

# A Basic Guide to ANCESTRY LIBRARY EDITION

## What is Ancestry Library Edition? □□

Ancestry is an online database of many different types of records of genealogical interest. Ancestry claims to be "the largest collection of family history data online." As always in genealogy, this is a tool and can help you find people but you'll still need to work to get documentation of your findings

## How to get on & time limits

Log into a public computer at the Mary Cheney library in the Reference area. You will need to have a valid library card to do this. Every library card is allowed 90 minutes of time on the Internet per day. The clock on the long-term computers allots 60 minutes (1 hour) to start. If no one else is waiting to use a computer, you may accept additional time when the pop-up menu on the computer offers it or ask the librarian on duty for help. Once you've followed the screens to log into the Internet, the computer will automatically come to the Manchester Public Library homepage. **The most common mistake people are making is to type in Ancestry.com into the address line on the computer. This won't give you access to the library subscription version.** □ Once you're on the Manchester Public Library homepage, click on "Need information" on the right-hand side. Then click on "Genealogy". Find **Ancestry Library Edition** and click on it. You're in! □□

## Searching □□

You will find this main search screen on the Ancestry Library Edition home page:

The screenshot shows the Ancestry Library Edition search interface within a Safari browser window. The browser's address bar displays the URL <http://www.ancestrylibrary.com/default.aspx>. The page features a search form with the following fields and options:

- First & Middle Name(s)** and **Last Name** input fields.
- Name a place your ancestor might have lived** and **Estimated birth year** input fields, with a **Calculate It** button.
- Checkboxes for **Add life events** (birth, marriage, death, and more) and **Add family members** (mother, father, spouse, siblings, children).
- Search** button, along with **Show Advanced**, **Clear Form**, and **Help** links.

Below the search form, there are two columns of collection links:

- CENSUS COLLECTIONS:** 1940 U.S. Census, Australia Census Collection, Canada Census & Voter Lists, Germany Census & Voter Lists, U.S. Census Collection, U.S. Census Collection, All...
- MORE COLLECTIONS:** Immigration & Travel, Birth, Marriage & Death, London Parish Records, Message Boards, list recent or all databases.

The page footer includes the text "Distributed By ProQuest" and "POWERED BY ancestry.com". The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows various application icons.

□□□□□□□The easiest way to start is to type in the name of an ancestor in the main search box. You can include a place your ancestor might have lived, an estimated birth year or other life events, or family members. Then look for your particular ancestors, carefully record information, and search again based on the new information you've found. □□

Sometimes providing less information can lead to more results. The names in the index have been left as they appear on the original document. For example, you may be searching for William Foster. Some records may list him as Will Foster or Wm. Foster or even W. Foster. Vary your strategies to locate the records you need. □□

You can also select the "Help" link at the top right of the page for more information on the best ways to search this site. Specific information is included on how to help broaden or narrow your results, such as using a wildcard character. If you want to search for names that differ only by one letter, use the question mark (?) wildcard; for example: search for Andersen or Anderson by using Anders?n. Search for alternate spellings by using the asterisk (\*) which represents 0 to five unknown characters; for example, a search for Smel\*er will search for Smeltzer or Smelzer. The use of wildcards is restricted to names that have the first three letters specified. For example, a search for Fran\* will yield names like Frank, Frances, Francis, Frannie, etc. However a search for Fr\* will not yield any results because only two letters were specified. □

If you click on the Search button (next to Home), Ancestry will bring up a search box that is the same one as under the home page. On the right side of the page, the different types of records available on Ancestry Library Edition are listed. On this Search page, you can also scroll down the same page to select a specific state in the United States or selected countries to get a list, organized by subjects, of all databases related to that area. This is especially helpful to be able to see if a death index, for example, exists for a certain time period in a certain state.

The screenshot shows the Ancestry Library Edition search interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Search', and 'Charts and Forms'. The main search area includes fields for 'First & Middle Name(s)', 'Last Name', and 'Name a place your ancestor might have lived'. There's also a section for 'Explore by Location' with a map of the United States and a list of states. On the right, a 'Special Collections' sidebar lists various record types like 'Historical Records', 'Census & Voter Lists', and 'Immigration & Travel'.

On the main Search page next to the Search box is: "**Show Advanced**" that will lead you to a more sophisticated search box. When entering information, it's a good idea to keep the "keyword" field blank, so that the records for which you're looking at are not excluded.

You can restrict the search by the main types of records in Ancestry: Historical Records, Stories & Publications, Family Trees and Photos & Maps. Also you can enter details about life events to help narrow your search.

A Soundex search can be used to help broaden your search and overcome spelling and transcription errors. The Soundex is designed to display results for all names that have somewhat similar pronunciation. To use this feature, click on the use default under the last name. Choose Soundex from the options.

Also on the main Search page, on the right, is a link to the Card Catalog. If you are looking for a particular database, or a particular type of database (like Civil War), you can put those terms in the keyword search in the card catalog and pull up a list of databases with those records or information. If you just click on Card Catalog it will bring up a list of all Ancestry databases.

### **Other helpful items on the navigation bar:**

Charts and Forms – sample pedigree charts, blank census forms, correspondence records, etc. to help you keep your family history information organized.

### **Census Indexes on Ancestry**

On the home page find "U.S. Census Collection" and click on it. From the list that comes up either scroll down to select a specific year to search or enter a name in the search box to search all census years.  If you choose to search all census years you can enter as much information as you like. More information will narrow your search while less information will broaden your search.

You will be given a list that shows in which census years your name occurs. Choose a census year to examine.  Once a year has been chosen, a list of names and locations will appear. These names will include a link that will take you directly to the census image.

To narrow your results, you can also select a specific census year to search. All census years (excluding the recently released 1940 census which is a work in progress) now have an "every name index."  Type in the name you wish to search. Include as much additional information as you like.  You will be given a list that shows where your name occurs.  Link directly to the census image.

### **Census Images**

While you may choose to use a census index to locate a family member more quickly, you can also browse the census for any given year.  From the home page, find "U.S. Census Collection" and click on it.  Scroll down the page and choose the census year, state, county, township, and enumeration district that you would like to examine. Once you've made your selections, you are able to scroll down and page through the census images.  Using the magnifying glass and "+" or "-" icons, you are able to make the image larger or smaller and move the image.  Printing can be tricky, please feel free to ask a staff member for help.

