

## Chapter 1 : [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com) "Trace Your DNA. Find Your Roots. Today."

*In this guide to African American genealogy research, we will talk about how to get started researching your African American ancestors, discuss common challenges and potential strategies for avoiding them, and highlight the best resources to help you begin to uncover your family's roots.*

S7 D5 Land, Probate, and Account Records Once you have determined a likely slave owner, the next step is to locate any probate, land, or account records for that individual since these are the most likely documents that will name a slave ancestor. The location of these records will vary by location, but many of these types of records are available to search or browse through the Family History Library , Ancestry. The collection includes slave deeds from and Dorothea Barton Cogswell Papers, bulk: Manumission Documents The Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution made slavery and indentured servitude illegal in all areas subject to United States jurisdiction. Prior to the passage of this amendment, individual manumission documents and state-wide abolish acts in the northern states can provide information about ancestors that were freed prior to the federal abolition of slavery. The Act required that slaves be registered and those not recorded were to be freed. Due to this stipulation in the law, there are records of owners registering their slaves. The Family History Library has some of these records on microfilm at the county level. Records of the petitions for compensation as part of this law have been compiled into a published volume, Compensated Emancipation in the District of Columbia: Petitions under the Act of April 16, The claims include information on the claimant, the names of those in their service freed under the law, and the amount of compensation awarded. Often they include additional information about the former slaves, including where they were born and their occupation. D6 P There are some published sources on the manumission and emancipation of slaves in other states, including: G8 M44 Freedom Papers: Some notable articles include: Alice Eichholz and James M. More recent articles on the site also include information from Tennessee, Indiana, and Illinois. Free African Americans of Maryland and Delaware: Free African Americans of Maryland W53 Church Records Church records can contain a wealth of information including valuable vital records of births, marriages, and deaths. Northern Anglican, Catholic, and Quaker church records can also contain information about manumissions and admissions of free African Americans to congregations. Church records are housed in a variety of places and sometimes can still only be located at the church if it is still in operation. There are a number of repositories that have programs focused on collecting African American church records. Understanding the history of African American and American Indian relations will help determine a potential connection. One of the most likely scenarios is that an African American ancestor was a former slave of an American Indian slave owner. This, of course, was not the only kind of African-Indian relationship, but it is the most likely scenario for which documentation exists. The enrollment cards created by the Dawes Commission to determine who could gain citizenship can be a valuable resource to learning more about ancestors that were Freedmen of these Native Nations. W A good reference book for understanding how to search for an American Indian connection. The enrollment records are available on microfilm through the United States National Archives , but there are indexes to the records that can be searched first to determine the likelihood that an ancestor is included on the rolls. P34 You can search the index to the final rolls online through Access Genealogy. These are the final rolls of those accepted as citizens, so it is not an exhaustive index of the applicants. It is helpful to also examine records for rejected applications since they contain valuable genealogical information. Caribbean Ancestry There are many records available to research ancestors from the Caribbean and a number of these resources are available online. There are also a number of resources to help identify slave owners. The University College of London has also created a database of British slave owners that filed claims for compensation in when parliament abolished slavery. This is a searchable database called Legacies of British Slave-Ownership that includes information about the claimant and the extent of the claim. Most of these slave owners filed claims for slaves in the Caribbean. Oliver Glied has compiled a list of Plantation Owners of St. Domingue which is helpful in identifying slave owners that were a part of the French Colony of St. There are a number of source books that are particularly useful for Caribbean research:

## Chapter 2 : African-American Genealogy Research for Beginners | Ancestral Findings

*If an African American ancestor was free prior to the end of slavery you may be able to locate them on earlier census records under their own name. The and United States Federal Census recorded all the free individuals in a household by name.*

