Finding Records Using the Resources on FamilySearch

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The FamilySearch.org website (www.familysearch.org) has many free resources available to researchers. Using filters and other advanced search techniques can help you find those elusive ancestors.

There are five main places on FamilySearch that have record collections:

1. **Search Tab**
   - *Search Collections by Name* – This is a good way to search if you don't know what collection your person is in and you have basic facts about the person.
   - *Browse All Collections* – This is my favorite way to search and allows you to browse to a location or topic, then choose the applicable record collection. This way to search is really good for names that are misspelled or mis-indexed.
   - *Research by Location* – This is helpful to see what records are available for a specific region in both the indexed and un-indexed records. It usually has links to free webinars and is very useful for people researching internationally.
2. **Images**: This is where the newly digitized collections are organized. Some microfilms are restricted due to the content and dates contained within, so they will not be available for viewing. Searches are done by location. Once the location is selected, life events and locations within the selected place can narrow down search results. Click on the collection and view the images like you would in the catalog.
3. **Catalog**: Search by location and then choose the appliable category of record you want to search. Microfilms that have been digitized will have a camera icon to the far right. If there is a lock above it, you will need to go to a FamilySearch Center or FamilySearch affiliate to view the records. If there is a magnifying glass on the far right, you can use a name to search the collection. Keep in mind that the magnifying glass may not cover all the dates or facts on the microfilm, so if you don't find it using the magnifying glass search feature, check the record manually by clicking on the camera icon and searching the pages of the digitized collection. Catalog is a very good place to find vital records, deeds, probates, tax records, and maps for specific localities. In the United States, search by county and state, unless your location is in New England, then search by the town. For locations outside the USA, search by the town or parish name unless you are looking for civil registration records kept at the county or state level.
4. **Research Wiki**: Click the blue online records to see what records are available on other websites. Some record collections may also be found by clicking on the applicable archives or repository links. This is where you will find word lists and other useful tools for languages other than English. Topical searches such as specific Civil War companies or immigration can also be used. Make sure to check if the Guided Research has tools for the area you are researching.
5. **Books**: This is where you will find books from FamilySearch's vast collection as well as those from contributing libraries. This is a good place to find books about your family, county histories, and other published books for various locations.

