

Using Ancestry.com Search

By

Tresa Tatyrek

tresatatyrek@gmail.com

Using ancestry.com at a library that has a library subscription is a little different from using a personal 'home' edition. The library usually has an icon or special link for you to click on to enter their version of the website. The library editions **do not** have the same databases as the home editions do. They have fewer databases in each record group than a home subscription would have.

I search by specific database. There are a number of ways to access specific databases. The census are fairly easy, the others, I use the card catalog.

The screenshot displays the Ancestry.com search interface. On the left, there is a search box with fields for 'Title' and 'Keyword(s)', and buttons for 'Search' and 'Clear All'. In the center, a dropdown menu is open, showing options: 'Search All Records', 'Census & Voter Lists', 'Birth, Marriage & Death', 'Public Member Trees', 'Military', 'Immigration & Travel', and 'Card Catalog'. On the right, a list of census records is shown: '1841 England Census', '1841 Isle of Man Census', '1841 Scotland Census', '1841 Wales Census', '1851 Channel Islands Census', '1851 England Census', and '1851 Isle of Man Census'. Below these, a detailed search filter form is visible, including sections for 'Match all terms exactly', 'First & Middle Name(s)', 'Last Name', 'Lived in (state or country)', 'Year range', 'Add event', 'Add family member', 'Keyword', 'Gender', 'Race/Nationality', 'Collection Focus', and checkboxes for 'Historical Records', 'Family Trees', 'Stories & Publications', and 'Photos & Maps'.

Set the Collection to the area of the world you are dealing with. Uncheck those items you don't want to see. I leave only Historical records checked.

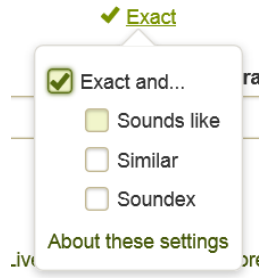
When you start typing in the First & Middle Name(s) box a box with Exact appears. If you check the box

The screenshot shows a dropdown menu with the following options: 'Exact and...' (checked), 'Sounds like', 'Similar', and 'Initials'. There is also a link for 'About these settings'.

you get I would select all of them.

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When you start typing in the Last Name Box a box with Exact appears. If you check the box you get

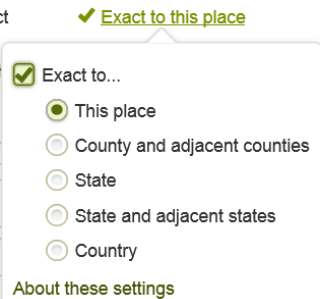


I would select all of them.


You can add events and family members as you need them. If you add an event where you want to add a date when you start typing you get Exact +/-



Locations have to be in their format (and they aren't always the way they are in the database so it does cause problems) After you select the matched place the box with exact shows up. I usually Exact to this place so I narrow the search to just one county or state and not get hits from Massachusetts when I'm looking for someone in Tennessee. You can restrict to the specific county, or the county and those that surround it. If your people live near a border, this can be helpful since the lines are imaginary and census and other records could be in the county next door to where you thought they were.



Once you get the results, you can tweak the search by clicking the edit link and revising your search criteria.



1940 United States Federal Census
[See More](#)

NAME: **John Riley Shows**
 AGE: **25**
 ESTIMATED BIRTH YEAR: **1915**
 GENDER: **Male**
 RACE: **White**
 BIRTHPLACE: **Mississippi**
 MARITAL STATUS: **Married**
 RELATION TO HEAD OF HOUSE: **Son**
 HOME IN 1940: **Southwest, Jones, Mississippi**
 STREET: **Union Road**
 INFERRED RESIDENCE IN 1935: **Rural, Jones, Mississippi**
 RESIDENCE IN 1935: **Rural Jones Mississippi**
 SHEET NUMBER: **7B**
 OCCUPATION: **Farmer Cropper**

