Where to Look for Information

Main Focus First Semester:
- What record types are there?
- What information is in them?

Alternate Focus:
- Where can I find the information I want to have?

Information About Ancestors
Where to look for it*
- Other Genealogies (has it already been done?)
- Ancestral Relationships
- Vitals (birth/baptism, marriage, death, burial)
  - The Basics: Who, What, When and Where?
- Exactly where did they live?
- Did they Serve in the Military
- The Person’s Character and Prosperity
- Migration; Foreign Town of Origin
- Describe Community and its History
  * Have you found the original document?

What do you want to know?
- Vitals: birth, marriage, death, and where events took place
- Develop family relationships
- Did they own or rent?
- Were they poor, rich, middle?
- Did they die with young ones?
- Where did they come from?

Getting Started
Do the Easy Stuff First
- Talk or write to your relatives
  - forms: pedigree, family groups
- Organize your information:
  - pedigree: MA-Alice-pedigree.pdf
  - genealogical software: PAF (click in lower right of page)
- Who else is working on your family?
  - web resources – amazing finds

Which Sources to Believe?
Original vs Secondary* Records
- Closest to date of event
- Made by eye witness to event
- Unbiased and competent
- No reason to hide the truth
- Incentive to be accurate
  * history/genealogy book, on-line, hearsay

Always
- Record your source of information.
- Was it the original record?
  - record made at time of event or soon thereafter
  - if not, confirm with original record.
- Confirm the original record itself:
  - was it made with competent hands?
  - did anyone want to hide the truth?
**Birth and Baptism** *(by class)*

- **“Original” Record** (entries made during 12-7-05 class)
  - Birth certificate
  - Church and town record?
  - family bible, diaries and engravings?
- **Secondary Records** (entries made during 12-7-05 class)
  - newspaper report
  - from a relative?
  - correspondence
  - family photos
  - census

* baptism could be day of birth or many years later

**Birth and Baptism**

- **“Original” Record**
  - certificate of birth (baptism often says when born)
  -- even the original can be wrong (something to hide?)
  - mother says so, town/church record?, family bible?
- **Secondary Records**
  - death or marriage certificate
  - age on document
  -- court, military, marriage, apprentice indenture
  -- census (month of birth on 1900 U.S. census)
  - presumed age, e.g. adulthood (tax, vote, legal dealings)
  - depositions/supoenas

* baptism could be day of birth or many years later

**Marriage** *(by class)*

- **“Original” Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
  - civil (government) and church records (minister*, church, government)
  - marriage certificate
  - marriage application, license, bond, pre-nuptial
  - family bible (long after event? – check handwriting)
  - pension application
- **Secondary Records** (entries added in Part 2 class)
  - children’s birth records
  - newspaper (marriages)
  - death records (obits, tombstones, funeral homes)
  - citizenship intentions (after 1906)

**Marriage**

- **“Original” Record** (entries to be made in Part 2 class)
  - marriage certificate
  - church/town record (if recorded soon after event)
  - spouses say so?,
  - family bible/letters?
- **Secondary Records** (entries to be made in Part 2 class)
  - marriage bond/license (marriage often on later day)
  - will identifying married daughters
  - probate files & deeds naming married widow/dau/sister
  - census sheets 1880+; bef 1880, less certain
  - cemetery family plots/inscriptions/records

**Death/Burial** *(by class)*

- **“Original” Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
  - civil (government) and church record
  - death certificate, will and probate
  - cemetery caretaker’s record
  - Social Security death index
  - military and/or occupational death record
  - widow/orphans application for military pension
  - family bible
- **Secondary Records** (entries added in Part 2 class)
  - tombstone, newspaper obituary or death record
  - Fraternal organizations, city directories

* burial could be days or months later (if ground frozen)

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ALL Class site: http://copland.udel.edu/~tdoherty
English Folklore from the 1500s...

When the locals needed places to bury people, they dug up coffins and took the bones to a "bone-house". When reopening, 1 of 25 coffins had scratch marks on the inside -- they were burying people alive! So, they led a string from the wrist of the corpse, thru the coffin to above ground, then tied it to a bell. Someone took the "graveyard shift" all night to sit and listen for the bell. Several were then "saved by the bell" and considered "dead ringers".

How did they sign their name?

