

Exciting News about Available Images at the Family History Center

As part of their effort to make every microfilm available on the internet, Family History Centers (FHC) now have thousands of microfilms available online - some available at home, some online but only available at the Family History Center. What follows is an introduction to finding and using these images.

Here's how to find out whether genealogical information of interest to you is now online:

- 1) Open FamilySearch
- 2) Click on Catalog



- 3) You may search the catalog by Place, Surname, Title, Author, Subject or Keyword

Search by:

[Place](#) | [Surnames](#) | [Titles](#) | [Author](#) | [Subjects](#) | [Keywords](#)

Click on the category you wish to search.

- 4) From here this note will demonstrate with a "Place" search, but the same process could easily be done with the others, particularly Surnames, Subjects, and Keywords.
- 5) If we're doing a "Place" search, you next need to enter the name of the location you are seeking (Let's try San Francisco - you should probably follow each step on your computer)

Search by:

[Place](#) | [Surnames](#) | [Titles](#) | [Author](#) | [Subjects](#) | [Keywords](#)

Place ✕

NOTE that this has to be in a specific form. See Attachment 1, Note 1.

6) Click on Search. This search will bring up a long list of categories.

Search Results for FamilySearch Catalog

 [PRINT](#)  [Catalog Print List \(0\)](#)

Notes

Created 1850, original county

Part of [United States, California](#)

[Places within United States, California, San Francisco](#) ▶

- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Archives and libraries \(2 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Biography \(3 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Biography - Indexes \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Buildings, dwellings, etc. - History \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Business records and commerce \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Cemeteries \(3 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Church directories \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Church history \(5 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Church history - Periodicals \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Church records \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Church records - Bibliography \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Colonization \(2 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Court records \(3 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Court records - Indexes \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Directories \(5 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Emigration and immigration \(9 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Emigration and immigration - Indexes \(2 \)](#)

Some of the most important categories are Vital Records, Naturalization, and Land Records. Each category here contains a number of records. This is shown by the parentheses, so for San Francisco there are 3 records related to Cemeteries.

7) Click on a category of interest (For San Francisco, let's pick Cemeteries). Now the records in that category will appear (3 records, per the number in parentheses).

- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Buildings, dwellings, etc. - History \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Business records and commerce \(1 \)](#)
- ▼ **[United States, California, San Francisco - Cemeteries \(3 \)](#)**

[Alphabetical interments in various cemeteries](#)

[Add](#)

Author: [Masonic Cemetery Association \(San Francisco, California\)](#)

[Alphabetical list of removals to Lawndale Cemetery, 1940](#)

[Add](#)

Author: [Laurel Hill Cemetery Association \(San Francisco, California\)](#)

[Register of removals, 1865-1906](#)

[Add](#)

Author: [Odd Fellows Cemetery Association \(San Francisco, California\)](#)

- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Church directories \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, California, San Francisco - Church history \(5 \)](#)

At this point you have to begin digging for what might be valuable in your research.

- 8) Next you would Click on a specific item (For San Francisco, let's pick Alphabetical Interments published by the Masonic Cemetery Association)

Alphabetical interments in various cemeteries Add to Print List

Authors: [Masonic Cemetery Association \(San Francisco, California\)](#) (Main Author)

Format: Manuscript/Manuscript on Film

Language: English

Publication: Salt Lake City, Utah : Filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, 1975

Physical: 1 microfilm reel ; 35 mm.

Notes
 Microreproduction of typescript.

Alphabetically arranged by first letter of surname.

[View this catalog record in WorldCat for other possible copy locations](#) 

Subjects
Locality Subjects
[United States, California, San Francisco - Cemeteries](#)

Location

Film Notes (This family history center has 1 of 1 films/fiche.)

Note	Location	Collection/Shelf	Film/DGS	Format
Alphabetical interments in various cemeteries	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	975837	

- 9) Scroll down to the bottom of the page that appears. Each item here was originally a microfilm made by the Family History folks. Look to the right side.

- a) If all that appears is an image of a reel, then it's only available as a microfilm and is not online yet.



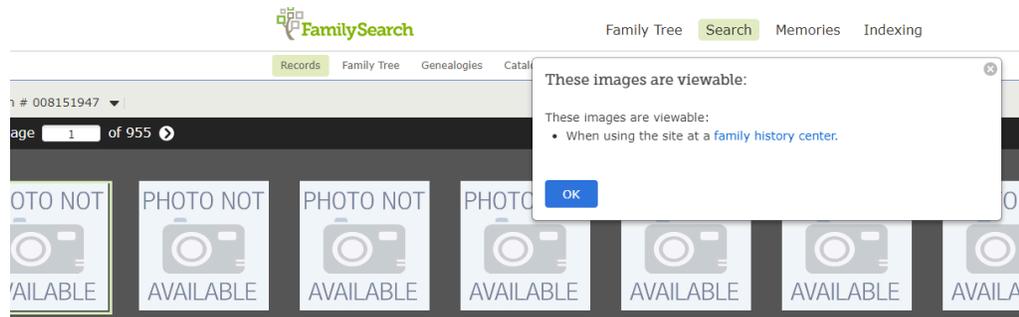
- b) If a magnifying glass appears, then the images are not only available online, but they are indexed!! Click on the magnifying glass and it will take you right to the index for a search! SEE Attachment 1, Note 2, on Film Number.



