

## Finding Your Early 1800's US Ancestors Online

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Data Type	Comments	Online Sources
1. US Censuses; individual State censuses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1850 census lists everyone and ages for each, but no family relationships</li> <li>• Earlier censuses list head of household and number of others by age and sex</li> <li>• State censuses usually name only the "head of household"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://ancestry.com">ancestry.com</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://familysearch.org">family search</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://myheritage.com">my heritage</a></li> </ul>
2. Family records, including Bibles, diaries, some books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent source, but be careful about accuracy of the old books, Bibles</li> <li>• Be especially cautious of copying posted family trees that offer no sources</li> <li>• Bibles help with maiden names</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some published books could be online</li> <li>• Data postings might be online</li> <li>• Message boards can be helpful, as on <a href="http://ancestry.com">ancestry.com</a></li> </ul>
3. Historic Newspapers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most old newspapers are found on the "for pay" sites</li> <li>• The newspapers are often hard to find but there are a few good finding sources</li> <li>• Obits will be the best genealogy item but other newspaper stories may help as well</li> <li>• Might provide hints or more regarding family connections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://Linkpendium.com">Linkpendium</a> may offer information as to the possible newspapers in a county</li> <li>• <a href="http://Eliphond.com">Eliphond.com</a> lists all online newspaper sources in world</li> <li>• <a href="http://Newspapers.com">Newspapers.com</a> has the largest online collection</li> <li>• <a href="http://ChroniclingAmerica.org">Chronicling America</a> is the LOC free site</li> <li>• <a href="http://FultonCountyHistory.org">Fulton County history site</a> (for NY State) – Free</li> <li>• Some States have special online collections</li> </ul>
4. Probate records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These records provide excellent data and are available for a good percentage of people – about 25% in US in 1800 had probate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start with <a href="http://familysearch.org">family search</a> catalog or <a href="http://Linkpendium.com">Linkpendium</a> to see what is available; many are online</li> </ul>
5. Tax records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These records are super in placing individuals in a certain time and place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start with <a href="http://familysearch.org">family search</a> catalog or <a href="http://Linkpendium.com">Linkpendium</a> to see what is available; some are online</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local county records may help</li> </ul>
6. Marriage records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are usually found at the State or county level; some states do a much better job than others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual state websites</li> <li>Also, look at Family Search and Linkpendium to see what might be available online</li> </ul>
7. Military records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pension applications and related investigative files may have superb data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fold3.com</li> <li>ancestry.com</li> <li>family search</li> <li>National Park Service</li> <li>Various US State sites</li> </ul>
8. Maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maps for an ancestor's time period can help define his movements, and reasons for migrating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various map collections, many online</li> <li>Old gazetteers, many online (find them via Linkpendium)</li> <li>mapofus.org is excellent</li> </ul>
9. Historical books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19th century books may have material that offers insights into the early families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digitized early books, found via Google, Family Search, BYU books, or Linkpendium</li> </ul>
10. Property records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More often than not, property records can be found for most US locations in the first half of the 1800s, sometimes even earlier than that</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family search catalog can help identify property record availability; many are digitized and online</li> </ul>
11. DNA records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a more challenging area to get good analytic data, but many persons have had success with DNA testing to either prove or disprove certain relationships</li> <li>DNA will be more important in future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following an individual's DNA test, the testing agency offers data on matches</li> <li>FTDNA is the largest firm</li> <li>Ancestry.com also does DNA autosomal testing</li> </ul>
12. City Directories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For urban ancestors, certain towns have useful early city directories for the early 1800s</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usually, these directories are placed online by the cities or counties themselves; they can be found via family search or Linkpendium</li> </ul>
13. Big Search Engines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These big search engines are excellent aids in finding the various types of records noted in this table</li> <li>They are especially helpful for finding digitized books</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Google</li> <li>Linkpendium</li> <li>Mocavo</li> </ul>

14. Church records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where they are available, these records are excellent for providing vital data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only some of these early records are available online, although the number available online is constantly increasing</li> </ul>
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### **The Jonathan Tracy (1771-1855) Odyssey: Anatomy of a Research Project**

