

www.familysearch.org.

Before beginning your family history genealogical research, you should do is find out what information is already available about your family. One of the first places to visit on the internet is FamilySearch - created by the Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS). FamilySearch.org

Start by looking for your family at <http://www.familysearch.org>. If you use the Search for Ancestors screen, you will search the following databases: The International Genealogical Index (IGI): Read more about the IGI

The world's largest genealogy index is the International Genealogical Index. The IGI is a large database containing more than 600 million names. Several million additional names are added yearly. The IGI primarily indexes births, baptisms (called christenings), and marriages. It rarely contains deaths.

The IGI is an extremely valuable research tool that every researcher needs to understand and consult, but good research techniques require that every entry found in the IGI should be checked in original sources to insure accuracy. The entries on the IGI are in two categories: events that were extracted from official records, and events that were submitted by individuals. If you click on an entry to reveal the details, look at the "Messages" and "Source Information" and you will know the source of the entry. If the Batch number begins with a C or a M, this is an extracted record and you should see a message similar to "Extracted birth or christening record for the locality listed in the record." The extracted entries are much more reliable than those submitted by individuals. Vital Records Index:

These records have all been extracted from official records. Ancestral File™:

The Ancestral File contains lineage-linked information on about 20 million people. With Ancestral File, you can print pedigree charts and family group sheets of families contained in the database. Ancestral File was created many years ago, and the pedigrees were submitted by individuals. The database contains many research errors and computer merging errors, but it can provide good clues for further research. The file is now closed, and no corrections are currently being made.

Pedigree Resource File:

This file was created from pedigrees submitted from individuals who uploaded GEDCOM files to FamilySearch.org. Only the index is online; the actual pedigrees are on compact disc. Most Family History Centers will have the compact discs, but you can also purchase any that interest you from FamilySearch.org. Family History Library Catalog

After this initial family history research, you then can use the Family History Library Catalog (FHLC) to look for published family histories or genealogies that have been published by someone else. You should also check the catalog of your local public library. A distant relative may have already done much of the work for you. Look for local histories that may contain details about your ancestor or his local community - village, town or city. After looking through the many secondary and compiled sources, you are ready to look at original records.

Family History Library Catalog™ (FHLC): The Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, has a very large collection of records from the British Isles. In fact, one entire floor in the Family History Library is devoted just to the British Isles. The majority of the Family History Library's microfilm and microfiche materials are available to researchers at Family History Centers through rental and indefinite loans. In addition, the FHL has a photocopying service to copy pages from books. Mastering the FHLC is your key to finding research materials available in the Family History Library (FHL). Family History Library call numbers are given for many of the records in this Guide to British Isles Research so that you can find them easily in the Family History Library Catalog.

The golden rule with any information found on the internet - is to treat it for what it is. If you find an entry in the IGI or anywhere else on the net, always look at the films/fiche of the original parish registers.

Used in this way, it is a great tool to help you with your family history research.