

## Family History - A Concise Beginner's Overview

This study guide is designed to provide a basic overview of the main types of records available for genealogical research. For additional information to supplement this study guide, please see our other beginner's study guide *Beginning Genealogy Research Outline*. In addition to a wide variety of study guides, we also have how-to books for beginning genealogists of all ages. Beginner's materials are shelved under the call number **929.1**, and are found in the following collections in the Lee County Library System:

1. Adult Non-Fiction
2. Juvenile Non-Fiction
3. Genealogy Reference

Books shelved in adult non-fiction and juvenile non-fiction can be checked out for four weeks. The study guide *Beginning Genealogy Research Outline* features a bibliography containing useful books for beginning genealogists. Those listed as genealogical reference are for in-house use only. Patrons may photocopy from our reference materials for a fee of \$.10 per page.

Our study guides have no copyright restrictions. Patrons may reproduce them or use them in whatever manner they wish. The intent of these study guides is to serve as basic guidelines. They are not substitutes for taking the time to read a periodical article or a book written by a professional subject specialist in the field of genealogy. Encountering brick walls at one time or another in genealogy is normal. Taking the time to read a book or article written by genealogy professionals or attending seminars given by a subject specialist in genealogy is the best long-term investment you can make to put yourself in the best position for success.

### Beginning Steps

To begin tracing your family, begin with yourself and work backwards through the generations, creating a timeline of major events that occurred during each person's lifetime, and recording the information on an ancestor chart. Names and dates should be recorded on ancestor charts and family group sheets. The biggest mistake some beginning genealogists make is starting with a person (usually a famous person who shares their surname or has similar family traits or background) and working forward to the present.

Organization is the key to long-term success. Keep a research log of your work and consider placing your charts in a three-ring binder. Another option is investigating the various genealogical software programs that allow users to input their research information and the program automatically organizes the data. Even if you choose this route, it is wise to maintain a paper backup. Try to involve family members and be sure to interview your elderly relatives. The following items are a sampling of home sources that family members may have. These items can provide you with important clues for research:

Award Certificates  
 Birth Certificates  
 Correspondence  
 Death Certificates  
 Diaries  
 Family Bibles

Immigration/Naturalization Papers  
 Marriage Certificates  
 Military Enlistment Papers  
 Photograph Albums  
 School Records/Diplomas  
 Scrapbooks

Your next step is researching records within your local community, state, and national resources that may pertain to the ancestor in question or his family. Consider joining a local genealogical society in the community where you reside. Experienced genealogists also recommend joining a society in each community where your ancestors resided. Many genealogical societies offer beginning genealogy courses as part of the benefits of membership. Another benefit is possible assistance in long-distance genealogical research that might save you a trip until you are sure there are enough records to justify making a trip to the community where your ancestors lived.

### **Locating Books on Your Family**

Many beginners make the assumption that at some point a book was written on their specific family. They assume finding information about their family will be as simple as searching for a biography. The reality is that except for some very rare instances, research is seldom that easy, unless you find yourself related to royalty or a very powerful political family that has been able to retain their influence and power for centuries. Researchers may need to browse through a number of compiled genealogies, civil records, census records, and religious records in order to piece together this type of information. In terms of family-related genealogies, published and unpublished family history research can be located in any of the following locations:

1. Public Libraries
2. Genealogical Society Libraries
3. Family History Library System (Mormons)
4. Private Genealogical Collections
5. Family Association Research Facilities
6. Ethnic or Religious Research Facilities

When visiting a local library in communities where your ancestors resided, search the library catalog under the following headings:

1. Family Surname
2. County/City-Local History
3. Genealogy

When you correspond with libraries or other repositories, always enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope, and limit your queries to no more than two specific requests at any single time. Many libraries limit written queries to one question at a time. When utilizing published genealogies, be cognizant of the fact that many will contain some inaccuracies.

