



## Finding Irish Emigrants in Online U.S. Records

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Your family stories and traditions state that family members emigrated to the US and you'd like to find out what happened to them. You probably would also like to know if you have cousins still living. This lecture will discuss the types of records that are available online and the strategies that can be used to find your people in US records.

### Genealogy Basics

It's important to understand the basics of good genealogical research whether working on or offline. The first rule is **Cite Your Sources**. Source Notes have two purposes:<sup>1</sup> to record the specific location of each piece of data so you, and others will be able to find it; and to record details that affect the use or evaluation of that data. I can guarantee that you will find conflicting information so knowing where that information came from will help you evaluate it.

**Set an Objective and Develop a Plan!** The Internet can be hypnotic. You click from one location to another and it's easy to get off task. Surfing and researching are not the same thing! Have an objective and search the appropriate databases to meet that objective. What do you already know about the person you are researching? Where he lived? His approximate age? Names of members of his family? If the person lived in Illinois and the objective of your search is to find his/her marriage record, be specific! Search for records in Illinois, don't do a general search that might turn up thousands of records.

**Evaluate each piece of information.** Does it fit with what you already know? Does the information make sense? If you are looking at an index, you must obtain the original document. If you are looking at a family tree and there are no sources be skeptical. If there are sources, you must look at the source, not take someone else's word. And remember to always give credit to those who have done the research.

To search successfully in the US you need to know the person's name, the place where he lived and the timeframe of when he lived there. Other information such as the names of a spouse and children will further allow you to find the right person, rather than someone of the same name.

Like in Ireland, records in the US can be in various jurisdictions. Civil, or what we call vital records might be kept by the state, the county or the town. Other records could be Federal such as the US census, or private, such as church records. Once you have identified a location, you need to learn about the records and how and where they are kept.

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Evidence! Citation & Analysis for the Family Historian*, (Baltimore, Maryland, Genealogical Publishing Company 1997) p. 19.

## Bibliography

### Online Articles and Resources

1. Ancestry.com, "Family History WIKI." (Includes The [Red Book](#) and [The Source](#)).  
[http://www.ancestry.com/wiki/index.php?title=Main\\_Page](http://www.ancestry.com/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page)
2. Board for Certification of Genealogists, "The Genealogical Proof Standard."  
<http://tinyurl.com/hpdav4n>
3. FamilySearch, "US Genealogy." (Clickable map to select state.)  
[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/United\\_States\\_Genealogy](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Genealogy)
4. FamilySearch, "Getting Started."  
<https://familysearch.org/ask/gettingStarted>
5. FindMyPast, "Kick off your American family history using the US Census."  
<http://tinyurl.com/hpdav4n>
6. Moughty, Donna, "Strategies for Starting Your Family History: Source Citation," Donna's Genealogy Blog, 15 Feb 2010.  
[http://www.moughty.com/blog/strategies-for-starting\\_2.html](http://www.moughty.com/blog/strategies-for-starting_2.html)
7. \_\_\_\_\_, "Strategies for Starting Your Family History: Evidence Analysis," Donna's Genealogy Blog, 22 Feb 2010.  
[http://www.moughty.com/blog/strategies-for-starting\\_3.html](http://www.moughty.com/blog/strategies-for-starting_3.html)
8. The National Archives (US), "Resources for Genealogists."  
<https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy>

### Some Genealogical Sites and Databases

9. American Ancestors\* (NEHGS) <http://www.americanancestors.org>
10. Ancestry\* <http://www.ancestry.com>
11. Boston Passenger Manifests <http://tinyurl.com/zqd7v2q>
12. Castle Garden (Immigration) <http://castlegarden.org/>
13. Cyndi's List <http://www.cyndislist.com/>
14. Donna's Website & Blog <http://www.moughty.com>
15. Ellis Island  
    "One Step" by Stephen Morse <http://stevemorse.org/>
16. FamilySearch <http://www.familysearch.org>
17. FamilySearch Wiki [https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/Main\\_Page](https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/Main_Page)
18. GenealogyGems Podcast <http://www.genealogygemspodcast.com/>  
(Can also be downloaded from iTunes)
19. Find A Grave <http://www.findagrave.com/>
20. Find My Past\* <http://www.findmypast.ie>
21. Fold3\* (Military records) <http://www.fold3.com/>
22. GenealogyBank\* (Newspapers) <http://www.genealogybank.com>
23. The Genealogy Guys Podcast <http://www.genealogyguys.com/>  
(Can also be downloaded from iTunes)

24. Immigrant Ships Transcriber's Guild <http://www.immigrantships.net/>
25. The National Archives (US) <http://www.archives.gov/>
26. USGenWeb <http://www.usgenweb.com/>

#### **Source Citations**

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28. \_\_\_\_\_, *Evidence Explained, Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace*, Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, 2007.
29. \_\_\_\_\_, *QuickSheet: Citing Online Historical Resources*, Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, 2005.
30. \_\_\_\_\_, *QuickSheet: Citing Ancestry.com Databases & Images, Evidence Style*, Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, 2009.

\*Premium (fee based) sites