Googling for Genealogy

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At www.dennisAhogan.com, click on Lectures and Handouts tab

> ➤ *Googling for Genealogy* – this presentation

> ➤ Select a handout and save on your computer

> ➤ Then you can click on links to try out websites

<u>Resources</u>

➤*Google Your Family Tree* by Daniel M. Lynch

    ➤(Lynch, Daniel M. *Google Your Family Tree : Unlock the Hidden Power of Google*. Provo, UT: FamilyLink.com, 2008.)

➤*The Genealogists Google Toolbox* by Lisa Louise Cook

    ➤(Cook, Lisa Louise *The Genealogist's Google Toolbox*. San Ramon, CA:Genealogy Gems Publications, 2011.)
    ➤Also Google Earth for Genealogy Volume I & II (DVD) by Lisa Louise Cook

➤http://www.searchforancestors.com/archives/googlegenealogy.html

Preamble

➢Genealogy Research is NOT = Internet/Google

   ➢5% of the world's genealogy content is on the web

   - Randall J. Seaver, Genea-Musings blogger

   ➢5% of the internet's genealogy content is indexed by Google – Robert Gardner of Google on mocavo.com

   ➢X% of Google's index shows up on Page 1 of results (For easy math let's use 1% - but that's high)

   ➢So 1% of the 5% of the 5% (.01 x .05 x .05 = .000025)
     or about .0025 of 1% of the world's genealogy content can be accessed via Google

Preamble Cont'd

➢ Google is not the only search engine

➢ Search syntax is not the same for every search engine

➢ Anything said about the Internet is almost immediately obsolete

➢ There's some grey areas with Google

How Search Engines Work

- Search Engines continually update their index
  - **Crawl** the web using software spiders/robots
    - Crawlers try to follow all links
    - Crawlers are stopped by search boxes/forms and login screens
  - **Index** each page crawled (each word gets a pointer to the web page where it was found)
  - **Analyze** each page for content value
- When a user submits a search string, search engines:
  - **Search** their index
  - **Rank** the results based on perceived relevancy
    - Google rank emphasizes the number of incoming links
  - **Display** the top results

Googling for Genealogy

Part I - Google searches for genealogy

Part II – Other Google tools relevant for genealogy

Part III – Other search engines relevant for genealogy

Googling for Genealogy

Part I

Google searches for genealogy

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **Stop Words**
  ➢ Depending on context, Google **may** ignore words such as *a, of, the, and, or, to, where, how*
➢ **the republic of ireland** (128,000,000) vs **republic ireland** (120,000,000)
➢ contents of 1st page of results are different
➢ Take Away: Try with & without stop words.

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **Quotes " "**

  ➢Exact contents of quotes must be found

  ➢**"republic of ireland"** (5,320,000) does NOT yield the same results as **republic of ireland** (123,000,000)

  ➢Exception to finding exact contents of quotes: "**hogan john**" returns results such as:

    ➢Nick **Hogan, John** Mayer

    ➢Hulk **Hogan: John** Graziano

➢ Take Away: Quotes are important & punctuation never counts

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➤ **Case**

  ➤ Case insensitive even inside quotes (except for Boolean command OR)

  ➤ **"republic of ireland"** (4,860,000) vs **"Republic of Ireland"** (4,860,000)

  ➤ **republic of ireland** (106,000,000) vs **Republic of Ireland** (106,000,000)

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **AND vs and**

  ➢ **AND** & **and** are usually ignored (stop words)

  ➢ **AND** is no longer a google command

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **OR vs or**

    ➢ **or** is usually ignored (stop word)

    ➢ **OR** between keywords indicates page must contain either keyword (| = OR)

    ➢ **hogan OR hagan** (Particularly helpful with spelling variations)

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢**Order of keywords**

   ➢First (leftmost) is considered most important

   ➢Ex: surname given placename

   ➢**john hogan** (5,350,000) vs **hogan john** (13,400,000)

      ➢Is more better than less?

      ➢Why is **john** returning less results than **hogan**?

➢Take Away: Change the order to see different results

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➤ **Word Variations – Stemming**

  ➤ Incorporates additional searches based on the stem of the search keyword.