### **Locating Accurate Local History Information**

Public libraries that maintain collections of local city directories usually maintain a local history file or collection of books. Many libraries keep copies of old city directories for their town or county. Old telephone books were printed on very cheap paper and deteriorate rapidly. Unless the library was able to digitize them, it is unlikely hard copies have survived. Some libraries may transfer materials to a local genealogical or historical society if space limits keeping the issues in-house. Local history information can also be found in the following sources that most libraries will own for the city and/or county within their service area:

1. Local History Books
2. Newspapers

3. School Yearbooks
4. Plat Maps
5. Church Histories
6. Local or County Gazetteers
7. Church Records/Histories
8. Cemetery Records/Inscriptions
9. Military Histories/Records of Local Regiments
10. Local History and/or Family Files

Other sources for local history information include local genealogical or historical societies, state archives, the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, the LDS Family History Centers located in all 50 states and worldwide, and the Library of Congress that has the largest collection of U.S. City Directories.

Fort Myers Regional Library is a registered Family History Library Affiliate – Family History Center. This status allows patrons using the Family Search website at our specific branch to have access to most non-copyrighted library and restricted access records and images. We are the only affiliate and Family History Center serving Lee, Collier, and Charlotte Counties.

### **Locating Vital Records**

Vital records consist of birth, marriage, divorce, and death records. All 50 states have been required to maintain these types of records since around 1900, although some started earlier. Enforcement of this requirement will vary, but for the most part, compliance was complete by 1920. Since vital records were usually created at or near the time of the event, they are considered valuable primary sources. Each county has an office that records vital statistics for all jurisdictions within the county. Copies of all records and certificates are forwarded to the appropriate state office. Most genealogical queries are directed towards the state office. Some county vital records offices are located in county courthouses, while others are merged in with the local health department. The most accurate and current source for obtaining access information for vital records is via the Internet at the following website:

<http://www.vitalrec.com>

### **Locating Church and Cemetery Records**

Most local Catholic church records are located at the main headquarters of the diocese. Protestant churches, such as Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian, also have older records housed in a central location. However, Protestant churches, such as Baptist, Congregationalist, Pentecostal, and Assemblies of God, tend to be organized on a more independent congregational basis with no central clearinghouse. The first step in this type of research is contacting the church, if it still exists. If the church no longer exists, contact the largest church in the area. They will usually be able to provide a specific repository where older records have been deposited. Our companion study guide ***Genealogical Research Using Church Records*** provides specific details to assist you in beginning this process. Sources for cemetery records include some or all of the following:

1. Cemetery Management Office
2. County Health Department
3. Local Public Library

#### 4. Local Historical or Genealogical Society

Any of these sources may provide information on cemeteries that either no longer exist or have merged. They often have tombstone inscriptions, maps, plot information, and the names of funeral homes that handled final arrangements. Funeral homes can be excellent sources of information for genealogists seeking next-of-kin information.

### **Census Records and Genealogical Research**

Census records are the best known and popular records used by genealogists. Census records exist on the local, state, territorial, business, church, and federal levels. Federal censuses have been taken every decade since 1790 and normally provide the most detailed information of interest to genealogists. Federal census records from 1790-1940 are now available to the public. Our study guide on *Genealogical Research Using Census Data* provides detailed information on the various types of census data available for research purposes.

When beginning your research, look for the most recent indexed census that covers the time period and locality where your ancestor resided. You must know the state and county where your ancestor was living at the time the census was taken (there is no national index). Censuses taken in 1900 and later typically provide the most useful information.

Genealogists can search census data for decades later than 1940, but must request special forms. Access is granted under special circumstances. Genealogical research is not considered an acceptable special circumstance. Many states have printed alphabetical census indexes covering the period from 1790-1870.

For genealogical purposes, the population census can be divided into four groupings. Please note that 1890 is not included in this division sequence because most of it was destroyed by fire.

