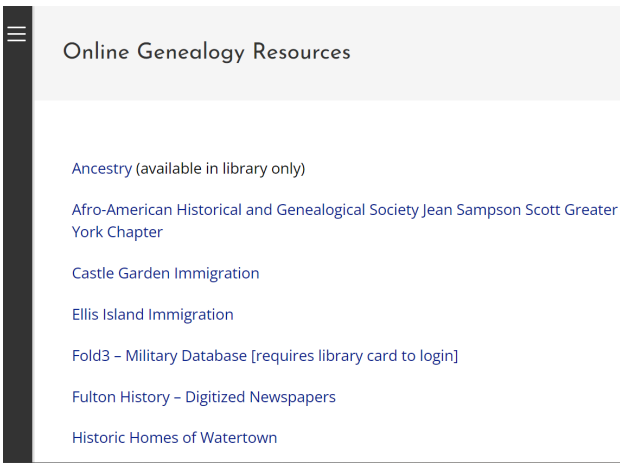
How to Guide

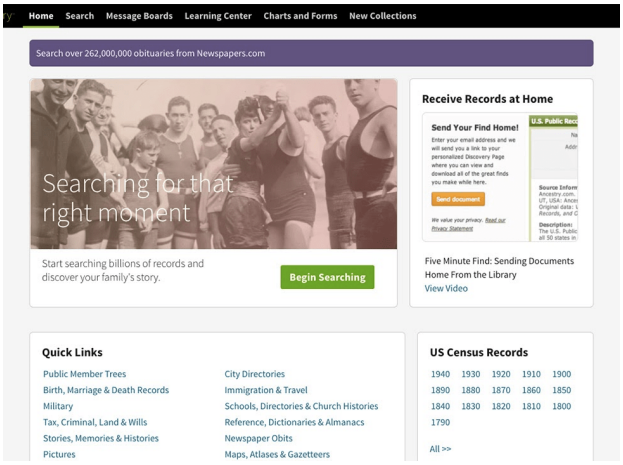
For Basic Searching



Getting to Ancestry.com

To access Ancestry, each NCLS library visits a different and *unique* website. You must be inside a library building to access Ancestry. First you need to navigate directly to this address, whatever it may be.

It is important to note that Ancestry is a read-only database. While it has powerful search engines that help you pinpoint genealogical records, **you'll need a personal subscription** to create and edit family trees or to message or collaborate with other Ancestry users. Libraries use a specific Library Edition subscription.

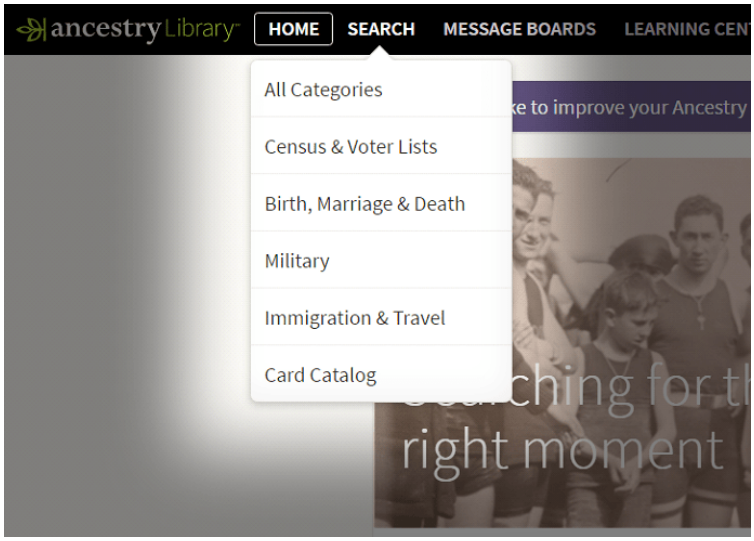


Genealogical Records

Our subscription includes access to:

