Introduction to Genealogy

Claire Kluskens

Learn how to do basic genealogical research using Federal records at the National Archives.

Archivist
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Claire Kluskens is a genealogical projects archivist specializing in immigration, census, military, and other records of high genealogical value. She spearheaded the completion of more than 300 National Archives microfilm publications. She lectures frequently and has published extensively in national, state, and local genealogical publications. Claire has been a National Archives staff member since 1992 and has done genealogical research since 1976.

Getting Started on Your Genealogical Research

An Introduction to Using Records in the National Archives

Claire Kluskens

Genealogy: A Lifetime Hobby Makes History Relevant

- Geography
- Economics
- Politics
- Social customs
- Religion
- Climate
- and other forces shaped our ancestors lives.

Begin with Yourself

- First, Get Organized, Get Your Tools
  - Box or Binder
  - Full-sized paper or notebooks
  - Pencils, pens, pencil sharpener, stapler.
  - Four- or five-generation ancestor chart
  - Family group sheets
  - Genealogy computer program? or word processing program

Begin with Yourself

- Fill out your ancestor chart

Ancestral Chart

Chart No. _____

National Archives and Records Administration   NARA's web site is http://www.archives.gov   NA Form 14134 (9/11)

Begin with Yourself

- Fill out a family group sheet for each ancestor and each ancestor's siblings.

Family Group Sheet

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Husband			Occupation(s)	
	Date	Place	Immigration	
Born			Naturalization	
Christened			Military Service	
Died			Cause of Death	
Buried			Date of Will	
Married				
Father			Other Marriages	
Mother				

Wife (maiden name)			Occupation(s)	
	Date	Place	Immigration	
Born			Naturalization	
Christened			Military Service	
Died			Cause of Death	
Buried			Date of Will	
Father			Other Marriages	
Mother				

Other Information/Records (ie. Census, Passports, etc…)

Begin with Yourself

Organize any "old family papers" you may have:
    Certificates of birth, marriage, death.
    Newspaper death notices.
    Military papers, Social Security Cards,
    Photographs, everything....

Interview Your Relatives

- Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins....

- They may know names, dates, places, family stories.

- They may have "old family records" pertinent to your ancestors.

- Stories, family traditions, "life in the olden days"

Starting Points

- Names of ancestors, their siblings, other relatives
- Dates of birth, marriage, death, divorce, burial
- Places of birth, marriage, death, divorce, burial
- Occupation
- Military service
- Other biographical details

Linking it all Together

Name plus some additional fact that links him or her to a specific geographic location or event on a specific date.

AND the source of that information.

Name by itself is not enough.

Why Knowing the Source is Important...

Fred T. Brown

Death certificate .... Died 1921

Gravestone .... Died 1922

Sarah M. Hayford

Death record...... Died 2 Apr. 1902

Newspaper........ Died 3 Apr. 1902

Join Genealogical Societies

- National Genealogical Society
- Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society
- State genealogical societies: the state in which you live, and the states in which your ancestors lived
- County genealogical societies: county in which you live and counties in which your ancestors lived
- Historical societies

Why Join Genealogical Societies?

- Publications
    Articles useful to you
    Vehicle for *you* to publish in
- Information about the area
    History, records, research facilities, more
- Networking
- Education - conferences, classes, etc.

Publish or Your Research Perishes!

- Publications by Genealogical Societies:

  County

  State

  National

- Self-publish.

  Write up your family story – do it well.

  Make sure copies of your "book" are with other family members, libraries where your family lived, libraries with "national" collections

Learn How to Do Genealogy Right

- Borrow books from your public library on how to do genealogy, relevant aspects of history, and so forth

- Take genealogy classes

- Follow the research standards recommended by the National Genealogical Society

Do Research in Records

- Federal
- State
- County
- Libraries: books, microfilmed records, more!
- Other: cemeteries, churches, funeral homes, private organizations

Doing Research in Archival Records:
The "misspelled name"

The name may not be spelled as you expect to find it.

- The "ear" test:

- What did the census taker (or other record keeper) think was said?

- Probably didn't ask how it was spelled.

- Mangling of a "foreign" name.

The "misspelled" name

Westurn …. Western, Weston

Hayford …. Hefford, Hafford, Heyford

Siml …. Symel, Chimel

McCuller … McAlley

Federal Records (NARA)

- Census: 1790-1940
- Military Service Records, Pension Records, Unit Records, Draft Registration records
- Immigration Records: 1820-1950s, entry at sea or land border ports of arrival
- Naturalization Records
- Many other possibilities

Census, 1790-1940

- Start with 1940 and work backwards

- Find everyone in the entire extended family in every census
  - To get a complete picture of the family
  - Work yourself around brick walls

- Indexes (computer or in book form) have mistakes.

