

FOR THE RECORDS

Print resources are still valuable in a digital world

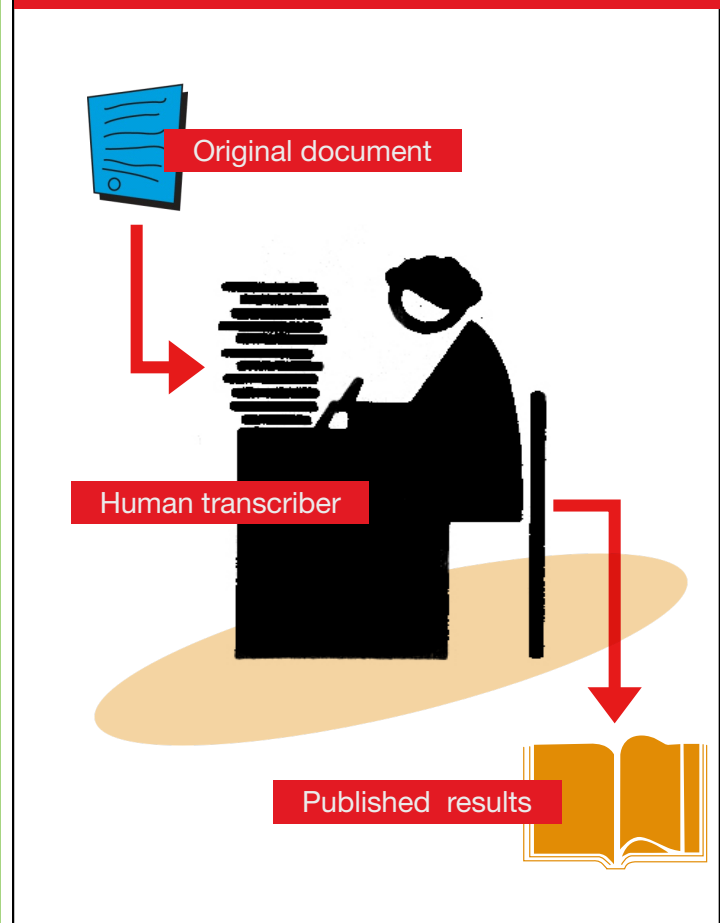
With advances in digitization, more and more genealogical research has shifted online. History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library has shifted much of its instruction to online, as well, and now offers classes on how to use Ancestry and FamilySearch effectively.

The advancement in digitization has greatly improved access for researchers. Regional records such as probate, deeds, and church records, have become increasingly available thanks to these efforts. All of this is fantastic. Not only has it enhanced access, but it has also resulted in an ever-increasing body of more accurate genealogical work.

However, a result of this advancement is that many beginning researcher have not had the experience of working with print research collections. As more original records go online, the value and techniques associated with using print collections are getting lost. This is unfortunate, because a lot of information in print collections cannot be found online. Genealogical indexes, transcriptions, and abstracts in print are excellent but often underutilized tools for genealogical research.

For decades, the only way to gain access to local records was to visit the courthouses. This limited genealogical research to those who had the means to travel. The Family History Library microfilmed many records and made them available through its microfilm loan program. In the meantime, researchers all over the country spent decades transcribing, abstracting, and indexing these records, producing thousands of volumes of county record book transcriptions, indexes, and abstracts. Many of these books have made their way into the collection of History and Genealogy at St. Louis County Library and countless other libraries across the country.

Genealogical indexes, transcriptions, and abstracts



Deeds

Deed records tend to follow a formulaic process whereby the deed is identified by the grantor and grantee. Their names appear at the top of the deed and make it easy for local courthouses to locate them. Courthouses generally created grantor and grantee indexes in order to locate deeds for their own use. The limitations to this practice lies in the indexes' purpose: it is for the courthouse's use, not the genealogical researcher. Grantor and grantee indexes are not every-name indexes.

Bequeath unto my beloved wife Jane all my kitchen Furniture, Bed and Bedding her Choice Chest with drawers, Cupboard Dining Table in the East end of the House four Chairs, looking Glass, round Tea Table, one Horse and Saddle her Choice, two Cows also her Choice, three Sheep to be kept for her use, the use of the room in the East end of the house, with sufficiency of Firewood cut and haled convenient and otherwise Comfortably supported, maintained and furnished with every necessary during her natural life at the expence of my Son Joseph.

