

Effective Use of Ancestry.com

February 2026

This presentation will show you how to avoid incorporating other people's mistakes into your tree and to use the Ancestry.com service effectively. It will teach techniques for building a more reliable, evidence-based tree.

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www.GenealogyTechTalks.com



Ancestry.com Hints

- The green leaf
- Can save a lot of time
- However, be skeptical
- Hints come from other people's trees

Ancestry.com Size

- Over 25 million members, 3 million paying
- Over 60 billion source records
- Over 1 billion searches per month
- Can include newspapers.com and Fold3

Ancestry.com Cost

- Monthly:
 - \$24.99 US only
 - \$39.99 world
 - \$59.99 All Access: world, Fold3, newspapers.com, plus 4 friends
- 6 months:
 - \$119.00 US only
 - \$169.00 world
 - \$259.00 All Access: world, Fold3, newspapers.com, plus 4 friends
- Pro Tools: \$10 per month
- Free (no record searching)
 - Build your tree at no cost
 - Can "batch up" and pay for a month of searching

Local Copy

- RootsMagic
- Family Tree Maker
- GEDCOM

Recommendations

- Be skeptical of hints
- Save other people's tree hints for last
 - never click the "Save" button
- Only add sources when you are confident of a match
- Verify transcriptions with the document image
- Standardize dates and places
- Take the DNA test, encourage family members

Recommendations

Sometimes it is useful to print several source documents on paper and **spread them out** on your desk to help see the big picture. Use a highlighter to mark **important or conflicted** information.

Recommended Order

1. Look at primary source hints (first hand and contemporaneous)
2. Look at high-quality secondary source hints
3. Click the search button
4. Look at low-quality source hints
5. Look at other people's trees (but, don't click "Save")

The screenshot shows a profile for Mamie Evelyn Prince in the Lori Family Tree. The profile includes a name card, a birth date of 29 January 1894 Illinois, and a death date of 20 February 1948 St Louis, Missouri, USA. It lists her father as Bernard Aime Prince and her mother as David Isabel Harwood. Below this, there are two sections for census records: the 1920 United States Federal Census (Census & Voter Lists) and the 1930 United States Federal Census (1930s - Current). Each section shows a thumbnail of the census document and a table of details including Name, Birth, Residence, CN#, and Spouse. The 1920 census lists her as Mamie Kelly, born 1894 Illinois, residing at 4920 Cotton Hill, Canton Hill, Dunklin, Missouri, USA, with CN# 1 and spouse Wm Kelly. The 1930 census lists her as Mamie Evelyn Kelly, born 29 January 1894 Illinois, United States of America, residing at 1620 Cotton Hill, Canton Hill, Dunklin, Missouri, United States of America, with CN# 1 and spouse William Harvey Kelly.

This screenshot is similar to the previous one but includes a callout box. The callout box is a dark grey rectangle with white text that reads "with duplicate" and "Member connect". Below this, it shows a navigation bar with three tabs: "facts", "Hints 8", and "Gallery". The "Hints" tab is highlighted with a green underline. Below the tabs, there is a section for "Accepted 0" with a green checkmark icon.

This screenshot is similar to the previous one but includes a callout box. The callout box is a dark grey rectangle with white text that reads "New" and "Undecided". Below this, it shows a navigation bar with three tabs: "New", "Undecided", and "Gallery". The "New" tab is highlighted with a green underline. Below the tabs, there is a section for "Mamie Evelyn Prince in the Lori Family Tree" with a birth date of 29 January 1894 Illinois.

Mamie Evelyn Prince ☆
 BIRTH: 20 JAN 1894 • Broughton, Hamilton, Illinois, USA
 DEATH: 20 FEB 1949 • St Louis, Missouri, USA
 1st cousin 2x removed

Timeline

- 1894 Birth: 20 Jan 1894 • Broughton, Hamilton, Illinois, USA
- 1900 Birth of brother William R Prince (1900-) at 1824 • Illinois, USA
- 1900 Birth of brother Bernard D Prince Jr (1900-) at 1900 • Illinois, USA
- 1900 Birth of brother Irving & Prince (1900-1934) at 1900 • Illinois, USA
- 1910 Residence: 1910 • Liberty, Stoddard, Missouri, USA
- 1910 Residence: 1910 • Liberty, Stoddard, Missouri, USA
- 1920 Birth of brother Frederick E Prince (1920-) at 1920 • Missouri, USA
- 1920 Birth of brother Marshall Wilson Prince (1920-) at 1920 • Missouri, USA
- 1920 Death of mother Clara Isabel Harwood (1870-1920) at 25 Jan 1920 • East Prairie, Mississippi, Missouri, USA
- 1924 Death of brother Irving & Prince (1900-1934) at 1924 • Mississippi, Mississippi, Missouri, USA
- 1949 Death: 20 Feb 1949 • St Louis, Missouri, USA

Relationships

- Parents: Bernard D Prince Sr (1870-), Clara Isabel Harwood (1870-1920)
- Siblings: William R Prince (1900-), Bernard D Prince Jr (1900-), Irving & Prince (1900-1934), Frederick E Prince (1920-), Marshall Wilson Prince (1920-)
- Spouse: William Hervey Kelly
- Children: Mamie Evelyn Prince