**1790-1840.** Censuses taken during this period are useful primarily for locating the residence of a family. Highlights from this period would include:

1. Only the head of the household is identified by name (usually a man)
2. Other information about the household is given in statistical format in columns, as in number of persons by age, sex, and race.
3. The 1820 census added the number of aliens (those individuals not yet naturalized), as well as the numbers of persons employed in agriculture, commerce, and manufacturing
4. 1830 categories were added for deaf, dumb, and blind persons
5. 1840 categories were added for insane, idiotic, persons over age 20 who could not read or write, and name/age of Revolutionary War and military pensioners in the family; occupational categories were expanded to include the following:
  - a. Mining
  - b. Agriculture
  - c. Commerce
  - d. Manufacturing and trades
  - e. Navigation of the oceans
  - f. Navigation of the canals, lakes, and rivers
  - g. Learned professions and engineers

**1850-1870.** The genealogical content of information increased as government mandates resulted in the following highlights:

1. For the first time, the name of each person in the household was recorded together with age, sex, race, occupation, and place of birth
2. Value of real estate owned
3. Whether married or attended school within the past year
4. In 1860, the value of personal property owned was added
5. In 1870, the cues gave the month of birth, if the child was born within the past year, and indicated whether the father or mother were foreign born

**1880.** New categories, especially those pertaining to family relationships were added. Highlights included:

1. Relationship of each person in the household to the head of household
2. Birthplace of the father and mother for each individual listed
3. Marital status of each individual listed
4. Number of months unemployed
5. Disabled household members

**1900-1940.** New categories expanded the amount of personal information required for all listed household members. More questions were added to ascertain specific facts on immigrants to the United States. Some of the most pertinent were:

1. Month and birth year were given for each individual
2. Number of years married for each couple
3. For each woman, the number of children she had borne, and the number still living at home
4. Whether the family home was rented or owned
5. For foreign born, the year of immigration and whether naturalized
6. In 1910, additional questions were added concerning survivors from the Union and Confederate armies in the Civil War.
7. The 1920 census was the first to request data regarding the naturalization of foreign-born persons of both sexes and all ages. Previous censuses had only gathered the information for males twenty-one years of age and older. The appendix at the end of this study guide will provide a list of questions asked for each census from 1790 through 1940.

To protect the right of privacy of living individuals, access to population schedules is restricted for seventy-two years after the census is taken. This rule is why the 1940 census is the last one currently available without restrictions. The 1950 census will be released on April 1, 2022.

Unless an exception is granted, these records are not available to researchers during that time. If you feel your situation warrants an exception, you must contact the following office:

**Personal Service Branch, Bureau of the Census, P.O. Box 1545, Jeffersonville, IN 47131.**

Individuals may request their own records (before they are publicly available) via the Census Bureau's Age Search Service by visiting the following link <https://www.census.gov/topics/population/genealogy/agesearch.html> for guidelines and procedures. Individuals interested in requesting a search of their personal census records must complete a form BC-600 available at the following link

<http://www2.census.gov/library/publications/2013/demo/BC-600.pdf>. The Spanish version is available at the following link

<http://www2.census.gov/library/publications/2013/demo/BC-600sp.pdf>. Solicitud Para Busqueda De Registros Censales).

## **Research Using Military Records**

There are four major types of military records that are useful to genealogists:

1. Military Service Records
2. Military Pension Records
3. Bounty Land Grants
4. Unit or Regimental Histories

Service, pension, and bounty land records are located at the National Archives. Records dated prior to the Civil War may also exist at some State Archives, since many units identified as federal may have actually been state units that served to supplement the federal army. If the unit was from a territory, the records would be on file at the state archives of the state from which the territory was created. State and local genealogical or historical societies may also have a wealth of information to supplement federal military records. Most of the information for Confederate soldiers can be found at the state archives of the units for which they served. The National Archives has a limited amount of information pertaining to Confederate veterans. Our study guide on *Military Records Research* provides detailed information on this subject.

## **Immigrant and Passenger List Information**

In the process of emigrating from the old world to America, our ancestors generated many records. Passenger lists and immigration and naturalization records have been collected at a number of genealogical research centers. The largest collections of ship passenger lists are on file at the National Archives. The largest collections of immigration and naturalization records prior to 1930 are on file with the Family History Library (Mormon Church). Prior to September 27, 1906, the naturalization process was primarily enforced on the local and state levels. From this date forward, enforcement became a federal responsibility. We have several study guides covering the varied circumstances pertaining to specific ship passenger lists, immigration records availability, and the naturalization process.

