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Colonial Vital Records

- Recorded at the town level since settlement (ex. New England)
- Town or city clerk recorded the vital records reported to them
- Original records held by town clerk

5

Vital Records (19th Century)

- In larger cities, deaths were recorded starting in the mid-1800's
- Many counties in the East and MidWest were recording deaths in the late 1800s
- 1841 - Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed first statewide legislation

6

Vital Records (20th Century)

- Most states start requiring vital records to be recorded in the early 1900's
- Compliance may occur as long as 20 years after the law was passed in the state
 - Expect to find gaps

7

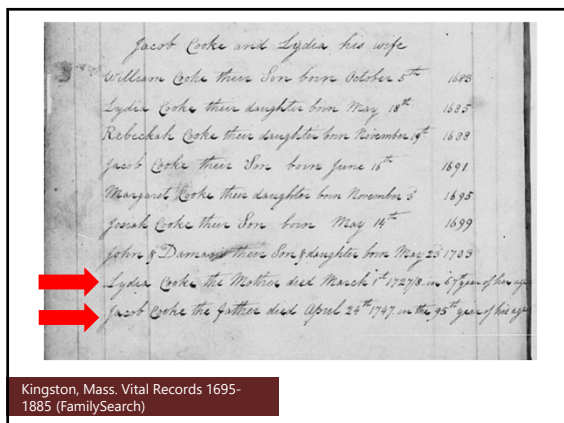
Death Record Formats

8

Family Group Records

- Originated in New England
- Deaths were appended to the list of births in town vital records
- When families were moving from one town to another, these records often came from Bible records.
- These records are very helpful in understanding the entire family unit (parents and siblings)

9

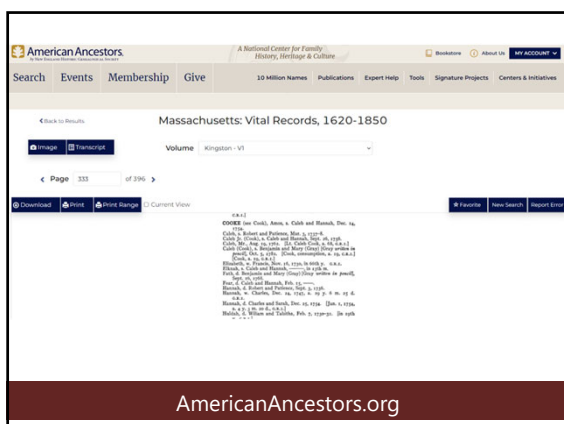


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Published Vital Records

- "Tan Book" series (Massachusetts)
 - Vital Records up to 1850
- Barbour Collection (Connecticut)
- Arnold's vital records (Rhode Island)

11



12

COOKE (see Cook), Amos, s. Caleb and Hannah, Dec. 14, 1754.
 Caleb, s. Robert and Patience, Mar. 3, 1737-8.
 Caleb Jr. (Cook), s. Caleb and Hannah, Sept. 26, 1755.
 Caleb, Mr., Aug. 19, 1755. [It. Caleb Cook, s. 68, c.s.1.]
 Caleb (Cook), s. Benjamin and Mary (Gray) [Gray written in pencil], Oct. 5, 1782. [Cook, consumption, s. 19, c.s.1.]
 Cook, s. 19, c.s.1.]
 Elizabeth, w. Francis, Nov. 16, 1735, in 66th y. c.s.1.
 Elkanah, s. Caleb and Hannah, —, in 12th m.
 Fath, d. Benjamin and Mary (Gray) [Gray written in pencil], Sept. 19, 1768.
 Fear, d. Caleb and Hannah, Feb. 15, —.
 Hannah, d. Robert and Patience, Sept. 3, 1736.
 Hannah, w. Charles, Dec. 24, 1747, s. 29 y. 6 m. 25 d. c.s.1.
 Hannah, d. Charles and Sarah, Dec. 25, 1754. [Jan. 1, 1754, s. 4 y. 3 m. 20 d. c.s.1.]
 Huldah, d. William and Tabitha, Feb. 7, 1730-31. [in 19th y. c.s.1.]
 Isaac, s. Caleb and Hannah, —, in 3d y.
 Jacob, h. Lydia, Apr. 22, 1747, in 55th y.
 John, Dec. 8, 1744. [Cook, Dec. 8, 1745, s. 42 y. 6 m. 15 d., c.s.1.]
 Joseph, s. Robert and Patience, Aug. 18, 1744.
 Kenia, d. Josiah and Lydia (Fauscoe), Dec. 6, 1808. [Keniah Cook, consumption, Dec. 13, s. 25, c.s.1.] [Keniah Cook, Dec. 6, s. 21 y. 4 m. 12 d. c.s.1.]
 Lydia, w. Jacob, Mar. 1, 1727-8, in 67th y.
 Lydia, d. John Jr. and Phoebe, July 29, 1732. [Cook, d. John and Phoebe, July 30, s. 23 d. c.s.1.]
 Lydia, d. Caleb and Hannah, Nov. 8, 1735.
 Mary, d. Nathaniel and Mary, Aug. 18, 1762.
 Nathaniel, s. Paul and Joanna, Oct. 1, 1735.
 Nathaniel, s. Josiah and Lydia (Fauscoe). Mar. —, 1786.

Kingston, Massachusetts Vital Records 1620-1850, Cooke Family, AmericanAncestors.org

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State Index Records

- Clerks abstracted town's vital records and sent them back on forms to the state
- Ex. New Hampshire Vital Records

14

New Hampshire Death Index, Benjamin C. Daniels, Lebanon, AmericanAncestors.org

15

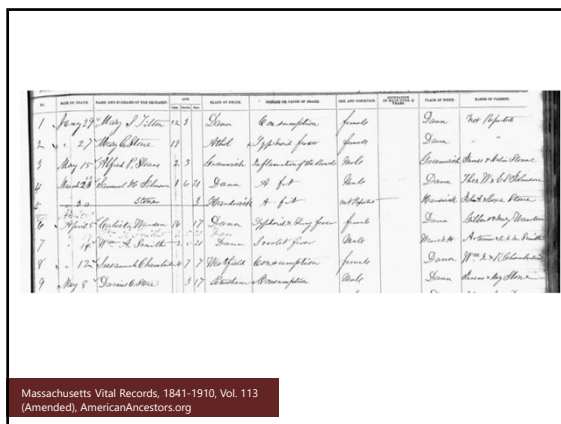
Death Registers

- Recorded the deaths within a city or town over the year
- Contain the following:
 - Name of deceased
 - Date of death
 - Age
 - Place of death
 - Cause of death
 - Sex
 - Place of birth
 - Parents' names

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18

Death Certificates

- A legal document that confirms someone has died
- Created during 20th century
- Can be filed in two places:
 - Place where person died
 - State where person is buried

19

What's on a Death Certificate?

