Genealogy II: How I fIT: Finding your genealogy source code.

Review Notes

Opening – main point

Our training in IT has trained us to look for solutions/fixes to problems. This is what we do! This type of thinking is transactional. Coding in any programing language is about transactions that satisfy a known question or reveal a desired endpoint. For the work of family history, I invite you to change gears and think in terms of a transformative journey. Hard work but also heart work.

Therefore, we should **accept and expect that there will be a lack of closure a**s we dive into genealogy and family history.
Too often I see folks dive into these waters expecting to surface with the full name, eye and hair color, country, state, and numbered street address of their most distance ancestor. In most cases this is too high an expectation.
As you go about your fam hx work, expect to be transformed. Expect to grow in your discoveries. This work is to be transformative (not transactional) – the intent is for you to be changed by discoveries and insights. You find reasons for inspiration in this work. This is a journey in which you will never reach the end. After all, you are a part of this story, as are your children, and their children, and so on.

Today we will ask better questions; transformational questions.

Overview of some of the major resources
What 'finds' are possible with:

- Family History and Genealogy resource guide
- https://guides.library.duke.edu/familyhistory
- The Big Four Genealogy **Websites** – Ancestry.com, FamilySearch, Findmypast and MyHeritage.
- T**ree builder software** packages:
  - GenoPro at https://genopro.com/
  - Family Tree Builder by MyHeritage https://www.MyHeritage.com/
  - Find my past https://www.findmypast.com/

Methodology: Scavenger hunt challenges

Find the burial site of an ancestor

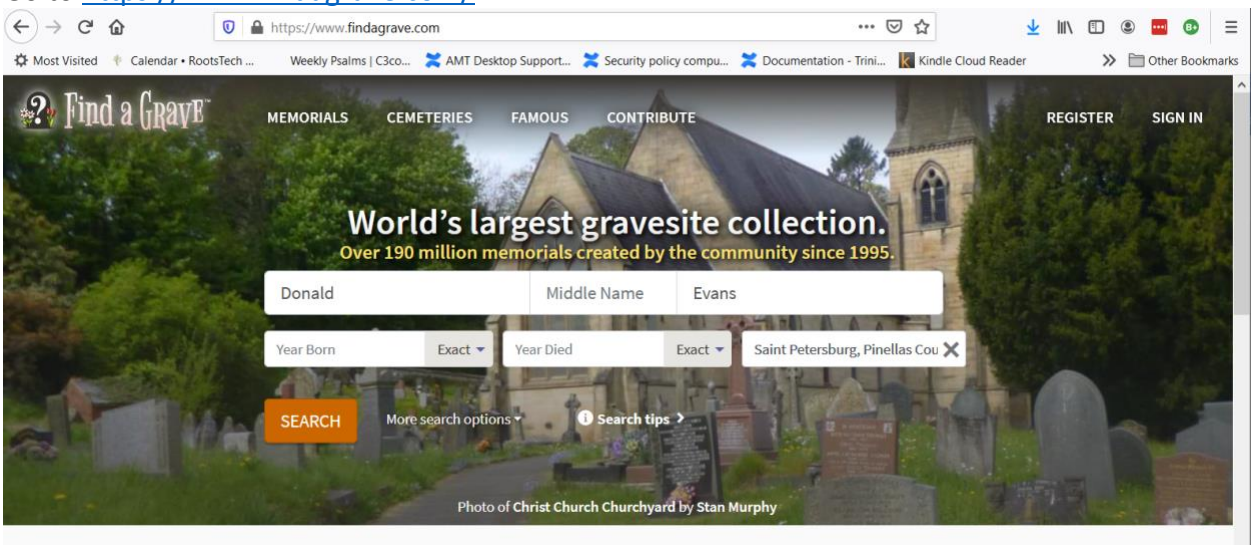
Use a **burial** website: BillionGraves.com and FindAGrave.com are the two leading sites for this purpose.
Is there a cemetery database in your ancestor's local town, city, county?

