

# ***Genealogy on the Internet:*** **An Annotated List of Websites**

## **Fee Databases (the largest two):**

### **Ancestry Library**

This database is available without cost when accessing it from within the library. Contains thousands of genealogical databases including census, birth, land, military records, ships' passenger lists etc. Includes millions of pages of scanned original records. Includes every-name indexing (e.g., every name within a household in the census) and "fuzzy" searches (e.g., "Whitcomb" will also pull up Whitcombe, Whitkum etc.). These scanned records have been machine-indexed, followed by human "clean-up". Images in Ancestry were scanned from *copies* of the original master films. If you are viewing this from within the library, you can click on this link:

<http://0-www.ancestrylibrary.com.www.livermore.lib.ca.us/>

### **HeritageQuest**

This database is available without cost to Livermore Public Library cardholders. When you access it from home, through our website at <http://0-www.heritagequestonline.com.www.livermore.lib.ca.us/hqoweb/library/do/index>, you will be asked to enter your name (first or last name will suffice) and your library card number (all the letters and numbers, no spaces, no dashes). Census indexing includes only heads of household and only performs "exact" searches (e.g., "Whitcomb" will not locate "Whitcombe"). This database provides access to some census records not available through Ancestry and also provides full-text access to a large number of local histories and genealogies. These scanned records have been hand-indexed, not by machine. Images in HeritageQuest were scanned directly from the *original* master films. Recommendation: click on "Search Census", then go to the bottom of the page and click on "What's New". This gives a concise description of what is in each collection in HeritageQuest, gives advice on searching, and provides helps on printing enlarged census images. HeritageQuest actually has all of the censuses scanned and online from 1790 to 1930, but just not all of the name indices. If you wish to browse an unindexed census year, click on the "Browse" button on the "Search Census" page. This will take you to a search page where you will be prompted for the specific year, state, county, and locality you wish to search, with drop-down options. This is also a good way to double-check indexers!

## **Basic Orientation and Education:**

About Genealogy: <http://genealogy.about.com>

Includes

- Surname meanings
- How to do genealogy research (click on the tab, "Learn How")
- Reviews of genealogy software (under "Learn How", click on "Choose a Genealogy Software Program")

And many suggestions for where to begin with your genealogical research.

RootsWeb's Guide to Tracing Family Trees:  
<http://rwguide.rootsweb.ancestry.com>

Johnston, Susan Goss. My Supplemental Online Genealogy Class:  
<http://freepages.misc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mdtmgug/education>

Cyndi's List: <http://www.cyndislist.com> Check under the heading, "Education".

## **Vital Statistics and Burials:**

Center for Disease Control: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm>  
The Center for Disease Control provides the latest information on where to write for a birth, marriage, death, or divorce record. Before mailing off your request and check, be sure to check any specific links the CDC provides to state vital records offices for additional information.

Death Indexes: [www.deathindexes.com](http://www.deathindexes.com)  
This is a privately operated site with links, organized by state, to vital records information. Included among these are a number of states that have chosen to put a portion of their death records online. Also access to a number of large cities' vital records (subscription required for city vital records).

Social Security Death Index: [ssdi.rootsweb.ancestry.com](http://ssdi.rootsweb.ancestry.com)  
From SSA's website: "The Death Index contains a listing of persons who had a Social Security number, who are deceased, and whose death was reported to the Social Security Administration. (The information in the Death Index for people who died prior to 1962 is sketchy since SSA's death information was not automated before that date. Death information for persons who died before 1962 is generally only in the Death Index if the death was actually reported to SSA after 1962, even though the death occurred prior to that year.)  
If you find a person in the Death Index, you will learn the date of birth and Social Security Number for that person. (The Social Security Death Index is not published by SSA for public use, but is made available by commercial entities using information from SSA records. We do not offer support of these commercial products nor can we answer questions about the material in the Death Index.) [The searches are free. Data lags about two months behind the current date.]

