Introduction to the FamilySearch Catalog

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Access FamilySearch

- From home computer: https://www.familysearch.org/ > Sign in
- From the Main Library: Click the *FamilySearch* icon on the computer desktop > Sign in
- From any branch library: Library home page > **Research > Genealogy > Online Databases** (menu on left) **> FamilySearch** (first entry under "Other Free Online Sources") > Sign in

Icons[1]

📷	Click on this camera icon to access digital images
🔍 📷	Click on camera icon to access digital images; click on magnifying glass to access index to this image set (might be partial index only)
🔑📷	Image viewing is restricted. Click camera icon to determine if and where images can be viewed; e.g., (1) Access the site at a FamilySearch center. (2) Access the site at a FamilySearch affiliate library (3) You may be able to view this image by visiting one of our partners' sites or the legal record custodian (fees may apply). Examples: Farmington, Connecticut, Land records, 1645-1905 (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/327447) Manila, Philippines, Defunciones (Deaths), 1862-1897 (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/365120)
🎞️	FamilySearch has a physical version of the record, but record custodian denies user access to digital images. (If film number begins with numeral 6, this is a fiche and will not be digitized.) Example: Evangelische Kirche Weinbach, Kirchenbuch, 1628-1877 (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/268536)
	No icon. FamilySearch has no physical copy and record custodian denies access to digital images.

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[1] FamilySearch, "What are Notes or Film/Digital Notes in the catalog?" 17 April 2023 (https://www.familysearch.org/en/help/helpcenter/article/what-are-notes-or-film-digital-notes-in-the-catalog : accessed 24 August 2023).

Exploring Catalog Searches

<center>Search by Place (I)</center>

Your subject, Maria Sophia Baca, was born in Monticello, N.M., 24 March 1905. Find her baptism.

- **Search > Catalog > Search by: <u>Place</u>** | Surnames | Titles | Author | Subjects | Keywords
- Enter ***monticello new mexico* > Scroll to relevant result**, highlight and click (United States, New Mexico, Sierra, Monticello) > **Search**

One result: **Church records (1) > Select > *highlight* Church records, 1869-1956 >** 1905 baptism should be in the first entry (Baptisms 1886-1956). The camera icon, with no magnifying glass, shows records have not been indexed.

Click the camera icon to view the images.

Best practice: Always read the descriptive images and the first few pages of the volume to determine how entries were made.

You will need to locate entries for 1905, and then page through the images until you find the Maria Sophia Baca baptism.

When you find the correct entry, always note the image number (*151*, in this case) or copy the FamilySearch stable URL in your citation.[2]

> ***Tip*:** You do not need to capitalize words, use commas, or arrange locations in a specific order.*

> ***Tip*:** As a class, church records tend to be catalogued under the smallest jurisdiction, city, town, or village. If you don't find records there, search under county, and then under state.

<center>Search by Place (II)</center>

Your subject, Alexander Bodkin, was born about 1800 in Kentucky. You think it's likely he is the son of William Bodkin of Harrison County, Kentucky. However, you can't find Alexander in any Kentucky census. What records might help?

- **Search > Catalog > Search by: <u>Place</u>** | Surnames | Titles | Author | Subjects | Keywords
- Enter ***harrison kentucky* > Scroll to relevant result**, highlight and click **(United States, Kentucky, Harrison) > Search**

Before selecting a record type, explore the information about Harrison County, Kentucky, in the "Notes" area at the top of the column. The "Notes" area provides the county's date of creation and parent counties, even details on possible records destruction.

- **Select > Place Information** > In the resulting window, scroll down to "Research Links" and click the drop-down arrow. Select the link to the FamilySearch *Wiki*. The Wiki entry for Harrison County provides information on its organization, parent counties, boundary changes, and record losses. It also provides information on available record groups, research facilities, historical and genealogical societies, and helpful references.

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[2] Copy everything up to the first questions mark in the URL: https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS73-6ZB8.

- Return to the Harrison County, Kentucky, catalog window: **Select > Places within United States, Kentucky, Harrison >** This area lists cities and towns within the county under which more local records can be found. Selecting one will open its records list.
- **Select > Part of United States, Kentucky >** This opens a list of records catalogued under the state. It is always a good idea to look at these. There is also a "Notes" section here that details Kentucky's origins, parent state, and records options.
- Return to the Harrison County records list **> Select > Taxation >**
- There are two original record series here, and we want the earlier one, "Tax books, 1794-1875."
- Select the first listed item to view tax books from 1794-1808 (excluding 1798) by clicking the accompanying camera icon.

> ***Tip***: Look at the author(s) for each record group. A jurisdiction or official usually indicates original records.

- How many images are there?
- Find the book for the year 1800. How are the records arranged?
- How many Bodkin (and variant spellings) entries do you see?

Tax lists serve as census substitutes and fill in the years between censuses. To discover if an Alexander Bodkin ever lived in Harrison County, Ky., you would read each tax year. Surprise! An Alexander Botkin first appears in 1824. For extra credit, try to find him.

> ***Tip***: Tax lists are seldom indexed, so look for published indexes to these records.

Mix and Match Your Search

Mixing and matching search criteria is a good way to discover new information. Possible Catalog search options include "Titles," "Author," "Subjects," and "Keywords."

