

## 22 Steps in Researching Your Family Tree

### 'Discovering Your Past Blog Series'

#### Step 7

Guides to Finding Ancestors in Census Records, Military Documents,  
and Ship's Passenger Lists

- Ancestry.com
- FamilySearch.org
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# Guide – Ancestry.com

Ancestry.com is a popular genealogy website that provides access to a vast collection of historical records. In this guide, we will explore how to find ancestors in census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists on Ancestry.com.

## Census Records

Step 1: Go to Ancestry.com and sign in to your account. Step 2: Click on the "Search" tab at the top of the page. Step 3: Select "Census & Voter Lists" from the drop-down menu. Step 4: Enter the name of your ancestor and any additional information you have, such as their birthplace or year of birth. Step 5: Click on "Search" to see the results.

Ancestry.com offers access to a wide range of census records from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and other countries. You can search by name, location, year, and other criteria to narrow down your search.

Once you have found your ancestor in the census records, you can view the original document and learn more about their family members, occupation, and place of birth.

## Military Documents

Step 1: Go to Ancestry.com and sign in to your account. Step 2: Click on the "Search" tab at the top of the page. Step 3: Select "Military" from the drop-down menu. Step 4: Enter the name of your ancestor and any additional information you have, such as their branch of service or dates of service. Step 5: Click on "Search" to see the results.

Ancestry.com provides access to a wide range of military records from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and other countries. You can search by name, location, year, and other criteria to narrow down your search.

Once you have found your ancestor's military records, you can view the original documents and learn more about their service, including their rank, unit, and any awards or commendations they received.

## Ship's Passenger Lists

Step 1: Go to Ancestry.com and sign in to your account. Step 2: Click on the "Search" tab at the top of the page. Step 3: Select "Immigration & Travel" from the drop-down menu. Step 4: Enter the name of your ancestor and any additional information you have, such as their year of arrival or port of departure. Step 5: Click on "Search" to see the results.

Ancestry.com offers access to a wide range of ship's passenger lists from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and other countries. You can search by name, location, year, and other criteria to narrow down your search.

Once you have found your ancestor's ship's passenger list, you can view the original document and learn more about their journey, including the name of the ship, the port of departure and arrival, and any other family members who travelled with them.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Ancestry.com is a valuable resource for finding ancestors in census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists. With its vast collection of historical records and powerful search tools, it is easier than ever to discover your family history. So go ahead and start your search today!

## **Guide – FamilySearch.org**

Welcome to the world of genealogy research on FamilySearch.org! In this guide, we'll cover how to use census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists to find information about your ancestors.

### **Census Records:**

Census records can provide valuable information about your ancestors, such as their names, ages, places of birth, occupations, and more. The US Federal Census is one of the most commonly used census records for genealogy research. Here's how to search for census records on FamilySearch.org:

1. Go to FamilySearch.org and log in to your account.
2. Click on "Search" at the top of the page.
3. Select "Records" from the drop-down menu.
4. In the search bar, type in the name of the person you're looking for.
5. You can refine your search by adding additional information, such as birthplace, residence, and age.
6. Select "Census and Voter Lists" under "Record Type" on the left-hand side.
7. Select the country and year of the census you want to search.
8. Review the search results and select the record that matches your ancestor.

### **Military Documents:**

Military documents can provide a wealth of information about your ancestors, including their service dates, ranks, units, and more. Here's how to find military documents on FamilySearch.org:

1. Go to FamilySearch.org and log in to your account.
2. Click on "Search" at the top of the page.
3. Select "Records" from the drop-down menu.
4. In the search bar, type in the name of the person you're looking for.

5. You can refine your search by adding additional information, such as birthplace, residence, and age.
6. Select "Military" under "Record Type" on the left-hand side.
7. Select the conflict and branch of service you want to search.
8. Review the search results and select the record that matches your ancestor.

### **Ship's Passenger Lists:**

Ship's passenger lists can provide valuable information about your ancestors' immigration and travel history, such as their names, ages, nationalities, and ports of departure and arrival. Here's how to find ship's passenger lists on FamilySearch.org:

1. Go to FamilySearch.org and log in to your account.
2. Click on "Search" at the top of the page.
3. Select "Records" from the drop-down menu.
4. In the search bar, type in the name of the person you're looking for.
5. You can refine your search by adding additional information, such as birthplace, residence, and age.
6. Select "Immigration and Naturalization" under "Record Type" on the left-hand side.
7. Select the country and port of arrival you want to search.
8. Review the search results and select the record that matches your ancestor.

In conclusion, FamilySearch.org is a valuable resource for genealogy research, offering a wealth of census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists. By following the steps outlined in this guide, you'll be well on your way to uncovering the fascinating history of your ancestors.

## **Guide – National Archives**

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is the official repository of historical U.S. government records. It holds an extensive collection of genealogical resources, including census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists. In this guide, we will provide an overview of these resources and how to access them at the National Archives.

