



Leave No Stone Unturned: Finding Elusive Ancestors on FamilySearch

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FamilySearch adds millions of records every year, are you finding everything you should? This class will highlight some different ways to search to make sure you leave no stone unturned in the search for your ancestors.

IMPORTANT SEARCH TIPS

1. Always search by name first.
2. Always view the image of the original record.
3. Attach sources to your Family Tree.
4. Search using a variety of methods. If you haven't tried searching more than 4 or 5 different ways, you haven't tried hard enough.
5. Less is more. Begin with a minimum of information and apply filters to your results to refine them. Don't miss out on some results because you have narrowed your search too much.
6. Log in with your FamilySearch account first in order to save records and images to your source box or to attach the information directly to your ancestor in Family Tree. It also allows you to view more image results.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS PAGE

- **Results:** Indicates the number of results that match your search criteria.
- **Name:** The name of the person in the record that matches your search parameters and the name of the collection from which the result was taken. The dates indicated in this section are the date range of the collection indicated and **not** the date of the actual record.
- **Events:** The type of event indicated in the record, its date and place.
- **Relationships:** Relationships that are indicated in the record.
- **Preferences:** Allows you to modify how the results are displayed. Play with this to find one you like best.

VIEWING RESULTS

- Click on the name of a result to view a mini synopsis on the right side of your screen.
- Click on the paper icon to view the result in full screen. This also provides an option to view the document information, collection information and copy the citation, view similar records, and view who may have the record attached to them in the FamilySearch Family Tree.
- Click on the camera, when available, to view the image from where the indexed information was extracted.

FILTERING RESULTS

You can filter your results by Collection, Sex, Race, Birth, Marriage, Death, or Other by clicking on the small gray buttons found between the number of results and the results. Once that button opens up you can choose the options by which to filter or narrow down your results.

Tip: You can conduct a new search from the results page by entering the information in the search engine sidebar on the right side of the page.

TYPES OF SEARCHES

SEARCHING BY NAME

To Obtain More Results: Search using only one surname but for variety, you can try searching with two surnames, if it is culturally appropriate for the area you are researching. It's important to remember however, that the names of individuals in many indexed records only contain one surname.

SEARCHING WITH A RELATIONSHIP

Searching with a relationship allows you to connect the name of your ancestor with one of his or her family members in the search engine. This greatly increases the likelihood that you will locate relevant results.

Spouse Search: Enter the name of the husband or wife in the principal search fields. Click on Spouse and enter the name of the spouse. This option is especially helpful when you are looking for a marriage.

Parent Search: Don't put any information in the principal search fields. Scroll down the page and click on Father and enter the father's name, then click on Mother and enter the mother's name. In countries where the woman does not use her maiden name after marriage, you may want to not enter it in the search engine. For good measure, try searching both with and without her maiden name. Be sure to limit your results by country, and if you know it the next smallest jurisdiction. You can also search for Hispanic family members using only the paternal and maternal surnames, because women do not change their surnames when they marry if they are living outside the United States.

VIEWING IMAGES FROM YOUR RESULTS

FINDING THE IMAGE OF AN INDEXED RECORD

This search is important because you should **always view the original record** to see ALL information found in the record. Often there will be additional information or important clues not included in the indexed information.

Review the Source Information

1. Is there an image attached? Even if there is, you may still need to browse images.
2. Is there a film number?
3. Is there an item or page number?
4. What is the date and location of the record?

Locate the Image

1. Write down all the pertinent source information (GS film or Digital folder number, item number, page number, date and place of the record). Open a new browser window to **FamilySearch.org** then continue the steps outlined below. Or you can leave your results window open and just open a new browser window in a new tab and continue the steps below. You can then flip back and forth between the browser tabs to view the document information.
2. Click on **Catalog**.
3. Click on **Film/Fiche number** and enter the film number. This information comes from the document information.
4. Click on **Search**.
5. On the results page, locate the film number and click on the camera icon.
6. Using the source information (item number, page number and date) locate the image.
7. Examine it thoroughly for clues.

BROWSING THE IMAGE COLLECTION THREE WAYS

Many records are not indexed yet, especially those outside the United States. There are other ways to locate this vital information by browsing the Historical Records Collections on FamilySearch.