- **"Original" Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
  - draft registration, pension application, naturalization
  - original deeds (grantee signs; grantor gets original)
  - wills and witnesses thereof
  - marriage cert., bond (marriage approvals by church)
  - work permit, contracts
  - checks, autographs
  - family letters

- **Secondary Records** (entries added in Part 2 class)
  - not deed books

Did they serve in the Military?

- **"Original" Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
  - muster rolls (e.g. Civil War), discharge papers
  - pension application; Albany NY did not serve papers
  - soldier’s diary
  - photo in uniform, letters from the battle

- **Secondary Records** (entries added in Part 2 class)
  - records of veteran’s organizations (e.g. American Legion)
  - plaque in cemetery, obituary
  - 1840, 1890 vets, 1910, 1930 census
  - family letters,
  - war histories (regiment, local)

Death/Burial*

- **"Original" Record**
  - civil (government) and church record
  - cemetery caretaker records
  - family bible/letters?

- **Secondary**
  - death notices?
  - obituaries?? (less than ½ of deaths)
  - tombstone inscriptions??
  - funeral ceremonies
  - probate/orphans’ court records
  - tax delinquent records
  - census mortality schedules (or not being counted???)

* burial could be days or months later (if ground frozen)

How did they sign their name?

- **"Original" Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
  - original wills, probate case files, guardian papers
  - original deeds (held by grantee, not government)
  - depositions/subpoenas/bonds/witnesses
  - sometimes when mortgage paid in full in deed books
  - marriage license, bond, certificate
  - letters, diaries, books (signed by owner)
  - original IOU (common pleas court)
  - bills of sale

- **Secondary Records**
  - deeds in county book (if clerk tried to match mark)

Did they serve in the Military?

- **"Original" Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
  - muster roll ("original" and report to authorities)
  - medical report of sick, wounded and dead
  - military reports: imprisonment, AWL, discharge papers
  - pension applications with affidavits
  - pension check
  - photo in uniform or uniform itself
  - letters home from battlefront

- **Secondary Records**
  - obituary, “mug book”, family genealogy
  - family folklore: descent from Revolutionary War soldier
What did they look like?

**“Original” Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- family photos (e.g. locket)
- modern driver’s license
- military records (description in WW1 draft registration)
- naturalization application (photo and/or description)
- passport (description + occupation in 1840 passport)
- school yearbooks, mug books
- Civil War officers and non-coms photos - barracks

**Secondary Records** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- paintings

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What did they look like?

**“Original” Record** (if labeled correctly)
- photo (including obits, citizenship intention 1906+, etc)
- painting and other art
- doctor’s description in pension/military application
- description in WW1 draft registration
- IL muster rolls: [http://www.ilsoa.gov/genealogy](http://www.ilsoa.gov/genealogy)
- diaries/letters
- health records (X-rays, dental)

**Secondary Records**
- obituaries
- diaries/letters
- family oral tradition

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Exactly* where did they live?

**“Original” Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- deeds; tax records
- WW1 draft registration
- census (ward/nearby town/post office; city street: 1880+)
- city directories
- family letters (envelope)
- death certificate, pension file/check; Sanborn map
- church baptism/marriage records (Catholic/others)

**Secondary Records** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- county “Atlas”
- MapQuest may help locate (is the place name the same?)


* knowing helps identify church, neighbors, migration paths

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What was this place like then?*

**“Original” Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- letters/diaries
- visits to old buildings (and their documents)
- picture postcards

**Secondary Records** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- county, town, industrial, church, college histories
- repositories: historical societies, grange, college libraries
- timeline in genealogical software (e.g. GenLine)
- newspapers
- bios (e.g. “mug” books – vanity)
- census – occupations, wealth, population records

* helps identify why they settled there or went elsewhere

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English Folklore from the 1500s...

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water.

Man of the house had the privilege of clean water, then grown males (sons then other men).

Then the women and finally the children!

Last of all the babies.

By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone.