People wonder how far back they will actually be able to get, due to lack of records in the era of slavery. However, there are a few important things to remember. Two, records of slaves were often meticulously kept by southern slave owners; this was not always the case, but it did happen in many cases, especially with people who owned large numbers of slaves. Three, there is always DNA to help you trace your roots back farther than you ever imagined, and usually with a few real surprises along the way. Getting Started With African-American Genealogy Research Assuming you know the names of your parents and grandparents and maybe even great-grandparents in some cases , the best place to start is with them. Use the oldest generation for which you have information. Send away for their death certificates to look for the names of their parents and where they were born. Look at census records to try to find them as children living with their parents. These two simple things will take you back another generation. Using the Census in African-American Genealogy After two or three generations, you will reach a point where you have ancestors who were adults in This means that former slaves who did not appear by name on previous census records are listed by name, along with everyone else living in their household, in this one. While you may find free African-American ancestors in earlier census records, this is the first one where you will find ones who used to be slaves. Many of them will be living near where they lived as slaves. Take a look at their white neighbors. If any of their white neighbors share the same last name as your ancestors, it could be that your ancestors used to belong to either of those neighbors or members of their families. It was not uncommon for former slaves to take on the surname of their former owners after they were freed. These were lists of people who owned slaves and how many they owned. Old newspaper records also have records of slave sales, runaway slaves, and stories of slaves who committed crimes against their owners. They are often listed by name in these records and may be the only way you can get names of your ancestors from before the Civil War unless you can find a historical society that has old plantation records with slave names recorded. All you have to do is use census information, slave schedules, and family names and locations to put the pieces together to connect your ancestors to the people in the old newspaper stories. You may find some really interesting information about your early American ancestors in the pre-Civil War era this way. These are just a few tips you can use to get started on your African-American genealogy research. Once you get started, you will usually find more avenues of research you can explore, including locating distant living cousins who are working on the same line, and who may have additional research information to give you. Once you start your African-American genealogy journey, remember, the adventure is only beginning. He has been involved in genealogy research for over 20 years. The thrill of the hunt, the adventure, and the excitement begin when he started investigating the meaning of his surname.

## Chapter 3 : African American Research Guide

*While you may find free African-American ancestors in earlier census records, this is the first one where you will find ones who used to be slaves. Many of them will be living near where they lived as slaves.*

A Guide to Finding Your Ancestors Online shares Anyone who has spent time doing family history research knows the many challenges involved in building a family tree with complete and accurate information – but researching African American ancestors can present its own unique set of complications. Make Instant Discoveries in Your Family Tree Now Imagine adding your family tree to a simple website and getting hundreds of new family history discoveries instantly. MyHeritage is offering 2 free weeks of access to their extensive collection of 9 billion historical records, as well as their matching technology that instantly connects you with new information about your ancestors. Sign up using the link below to find out what you can uncover about your family. For help deciding on the best family tree program for you, see our detailed breakdown of the top 6 choices here. Record as many details as possible from these inquiries; look here for helpful tips on collecting information at family gatherings. The steps walk you through locating specific information about your ancestors using recommended documents and suggested sources. The guide offers suggestions for locating records. Look here for additional information on free genealogy resources to help you locate these documents. After reading through the following section, review the resources detailed in this article as you work your way backward in an effort to identify your ancestors prior to After emancipation most African American persons were included in general records such as census records, vital records, school records, voter registration and so on. Reconstruction Era between Other sources of information can be found in various military records, Voter Registration Lists, and possibly census records. The Census would be the first that records African American persons by name. See the resources section below for detailed entries on these sources. This will be the most challenging period for research. Siekman of the New England Historic and Genealogical Society both provide helpful information to get you started. Claim My 2 Week Free Access It is important at this point to learn if your ancestors were enslaved or free persons prior to emancipation. Because enslaved persons were not listed by name, if you find them you know they were likely free persons. If you already know the name of the slaveholding family you might first search the and slave schedules using their names. Each slaveholder was listed by name along with physical descriptions and age of enslaved persons along with a few other details depending on which year you are searching. This will allow you to confirm the last slaveholder and give you further details about other enslaved persons held by same slaveholder. You may also want to examine entries for nearby slaveholders for details on enslaved persons that might help you connect family relationships. Then search the slave schedule for these names. Get 30 Days of Genealogy Tips Free What might you learn with 30 days of expert genealogy research tips delivered straight to your inbox? Easily discover new research techniques, record collections and resources. Unsubscribe at any time. Simply confirm your email address to complete your subscription. There was an error submitting your subscription. With this confirmation, you can then begin searching the genealogical records of the slaveholder and his family for further clues about your ancestors. Use the myriad of online and offline resources to research the personal papers, land, probate, and account records of the slaveholders. Beyond the available online resources, also consult state archives and genealogical societies. Lists of state archives can be found here and here. Also check ArchiveGrid , which details locations for over 5 million archival documents in collections around the world. A few notable dates to use for reference: First African slaves arrived in Virginia in In Congress banned the importation of African slaves. Slavery is banned north of the southern Missouri boundary in Civil War began in when 7 states secede and create the Confederate States of America. The Confiscation Act of granted freedom to slaves held by persons in rebellion against the United States. President Lincoln issued emancipation proclamation in Slavery ended in with the ratification of the 13th amendment. In the 14th Amendment is ratified granting citizenship to all those born or naturalized in the U. In the 15th Amendment grants African American men the right to vote. Some important facts to keep in mind: There were approximately 4 million enslaved at the start of the Civil War. Husbands, wives and other family members

