

Things to do:

1. Pick up the phone and call the funeral home or cemetery across the country and request a lookup in their old records?
2. Call, email or write a letter to the author of a book on the family?
3. Call out of state libraries and asked if they have microfilm of the local newspaper for a given year? Do they have an obituary index?
4. Research each ancestor from birth to death: include variant spellings
5. Birth record -- baptismal record -- delayed birth records
6. First year they appear on the census - each year they appear on the federal census all the way through life - read column headings
7. State census records -- non-population schedules -- agriculture, DDD = Defective, Dependent, Delinquent
Read the column headings - State census records contain an amazing amount of information not included in federal census records.
8. Marriage records -- when did parent information begin for that area?
9. Tax records - help cover the time between census years and can help determine when someone moved out of the county
10. Orphan Home's record -- bound out as pauper children
11. Articles of Apprenticeship -- indentures -- bound to someone to learn a skill
12. Military records -- Rev War, War of 1812, CW, WWI, WWII - pension records
Did you know parents could apply? Children could receive a minors pension until age 16
Order pension records from NARA -- online process

13. Ship's passenger lists - 1900 census lists year of arrival and if naturalized - date is not always accurate
Look at all the pages of the ship's list -- other family members may be on the same ship.
14. Naturalization records
15. Death record -- will or probate -- deed - Widow's dower.
If a book was recopied do a search for the old book and compare the two records - they may differ. U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936-2007
16. Newspapers -- input year range and surname - died - death - community
17. Obituary -- where did the children live, listed by husband's name - Mrs. John Doe
18. Cemetery records
19. Findagrave -- search whole cemetery on surname only - sometimes persons are listed by military rank or infant
20. When a wife disappears from the local census records and you can not find a local obituary or cemetery record for her -- where is she?
They had no children who survived to adulthood.
Look at the husbands obituary -- did he belong to a benevolent society? Did that benevolent society have a home for widows and orphans? Sometimes in another state.
21. Contact and interview elderly relatives - distant relatives - descendants of collateral lines-
22. Do not depend on the indexes on those high priced subscription sites to have accurate names in their databases. Learn to research in a way that the spelling of the name does not matter. Do a search on just the first name and a general year of birth with a +- of a year or two. Do not depend on an accurate place of birth either.
23. When searching for birth and death certificates - try searching on the date only plus the county and state.