Getting More out of FamilySearch.org

Introduction

In order to get more out of your FamilySearch experience, you need to take advantage of all the resources hidden behind the scenes. The majority of records available through the FamilySearch database are not searchable using the Global Search Feature. You must locate the sources using the Family Search Catalog.

What is the Family Search Catalog?

The Catalog is a guide to birth, marriage, and death records; census records; church registers; books; periodicals; family histories and many other records that contain genealogical information. It is important to understand that FamilySearch is a catalog to an actual physical library located in Salt Lake City, Utah. Records in FamilySearch may be searchable online, on microfiche or microfilm, or in a book or in a computer file.

Some entries in the FamilySearch Catalog include images of records. When an image is available in the catalog, a camera icon will appear to the right of the microfilm note associated with that image.

Where is the Catalog?

The FamilySearch Catalog is available on the Internet at FamilySearch.org. It can be located on the homepage under the **Search** tab. Select **Catalog**

Type of Search:	To Find the Following Types of Catalog Entries:
Place Search*	Look for a record by the name of a place (locality) where an ancestor lived.
Surnames Search	Find family histories (and more) by a particular family name.
Titles Search	Find a record by its title.
Author Search	To find the works of an author by his name (individual or corporate).
Subjects Search	To discover works based on the topics they cover.
Keywords Search	Get a record using any words or phrases in significant parts of its catalog entry.
Call Number Search	See catalog entries by finding their book, compact disc, or pedigree call number.
Film/Fiche Number Search	See catalog details by finding the Library's microfilm or microfiche number.

<u>Getting More Out of the Catalog</u>

1. Identify a Query

Many people who get into FamilySearch end up looking for the wrong things. Before you use the FamilySearch Catalog, it helps to choose a query about which you want to find more information, and decide what you want to learn. *Pick a Specific Query* – What is your goal? Why are you searching? What are you "actually" looking for?

2. Identify the <u>right</u> sources

It is very easy to get confused and start looking for the wrong things. A passenger list will not generally tell you the village of origin for an ancestor. A will - will not say a spouses' maiden name (though it might list relatives – and the maiden name might be on the document!). When searching FamilySearch, know the Question(s) you are trying to answer and that will aide you in deciphering what records to look for to help answer your questions.

3. Be Reasonably Exhaustive

Look at everything produced by an Event. Look for patterns. Look at the community. Follow those paths. If you look at a will and see witnesses, trace them. If you look at a deed, who bought or sold the property. These are all clues. Who are these people? Where did they come from?

4. Indexes are your Friend

The LDS Church and Family History Library have been microfilming for years at courthouses and archives all over the world. Those courthouses and archives often developed systems for locating their own records – in **most** cases, they weren't just rotting in a basement. Therefore, many of the records in FamilySearch have indexes – these might be a separate document or they may be included in the actual record source. Grantor and Grantee Indexes, Probate Indexes, Will Indexes, etc. Pay close attention to what sources are available.

5. The Place Search*

The most useful type of search in FamilySearch is the place search. To search for a place in FamilySearch, we enter locations in reverse:

United States, Pennsylvania, Adams, Gettysburg (Fig. 1)

A place search will bring you to a list of subjects related to that location – Probate, Deed, Vital, etc. Conduct County and City searches in the United States – especially when there are issues with city – county relationships such as St. Louis, MO. (Fig. 2)

You can select a subject and expand it out to see what sources are available (fig. 3)

Figure 1 Place Search

Figure 2 Location Subject List

> United States, Pennsylvania, Adams - History - Periodicals (2)
▼ **United States, Pennsylvania, Adams - Land and property (9)**

