Making Effective Use of FamilySearch.org

Thoughts about how to get the most from the premier free genealogy website...

By Craig Rhombs



Welcome

- Craig Rhombs
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Objectives

- Review the following features of the familysearch.org web site
 - Account
 - Help / Help Center
 - Searching
 - Family tree
 - Memories
 - Indexing
 - Activities





The lesser used facilities

- Most people jump right in and try to search for a name.
- There is much value in NOT doing that first.
- Look at . . .
 - The Help Center
 - The Wiki
 - FamilySearch groups/communities for help

Your Account

- Get one! It won't hurt & you'll not receive spam.
- https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/familysearch -signin-benefits/
- Benefits:
 - User authentication
 - More searchable content
 - More personalized services





New During the Pandemic

- · Changes to on-line consultations
 - https://www.familysearch.org/en/family-history-library/virtual-genealogy-consultation-faqs
- Nearly 5.8 billion images, 1.4 indexed, 4.4 unindexed!
- 423,000 physical book in catalog
- 3000 record collections
- 90,000 "how to" articles
- Physical library remodeling
- Multi-language support expanded
- Help system redesigned
- · ancestors.familysearch.org faciilities added
- Mobile app
- · Use of aliases in search feature
- Redesign of memories facilities
- 400th anniversary: https://www.familysearch.org/collection/mayflower-descendants/
- Changes coming: image exploration, record detail, physical library, Germans from Russia collection acquisition, search pages
- Completion of microfilm digitizing



News & Education

- Stay up to date by viewing the blog
 - https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/
 - https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/tag/about-familysearch/whats-new-at-familysearch
- Periodic entries include "record update" entries
- Classes & Webinars (live and recorded)
 - https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Family History Library Classes and Webinars
 - https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Classes_in_the_Learning_Center



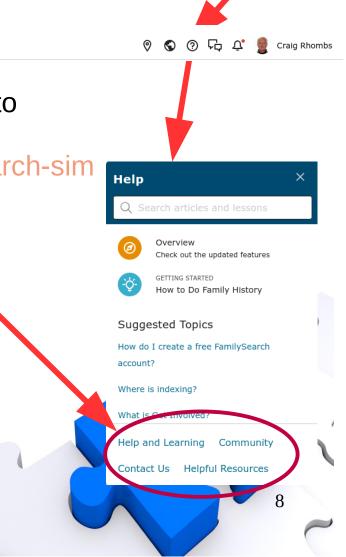
Help!



- People frequently breeze past this on the way to searching. - Don't! - Recently updated: https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/familysearch-sim plified-help-menu/
- Helpful Resources / Helper Resources
- Contact Us
- Communities
- Help and Learning with many options like . . .
 - The Research Wiki
 - Examples: by country (Scotland); by topic (slave)
 - Rookie mistakes

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The Help Center

Help and Learning



- Pick a topic or . . .
- Search for a topic
- https://www.familysearch.org/en/help/helpcenter/landing

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Searching for Help

- Enter search string to find
 - Articles
 - Lessons/classes
 - WIKI entries





The Research Wiki



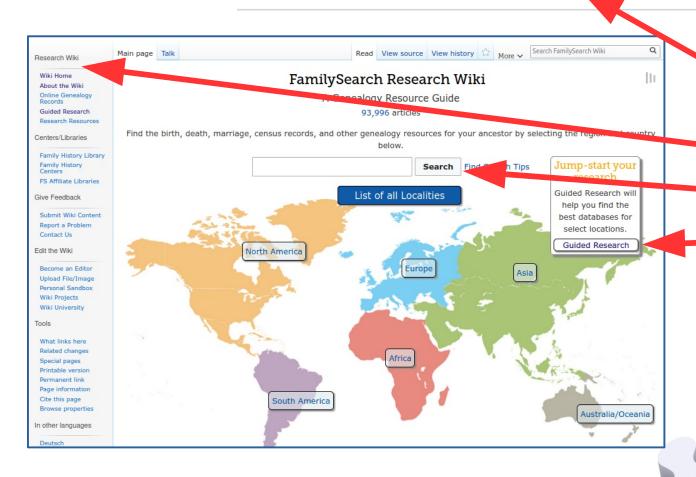
Family Tree

Search

Memories

Get Involved

Activities



- Access via "Search" menu
- Left Navigation
- Search
- Note guided help
- https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Main_Page