Other records potentially available from SSA include the Application for a Social Security Number (form SS-5). [[ssdi.rootsweb.ancestry.com](http://ssdi.rootsweb.ancestry.com) provides a link which will take you directly to the SSA online application. The current cost for the SS-5 is \$27.- The original SS-5 normally includes names of parents of the deceased as well as place of birth.]

California Death Records:  
[vitals.rootsweb.ancestry.com/ca/death/search.cgi](http://vitals.rootsweb.ancestry.com/ca/death/search.cgi)

This death index for California covers the years 1940 to 1997, providing name of the deceased, birthdate, deathdate, mother's maiden name, gender, birthplace, deathplace, age, and SS# if the deceased had one.

Vitalsearch: [www.vitalsearch-worldwide.com](http://www.vitalsearch-worldwide.com)

This is a commercial database providing access to some level of vital records in 21 U.S. states. You will need to register for a "guest pass" before being permitted to enter some of its products. And some require "Premium Search" membership (fee-based). Dates covered: at least 1888-2005.

Interment.net Cemetery Records Online:

[www.interment.net/us/nat/veterans.htm](http://www.interment.net/us/nat/veterans.htm)

This is especially good for finding burial data for veterans in the National Cemeteries.

Find a Grave: [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

The data in this database is user-contributed, but currently has over 59 million records, many with photographs.

U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs: Nationwide Gravesite Locator:

[http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL\\_v1](http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL_v1) Includes burials in national and state veterans' cemeteries and also those veterans whose burials in private cemeteries are marked with government gravestones. Not exhaustive.

## **Family Records, Photos, and Other Artifacts:**

Dead Fred Genealogy Photo Archive: <http://deadfred.com>

eBay: <http://ebay.com> search by record type (family Bible, photograph), surname, and location.

Flicker: <http://flickr.com> search by record type, surname and location. Includes pictures of many tombstones on veterans' graves.

National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections: [www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc](http://www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc)

## **Finding Published Records: Both Real and Digitized Books, Magazines, Newspapers:**

Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers:

<http://www.loc.gov/chroniclingamerica/index.html>. Contains access to a number of digitized newspapers for the period 1880-1910, as well as a database of information about American newspapers, 1690-present.

International Coalition on Newspapers: <http://icon.crl.edu/digitization.htm>

Digitized historic newspapers, both from the U.S. and around the world.

Google Book Search: <http://books.google.com> In many ways, this source is an improvement over the book search feature in **HeritageQuest**. You can keyword search thousands of books *and* articles from many genealogical publications. Books can be searched online and are downloadable. Magazine articles are not full-text, but info is given on how to find the specific issue.

Internet Archive: <http://www.archive.org> This non-profit site inherited Microsoft's *LiveBook* digitization project. You can keyword search for thousands of books and other types of media. Books can be full-text searched and also downloaded.

Newslink: <http://newslink.org>

Links to current newspapers, many with online archives (but few are they that allow free access).

British Columbia Digital Library:

<http://bcdlib.tc.ca/links-subjects-newspapers.html>

The British Columbia Digital Library's links to historic newspapers online, often full-text—for example, the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1841-1902.

Making of America: Cornell University Library:

<http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/moa> This website offers access to over 250 digitized books and 100,000 articles from the 19<sup>th</sup> century; includes a number of local histories.

Making of America: University of Michigan:

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moagrp> Offers digital access to over 10,000 books and 50,000 articles from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including a number of local histories.

Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov> . See also:

“Digital Collections” <http://www.loc.gov/library/libarch-digital.html>

“Library of Congress Online Catalog” <http://catalog.loc.gov>

“American Memory” <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

LibWeb: Library Servers via WWW: <http://lists.webjunction.org/libweb> This site provides an excellent list of local libraries and university libraries. If you don't find what you need here, try a *Google* search with keywords: [location] and **library** or [location] and **university**.

