



Attacking Brick Walls using Tech & Traditional Methods

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Inevitably there are brick walls in the quest to locate one's ancestors. How do you break these walls down, find the information you are looking for and continue your research? It seems that no matter where you look, it leads to another dead-end. Some of the more obvious problems:

We all have ancestors who are challenging to find. Thinking outside the box to find records to break through those brick walls.

Natural Destructions, Man-Made Destructions, Surname Searches, Variant Spellings

Check different ways a name can be spelled. Often in census records, the informant was a child or relative who knew the individual by a nickname. The census taker didn't know how to spell the name correctly or a nickname used by the informant. Add to this the misspellings of names, and one has to be very creative in finding their ancestor. Then there are abbreviations commonly used Wm for William, Sam^l for Samuel, and X^r for Christopher.

The dates are not lining up.

Creating a timeline can be a great tool, especially when multiple generations have the same name. Sometimes one finds that they have a child that is a child of themselves accidentally in their database and have created a loop. Other times you may have entered a date incorrectly, and now you have a child born before the parents were married or knew one another. Adding *current events* around the time of your ancestors often opens doors to other records which may be available but were not thought of till these events are added in. Genelines¹ is an excellent tool for these situations.

Substitutes

Vital Record Substitutes

Different census types, bibles, newspapers, military records, passenger records, border crossings, school records, biographical indexes and databases, and the Chamber of Commerce

Marriage Record Substitutes

Gretna Green marriage records, property records, dower property, homestead and land records, land deeds, town records, marriage bonds, divorce records, military pension papers, emigration and naturalization records, and newspapers.

¹ Genelines by Progeny Software: <http://www.progenygenealogy.com/genelines.html>, accessed Feb., 2021

Death Record Substitutes

Mortality Schedules, City Directories, Funeral Home Records, Funeral/Memorial Cards, Funeral Books, Cemetery Records, Tombstones, Tombstone Engravers Orders, Obituaries, Probate Records, Coroners Records, and Social Security Death Index.

Church Records

Baptisms, marriages, burials, ordination records, confirmation records, seat fees, churchwarden records, and online records.

Orphans, Patients, Criminals

Cyndi's list, institutional records, criminals, orphan trains, publish religious records, court records, prison records, various websites, and town records

Census Records

Tax rolls, land records, militia records, voters lists, court records, legislative records, and city directories

Biographical Indexes: Country, State, County, City, Town or Village

Various Who's Who's (Ancestry), Master Biography & Genealogy Master Index, State Biographies, City Biographies, Town Histories

Historical/Family Histories

Family Histories, biographies, bibliographies, published vital records, published family records, published cemetery records, familysearch.org, archive.org, heritagequestonline.org

Military Records

Soldiers lists, enlistment records, pension records, civil war records, military memorials, military cemeteries, military awards

Organizations: Fraternal & Service

Catholic Knights of America, ELKS, Foresters, Fraternities, Lions Club, Kiwanis Organization, Salvation Army, Boy Scouts, YMCA/CYO, check out <http://richhartzog.com/art/society.htm>

Other Possible Records

Personal diaries, correspondence, postcards, old scrapbooks, family pictures, baby books, family stories, legends, guest books, newspaper clippings

Artificial Intelligence Assistance

Ancestral Quest: <http://www.ancquest>, GenSmarts: <http://www.gensmarts.com>

DNA

Genealogical Value Tests: Y-Chromosome DNA, Mitochondrial DNA, Autosomal DNA
Choices: Ancestry DNA, MyHeritage DNA, FamilyTree DNA, Living DNA, and 23 and Me
The above companies were tested on the following criteria :

Website	Price
Standard (Autosomal Test)	Y-DNA Test
mtDNA Test	Collection Method
Stores Results	Chromosome Browser

Raw Data Upload	Database Size
Health Info	Geographic Regions
Genealogical Community	Contact Matches

Test Results

Ancestry DNA

- Best Cousin Matching
- Most Geographic Regions for Ethnicity

FamilyTree DNA

- Best for the Serious Genealogy
- Y-DNA and mtDNA

MyHeritage DNA

- Best autosomal test on a budget

23andme DNA

- Best for Genetic health screening, not genealogy

Living DNA

- Best for British Isles Roots

All the above is from <http://www.smarterhobby.com/genealogy/best-dna-test/>

Add your raw data to <http://www.GedMatch.com>.