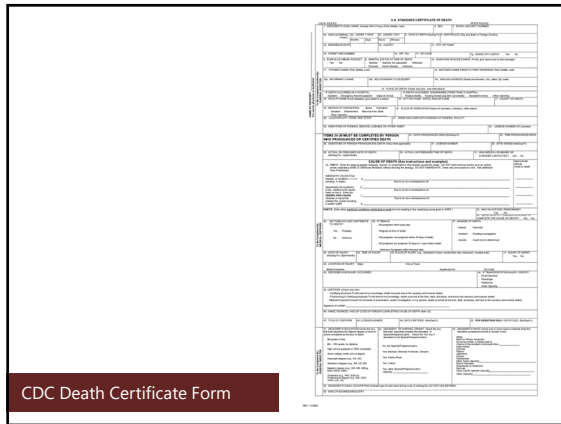
Name of deceased person	Sex	Race	Age
Date of death	Place of death	Date of birth (sometimes estimated)	Place of birth
Residence of deceased	Occupation	Parents' names and birthplace	Cause of death
Informant	Funeral home/undertaker	Place of interment	Veteran Status

20

Standardized Forms

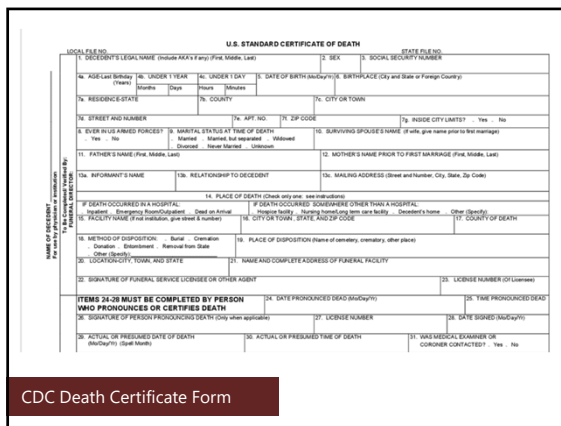
- Prior to 1989, each state had their own version of a death certificate
- The Center for Disease Control (CDC) issued a standard death certificate form in 1989
- It was revised again in 2003

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CDC Death Certificate Form

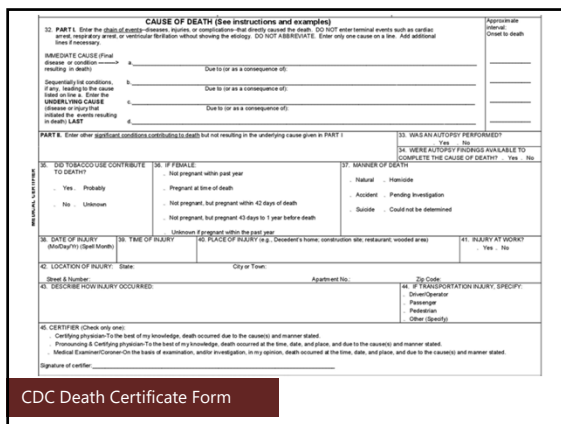
22



U.S. Standard Certificate of Death

CDC Death Certificate Form

23



CDC Death Certificate Form

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<p>40. CERTIFIER (Check only one):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Certifying physician: To the best of my knowledge, death occurred due to the cause(s) and manner stated. <input type="checkbox"/> Pronouncing & Certifying physician: To the best of my knowledge, death occurred at the time, date, and place, and due to the cause(s) and manner stated. <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Examiner/Coroner: On the basis of examination, and/or investigation, in my opinion, death occurred at the time, date, and place, and due to the cause(s) and manner stated. <p>Signature of certifier: _____</p>			
41. NAME, ADDRESS, AND ZIP CODE OF PERSON COMPLETING CAUSE OF DEATH (Item 3):			
42. TITLE OF CERTIFIER	43. LICENSE NUMBER	44. DATE CERTIFIED (Mo/Day/Yr)	45. FOR REGISTRAR ONLY: DATE FILED (Mo/Day/Yr)
<p>46. DECEASED'S EDUCATION: Check the box that best describes the highest degree or level of school completed at the time of death.</p> <p>No grade or none</p> <p>9th - 12th grade, no diploma</p> <p>High school graduate or GED completed</p> <p>Some college credit, but no degree</p> <p>Associate degree (e.g., AA, AS)</p> <p>Bachelor's degree (e.g., BA, BS, BS)</p> <p>Master's degree (e.g., MA, MS, MEd, MDiv, MFA)</p> <p>Doctorate (e.g., PhD, EdD, MD, DDS, DVM, etc.)</p>		<p>47. DECEASED'S RACE: Check the box that best describes whether the deceased is Spanish/Hispanic/Latino. Check the "No" box if deceased is not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino.</p> <p>No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino</p> <p>Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano</p> <p>Yes, Puerto Rican</p> <p>Yes, Cuban</p> <p>Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino (Specify) _____</p>	
<p>48. DECEASED'S SEX: Check one or more boxes to indicate what the deceased considered himself or herself to be.</p> <p>Male</p> <p>Black or African American</p> <p>Asian or Asian American</p> <p>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Specify) _____</p> <p>Other (Specify) _____</p>		<p>49. DECEASED'S USUAL OCCUPATION (Indicate type of work done during most of working life. DO NOT USE RETIRED).</p>	
50. KIND OF BUSINESS/INDUSTRY			

