

Investigating Your Family History – Beginner’s Genealogy

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How Do I begin?

1. Start with Yourself
2. Collect all Family Documents
3. INTERVIEW LIVING RELATIVES

Get Organized

1. Use a Genealogy Software

Family Tree Maker – Ancestry.com
Legacy – LegacyFamilyTree.com
FamilySearch.org

Vital Records

- Birth, Death, Marriage and Divorce records usually maintained by State and/or County Offices
- First legislation passed in IL in 1819 requiring doctors to publish births and deaths in newspapers (no perm record required to be kept)
- 1843 legislation allowed parents and next of kin to make affidavit to the courts as to birth or deaths but was completely voluntary
- 1877 legislation made mandatory reports of birth and death at county level but law was weak until formation of State Board of Health (IL Dept. Public Health in 1917)

Social Security Records

- Started in 1936
- SSDI or Social Security Death Index available on Ancestry.com
- SS5- Original Social Security Application

Obituaries and Cemeteries

- Harold Washington Library in Chicago has largest selection of microfilmed Chicago Newspapers back to 1849
- ChiPubLib.org – Chicago Public Library Website with Tribune Historical Archives
- Newspapers.com
- Ancestry.com – Obit Collection
- Legacy.com
- Catholic Burials available for Chicago and Joliet Archdiocese at kiosks in Catholic Cemeteries

Federal Records

- Census Records – Ancestry.com (Latest is 1940 – released in 2012)
1790 through 1940 (1890 burned)
- Naturalization – Indexes available on Ancestry and FamilySearch.org
Declaration of Intention – (First Papers) – Eligible to file 2 years after arrival, Pre-1906 not much info
Petition – 3 years after Declaration – Prior to 1922 women derived nationality from husband
- Ship Manifests – Ancestry.com
Pre-1820 records may be on file at the port of entry or in the state archives where the port is located.
From 1820 to 1890 U.S. Customs Service maintained passenger lists
From 1891 the Immigration and Naturalization Service controlled entry to the U.S.
- Military
E-Vet-Recs at NARA.gov
www.Fold3.com
Local County Recorders Office
Individual Deceased Personnel Files at St. Louis, MO
Archival Research Room: stlarr.archives@nara.gov or Telephone: 314-801-0850
Archival Request for off-site copies: stl.archives@nara.gov
National Personnel Records Center
1 Archives Drive
St. Louis, MO 63138

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