➤ Singular/plural, other tenses

➤ **running** yields results including **running, run, runs**

  ➤ **To eliminate stemming**, put quotes around word "running"

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **Minus Sign** with preceding space

  ➢ Removes pages from results that contain the concatenated word

  ➢ **hogan –hulk –heroes** ** Particularly helpful for surnames with common meanings **

➢ **hogan –"hulk hogan" –"hogan's heroes"**

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **Wildcard** (*, **, ***, etc.) within quotes
  ➢ **"john hogan"** will NOT find John F Hogan
  ➢ **"john * hogan"** finds John F Hogan, John F. Hogan, John Frances Hogan, John "JF" Hogan but **not** John Hogan or John J F Hogan or Hogan, John
  ➢ ONLY whole word wildcard is available in Google (* = 1 word). Partial word wildcard is available in some other search engines.
  ➢ **"john ** hogan"** finds John J. "Jack" Hogan and John Smith, George Hogan
➢ **"john *** hogan"** finds
  John and Gertrude (Bovee) Hogan
  John Smith fought George Hogan

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **AROUND**

  ➢ Formerly undocumented "proximity" feature

  ➢ **john AROUND hogan** will find both John Hogan and Hogan, John

  ➢ **john AROUND(20) hogan** indicates that the two search terms should be within about 20 words

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ Searching for names

   ➢ **"john hogan" OR "john * hogan" OR "hogan john"** [best practice]

   ➢ **"john hogan" OR "john * hogan" OR "john ** hogan" OR "john *** hogan" OR "hogan john"**

   ➢ Probably should add a placename/spouse/year range

Google Search Commands & Syntax

> **Number Range**
>> (..) can be used for a range of any type of numbers, including a year range
> **"john hogan" born 1850..1870**
> **"john * hogan was born" 1850..1870**
> **"john hogan" "mary o'toole" married 1850..1870**

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢Some searches for BMD info

  ➢**"john * hogan was born" rochester OR canandaigua**

  ➢**"john * hogan married" rochester OR canandaigua**

   ➢**"john * hogan died" rochester OR canandaigua**

  ➢**"john * hogan was buried" rochester OR canandaigua**

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢Some other search suggestions

  ➢**"john * hogan" obituary**

  ➢**"john * hogan" cemetery**

  ➢**"john * hogan" will**

  ➢**"john hogan" OR "john * hogan" OR "hogan john" obituary**

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **State searches**

   ➢ As in Michigan vs. MI vs. Mich.

   ➢ Prior to the 2-letter state abbreviations (which began ~1963), longer abbreviations were used. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_abbreviations

➢ Take Away (see next slide for results of my unscientific study): Safest technique would be **michigan OR mi OR mich**

Google Search Commands & Syntax

<u>words bolded on results pages:</u>

mi   mi, michigan

michigan   michigan

mich   mich,
                michigan

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **Compound clauses**

  ➢ **(John OR "John J" OR "John James") AND (Hogan OR Hagan)**

➢ Up to 32 keywords can be in a search string

➢ Compound clauses are evaluated from left to right

  ➢ **Parentheses are now ignored by google,** so the above string is effectively:

  ➢ **John OR "John J" OR "John James" Hogan OR Hagan**

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **site:** followed by any domain name
  ➢ Enables a google search of that site only.
  ➢ **site:https://saratoganygenweb.com/ Hogan**
    ➢Useful for GenWeb-type sites!!
  ➢ **"john hogan" OR "john * hogan" OR "hogan john" site:fultonhistory.com**
    ➢"Quick & Dirty" way to search Fulton History site
    ➢No way to simulate important Fulton History features like fuzzy search
  ➢**"john hogan" 1850..1870 -site:abc.com** searches sites except abc.com
  ➢ **site:gov "john hogan" 1850..1870** searches for only sites whose extension is .gov

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➤ **filetype: or ext:**

  ➤ searches for only files of the type indicated

  ➤ **genealogy filetype:xls**

  ➤ **genealogy –filetype:pdf**

  ➤ **hogan filetype:ged**

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➤ **Calculator**

   ➤ Enter **1930 – 73** (for approximate birth year for someone who died in 1930 at the age of 73). Operators available: + - * / ()