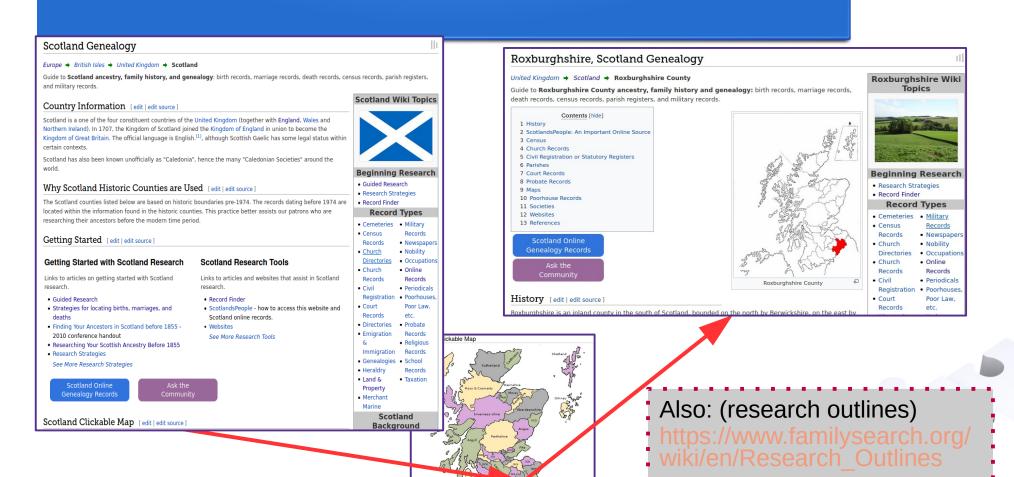
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Wiki - By Location Example 1



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Wiki - By Location Example 2

- France makes another good example because of the research tools.
- https://www.familysear ch.org/wiki/en/France_ Genealogy

France Research Tools

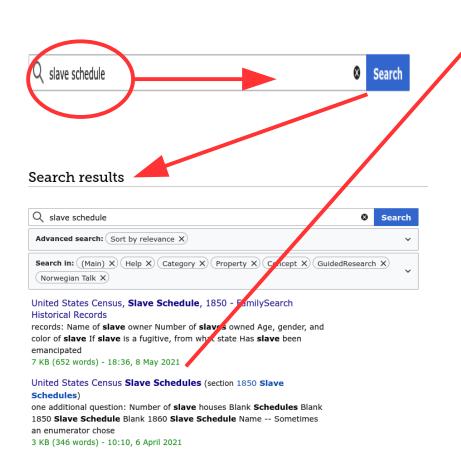
Links to articles and websites that assist in French research.

- Interactive Map to Online France Archives
- · French Genealogical Word List
- · Latin Genealogical Word List
- French Records Extraction Manual, Full Manual
 - 1: Old French Records
 - o 2: Parish Christening and Civil Birth Entries @
 - 3: Marriage Entries
 - 4: Other Entries
 - 5: French Handwriting and Spelling
 - 6: Name Identification

 - 8: Dates
 - 9: Putting it all into Practice
- · French Letter Writing Guide
- · French Republican Calendar
- FranceGenWeb Communes Gazetteer
 [®]

 See More Research Tools

Wiki - By Topic Example



United States Census Slave Schedules

United States 9 U.S. Census 9 Slave Schedules

Historical Background

Slave Schedules were used in two U.S. Federal Censuses: The 1850 U.S. Federal Census and the 1860 U.S. Federal Census. Slaves were usually not named, but enumerated separately and usually only numbered under the slave owner's name. The National Archives has microfilmed all of the original manuscripts for applicable states.

Contents

1850 and 1860 schedules

- · City, town, or sub district of slave owner
- Name of slave owner
- NO NAMES OF SLAVES (occasionally names were listed)
- · Number of slaves owned
- · Age, sex, color
- · Fugitive from state?
- · Number of slaves manumitted (released from slavery)
- · Deaf,dumb (mute), blind, insane, or idiotic?