- Example: Alachua county
  Alachua County Virtual Cemetery Project Search

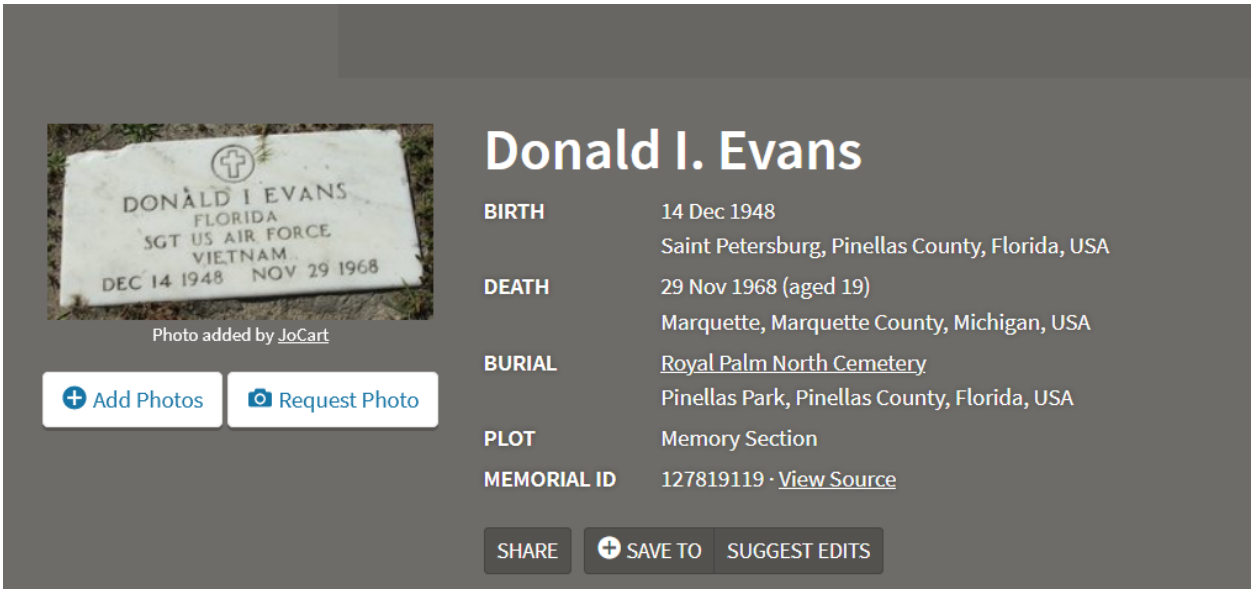
- Is there a record produced by the ancestor's religious community, professional community?

- Example: CEDAR HILL CEMETERY aka ERWIN MILLS CEMETERY here in Durham began as a cemetery for employees who could not afford burial elsewhere. Later, other people were also buried there.

Find an ancestor using Find a grave website.
Go to https://www.findagrave.com/



This search revealed too many results. How to narrow?



I searched on “Donald I. Evans” since I have an item with his middle initial.
Talk about items you may possess with valuable clues.

Find codes and clues on items you own.

If you are working from home, think about items you have from an ancestor. What do you have? What clues are there that can be followed up on?
Do you have books once owned by an ancestor? There may be an initial, a middle name, and address hand written inside that can help.

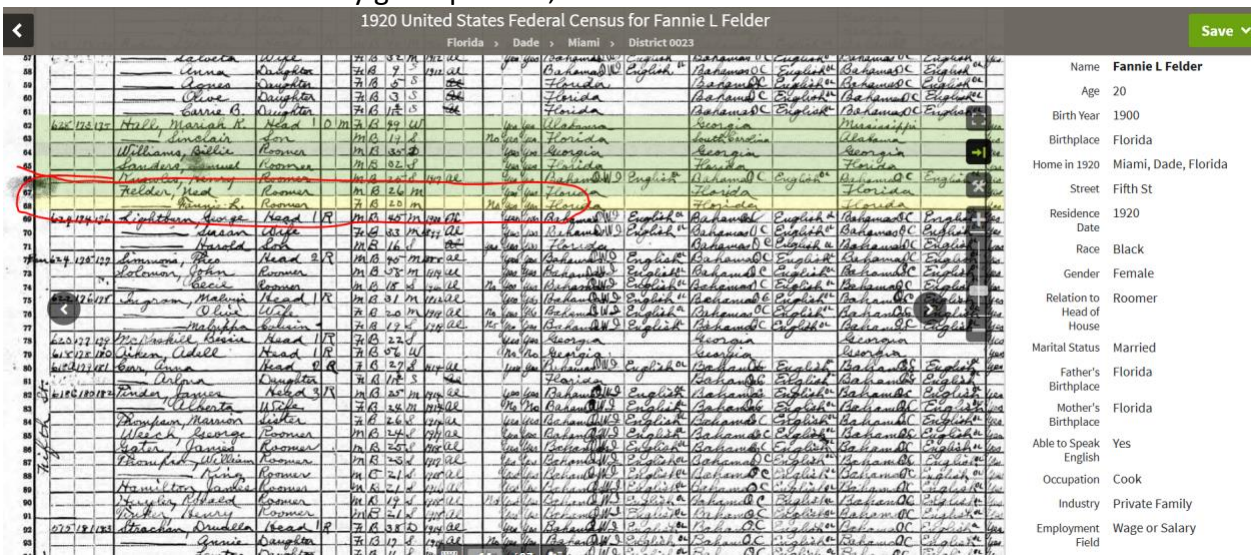
Remember that search for “Donald Evans”? Where did I get his middle initial?
When he died, I inherited his old record collection.