## **Obtaining Information from Libraries, Genealogical, and Historical Societies**

Many public libraries have printed and Internet sources that will provide researchers with contact information for genealogical societies, family associations, and research institutions around the world. Libraries also have printed sources that can provide researchers with holdings for major research institutions. This holdings information can be useful for patrons who want to borrow items from other library collections. These services enable genealogists to plan research trips or prepare queries to send to libraries for research assistance.

When sending letters to libraries or other research facilities, the following guidelines provide you with the best chance for a timely response:

1. Include a stamped, self-addressed business size (long #10) envelope for a response
2. Ask no more than three short and specific questions
3. Type rather than write your questions

4. Supply specific dates (day, month, year) when requesting a search of records or materials.
5. Keeps a correspondence log detailing the date, name of institution, the questions, and a copy of the letter.

Keep in mind that many public libraries with genealogical collections have only one staff member assigned to the collection. Unless you can provide specific dates on your query, they may not be able to assist you. Some libraries depend on the local genealogical society to staff the genealogical collection. Be sure to also inquire about charges for research queries. Most libraries will answer brief queries free of charge, but for more detailed queries you may be referred to professional researchers who typically charge a fee for their work. It is your responsibility to inquire about these charges in advance.

## **Genealogical Source Overview and Checklist**

This checklist is designed to assist genealogists in compiling information from a variety of sources. Check the sources you have acquired or have investigated for each family or individual. Every clue you can find using these sources will speed up your research and save time and money.

### **1. Home and Family Sources**

#### **Personal Records**

- Scrapbooks
- Heirlooms
- Journals/Diaries
- Oral Histories
- Personal Histories
- Family Histories (Published or Folders)
- Personal Correspondence
- Photographs
- Funeral Cards
- Obituaries
- Medical Records
- Military Records
- Employment Records
- Social Security Card/Application Form/Receipts
- Labels/Tags on Trunks or Baggage
- Films, Slides, or Videos
- Tombstone Photos or Inscriptions
- Autograph Books

#### **School Records**

- Elementary
- Secondary
- Vocational/Trade
- College
- University
- Arts
- Private
- Ladies Finishing
- Correspondence Schools
- Yearbooks

#### **Certificates**

- Birth
- Military Discharge
- School Awards/Achievements
- Marriage
- Death
- Adoption
- Graduation
- GED
- Divorce
- Citizenship
- Manumission (Liberation or Emancipation)

#### **Insurance Records**

- Life Policies/Applications
- Fire Policies/Applications
- Accident Policies/Applications
- Health Policies/Applications
- Miscellaneous Policies

#### **Religious Records**

- Family Bibles
- Marriage
- Baptism/Christening
- Confirmation
- Religious Office
- Religious Achievement/Awards
- Missionary Activities
- Ministerial/Priest Papers
- Nunnery Documents



**Business/Legal**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Accounting Books/Ledgers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Receipts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Correspondence
- \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Applications
- \_\_\_\_\_ Citizenship Papers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Passports/Visas
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mortgage Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Deeds
- \_\_\_\_\_ Property Titles
- \_\_\_\_\_ Rental/Lease Agreements
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bank Applications/Forms
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bank Statements
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Probate Papers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Intestate Courts Papers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Legal Briefs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adoption Papers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Court Orders

**Non-Document Record Sources**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Military Uniforms (insignia of organization, rank, service, ribbons, awards, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dish and Glassware (location of manufacturer, production dates and insignia)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Furniture (manufacturer location and production dates)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Photographs/Portraits
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clothing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Quilts/Stitchery with Names
- \_\_\_\_\_ Jewelry
- \_\_\_\_\_ Flags, Swords, Guns, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

**2. Sources of Research Done by Others****Personal Research**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Pedigree Charts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family Group Sheets
- \_\_\_\_\_ Descendancy Charts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Books of Remembrance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Research Notes

**Printed Resources**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Family Histories
- \_\_\_\_\_ Biographies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Genealogies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pedigrees
- \_\_\_\_\_ County/Local Histories
- \_\_\_\_\_ State/Local Histories
- \_\_\_\_\_ City Directories
- \_\_\_\_\_ Indexes