California State Library: [www.library.ca.gov](http://www.library.ca.gov)

This link takes you to the California State Library's website. You can search in its web catalog for materials which are held in the Sutro Library in San Francisco, a major genealogical collection in California (e.g., searching on “Whitcomb family” in the Main Catalog returns five printed genealogies, all in the Sutro Library, on this family).

Missouri State Library: [www.mcpl.lib.mo.us/branch/ge/heartland](http://www.mcpl.lib.mo.us/branch/ge/heartland)

This library in Missouri offers free interlibrary loan of its genealogical materials nationwide. Your library may now order via OCLC (see website for other interlibrary loan options).

National Genealogical Society: [www.ngsgenealogy.org](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org)

The National Genealogical Society will interlibrary loan its materials, and these are located in the St. Louis, Missouri, County Library. Go to “References for Researching”, then “NGS Book Loan Collection” for further information. Also good site for research criteria.

New England Historic Genealogical Society:

<http://www.americanancestors.org> Joining this society will allow you to have access online to more than 2400 databases of vital records, probate records, and published genealogies. Also significant material accessible for free.

Footnote: <http://www.footnote.com> Although paid membership is required for access to most databases, some free material is also available.

PERSI: [www.acpl.lib.in.us/database/graphics/order\\_form.html](http://www.acpl.lib.in.us/database/graphics/order_form.html)

PERSI (Periodical Source Index) is the most comprehensive subject index to periodical articles on genealogy and local history in the world. The index is only available through fee-based services such as **Ancestry Library** or **HeritageQuest**. This link will take you to the request form for ordering articles.

WorldCat: <http://www.worldcat.org> Use Advanced Search for more precision.

This site provides links to holdings in participating libraries. Not all libraries in the world participate yet. You can search for books, articles, dvds, cds, or “everything”.

Amazon.com: <http://www.amazon.com> Known primarily as a book vendor, this site also offers online searching of some of its books.

## **General Surname Searches and Ships’ Passenger Lists:**

FamilySearch: [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

This site is operated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS). Fill in the search form and click on “Search”. The search engine now reports a wide variety of resources, many of which are beyond LDS sources (e.g., Footnote—see above).

Remember that some data reported were submitted without verification—e.g., “Ancestral File”, “International Genealogical Index”, and “Pedigree Resource File”.

From this site you can also locate local LDS Family Search Centers, check in their Library Catalog for holdings of microfilmed records from all over the world which you can order and read at a local family history center, and print out a variety of genealogical forms at no charge (click on “Learn” and then “Get Started”).

They also have a database of over 40,000 free articles provided by genealogists all over the world, and offer a variety of free classes online to learn more about how to do your genealogical research.

GeneaNet: [www.geneanet.org](http://www.geneanet.org)

Developed by two engineers based in Paris France. Can locate others working on your family tree. To access most features, you must register for a free subscription.

Castle Garden (NYC) Passenger Lists: [www.castlegarden.org](http://www.castlegarden.org)

An index to all New York City arrivals, 1830-1892. Still under construction. No scanned images, no Advanced Search available as of 3/28/2011.

Ellis Island (NYC) Passenger Lists: [www.ellisland.org](http://www.ellisland.org)

An index to all New York City arrivals 1892-1924. See "Search Tips" under "Passenger Search". You will need to register (free) to access images of the original passenger record, the ship manifest, and the ship image.

Steven P. Morse Website: [www.stevemorse.org/index.html](http://www.stevemorse.org/index.html)

Steve Morse provides more detailed and varied search strategies of the Ellis Island website and also includes the Castle Garden (New York's pre-Ellis Island port of entry) lists as well as of many other websites (e.g., NYC death records). Many links take you to fee databases such as Ancestry, but a large number of the databases are free. Recommended: read his "About this website and how to use it", accessible on the front page.