   ➤ Birth date calculators plus more are available at http://www.searchforancestors.com/utility/

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **#**

➢ Social Media Topics

  ➢ **#genealogy** searches for genealogy hashtags

  ➢ **#hogan** searches for Hogan hashtags

Google Search Commands & Syntax

➢ **Google Advanced Search**

➢ http://www.google.com/advanced_search

Google

Advanced Search

Find pages with...   To do this in the search box

all these words: Type the important words: `tricolor rat terrier`

this exact word or phrase: Put exact words in quotes: `"rat terrier"`

any of these words: Type OR between all the words you want: `miniature OR s`

none of these words: Put a minus sign just before words you don't want:
                                                            `-rodent, -"Jack Russell"`

numbers ranging from: to   Put 2 periods between the numbers and add a unit of measure:
                                                            `10..35 lb, $300..$500, 2010..2011`

Then narrow your results by...

language: any language   Find pages in the language you select.

region: any region   Find pages published in a particular region.

last update: anytime   Find pages updated within the time you specify.

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Part II
Other Google tools relevant for genealogy

Google Tools & Apps

➢Google search commands and syntax discussed above can be used in all Google tools and applications – Sort of

➢That is a goal which is a work in progress.

➢Some tools are more compliant than others. For example, most any Google web search string can be used in Google Books.
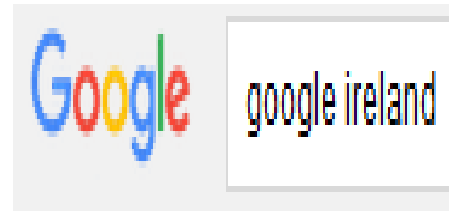
Google Books

➤ http://books.google.com/
➤ Google has digitized millions of books in cooperation with libraries and publishers worldwide. This collection is mainly public domain, out-of-copyright books.
➤ Results of your search will list books with an indication of their availability: Full View, Limited Preview, Snippet View, No Preview.
➤ Many books (Full View) can be downloaded free in PDF format and are fully searchable.
➤ Options are in the column on the left. Note that dates refer to when item was published.

Google's Local Bias

➤ Use the google site of the country you're researching

   ➤ Ex: google.com for US, google.ie for Ireland, google.co.uk for UK, etc.

   ➤ To access google's international websites, enter google *name of country* into the search box, ex:

     & select 1st result.

Google Language Tools

➢ **Select the language of the google interface & search results**

  ➢ https://www.google.com/preferences#languages

➢ **Translate text** – type or cut/paste text in box, select language

  ➢ https://translate.google.com can detect the language and speak the result

➢ **Translate a web page** - enter the url in text box, select language

  ➢https://translate.google.com

➢ **Translate app** – instant translation for android & iOS

Google Alerts

➤ http://www.google.com/alerts
➤ Automates queries to be done 24/7 for you.
➤ Its easy to do.   Just enter the search string and how often you want to be notified: immediately, once a day, once a week. Also indicate whether you want the results delivered to your email or to a RSS reader.
➤ Results do not include sponsor links or spam.
➤ **Results are not cumulative.** For example, using "once a day" frequency, results will reflect items added to the google index since the previous day.

Google Maps

➢ http://maps.google.com/

➢ Maps: enter an address in the search box **Stanley, NY** When the map is displayed, click on a lettered balloon or anywhere on the map. Then click on Street View to see an interactive photo of that address (not all addresses have photos). Street View is available in some foreign countries including Ireland.

➢ Because of local bias, initial map is for the country site you're using.

➢ **catholic church gorham ny** or **gorham ny**

➢ **cemeteries canandaigua ny**

➢ For any view including Street View you can Print, Send (emails a link) and Link (provides link to include in an email or IM & html to imbed on a website).

➢ Entering a county and state yields a map with the county outlined.

➢ See "Google Maps for Genealogy" at

http://dennisahogan.com/lectures-and-handouts

Google Earth

➤ http://www.google.com/earth/index.html

➤ Google Maps on steroids

➤ Free download

➤ Can overlay current images with historic (Rumsey Historical Maps)

➤ *The Genealogists Google Toolbox* by Lisa Louise Cook

  ➤ (Cook, Lisa Louise *The Genealogist's Google Toolbox*. San Ramon, CA:Genealogy Gems Publications, 2011.)