FIND A COLLECTION / SEARCH BY PLACE

You can find a specific collection or collections for a specific place using two options found on the Records home page. To access the Records home page, click on Search and then Records.

Find a Collection

Use this option if you know the name of specific collection you would like to view and research with. Enter the name or a few keywords from the collection title in the Collection Title field. Choose the correct option from the list that appears. Alternately, you can also view and browse all collections by clicking on Browse All Collections.

When you Browse all Collections, you have the option to filter by collection title. You may also filter by collection type or locality using the options found in the right sidebar.

Search by Place

Use this option to browse collections available for specific places. Be sure to try all available jurisdictions for the place: Country, Province, or State. Enter the name of the place and choose the correct option from the list that appears. Or click on Browse Places to view all collections sorted by their locality.

If you choose to Browse Places, you can filter your results by clicking on the map. Once you click on a continent you will see a list of countries for that continent or region in the right sidebar. You may also begin by choosing the filters found in the right sidebar.

USING THE FAMILYSEARCH CATALOG

Use the FamilySearch catalog to find microfilm and digitized images as well as other records that are not digitized, such as microfilms, books, periodicals, or maps. The most commonly used search option is place but you can also search by:

- Surnames
- Titles
- Author
- Subjects
- Keywords

Understanding the Icons in the Catalog

- **Magnifying glass icon:** Some or all the records from this microfilm are indexed. Click on the magnifying glass icon to search by name within this microfilm.
- **Camera icon:** Records are digitized and online. Click on the camera icon to view the images.
- **Microfilm roll icon:** Records are only on microfilm for now.
- **Camera icon with key:** Images are restricted to certain groups of users. These restrictions are imposed by the archives and repositories who provided FamilySearch with the records.

Places Within

Use the catalog's Places Within feature to locate records for cities and towns within a province, state or department. This is especially helpful if you don't know how to spell the name of the town.

Why Use the Catalog?

- Verify if a microfilm has been indexed.
- Locate other items available for your locality or surname.

Remember to search for records at the jurisdictional level that created the records – national, state, county, or city. You must spell the name correctly or use Google or Places within ... [name of state or province] to help identify the correct spelling.

USING FAMILYSEARCH IMAGES

Why Use Images?

- New acquired images go here first.
- It's a quick way to locate images for a specific film or DGS number.
- You can apply filters to narrow your search criteria.
- Greater magnification options for images.
- Ability to do a map search for nearby localities.

Images is not a place to search for names. Begin by entering the name of the place you would like to research in. Choose the correct locality from the list of options that will begin to appear as you type in the place you need.

More Options gives you the ability to apply filters at the start of your search. You can filter by Record Type, Keyword, Creator, Custodian, and Image Group Number or DGS

Results Page

You will see a list of results for the locality entered if FamilySearch has records for that locality.

Filter by Date or Life Event

By default, you will see filters in the right sidebar you can use to narrow your results by Date and Life Event. For date, you can choose a specific year or range of years. Be sure to select the option offered that matches your choice. To filter by Life Event, click on that field and choose the option that fits your needs from the drop-down menu. Click on Update to refresh your results using the filters you have chosen.

Choose Display Options for Results

You can filter the information displayed in the columns by clicking on the button Options. After you have chosen your options, click on the X in the upper right corner near options to close the sidebar. To be able to filter now by date or life event, click on the button Refine Search.

IMPORTANT BROWSE IMAGE TIPS

- Look through indexes found among the images, if any. Remember that the page number in the index rarely matches the image number. The number in the index is usually a record/certificate number or a page number. Get familiar with the index organization before starting your browse through the images.
- You can browse forward or backward in an image set using the small arrows that appear on either side of the words **Image xx of xx**. You can also enter an image number and click on Enter to advance to that image number.
- To use the tools to improve the image quality, click on **Tools** and you will see various options. You can adjust the brightness or contrast of the image, rotate right (in Images only) or left, download, and print.
- Begin with date of the event (birth, marriage, death) working forward in time. The records are normally in chronological order by the date of the event or of the registration. If the event is not on the date expected, try searching a few years before or a few years after.
- Take notes or use a research log. Be patient and don't give up.