



Finding Where on Earth to Look Next

When family historians hit the proverbial brick wall, it's time to regroup and look again at a broad variety of record groups. Learn more about the locality where each ancestor lived, gathering clues about ecclesiastical and government jurisdictions, migration patterns, legal policies, and social customs, in addition to information about surviving records groups in local and regional repositories in manuscript, microform or digital format.

Much of genealogical research isn't about people, it's about the places your ancestors once lived.

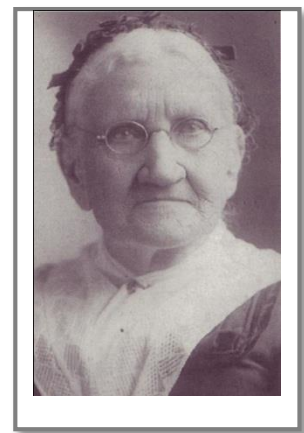
LET'S ASSUME you have

- **Gathered** info from family
- **Located** "proof" documents
- **Evaluated** evidence
- **Typed / scanned** into genealogy program

Perhaps you've ventured out on the web to reputable websites like Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org, FindMyPast.com (United Kingdom), ScotlandsPeople.gov.uk, MyHeritage (40+ languages) and such. No single place on the web has it all.

IT'S NOT ALL ON THE 'NET

All too often beginning researchers think climbing one's family tree is just a few mouse clicks away. Recent TV advertising for a major genealogy website misleads researchers by stating *"You don't have to know what you are looking for, you just have to start looking."*



PRACTICAL ADVICE

The key to renewed research success is to seek advice of experienced researchers. The FamilySearch Research Wiki <<http://wiki.FamilySearch.org>> is a great place to start. Many articles are compiled by experienced professional researchers, perhaps employees of the Family History Library (FHL) who are sure to include references to essential resources outside the FHL collection. Additional articles are submitted by those who have research experience in a locality or ethnic group. The following page has a screen shot of the Massachusetts page from the FamilySearch Research Wiki. Note the variety of topics:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Introduction | • Emigration and Immigration | • Newspapers |
| • American Indians | • Gazetteers | • Obituaries |
| • Archives and Libraries | • Genealogy | • Periodicals |
| • Bible Records | • History | • Probate Records |
| • Biography | • Land and Property | • Societies |
| • Cemeteries | • Maps | • Taxation |
| • Census | • Military Records | • Town Records |
| • Church Records | • Naturalization and Citizenship | • Vital Records |
| • Court Records | | • For Further Reading |
| • Directories | | |

RIGHT: The page includes links to “unique genealogical features”:

[New England Historic Genealogical Society \(NEHGS\)](#)

Published [BMDs of 215 towns to 1850](#)

Large number of [family histories](#)

[Mayflower](#), & [Great Migration](#) records

[Congregational Church](#) records

[Warnings out](#) town records

And there are links for counties and towns for specific details.

BELOW: A review of the section titled “Massachusetts – Military Records” on the wiki shows the following information about Colonial Wars. If you aren’t in Salt Lake City with access to the Family History Library books, the wiki informs you of titles that might solve your research challenges.

Massachusetts

[Edit This Page](#)

[United States](#) » [Massachusetts](#)

Welcome to the Massachusetts page, the Bay State

Most unique genealogical features:

- New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS)
- Published BMDs of 215 towns to 1850
- Large number of family histories
- Mayflower, & Great Migration records
- Congregational Church records
- Warnings out town records

Counties

■ Barnstable	■ Dukes	■ Hampden	■ Nantucket	■ Suffolk
■ Berkshire	■ Essex	■ Hampshire	■ Norfolk	■ Worcester
■ Bristol	■ Franklin	■ Middlesex	■ Plymouth	

Click on the map below to go to a county page. Hover over a county to see its name. To see a larger version of the map, click here.

