

SEARCHING US RECORDS FOR YOUR IMMIGRANT ANCESTORS

Irondequoit Public Library Genealogy Group

<http://www.irondequoitlibrary.org>

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Slides are Online

- At www.dennisAhogan.com, click on Lectures and Handouts tab
- Select a file and save on your computer
- Then you can click on links to try out websites
- There is a more detailed document on the website called "Course IV - Searching US Records for Your Immigrant Ancestors"

The Immigrant

The immigrant may be the toughest person in your family to research

- You have to identify the immigrant in the records of at least 2 countries
- You must find something in the records of 1 country that "connects" to contents of records in the other country to insure that you have identified "your John Smith"

The Immigrant

It is important to begin your research in the country they immigrated TO and eventually work your way back to the old country.

Build up a body of knowledge about your immigrant and their

- Parents
- Siblings
- Children
 - Note sponsors for baptisms & marriages
- Also note other locals with the same surname and even other immigrants from the same country

The Search

The Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS) was developed by the [Board for Certification of Genealogists](#). The GPS is a process to help us reach "correct" conclusions even when we cannot find original records.

1. **Reasonably exhaustive search**
2. Complete, accurate citations
3. Analysis and correlations of all source, information items, and evidence
4. Resolution of conflicts
5. A soundly reasoned, coherently written conclusion.

The Search

I suggest that when you are researching an immigrant that you should do an extremely exhaustive search.

Basic Name & Search Tips

- For O names & Mc/Mac names, search indexes with & without the prefix (& don't forget Ma forms, ex: Magory for McGory)
- Don't assume 1 spelling of names when searching records (use Soundex, non-exact or wild cards when available)
 - O'Reilly, O'Riley, Reily, Riley, etc
 - O640, O640, R400, R400 (Soundex codes)
- Inconsistent punctuation in indexes:
 - O'Flynn, OFlynn, O Flynn, O_Flynn, O.Flynn
 - McGrath, MacGrath, Mc Grath, M'Grath, Mgrath, Magrath

Basic Name & Search Tips

- Don't assume 1 given name is used in all records (nicknames/synonyms, middle names)
- Nicknames/synonyms: BJ, Delia or Biddy for Bridget
- For females, do a separate search with maiden name and with all married names.

US Sources

- **US Census (state or country of birth)**
 - Population schedules: Every 10 years, 1790-1940 currently available, 1890 largely destroyed
 - Non-Population schedules: 1790 Slave, 1810-1820 & 1850-1880 Manufacturing, 1840 Pensioners, 1850-1880 Agriculture, 1850-1880 Mortality, 1880 Defective, 1890 Veterans (Kentucky through Wyoming plus DC exist).
- **NY State Census (county or country of birth)**
 - 1815, 1825, 1835, 1845, 1855, 1865, 1875, 1892, 1905, 1915, 1925
- **FamilySearch Wiki for Census Sources for NY**
https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/New_York_Census

US Sources

- **Census** (and much more)
 - FamilySearch, free www.familysearch.org
 - Heritage Quest, Free at www.libraryweb.org/heritage.html with a Monroe County library card (can be used from home)
 - Ancestry.com, Free at the Rochester Public Library, Rundel Bldg, Local History Room (also Brighton, Fairport, Henrietta, Irondequoit, Ogden, Greece, Penfield, and Pittsford Libraries) with a Monroe County library card
 - Ancestry.com, Free at Family History Centers like Westfall Rd & Kreag Rd

US Sources

- I do a census inventory of the immigrant's family in the US

Madigan		1st	Patrick	Ellen or Ella	Mamie/Mary	Patrick	Ella
		middle	T.		E.	V.	M.
		(maiden)		(Newland)	(Madigan)		(Mac
		surname	Madigan	Madigan	Manion	Madigan	O'Ha
		spouse(s)			Edward	Leona?	Pete
		birth	bAbt1844 IRL	bAbt1852 ENG	b1875 NY	b1877 NY	b 187
		marriage	m 1874 NY?	m 1874 NY?	m 1905-1928		m 19
		death	d 1909 NY	d 1924 NY			
Census:	Date:	Source:					
1940 US	1-Apr	FS/A	deceased	deceased	Found-Buffer	deceased	de
1930 US	1-Apr	FS/A	deceased	deceased	Found-Buffer	Found-Buffer	Four
1925 NY		A	deceased	deceased			
1920 US	1-Jan	HQ/FS/A	deceased	Found-Buffer	Not Found	Not Found	Four
1915 NY		A	deceased				
1910 US	15-Apr	HQ/FS/A	deceased	Found-Buffer	Not Found	Not Found	Not I
1905 NY		FS	Found-Buffer	Found-Buffer	Found-Buffer	Not Found	Four
1900 US	1-Jun	FS/HQ/A	Found-Buffer	Found-Buffer	Found-Buffer	Found-Buffer	Four
1892 NY		FS/A	Found-Buffer	Found-Buffer	Found-Buffer	Found-Buffer	Four
1890 SIR	2-Jun	HQ/FS/A					

US Sources

- **Vital Records (birth/marriage/death)** (includes birthplace, parents' names)
ex. NYS Vital Records Index at Rundel Library
- **Church Records** (usually no birthplace info)
ex. Rochester Catholic Diocese at Rundel Library
- **Tombstones, Cemetery Records** (sometimes birthplace info for immigrants)

www.findagrave.com, www.interment.net, <http://billiongraves.com/>

- **US Social Security Death Index (SSDI)** (leads to SS application form (SS-5) which has birthplace, mother's maiden name)

US Sources

- **Newspapers** (anniversary & death notices may include birthplace) <http://www.fultonhistory.com/>
<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/>
- **City Directories** (probably no birthplace, but excellent "census substitute")
- **Military Records** (pension & WWI Draft Registration may contain detailed info, including birthplace)
- **Naturalization Records** (may include birthplace)

US Sources

- **Immigration Records** (prior to late 1800's, no "last residence" or "place of birth")
- **Probate** (may include birthplaces)
 - Executors, witnesses, guardians of minors
- **Land Records** (probably no birthplaces)
 - Transactions for token amounts & neighbors
- **Family Bible** and other family papers (may include birthplaces)

US Sources

...And probably **THE** most helpful source of all - the immigrant's Home Town(s) in the US

- Visit if you can
 - Historical societies, museums, libraries, archives, genealogical societies, cemeteries, town historians
- If you can't visit, then absolutely contact them all **AFTER** you research their resources online

You *CAN* do it!