I Give and Bequeath unto my four daughters viz. Mary Intermarried with James Rankin, Margaret intermarried with Isaac Moore Sarah intermarried with James Rankin and Abigail intermarried with William Rankin each the Sum of ten pounds to be paid them respectively in two years after my decease, which sums so paid to be in full (with what they have already received) of their shares of my Estate real and personal. I Give and bequeath unto my Son Alexander the whole Amount of his wages for the School he now teaches; and also a good horse and Saddle to be paid for by my Sons Joseph and Ebenezer, I bequeath unto my Son James the Sum of Ten pounds to be paid in two years after my decease, which with what he has already received to be in full of his share of my Estate both real and personal

I Dec 5, 1796 Jan 4, 1797
 McGinley, John. Executors: Moses McClean, Joseph and Edward
 McGinley. Hamiltonsban Township. Wife: Jane McGinley. Children:
 Mary wife of James Rankin, Margaret wife of Isaac Moore, Abigail wife of
 William Rankin, Alexander, John, Joseph, and Ebenezer.

to be paid him the 1st day of April
 day of November next ensuing
 full of his share of my

Estate real and personal. I farther will and order that my Sons Joseph and Ebenezer afore-

Will of John McGinley, 1797 (York Co., Pennsylvania, FamilySearch, Pennsylvania Probate Records, 1683-1994 Wills v.H-K 1789-1803). Inset: abstract in *Abstracts for York County, Pennsylvania Wills, 1749-1819*, p. 159.

Why is this important? Here is an example: James Maginley was born about 1700 in County Antrim, Ireland. A deed issued in 1769 to Amos Maginley, cites a 1745 purchase by James Maginley of 1100 acres from Charles Carroll in Carroll's Delight, a tract of land in present day Adams Co., Pennsylvania. Carroll's land grant from Lord Baltimore was filed in Anne Arundel Co., Maryland. This suggests James Maginley arrived in Maryland between 1700-1745. However, in Baltimore Co., Maryland, James Maginley appears as a witness to a deed in 1724. This evidence suggests he actually arrived earlier. That is important evidence that could not be located using grantor and grantee indexes but was included in a book of deed transcriptions.

The July 2019 *PastPort* feature article, "[Freely and without coercion": Deed Records under Coverture](https://bit.ly/3clu0BL)" <<https://bit.ly/3clu0BL>>, discussed the practice of coverture and how the rights of dower and curtesy were documented in deeds via deed acknowledgement or dower / curtesy release. As the article indicates, spouses were generally not recorded in grantor / grantee indexes, making print indexes, abstracts, and transcriptions valuable sources for such information.

Probate

Unlike deeds, which generally result in a single document, many different records are produced during the probate

and principally - I commit my soul into the hands of Almighty God
 and my body to the earth to be decently buried. and after my
 debts and funeral expenses are paid I devise and bequeath as follows
 Item I give and bequeath unto Catharine Crumrine my daughter the
 sum of fifty dollars.
 Item I give and bequeath unto my son Philip Crumrine fifty dollars
 Item I give and bequeath unto my son Michael Crumrine sixty dollars
 Item I give and bequeath to Elizabeth, first late Elizabeth Crumrine my
 daughter in case she survives her husband and becomes a widow the
 sum of one hundred dollars. and in case she dies before her husband
 I wish that this one hundred dollars shall be divided equally between
 her children lawfully to be begotten share and share alike
 Item I give and bequeath to my daughter Mary Wilson late Mary
 Crumrine the sum of one hundred dollars.
 Item I give and bequeath to my daughter Peter Crumrine the sum of forty dollars.
 Item I give and bequeath all the rest and residue of my estate both
 real and personal to be divided between my wife Catharine Crumrine
 and my children by her begetten namely Malena, Henry, Susanna,
 Margaret, Martin, John, Jacob and Eliza Crumrine my wife
 Catharine Crumrine to hold possession of my farm upon which
 I at present reside in Perry County and State of Ohio for ten

Will of Christian Crumrine, 1821 (Perry County, Ohio, Probate Book A, p. 20)

process. Probate files are generally only indexed by testator or as intestate, depending on whether the deceased had a will or not. Only about 10% of individuals file a will, and only about 30% of estates enter probate. It is important to note that not all probate records pertain to deceased individuals. They are also provided for persons living under guardianship, in cases involving mental illness, for example. Most courthouses have an index of testators. However, wills often include many other names, including spouses, parents, children, in-laws, witnesses, executors or executrixes, clerks, etc.