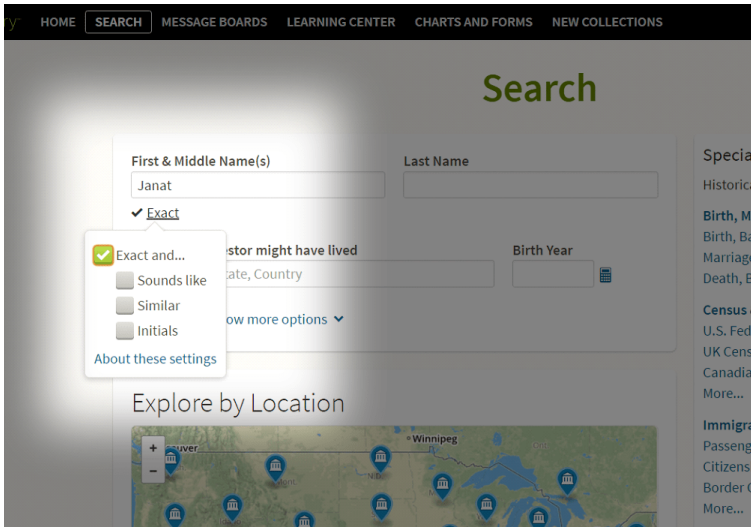
- Census records from 1790 to 1950
- Vital statistics (birth, death, and marriage records)
- Military records, including draft registration cards
- Immigration records and passenger lists
- City directories
- Photographs, including those of some headstones and from some yearbooks

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TRACING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY? HEAD TO NCLS.LIBGUIDES.COM



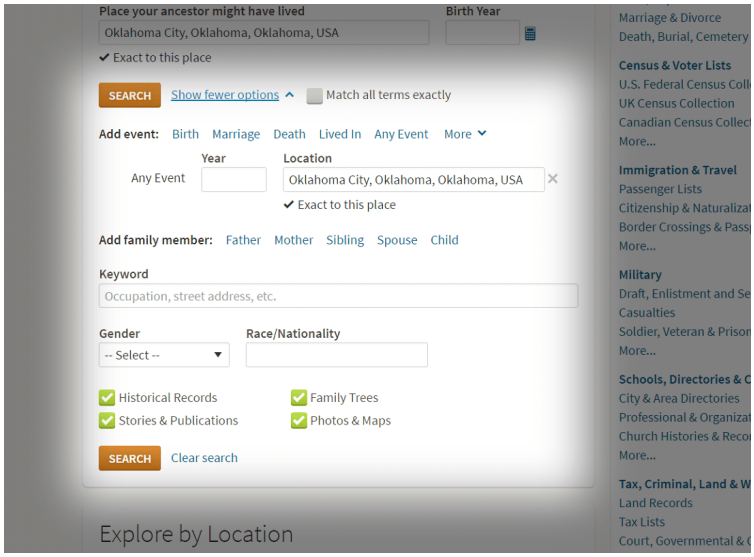
Search Basics

Ancestry has a multitude of ways to search its records. If you're just getting started and not sure exactly what you're looking for, **click on the Search button on the top menu bar. Choose All Categories** to conduct a broad search.



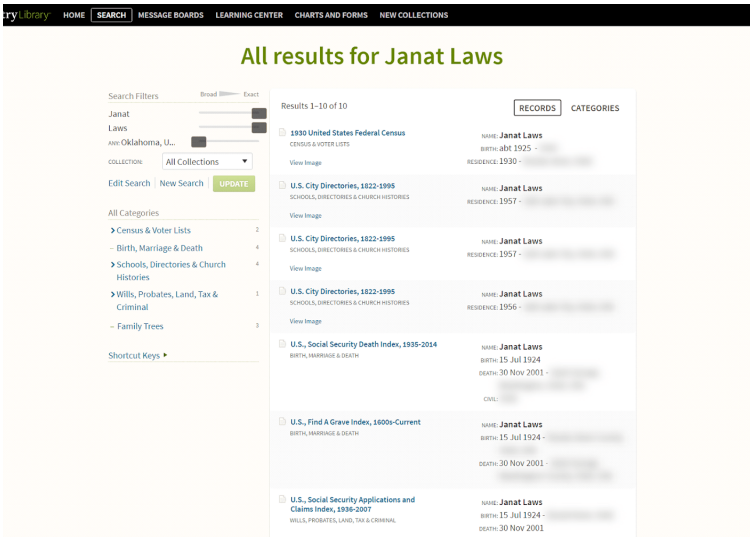
Enter the name information for your search. If you're unsure of the year, using the Exact options will allow you to include a range in your results. Be aware that these options can sometimes skew your results.

Enter the location information. Possible matches will populate in real time. You can either enter the location manually or **click on an autofill option** that is based on what you type. Be aware that clicking the Exact button and the options that appear with it will limit your results.