CDC Death Certificate Form

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<h2>History of Death Certificate Changes</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1950 – Social Security Number Added • 1970s – Autopsy Performed? Question added • 1983 – New Hampshire and Oklahoma added ethnicity • 1987 – HIV/AIDS added as a new disease classification <p>• Source: "Documenting Death - - The Certificate" (PBS)</p>

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<h2>Interpreting the Death Record Details</h2>
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The Informant

- The person who gives information about the person that died
- This person may or may not be present at their death
- Supplied answers about the deceased (ex. age, residence, birthplace, parents' names, etc.)
- The informant's street address or city may be noted

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Hospitals/Institutions

- When someone is admitted to a hospital or other institution, information is often collected upfront
- The informant may be a staff member at one of these facilities
- The information on the death record may be self-reported by the deceased before they passed

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Parents' Names/Birthplaces

- Not always reported by informant
- Birthplace may give a big clue for immigrant origins/migration path
- Consider if the informant knew the deceased long enough to know their parents
 - Siblings are more reliable informants than children and spouses

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Veteran Status

- 20th century certificates may note if the deceased was a military veteran.
- If so, consider the date of birth of the deceased and what possible military conflicts they may have participated in.
- Seek out military records on sites like Fold3.com.

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[eI
The informant is often
a close relative or
friend of the deceased

32

Cause Of Death

- Important for public health statistics and reporting
- Determined by the attending physician and sometimes a coroner (if applicable)
- May include outdated terminology
 - Medical glossaries can be helpful resources

33

- Principal Cause of Death
- Contributory Causes and other conditions
- Provides a sequence of events for how the deceased died
- Can indicate long term illnesses that the deceased had

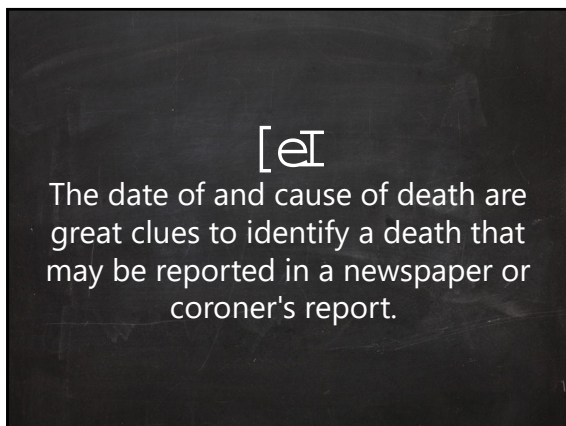
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[illegible]

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37

REGISTRY DEPARTMENT OF THE CITY OF BOSTON.
DEATHS.

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that I hold the office of _____ City Registrar of the City of Boston, as created by Chapter 212 of Acts of 1892, and have the custody of the Records relating to Births, Marriages and Deaths, in said City; and I further certify that the following facts appear on the said Records.

Recorded February 25, 1919 No. 1165

DATE OF DEATH: January 25, 1919
NAME AND SURNAME OF THE DECEASED: John Callahan
AGE: 65
PLACE OF BIRTH: Ireland
PLACE OF DEATH AND RESIDENCE: 23 Devon St. Boston
NAMES AND RESIDENCES OF PARENTS: William Callahan Ireland Mary Hand Ireland
SEX OR SEXES: Male
PROBABLE CAUSE OF DEATH: Heart disease, intercurrent with arteriosclerosis
By whom reported: E. W. Sullivan City Registrar
By Chapter 212 of Acts of 1892, "the notations or abridgements of other documents (the Registrar need not make the same) shall be given on the first of the City Registrar."

By me, E. W. Sullivan City Registrar
Before me, _____ Justice of the Peace

RECEIVED: as
Then personally appeared the above-named _____ and made oath to the truth of the statements in the above certificate by him subscribed.

Death Record of John Callahan, 1919,
Boston, Massachusetts, UMass Boston

38



Boston Molasses Explosion Aftermath,
Library of Congress

39

1920 Death Certificate, Clifton, North Carolina (AmericanAncestors.org)

40

Death Certificate with ICD Code

41

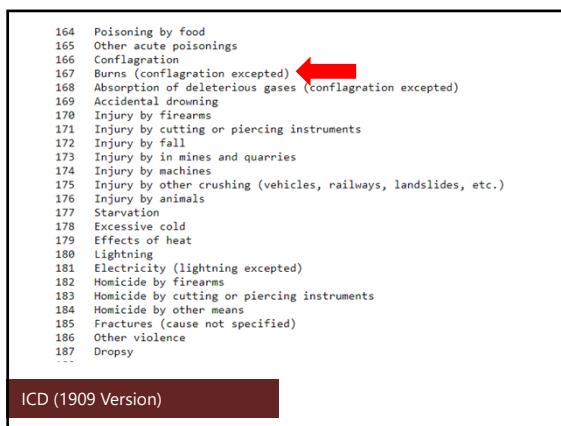
ICD

- ICD = International Classification of Diseases
- First published in 1893
- Codes can help you determine cause of death when it's illegible
- Multiple versions have been produced. Refer to the one that was in place at the time of death.

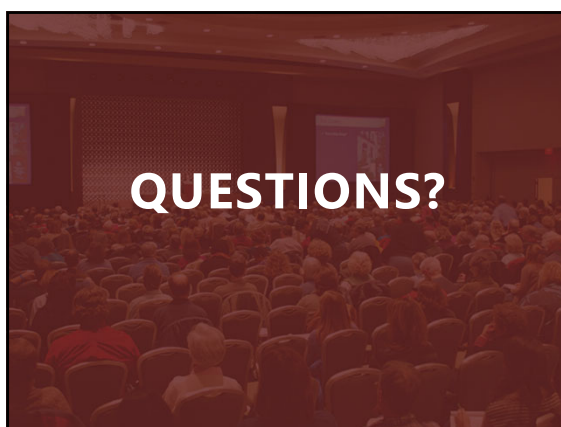
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Finding the Records

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Privacy Restrictions

- Vary from state to state
- Generally, death records over 50 years old are usually available to the public and may be digitized.
- Different repositories:
 - State vital statistics office
 - County/town clerk's office
 - State Archives
 - National Archives and State Department
 - U.S. citizens who died overseas