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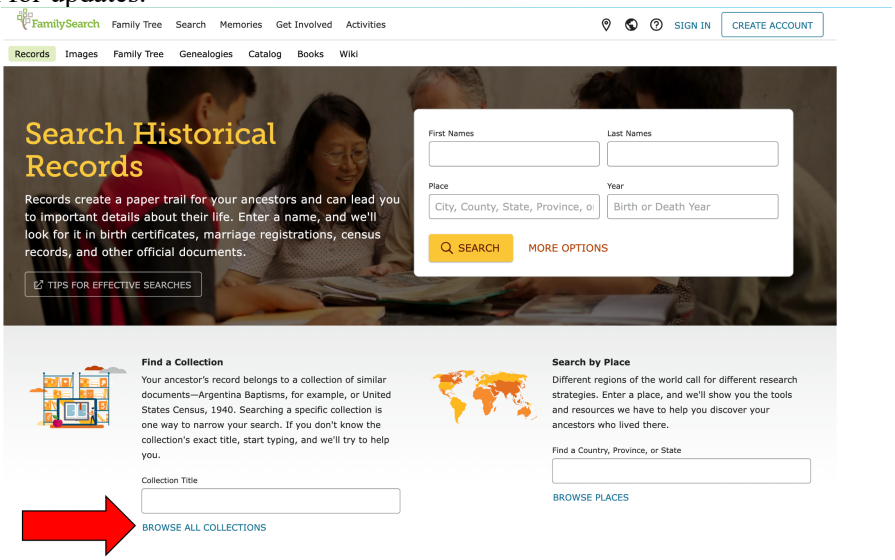
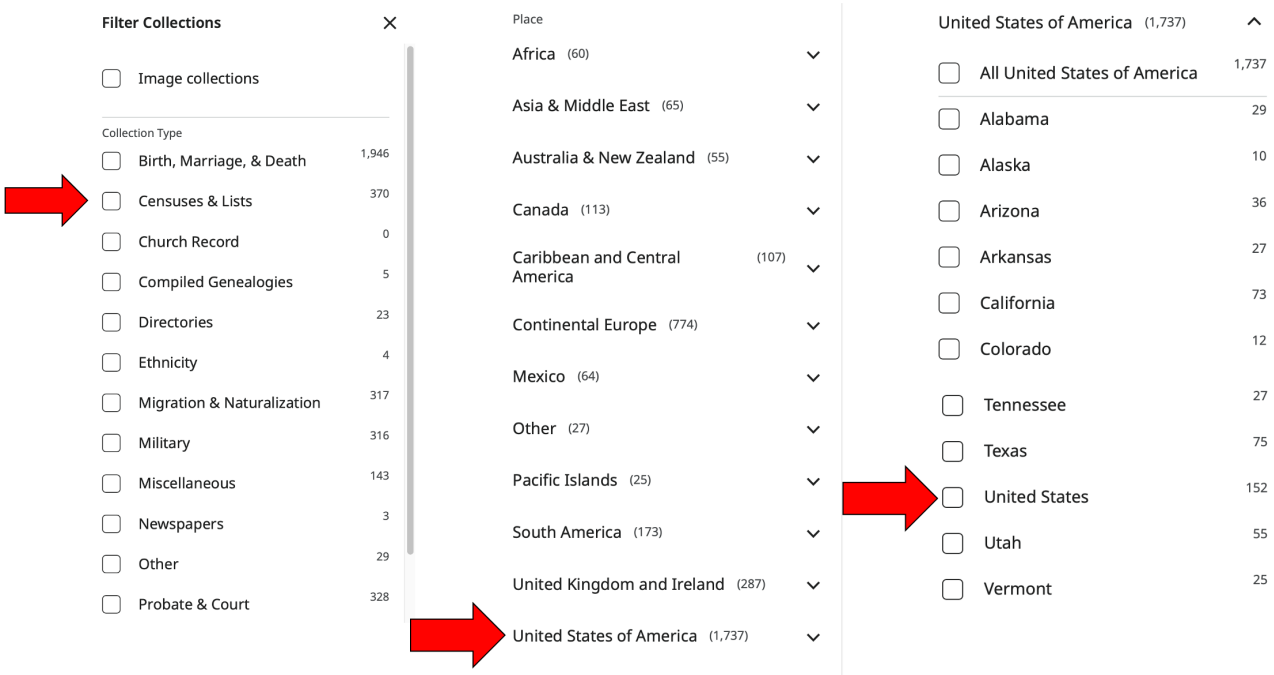
Records

The historical record collection (https://www.familysearch.org/search/) has both indexed and unindexed collections from the massive microfilm and microfiche records of FamilySearch. More digitized records are being added, so check back often for updates.

If you can't find your family by typing their information into the search box, use filters to specify the collection or click on BROWSE ALL COLLECTIONS.

Click on the specific locality or topic you want to search. If you choose United States, click on the specific state to get the collections for that area. Try using various search tricks and filters until you find them.





Use the filters to narrow down the database selection so you get better search results.