Rootsweb: [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com)

Portal to a large number of sites; begins with a search engine which allows you to perform a name search in a variety of resources including:

- Social Security Death Index
- RootsWeb Surname List (a list where anyone can register a surname they're researching; links you to a list of other surnames they've posted and includes their email address and sometimes "snailmail" address)
- WorldConnect Project (here you can submit a specific name, and the results will show who else is interested in this specific name and how to contact them; it will also show you family connections they have posted for this specific name)
- Bureau of Land Management records (see below)
- A number of online vital statistics databases
- Obituary Daily Times (index of mostly recently published newspaper obituaries; not exhaustive) and a number of other free databases

## **Websites Specific to Cultural and Ethnic Groups:**

African American:

[www.detroit.lib.mi.us/burton/african\\_american\\_internet\\_guide.htm](http://www.detroit.lib.mi.us/burton/african_american_internet_guide.htm)

This guide from the Burton Historical Collection at the Detroit Public Library lists its best picks for researching African American genealogy online.

British Isles: [www.genuki.org.uk](http://www.genuki.org.uk)

This website specializes in the British Isles. Do you know the place of origin in Scotland, Wales, England, Ireland, the Channel Islands, or the Isle of Man? Then this is a must-see website.

Germany: [wiki-de.genealogy.net/Hauptseite](http://wiki-de.genealogy.net/Hauptseite)

This website is in German, but it is also available in English (click on English in lower corner in menu on far left). A number of sites to search for surnames, places etc.

Spanish/Latin-American:

- [www.hispanicgenealogy.com](http://www.hispanicgenealogy.com)

This is the website of the Hispanic Genealogical Society of New York. Contains many links to resources on Latin-American, including Puerto Rican, genealogy.

- <http://www.lasculturas.com/lib/libGenealogy.htm>

This a private website moderated by Rich Vazquez. Contains a variety of links to resources on Latin-American, Spanish, and Sephardic genealogy. Some of the links are no longer active, but there are enough active links to make this site worthwhile.

- [www.somosprimos.com](http://www.somosprimos.com)

This is the website of the Society of Hispanic Historical and Ancestral Research. They publish an online magazine, *Somos Primos*, and offer many links to sources on Hispanic heritage, including specific resources on early Californios.

Chinese-American: <http://www.c-c-c.org/programs/roots/>

This is the website of the Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco. The “roots” portion of the website focuses at present primarily on immigrants from Guangdong Province in mainland China. They also offer roots-related courses, internships, scholarships etc.

Jewish:

- [www.jewishgen.org](http://www.jewishgen.org)

This website for Jewish genealogy requires registration (email address and a password of your choosing) before it will allow you access to some of its databases. Very extensive.

- [www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org)

Free-access database of all who perished in the WWII Holocaust. Very sophisticated search engine in “Advanced Search”. Good for pinpointing locations of families with same name.

Native American: <http://shs.umsystem.edu/research/guides/nativeam.shtml>

This site operated by the State Historical Society of Missouri offers a good beginning point for researching Native American genealogy.

All Nationalities: <http://www.worldgenweb.org>

This website will take you to a map of the world. Click on the world region you are interested in and follow the links down to the specific country you need.

## Finding Ancestors by Locality

USGenWeb: [www.usgenweb.org](http://www.usgenweb.org)

This is a massive volunteer effort to bring local records to the internet. This is particularly handy if you already know the *state*—or, better yet, the *county*—where your ancestor lived. A map or listing will take you to the state or county in which you are interested. Available data can vary from *very little* to *very much*. Includes a number of full-text old local histories (but beware—some of these have been transcribed, *not scanned*, to the web, thus allowing for clerical error!).

Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center:

<http://www.genealogycenter.org/Home.aspx> This is a nationally known collection of genealogy materials, with 222 free databases searchable online.

## Finding Government Records: State and Federal

The National Archives:

[www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/index.html](http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/index.html)

This is the genealogy webpage of the National Archives. Worth browsing for all of the records collections which may have information about your ancestors. Includes links to a number of non-archives websites.