Census, 1790-1940

- What do you do when you "can't" find the person using an index?

  - Try spelling the name a different way.

  - Use "brute force" -- If you know where the person lived, read the census for that town/township/village/district, etc., page by page, line by line.

  - Arranged by state, then by county, then by locality.

Census, 1870 to 1940

- 1870-1940: Every person listed by name
  - Name
  - Age & gender
  - Race
  - Marital Status
  - Occupation
  - Birthplace
  - 1880-1930: birthplace of parents
  - & more

Census, 1850 and 1860

- 1850-1860: Every free person listed by name
  - Name
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Race
  - Marital status
  - Occupation
  - Birthplace

Census, 1850-1860 Slave Schedules

- Name of slave owner
- List of slaves by age and gender: no names

Census, 1790-1840

- 1790-1840: Name of head of household
  - All household members listed by gender and age categories: no names

  - Slave would be part of master's household

Sample Census Search for an African-American Family in Autauga Co., Alabama
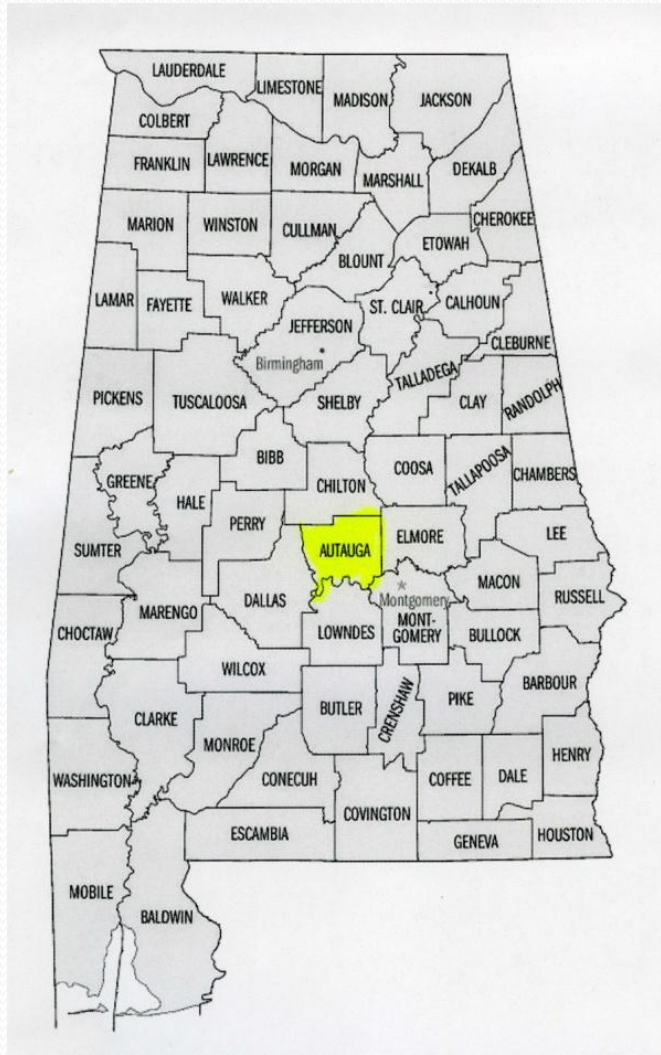
Sample Search: "Jese" Washington Family - beginning with 1930

- 1930: Live in Washington, Autauga County, Alabama. T626, Roll 1, E.D. 1-3.
  - Jese, 63
  - Ella, 58
  - Harry, 17
  - Dotty, 16
  - Betty, 15
  - Arch, 14
  - Quince, 13
  - plus Albert Walter, grandson, 14

1930 Census Image

Sample Search: Joe Washington Family – now back to 1920

- 1920: Live in Washington, Autauga County, Alabama. T625, Roll 1, E.D. 3:
- Joe, 45
- Ella, 40
- Ida, 24
- Anna, 16
- Eddie, 15
- Foster, 14

- Lula, 12
- William, 10
- *Harry, 9*
- *Dollie, 8*
- *Bomista [?], 6*
- *Archie, 5*
- *Quincy, 3*
- *Albert, 4, "step son"*