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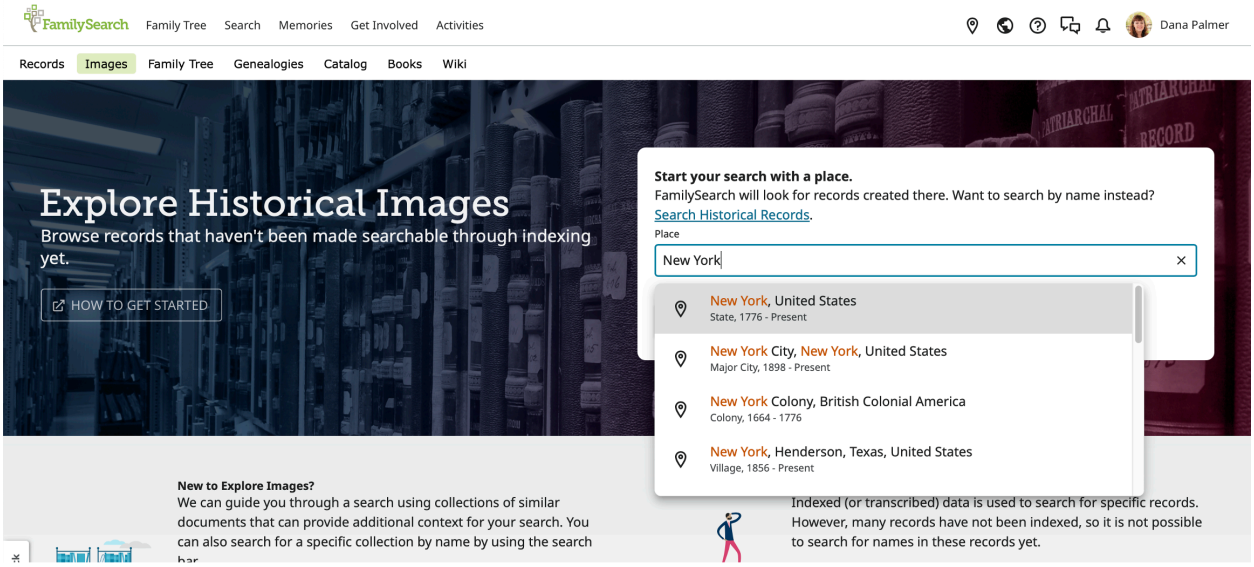
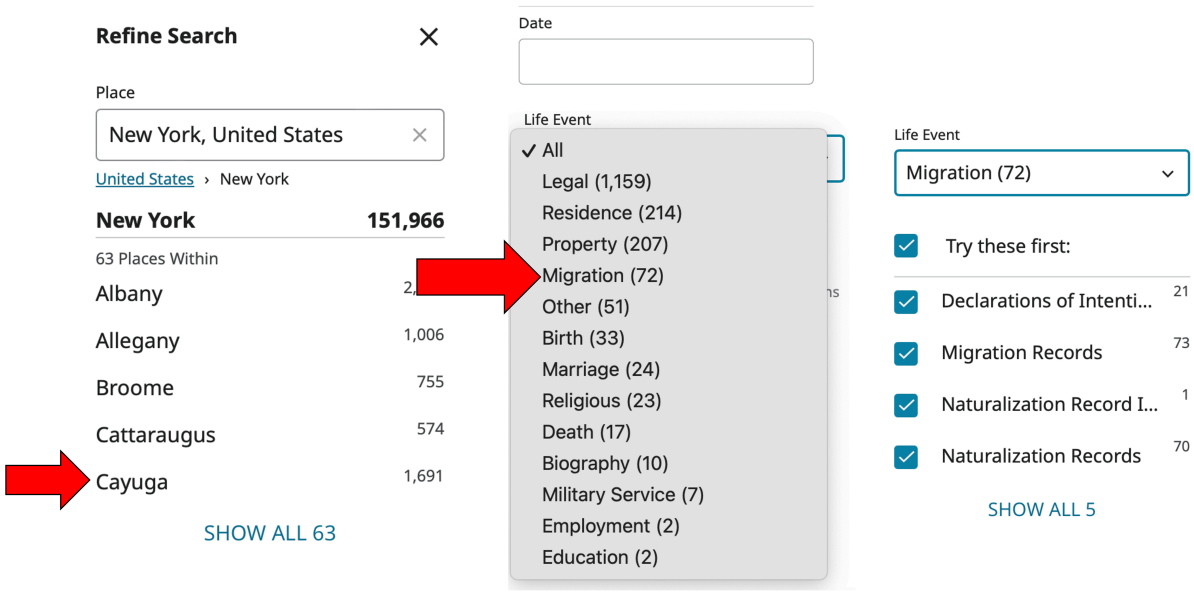
Images

Images (https://www.familysearch.org/records/images/) has the more recently digitized records from FamilySearch. Check back often for updates.





Use life events and the location filters to further narrow down the databases.

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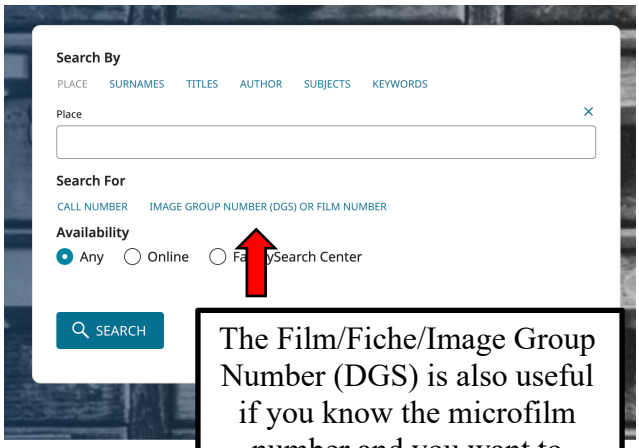
Catalog

The catalog (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog) is a compilation of all the books, microfilms, microfiche, etc. that are available at the FamilySearch Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. These records are copies of original records (vitals, census, church, tax, court, etc.) from around the world.