**Periodicals**

- Genealogies
- Historical Items
- Queries
- Source Extracts
- Directories
- Genealogical and Historical Society Publications

**Family History Library Sources**

- Temple Index Bureau
- Family History Library Catalog
- Family Registry
- International Genealogical Index
- Ancestral File
- Family Group Record Archive

\*\*\*\*\*

**3. Church Sources****Religious Events**

- Birth
- Baptism/Christening
- Circumcision
- Confirmation
- Communion
- Bar Mitzvah Records
- Ordination
- Primary or Secondary School
- Seminary
- Marriage
- Banns
- Divorce
- Annulment
- Death
- Burial
- Admissions
- Removals
- Disciplinary Proceedings
- Subscriptions
- Church membership/transfers

**Church Records**

- Minister's Records
- Mission Reports
- Church Minutes
- Contribution/Tithing Records
- Bishops' Transcripts
- Church/Congregational Histories
- Anniversary/Homecoming Events

## 4. Private Sources

### **Newspapers**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Indexes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Births
- \_\_\_\_\_ Marriages
- \_\_\_\_\_ Deaths/Obituaries
- \_\_\_\_\_ Anniversaries
- \_\_\_\_\_ Advertisements
- \_\_\_\_\_ Local News Events

### **Organizations**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Fraternal/Sororities
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clubs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Societies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts

### **Mortuary Records**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Burial Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Death Notices
- \_\_\_\_\_ Obituaries
- \_\_\_\_\_ Church Funeral Programs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Funeral Cards
- \_\_\_\_\_ Registers

### **Historical Data Collections**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Daughters of the American Revolution
- \_\_\_\_\_ United Daughters of the Confederacy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sons of the American Revolution
- \_\_\_\_\_ Miscellaneous Patriotic Lineage Societies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Oral Histories
- \_\_\_\_\_ Personal Papers/Memoirs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Indexes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Correspondence/Diaries
- \_\_\_\_\_ Surname Files
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tombstone Inscriptions
- \_\_\_\_\_ Biographies

### **Legal Notices**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Probate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Auctions
- \_\_\_\_\_ Courthouse/Sheriff Sales
- \_\_\_\_\_ Divorces
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bankruptcies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Court Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Slave Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lawyer Files

### **Institutional**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Charities
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hospitals
- \_\_\_\_\_ Convents (Nuns)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Seminaries
- \_\_\_\_\_ Libraries
- \_\_\_\_\_ Genealogical/Historical Societies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Missions
- \_\_\_\_\_ Orphanages
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reunion Registers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Schools
- \_\_\_\_\_ Colleges/Universities
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mental Health/Behavioral
- \_\_\_\_\_ Military
- \_\_\_\_\_ Corporate Histories

### **Employment**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Indentures
- \_\_\_\_\_ Apprenticeships
- \_\_\_\_\_ Licenses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pensions
- \_\_\_\_\_ Awards
- \_\_\_\_\_ Personnel Files
- \_\_\_\_\_ Accounts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Retirement Data

## 5. Public Records

### Censuses

- \_\_\_\_\_ State Censuses (years will vary by state)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Territorial Censuses (years will vary)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Church censuses
- \_\_\_\_\_ School Censuses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mortality Censuses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Revolutionary War Veterans
- \_\_\_\_\_ Union Army Veterans
- \_\_\_\_\_ Agriculture Censuses
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1790
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1790
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1800
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1800
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1810
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1810
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1820
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1820
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1830
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1830
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1840
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1840
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1850
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1850
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1860
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1860
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1870
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1870
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1880
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1880
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1900
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1900
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1910
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1910
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1920
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1920
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census Index 1930
- \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Federal Census 1930

### Land Records

- \_\_\_\_\_ Grantor Index
- \_\_\_\_\_ Grantee Index
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bounty Warrants
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tract Books
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plat Maps
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mortgages
- \_\_\_\_\_ Grants
- \_\_\_\_\_ Patents
- \_\_\_\_\_ Homestead Papers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Surveys
- \_\_\_\_\_ Indian Treaties

