## Find A Grave: Friend, Foe, or Both?



© Patti Gillespie, MS
Family Lines & Stories
www.familylinesandstories.com
FamLStories@gmail.com

"It is important to remember that *Find A Grave* is open to any who wish to contribute, including professional genealogists and hobbyists alike. While many people enter information from sources that are considered "reliable," such as published obituaries and death certificates, others may be entering information from an old and unproven family tree. Additionally, information engraved on tombstones is sometimes "second hand," and may not be entirely accurate. When using *Find A Grave*, family historians should always analyze the information provided and compare it with other verified information on their family tree. no unverified source" (Marc McDermott, "Find A Grave Review," 24 Feb 2022, *GenealogyExplained*).

## Benefits and *Drawbacks* to Using *Find A Grave*

- Corrected information and other documents may be uploaded and will be added after approval.
- May identify a person in a certain place at a certain time
- May state dates and places of birth, marriage, death, burial information
- May state maiden name
- May detail family relationships and/or descendants
- May provide adoption information
- May provide information on the FAN (friends, associates, and neighbors) relationships
- May provide death notice or obituary
- May state occupation
- May state religious affiliation or leadership
- May provide photographs
- Find A Grave is available as an app and on GooglePlay.
- Individual may be posted without permission of family or before confirmed death
- Information and/or citation concerning individual may be lacking or incorrect
- Find A Grave is an open platform—anyone is able to post anything—until enough complaints MAY cause it to be pulled

			Name of Individual
			Cemetery Name & Location
			Military Identification
			Spouse(s)
			Birth, Death, Marriage Information
			Children, Names, BD, BP
			Memorial No.; any photo credit
			Citation

**EE Citation Example**: Find A Grave, database, and images (<a href="http://findagrave.com">http://findagrave.com</a>: accessed [date]), memorial page for [state name of individual (birth year-death year)], Find A Grave Memorial no. [write it out] citing [name of cemetery, community, county, state]; photographs by [list individual(s) who posted photos].

## Resources

Bobbinger, Amy. "How to Find a Person's Grave," 11 July 2022, *WikiHow* (<a href="https://www.wikihow.com/Find-a-Person%27s-Grave">https://www.wikihow.com/Find-a-Person%27s-Grave</a> : accessed 4 May 2023). Good for basic strategy.

Ball, Jill and Lynn Broderick. "Ethical Considerations in An Online World," RootsTech 2022 (https://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/session/dealing-with-ethical-dilemmas-in-an-online-world-a-discussion: accessed 1 September 2023); relevant question found at 10:10 on the recording.

Crow, Amy Johnson. "Major Update to *Find A Grave* Memorials," Amy Johnson Crow, 13 January 2022, (<a href="https://www.amyjohnsoncrow.com/major-update-to-findagrave-memorials/">https://www.amyjohnsoncrow.com/major-update-to-findagrave-memorials/</a>: accessed 4 May 2023).

Estes, Roberta. "Find a Grave (Owned by Ancestry), Seriously, JUST STOP Incentivizing the Creation of Memorials of the Recently Deceased," 2 June 2022, DNAeXplained – Genetic Genealogy (<a href="https://dna-explained.com/2022/06/02/find-a-grave-owned-by-ancestry-seriously-just-stop-incentivizing-the-creation-of-memorials-of-the-recently-deceased/">https://dna-explained.com/2022/06/02/find-a-grave-owned-by-ancestry-seriously-just-stop-incentivizing-the-creation-of-memorials-of-the-recently-deceased/</a>: accessed 4 May 2023).

"Find a Grave," 13 February 2023, Google Play (https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.ancestry.findagrave&hl=en\_US&g l=US&pli=1: accessed 4 May 2023).

"Find A Grave," Wiki, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Find A Grave : 4 May 2023).

"Global, Find a Grave® Index for Burials at Sea and other Select Burial Locations, 1300s-Current," *Ancestry* (<a href="https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60541/">https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60541/</a>: accessed 4 May 2023).

"Help: Find A Grave," 8 December 2022, WikiTree (https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Help:Find A Grave: accessed 4 May 2023).

Knox, Constance. "Find A Grave - Top 5 Tips," 2020, YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePv8umGpWLA: accessed 4 May 2023).

McDermott, Marc. "Find A Grave Reviewed," 24 February 2022, *GenealogyExplained* (https://www.genealogyexplained.com/find-a-grave-review/: accessed 4 May 2023).

Melick, Rayanne. "Find A Grave Training," October 2018, BYU Family History, *YouTube* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JoymNMhzwhc: accessed 4 May 2022).

Reid, Katie. "How *Ancestry.com*'s *Find A Grave* Encourages Bad Actors and Bad Data," 5 August 2019, *OneZero* (https://onezero.medium.com/the-digital-undertakers-inside-the-obsessive-community-racing-to-put-the-dead-online-f3199147e968: accessed 4 May 2023).

Russell, Judy. "Ancestry, this one's on you," *The Legal Genealogist*, 31 May 22, (<a href="https://www.legalgenealogist.com/2022/05/31/ancestry-this-ones-on-you/">https://www.legalgenealogist.com/2022/05/31/ancestry-this-ones-on-you/</a>: accessed 1 September 2023).

Wallace, Cathy. "What is the Difference Between Find A Grave and Billion Graves?" 2019, *Billion Graves* (<a href="https://blog.billiongraves.com/what-is-the-difference-between-billiongraves-and-find-a-grave-for-researchers/">https://blog.billiongraves.com/what-is-the-difference-between-billiongraves-and-find-a-grave-for-researchers/</a>: accessed 4 May 2023).