### **Census Records**

The U.S. federal government has conducted a decennial census since 1790. Census records can provide a wealth of information about your ancestors, including names, ages, birthplaces, occupations, and family relationships. The National Archives has census records from 1790 to 1940.

To access census records at the National Archives, you can start by searching the online catalog, which is available on the NARA website. You can search by individual or family name, state, county, and year. Once you find the record you are looking for, you can request a copy of the microfilm or digital image of the record.

### **Military Records**

The National Archives holds a vast collection of military records dating back to the Revolutionary War. These records can provide valuable information about your ancestor's military service, such as enlistment and discharge dates, unit information, and pension records.

To access military records at the National Archives, you can start by searching the online catalog, which is available on the NARA website. You can search by name, conflict, branch of service, and other criteria. Once you find the record you are looking for, you can request a copy of the record.

It's worth noting that not all military records are available to the public. Records less than 62 years old are restricted, and you may need to provide proof of relationship to the veteran to access them.

### **Ship's Passenger Lists**

If your ancestors immigrated to the United States, ship's passenger lists can provide valuable information about their journey, including the port of departure, date of arrival, and passenger names.

The National Archives holds passenger lists for arrivals to the United States from 1820 to 1957. You can search these records on the NARA website by name, port of arrival, and date range. Once you find the record you are looking for, you can request a copy of the record.

## **Conclusion**

The National Archives is a valuable resource for genealogical research, with an extensive collection of census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists. By following the steps outlined in this guide, you can access these records and uncover new information about your ancestors.

# Guide – Fold3

Fold3 is a subscription-based website that focuses on military records and offers access to a variety of resources such as historical records, documents, and photographs. Here is a guide on how to use Fold3 to find census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists.

## 1. Census Records:

Fold3 offers access to US Census records from 1860-1930. These records provide a wealth of information about our ancestors such as their names, ages, birthplaces, and occupations.

To access the census records on Fold3, follow these steps:

- Go to Fold3.com and log in with your account.
- Click on "Search" on the top navigation bar.
- Select "Census & Voter Lists" from the drop-down menu.
- Select the census year you wish to search, enter your ancestor's information, and click on "Search."

## 2. Military Documents:

Fold3 has a vast collection of military records, including service records, pension records, and draft registration cards. These records can provide information about an ancestor's military service, including their enlistment date, rank, unit, and any disabilities incurred during their service.

To access military records on Fold3, follow these steps:

- Go to Fold3.com and log in with your account.
- Click on "Search" on the top navigation bar.
- Select "Military Records" from the drop-down menu.
- Select the type of record you wish to search and enter your ancestor's information.
- Click on "Search."

### **3. Ship's Passenger Lists:**

Fold3 also has a collection of ship's passenger lists, which can provide valuable information about an ancestor's immigration status. These lists include details such as the passenger's name, age, occupation, country of origin, and destination.

To access ship's passenger lists on Fold3, follow these steps:

- Go to Fold3.com and log in with your account.
- Click on "Search" on the top navigation bar.
- Select "Immigration & Travel" from the drop-down menu.
- Select the collection of passenger lists you wish to search and enter your ancestor's information.
- Click on "Search."

In conclusion, Fold3 is an excellent resource for finding census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists. With its extensive collection of historical records and easy-to-use search tools, it is an ideal website for genealogists and family history enthusiasts.

## **Guide – Ellis Island**

Ellis Island is a historic site that played a significant role in the immigration history of the United States. Between 1892 and 1954, millions of immigrants passed through the island, seeking new opportunities and a better life. For those interested in tracing their family history, Ellis Island can be a valuable resource, especially for finding ship's passenger lists. Here is a guide on how to use Ellis Island's records to find census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists.

### **Census Records:**

The U.S. government conducts a census every ten years to count the population and gather demographic information. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) maintains copies of these records, including the 1890 census which was mostly destroyed in a fire. Ellis Island does not have direct access to census records but can provide useful information that can be used to locate census records.

To begin your search for census records at Ellis Island, start by locating the arrival record of your ancestor. The passenger manifest will include details such as the name, age, occupation, place of birth, and nationality. Use this information to search census records on websites like Ancestry.com or FamilySearch.org. You can also access census records for free at the National Archives website.

### **Military Documents:**

Ellis Island has a collection of military records that can be useful in researching your ancestor's military service. The collection includes records from World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. These records can include draft registration cards, service records, and casualty lists.

To search for military records at Ellis Island, start by identifying the dates of your ancestor's military service. Use the passenger manifest to determine when they arrived in the United States and check if they were of military age at the time. You can then search Ellis Island's military records collection or use the National Archives website to locate the records.

## **Ship's Passenger Lists:**

Ellis Island is best known for its ship's passenger lists, which document the arrival of immigrants to the United States. These lists include details such as the name, age, occupation, place of birth, and last place of residence for each passenger. Ship's passenger lists can be a valuable source of information for tracing your family history.