1860 added one additional question:

Number of slave houses

Blank Schedules

Blank 1850 Slave Schedule & (reproduction) Blank 1860 Slave Schedule & (reproduction)

Value

- Name -- Sometimes an enumerator chose to list the first names of individual slaves. Each countywide slave schedule must be searched to see if there are names of slaves or not.
- 2. Number -- The number of slaves enumerated could help determine if the owner had a plantation or not, and size.

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Wiki – Topic "Rookie Mistakes"

https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Rookie Mistakes

Contents [hide]

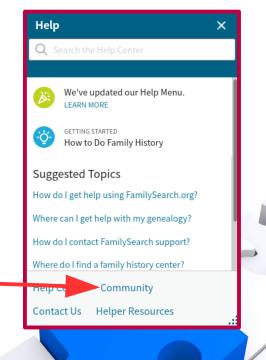
- Rookies search individuals.
- 2 Rookies are inclined to be poor note keepers
- 3 Rookies can jump to conclusions which aren't supported by evidence
- 4 Rookies may assume an ancestor's name has only one correct spelling
- 5 Rookies frequently have vague research goals
- 6 Rookie researchers jump between families too often
- 7 Rookies occasionally "start" their research on ancestors in the distant past
- 8 Rookies may assume no record of an event exists if not found in their first search
- 9 Rookies overlook hidden relatives and neighbors
- 10 Rookies avoid discussing contradictory evidence
- 11 Rookies don't think about sharing their research
- 12 Rookies don't sharpen the saw enough
- 13 Rookies have a tendency to expect too much and give up too early
- 14 Related Content
- 15 See also

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The Power of Community

- Our ancestors did not live their lives for our convenience.
- Most had struggles of their own. Life was messy for many.
- Keep an open mind.
- When stumped, develop a hypothesis that can explain the facts; test it; revise as necessary.
- Maintain an issues list.
- Reach out for help: https://community.familysearch.org/en