To find records for a specific locality, type in the county (for the US) or town/church (for international countries). Click the drop-down arrow from the available categories.

Choose a link from the available records and see if there is a camera icon next to the microfilm. If there is a camera icon, then the records can be viewed online. If there is a camera icon with a lock above it, then the records can only be viewed on a local FamilySearch center or FamilySearch affiliate.



The Film/Fiche/Image Group Number (DGS) is also useful if you know the microfilm number and you want to view the original record.

Subjects

Locality Subjects

United States, Ohio, Warren - Taxation

Results per page: 100

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Film/Digital Notes

Note	Location	Collection/Shelf	Film	Image Group Number (DGS)	Format
1816-1826	Family History Library	United States & Canada 2nd Floor Film	514202	4849171	
1827-1828	Family History Library	United States & Canada 2nd Floor Film	534810	4849282	
1829-1830	Family History Library	United States & Canada 2nd Floor Film	534811	4849283	
1831-1832	Family History Library	United States & Canada 2nd Floor Film	514203	4849172	
1833-1834	Family History Library	United States & Canada 2nd Floor Film	514204	4849178	
1835	Family History Library	United States & Canada 2nd Floor Film	534812	4849284	
1836-1838	Family History Library	United States & Canada 2nd Floor Film	522500	4849180	

Choose the magnifying glass to search the collection or click the applicable microfilm to view the original records.

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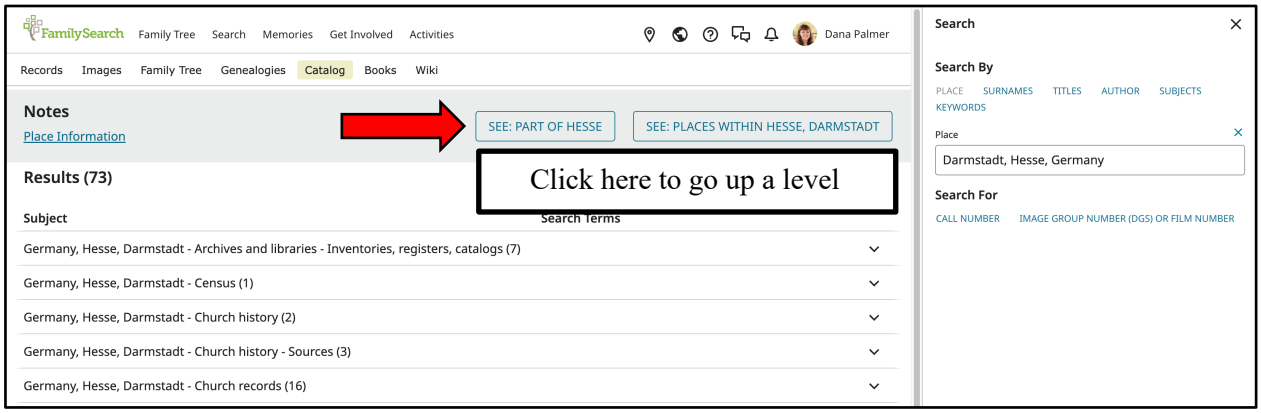
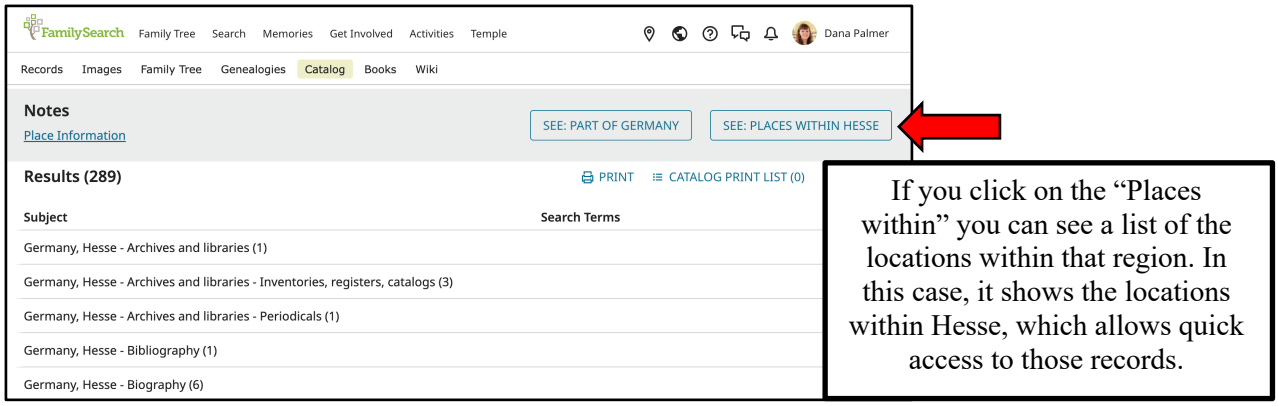