### Court/Legal Records

- \_\_\_\_\_ Dockets
- \_\_\_\_\_ Minutes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Judgments
- \_\_\_\_\_ Orders, Decrees
- \_\_\_\_\_ Case Files
- \_\_\_\_\_ Indexes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sheriff/Police Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Justice of the Peace
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lawyer Briefs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Jail Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Guardian and Ward
- \_\_\_\_\_ Orphan Court Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bankruptcy Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Certificates
- \_\_\_\_\_ Licenses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chancery Court Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Civil/Criminal Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prison Records

**Probate Records**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Indexes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Administrations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Estate Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Inventories
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bonds
- \_\_\_\_\_ Settlements
- \_\_\_\_\_ Packets
- \_\_\_\_\_ Petitions

**Tax Records**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Personal Property
- \_\_\_\_\_ Real Estate
- \_\_\_\_\_ School
- \_\_\_\_\_ Poor Rate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tax Exemptions
- \_\_\_\_\_ Poll Tax (Voting)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Householder's Index

**Miscellaneous Governmental Records**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Marriage Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Death Certificates
- \_\_\_\_\_ Centennial Celebrations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Native American Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Records

**Cemetery Records**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Sexton Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Indexes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Monuments
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plat Books
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tombstones
- \_\_\_\_\_ Memorials
- \_\_\_\_\_ Deeds

**Military Records**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Service Record Index
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pension Index
- \_\_\_\_\_ Service Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Unit Correspondence
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pension Files
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bounty Land Grant Awards
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discharge Papers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Muster Rolls
- \_\_\_\_\_ Regimental Histories
- \_\_\_\_\_ Military Campaigns
- \_\_\_\_\_ Desertion Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Burials
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dependents or Personnel Born Abroad
- \_\_\_\_\_ Admiralty Court Records

**Immigrant Records**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Emigration (leaving the "Old World")
- \_\_\_\_\_ Passenger Lists
- \_\_\_\_\_ Passports
- \_\_\_\_\_ Vaccination Certificates
- \_\_\_\_\_ Alien Registration
- \_\_\_\_\_ Change of Name
- \_\_\_\_\_ Oaths of Allegiance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Register of Voters
- \_\_\_\_\_ Citizenship Papers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Naturalization Papers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Immigrant Aid Societies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Customs Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ship Logbooks
- \_\_\_\_\_ Border Crossings

**Newspapers**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Obituaries
- \_\_\_\_\_ Biographical Articles
- \_\_\_\_\_ News Articles

**Histories**

- \_\_\_\_\_ State
- \_\_\_\_\_ County
- \_\_\_\_\_ Local
- \_\_\_\_\_ Business
- \_\_\_\_\_ Biographies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Church
- \_\_\_\_\_ Occupational/Guild
- \_\_\_\_\_ Organizational
- \_\_\_\_\_ Society
- \_\_\_\_\_ Almanacs

**Periodicals**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Genealogical Societies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Historical Societies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Military Organizations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Military History Societies
- \_\_\_\_\_ State/Locality News
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family Organizations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Surname Societies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Local Heritage
- \_\_\_\_\_ Heraldic Societies

**Bibliography and Suggested Readings**

**American Records and Research: Focusing on Families-Course One.** Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, Coordinator-Paula Stuart Warren. Contributors-D. Joshua Taylor, Elissa Scalise Powell, William M. Litchman, and Birdie Monk Holsclaw, c2007. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 SALT**

**American Records and Research: Focusing on Families-Course Two.** Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. Coordinator-Paula Stuart Warren. Contributors- Chuck Knuthson, Marianne Crump, Thomas McGill, Anne Wuehler, Anne Roach, Ruth Maness, John Phillip Colletta, Kory Meyerink, Judith W. Hansen, and Birdie Monk Holsclaw, c2008. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 SALT**

**Family Tree Guide Book: Everything You Need to Know to Trace Your Genealogy Across North America.** Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c2002. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 FAMILY**

**Guide to Genealogical Research.** 3rd Edition. Washington, DC: National Archives, c2000. **Genealogical Reference 929.373 UNITED**