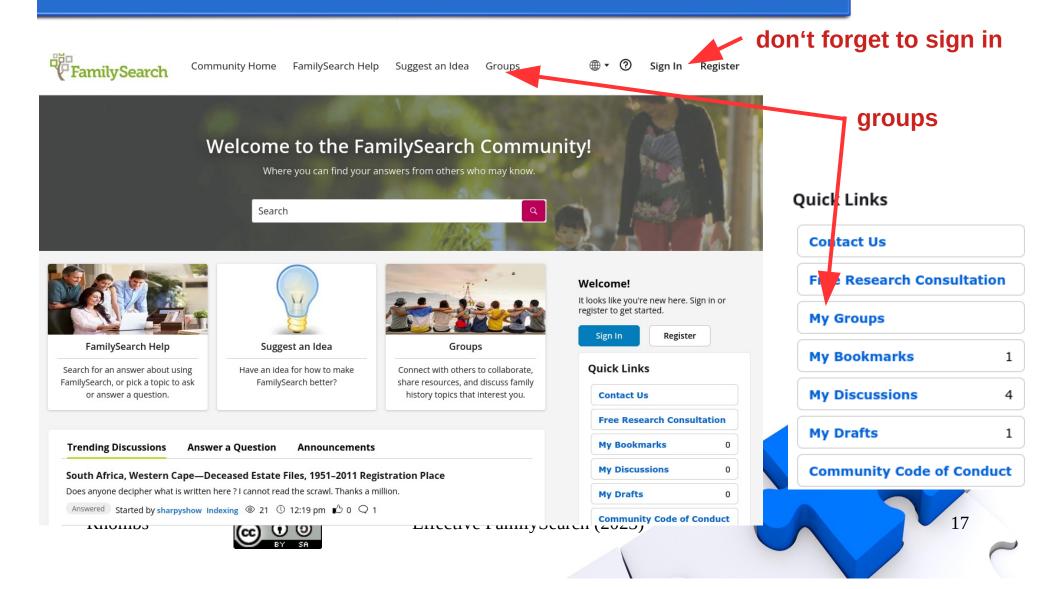


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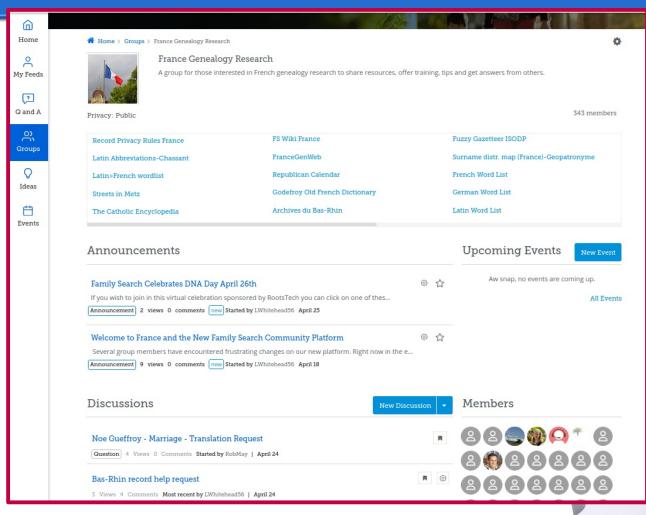




Dedicated Website (new)



Example Community Research Groups



See

https://community.f amilysearch.org/e n/group/79-franceresearch

Note announcement, and discussion sections



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Family Search Workflow

- Understanding this can help you do your research.
- Raw images are acquired and sent "home"
- These images reside in a sort of queue of images that are not cataloged and not indexed.
- OCR and AI are used to initially process the images, but they are still neither cataloged nor indexed by a human.
- Images are then cataloged.
- Cataloged images are indexed by humans.

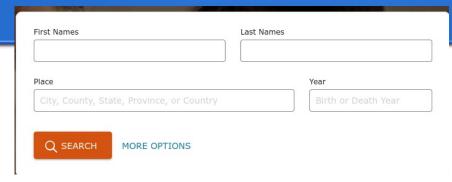
Family Search Workflow





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Searching Indexed Sources



- General record search start general and then focus; note new format! https://www.familysearch.org/search/
- Example: find Agnes Moodie b.1871 in Scotland
- Example: Use collections to narrow search (Scotland Thomas Moodie b. 1790 in Scotland)
- Example: By collection (1850 slave schedules Bythewood in SC)

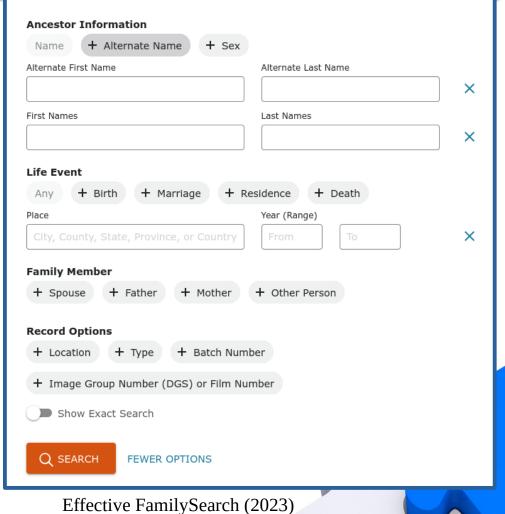
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The "More Options" Form

New alternate name fields as well as changes to how you enter other search criteria.

One motivation for these changes was probably the desire to make the web pages adaptable to various environments – desktop and mobile with a variety of display sizes.







Finding Agnes

- Agnes Moodie
- Born in 1871 in Scotland . . .
- Source citation
- Saving
- Sharing

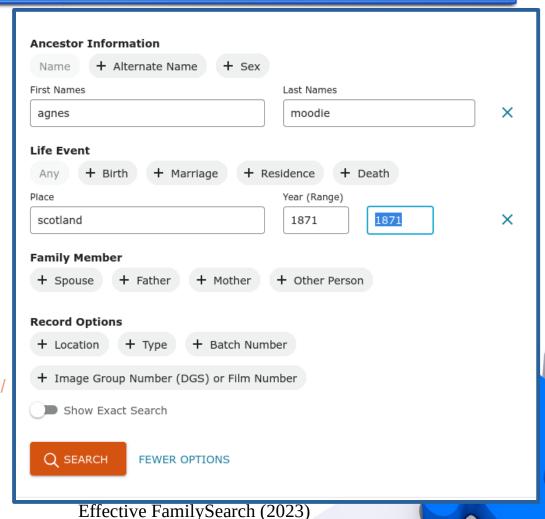
"Scotland Births and Baptisms, 1564-1950", database, FamilySearch (

https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/ 1:1:FQ8B-7X6

: 12 February 2020), Jane Agnes Moodie, 1871.