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News and Events

New England Historic Geneal. Soc. events [@](#)

Massachusetts Topics

- Introduction
- American Indians
- Archives and Libraries
- Bible Records
- Biography
- Cemeteries
- Census
- Church Records
- Court Records
- Directories
- Emigration and Immigration
- Gazetteers
- Genealogy
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- Naturalization and Citizenship
- Newspapers
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- Periodicals
- Probate Records
- Societies
- Taxation
- Town Records
- Vital Records
- For Further Reading

Moderator
Dsammy

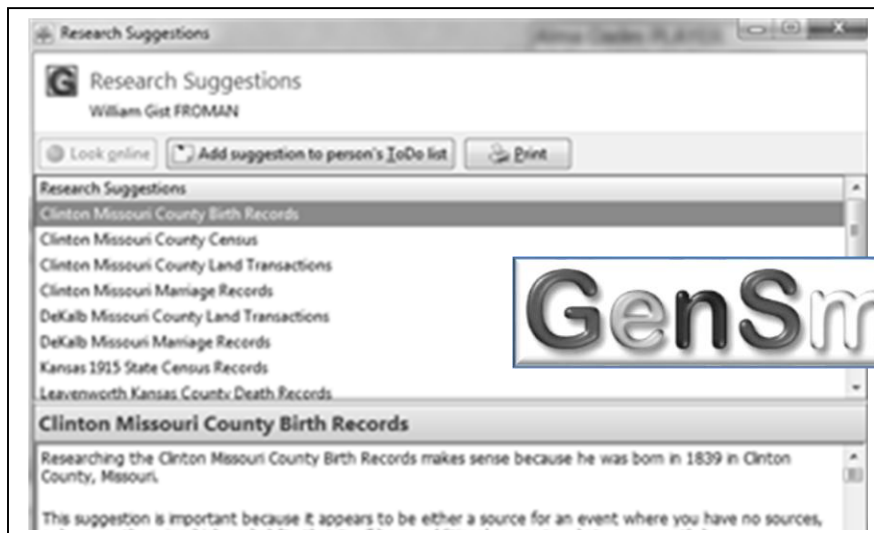
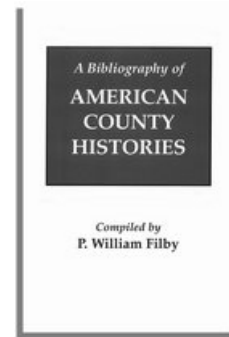
Colonial Wars (1620–1763)

Numerous records of [colonial wars](#) have been published. The Family History Library has copies of most of them, including:

- Doreski, Carole. *Massachusetts Officers and Soldiers in the Seventeenth Century Conflicts*. Boston, Massachusetts: *The Society of Colonial Wars in Massachusetts and the New England Historic Genealogical Society*, 1982. (Family History Library book [974.4 M24d](#).)
- Bodge, George M. *Soldiers in King Philip's War*. Baltimore, Maryland.: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1991. (Family History Library book [974 M2b](#).) A concise history of the Indian Wars of New England from 1620 to 1677. Contains lists of soldiers, stories of battles, copies of ancient documents relating to the King Philip's War, 1620–1677.
- MacKay, Robert E. *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors in the French and Indian Wars, 1744–1755*. Boston, Massachusetts: Society of Colonial Wars, 1978. (Family History Library book [974.4 M2mc](#).) Gives in-depth information about the years of turmoil among the French, Indians, and Colonists. It includes details about forming the militia force to combat the unrest.

PLACES TO LOOK

- Local library
- Google Books (*Includes links to WorldCat, to find libraries with the book. Consider interlibrary loan.*)
- Compiled genealogies provide clues. Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org and MyHeritage.com host larger collections of online trees.
- City directories place ancestors in places between census enumeration years.
- Browse images not yet indexed at FamilySearch.org
- The Lyons County, Iowa Case Study concerning Charles Henry Goering's last home, local church and gravesite.
- State historical societies
- Family History Library Catalog www.FamilySearch.org
- BYU's Digitized Books (*will be moving to FamilySearch.org*)
- Bureau of Land Management & Federal Land Entryfiles at NARA I.
- Online finding aids NARA & *Prologue Magazine*
- Using lineage applications – DAR website
- Library of Congress: American Memory, including manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project
- PERSI – Periodical Source Index (*available in fiche format at FamilySearch Centers, in book format, and searchable online.*)
- Newspapers – GenealogyBank.com, Newsbank
- Google Maps
- County histories
- Local museum – sometimes providing more than local color.
- Fold3 – Pennsylvania Archives (*always free*)
- National Park Service Soldiers and Sailors System – also includes brief unit histories
- Union Civil War Pension File (*Indexed at Fold3 and Ancestry.*)
- GAR, Department of Iowa – William B. Phillips entry
- Confederate records – Florida example
- Google Patent Search
- USGenWeb – state & county pages, penny postcard collection
- Cyndi's List
- GeneaWebinars.com – Usually free, online seminars produced by organizations throughout the world of genealogy.
- GenSmarts – artificial intelligence for struggling genealogists



RECORDS SELECTION TABLES

Go to <http://wiki.FamilySearch.org> and search for the phrase "Record Selection Table" (without quote marks.)