- Notice: Parents are 45 & 40 instead of expected 53 & 48

1920 Census Image

Sample Search: Joe Washington Family – now back to 1910

- 1910: Live in Washington, Autauga County, Alabama. T624, Roll 1, E.D. 3:
- Joe, 36
- Ella, 35
- *Ida L., 13*
- Clarence, 12
- *Anna, 9*

- *Eddie, 7*
- *Foster, 5*
- *Lula, 3*
- *William, 2*
- *Harrie, 9/12*

- Note: Parents are 36 & 35 instead of the "expected" 35 & 30

1910 Census Image

Sample Search: Joe Washington Family – now back to 1900

- 1900: Live in Washington, Autauga County, Alabama. T623, Roll 1, E.D. 3:

- Joe, Sept. 1869 (30)

- Ella, Jan. 1878 (22)

- *Clarence, July 1898 (2)*

- *Idalee, July 1897 (3)*

- George, Sept. 1899 (8/12)

1900 Census Image

Sample Search: Joe Washington Family – now back to 1890

- Very little of 1890 Census survives.

- Most destroyed as a result of a fire in Commerce Department Building in 1921.

Sample Search: Joe Washington Family – now back to 1880

- With the information I had, I tried online indexes, but did not find him. He must be on the census somewhere. Strategies:

  - Search Autauga County line by line.
  - May be in a different county.
  - Have to use other records to find parents & origins, or siblings….

Sample Search: Joe Washington – now back to 1880

- Issues:
  - He should be a son in someone's household.
  - Age range is variable based on later censuses:
  - 1880: Age ? – somewhere between 5 and 13
  - 1900: Age 30 (Sept. 1869)
  - 1910: Age 36 (1874)
  - 1920: Age 45 (1875)
  - 1930: Age 63 (1867)

Joe Washington's wife

- Autauga County Marriage Records

- Vol. 9, Page 408

- Joe Washington to Ella Livingston (1895)

- Be sure to get copy of original record; may have more information than what is online.

Joe Washington's wife

Autauga County, Alabama
Index To Marriage Records

Compiled By: Larry W. Nobles

Additional information may be acquired from:

Autauga Genealogical Society   Autauga County Heritage Association
Post Office Box 668   Post Office Box 178
Prattville, Alabama 36067-0668   Prattville, Alabama 36067-0178

Search Results:

Entries matching "washington"

If no names are listed below here, then none were found.

NAME	SPOUSE	DATE	BK	PAGE
WASHINGTON, ARON	TATUM, SALLIE	15 DEC 1875	7	71
WASHINGTON, CALLIE	CREWS, WILLIE	29 DEC 1892	9	240
WASHINGTON, CUBIT	WRIGHT, HATTIE	29 JAN 1891	9	130
WASHINGTON, DUMAS	GOLDEN, ELLA	28 FEB 1878	7	216
WASHINGTON, ELIZA	OBANNON, CARSON	21 OCT 1874	7	7
WASHINGTON, ERIUS	HUNTER, ARINA	24 JUL 1879	7	292
WASHINGTON, GABRIEL	BROWN, CAROLINE	12 FEB 1880	7	339
WASHINGTON, GEO.	DUBOSE, HATTIE	3 MAY 1890	9	84
WASHINGTON, GEORGE	PORTER, COMFORT	27 JUN 1872	6	481
WASHINGTON, JACOB	DRAKE, MARY ANN	23 OCT 1880	7	368
WASHINGTON, JACOB	DRAKE, MARY ANN	23 OCT 1880	7	368
WASHINGTON, JAMES	FRAZER, ALABAMA	16 JUL 1896	10	73
WASHINGTON, JOE	LIVINGSTON, ELLA	14 FEB 1895	9	408
WASHINGTON, JOSEPH	DEJARNETTE, MATILDA	13 DEC 1868	11	10
WASHINGTON, LONALLA	GOLSMITH, CHARLIE	10 JUN 1895	9	417
WASHINGTON, LUENAN	QUALES, JOHN	23 MAR 1871	6	483
WASHINGTON, MARIAH	GROVES, EUGENE	29 JUL 1897	10	182
WASHINGTON, SELLA	TAYLOR, TONY	19 MAY 1883	8	56
WASHINGTON, WILLIE	JOHNSON, ADA	28 JAN 1891	9	129