Atlas & plat book Adams County, Pennsylvania Author: Rockford Map Publishers	Add
The Blunston license book, 1733-1765 Author: Blunston, Samuel	Add
Deeds, 1800-1851; index 1800-1937 Author: Adams County (Pennsylvania). Recorder of Deeds	Add
Digges' choice, 1724-1800 : a history of land transactions within a portion of York and Adams Counties, Pennsylvania Author: Bankert, Jan A.	Add
Germany Township, Conewago Township, Union Township, Mount Joy Township, Mount Pleasant Township, Straban Township : Adams County, Pennsylvania: original Pennsylvania land records, volume 1 Author: Hively, Neal Otto; Adams County Historical Society (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania)	Add
Index draft books for surveys situated in Lancaster and York Counties but now located in Adams County, Pennsylvania, 1765-1873 Author: Weaner, Arthur; Yenne, Betty J.	Add
Listing of inhabitants in 1779, Adams County, Pennsylvania Author: McQuillis, Victoria (Victoria A.)	Add
The Manor of Maske : its history and individual properties Author: Glatfelter, Charles H. (Charles Henry), 1924-; Weaner, Arthur	Add
Sundry genealogical materials pertaining to south central Pennsylvania, books 1-8 Author: Stoever, John Casper, 1707-1779; South Central Pennsylvania Genealogical Society	Add

> United States, Pennsylvania, Adams - Land and property - Maps (3)
> United States, Pennsylvania, Adams - Maps (9)
> United States, Pennsylvania, Adams - Military history - Civil War, 1861-1865 (4)
> United States, Pennsylvania, Adams - Military records - Civil War, 1861-1865 (1)

Figure 3 Expanding Subject

Selecting a source will take you to its catalog page. **Some items are only available in Salt Lake City, others are digitized.**   Some Digitized options are only available from Family History Affiliates, other from Family History Centers. (Fig. 4)
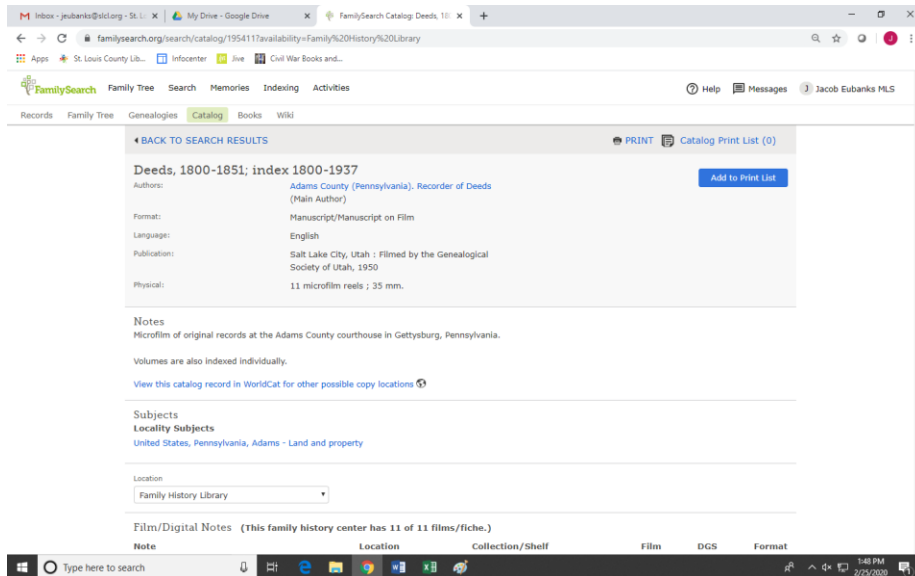

Figure 4 Selecting a Source

If you scroll down the source page, FamilySearch will let you know the format and what vols. Are available for the title. (fig. 5).

Film/Digital Notes (This family history center has 11 of 11 films/fiche.)

Note	Location	Collection/Shelf	Film	DGS	Format
Index to grantors, surnames A-K, 1800-1937	...story Library	United States & Canada Film	20666	8035077	📷
Index to grantors, surnames L-Z, 1800-1937	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	20667	7856692	📷
Index to grantees, surnames A-K, 1800-1937	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	20668	7856693	📷
Index to grantees, surnames L-Z, 1800-1937	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	20669	7856694	📷
Deeds, v. A-C, 1800-1807	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	20670	7856695	📷
Deeds, v. D-F, 1807-1814	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	20671	7856696	📷
Deeds, v. G-I, 1814-1821	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	20672	7856697	📷
Deeds, v. K-M, 1821-1832	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	20673	8066861	📷
Deeds, v. N-O, 1832-1842	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	20674	8066862	📷
Deeds, v. P-Q, 1842-1848	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	20675	8066863	📷
Deeds, v. R, 1848-1851	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	20676	8066864	📷