When no will exists, letters of administration are filed, and the probate court appoints an administrator / administratrix. In

most cases, these records are the first part of the probate case file. Other records within the case file include notices of probate, inventory of the estate, receipts and ledgers, estate sale, guardianships, and other related documents. Despite the significant quantity of names recorded in these records, the courthouse will generally only provide an intestate index for these records. Occasionally, there may be an index of administrators / administratrix.

Church registers

It should be of no surprise that much like deeds and probate, church registers, when indexed – generally follow the same

Anna Maria, b. 4 Feb 1789, bapt. 19 Apr 1789, of Christian Krumrein and Elisabeth. Sponsor: Anna Maria, daughter of Andreas Beltz.

Anna Maria Magdalena, b. 2 Apr 1795, bapt. 28 June 1795, of Christian Krumrein and Maria Catharina. Sponsors: Peter Beltz, Maria Magdalena.

Anna Barbara, b. 10 June 1797, bapt. 13 Aug 1797, of ... Krumrein and Catharina. Sponsor: Margaretha Moll.

Henrich, b. 11 Apr 1799, bapt. 19 May 1799, of Christian Crumrine and Catharina. Sponsors: Parents.

Christian Krummrein's wife Maria Elisabeth, buried 17 Nov 1792, 28y, 2m.

Christian Krummrein's wife Margaretha, buried 18 Sept 1793, 26y.

Abstracts of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church Records for the Crumrine family from *Early Church Records of Loudoun County, Virginia*

pattern of only indexing the individual who was baptized, married, or buried. This is a disadvantage, because church records are often the first place genealogists turn when civil records are missing. Church registers generally include the names of parents of individuals and sometimes-even grandparents; along with witnesses, godparents, and the cleric who conducted the rites. All of this is useful evidence for the genealogist.

Case study: two, three or four wives?

Christian Crumrine's will probated in 1821 in Perry Co., Ohio names fourteen children: six adults and eight minors. The six adults are entered into the will individually and appear to be by birth order:

Catherine Krumryne, my daughter [...] Philip [...] Michael [...] Elizabeth Fore, late Elizabeth Krumryne, my daughter [...] my daughter, Mary Wilson, late Mary Krumryne [...] Peter [...]

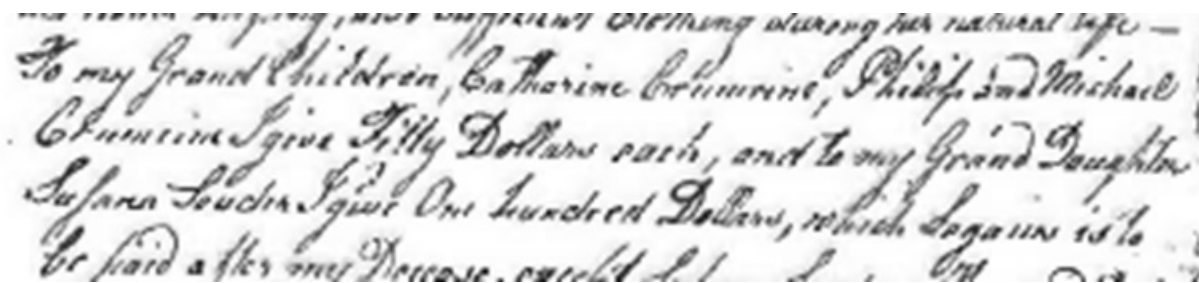
The eight minors are recorded as "begotten" by then wife

Catherine, suggesting the prior children are from a different spouse:

I give and bequeath all the rest...both real and personal to be divided between my wife Catherine Krumryne and my children by her begotten namely Molena, Henry, Susanna, Margaret, Martin, John, Jacob and Eliza Krumryne.