 ➤ Also Google Earth for Genealogy Volume I & II (DVD) by Lisa Louise Cook

➤ See "Google Earth for Genealogy" at http://dennisahogan.com/lectures-and-handouts

Google Images

➢ http://images.google.com/ includes LIFE photo archives

➢ After a search, click on Images in Google bar to bring up related images

➢ **rochester ny vintage**

➢ **rochester ny postcards vintage**

➢ Click the camera icon on the right of the Images search box. You can enter one of your images of a person or building and Google will display similar images.

➢ Click on *Search Tools* which offers options such as *Black and White* (for vintage photos), *Faces*, and *Line Drawings* (for maps).

gmail

➤ gmail.google.com, gmail is a free email service with tagging.

➤ **Best Practice: Use a "permanent" email address (gmail or yahoo) for all genealogy contacts.**

  ➤ Do NOT use an email address provided by your ISP (Internet Service Provider) like roadrunner or aol.

  ➤ Do NOT use an email address provided by an employer or other temporary supplier.

Googling for Genealogy

Part III
Other search engines relevant for genealogy

Easy Genealogy Google Searcher

The Easy Genealogy Google Searcher puts advanced Google features on one page with suggested keywords and advice about how each feature is useful for genealogy searches.

http://www.searchforancestors.com/google/searcher.html

Other Search Engines

➢ 15 Most Popular Search Engines – August 2020
   (http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/search-engines)

1. https://www.google.com/

2. https://www.bing.com/

3. https://search.yahoo.com/

4. http://www.baidu.com/

5. https://www.ask.com/

6. http://www.search.aol.com/

7. https://duckduckgo.com/

8. https://www.wolframalpha.com/

9. https://yandex.com/

10. https://www.webcrawler.com/

11. https://www.search.com/

12. https://www.dogpile.com/

13. https://www.startpage.com/

14. https://www.excite.com/

15. https://www.info.com/

Meta Search Engines

➢ Searches using multiple search engines.

➢ www.dogpile.com … google, yandex, and bing

➢ https://www.yippy.com/ clusters results in "logical" groups, searches Ask, Open Directory, Gigablast and others

➢ www.copernic.com …for "SERIOUS Deep Digging", small fee

➢ https://www.startpage.com/   "world's most private search engine"

Anonymous Search Engines

➢ DuckDuckGo, https://duckduckgo.com/

➢ Searches anonymously – non of your info is communicated to links that you click on.

➢ Results are NOT based on your past search history. Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc. bias your results based on your history.

➢ Runs your search against it's own index as well as about 100 other search engines.

➢ Other search engines providing search privacy:

  ➢www.startpage.com

  ➢Or use the private modes of your browser

Genealogy-Specific Search Engines

➢ Search tools & portals:

➢ Genealogy In Time,

http://www.genealogyintime.com/tools/genealogy-search-engine.html

➢ Ancestor Search, http://www.searchforancestors.com/

➢ Ancestor Hunt, http://www.ancestorhunt.com/

➢ Super Search, http://surnamesupersearch.com/

➢ Linkpendium, http://www.linkpendium.com/

➢ Top Search Engines and Directories,

http://www.academic-genealogy.com/topsearchenginesdirectories.htm

Hinting from Online Family Trees

➢RootsMagic provides tree syncing and hinting with 4 of the largest online trees:

➢https://familysearch.org/

➢http://www.myheritage.com/

    ➢Hints based on both historical records & trees

➢https://www.findmypast.com/

➢http://trees.ancestry.com/

Possible Best Practice for Searching

- ➢ "Automatic" (search-less searching)
  - ➢ Google with your "perfect" search string(s) in a google alert
  - ➢ Hinting from online family trees
- ➢ "Manual"
  - ➢ FamilySearch
  - ➢ Subscription sites: ancestry, myheritage, findmypast
  - ➢ Google
  - ➢ Metasearch tools – duckduckgo, yippy

Happy Hunting