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

NAME	AGE
Frank Shows	69
Mary Ann Shows	65
John Riley Shows	25
Annie Laurie Shows	17
John A Shows	3/12
Robert Langford	18

Review the results. Look for the page icon that indicates there is an image linked to the record. You can hover over the database title and get a pop up of the record extraction. To view the actual record, if there is one, click on view image link

ancestry 1940 United States Federal Census for John W Shows





Line Number	House Number	Street Name	House Owned or	Value of Home	Respondent	Surname	Given Name	Relation to Head of House	Gender	Race	Age	Estimated Birth Year	Marital Status	Attended School or	Highest Grade	Birthplace	Citizenship
70		Mosselle Overt Road			Shows	John W	Head	Male	White	39	1901	Married				Mississippi	
71		Mosselle Overt Road			Shows	Wille Mae	Wife	Female	White	35	1905	Married				Mississippi	
72		Mosselle Overt Road			Shows	Dorris	Daughter	Female	White	13	1927	Single				Mississippi	
73		Mosselle Overt Road			Shows	Ruby Lee	Daughter	Female	White	11	1929	Single				Mississippi	
74		Mosselle Overt Road			Shows	Wilma Lael	Daughter	Female	White	6	1934	Single				Mississippi	
75		Mosselle Overt Road			Shows	John I	Son	Male	White	7	1938	Single				Mississippi	

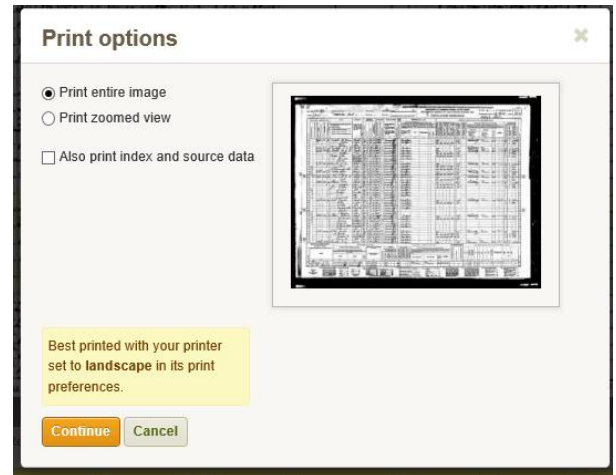
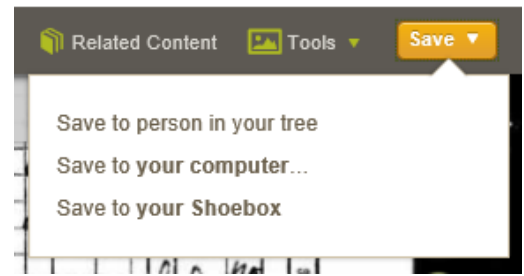
The pane at the bottom is closable by clicking on the




- You will see the record you are viewing and the name of the person you search for at the top.
- You will see the location the record is for under that.
- You will see the digital itself in the majority of the window.

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- The transcriptions can be wrong, so you will want to check the actual image.
- Closing the extra pane will make moving around the images much easier. You simply hold your mouse down on the image and move it around.
- You can save the image by clicking on the  button. Save to your computer will open a window where you can select where you want to save it and you give it a name. Remember where you saved it and what you named it. If at the library, use a flashdrive. The options vary with record type.
- You can print the image by clicking  . You can move from one image in a record set to another by clicking on the appropriate arrow   .
- If you find transcription errors, please submit the corrections, they are reviewed and updated. Others will benefit if you take the few minutes it takes to do this. This can only be done on certain



fields. When you hover over those fields you will see a  , click on it and a window will open.

General Notes & Tips:

I do not use the generic search feature. I find the specific database I want to look in, like each census year. Birth, marriage, and death records for the state I'm working in. Military records for the time period the people I'm looking for would have been in.

- I open each census year by right clicking on each year and opening it in a new tab.
- I keep the advanced search option on.
- I try and look at the actual image.