BELOW: US Military Record Selection Table

https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/US_Military_Record_Selection_Table

U.S. Military – Record Selection Table

Once you know in which war(s) your ancestor may have served, use this table to decide which records to search. Use this table as a guide only. The information listed here is generally found in pre-20th century records, but each item is rarely found in every individual record.

Look in →	Service	Pension	Bounty Land	Draft	Cemetery	Soldier Homes	Veteran/Lineage Society	Military Biography
Age	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Birth date		■		■	■	■	■	■
Birth place	■	■		■		■	■	■
Children		■				■	■	
Death date	■	■	■		■	■	■	■
Death place	■	■					■	■
Spouse, Marriage		■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Military Unit	■	■	■		■	■	■	■
Occupation	■			■		■	■	■
Parents							■	
Physical description	■	■		■		■		
Residence	■	■	■	■		■	■	■
Service history	■		■				■	■

SAMPLING OF RECORD SELECTION TITLES

Canada Records Selection Table

https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Canada_Record_Selection_Table

Country of Arrival Record Selection Table

https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Tracing_Immigrants_Arrival_Record_Selection_Table

Germans From Russia Record Selection Table

https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Germans_from_Russia_Record_Selection_Table

Italy Record Selection Table

https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Italy_Record_Selection_Table

Mexico Record Selection Table

https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Mexico_Record_Selection_Table

Scotland Record Selection Table

https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Scotland_Record_Selection_Table

Sweden Record Selection Table

https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Sweden:_Record_Selection_Table

Tracing Immigrant Origins Record Selection Table

https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Tracing_Immigrants_Origin_Record_Selection_Table

US Record Selection Table

https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/United_States_Record_Selection_Table

Wales Record Selection Table

https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Wales_Record_Selection_Table

ANALYSIS OF WHAT YOU'VE GOT

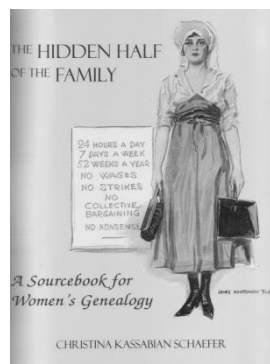
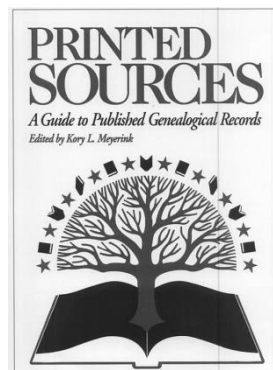
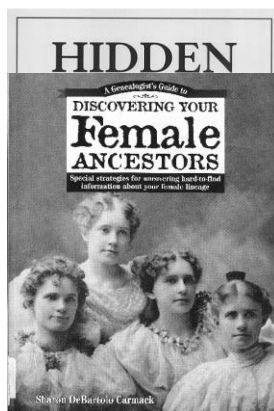
Often clues about where to look next are found by reviewing documents you've already collected. Transcribing a document word for word assists in understanding each bit of info a source provides. My personal research shows sometimes my earlier research conclusions weren't clearly written.

Board for Certification of Genealogists <http://www.bcgcertification.org>

See: Skillbuilding: Your Learning Center; Work Samples, and the Genealogical Proof Standard.

Mills, Elizabeth Shown. *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company. 2009. Study in particular the first two chapters.

Mills, Elizabeth Shown. *Evidence! Citation and Analysis for the Family Historian*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company. 1997. [Preview of pages 1-30](#) available at Google Books. Item #9 "We should not cite sources we have not used; It is both risky and unethical to "borrow notes" from other writers."



CONCLUSION

Reviewing all sources of information for reliability, correlation with newly acquired information, and resolution of conflicting evidence can break through many brick walls.