- c) If what appears is a camera, then the images are available online. Click on the camera image. SEE Attachment 1, Note 2, on Film Number.



- i) In some cases when you click on the camera you will get a message (either with or without blank images) that says “this image is only available at your local Family History Center”.



In that case, you need to go to the Peterson Lane Family History Center to access the image (see below).

- ii) In other cases, when you click on the camera it will take you right to the images!

10) In some cases a message will appear near the top of the page citing a Digital Collection. This indicates that the information is online at the FamilySearch website and if you click on the link it will take you there.

11) In some cases a message will appear near the top of the page “To View a Digital Version of This Item Click [HERE](#)”. If you click on [HERE](#) you may be directed to the main FamilySearch website. You may also be directed to Ex Libris, a site that carries books online. SEE Attachment 1, Note 3 on Ex Libris.

[◀ BACK TO SEARCH RESULTS](#)

From an old Virginia Bible

Format:	Journal Article
Language:	English
Physical:	p. 11

Notes

To view a digital version of this issue click [here](#).

Working with Unindexed Images

Working with unindexed images is quite different from working with indexed images. There are a number of tricks to make the process easier. SEE Attachment 2 on working with unindexed images.

Santa Rosa Family History Center

If you find that a desired set of images are available at the Family History Center, here their address:

Santa Rosa Family History Center
1725 Peterson Lane
Santa Rosa, CA
707-525-0399

Open Tuesday 1-5; Wednesday 1-8; Thursday, 1-5; and Saturday 9-1.

Consider calling in advance, since there are times the FHC has to be closed.

They have a number of computers and people to assist you in using them.

If you bring your own laptop, you can use it access these databases at the FHC.

Why is this Happening?

Many of the microfilms that FamilySearch made are subject to limitations from the original source. Until changes to those limitations can be negotiated, the online version of these microfilms is only available at the Family History Centers.

Attachment 1

NOTE 1: Searching in the Catalog at FamilySearch has to be in a specific form. The typical US County (say, San Francisco) would be entered as "United States, California, San Francisco". I have found the best approach is to enter the County or City name and then the automatic program takes over and gives you a choice of country, state, county, city.

Note further that some records are not indexed in a way that's obvious to you, so you may want to check all 3 - records of a particular City, County, or State. This is often true for vital records, which could be kept at any of these 3 levels. So if you wanted the records for the city of San Rafael, it might be wise to search each of the following:

United States, California

United States, California, Marin County

United States, California, Marin County, San Rafael

This is in addition to searching predecessor locations for historic records that might predate the records kept for a particular county. For example, if your search was for an event in Lake County before 1861, when it was created, those records would be in Napa County.

NOTE 2: When you access an indexed database or an image from the Catalog, it brings up the Film Number associated with the original Microfilm. Often what has happened is that this film is only one of many which are associated with the topic. For example, you might click on Death Records for a specific county in Virginia (i.e. Henrico County) and be directed to a larger database for all Death Records in Virginia. This larger database originally consisted of 35 microfilms. By using the specific microfilm number in the search, FamilySearch limits the search to the location of interest (in this case - Henrico County) which can be very important in an efficient search.

NOTE 3: Ex Libris is a website devoted to putting books and magazines on the internet. When you access Ex Libris through FamilySearch, you will often get the book immediately. Sometimes you get a message that the book is only accessible at a Family History Center, and there may be a limited on the number of people who can access the book.

Attachment 2 - Using Unindexed Records

Records that have not been indexed may still be easily searched.

1. The best way to search a record set is to understand how it is organized. There are 3 common ways for records to be organized:
 - a. Alphabetical, usually by the last name of the individuals. In this case it can be quite easy to search for the person by name. *Warning: Many of these datasets are only alphabetical by first letter, so the names beginning with S are together, but Smith might easily come before Sanders.*
 - b. Chronological. In this case it can be easy to search for an event if you know the actual date. *Warning: the events may be by a large time category like by year, but not in exact chronological order.*
 - c. By Case Number (as, for example, a Naturalization or Pension record)
2. The next step is to see if there is an internal index. This is often the case with land records (Deeds) or Vital Records - the first few pages of the data set are themselves an index. *WARNING: Some datasets include multiple volumes or years of data, so the first index may be to the first volume and a second volume may be indexed many pages later.*
3. Often there is a separate index that can be searched. For example, county land records often have separate volumes that are the indices. In this case, the index volume may be alphabetical and will then give the volume and page for the actual record. Another example is that images available of Naturalization Records are often by Case Number, but there are also alphabetical indices which give the case number and date for a specific individual.
4. And if all else fails, you can always page through the volume one page at a time. While this may seem cumbersome - it's the way we did genealogical research for decades before the modern internet era!!