were not always enslaved at the same location. Often slaves had more than one slaveholder over the course of their enslavement. Many enslaved persons did not share the surname of the slaveholder. As noted, many general record resources also apply to research of African American ancestors. These websites are a good place to begin: Begin with the state you are searching in and follow the links to the record type of interest; these individual pages will list what resources exist for the record type for that state and where to find them. You can search many of these records for free online – we have a list of free U. However, while there are many sources available online, it is important to know that many primary documents are not available for digital viewing but may still be located using the internet. This may be especially true for African American researchers. Do not let this deter you from using the internet. It is an online database that will allow you to locate a copy of the source either online or at a nearby library. As mentioned, also consider ArchiveGrid for locating primary sources. State archives are an excellent source; lists of archives can be found here and here. Education, Introductions, and Starting Places for African American Research There is a wealth of information online, some already linked within this article, that will help introduce you to genealogy research. There are also many solid resources available online that are specific to researching African American ancestors: This webpage is a goldmine of information, resources, and links for anything related to African American genealogy. To get you started, check out the guide for research , the online genealogy records , the quick guide to records , and view the main page linked above for individual state pages for African American genealogy. This page is the starting place for any resources available through NARA. Their catalog is available here. Some of the topics include reconstruction era documents, census records, manumission documents, free African Americans, and multiple topics related to African American connections to other ethnicities. The broadcast is also offered in text format and provides multiple recommendations and suggestions for resources. You might also be able to find some of the book suggestions in other databases such as WorldCat. Overview of African American Research: This page is provided within the Ancestry. A Guidebook to American Genealogy. This offers a step by step guide to locating your ancestors after Finding the Slave Generation: An Interactive Guide for Beginners: This interactive guide offers introductory information for beginning your research. This project offers access to a multitude of records through their database as well as other resources such as a digital reading room and digital research library. The site is being rebuilt but can still be accessed in the previous format. African American Genealogy Also, see this short tutorial for beginning your research available on the OBA website and this detail-rich Black History Timeline. This website offers collections on census records, death records, marriage records, photos old and current , slave data, and surname database. It also offers a library records page with links to research guides, articles and papers, and documents and records by state. There are also pages dedicated to state and world resources as well as forums. Research Library, Low Country Africana: The digital library on this website offers a beginning research guide, a research method guide, and a variety of other useful sources for locating relevant records for your ancestors in SC, GA, and northeastern FL. In addition to these online resources, there are also many print resources that have been suggested by FamilySearch, NEHGS, and other genealogical organizations. Again, keep in mind WorldCat for locations of these materials in your area. Try the following to get you started:

### Chapter 4 : [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com): The Genealogy Page | The Black Past: Remembered and Reclaimed

*If you need help with your African American genealogy research, these 10 free sites are the perfect place to start. You'll find records, guides and more that can help you find your ancestors.*

### Chapter 5 : African-American Genealogy & Black Ancestry at Ancestor Search

*Discover your African American Ancestry Researching African American ancestors can be challenging. We have the tools you need to get started, including several databases, a primer for conducting African American research, articles from American Ancestors magazine, and much more.*

## Chapter 6 : African American Ancestry and DNA | Ancestry

*Get this from a library! Locating free African American ancestors: a beginner's guide. [Aaron L Day] -- "The primary purpose of this report is to review resources that may be used when researching ancestors who lived prior to the Civil War era.*

## Chapter 7 : African American Genealogy: Find Your Ancestors on These Free Sites

*The Challenges of African-American Genealogy Research. While African-American genealogy can bring with it some real challenges, the rewards make it well worth the effort.*

## Chapter 8 : Welcome to Our Black Ancestry

*The online companion to it is at American Ancestors, full of resources, advice and a list of services provided by NEHGS to help find African-American ancestors. Advertisement.*

## Chapter 9 : African American Genealogy: A Guide to Finding Your Ancestors Online

*Find Ancestors in Fold3's Free Black History Records in February Allison Dolan February 2, updated on August 18, In honor of African-American History Month this month, genealogy website Fold3 is offering free access to its Black History Collection of records through the end of February.*