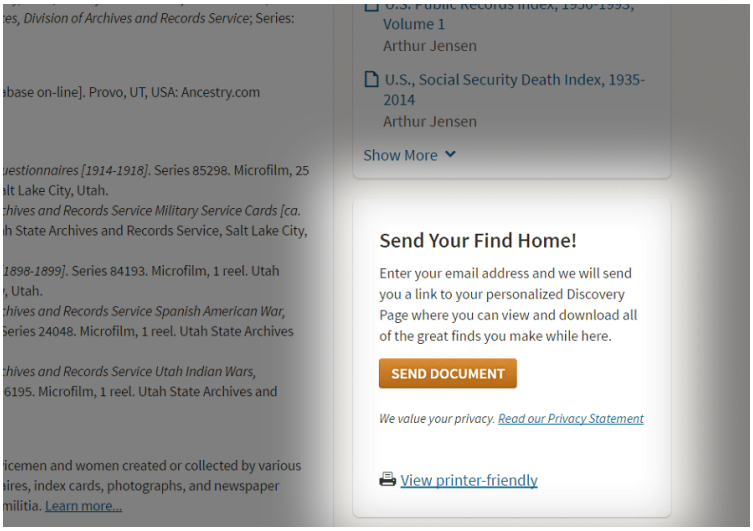
To include any additional details, such as gender, nationality, or known family members, **click the Show More Options button.** Once you've entered all of the information, **click Search.**

TIP: START WITH THE MALE SIDE OF A FAMILY IF POSSIBLE. MALE NAMES DO NOT CHANGE AS MUCH!



You can now **use the search filters and categories** in the left sidebar to narrow your results. Hover over your results to see helpful tooltips. Click the See More button in the tooltip to see more information, or click a record to see the whole file.

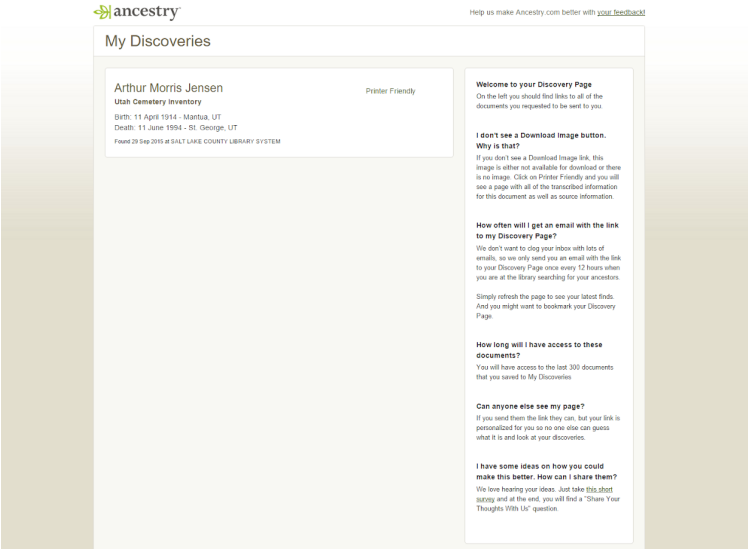
Reminder: due to privacy laws, the most recent US Census available is for 1950.



Saving Information

There are multiple ways to save the information you gather from Ancestry, but one of the easiest is to **use the Send Document button.** When you find a record you want to share with yourself, click this button on the screen.

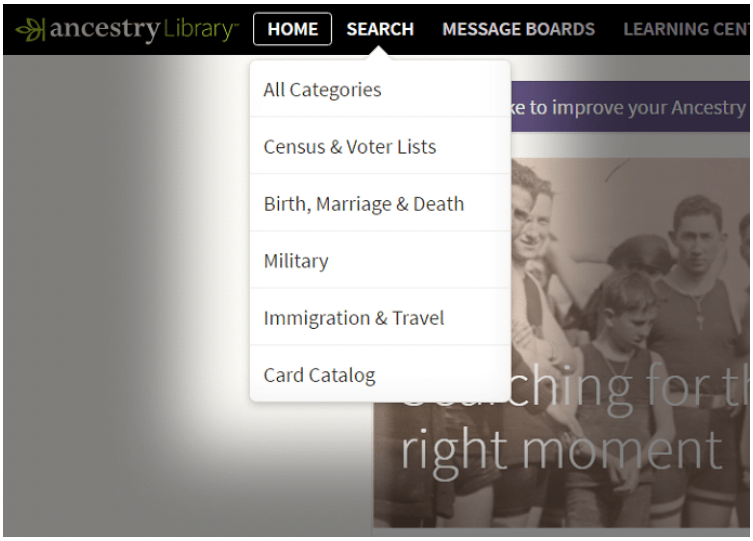
A pop-up will appear. **Enter and confirm your email address** and then **click the Send Email button.**



When you check your email at home, **click the "View Your Discoveries" link** in the email to take you to "My Discoveries" on the Ancestry website. This page is personalized for you - others can access it if you share the link.