**Land and Court Records.** Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. Coordinator-Patricia Law Hatcher. Contributors-Lloyd de Witt Bockstruck, Michael J. LeClerc, Rhonda McClure, Gordon L. Remington, and Paula Stuart Warren, c2006. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 SALT.**

**Red Book: American State, County, and Town Sources.** Provo, UT: Ancestry, c2004. **Genealogy Reference 929.1072 RED**

**Sourcebook to Public Record Information.** Tempe, AZ: BRB Publications, c2006. **Adult Reference 352.387 SOU**

**Tracing Immigrant Origins.** Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, Kory Meyerink-Coordinator, Contributors- John P. Colletta, Jeanette K.B. Daniels, Richard W. Dougherty, Gerald Haslam, Larry O. Jensen, Marie Melchiori, John Kitzmiller, c2001. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 SALT**

Allen, Desmond W. **First Steps in Genealogy: A Beginner's Guide to Researching Your Family History.** 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c1998. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 ALLEN**

Bentley, Elizabeth P. **Genealogist's Address Book.** Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c2009. **Genealogy Reference 929.102 BENTLEY**

Brockman, Terra Castiglia. **Student's Guide To Italian American Genealogy.** Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 BROCKMAN**

Burroughs, Tony. **Black Roots: A Beginners Guide To Tracing The Family Tree.** New York, NY: Fireside Book, c2001. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1089 BURROUGHS**

Carmack, Sharon DeBartolo. **Family Tree Guide to Finding Your Ellis Island Ancestors.** Cincinnati, OH: Family Tree Books, c2005. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 CARMACK**

----- **Family Tree Resource Book For Genealogists.**  
Cincinnati, OH: Family Tree Books, c2004. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 FAMILY**

----- **Organizing Your Family History Search: Efficient & Effective Ways To Gather & Protect Your Genealogical Research.** Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c1999. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 CARMACK**

Crandall, Ralph. **Shaking Your Family Tree: Basic Guide To Tracing Your Family's Genealogy.** 2nd Edition. Boston, MA: New England Historical Genealogical Register, c2001. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 CRANDALL**

Crawford-Oppenheimer, Christine. **Long Distance Genealogy.** Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c2000. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 CRAWFORD**

Croom, Emily Anne. **Genealogist's Companion & Sourcebook.** 2nd Edition. Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c2003. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 CROOM**

----- **Unpuzzling Your Past : A Basic Guide To Genealogy.** 4th Edition.  
Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c2001. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 CROOM**

Crume, Rick. **Plugging Into Your Past: How To Find Real Family History Records Online.** Cincinnati, OH: Betteway Books, c2003. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 CRUME**

Drake, Paul & Margaret Grove Driskill. **Genealogy: How To Find Your Ancestors.** Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, c2000. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 DRAKE**

- Everton, George B. *Handybook For Genealogists.* 10<sup>th</sup> Edition. Draper, UT: Everton Publishers, c2002. **Genealogy Reference and Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 HANDY**
- Greenwood, Val D. *Researcher's Guide To American Genealogy.* 3rd Edition. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c2000. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 GREENWOOD**
- Hatcher, Patricia Law. *Locating Your Roots: Discover Your Ancestors Using Land Records.* Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c2003. **Genealogy Reference 929.1072 HATCHER**
- Hartley, William G. *Everything Family Tree Book: Finding, Charting, & Preserving Your Family History.* Holbrook, MA: Adams Media, c1998. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 HARTLEY**
- Helm, Matthew & April Leigh Helm. *Genealogy Online For Dummies.* 2nd Edition. Foster City, CA:IDG Books, c1999. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 HELM**
- Johnson, Anne. *Student's Guide to African American Genealogy.* Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **African-American Collection (DUNBAR BRANCH) 929.1 JOHNSON**
- *Student's Guide To British American Genealogy.* Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 JOHNSON**
- Kavasche, E. Barrie. *Student's Guide To Native American Genealogy.* Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **Adult Non-Fiction (CAPE CORAL & EAST COUNTY) 929.1 KAVASCHE**
- Kemp, Thomas J. *The American Census Handbook* Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Publishing, c2001. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 KEM**
- *International Vital Records Handbook.* 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c2000. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 KEM**
- Lainhart, Ann S. *State Census Records* Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c1992. **Genealogy Reference 929.373 LAI**
- McKenna Erin. *Student's Guide To Irish American Genealogy.* Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 MCKENNA**
- Melnyk, Marcia Yannizze. *Family History 101 : Beginner's Guide to Finding Your Ancestors.* Cincinnati, OH: Family Tree Books, c2003. **Genealogy Reference 929.1072 MELNYK**
- Morgan, George G. *How To Do Everything With Your Genealogy.* Emeryville, CA: McGraw Hill-Osborne, c2004. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 MORGAN**