Click on the "Part of" or "Places within" to view other locations near the location you are searching. This is very useful if your person is not in the records you are searching and you want to search nearby towns.



If you click on the "Places within" you can see a list of the locations within that region. In this case, it shows the locations within Hesse, which allows quick access to those records.

Click on one of the subdivisions, so you can see more locations within that region. In this case, clicking on Oppenheim in the image to the right, shows the towns within Oppenheim in the image below.

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Research Wiki

FamilySearch's Research Wiki (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main_Page) is a free website resource database similar to Wikipedia, but its focus is on genealogy research and sources. It can be searched by key word for specific articles or by browsing topics or locations. Many articles and how-to instructions about family history can be found or posted on this site.

External website links to databases and other records can often be found using the Research Wiki for a specific locality. The FamilySearch Research Wiki is extremely useful if you want to know when records started for a specific location, where the originals are stored, and if any part of the collection is online.

Understanding how to find records using the resources in the Research Wiki will save you many hours in your search.

2.14 Land and Property Records
2.15 Local Histories
2.16 Maps and Gazetteers
2.17 Migration
2.18 Military Records
2.19 Naturalization and Citizenship
2.20 Newspapers
2.21 Obituaries
2.22 Other Records
2.23 Periodicals
2.24 Probate Records
2.25 School Records
2.26 Social Security Records
2.27 Tax Records
2.28 Vital Records
2.28.1 Birth
2.28.2 Marriage
2.28.3 Death
2.28.4 Divorce
3 Research Facilities
3.1 Archives
3.2 FamilySearch Centers
3.3 Libraries
3.4 Museums
4 Societies
5 Websites
6 Research Guides
7 References

Clerk Circuit Court has marriage records from 1830, divorce records from 1850, probate and court records from 1832 and naturalization records on microfilm.
Health Department has birth records and death records.
Copies may be obtained from the county health department or the Indiana State Division of Vital Records.

Tippecanoe County, Indiana Record Dates [edit | edit source]

Information for this chart was taken from various sources, often containing conflicting dates. This information should be taken as a guide and should be verified by contacting the county and/or the state government agency.

Known Beginning Dates for Government County Records[3]						
Birth*	Marriage	Death*	Court	Land	Probate	Census
1882	1826	1882	1832	1826	1832	1807
*Statewide registration for births in 1907 and deaths in Oct 1899. General compliance by 1917.						

Record Loss [edit | edit source]

There is no known history of courthouse disasters in this county.

Boundary Changes [edit | edit source]

- **Parent Counties**: Formed 20 January 1826 from the Wabash New Purchase.[4]
- **County Seat:** Lafayette[5]
- Interactive Map of Indiana County Formation History (1790-1897) - animated maps illustrating Indiana county boundary changes
- Indiana Historical Boundary Changes - list of all boundary changes by county provided by Newberry Library

You can search localities such as a state, county within a state, or country. For locations in the United States, it is very helpful to understand when each locality started keeping records and if there is record loss. Genealogy word lists and handwriting tools can be found on the applicable country page.