Family Bibles often have valuable data in them. Look for names and dates.
Do you have old photos? You probably have some taken by the Olan Mills company.
Flip them over on the back. The picture has a number on the back. The number is a file number used by Olan Mills Sr. (1904-1978). Olan Mills' proofs have an identification number that tells the company which studio took the picture and when it was taken, as well as the pose. For instance, take the ID number 9801 041501: The first four digits identify the studio; the next six give the date, April 15, 2001.

Look for things that may seem out of place

Here we will focus on census records.
Play a game of what's wrong with this picture?
Any odd/misspellings?
Any missing or additional persons?
Do the ages make sense?

Example:
Look at census record of my grandparents, Fannie and Ned Felder



Q. What's wrong this is record?
A. Where is their 2-year child/my mom? Not finding her here lead to the discovery of how they left her with a relative, while they went off in search of work. Mom being missing from the census record cause me to ask questions; resulting in this discovery.

Look for a "news" report on an ancestor

Search the following online sources:
Chronicling America
Google
Newspapers.com

DISLOYAL TALK LANDS A NEGRO IN CITY'S JAIL

Expressions that were hostile to the the United States army landed Ned Felder, a negro, in the city jail and he had reason to congratulate himself that he was in jail as he narrowly missed being roughly handled. Fortunately for the negro only one white man heard the negro express the hope that the Germans would kill every American soldier in France. The one white man who heard the remark, made as the County guard marched up Central avenue Monday night, promptly caught Felder by the nape of the neck and kicked him several times. He then turned the negro over to the police.

In municipal court Felder was fined $15 and costs. He claimed he had not said anything against the army and protested that he is registered for army service and is loyal but the testimony of the white man who heard the statements was convincing. The negro realized that he was in danger, as he said to Judge Maurer:

"That white man would sure have killed me last night if he had had a gun. They hustled me about so I did not know what was happening."

Felder came here from Gainesville and is a waiter in a restaurant.

Article from:
The Evening Independent - Jan 16, 1918
Front Page

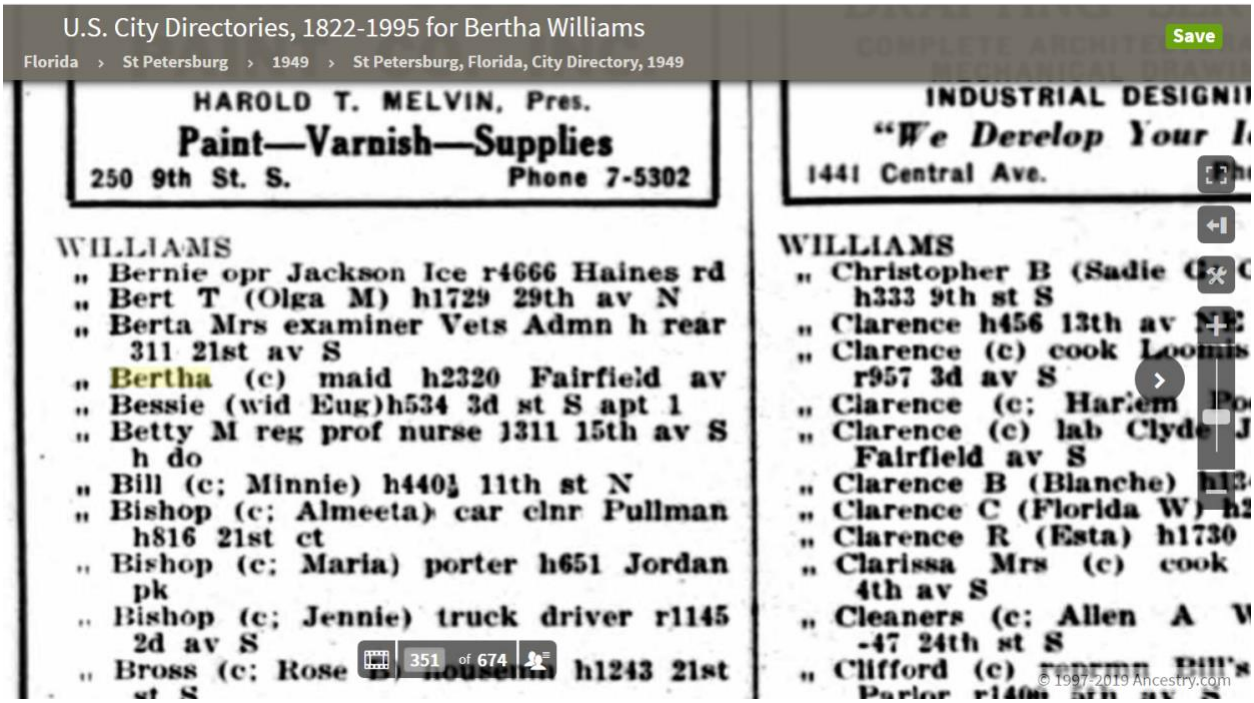
Note, when you see money amounts, think of the value in terms of today's currency. According to online calculator at https://www.dollartimes.com/inflation/inflation.php?
$15 in 1918 equates to about $275 today.