3rd Party Links

WikiTree: <http://www.wikitree.com>, Genes Reunited: <http://www.genesreunited.com>, My Heritage: <http://www.myheritage.com>

If you have pictures with no idea who is in them, you can upload them to <http://www.deadfred.com>, create a blog and post them, and seek the help of the photo detective, *Maureen Taylor*, <https://maurentaylor.com/>.

Additional Possible Resources

Apprenticeship Records	Address (Old) Books	Business Guilds / Unions
Documentaries	Family Research Papers	Family Reunions/Newsletters
Genealogical Research Directory	Military Ribbons, Medals	Patent Records
Plat Maps	Railway Records	School Yearbooks
W.P.A. Inventories		

Community Help

- Facebook Genealogical Research Communities: (Click the (?) on familysearch.org.)
 - <https://community.familysearch.org/en>

Some Internet Resources

Some Free Internet Resources

<http://www.familysearch.org> - LDS Research Site

<http://www.usgenweb.com/> - US GenWeb Project

<http://www.rootsweb.com> – Many genealogies – always changing – new databases

<http://genealogy.about.com/library/weekly/aa042602a.htm> - About Genealogy

<http://genealogytoday.com> – Unique Databases

<http://www.cyndislist.com/> - Immense Collection of Sites by Categories

<http://www.stephenmorse.org/> - Stephen Morse

<http://www.genealogy.gc.ca> - Canadian Genealogy Centre

<http://www.acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy/persi.html> - Allen County Public Library

<http://www.linkpendium.com> – Linkpendium – Directory to Genealogical resources
<http://www.italiangen.org> – Italian Genealogical Organization – New York Vital Records
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html> - The Library of Congress
<http://www.dar.org/> - National DAR Organization
<http://www.pricegen.com/resources/> - Price & Assoc.-Many resources provided
<http://www.genealogicaljourneys.com/sites.htm#book> – Genealogy Journeys – over 40,000 links
<http://olivetreegenealogy.com/index.shtml> - Olive Tree Genealogy – many Databases
<http://www.ellisland.org/> - Ellis Island – Passenger Lists
<http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/> - Bureau of Land Management
<https://www.icapgen.org/> || <https://www.bcgcertification.org/> find professional help
http://www.genealogytoday.com/guide/funeral_cards.html - Funeral Cards Online (Use Wayback Machine)
<http://www.marblecemetery.org/>: Cemetery Records online in addition to FindAGrave or BillionGraves
<https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ssa-711.pdf>: Order Social Security Form

Some Paid Subscription Sites

<http://www.ancestry.com> – Ancestry.com –access to millions of records
<http://www.godfrey.org> – Godfrey Memorial Library – access to newspapers and so much more by state
<http://www.americanancestors.org> – New England Historical – databases, articles, vitals, cemeteries
<http://www.mytrees.com> – Access to millions of genealogical family pedigrees and more
<http://www.genealogy.com> – census, family & local histories, military, vital records
<http://www.myheritage.com> – Access to family pedigrees from all over the world
<http://www.grlresearch.com> – Canadian Vitals, rare books, millions of online records
<http://www.scotlandpeople.gov.uk> – Scotland vitals and so much more!
<http://www.one-name.org/> - Guild of One Name Studies
<https://library.udel.edu/databases/archivegrid/> - Archive Grid - Historical Documents, Family Histories from around the world
<http://www.findmypast.com> – An extensive collection for doing England research

Last thoughts...

- Join a social networking community like Facebook
- Review past research and correspondence
- Talk over your problem with another researcher
- Study and know the area you are researching
- Ask any new relatives you locate
- Look for unusual records in your area
- Check weekly for new digital databases
- Get professional help: APG, ICAPGen, BCG or check your local library for recommendations.