National Archives Branch in San Bruno:

<http://www.archives.gov/pacific/san-francisco/index.html>

This is the website of the National Archives branch in San Bruno. Includes address, phone numbers, and hours as well as a list of its services. All National Archives branches have full access to **Ancestry Library**. You can order copies online of certain genealogical records through this website.

Bureau of Land Management: [www.glorerecords.blm.gov](http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov)

This is the Official Federal Land Patent Records Site of the federal Bureau of Land Management. It is searchable by name and state. It will tell you if anyone of that name received a patent for land in that state. The database currently covers most of the public lands—this includes patents issued between 1820 and 1908, with full image access. You may also order certified copies online. Now also includes images of original plats. For more information about how to search this database and the ins and outs of land patents, click in the header on “Reference Center”, then follow the menu on the left for “Search Tips” and “Appendices—FAQ”.

U.S. Geological Survey: <http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnispublic> This is a server operated by the U.S. Geological Survey. It will identify not only town names but geological features as well. Type in a placename and then select “populated place” from the dropdown menu. Once you have identified the location, geonames provides

several links to mapping websites which will provide a topographical map of the location.

State Archives collections: <http://www.statearchivists.org/states.htm>  
Council of State Archivists (CoSA) provides directory of U.S. State Archives and records programs with links to their websites. State archives' websites can be goldmines. For example, the Maryland State Archives website has an index to death records from 1875 to the 1940's for the entire state.

## Online Military Databases (U.S.):

Civil War:

- Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System: [www.itd.nps.gov/cwss](http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss)  
Indexes service records. Name search links to state, unit, rank, side, alternate name.
- American Civil War Research Database: [www.civilwardata.com](http://www.civilwardata.com)  
Fee-based. Attempting to link together all records concerning each soldier.

(WWI draft registrations in Ancestry.com)

World War II:

- Access to Archival Databases: [aad.archives.gov/aad/](http://aad.archives.gov/aad/)  
Provides access to a number of databases on military personnel. Under "Genealogy/Personal History", click on "Military Personnel". Includes databases of WWII army enlistment and reserve records.
- Archival Research Catalog: [www.archives.gov/research/arc/ww2](http://www.archives.gov/research/arc/ww2)  
WWII Army and Air Force casualty list; WWII Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard casualty list.

## Forms and Others Willing to Help:

[http://genealogy.about.com/od/free\\_charts/ig/genealogy\\_charts/](http://genealogy.about.com/od/free_charts/ig/genealogy_charts/)  
allows you to print out for free some kinds of genealogical charts and forms.  
**FamilySearch** (see above) also offers free forms you can print.

Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness: [www.raogk.org](http://www.raogk.org)  
Over 4600 volunteer researchers are available through this site to help you with your research. This is not a *free* service. Researchers will wish to be reimbursed for their expenses in fulfilling your request. And you may wish to offer help in return. Click on "Guidelines for making requests" and then go to the bottom of the page and click on "Let's go find a volunteer!".

## Local Websites of Interest:

California Genealogical Society and Library: [www.californiaancestors.org](http://www.californiaancestors.org)

For a membership fee, currently \$35/year, this society offers free at-home access to members-only databases as well as a discount on ordering records from their free indexed databases.

## **Staying in touch with the latest developments (a sample):**

Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter, published daily:

<http://blog.eogn.com>

Includes articles and information on the latest trends etc. In order to read some articles, you will need to sign up for the "Plus" edition (no charge, just registration). As of 3/30/2011, if you're using Microsoft Explorer to access this site, you'll need to upgrade to Explorer 9.

The Librarians' guide to genealogy websites: [www.ipl.org](http://www.ipl.org)

Click on **Special Collections Created by ipl2**, then on **Pathfinders**, and then, under **General Reference, Genealogy** and consult this list of print and web resources on genealogy, compiled by a librarian for ipl2. Check out also the links at the bottom: **Surname Pathfinder** and **Genealogy FAQ**.

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