Ask questions to discover more of the story. What was Ned doing to make money? Was this a sacrifice?
For many Blacks of the day ,this situation would lead to a peonage system incarceration.

In a city directory find an ancestor's race and occupation

A city directory will contain an alphabetical list of citizens, listing the names of the heads of households, their addresses, and occupational. In 1957 we see Willie and Christine Wilcox in the phonebook/city directory. Note he was listed as a cook.

See the image below out of the 1949 phonebook. Note that race data was given. If the person was black note there is a "c" next to their name – stands for "colored."

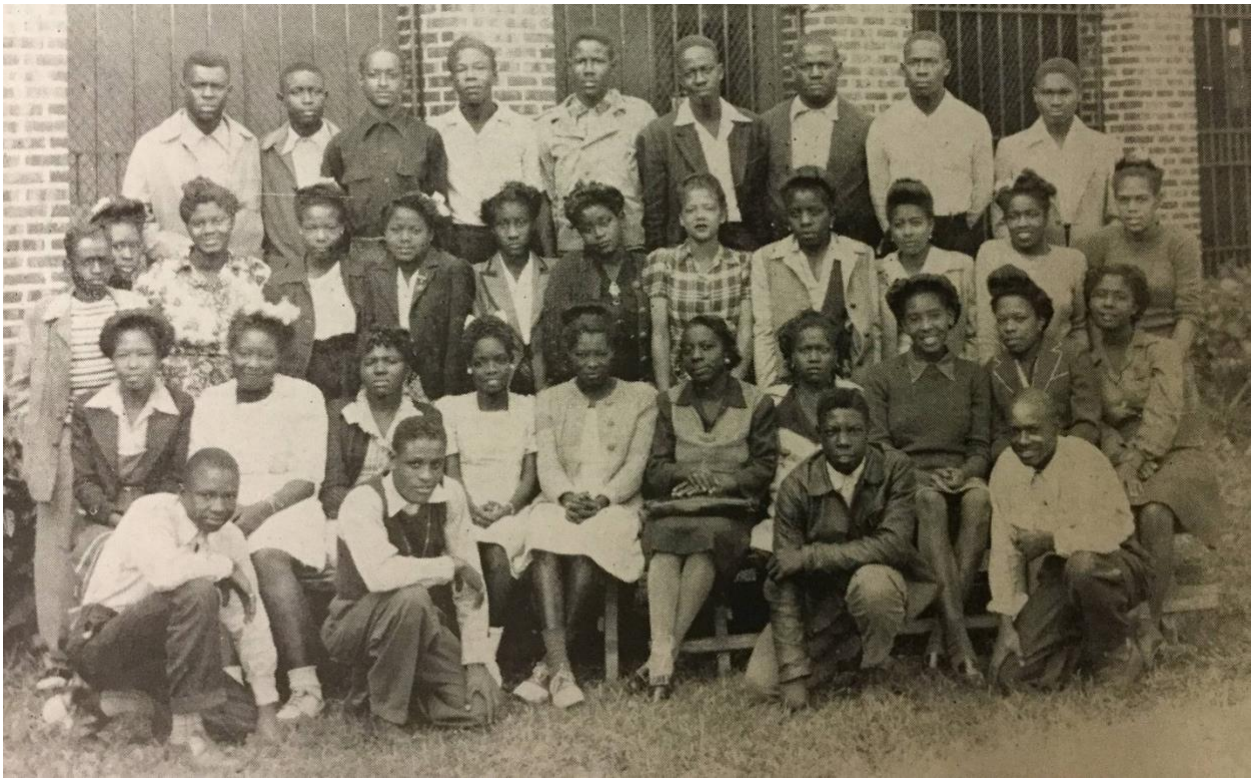


Find a family friend/co-worker, neighbor of an ancestor in a city directory.
Find unmarried female ancestor directory listing, then find her after a marriage. Did the address change? Did she own property?