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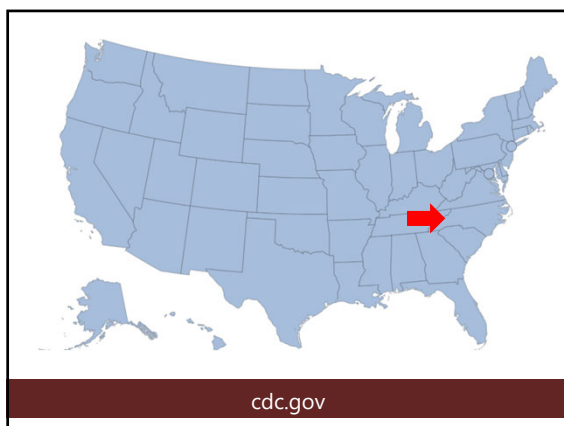
State Indexes

- Each state has a vital record index for births, deaths, and marriages.
- Many indexes available online:
 - American Ancestors
 - FamilySearch Wiki
 - FamilySearch Catalogue
 - Ancestry.com
 - State Archive Web Sites
 - State/County Genealogical Society Web Sites
- Information on index:
 - Name of deceased
 - Year of death (sometimes date)
 - County/town of death

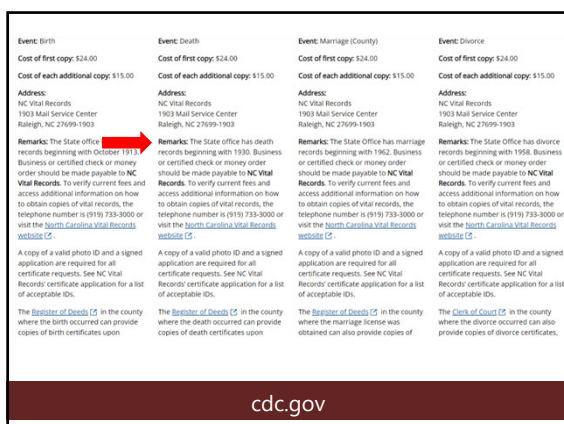
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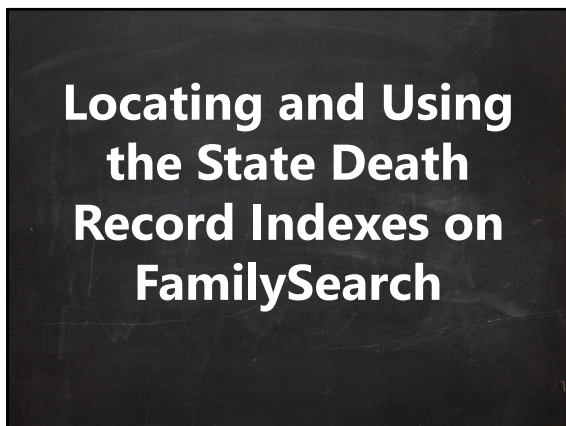
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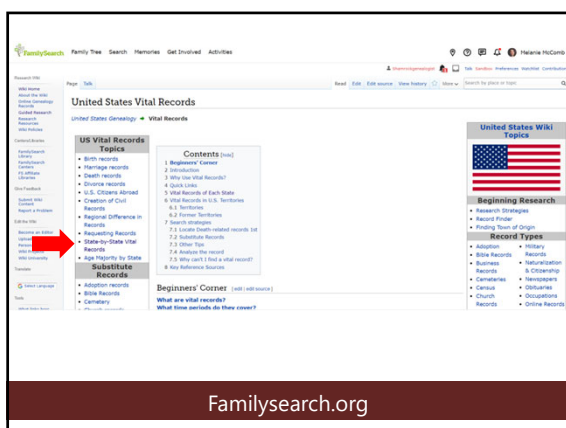
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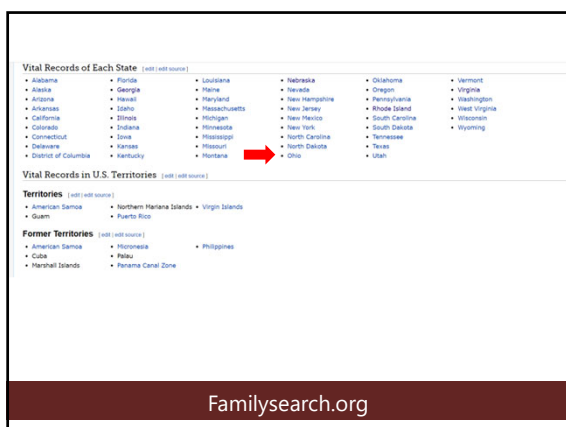
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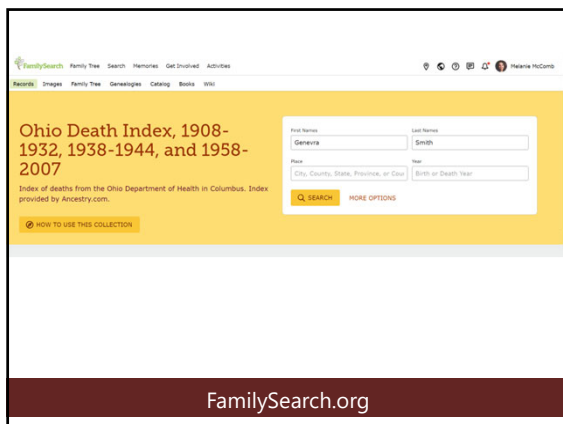
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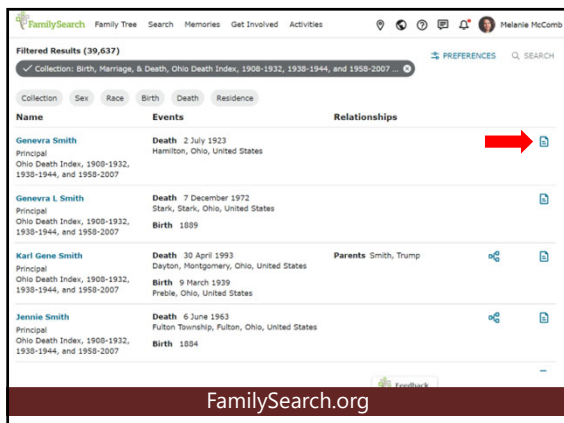
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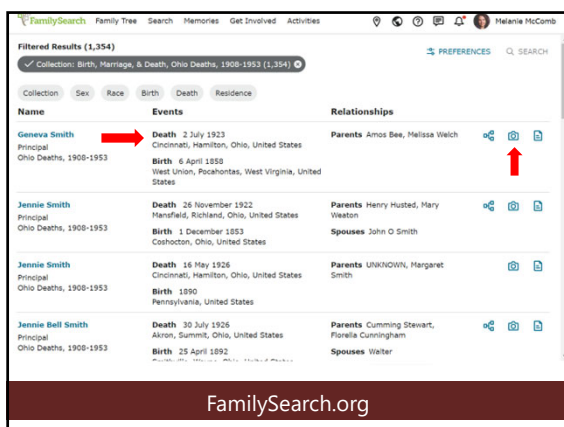
