



GENEALOGY AND THE WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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www.researchingwithlori.com

- I. Information about WHS Library collections
 - A. Library owns published materials from across the United States and Canada.
 - B. Collection of family and local histories started in the 1850s and always had a wide scope.
 - C. Area Research Centers (ARC) are branches of our Archives collections.
 - D. Map collection is international.
 - E. Location is on the UW Madison campus. We have access to a variety of online materials because we are on this campus. <http://library.wisc.edu>
- II. Steps to prepare.
 - A. Choose the family lines you will research.
 - B. Organize what you have found and read it! Timelines
 - C. Think of your questions ahead of time.
 - D. Create a research plan.
 - E. Make a list of what to find.
 - F. Consider the easy/basic records first.
 - G. Write out problematic records to locate.
 - i. Military
 - ii. Land
 - iii. Immigration (passenger lists and citizenship)
 - iv. Court, adoption, divorce, probate, prison, etc.
 - H. Look at online resources before you come.
 - i. Print out pages from the websites.
 - ii. Online catalog for WHS
 - iii. Online digital collections from WHS site
 - iv. Online indexes (www.deathindexes.com)
 - v. Ancestry
 - vi. FamilySearch.org
 - vii. www.findagrave.com

viii. Online newspapers (also check our Guide to Wisconsin Newspapers found on our website. <https://wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS15307>)

- I. What to bring:
 - i. Pencils/pens
 - ii. Flash drive, digital camera, hand scanner
 - iii. Credit card to use for adding \$ to a copy card
 - iv. Notebook (not lots of scratch paper)
 - v. Printouts or a device to show us your family group sheets, pedigree charts, timelines
 - vi. Passwords for your Ancestry, FamilySearch or other online accounts
 - vii. Lists of records to find and questions to ask
 - viii. Printouts from online catalogs and indexes

III. One Online Catalog (found under Research Your Family History or Explore Our Collections at www.wisconsinhistory.org)

- A. Archives
 - i. Unpublished materials, Manuscripts, public records, photos, maps, etc.
 - ii. Search by location (town, county, state in separate searches to find records based on those 3 different authors) and the type of record.
- B. Library
 - i. Published materials, but exceptions exist
 - ii. Location search; Surname family; Surname genealogy
 - iii. Keep searches broad.

IV. WWW.WISCONSINHISTORY.ORG

- A. Research Your Family History (www.wisconsinhistory.org)
 - i. Name index covers many resources (pre-1907 vital records, property records, obituaries, biographical sketches)
 - ii. Only indexes some collections. Still need to look through newspapers, etc.
- B. Wisconsin Historical Images (from the front page of www.wisconsinhistory.org)
- C. Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers (look at Wisconsin in the Civil War)
- D. Maps and Atlases

V. Reaching out to researchers and access to collections.

- A. Consultation with Lori Bessler (phone or Zoom online)
- B. Interlibrary Loan
- C. Online digital collections
 - i. Ancestry Library Edition, Fold3 and American Ancestors-NEHGS
 - ii. Family History Library Affiliate/Partner (FamilySearch.org/LDS)
- D. Email reference (AskLibrary@wisconsinhistory.org)
- E. Phone calls (see header on this handout)

- VI. What is found at WHS in Madison that is not found online?
- A. Online collections from FamilySearch.org available only to Affiliate Library/Family History Center.
 - B. Family and Local Histories (not online if still under copyright)
 - C. Maps (Sanborn maps, atlases, plat maps) (not available through ARC network)
 - D. City Directories (check Ancestry and Fold3 websites)
 - E. Censuses (special schedules not yet complete on Ancestry) (Agricultural, Mortality, Industrial; 1850-1880)
 - F. Genealogical and Historical materials for all other states and Canada.