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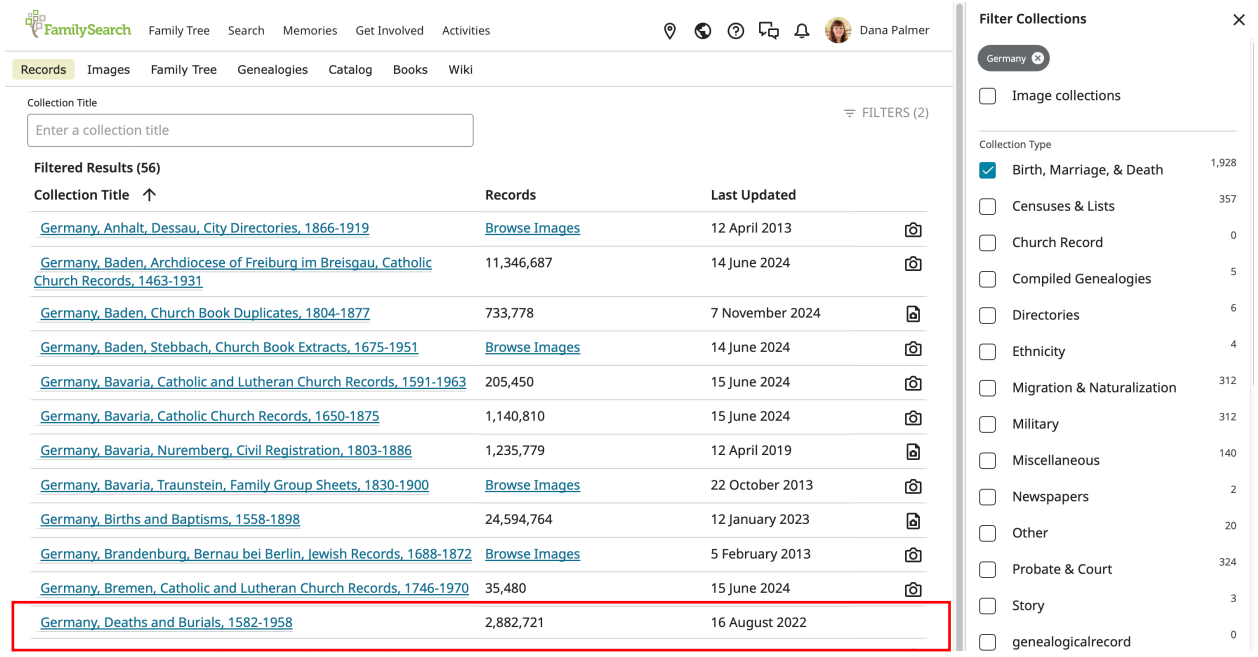
Some Searching Tricks on FamilySearch

Filters: allow you to use an exact or a very broad search parameter for your person in the historical record search. Be careful with exact filters on names. Sometimes it will eliminate your person. Exact filters on date ranges and localities work best.

Wildcards: helpful to find people with abbreviated, misspelled, mis-indexed, or nicknames.

- Use the **question mark** (?) symbol to replace a single letter within the word. It can be used multiple times in a word.
  - So Eli**?**abeth would result in searches for Elizabeth and Elisabeth.
  - This is especially useful if the second letter is indexed or recorded different than expected (Jrseph versus Joseph).
- Use the **asterisk** (*) symbol to look for multiple letters.
  - On FamilySearch you only need 1 letter before the * wildcard feature.
  - If you used ROS* as a given name, you would get Rosa, Rose, Ross, Rossina, Rosina, etc. and all variations on the given name starting with Ros.
  - If you used JOH*SON, you would get Johanson, Johansson, Johnson, Johannsson, etc.
- **Combinations** – you can also use the asterisk and question mark wildcards in combination such as: T?r* or S?l?n* or Joh*s?n. This is really helpful if you have letters that are often interchanged with others and an ending that is not consistent.

Unindexed Records in Research and the Catalog: many records have not been indexed by FamilySearch or are partially indexed. Search by location and then the collection type to find the record collection you want. Then search the digitized microfilm until you find your entry. Many of these records, especially deeds and probate records, may have an index at the beginning or end of the digitized collection. Check for these as they may save you time finding your entry. Remember to also attach the record to the applicable person in the Family Tree.



Collections in the Records without the camera icon may have digital images elsewhere on the FamilySearch website (usually Catalog or Images).

