Using AmericanAncestors.org

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Introduction

AmericanAncestors.org offers over 480 searchable, digitized databases containing more than 1.4 billion searchable names. These databases include vital records, cemetery records, probate records, genealogies, and scholarly journals. Get the most of your AmericanAncestors.org search using the tips and techniques below. Watch our webinar, The New AmericanAncestors.org: https://www.americanancestors.org/video-library/zoom-demo-new-americanancestorsorg

LOG IN

To access records from all databases on AmericanAncestors.org, you must have an active American Ancestors paid membership and you must be logged in.

To log in:

Go to AmericanAncestors.org and click "Log in" at the very top of the page.

Enter your username and password.

You can now search all databases and access results!

If you are not an American Ancestors member, you can register for free as a Guest Member at https://www.americanancestors.org/membership/guest-users and access a limited number of databases.

THREE WAYS TO SEARCH

There are three basic ways to search the databases on American Ancestors:

Traditional advanced search
- O https://www.americanancestors.org/search/advanced-search
- O All the results returned must match all of your search criteria

Database search
- O Access a database-specific search page

    O The results with the best fit to your search criteria are returned, and sorted in order of relevance

Category search

O Access a category-specific search page.

O The results with the best fit to your search criteria are returned, and sorted in order of relevance

DATABASE SEARCH

The Database search pages are tuned to search a single database:

- Choose a database from our A-Z Database list (https://www.americanancestors.org/b rowse-database) by clicking the magnifying glass icon next to the database name.
- Only fields available for search in the chosen database will appear on the search form.

  Note: Be sure to read the Search Tips listed underneath the search form to gain information on any particularities of a given database.

Example Database Search page

CATEGORY SEARCH

To access our Category Search, go to Advanced Search (https://www.americanancestors.org/search/advanced-search) and then go to Search by Category section on the right-hand side. Click on a category that you're interested in, like "Vital Records". Only fields available for search in the chosen category will appear on the search form.

Search by Category options

JOURNAL SEARCHES

Scholarly journals and periodicals are important, yet often overlooked, resources. AmericanAncestors.org offers thousands of searchable issues from several journals, including our own *New England Historic and Genealogical Register,* the *New York Genealogical & Biographical Record, The Mayflower Descendant,* and many others. Searching journals on our website is different than searching other records:

- Start on our category-specific search page: https://www.americanancestors.org/search/category- search/98/journals-and-periodicals
- Article titles can be searched using the keyword field.
- Some journals offer the "Article Title Only Filter" found toward the bottom of the screen. Check this box (found on the database search page for a particular journal) and each individual article will be returned once.
- When searching journals and other periodicals, the year you see in your search results refers to the publication year and **not** a year tied to the person you are searching for. Don't overlook these records because of that date!
- For more information, see our webinar: How to Search Journals on AmericanAncestors.org (https://youtu.be/-4jCupNiwaI).

WILDCARD SEARCHES

Wildcards used within your search terms can help broaden your results. In this context, a wildcard refers to a single character that can represent one or a series of unknown characters. They are especially helpful when searching for ancestors: consider how many times you have seen misspellings, transcription mistakes, and other inconsistencies in the records. *Note:* A wildcard can be used within the First Name, Last Name, and Keyword fields. Supported wildcards include:

Operator	Applicable Search Fields	Usage	Example
?	Keyword; First Name; Last Name; Location	Represents any single character	Hans?n returns Hansen and Hanson
	Keyword; First Name; Last Name; Location	Replaces zero or more characters; best used for spelling variations or a series of unknown characters.	Wood* returns Wood, Woods, Woodward, Woodbury, and others

SAVING SEARCHES

AmericanAncestors.org allows you to save your favorite searches to your user profile for future use. By saving your repeat searches you can access them from any computer you use to log onto our web site with your login credentials. The search is re-executed each time you bring it up so corrections and additions we make to our database will be reflected in your search. It will save you time and keep your search parameters consistent.

To save a search, perform a search as you would normally. When you are happy with the search, click on the "Save Search" button at the top of the search results. *Note: If* you wish to make refinements or changes after saving the search, you will have to save it again under a different name.

