

PERSI



Breaking Through Brickwalls

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This presentation will answer the questions:

What is it?

How can I use it?

How it might help me?

Why Would You Need It?



How we hope to break through
a brick wall



How it more often happens

You need tools



Using periodicals is part of the suggested “first steps’ in genealogy research to find what other’s have already done.

Periodicals can include:

- Completed genealogies

- Family histories

- Bible records

- Records no longer available because of destruction

- Local record sources abstracted

There have been written indexes around since 1800s

- Munsell Publications: Index to Town Histories, Biographies,

Etc

- Jacobus Indexes: Index of periodicals from 1858-1952.

[There is a copy in the MCGS Library]

- Walenmaier Indexs: 1956-1962 – Periodicals and Family

Histories

- Genealogical Periodical Annual Index: 1962-1965

Great sources for social history of the area your ancestor lived. Most of these are no longer in print but you maybe able to access them through interlibrary loan or at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

PERsi is one of these tools.

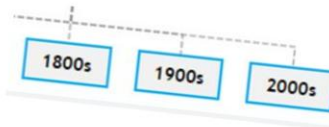
What it is / isn't



Image of bound periodicals at the Galveston & Texas History Center



Allen County , Fort Wayne, Indiana, Public Library



Publication Subject index

Begun in 1986 staff of Allen County Public Library to index their collection

More that 1 million articles

Updated annually

Large national journals to small mimeographed society bulletins

Does not cover every periodical published but all indexed publications are held by the library

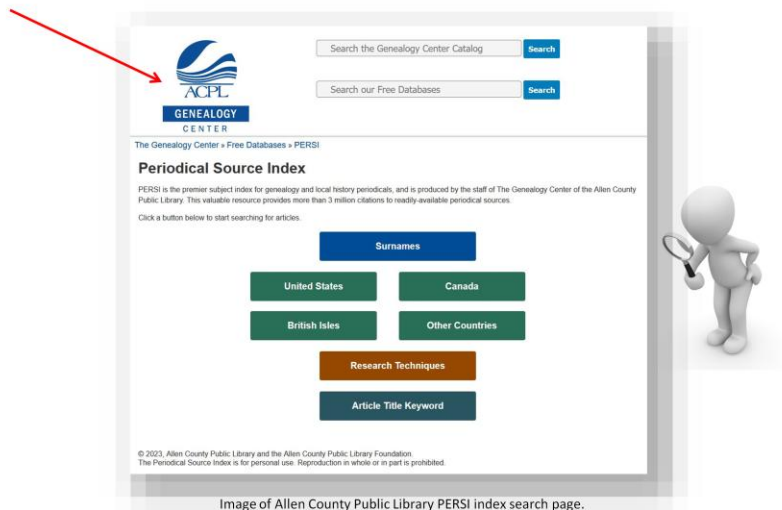
Not a text-search tool of contents. Just a article title search tool

Guidelines used to create index have been subjective

You need to be creative in your searches

Next Slide: Where Do You Find It?

Where Do You Find It?



This is an image of the landing page of the PERSi index on the Allen County Public Library Website. The index has been in book form, on CD and has been part of various paid websites over the years. It is now on the Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center website.

A clickable URL has been included at the bottom of this slide which will take you to this page on the ACPL website.

Later slides will show you how to use it.

This presentation will be posted to website in Members Only Section and as a 'presentation example' on the Join/Renew page.

Example: You heard that collateral family member named Laura Hazel Miller lived in a cave in Glade Park in Mesa County, Colorado

What Might You Find?

Where Might You Find it?

<https://www.mesacountygenealogy.org/newsletters.html>

2012 Vol 32 **Issue 1** Issue 2 Issue 3 Issue 4

Periodical Source Index: Location Search

PERSI > Location Search: USA > CO > Mesa County > Surname

Click here to order articles. (Will open in new tab.)


Show 10 entries Search: Miller

| Article Title | Periodical | Year Published |
|---|---|----------------|
| Laura Hazel Miller made home in natural caves | Mesa Dwellers Vol. 32, Issue 2 (Jun 2012) ACPL Call #: 978.801 M66mc | 2012 |

Periodical Source Index Search

Glade Park Woman Made Home in Natural Caves
By Kathy Jordan

High on Glade Park, about three miles west of the store, is the cave that once housed Laura Hazel Miller. What little I have been able to uncover about her makes her story both heartbreaking and fascinating. I spoke with several people who knew Mrs. Miller. One of those was Elsie King Granere. Elsie said that she and her deceased husband, Roy King, moved onto Glade Park in 1944. One day when they were driving to the Glade Park store from their ranch several miles to the west, they stopped and offered Mrs. Miller a ride. Elsie said that Mrs. Miller, dressed in a black bonnet and skirt, was happy to get a ride as she appeared tired and out of breath. Elsie told me that sometime after 1944, The Denver Post ran a full-page story about Mrs. Miller. Since the Kings subscribed only to the Sunday Post, she knew that the story had appeared on a Sunday. I contacted the Denver Public Library with the limited information I had. In about three weeks, I had an e-mail from a library volunteer with a copy of the page that ran in December 1948. It contained three pictures that he visited with her in the early 1950s and that they had a pleasant conversation. He noted: "She was a very intelligent woman, and I could hardly believe she was 87 years old". Doralyn Genova, whose grandparents, Henry and Dora Lane, had a homestead on the property just west of Mrs. Miller's, recalls visiting Mrs. Miller with her mother, Anna Lane Brodak, and Olive Lane Blackburn on a somewhat regular basis. Doralyn said they always took fresh vegetables and fruit when in season. Mrs. Miller had several Ute Indian baskets, and she would go back in one of the caves and bring out one or two to show her guests. She said that Mrs. Miller was intelligent and always had a lesson of some sort to teach Doralyn and her sister, Shirley. Zita Hammer Roseborough said that her mother would give Mrs. Miller a ride to the store. She said that Mrs. Miller kept her money in a glass jar in the midst of other glass jars filled with fruit and vegetables she had canned. Terry Hammer remembered that when his



<https://www.mesacountygenealogy.org/newsletters/2012/jun%202012.pdf>

I have used here a local example of a PERsi search.