Search Yearbooks for ancestors

Ancestry.com is one place to look for yearbooks, another is
https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/where-to-find-high-school-and-college-yearbooks-online/

Ask questions:
Why is ancestor not in the expected yearbook?
Mom drop out to care for grandmother
What interests did your ancestor have?
Any surprises?
Example:
A 1945 High School yearbook revealed a class photo below. Individual named photos were not available, only group shots. A careful search of the photos and I found my step mom in the group photo! She is 2nd row down from the top, one in from the end of the row on the right. Some family faces are quite easy to recognize.



Find articles in Google newspaper archives

Use https://news.google.com/newspapers to search for names of family in local newspapers. Look for newspaper reporting of events (narrow timeframe) your ancestors would have read or even been a part of.

What city development was in the works (new buildings/industry)?
What ads might your ancestor have seen?

Talk about differences between the Duke Library edition and the paid edition of Ancestry.

Search Maps and Google earth for ancestors

Find street address of ancestor's house.
Look at historical view and look at current view. What's changed?
Historical imagery is only in **Google Earth Pro** - the desktop application. Not available in the online version.

There is https://earthengine.google.com/timelapse/ which is technically 'historical' imagery, not quite as high resolution as the stuff in Google Earth itself, but better worldwide coverage.

Google Earth automatically displays current imagery. To see how images have changed over time, view past versions of a map on a timeline.

1. Open Google Earth.
2. Find a location.
3. Click **View** › **Historical Imagery** or, above the 3D viewer, click Time .

Locate an ancestors neighborhood using the 1930's Home Owners Loan Corporation red line maps

Use https://dsl.richmond.edu/socialvulnerability/website for Mapping InequalityRedlining in New Deal America
Did ancestor live in a red lined area?
How was the area described?

Use Google and commands to search an ancestor by name

The **AND** command word.

> This command word combines words. When no commands are in the search, Google will assume that **AND** is the command. **AND** must be capitalized for Google to recognize it as a command word.
>
> For example, when you type in **Shed AND Phyllis Lembric**
>
> Google will only show results that contain both the names Shed and Phyllis Lembric. That's about 2,000 results for you to look at instead of the 6,000,000 results you get by searching **Shed and Phyllis Lembric**

The **OR** command word.

> This command word combines words and asks for results that contain either one item or another. Say I wanted to search for one word/phrase or another, the **OR** must be capitalized.
>
> Sometimes you may want to search variations of an ancestor's name. In my case, I knew that my Great-grandfather signed his name in two different ways. Sometimes he wrote

"ASJ Allen and other times he used his first name and wrote "Albert SJ Allen." Here is how I searched for one or the other in the same search.

Searching **"ASJ Allen" OR "Albert SJ Allen"** results in about 300 hits.

Searching for **"ASJ Allen" or "Albert SJ Allen"** will return about 3 results and a message of "It looks like there aren't many great matches for your search."

Notice in the search above how I used the quotation marks. If you want to search for an exact phrase use " " to surround the exact phrase. For example, I performed searches for **"Albert Allen"** and also **"Allen, Albert"** to reveal results from sites that may place the last name in front of the first name.

The ***** command word.

