

Getting Family History Information through the Back Door

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Consider checking alternatives to your direct line relatives:

brothers- and sisters-in-law ● uncles/aunts ● cousins (all varieties)

Consider checking your family's associates:

neighbors ● co-workers ● church members and clergy

Consider checking historical events in the areas & time frames where your family lived

wars ● migrations ● inventions ● epidemics

Resources for above (see finding aids on next page)

1. Census records (state, Federal, & special)
2. Newspaper accounts (including advertising)
3. Historical accounts (books, websites)
4. Letters
5. Diaries
6. Records of institutions
7. Probate records
8. Deeds
9. Military & pension records
10. Vital records of ancestor, corollary ancestors, & non-related associates
11. Cemeteries (check graves next to your ancestors')
12. Church records of ancestors' congregations
13. Living relatives, no matter how distant
14. Websites for the areas where your ancestor lived
15. Photos
16. City Directories

Some of the best things come through the back door!

Just a few suggestions of places to find these back door treasures:

- Ancestry.com
 - Various databases (beyond the census)
 - Military
 - Immigration & Naturalization
 - City Directories
 - Family Trees posted by others (evaluate very carefully)
 - and more
 - Census records: Federal ● State ● Special
- FamilySearch.org
 - Search – Records
 - Vital records
 - Census records
 - Court records
 - and more (updated almost daily)
 - FamilySearch Catalog (even if you can't rent films)
 - FamilySearch Wiki (includes what resources are online – all sites – with a search qualifier: e.g., “England ancestry”)
 - Trees (evaluate very carefully)
- Historical Societies in the areas where your ancestors lived
- Fold3.com
 - Military records
 - Census records
 - Immigration & Naturalization records
- Find-a-Grave.com
- Newspapers (obituaries, announcements, advertisements, news stories) on
 - Ancestry.com
 - Fold3
 - Godfrey Library
 - NewsBank/GenealogyBank
 - Freenewspaperarchives.us
 - Google News Archive search
 - NewspaperArchive.com
 - Newspapers.com
 - Chronicling America
 - Individual websites for Counties of your ancestors
 - and more – (Check Cyndi's list for more ideas)
- USGenWeb.com: state and county sites
- Social Media sites (e.g., Facebook genealogy groups)

Please don't slam the door on these possibilities!