Migration research revealed that the Crumrines settled in Perry Co, Ohio in 1810, having travelled along Zane's Trace and Braddock's Road from Loudoun County, Virginia where they had lived within "the German Settlement."

The genealogical transcription book, *Early Church Records of Loudoun County, Virginia* (Mary Hiatt, Westminster, Md.: Family Line Publications, 1995, call no. 975.528 H623E), includes the church registers of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church. The registers include baptisms for four Crumrine children corresponding to Mary Wilson (Anna Maria, 1787), Molena (Anna Maria Magdalena, 1795), Susanna (Anna Barbara, 1797), and Henry (Heinrich, 1799). Due to the ordering



Catherine, Philip, and Michael Crumrine are mentioned in the will of Anthony Souder, 1803 (Probate Court Book G, p. 137, Loudon County, Virginia)

of children in Christian Crumrine’s will, it is possible Anna Barbara could be an additional child, not named in the will. The baptism of Anna Maria (1787) names the mother as Elizabeth. The other three name Catherina or Maria Catherina as their mother.

Two wives of Christian Crumrine are recorded in the burial register: Maria Elizabeth (1792) and Margaretha (1793). There are no marriage registers for this congregation – but it would appear from the burial information that Christian Crumrine had three wives: Maria Elizabeth (with whom he had six children), Margaretha, and Catherine (with whom he had eight children).

However, a will index for neighboring Frederick County, Maryland, indexes a will filed in 1803 by Anthony Souder. In this index are three Crumrines: Michael, Peter, and Catherine. Indeed, Anthony Souder identifies these Crumrines in his will as his grandchildren. They do not appear in the local will index for Frederick County.

It would be very easy for someone to make the jump (and many have) that Maria Elizabeth [surname unknown] is the daughter of Anthony Souder. But we know from the transcriptions of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church, included in

Early Church Records of Loudoun County that Anna Maria (Mary Wilson) was born in 1787 to Elizabeth and Christian Crumrine. If Anthony Souder named his grandchildren in his will in 1803, why did he not name Anna Maria? In addition, what about Elizabeth and Peter, named in Christian Krumryne’s will in Perry Co. Ohio?

If a researcher only found Anthony Souder’s will or only the church records of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church, it would be very easy to see how one might only identify two or three wives of Christian Crumrine. By using the genealogical transcripts, abstracts, and indexes available in print, and conducting exhaustive research in neighboring counties, we know that Christian Crumrine of Loudoun County, Virginia and later Perry Co., Ohio actually had four wives.

Limitations

Print indexes, abstracts, and transcriptions are secondary sources, meaning the researcher is relying on the accuracy and interpretation of the transcriber. Researchers can encounter the same limitations in print indexes that they do in searching databases. Names are sometimes spelled incorrectly based on poor documentation or poor transcription. In some cases, transcribers miss whole names or misinterpret text.

For example, in his 1796 will, John Maginley (McGinley) named all of his children. In Abstracts of York County, Pennsylvania (Westminster, Md.: Family Line Publications, 1995, call no. 974.841 W949A), abstractor F. Edgar Wright identifies seven children documented in the will: Mary, Margaret,

NEW! Index to PastPorts

An index to *PastPorts* issues, 2008–2020 now [online](https://bit.ly/2M3I2js) <https://bit.ly/2M3I2js>.

Abigail, Alexander, John, Joseph, and Ebenezer. However, according to the will recorded in the York County register of wills, there were nine children including daughter Sarah and son James:

[...]beloved wife Jane [...] my son Joseph [...] my four daughters [...] Mary intermarried with James Rankin, Margaret intermarried with Isaac Moore, Sarah intermarried with James Rankin, and Abigail intermarried with William Rankin [...] Son Alexander [...] Son James [...] Son John [...] son [...] Ebenezer. *[McGinley, John, Will, 1797, York Co., Pennsylvania, FamilySearch, Pennsylvania Probate Records, 1683-1994 Wills v. H-K 1789-1803 FHL# 22133]*

In this particular instance, the will specifies that there were “four daughters.” It is important to be aware that transcribers are human, and humans make mistakes, especially when tran-

scribing or abstracting records written in 18th century handwriting!