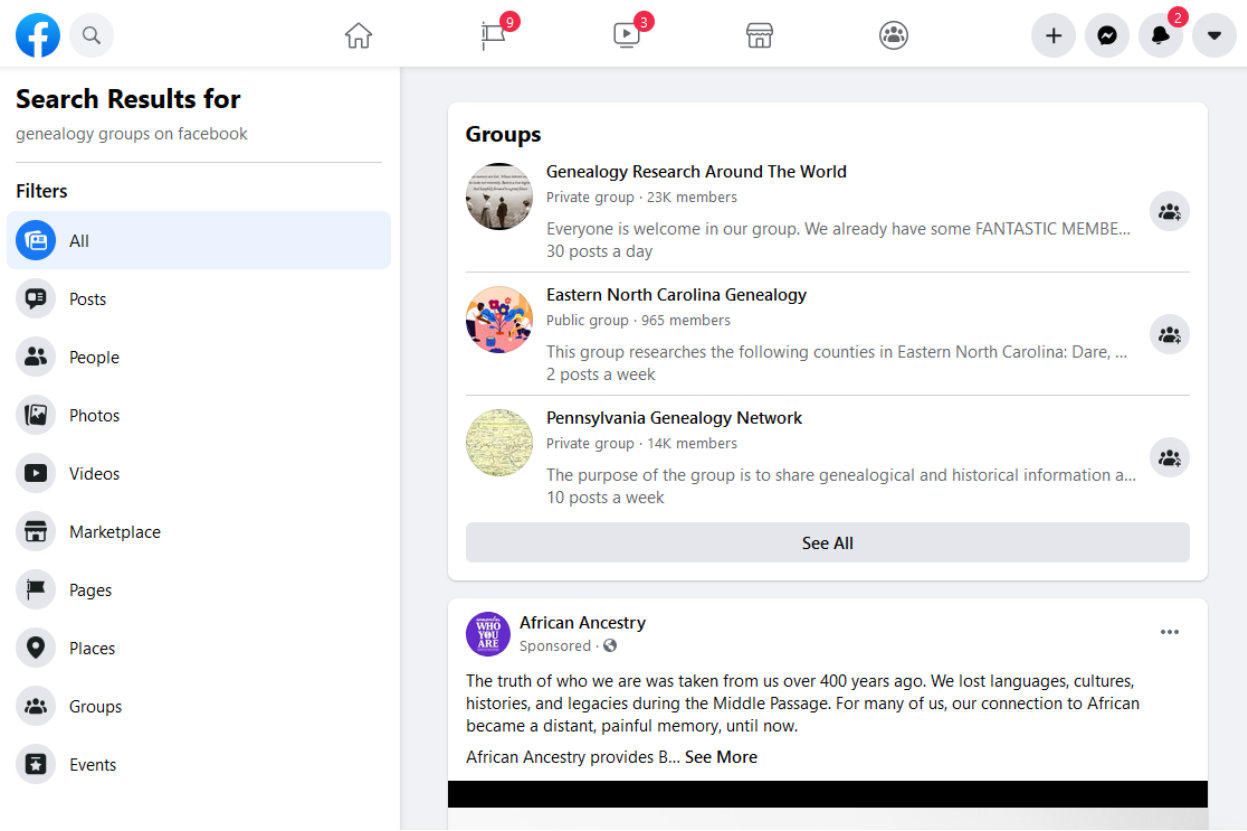
Sometimes you may only have partial information. As a child, I remember asking my mother how to spell a word and she would respond with "look it up in the dictionary." Well if I don't know how to spell it, how can I look it up? Never did get a good answer from mom on that one, but Google has an answer for us. How do you search Google for what you don't know? Search for what you know and use a wildcard symbol * to stand in for the unknown.

A wildcard is used inside quotes.

One asterisk for one set of characters; two asterisks for two sets; etc. For example, **"Albert * Allen"** will display about 200,000,000 results whereas the results of **"Albert ** Allen"** may result in a more manageable result.

Find a Facebook page that relates to an ancestor's relatives, local, ethnicity, or more.

There's a Facebook group for that! There are a number of groups that focus on genealogy.



Facebook DNA Groups

- DNA Detectives
- DNA For Genealogy
- DNA Tested Descendants of Angola, Cameroon, the Congos & Gabon*
- DNA Tested Descendants of Nigeria, Benin, and Togo*
- The African Descendant's Genetic Genealogy

- Our Black Ancestry https://www.facebook.com/groups/13488807931
- Florida Genealogy Network https://www.facebook.com/groups/208192675888750
- Because of Them We Can by Eunique Jones https://www.facebook.com/becauseofthemwecan
- Friends of Geer Cemetery - Durham, NC https://www.facebook.com/friendsofgeer
- The Stagville Memorial Project https://www.facebook.com/stagvillememorial

Find military record of an ancestor.

United States World War I and World War II Draft Registration Cards
WW1 - https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1968530
WW2 - https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1861144

Some questions to ask…
Where did the male ancestor work?

How far was work from home?
Who was ancestor's family contact? Do you know them?

Use the MyHeritage animation tool on old photos of ancestors

Fun tool that animates photos; allows you a look at a moving image of your ancestor.
https://www.myheritage.com/deep-nostalgia?lang=TH