- Morris, Christine M. *Tracing Your Ancestors : An Illustrated Guide To Compiling Your Family Tree.* New York, NY: Quadrillion Publishing, c1999. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 MORRIS**
- Paddock, Lisa Olson & Carl Sokolnicki Rollyson. *Student's Guide To Scandinavian American Genealogy.* Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 PADDOCK**
- Rising, Marsha Hoffman. *Family Tree Problem Solver: Proven Methods for Scaling the Inevitable Brick Wall.* Cincinnati, OH: Family Tree Book, c2005. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 RISING**
- Robl, Gregory. *Student's Guide To German American Genealogy.* Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 ROBL**
- Rodda, Harriet Stryker. *How To Climb Your Family Tree: Genealogy For Beginners.* Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott, c1972. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 RODDA** \*\*In spite of the age of the material, this is still considered one of the best books ever written on how to start your searching! The concepts are still the same today as was the case at the time of publication.
- Rollyson, Carl Sokolnicki & Lisa Olson Paddock. *Student's Guide To Polish American Genealogy.* Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 ROLLYSON**
- Rose, Christine. *The Complete Idiot's Guide To Genealogy.* New York, NY: Alpha Books, c1997. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 ROSE**
- *Genealogical Proof Standard : Building a Solid Case.* San Jose, CA : CR Publications, c2005. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 ROSE**
- Ryskamp, George R. *Student's Guide To Mexican-American Genealogy* Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 RYSKAMP**
- She, Colleen. *Student's Guide To Chinese American Genealogy.* Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 SHE**
- Smith, Franklin Carter & Emily Ann Croom. *Genealogist's Guide To Discovering Your African American Ancestors: How To Find & Record Your Unique Heritage.* Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c2003. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 SMITH**
- Stockwell, Foster. *Sourcebook for Genealogical Research: Resources Alphabetically by Type and Location.* Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, c2004. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 STOCKWELL**
- Sturdevant, Katherine S. *Bringing Your Family History to Life Through Social History.* Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c2000. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1072 STUDEVANT**
- Szucs, Loretto Dennis & Sandra Hargreaves Luebking. *Family History Made Easy.* Salt Lake City, UT:Ancestry, c1998. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 SZUCS**

Szucs, Loretto Dennis. *The Source: Guidebook Of American Genealogy.* 3rd Edition. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Publishing Company, c2006.  
**Genealogy Reference 929.1 SOURCE**

Taylor, Maureen. *Through The Eyes Of Your Ancestors: A Step-By-Step Guide To Uncovering Your Family's History.* Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin, c1999.  
**Juvenile Non-Fiction 929 TAYLOR**

Thackery, David T. *Finding Your African American Ancestors: A Beginner's Guide.* Orem, UT: My Family.com, c2000. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 THACKERY**

Yamaguchi, Yoji. *Student's Guide To Japanese American Genealogy.* Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 YAMAGUCHI**

Wolfman, Ira. *Do People Grow On Family Trees?.* New York, NY : Workman Publishing, c1991. **Juvenile Non-Fiction 929.1 WOLFMAN**

**NOTE: This study guide is meant to serve as an overview or outline for patrons using the genealogy collection at Fort Myers Regional Library. The compiler emphasizes that the information contained in this study guide should not serve as a substitute for taking the time to read one of the books or articles cited in the bibliography, or attend lectures given by the subject specialists cited as authors.**

Compiled by Bryan L. Mulcahy, Reference Librarian, Fort Myers Regional Library, and Carolyn Ford, Genealogy Volunteer, Fort Myers Regional Library, 1/9/2019.