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## ANCESTRY.COM AND LIBRARY EDITION

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- I. Online Research Tips and Warnings
  - a. **Primary** vs. Secondary Records (Primary sources are original records created during the time period you are studying, and are not filtered by interpretation. They could also be materials created at a later date by a participant or observer of the time period through memoirs, autobiographies or oral histories.)
  - b. Database vs. Digital Collection (Databases are indexes or abstracts which are incomplete. Digital collections are usually the record itself but it may be a digital image of an index, so be careful!)
  - c. Only 1% of genealogical resources are online! Still mostly databases!
- II. Ancestry is not all inclusive! Use other sites also.
  - a. Online family trees ([www.rootsweb.com](http://www.rootsweb.com))
  - b. Cemetery/Church ([www.usgenweb.com](http://www.usgenweb.com))
  - c. Vital Records ([www.deathindexes.com](http://www.deathindexes.com))
  - d. Books ([www.digitalbookindex.com](http://www.digitalbookindex.com)) & HeritagequestOnline (at libraries)
  - e. Researchers ([www.raogk.com](http://www.raogk.com) and [www.usgenweb.com](http://www.usgenweb.com))
  - f. Military and Land ([www.footnote.com](http://www.footnote.com) subscription at WHS Library)
- III. Ancestry.com vs. Ancestry Library Edition
  - a. Ancestry.com (26,106 databases and digital collections)
    - i. Free Learning Center! Free email newsletter! Free forms!
    - ii. One World Tree (online pedigree program, enter data directly)
    - iii. Historical Newspaper and Obituary Collections
    - iv. Family and Local History Collection (also on HeritageQuestOnline.com)
    - v. PeopleFinder (finds public records for locate living people)
    - vi. Filby's Passenger and Immigration Lists (also bound at WHS Library)
    - vii. Gale's City Directories (also on film at WHS Library)
    - viii. Biography & Genealogy Master Index (WHS Library holds a subscription to this for you to use at WHS Library)
    - ix. Ancestry World Tree and Message Boards (only in read-only format on Library Edition)
    - x. You can make corrections to index entries (can't do in Library Ed.)
  - b. Ancestry Library Edition (4,694 databases and digital collections)
    - i. World Collection for free
    - ii. Great for large collections that encompass large areas or eras. Census, passenger lists, military, land.
    - iii. Try this before personal subscription. Learn the basics before investing.

- IV. Search strategies (choose advanced search every time, more options)
- a. **Read descriptions** of collections to make sure it will include your search criteria!  
Also it may explain how to find the original records!
  - b. Ranked vs. Exact Search
    - i. Ranked pulls more chance hits and rates them by a 5 star system. Also it tends to pull up names that connect to aliases and name spellings.
    - ii. Exact pulls less hits but more chance they apply to the family.
  - c. Global vs. Direct Database (do both!)
    - i. Global will search every one of the databases.
    - ii. Direct is good if you know which database you want to focus on. Search screens change with various databases. Content in the search will be different with different record types.
  - d. General ideas about searching
    - i. Try various combinations with different boxes in advanced search.
      1. Never fill in every box in 1 search.
      2. Try broad and go narrow. Surname and state for example.
      3. With names, first name could be initials instead of full name, or nicknames.
      4. Search by child's name.
      5. Search by wife's name.
      6. Search by location and birth place.
      7. Search by location. Only state. Then add more detail.
      8. Be creative. When in doubt, leave it out.
      9. Keep trying the database over time. More information may be added over time. Search options also change sometimes in databases.
    - ii. Question your existing information about the family.
      1. Are you sure of the location? What documents back up the information about locations?
      2. Names are spelled various ways by various people! Some of these people are outside the family.
      3. Problems with census takers and indexers. Names could be reversed, index says last name when it is actually the first name. Some letters read completely incorrectly.
      4. Look at other documents you have on the person. Create a timeline to sort out your information about that member and all the other members of the family.
  - e. Wildcards and Soundex
    - i. Wildcards (manipulate with 2 symbols)
      1. Three letters with \* will pull up any words that start with those letters.
      2. Three letters with a ? and the finish of the word will pull up those with differences in the spelling where the ? shows up.
    - ii. Soundex only pulls up names that have changes in vowels and silent letter types. If a consonant changes in the first 3 consonants in the word, it will change the coding system used by the Soundex code.
- V. Keeping up with it all? (Email newsletters, online magazines)
- a. Ancestry.com
  - b. Rootsweb.com
  - c. Family Tree Magazine (online and print)