Search Results

1 - 9 of 9 records for Name: Percy Burrell, Database: Massachusetts: Vital Records, 1841-1910

	Name	Events	Relationship
	Perry L. BURRELL 📷 Massachusetts: Vital Records, 1841-1910 Vital Records (incl. Bible, Cemetery, Church and SSDI) View Image	MARRIAGE : 1901 LOCATION : Rockland, Plymouth, Massachusetts, United States AMENDED : N VOLUME : 514 PAGE : 197	

Search filters: Percy Burrell

Sort by: Relevance

Saved Searches

Saved Searches
- Saved Searches
- Pennsylvania
- MVR P
- Mass vr - Plymouth
- Court, Land and Probate Records
- North American Cemetery Transcriptions from NEHGS Manuscripts
- Lodowick LeClear
- John LeClear
- Nathaniel Woods
- IN-343

Search

To find an re-execute your saved searches, on any search screen use the pull down-list, titled "Saved Searches".

You can also create a list of favorites of frequently used databases and search those as a group or individually. To create your list of favorite databases:

1) While viewing database records, you can include the database you are currently viewing by clicking the "Favorite button" at the top right of the display.

Name	Nathaniel WOODS
Death	1847 - 1848
Location	Dedham, Norfolk, Massachusetts, United States
Original Text	
Amended	N

Databases

AmericanAncestors.org is one of the most widely used online genealogical resources in the country. This site features hundreds of unique searchable online collections, offering information on hundreds of millions of people.

2) You can also save a favorite database while browsing databses by clicking on the star in the table.

Note: If you no longer want a database in your favorites, simply click the star again.

To use your favorite databases for search, go to the search screen and check the box "Favorite(s) only" near the middle of the form next to "Database Type". Open the database drop down list (by clicking on the down arrow under "Database"). You will only see the databases from your favorites listed here. Select one or use all to execute your search.

Once your search results are returned, click on the name in the record listing to be taken to the Record Display page. Click View Image to be taken directly to the image.
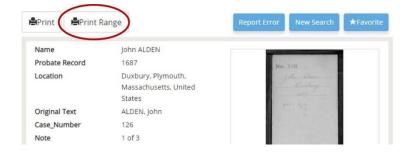
Viewer tools are at the upper-left corner of the window. These include: Download, Print, Zoom-in, Zoom-out, Restore Original View and Full Screen view.

On each image page you should be able to do the following:

- To "pan" or move the image around in the image viewers. You can place your cursor over the image, click and hold your mouse button, then drag the image around as you move your mouse or drag your finger across your touchpad.
- Get help (lower right, underneath the image)
- Write a comment (lower right, underneath the image). If you find an error, have a question or have other thoughts related to our database, please let us know!
- View and copy the citation (button located directly underneath image)
- See the database description
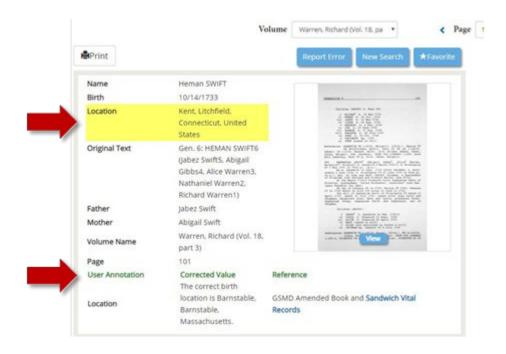- Read search tips for this database

To save or print a database image for your own records, use the Download and Print button at the upper left-hand corner of the image. This will open a new tab to print or save the current view of the image.

NOTE: For some databases, these files will be very large. To limit the image to that portion which appears in your browser view, check "Current View" before clicking Download or Print.

For journals or probate files you may want to print multiple pages at once. Use the Print Range button and enter the number of pages you want to print. You may also print to PDF if your browser supports it.

When we receive documented evidence that a record is incorrect in the original source document that we have indexed you can see annotations. The field that was incorrect is highlighted in yellow on the record detail page and the corrected information is shown in the image below. If you find an error you can use the "Report Error" button, or the Comment or Question box on the variou search results pages.

This blog provides updates whenever we add databases or enhance the search experience. You can use the web site or sign up for email notifications.

URL: https://dbnews.americanancestors.org

Subject Guide: *Using AmericanAncestors.org* at https://www.americanancestors.org/education/learning-resources/read/using-americanancestors-org Questions? Contact: webmaster@nehgs.org

Additional Resources on AmericanAncestors.org:

- Research Guides – https://www.americanancestors.org/tools/research-guides
- Research Templates – https://www.americanancestors.org/tools/research-templates
- Chat with a Genealogist (FREE!) - https://www.americanancestors.org/expert-help/ask-a-genealogist-chat
- American AncesTREES - https://www.americanancestors.org/tools/american-ancestrees
- Upcoming Events (including courses, webinars): https://www.americanancestors.org/events
- Consultations – https://www.americanancestors.org/expert-help/consultations
- Research for Hire – https://www.americanancestors.org/expert-help/hire-a-researcher