Figure 5 Source Page

In the case of Figure 5, we are looking at Deeds for Adams Co., PA. Note the Grantor and Grantee Indexes. If we select the camera out to the right, we go to a digitized image of the microfilm. (Fig. 6)

Figure 6 Film Reel

If the Camera has a key, it is a locked record and is of limited access – to either a Family History Affiliate or a Family History Center. SLCL is an Affiliate. If we select an image in the film (fig. 7)
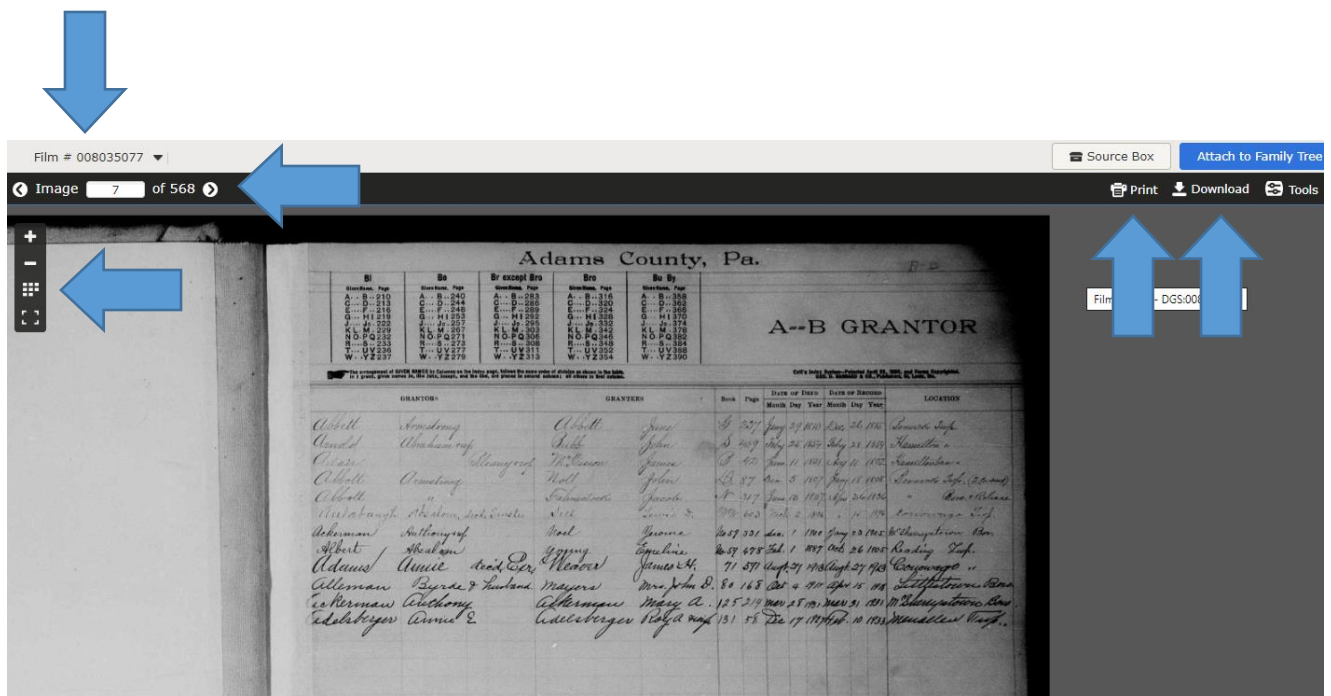
Figure 7 Digital Image