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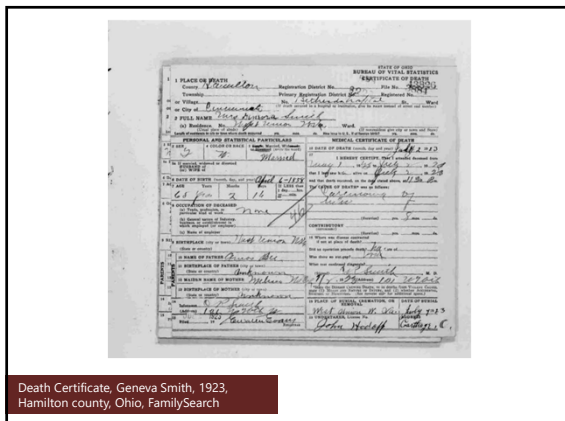
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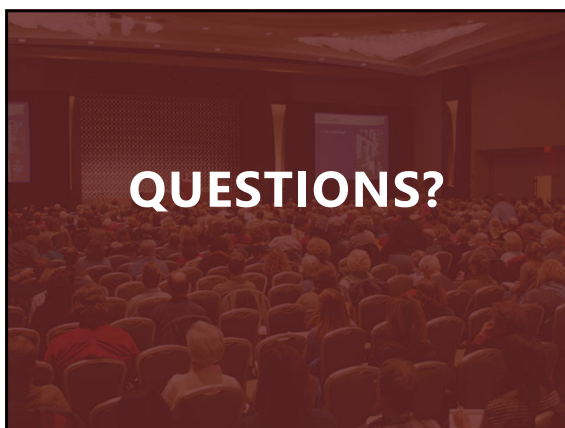
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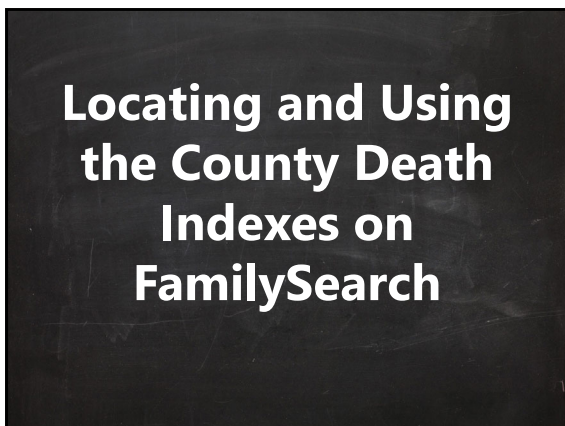
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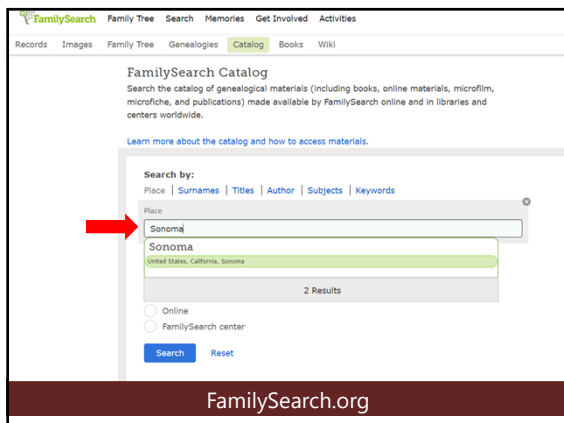
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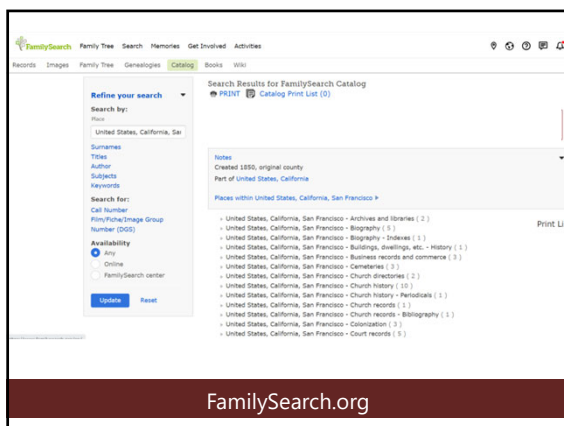
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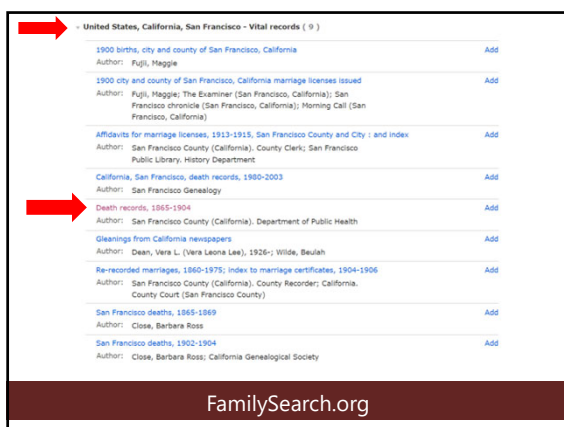
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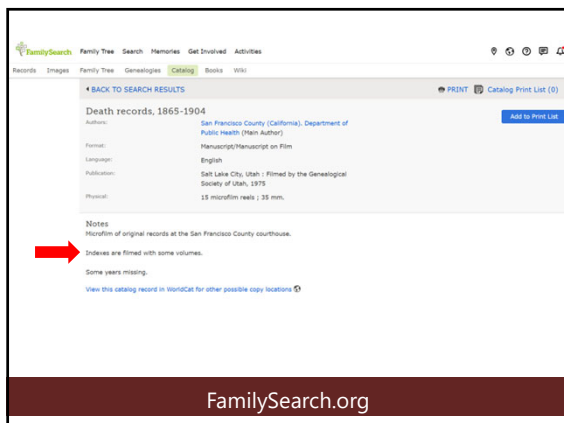
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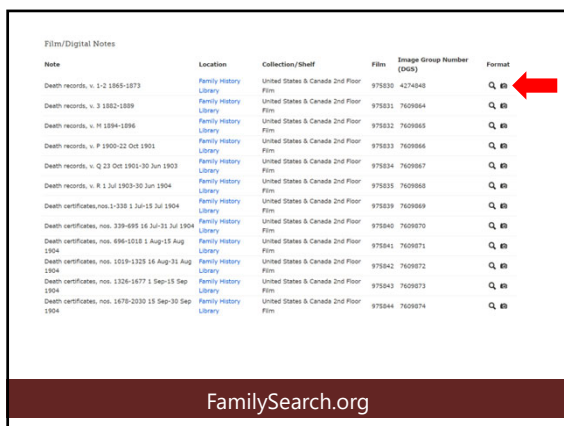
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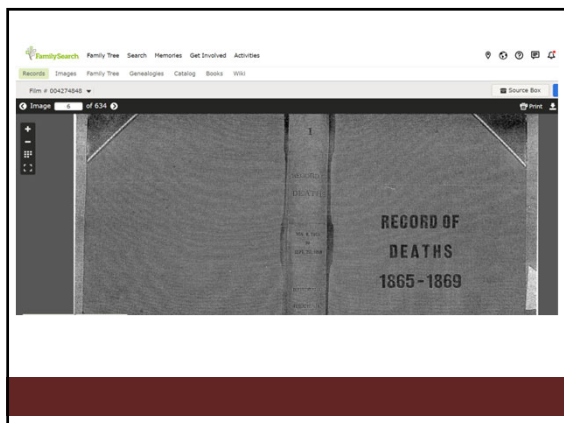
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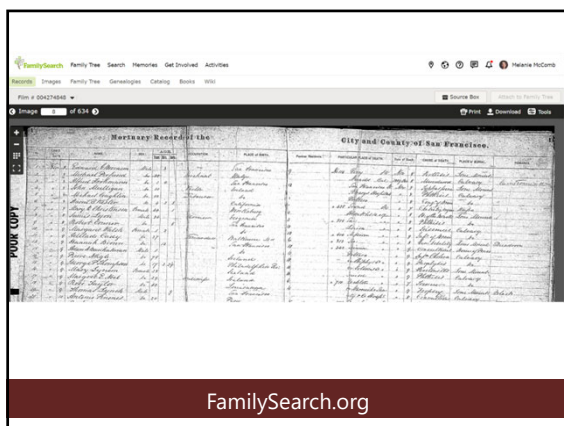
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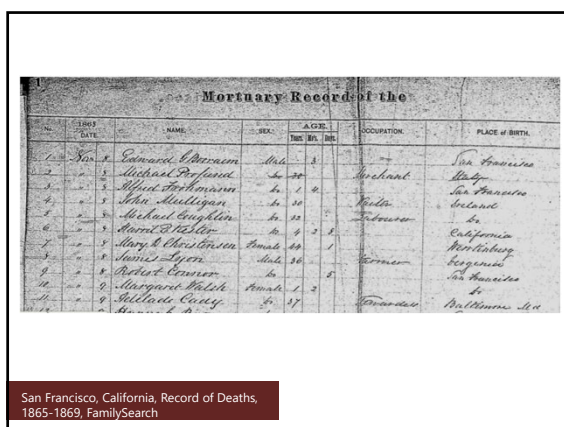
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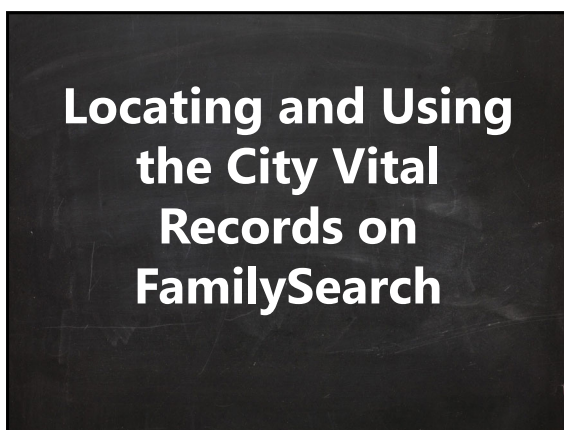