Despite these limitations, it is to the researcher’s advantage to seek out and utilize genealogical indexes, transcriptions, and abstracts in print. Researchers who focus only on available online records—and the limited indexing attached to these resources—will surely miss much of the hidden evidence that is out there to find.

Accessing print resources

I would hope that it is clear at this point that a primary value of these print volumes lies in the ability to locate individuals who are documented in original records, but not locatable with the originating parties’ method of searching. Print volumes are also great aid for understanding and interpreting records. Often the handwriting on original records can be difficult to read. Wills, deeds, and other records were recorded by the clerk of the court and as such often recorded in the court book en masse. As the clerk’s hands got tired, the handwriting would grow more difficult to read. The benefit of the transcriptions is that the transcriber has looked at the clerk’s handwriting over-and-over and has an advantage in deciphering the clerk’s handwriting that fresh, un-indoctrinated eyes do not possess.

History and Genealogy at St. Louis County Library collects genealogical indexes, transcriptions, and abstracts in print for all eastern states and those bordering the western side of the Mississippi River including Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa, and Mississippi. Some sources are also available for states in which migration from Missouri occurred, including Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas. Transcriptions and indexes are generally shelved in the library by state and county. You can search for these titles using the St. Louis County Library’s [online catalog](https://webpac.slcl.org/) <webpac.slcl.org>.

For more information on locating these resources, consult our Virtual Tutorial, [“Finding Genealogical Records”](https://bit.ly/38rWHvF) <https://bit.ly/38rWHvF> and our virtual class [“Library Skills for Genealogical Research”](https://bit.ly/30zTcyT) <https://bit.ly/30zTcyT>. The videos are available on the [History & Genealogy website](http://bit.ly/3vha4Zu) <http://bit.ly/3vha4Zu> and the library’s [YouTube channel](https://bit.ly/20LVCb6) <https://bit.ly/20LVCb6>.

Of note

St. Louis County Library buildings scheduled to reopen on March 23

All St. Louis County Library locations will reopen on March 23 by appointment. Reopening details will be announced on March 16 and made available on the [library’s website](https://www.slcl.org/) <https://www.slcl.org/>.

Appointments can be made online through the libraries website or by calling 314-994-3300.

Remote access to Ancestry Library Edition extended

St. Louis County Library is able to extend remote access to the Ancestry Library Edition database through the end of June 2021. Remote users should login through the library’s [database page](http://bit.ly/3evfVo1) <http://bit.ly/3evfVo1>. A valid St. Louis County Library card is required. Requirements for obtaining a card and an online application form is on the [library’s website](https://www.slcl.org/content/library-cards) <https://www.slcl.org/content/library-cards>.

Live History & Genealogy classes via Zoom webinar


Classes are free and open to the public. Registration is required. [Register online](https://www.slcl.org/events) <https://www.slcl.org/events> or call 314-994-3300. Classes will be conducted over Zoom webinar. Times listed are Central Time.

Saturday, March 27, 10:00 a.m.

Library Skills for Genealogical Research

Libraries offer essential tools for researching your ancestry. Learn how to search online library catalogs, obtain materials from distant libraries, locate periodical articles, and use the library's in-house guides. *Prerequisite: Who Were my Ancestors? Beginning Genealogical Research class or previous research experience.* | [Register](#)

St. Louis Genealogical Society
49th Annual Family History Conference



ALL ROADS LEAD TO MISSOURI
1-2 May 2021

Featuring
Patti Hobbs, CG
PLUS
Local Speakers

[View details and register online](#)
<https://bit.ly/3agbydH>

Thursday, April 1, 6:30 p.m.

Exploring FindMyPast for Irish Research

Find My Past is to Irish research what Ancestry.com is to American research. Learn how this database can help you research your ancestors from the Emerald Isle. | [Register](#)

Wednesday, April 7, 6:30 p.m.