To search for ship's passenger lists at Ellis Island, start by using the website's search feature. You can search by name, year of arrival, and ship name. Once you find the record you are looking for, take note of the information it provides. This can help you locate other records, such as census records or naturalization records.

## **Conclusion:**

Ellis Island is an excellent resource for anyone interested in tracing their family history, particularly those who are searching for ship's passenger lists. By using the information provided in the arrival records, you can find additional records, such as census records and military documents, that can help you learn more about your ancestors. Remember to use multiple sources when conducting research and to always verify information with primary sources when possible.

## **Guide – The National Archives of the UK**

The National Archives of the UK is a treasure trove of historical records that can be used to trace your family history. Here is a guide to finding ancestors in census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists on The National Archives of the UK:

### **Census Records:**

1. Begin by visiting The National Archives' website and clicking on the "Discovery" tab at the top of the page.
2. Next, click on "Census records" under the "Records and research" section.
3. You can search for census records by entering your ancestor's name, age, birthplace, and other identifying information.
4. Alternatively, you can browse the records by clicking on the census year and then the county you are interested in.
5. Once you have found a record of interest, you can view the full transcript and image by ordering a copy or visiting The National Archives in person.

### **Military Documents:**

1. Start by clicking on the "Discovery" tab on The National Archives' website.
2. Next, click on "Military records" under the "Records and research" section.
3. You can search for military records by entering your ancestor's name, service number, regiment, and other identifying information.
4. Alternatively, you can browse the records by clicking on the conflict and then the regiment you are interested in.
5. Once you have found a record of interest, you can view the full transcript and image by ordering a copy or visiting The National Archives in person.

### **Ship's Passenger Lists:**

1. Begin by clicking on the "Discovery" tab on The National Archives' website.
2. Next, click on "Immigration records" under the "Records and research" section.
3. You can search for ship's passenger lists by entering your ancestor's name, birthplace, and other identifying information.

4. Alternatively, you can browse the records by clicking on the port of entry and then the year you are interested in.
5. Once you have found a record of interest, you can view the full transcript and image by ordering a copy or visiting The National Archives in person.

### **Tips:**

- Be sure to search for alternate spellings and variations of your ancestor's name, as names were often recorded differently in historical records.
- Try searching for your ancestor in multiple databases and archives to increase your chances of finding information.
- If you are having trouble finding your ancestor, consider hiring a professional genealogist or reaching out to a local genealogy society for assistance.

## Guide – Findmypast

Findmypast is a genealogy website that specializes in providing access to a wide range of records related to family history. These records include census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists, among others. Here's a guide to finding your ancestors using these records on Findmypast:

1. **Census Records:** Findmypast has an extensive collection of census records from the UK, Ireland, the US, Canada, and Australia. To search for census records on Findmypast, follow these steps:

- Go to the Findmypast website and log in to your account (or create a new one if you haven't already).
- Click on the "Search" tab in the top menu bar, then select "Census" from the drop-down menu.
- Enter the name of the person you're looking for, along with any other details you have (such as their birth year or place of birth).
- Choose the country and census year you want to search in, then click the "Search" button.

Findmypast's search engine will then generate a list of results based on your search criteria. You can view each result to see more details about the person, including their age, occupation, and household members.

2. **Military Records:** Findmypast has a large collection of military records from around the world, including records from the UK, Ireland, the US, Canada, and Australia. To search for military records on Findmypast, follow these steps:

- Go to the Findmypast website and log in to your account (or create a new one if you haven't already).
- Click on the "Search" tab in the top menu bar, then select "Military" from the drop-down menu.
- Enter the name of the person you're looking for, along with any other details you have (such as their birth year or place of birth).
- Choose the country and military conflict you want to search in, then click the "Search" button.

Findmypast's search engine will then generate a list of results based on your search criteria. You can view each result to see more details about the person, including their rank, unit, and service number.

3. **Ship's Passenger Lists:** Findmypast has a large collection of passenger lists from ships that arrived in the UK, US, Canada, and Australia. To search for ship's passenger lists on Findmypast, follow these steps:

- Go to the Findmypast website and log in to your account (or create a new one if you haven't already).
- Click on the "Search" tab in the top menu bar, then select "Travel & Migration" from the drop-down menu.
- Enter the name of the person you're looking for, along with any other details you have (such as their birth year or place of birth).
- Choose the country and time period you want to search in, then click the "Search" button.

Findmypast's search engine will then generate a list of results based on your search criteria. You can view each result to see more details about the person, including their age, occupation, and port of departure and arrival.

In addition to these records, Findmypast also has a variety of other records that can help you trace your family history, including birth, marriage, and death records; newspapers; and wills and probate records. By using these records in conjunction with census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists, you can build a detailed picture of your ancestors' lives and learn more about your family history.