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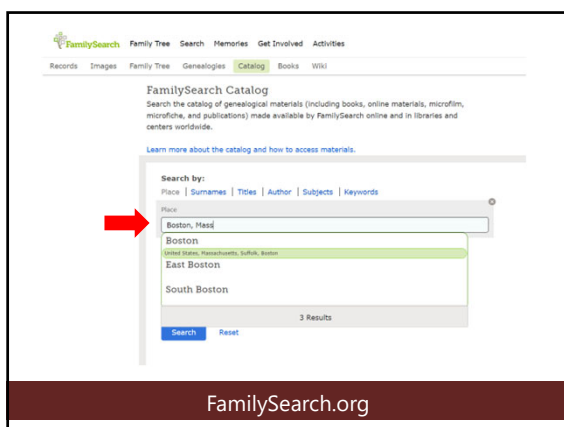
City and County of San Francisco.						
Particular Residence	PARTICULAR PLACE OF DEATH	Date of Death	CAUSE OF DEATH	PLACE OF BURIAL	REMARKS	
1	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
2	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
3	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
4	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
5	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
6	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
7	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
8	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
9	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
10	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
11	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
12	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
13	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
14	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
15	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
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17	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
18	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
19	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		
20	San Francisco	1865	Heart Disease	San Francisco		

