Of course, you can also consult the free Web sites such as FamilySearch and Rootsweb.
- You will have access to **Heritage Quest Online from home**.
Guests can get 1 hour free time at the library.
\$10 per day to use library for non-members.

If you decide you want to continue with genealogy with the goal of producing a nice book to share with family, **you need to use a software program and NOT free online trees**. Free trees online are for beginners just to try out. Software allows you to create books. The Heritage Library offers classes on Family Tree Maker Software, which I highly recommend. I teach the 4 part Zoom classes on a regular basis. Check with the library or email me if you want to know when the next classes will be held. (Note: I have been teaching this for years. I find that many folks who think they are using the software correctly, aren't. It is very powerful!)