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Search [Q Search] [Tools] [Edit]

Relationships

- Parents: Bernard D Prince Sr (1870-), Clara Isabel Harwood (1870-1920)

All results for Mamie Evelyn Prince Kelly

Filters

- Census & voter lists: 50,000+
- Birth, marriage & death: 70,000+
- Military: 40,000+
- Immigration & emigration: 6,000+
- Newspapers & periodicals: 5,000+
- Pictures: 520

Family trees

- Recent location: 300,000+
- North America: 600,000+
- Europe: 600,000+

All results for Mamie Evelyn Prince Kelly

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All results for Mamie Evelyn Prince Kelly

Search [Broad] [Exact]

Mamie Evelyn Prince Kelly
 Born: 1894
 In: Broughton, Hamilton, Illi...
 Lived In: 1910
 In: Liberty, Stoddard, Misso...
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First & Middle Name(s) Last Name

Marnie Evelyn Prince Kelly

Quick Fill Suggestions

✓ Marnie Evelyn Prince

Place your ancestor might have lived Birth Year

City, County, State, Country 1894

Search show fewer options Match all terms exactly

Add event: Birth Marriage Death Lived In Any Event More

Year Location

Birth 1894 Broughton, Hamilton, Illinois, USA

Death 1949 St Louis, Missouri, USA

Lived In 1910 Liberty, Stoddard, Missouri, USA

Add family member: Father Mother Sibling Spouse Child

First & Middle Name(s) Last Name

Father Bernard D Prince

Mother Dora Isabel Harwood

Sibling Marshal Wilson Prince

First & Middle Name(s) Last Name

Marnie Evelyn Prince Kelly

Quick Fill Suggestions

✓ Marnie Evelyn Prince

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Exact to...

- This place
- County
- County and adjacent counties
- State
- State and adjacent states
- Country

 About these settings

Other People's Trees

- May contain mistakes
- Save until last
- May bias you to their errors
- Are there any source citations?

Tree with relevant information

Ancestry Member Tree Julia Sullivan from your tree

Dreher Families - Württemberg, Owner: MBoast

Julia SULLIVAN
 BIRTH 25 Nov 1864 Mattoon, IL
 DEATH 9 Sep 1948 **DIFFERENT** Terre Haute, IN

Family Info

Father	Eugene J. SULLIVAN (1833-1923)
Mother	Bridget McMAHON (1823-1908)
Spouse	Michael HEFFERN (Married 1923)
Children	Mary A. (1884-), Hazel S. (1908-)
Spouse	Edward HAYS (1863-1928)
Married	1922
Children	Ruth (1923-)

ScottLee with source Your Tree

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Review Cancel

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sources (1) records (1)

sources (21) records (21) photos (1)

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sources (21) records (21) photos (1)

HEALTH OFFICER'S CERTIFICATION

20. Date of Death Sept 15 1948 at 48 M.

21. I CERTIFY that I have investigated cause of death of deceased and find that deceased came to death on date and hour stated above due to:

Standardizing Data

- Standard dates
 - DD Mmm YYYY
 - 1 Jan 1922
- Standard place names
 - **City, County, State, Country**
 - Seattle, King, Washington, USA
 - Richmond,, Virginia, USA
 - Georgia, USA

Edit birth **Malcolm S Brown**
1889-1969

Edit fact

Attach media
Attach source

Edit fact

Date: Feb 16, 1889 Location: Mississippi

Show map on LifeStory

Description: Enter an optional description of this event

Show this event on LifeStory

Automatically generate story and replace current text for this event.

Birth
Malcolm S Brown was born on February 16, 1889, in Mississippi.

Save Close Delete

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Save Cancel Delete

- Mississippi
- Mississippi Choctaw Reservation, Neshoba, Mississippi, USA
- Mississippi City, Harrison, Mississippi, USA
- Mississippi County, Arkansas, USA
- Mississippi County, Missouri, USA
- Mississippi State, Oktibbeha, Mississippi, USA
- Mississippi Station, Frontenac, Ontario, Canada
- Mississippi, Columbia, Arkansas, USA
- Mississippi, Crittenden, Arkansas, USA
- Mississippi, Desha, Arkansas, USA
- Mississippi, Dyer, Tennessee, USA
- Mississippi, Jersey, Illinois, USA
- Mississippi, Missouri, USA
- Mississippi, Sacramento, California, USA
- Mississippi, Sebastian, Arkansas, USA
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Ancestry DNA

- Can help verify research
- ThruLines
 - Lists DNA matches by relationship
- Get your relatives to test
 - Siblings, parents
 - Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins
 - More distant relatives



Ancestry DNA

- \$99 AncestryDNA
 - Saliva sample
 - Frequent discounts
- List of DNA cousins
- Ethnicity breakdown



Ancestry DNA

- ThruLines needs common relatives
 - Your tree and your DNA relative's tree must have at least one person in common
- Many people build minimal trees
- Build your tree down from your ancestors
 - As many generations of descendants as you can

