



## Using the USGenWeb Archives National Search Engines

### What is US GenWeb Archives?

The USGenWeb Project consists of a group of volunteers working together to provide Internet websites for genealogical research in every county and every state of the United States. The Project is non-commercial and fully committed to free access for everyone. Information is generally organized by county and state, and this website provides you with links to all the state websites which, in turn, provide gateways to the counties. The USGenWeb Project also sponsors important Special Projects at the national level and this website provides an entry point to all of those pages, as well.

The archives contain projects that have been completed or are still in progress. The USGenWeb Digital Library (Archives) was developed to present actual transcriptions of public domain records on the Internet. This huge undertaking is the cooperative effort of volunteers who either have electronically formatted files on census records, marriage bonds, wills, and other public documents, or are willing to transcribe this information to contribute. There are several projects that are being undertaken by The USGenWeb Archives and these are listed below:

USGenWeb Tombstone Project	USGenWeb Family Group Sheet Project
USGenWeb African American Griots Project	US GenWeb Lineage Project
Pension Project	Church Records Project
Marriage Records Project	Obituary Project

### Accessing the US GenWeb Archives

- Go to <http://www.rootsweb.com/~usgenweb/newsearch.htm>

### Searching the US GenWeb Archives

The National Search Engines allow you to search all records at once. There are two search engines, the Simple Search Engine and the Advanced Search Engine.

#### Simple Search:

Note this search engine will only search for separate terms such as **John** or **Smith**. If you enter **John Smith** and choose **Match: All**, it will find all files containing both words, but they will probably not be together. Search engine is not case sensitive, same result whether you use lower case or upper case letters.

- Select your choice for matching from the **Match** drop-down menu – **All**, **Any**, or **Boolean** (Boolean is when you use the Boolean operators (and, or, and not) to define your search such as John and Franks)
- Select your choice for sorting using the **Sort by** drop-down menu – **Score**, **Time**, **Reverse Score**, or **Reverse Time**.
- Select the states to search using the **State** drop-down menu. To search all states at the same time, use **Any**.
- To select a particular county, use the **County** drop-down menu. To search all counties, select **Any**.
- Enter a search term in the **Search for** field. I would suggest a last name if it is unusual or if you are limiting the search by state and/or county, then you a common last name.
- Press **<enter>** or click on the **Search Selected Records in the USGenWeb Archives** button.
- The results window will open and tell you how many documents met your search criteria. It will give the place and information about the link. Review the links and click on desired links to see the record. Remember, these are probably all going to be transcribed records and not digital images of the original record.

If you complete a search and use your browser's **"Back"** button to return to this page, you may have to use your browser's **"Refresh"** or **"Reset"** button to remove all of the previous query.

## Advanced Search:

The Advanced Search gives a few new options. Using this search, you may perform various searches such as looking for a name in a particular order "John Smith" or the name John Smith with one or two words separating John and Smith. You may also search for a specific type of record (Military, Cemetery, Newspaper, Vital Records, Obituaries, etc.) any subdivisions thereof (for instance, military records for which war). Search engine is not case sensitive, same result whether you use lower case or upper case letters. This search ignores white space and punctuation,

- Click on the **Advanced Search** link on the Simple Search web page.
- Enter your **Search for** term(s).

### Sample Queries

Type In	Results
John Smith	Finds files that contain the word "John" or the Word "Smith" (or both)
"John Smith"	Finds files where the word "John" immediately precedes "Smith"
"John Smith"~1	Finds files where the word "John" precedes "Smith" by at most 1 word For example: John Smith, John Q. Smith, John Wesley Smith. Use ~2 for a maximum of two words between John and Smith
"Smith John"	Finds files where Smith immediately precedes John
"Smith John" not state:tn	Finds all files where Smith precedes John EXCEPT those in the Tennessee directory
"Smith John" not (state:tn and county:roan)	Finds all files where Smith precedes John EXCEPT those in the Roan County, Tennessee directory Notice the use of parentheses to indicate that both conditions have to be met to exclude the file. Also notice the colons and the 2 letter code for the state
smith and (lawyer attorney)	Finds all files containing the word "Smith" and either the word "lawyer" or "attorney" or both
sm?th	Finds files containing smith, smoth, smath, smyth, etc. Use * for multiple wild cards. You cannot start a query with a ? or a *. smith* is OK, but *smith will not work
"john smith" "mary jones"^3	Use ^ to assign priorities. This search finds files containing John Smith or Mary Jones and assigns a higher priority to Mary Jones. The higher the number, the higher priority.
"John Smith" and vermont not state:vt	This may seem contradictory. If you have already searched the files in the vt directory using the state pull-down, you can search the other 49 states plus the District of Columbia with this search. You will find files in the other states that contain the word "Vermont" as well as "John Smith". This is handy when someone has disappeared from Vermont.

- Select the state from the **State** drop-down menu. Use **Any** to search all states.
- Select a county if you desire using the **County** drop-down menu. Use **Any** to search all counties.
- Select the kind of record to search from the **Choose a kind of record** drop-down menu or use **Search all records** to search all the various kinds of records.
- If the kind of record selected has sub-types, you may select a sub-type using the **Choose a sub-kind of record** drop-down menu.
- Press <enter> or click on the **Search Selected Records in the USGenWeb Archives** button. If you get too many results, use the drop -down menus to limit your search to a state, county, or kind of record
- The results window will open and tell you how many documents met your search criteria. It will give the place and information about the link. Review the links and click on desired links to see the record. Remember, these are probably all going to be transcribed records and not digital images of the original record.

If you complete a search and use your browser's "Back" button to return to this page, you may have to use your browser's "Refresh" or "Reset" button to remove all of the previous query.