



France Research Guide

ANCESTOR'S BIRTH LOCATION UNKNOWN

FamilySearch Indexed Records – Try searching in the indexed records for the name of your ancestor. Try a variety of searches with your ancestor's name, or with parent's names, or just by parent's surnames AND using the option to limit locality by the country "France" and the name of the department in France. If there are no results, you will have to find more information from home sources or by asking family members.

Contact Family Members: If you do not have even a minimal amount of information AND have no idea of where and when to look, you need to contact family members who might have that information. This could be older aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc.

ANCESTOR'S BIRTH LOCATION AND NAMES OF PARENTS, SPOUSE, OR CHILDREN ARE KNOWN

FamilySearch Indexed Records: Try searching first in indexed records as explained above.

Department Archive Websites: The department archives of France have digitized all of the parish and civil records in their collection. These collections also include indexes that cover ten-year spans of births, marriages, and deaths, called *tables decennales*. You can find these digitized records by googling the word **archives** and the **name of the department**. You can also find a link to the collection on the FamilySearch Wiki on the department's page.

FamilySearch Browsable Images: If there are no results from your previous search for your ancestor or any siblings, you will have to browse images for the locality. On the **Search** page, click the **Continental Europe** portion of the map then select **France** from the list of countries. Select a record collection from **Image-Only Historical Records** and browse the collection page-by-page for your ancestor.

FamilySearch Catalog: Under **Search** on the home page select **Catalog**. Type **France** and click **Search**. A list of available records will appear. Your search can be localized by selecting **Places within France** at the top and then choosing the exact locality where your ancestor lived.

RESEARCH STRATEGIES

FamilySearch Wiki: The Wiki is full of information about research in France. On the FamilySearch home page, go to **Search** and select **Wiki**. Type in **France** and then press enter. The **Topics** sidebar on the right includes language aids, access to civil and church records, gazetteers, etc. The main page has a list of departments. Click the department where your ancestor lived to find a link to digitized records and any possible indexes.

Geneanet: This is a subscription website that many people from France use to build family trees. You can search the database of member trees by an ancestor's name to see if someone

else has built a tree that includes your ancestor. These trees may provide exact birth, marriage, and death dates and places as well as the names of other members of the family.

Who to search for: If you don't know the names of the parents, but you know the name of the spouse and/or the names of some of his children, begin with a marriage search (if they married in the France and you know the place). Or begin with a search for the birth/baptism record for one of their children (if you have an approximate birthdate and place).

FamilySearch Community: You can get immediate research and handwriting help from a community of researchers through the FamilySearch Communities. Go to <http://community.familysearch.org/> and click **Groups**. Search for **France Genealogy Research** to find the group for French genealogical research. On this page, you can post research questions and upload documents to get translation help.

FINDING A LOCALITY

For help locating a place in France, try the following sources:

- Google
- Wikipedia
- FamilySearch Wiki article **France Gazetteers**.
- Try a keyword search in the FamilySearch Catalog for France Gazetteers

ONLINE RESOURCES

Ancestry: www.ancestry.com

Ancestry has many digitized French records, including records for Paris, Alsace-Lorraine, Allier, Alpes-Maritimes, Marne, Saone-et-Loire, and Oise.

Cyndi's List France: www.cyndislist.com/france

Links to many online resources for French genealogy.

Geopatronyme: www.geopatronyme.com

Find where in France people with your surname lived from 1891-1990.

France GenWeb: www.francegenweb.org/

Links to many important genealogical websites, including the department online websites, gazetteers, military names republican calendar converters, and Huguenot names and places.

French Genealogy Online Databases and Records:

www.genealogy.about.com/od/france/.../France-Genealogy-Records-Online.htm

Mémoire des Hommes: www.memoiredeshommes.sga.defense.gouv.fr/

Identifies casualties of war from WWI and WWII.