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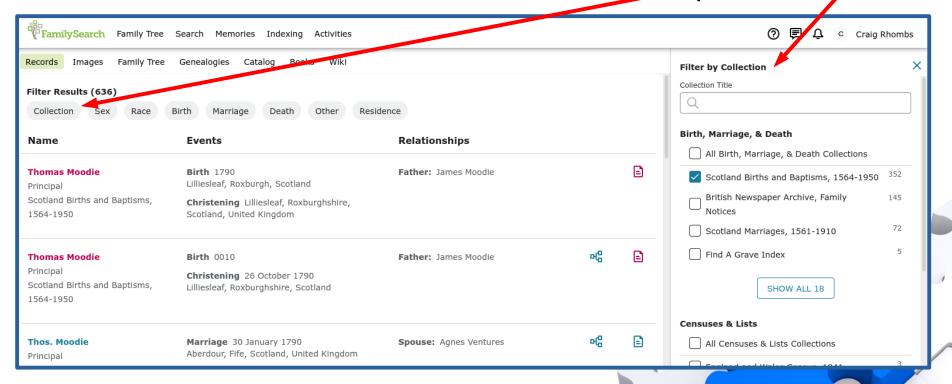


Finding Thomas Moodie

• b. 1790

filtering

Narrow to collection = Scotland Births and Baptisms

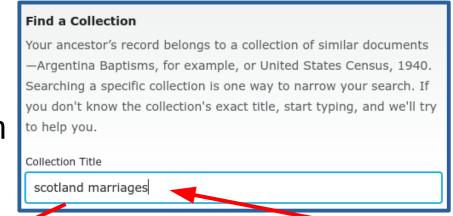


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How to Use the Catalog (1) – finding a collection first

- Use example of Elizabeth Litster/Lister
- Find marriage directly using marriage collection for Scotland
- Year ~ 1816 +/- 3



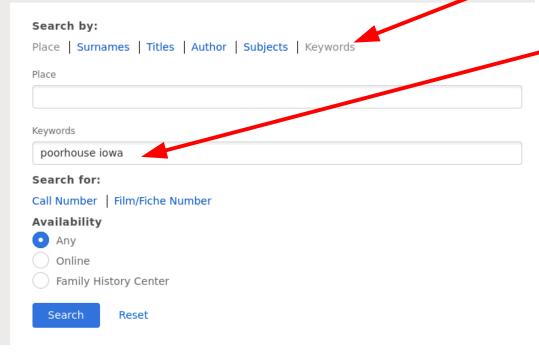


How to Use the Catalog (2) – locate source by topic

FamilySearch Catalog

Search the catalog of genealogical materials (including books, online materials, microfilm, microfiche, and publications) made available by FamilySearch online and in libraries and centers worldwide.

Learn more about the catalog and how to access materials.



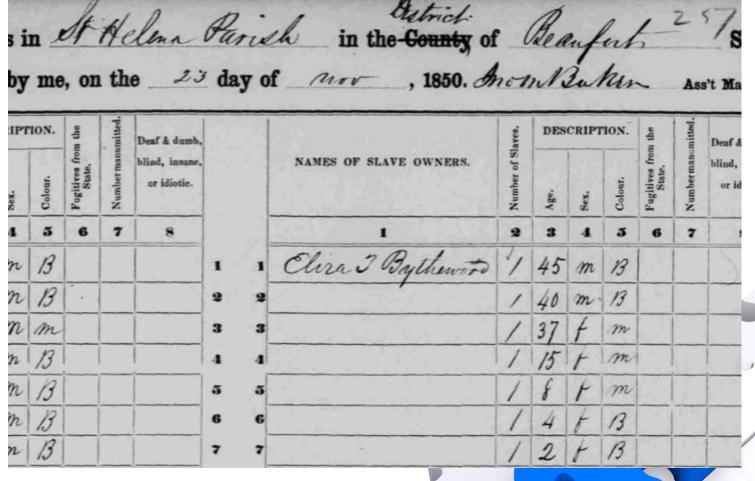
- Keyword search
- Poorhouse info for Iowa



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Finding Bythewood Slaves

 Look for Bythewood in SC, then focus on 1850 stave schedule collection



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Tips from FamilySearch

- Regarding indexed online sources
- Tips:

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Tips_for_Searching_an_Online_Index

- Spelling flexibility
- Less can be more
- Restrict results that are too numerous
- Try a different source/index

Cataloged Records <u>NOT</u> Indexed

- Most are <u>not</u> indexed (80%?) see historical record collections for indexed ones (20%)
 - https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/list?count=20
- They consist of digital images
- There are techniques for finding them and then navigating to your information
- https://www.familysearch.org/search/
 - Use map or collection list
 - Use catalog (topic, location, etc.)
 - Analyze how the source is organized!