Your subject attended the Albuquerque School in the 1880s. What was that school like? You know that it was regularly inspected by an agent for the Office of Indian Affairs, so the National Archives should have inspection reports on the school.

Although some federal records, such as census records, are catalogued by location, most are simply catalogued under "United States". A search by place would not be helpful. However, entering *indian affairs* as the **Author** should find all records created by the Office of Indian Affairs and its successor, the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Search > Catalog > Search by: Place | Surnames | Titles | **Author** | Subjects | Keywords

- **Author** enter *indian affairs*

There are far too many results to be useful. Even the 39 results listed under "United States. Office of Indian Affairs" are too many to search productively. Narrow these results by entering filter terms in the **Subjects** or **Keywords** fields.

The **Subjects** field refers to Library of Congress Subject Headings.[3] If you search the Library of Congress Subject Headings, you will find a heading, "Indians of North America—Schools". Prepositions are optional in your search terms and punctuation is a no-no. Add the **Subjects** term *indians north america schools* to the preceding search to see if the results are more manageable.

The **Keywords** field is far more flexible than the **Subjects** field. In general, keywords could be any combination of names of people or things, places, record types, historical time periods, etc. The catalog search will look for these terms in titles, authors, notes, or film descriptions. Two obvious keywords would be *school* and *Albuquerque*.

Search > Catalog > Search by: Place | Surnames | Titles | **Author** | Subjects | **Keywords**

- **Author** enter *indian affairs*
- **Keywords** enter *school albuquerque*

Voila! There are only four results, and all four might be relevant to your research. We will go directly to the entry under **United States. Office of Indian Affairs (1)**, "Reports of inspection of the field jurisdictions of the Office of Indian Affairs, 1873-1900."

- This is a National Archives microfilm publication, M1070, comprising 60 microfilm rolls. Albuquerque School reports are on roll 1.
- Click on the camera icon and see what you find.

> ***Tip:*** The National Archives pamphlet describing a microfilmed series is included at the beginning of Roll 1. If the *FamilySearch* catalog does not include descriptive material (very rare!), look at the first roll in any National Archives microfilm publication.

Many National Archives microfilm publication images can be found on the National Archives catalog, *Ancestry*, or other websites. One of the largest collections, however, can be found on *FamilySearch*. The National Archives publication number is usually entered as a keyword in the FamilySearch catalog, so try the above search again using only **Keywords** enter *M1070*.

Searching is more art, than science. If your search terms don't uncover relevant items, change them!

Search by Microfilm Number

The Catalog Search includes an option to search by microfilm/fiche number (FHL #) or by image group number (DGS #). That search is handy when a journal citation or Ancestry database description includes that number. If *Ancestry* is your go-to site for genealogy research, you should be aware that many of their databases are FamilySearch indexes to its records. Ancestry includes a reference to the FHL microfilm in those search results. Genealogists always consult the best available records, so find that microfilm!

An Ancestry search for Bodkin or Botkin marriages in Indiana uncovered a database reference to a marriage of interest, that of Harrold Ailnon Bodkin to Norma Ruth Beall in Muncie, Indiana, in 1949. The abstract details are extensive, but one shouldn't trust derivative records if the original

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[3] *The Library of Congress*, "Library of Congress Subject Headings PDF Files," (https://www.loc.gov/aba/publications/FreeLCSH/freelcsh.html#About : accessed 7 September 2024).

record is available. Ancestry provides the source, p. 230 in FHL microfilm 002069823. The digitized image might not be available, but if it is, it should be consulted.

- **Search > Catalog > Film/Fiche/Image Group Number (DGS) >** enter *002069823*.
- This microfilm is part of the Delaware County, Indiana, "Marriage records, 1827-1957" series. There are 40 films in this series, so scroll down to the correct film number, "Marriages, v. 68-69, 1949-1950" and click on the camera icon. Astute students will note the magnifying glass icon indicating that this series has been indexed. Since we know the Bodkin-Beall marriage is on page 230, we can skip the index.
- Page 230 is found on image 168. Note that the original record has much more information than the Ancestry database entry. Note also that Bodkin's mother's maiden name was incorrectly transcribed in that database.

The next time a citation provides a FamilySearch microfilm or digital image number, remember how easy it is to locate the original in the FamilySearch catalog.

A Few FamilySearch Records Used in My August Research

Just to give you a taste of the wide range of records available on *FamilySearch* via the Catalog search, here are a few of the records used in the past month in my own research or in that of library patrons.

Bishop's transcripts for St. John's Church, (**Preston, Lancashire)**, 1616-1875 (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/361819/)

Muster/payrolls, and various papers (1763-1808) of the Revolutionary War [**Massachusetts and Rhode Island**] (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/729681/). (Finding records in this collection is tricky, but they are indexed in another collection: "Muster rolls (index file cards) of the Revolutionary War, 1767-1833 [Massachusetts]" (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/746935/). Find your subject in this index first.)

New Hampshire, Cheshire County, Deeds, 1770-1900 (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/56152/)

Probate records, 1871-1946 (**Valencia County, New Mexico**) (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/1167604/)

Registres de l'etat civil de Waldbredimus (**Luxembourg**), 1796-1923 (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/238662/)

Wisconsin, Monroe County, probate records: case files, 1800-1939 (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/2754733/)

Workhouse registers, 1845-1913 (**Enniskillen, Ireland**) (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/240954/)