

ADAMS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH



Establishing Basic Information

Researching an ancestor can be difficult, but the ACHS holds a treasure trove of information that can make your search for information easier! To begin, you will want to learn the basic details of your ancestor's life. This includes their birth date, birthplace, parents' names, marriage date, spouse name, death date, death place, and burial place. For each of these facts, you will want to consult the following records:

1. Birth/Parents' Names: birth records are very sparse prior to 1900, and most Pennsylvania birth records must be ordered from the PA Department of Health. However, many birth dates can be found on other records such as death certificates, headstone transcriptions, and church records. The ACHS has a fantastic collection of church records filled with birth and baptismal notices.
2. Marriage: ACHS holds some 20th century marriage records, but this collection is incomplete. The best source for marriages is church records and newspaper references (see the ACHS card files).
3. Death/Burial: Consult newspaper references (ACHS card files), church records, cemetery inscription cards, Pennsylvania State Death Certificates (1906-1966) via ancestry.com, and the ACHS Estate Files collection.

Additional Resources

To establish additional information about an ancestor, we recommend the following sources:

1. Search our PastPerfect museum database for any relevant documents, artifacts, or photographs in the collection.
2. Check our Collections Index to see if there is a pertinent family collection, or if any of your ancestors donated materials to the ACHS.
3. Ask to see a Family File for the family name you are researching.
4. Check out US Federal Census records via ancestry.com, and local septennial census records in the ACHS research room.
5. Look through the Society's Estate Files to view original wills and inventories.
6. Check in our research room for a published or unpublished genealogy for the family surnames you are researching.
7. Check our naturalization records index (research room) if your ancestor was an immigrant.
8. Search local newspapers via newspapers.com (available on all ACHS computers) for references to your ancestor, including news items, obituaries, land transfers, and any other anecdotes.
9. If your ancestor was a veteran, consult our pension records collection and other military records available via Fold3.com (available on ACHS computers).

Visit Us:
368 Springs Avenue
Gettysburg, PA 17325
Wed - Fri 9AM-12PM & 1-4PM
& Thursday, 6-9PM

Contact Us:
P.O. Box 4325
Gettysburg, PA 17325
(717) 334-4723
info@achs-pa.org

Online/Digital Resources:
www.achs-pa.org
www.facebook.com/achs-pa
Instagram: [adamscountyhistory](https://www.instagram.com/adamscountyhistory)