Examples of Un-indexed Searches

- For those sources that have been catalog
- South Dakota image-only records (<u>start with "search by place"</u>) -These have been indexed,



but this example assumes that they have not in order to show how to use images

Look for SD county naturalization records

BROWSE ALL 124,277 IMAGES

- Hint: https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/2078640
- Faulk County, box 9:

https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-99WY-ZXR1?i=95&wc=MCYH-2W5%3A357893701%2C357914801&cc=2078640





Records Neither Indexed Nor Cataloged

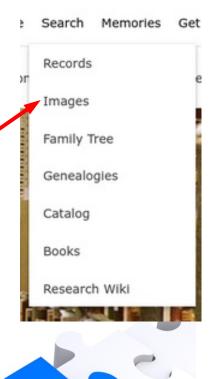
 More details: ~40% are Neither indexed Nor cataloged https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzPQqgyk-bl

 Many new records are processed using OCR to help automate the indexing process. (Artificial intelligence especially for handwritten docs.)

https://www.familysearch.org/records/images/



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Search Books

- https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/
- Many available on-line according to copyright restrictions.
- Try also https://www.worldcat.org/ for books.





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More Examples

- Start with research wiki Alsace https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Alsace
- Example <u>collection</u> the IGI https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/igi?collectionNameFilter=true



THE Family Tree

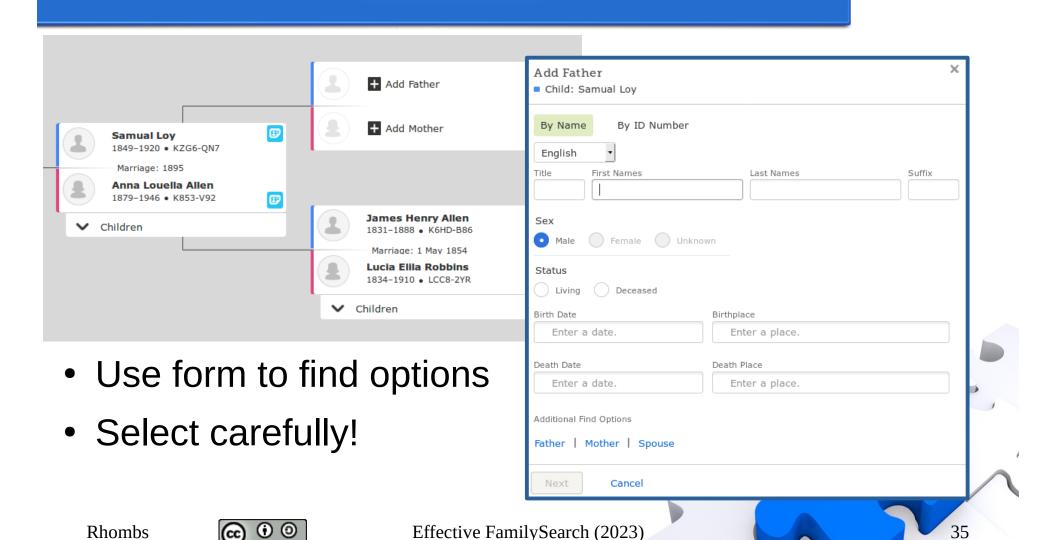
- Collaborative! It is shared; please build based on evidence.
- Overview: https://www.familysearch.org/tree/overview
- How to start: https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/how-to-start-a-family-tree
- Be careful some evidence is misleading; some entries are wrong; see

https://genealogysstar.blogspot.com/2021/12/the-irony-of-familysearch-family-tree.html

