

Researching Digitized Books – FamilySearch.org

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Census and vital records are important for family researchers, but resources originally published in book form can be incredibly valuable for genealogists willing to dig for them. Numerous books compiling town, county, and church vital records have been published over the years—and they are increasingly being digitized. You can search about 150,000 of these digitized genealogies, family histories, county and local histories, genealogy periodicals, gazetteers, and school yearbooks through the FamilySearch Books collection.

When searching for digital books on FamilySearch.org, make use of the Advanced Search form (see image above) and with these four helpful strategies:

- **Start broadly.** It's usually best to start your search broadly, then narrow if you get too many results so you don't miss out on relevant resources.
- **Try different search terms.** Enter any word or phrase as a search term. Try searching for a surname only, or a surname and a location where an ancestor lived to find genealogies. Experiment with spelling variations of surnames or search for a location to find local and county histories.
- **Use wildcards.** The same wildcards that work for searching Historical Records collections work for Family History Books. An asterisk (*) will replace multiple characters, and a question mark (?) will replace a single character.
- **Refine search results.** Currently, there are limited ways to refine your results, but that could change as FamilySearch.org and its search capabilities evolve. To the left of the search results, you'll see a column with several options. Click the down arrow next to a category to check the appropriate boxes to narrow your search.

To account for spelling errors or other variations of names, you can use wildcards. Wildcards are special characters you enter in a search box in place of certain letters. On FamilySearch.org,

- You can use a question mark (?) to represent one missing letter.
- An asterisk (*) can replace zero or more characters.
- You can use multiple wildcards in the same search. You must have at least one letter in the search box, and you can place the wildcard at the beginning, middle, or end of the search field.

Where is the Family History Books collection

There are two ways to access Family History Books from FamilySearch.org:

1. Through the Books Tab. (All Books Online) at <https://familysearch.org>
 - Click on the **Books** tab. OR
2. Through the Catalog (books in FHL & BYU)
 - Click on the **Catalogs** tab

It is recommended to search both tabs. Some Books in Catalog may not be available through the Book tab. The Book tab, also lets you to refine your search through the left hand menu.

Problems with Viewing Books

The status of the book determines whether you can view it online

The status of a book can be Public, In Progress, or Protected.

- To check the status of a book in the search results list for Books, click **Details**.

- **Public.** Some books on the site are in the public domain. Public books are available for viewing online by multiple users at the same time from any location.
- **In Progress.** A book can be temporarily out of circulation for scanning. If a book is being digitized, the words "In Progress" appear next to the name of the book in the Catalog.
- **Protected.** You can view protected or copyrighted books online at the Family History Library or one of the family history centers. Three copies can be in use at a given time.

"You do not have sufficient rights to view a requested object"

You can view only some books at the Family History Library or a family history center. If you are attempting to read a copyrighted book (meaning a book with Protected status that has been digitized) outside an authorized location, the error message "you do not have sufficient rights to view requested object" appears. If you encounter the message while in a family history center or the Family History Library, please try again in 60 minutes to see if the book is available. The book is made available after another reader finishes. Some readers forget to close the book after viewing it. The system automatically closes the book after 24 hours.

Time-out of an open digital book

- If a digital book sits open in the browser, unused, for too long, the window times out, and you are prompted to reload the file or close it.
- If you are not finished with the book, click **Reload**.
- Otherwise, click **Close** to close the book.

Problems with downloading

- Some books are very large and can take a long time to download to your computer.
- A progress bar shows while the file downloads.
- If your internet connection speed is slow and the book is very large, it can take hours for the book to finish downloading.
- Very large books (1 gigabyte or larger) downloading on a dial-up connection can time out before the book can download. We suggest you try downloading with a faster internet connection.

Bookmarking or Sourcing a Book

Digitized books can not be bookmarked as the "viewing URL" changes

- The URL (web address) is designed to be used only once

Saving a "working link" (URL) to the book OR for Sources and record keeping

- Click on the words **Copy Link** above the right side of the image.
- A new window opens which shows a highlighted usable link.
- **Copy** this link - Save this link for future use
- You can also email this link to another person.

Note: If a book is *scheduled* to be online, it will show up in the search results. If it is not online yet, you receive an error message when you try to open the book. Check back later to see if it has been uploaded.

The Sad Case of Unsuccessful Searches

What if you didn't have any luck with your search? Not all is lost! Remember that FamilySearch doesn't have every record out there, and not all of their records are indexed. Try searching on one of the FamilySearch's eBooks partner sites, such as DPLA (Digital Public Library of America) at <http://dpla.la>.

References: GenealogyInsider, Tuesday, August 25, 2015, Born To Be Wild: How To Use Wildcards In
 FamilySearch.org Searches
 GenealogyInsider, Tuesday, September 01, 2015, Bookworm Genealogy: How to Find
 Digitized Books on FamilySearch.org
 FamilySearch Wiki, FamilySearch Online Book Collection FAQs
 Online books on FamilySearch.org: Issues Addressed