Thus, the expression … "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water"*

* helps identify why they settled there or went elsewhere

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* [http://historymedren.about.com/od/dailylifesociety/a/bod_baths.htm](http://historymedren.about.com/od/dailylifesociety/a/bod_baths.htm)
### What was this place like then?*<br>
- **“Original” Record**<br>  - photos (family/county histories, postcards, newspaper)<br>  - descriptions of life in letters/diaries (one person’s view!)<br>  - paintings/drawings (the artist’s view!)<br>  - maps: old “official”; [http://earth.google.com](http://earth.google.com)<br>    -- U.S. Geological Survey: [http://ngmdb.usgs.gov](http://ngmdb.usgs.gov)<br>- **Secondary Records**<br>  - histories, genealogies, biographies (use LDS catalog)<br>  -- drawing power of soil, finance, industry<br>  -- migrations because of war, disease, famine, “better life”<br>  -- may say why people settled there; identify first settlers<br>* helps identify why they settled there or went elsewhere

### How prosperous were they?*<br>
- **“Original” Record** (entries to be made in Part 2 class)<br>  - wills, probate papers (inventories, sales)<br>  - deeds<br>  - insurance maps<br>  - tax rolls<br>  - cemetery plot paid for, or pauper<br>- **Secondary Records** (entries to be made in Part 2 class)<br>  - census<br>  - unions<br>  - newspapers<br>* What did they own? Were they in debt?

### What kind of people were they?*<br>
- **“Original” Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)<br>  - letters/diaries (written at time by person or others)<br>  - tax records (slave or slave owners, occupation, physicals)<br>  - pension inventories (books, tools of trade, loom, clock)<br>  - wills of personal property (quilt, Bible - from mother)<br>  - religious records (served/punished/disowned)<br>  - elected to office<br>  - named as guardian, trustee or executor in will<br>  - convicted criminal, filings for divorce<br>  - affidavits, depositions, renunciations of executor task<br>- **Secondary Records**<br>  - “mug books”, family stories (oral tradition)<br>  - occupation (deed, will, probate, tax record)<br>* often only one person’s or one organization’s opinion

### 1920s note from Great Aunt Allie to my Mother**<br>She was named after her Great Aunt Mary Alice (Allie) MacMillan who as a 1900 census enumerator lied about her age — by 4 yrs!
With whom did they associate?

**“Original” Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- witnesses of documents
- guest lists and attendees (e.g. baptisms, wakes, weddings)
  -- Godparents, pallbearers
- photos with others
- school yearbooks/clubs (found via diploma/newspapers)
- diaries/letters
- fraternal organizations (via tombstone/obituary/bios)
- next door neighbors in census

**Secondary Records** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- obituaries
  * many could actually be related in some way

Who are they related to?

**“Original” Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- wills listing heirs, court cases over inheritance
- pensions
- census (note children & others of different last names)
- family bibles (does handwriting change over time)
- christening, birth certificates
- mortgage records, military discharge papers (DD214?)
- marriage license, divorce
- letters/diaries
- insane asylum committals
- ship passenger lists (embarkation/debarkation)
- citizenship applications

**Secondary Records** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- 1 yr bef census (to 5/31) mortality schedules (index 1850-85)
- obituaries; tombstone engravings
- genealogies (e.g. DAR application, books/journal articles)

Using Deeds to Build Relationships

**Search grantor (seller) index**
- will usually name spouse if married

**Search grantee (buyer) index**
- keeps original deed
- clerk records in county deed book

**Early deeds not necessarily recorded**
- appear in book in order deeds are brought to deed office
- deed might be recorded 50 yrs later
Where did they come from?

**“Original” Record** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- intention and naturalization papers
- passenger lists: here to there (current resident)

**Secondary Records** (entries added in Part 2 class)
- census records (including all resident of household)

*see [http://copland.udel.edu/~tdoherty/MigrationUS.pdf](http://copland.udel.edu/~tdoherty/MigrationUS.pdf)

Where did they come from?

**“Original” Record**: difficult – you don’t know location!
- military pension papers; deeds (grantee of different place)

**Secondary Records**
- immigration, intention, naturalization, passenger records
- Certificates/records: marriage, death
  -- children's birth, baptismal (for parent’s birthplace)
  -- records of town and church (including transfers)
- Collect every census record, look at neighbors
  -- place of earlier census, birthplaces of household “family”
- obituaries, “mug” books, genealogies, family letters
- family bibles, letters from home, photos (look on back)
- perseverance: tracing sibling’s lines,
  - join/organize Y-DNA study: [http://familytreeDNA.com](http://familytreeDNA.com)

*see [http://copland.udel.edu/~tdoherty/MigrationUS.pdf](http://copland.udel.edu/~tdoherty/MigrationUS.pdf)

Summary and Conclusions

**Where to look for it**

What you’re looking for might be found almost anywhere.

You’ll never know what you’ll find until you look.