- Correcting errors
- Work in progress: https://ancestors.familysearch.org/en



Example Addition



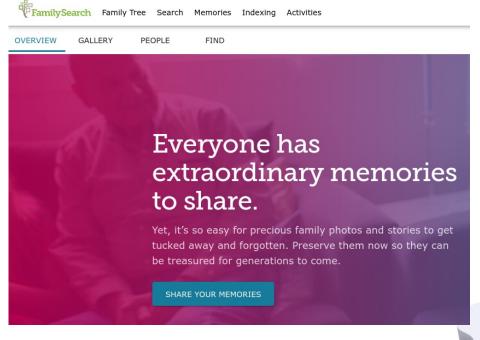
Family Tree Builder

- Note that there are alternatives for collaborating on your family history research
- here's one: https://www.werelate.org/wiki/Main_Page
- I recommend that you keep a private version of your tree that is your sole responsibility and that you back up properly.
- Understand the options!

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Memories

- Record your thoughts, photos, docs, etc.
- https://www.familysearch.org/memories/



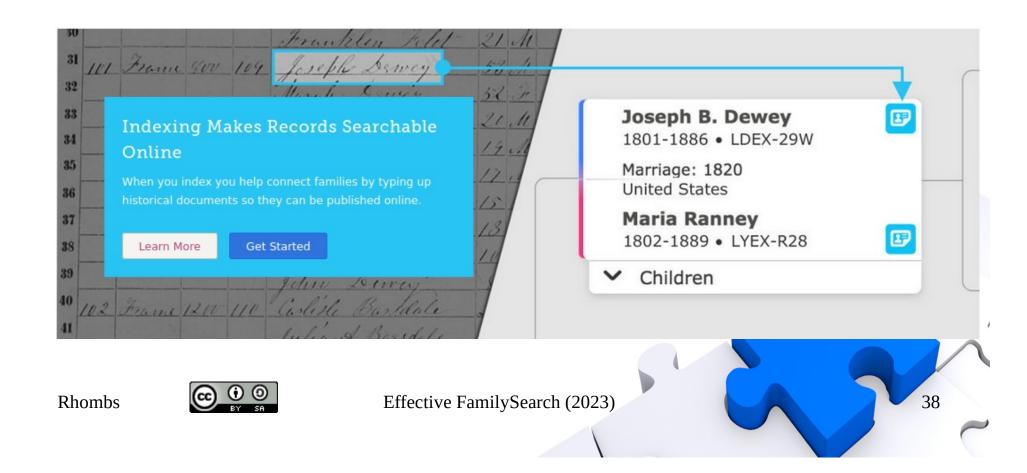






Indexing (get involved)

Help build transcriptions



Family History Centers and Training



- Dedicated website (new): https://www.familysearch.org/family-history-library/welcome-to--the-family-history-library
- Locally in Crystal and at MNGS.org library
- Check availability
 - www.mngs.org
 - https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Minneapolis_Minneso ta_Family_History_Center/Resources
- The Family History Guide: https://thefhguide.com/ (The Family)
 History Guide is a Registered Solutions Provider for FamilySearch, who refers to it for training assistance.)



Cast Your Fate . . .

- There are certainly other sources for data, try these. . .
- Use operators in search engines like

https://duckduckgo.com/

https://www.startpage.com/

- Academic articles: https://www.jstor.org/
- Look for images

https://images.google.com/





Sometimes you get lucky!

Wenn die Kraft zu Ende geht, ist Erlösung Gnade.

In Liebe und Dankbarkeit nehmen wir Abschied von meinem lieben Ehemann, unserem Vater, Schwiegervater und Opa

Alexander Rombs

15. 8. 1850

14. 10. 2016

Er ist in Frieden eingeschlafen.

90522 Oberasbach, Distelweg 3, im Oktober 2016

In stiller Trauer: Ida Rombs

Maria und Nandor Rombs Nikodemus Rombs und Maria Christian, Sabrina und Janine Rombs nebst allen Verwandten

Die Trauerfeier findet am Donnerstag, dem 20. Oktober 2016, um 12.00 Uhr im Krematorium Westfriedhof statt. Wir bitten von Blumenschmuck Abstand zu nehmen. Für zugedachte Anteilnahme herzlichen Dank.











Thanks for Your Time!

Practice!!!

Perseverance!!

Persistence!!

What, so what, now what?