Researching 20th-Century Military Veterans

Learn about records related to 20th-century military service and tips for locating information. The Instructor will give an overview of print and digital sources and provide information about obtaining records from the National Archives. | [Register](#)

Tuesday, April 13, 6:30

Jumping the Pond: Discovering Your German Ancestral Village

Finding your ancestor's place of origin is essential to research progress. Learn about sources and get tips for discovering this sometimes-elusive information. | [Register](#)

Saturday, April 24, 10:00

Who Were my Ancestors? Beginning Genealogical Research

If you have little or no research experience, this is the class for you. Learn about the genealogical research process and the many resources available in History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library. | [Register](#)

Monday, April 26, 6:30

The Google Earth of the Last Century: Fire Insurance Maps

Curious about what your ancestor's living or work situation might have been like? Fire insurance maps offer a glimpse of the urban built environment in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Case studies will show how to use them to solve different research problems. | [Register](#)

Check out the History & Genealogy
[Virtual Classroom](#)
View class recordings free and on-demand
<https://www.slcl.org/genealogy/virtual-classroom>

St. Louis Genealogical Society Programs

StLGS meetings are free and open to the public, but registration is required. [Visit the St. Louis Genealogical Society website for registration information](https://stlgs.org/) <https://stlgs.org/>. Meetings will be conducted using Zoom.

Saturday, April 10, 10:00 a.m.

StLGS General Membership Meeting

Researching Catholic Records

The Catholic Archdiocese of St. Louis encompasses the counties of Franklin, Jefferson, Lincoln, Perry, St. Charles, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, St. Louis, Warren, and Washington. Learn from the Archdiocese's archivist, Rena Schergen, how to research these valuable records that include parishes, schools, orphanages, priests, cemeteries, religious orders, and more.

Tuesday, April 27, 7:00 p.m.

Irish Special Interest Group

Exploring Griffith's Primary Valuation of Ireland

In the absence of so many census records, Griffith's Valuation has become the gem for genealogists researching nineteenth century Ireland.

PastPorts is published by History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library, located on Tier 5 of Library Headquarters.

[Current and past issues can be downloaded from the web](http://www.slcl.org/pastports) <http://www.slcl.org/pastports>.

Contact us:

History & Genealogy
St. Louis County Library
1640 S. Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63131

314-994-3300
genealogy@slcl.org
www.slcl.org/genealogy

History & Genealogy services

The following H&G services are available during library building closure.

Photocopies

H&G can provide photocopies, prints, or digital scans of many library materials, including:

- Books and periodicals—up to 30 pages from one book or one article from a single journal issue. Staff can also photocopy or scan tables of contents and index pages.
- Microfilmed records—A list of microfilm available in the H&G collection can be [viewed online](https://bit.ly/3jrqw3j) <https://bit.ly/3jrqw3j>.
- Databases—H&G staff will print out database records if patrons cannot access the database at home.

Please use the [online lookup request form](https://bit.ly/2UQXJKE) <https://bit.ly/2UQXJKE> and be as specific as possible when submitting requests.

Print collection

One-third of the books in H&G's collection—more than 27,000—can be checked out. The entire collection is included in the library's [online catalog](http://webpac.slcl.org) <http://webpac.slcl.org>. Books with call numbers that do not begin with "R" are available to check out. Patrons can request books online or by calling 314-994-3300.

Research guidance

H&G staff members can provide research assistance over the phone or by email. Researchers whose information needs cannot be met in this way may schedule an appointment for a face-to-face meeting with an H&G librarian.

Book-a-Genealogist

Researchers who would like in-depth assistance can schedule a phone consultation with an H&G staff member. Requests can be made using the online [Book-a-Genealogist form](https://bit.ly/3fQbB0r) <https://bit.ly/3fQbB0r>.

Database access

Most library databases can be used at home by St. Louis County Library card holders living in the metropolitan area. The Ancestry Library Edition database, normally restricted to in-library use, can be accessed remotely on a temporary basis. [View the list of genealogical databases on the library's website](https://bit.ly/37GRBtF) <https://bit.ly/37GRBtF>.

For more information, please contact the History & Genealogy Department at 314-994-3300 or genealogy@slcl.org.