- Harmon Tracy (1834-1919) Data: censuses; Civil War pension and other data; death data; marriage(s) data. Plenty of data on this man.
- Henry Tracy (1804-1861) Data: censuses; property records; other records – plenty of data.
- Jonathan Tracy (1771-1855) Data: censuses; postings; other possibilities.
- Starting Point = 1850 census. Jonathan is listed with Henry Tracy and family; Jonathan is 79, born in NJ, living in Warren County, IL – he might be Henry’s father???
- Goals: confirm that Jonathan is Henry’s father; learn about Jonathan’s BMD, early life, and parentage.
- How to Achieve Goal: See where he went after 1850; Look for death record, cemetery or probate records – he isn’t in 1860 census; no IL death record; no probate record; BUT, a newspaper record has his obit in 1855. He is identified as Henry’s father.
- Tracing Jonathan backwards in time. See if there is value in Collaboration, use of Search Engines, or Genealogy Books. Look at books about the Tracys; look at online postings; look at family trees provided by relatives. In each case, carefully evaluate the data quality and accuracy. Clues are provided by these various sources, but data is soft.
- Some Questionable Data. In a family tree, a Jonathan Tracy (1745-1855) is shown with roots in CT, and being the father of Steuben County, NY brothers, and living in Warren County, IL in 1850. This data would make Jonathan too old and won’t match his census data over the years. But, maybe he is connected (as a brother?) to the Steuben Tracys.
- Return to firmer data; back to the 1850 Census. Henry had children born in IN, so let’s look at IN records.
- IN has good census, marriage and property records. The 1840 census shows Henry and family in Rush Co., IN; it also shows Jonathan with a wife and children in same county, a few entries from Henry. IN marriage records show a marriage for Jonathan; also, a marriage record for Matilda Tracy; and a marriage for a Jared Tracy. No Tracys are in IN 1850 census.

- Back to the IL records. The 1850 Warren County census shows families for not only Henry Tracy, but also for Jared Tracy, and for Matilda Tracy (Wells). It looks like the Tracy family moved en masse from IN to IL. But Jonathan's IN wife is no longer in the picture.
- Good Data Point. I have some online collaboration data from descendants of Matilda. They claim that Jonathan's wife was named Mary Owens, and that they married in 1799, and that she died in 1833. There may be some truth to this data. Also, they provide a newspaper obit for Matilda noting her birth in Ontario County, NY.
- Ontario County, NY Data. The 1810, 1820, and 1830 censuses show data for Jonathan and family. No names are given but the ages and genders of the children are useful data. Ontario property data shows Jonathan selling property in 1833, the same year in which Mary Owen (Tracy) may have died. Perhaps that is the time he moved to IN.
- NY Newspapers. Looking for useful data on the Tracys in that 1810-1833 time period, I find an 1817 newspaper. This entry shows mail to be picked up at the local Lyons, NY PO for either Jonathan Tracy or Israel Owens. The notation of "either" suggests someone was writing a letter to either a member of the Tracy or Owens family. Remember my new relative said Jonathan's wife was surnamed Owens. It seems likely that one of her kin sent that letter. An 1826 newspaper again notes that Jonathan needs to pick up his mail.
- Back to IN Data. Learning that Jonathan sold NY property in 1833 and was in the IN census in 1840, let's check IN newspapers. And yes, there he is, in 1835, being asked to pick up his mail in IN.
- Jonathan in 1800. Since he first was in the Ontario County census in 1810, we want to know where he came from. The 1800 census has two entries for a Jonathan Tracy in diverse NY counties. One of them, in Steuben County, is a good possibility. In a small community, in 1800, not only Jonathan Tracy, but an Isaac Tracy and a Henry Tracy were listed.
- Steuben County Tracys. Steuben County, we learn from NY maps and gazetteers, was formed in 1796, so these were new settlements. We check property and tax records, and early historical books. Jonathan, Isaac, and Henry Tracy are in all of these places. They were closely associated with each other in Steuben County, with Jonathan arriving in 1793 – coming from nearby Tioga County. In a piece of "clinching" property data, an 1818 record notes Jonathan's sale of Steuben property and states that he is "of Ontario County." Thus, we know Jonathan came from Steuben to Ontario County. Because four Steuben County Tracys had a lot of dealings with each other, there is a strong likelihood they are brothers.
- Tracy families in 1790 census; need to look in correct county.

- DNA Data as a Supplement. The Family Tree DNA family finder test turned up two provocative entries for people who are related to (a) early CT Tracys, and (b) one of the Steuben County Tracy brothers. These data seem to confirm that Jonathan is indeed a brother of the Steuben group and has earlier origins in CT. We are getting closer to a full knowledge of Jonathan's origins.