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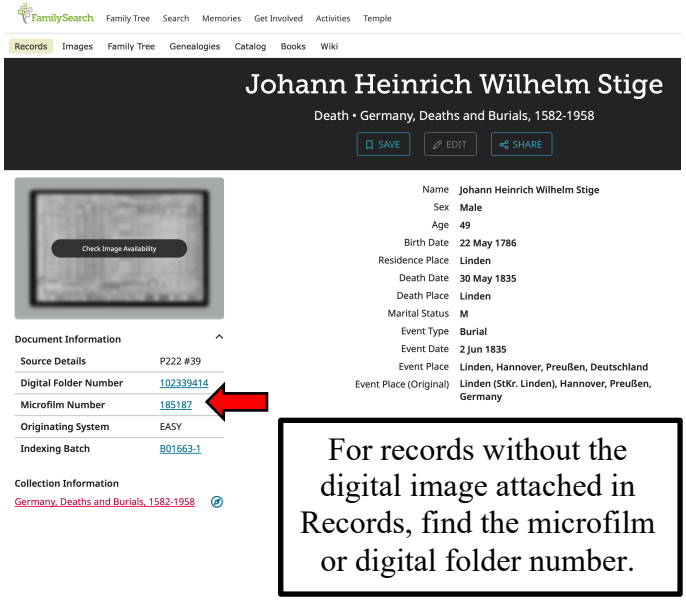
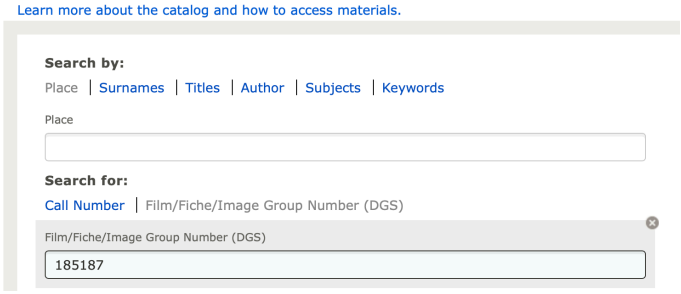
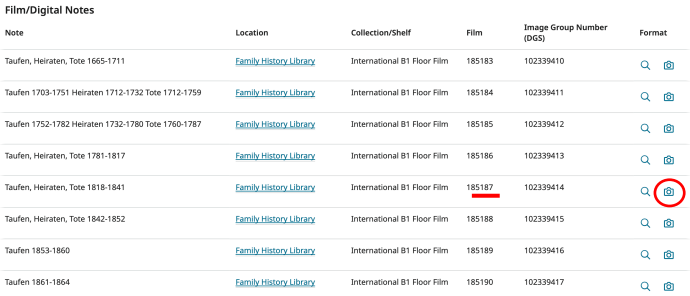


For records without the digital image attached in Records, find the microfilm or digital folder number.



Go to the Catalog and locate the applicable microfilm or digital folder number and click the camera icon to view the image.

Microfilm / Batch searches: allow you to find all the names in a specific batch or microfilm. This saves a lot of time because all the surnames on that microfilm or batch can be quickly found using this type of search. You can then go to the catalog and click on microfilm/microfiche/image group number, type in the number, and find the original record, even if the image is not in **Records**.



Full Text Search

FamilySearch's experimental Labs has a Full-Text Search feature that allows users to search for names or words in the included records. (https://www.familysearch.org/search/full-text) All names are indexed, not just the primary ones, and may include parents, neighbors, witnesses, etc. Many of the included records are deeds and court records in the United States. *NGS Magazine*, July-September 2024, pp. 28-32 has an excellent article with many tips on how to successfully search using the full-text search on FamilySearch.

Family Tree

FamilySearch's Family Tree (https://www.familysearch.org/en/family-tree/) can be a powerful tool if used properly. The more information you add to the facts on the person's Details page, the more likely record hints will pop up for that person. Review these hints and add the applicable ones to that person. Make sure to mark "Not a Match" if the record is not for that person. Often new records will be found as more records and data is listed.

If a record does not appear in the hints, you will have to find it manually by searching Records, Catalog, or Images. Once you find the record, make sure to attach it to the person in the tree so it is easy to find it again.

Make sure to merge duplicates and add all family members.

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