In fig 7, we see a page from the Grantor Index to Adams Co., PA. In the upper left, you see the FHL Film #. Below that is the image # and the total images. Below that are Zoom tools as well as a tool to move from **single image view** to the **whole film view**. In the upper right, you will see options to Download, Print, as well as attach to **Family Tree** and **Source Box**. In this case, we would search for the Grantor, identifying the book, page, and date of the deed. We would then return to the source page to find the book. In this case, Armstrong Abbott's deed is in Book G, Page, 237 (fig. 8).
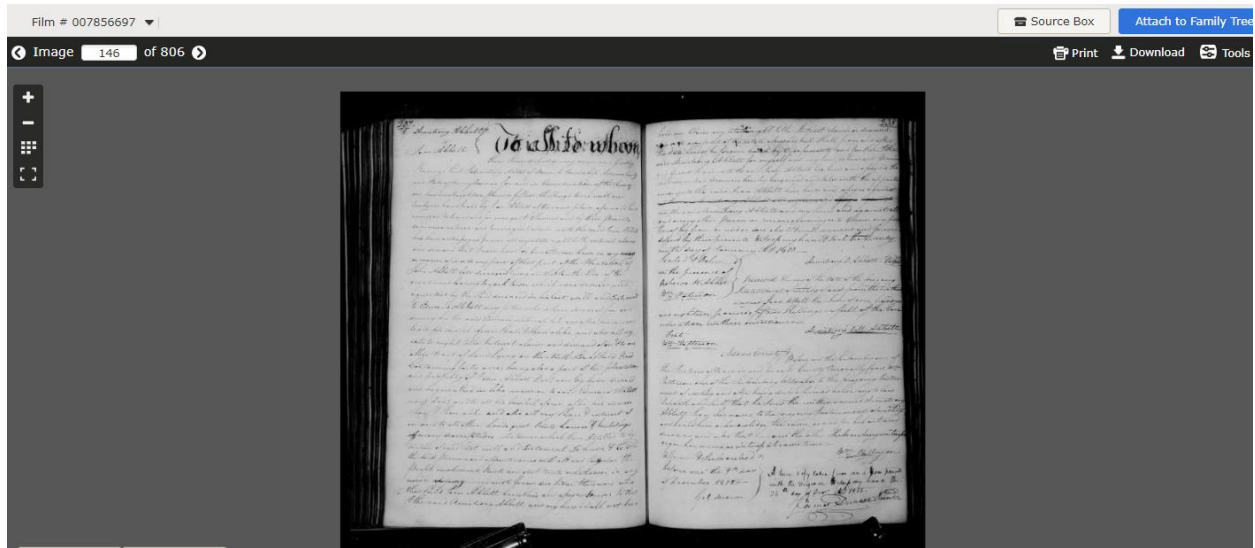
Figure 8 Book G, Pg. 237, Armstrong Abbott

Exceptions:

If records are part of a larger set, such as Ohio, Jefferson County Court Records, 1797-1947, your search will be redirected. (Fig. 9) In these cases, a hyper link will say "click here" in the middle of source page.

Figure 9 Ohio, Redirect to Jefferson County Court Records Series

That will redirect you to the series (Fig. 10). Click "Browse through _____ images"

Figure 10 Series Page. Ohio, Jefferson County Court Records

 This will redirect you to a page where you have multiple option types. In cases where it is a state record series, it will list counties.