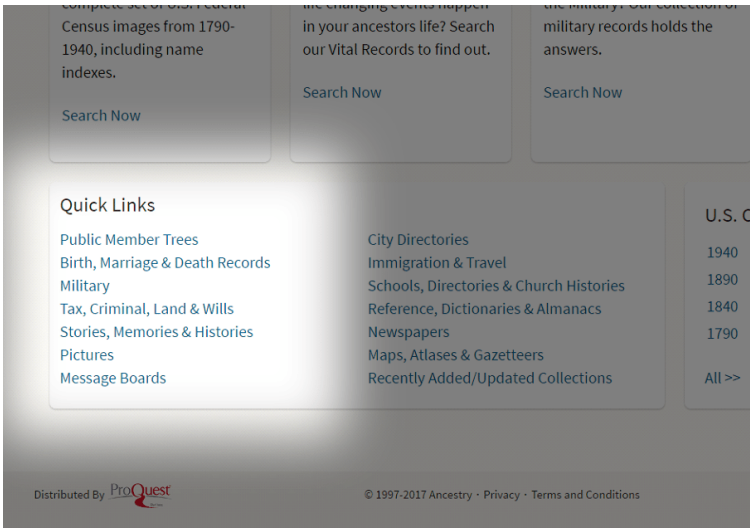
From here you have the option to **download specific images or print a printer friendly version of your records.**

FUN FACT: YOU CAN STORE UP TO 300 DOCUMENTS IN THE MY DISCOVERIES PAGE!



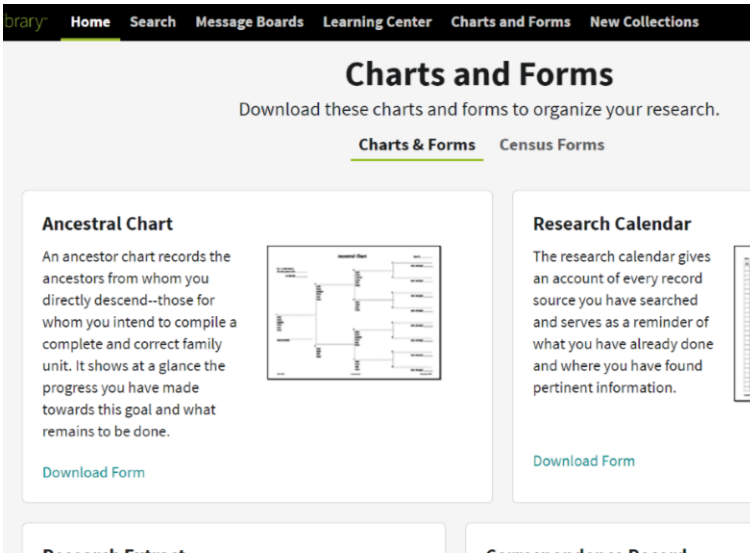
Other Search Options

In addition to the All Categories search, you can also search within specific categories if you are only looking within that field for a record. You also have the option to conduct a Card Catalog search. To start a Card Catalog search, **click the Search tab** and **select the Card Catalog category.** All databases are listed within the card catalog and available to search individually or as groups.



You can also search within the public family trees. To start this search, find the Quick Links section on the homepage and then **click on the Public Member Trees link.**

While the public family trees may be useful to connect to possible ancestors, they should be used with caution. The information, including the photographs found there, is not verified for accuracy by an outside source before being published.



Charts and Forms

Keep track of your family research by using the handy ancestral charts provided for use. To access these charts and other forms, **click on Charts and Forms** in the top menu bar on the homepage. These will help keep you organized as you continue your research journey.

NEED HELP WITH YOUR SEARCH? CONTACT THE GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT AT FLOWER LIBRARY AT 315-785-7711.