San Francisco, California, Record of Deaths,
1865-1869, FamilySearch

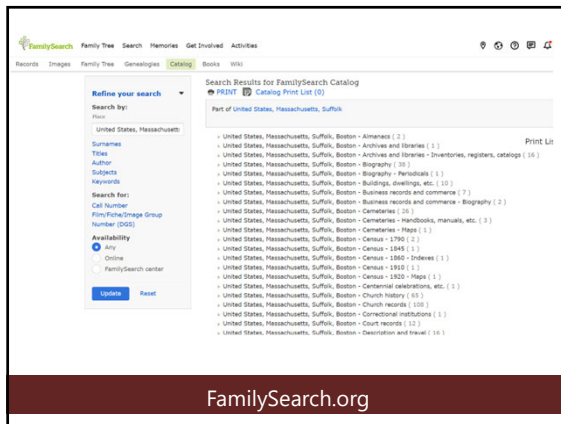
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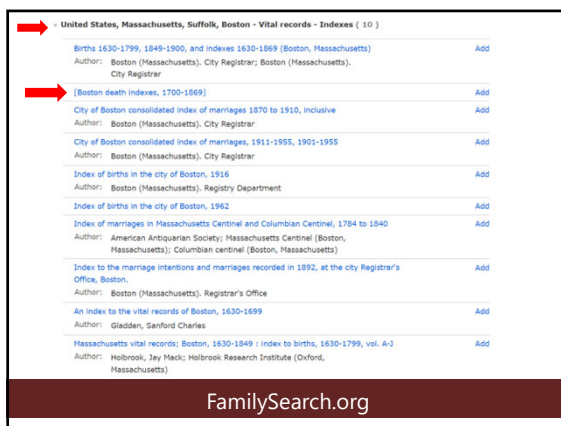
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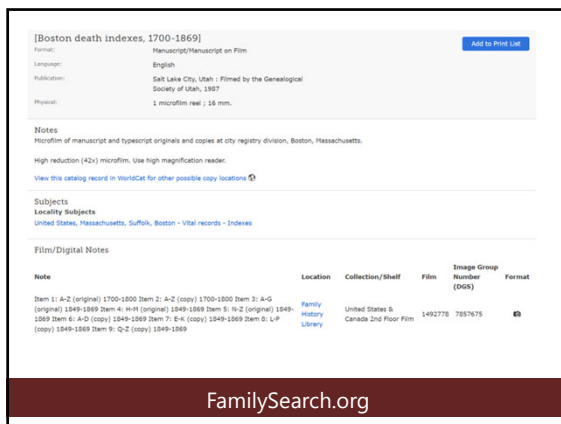
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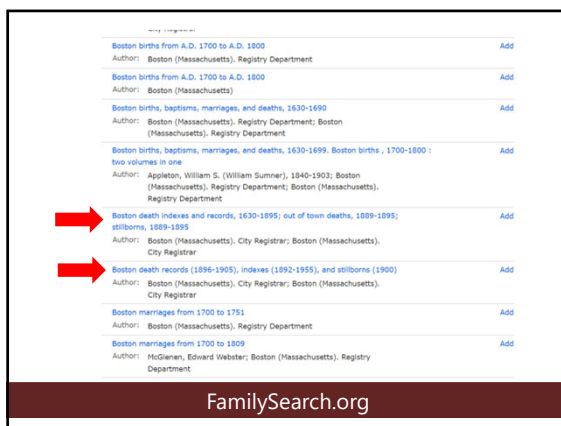
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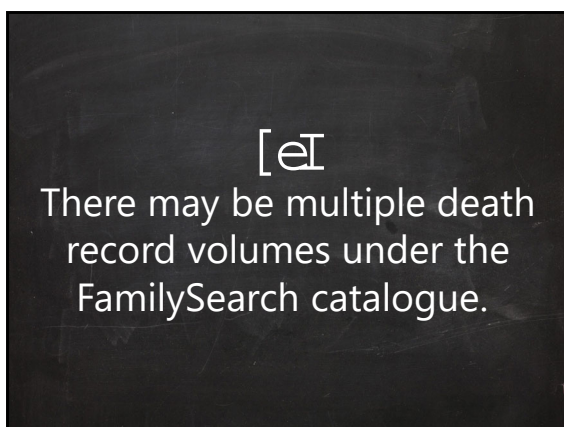
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87

United States, Massachusetts, Suffolk, Boston - Vital records (51)

Abstracts from Waverley Magazine : [1863-1864]	Add
Author: Lee, Harvey	
Birth registers, 1911-1958	Add
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar	
Births 1630-1799, 1849-1900, and indexes 1630-1869 (Boston, Massachusetts)	Add
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar; Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar	
Births, 1728-1897; indexes of births, 1870-1900	Add
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar; Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar	
Births, 1870-1910 (Boston, Massachusetts)	Add
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar; Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar	
Births, marriages 1668-1911, Boston, Massachusetts	Add
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar; Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar	
[Boone marriages in Massachusetts]	Add
Boston (Massachusetts) certificates of marriage, 1883	Add
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar; Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar	
Boston and vicinity death records, 1905-1910	Add
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar; Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar	

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Out of town deaths (1892, 1896-1904); stillborns (1896-1905) (Boston, Massachusetts)

Author: Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar; Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar
 Add || Out of town marriages, 1896-1905 (Boston, Massachusetts) | Add |
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar; Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar	
Out of town marriages, prior to 1800, 1850-1895; index, 1850-1892 (Boston, Massachusetts)	Add
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar; Boston (Massachusetts). City Registrar	
A Record of deaths in Boston and vicinity, 1799-1815	Add
Author: Huddy Brook Cemetery (Great Barrington, Massachusetts); Les Aînés généalogistes de l'Outaouais (Vanier, Ontario)	
Record of marriages solemnized by Alexander Blaikie, D.D. of Boston, 1871-1880, 1882, 1885	Add
Author: Blaikie, Alexander	
A report of the Record Commissioners : containing Boston births, baptisms, marriages and deaths, 1630-1699	Add
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). Registry Department	
A report of the Record Commissioners of the city of Boston	Add
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). Registry Department	
A Report of the Record Commissioners of the city of Boston : containing Boston births from A.D. 1700 to A.D. 1800	Add
Author: Boston (Massachusetts). Registry Department	