Figure 11 Ohio, Jefferson County Court Records

Select the county then select which record set you wish to view. In fig. 11, it is a county level record series – so it only shows us the record sets. If we select probate records, we get a list of record sets, similar to, but not identical to that seen in fig. 5.
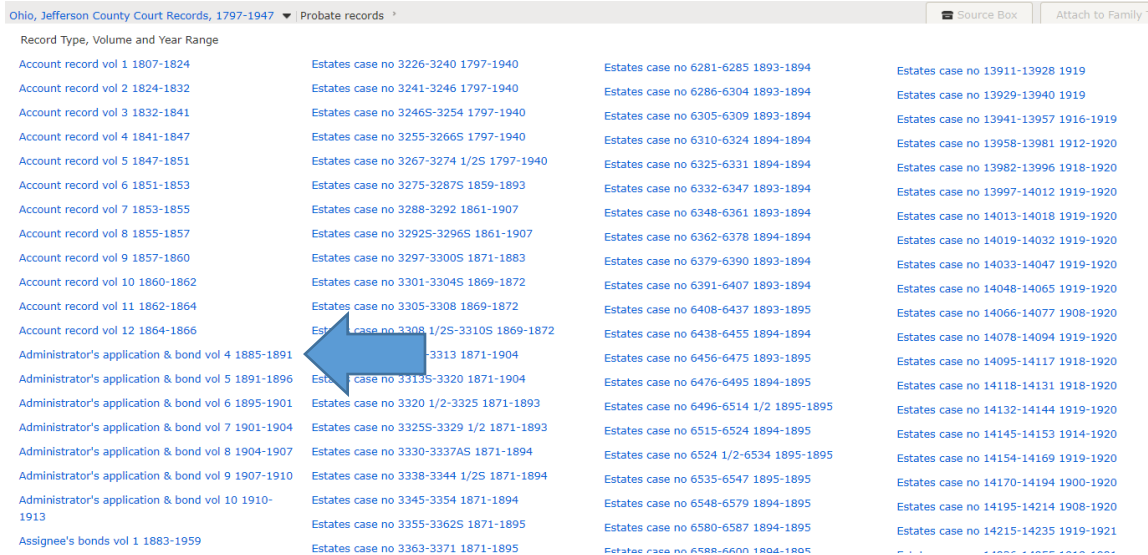

Figure 12 Probate Records, Ohio, Jefferson County Court Records

Source Indexing is not always in a separate file. Sometimes, county records included indexes at the beginning or end of their local court books. The Administrator Applications & Bonds of Jefferson County, Ohio are an excellent example. If we select this source from Fig. 12, we are taken to Fig. 13.
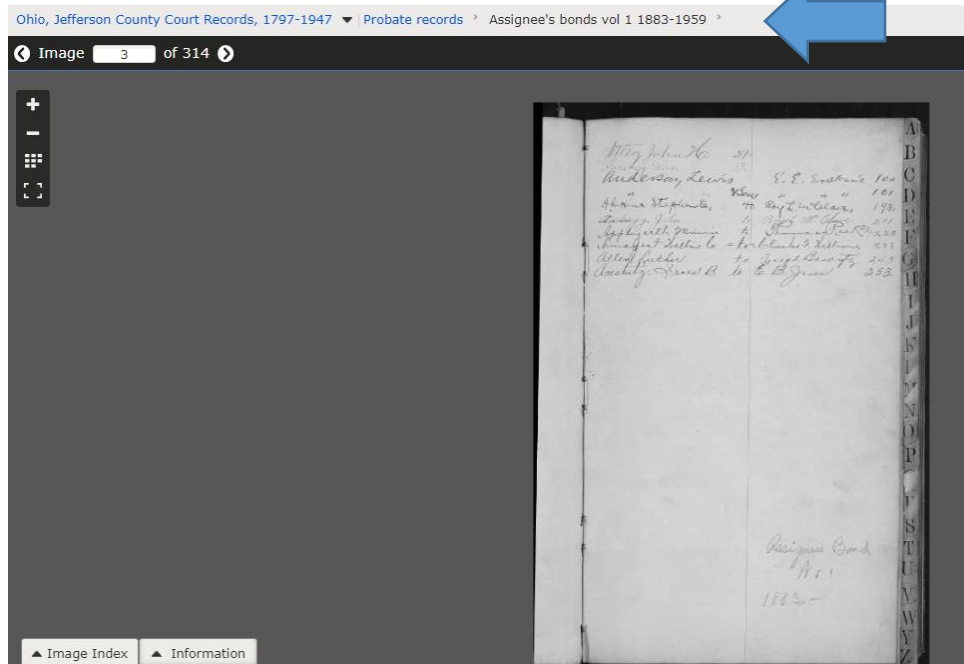

Figure 13 Assignee's Bonds Vol. 1 1883-1959, Jefferson County, Ohio

Note: The Running Thread at the top of the page- you can return to the Records List or the Series Page from a Record.

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