Ella Livingston's family – back to 1880

- Issues: We're working with little information. Likely in Autauga County.
- Ella's age range is variable based on later censuses:
  - 1880: Age ? – between 2 and 8 years old.
  - 1900: Age 33 (1878)
  - 1910: Age 35 (1875)
  - 1920: Age 40 (1880)
  - 1930: Age 58 (1872)

Ella Livingston's family – back to 1880

- 1880: Living in Prattville, Autauga County, Alabama, T9, Roll 1, E.D. 2. Likely match:

- Hill Livingston, age 45
- Mary, 30
- Melissa, 16
- George, 12
- Archie, 12

- Clara, 11
- Hilliard, 7
- **Ella, 6**
- Edgar, 3
- Hattie, 6 months

- "Hill" is likely short for Hilliard.

1880 Census Image

Ella Livingston's family – back to 1870

- Likely match: "Hilliard Livingston", age 33, found in Beat 5, Post office Prattville, Autauga County, Alabama.

- Where's his wife and children?

Ella Livingston's family – back to 1880

- 1870: Living in Beat No. 5, Autauga County, Alabama, M593, Roll 1. Likely match:

- Alexander, Mary, age 30
- Alexander, Malissa, 6
- Alexander, George, 3
- Alexander, Arch, 3
- Alexander, "Clarence," 9/12 (Sept. 1869)
- Livingston, Hilliard, age 33

1870 Census Image

Military Service Records and Military Pension Records, ca. 1775-ca. 1906

- Revolutionary War
- War of 1812
- Civil War
- Miscellaneous wars
- Indian Wars
- Spanish-American War
- Philippine Insurrection

Military Service Records

- Indexed by War, then by name
- Provides basic facts & possibly more
  - Name
  - Age
  - Location of enlistment & how long
  - Unit(s) in which served & rank(s)
  - Basic information about his service

Compiled Military Service Records

Jacket

Card

Card

Military Pension Records, ca. 1775-ca. 1916

- Arranged by war --
  - Revolutionary War
  - War of 1812
  - "Old Wars"
  - Civil War & later

- More details about service, family members (widow and dependent children), medical condition

Draft Registration Cards

- **Civil War**: Men under age 45 (whether or not they served)

- **World War I**: Men under age 18-45 (whether or not they served)
  - Three different types of cards (information content varies)
  - Name, date & place of birth, occupation & employer, next of kin & their address, physical description

- **World War II**: 4th Registration ("old men"), age 45 & up

Immigration Records

- Ship Passenger Arrival Records, 1820-1957

- Land Border (Canada): 1895-1950s

- Land Border (Mexico): 1903-1950s

Immigration Records

Ship Passenger Arrival Records, 1820-1957

Unidentified Barque

1873

Immigration Records

- Ship Passenger Arrival Records, 1820-1957

1902

National Archives Microfilm Publication T844, Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at Baltimore, Maryland, 1891-1909, Roll 31, vessel Cassel, arrived 20 Aug. 1902, Franz Polak, line 13

Immigration Records

- Land Border (Canada): 1895-1950s
- Land Border (Mexico): 1903-1950s

A3379 Roll 111

Naturalization Records

- The process of becoming a citizen

- Two steps:
  - Declare Intent to become a citizen (2 yrs.)
  - Petition for naturalization (3 yrs.)

Other Federal Records

- What relationship did your relatives have with the Federal Government?
  - Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen & Abandoned Lands
  - Freedman's Savings & Trust (Freedman's Bank)
  - Bureau of Indian Affairs (Cherokee freedmen)
  - Southern Claims Commission
  - Postmaster
  - Other Federal Employee
  - Buy or Obtain Land from the Federal Government

State Records

- Vital Records

Birth and death records kept at the state level, since the early 1900s, with copy at the county level.

County Records

- Vital records: birth, marriage, death, divorce
- Land records: deeds, mortgages, taxes
- Court records: naturalization, probate, litigation, criminal justice
- Voter registration
- Other

Libraries

- Microfilmed original records (census and more)
- Newspapers (microfilmed) for death notices, obituaries, news stories, etc.
- Books for compiled records, histories, genealogies, and more

Keep Researching

- There's always more to learn about your family.

- Stay organized!

- Writing your family's history as you go along! (Don't wait for "someday")

- Remember that names are not always spelled as you expect to find them.

- Different records may give conflicting information.

Thank You!

More Information

- NARA

  www.archives.gov

- NARA Genealogy

  www.archives.gov/genealogy/topics

Presenter didn't get to your question?

You may email us at *inquire@nara.gov*