FamilySearch.org

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Finding Colonial Death Records

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Refine your search

Search by:

Place: United States, Massachusetts

Summaries

Title: Part of United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth

Author: United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Buildings, dwellings, etc. (4)

Subjects: United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Cemeteries (5)

Keywords: United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Census - 1885 (1)

Search Part: United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Directories (2)

Call Number: United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - History (17)

Image Group Number (DS): United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - History - Personal narratives (2)

Availability: United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Land and property (5)

Any: United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Maps (1)

Online: United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Military records (1)

FamilySearch center: United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Military records - Civil War 1861-1865 (1)

Update: United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Town records (3)

Reset

Annual report of the town officers of the town of Duxbury
Author: Duxbury (Massachusetts), Town Clerk
Add

Copy of the old records of the town of Duxbury, Mass., from 1642 to 1770
Author: [blank], George
Add

Records of Duxbury, 1642-1826
Author: Duxbury (Massachusetts), Town Clerk; Duxbury (Massachusetts), Town Clerk
Add

United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Vital records (18)

FamilySearch.org

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Records of Duxbury, 1642-1826

Author: Duxbury (Massachusetts), Town Clerk (Main Author)
Duxbury (Massachusetts), Town Clerk (Repository)

Format: Manuscript/Manuscript on film

Language: English

Publication: Salt Lake City, Utah : Filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, 1985

Physical: 2 microfilm reels : 35 mm

Subject: (Digital Collection) Massachusetts, Town Clerk, vital and town records : COLLECTION RECORD, 1628-2001

Notes

Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records are available online, click here.

Microfilm of manuscripts filmed at Duxbury, Plymouth County, Massachusetts.

View this catalog record in WorldCat for other possible copy locations

Subjects

Locality Subjects

United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Town records

United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Vital records

United States, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Duxbury - Land and property

FamilySearch.org

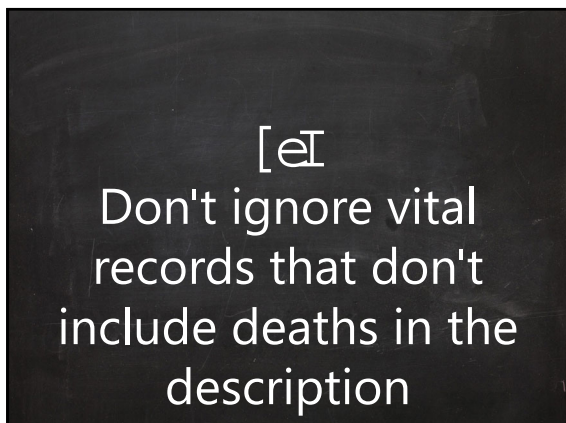
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Film/Digital Notes

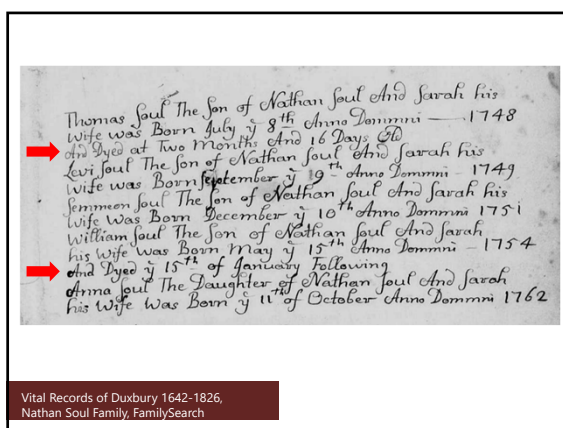
Note	Location	Collection/Shelf	Film	Image Group Number (DS)	Format
General records: Rates and bonds, debts, minutes of meetings, agreements, warrants, some births, and marriages, ex-marriages, etc., 1645-1826.	Family History Library	United States & Canada 2nd Floor Film	417933	7009262	DS
Miscellaneous and fragmentary records 1642-1787, 1686-1711.	Family History Library	United States & Canada 2nd Floor Film	417934	7009263	DS

FamilySearch.org

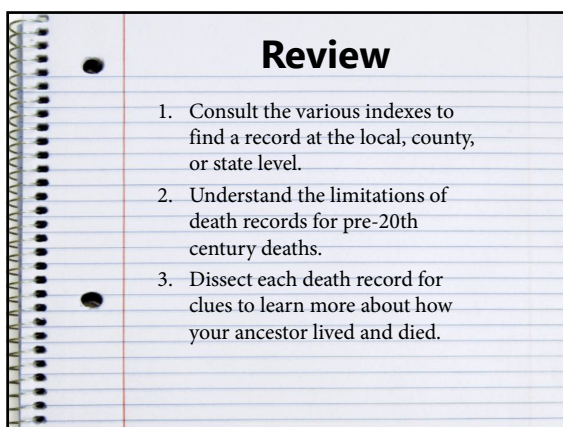
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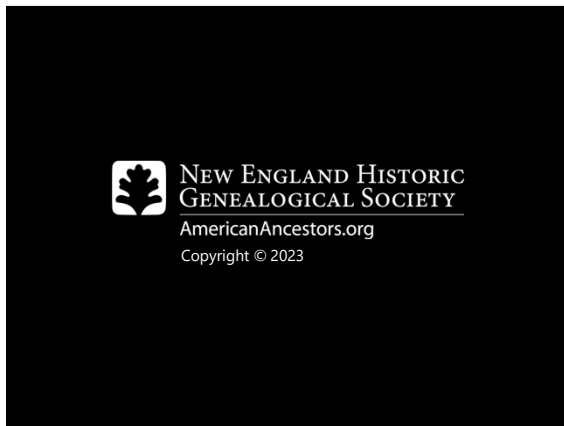
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