Using a 'Location Search' with a common name is a better option than a 'Surname Search' which would give you far too many results.

Steps I took for the search

Location>

USA > Colorado > Mesa County > Surname > Miller

The results give me:

Article Title, Periodical/Year published, Vol./ Issue and the name of the publisher (not shown in this example).

Note the difference in actual title and indexed title. You may see this issue as there are no consistent indexing rules for the volunteers. Because of this using a wide variety of search terms can be helpful.

Although you could order the article from the Allen County Public Library they suggest a bit of online searching first to see if you can locate the article in a different place.

As you can see from this slide, the article is available on our website

One Way to Get Started

- Create a topic-based based pedigree chart for the family of interest. (occupations, locations, etc.)
 - Identify which topics or subjects are similar across multiple generations.
 - Identify what is different, generation by generation.
- Create a research plan based on similarities and differences
- Search PERsi using filters for articles of interest.
- Keep a detailed research log.
 - Cyndi's List: <https://www.cyndislist.com/charts/research/>

Modified from 'PERsi: Spanning The Generations', Jen Baldwin, Find my Past, Data Acquisition Manager.
article created prior to moving, in 2020, back to the Allen County Public Library.

Remember PERsi is a Subject / Topic based index. Here is a quick list of a way to create a research plan to use PERsi

The link will take you to 'Cyndislist' a massive genealogy subject indexing site with links. This particular link will take you to some research form example links.

I Search With a Biography

Gibson Morrison (ca 1822 – 1888) may have been born in **Tennessee (Possibly Hickman County)**.

By 1844 he was living in **Pope County, Arkansas** with his wife Mary Clark. He was listed as a steamboat pilot on the 1850-1870 US Federal Census, and served as a civilian **steamboat pilot** during the **Civil War** on the Arkansas River. His wife (and possibly oldest son) died about 1863, perhaps in a house fire. He had 6 children by this marriage. He **married** Julia Ann Massey **about 1864** and had an additional 7 children. While serving as pilot of the Annie Jacobs during the **Civil War** he was wounded, these wounds apparently were a contributing factor in his death in 1888. His burial location is unknown but he may have been buried on the family farm that is now under the waters of Lake Dardanelle that was created in 1965 with the erection of the McClellan-Kerr Navigation System. No records have been found indicating where, or if, **his grave may have been moved**.

Possible PERsi Keywords



From Wikipedia: Sultana at Helena, Arkansas, on April 26, 1865, the day before her destruction. A crowd of paroled prisoners covers her decks. Accessed May 2023

- Morrison – Tennessee, Arkansas
- Tennessee – Hickman County
- Migration – Tennessee, Arkansas
- Arkansas – Pope County
- Marriages - Arkansas
- Arkansas - Civil War
- Military Records
- Steamboats – Arkansas
- Steamboats –Civil War
- Rivers - Arkansas
- [Graves -Removals](#)

I search PERsi using a brief ancestor biography. After creating the biography I highlight possible PERsi search keywords.

Remember: Be creative with your search terms.

The link will take you to the PERsi listing for the keyword “removals”. Using the additional search box in the results screen you can enter the term ‘Arkansas’ to focus on only that state.

How Do You Use It?

- [Allen County Public Library online](#)

- > Research
- > Genealogy
- > Periodical Source Index PERsi
- > General Subjects

Surnames, United States, Canada, British Isles, Other Countries, Research Techniques, Article Title Keyword

* **Note:** Not an 'every name' or 'every word' index; Does not cover 'surname' periodicals

These are the 'breadcrumb' steps to locate the PERsi database on the Allen County Public Library website.

Click link to access the Allen County Public Library online

Research > Genealogy > PERsi

This will open the landing page for the index that is the same as the image you saw on slide #4 of this presentation.

Once again, remember PERsi is not an every name/every word index, it is more of a keyword/subject index.

Familiarize yourself with the various menus and

Things to Keep in Mind

- It will take practice to use it efficiently.
- Foreign articles may be in the language of the country.
- Be creative in your searches – [graves, cemeteries, crypts, mausoleum, vaults, tombs, churchyards, death, burials, gravestones, abandoned, name of state], these are words that may be in an article title.
- In older periodicals there may be some articles written when people were alive to be interviewed.
- Browse the categories in each section to get a feel of how they are listed.
- Not just for genealogists – example: My Vietnam War research terms for my husbands service time:
 - Vietnam; Vietnam War; 1968; 1969; 101st; infantry; helicopters; operations; etc.

Here are a few things to keep in mind. Most importantly be creative in your searches. Here you can see a variety of terms that may be related to burials.

Check a thesaurus for more options.

Because PERsi is a periodical index it includes not just genealogy periodicals but periodicals of a wide variety. I have used this tool to do research of the Vietnam War. I list here a few of the search terms I have used for this type of research.

Ideas for Searches from MCGS Members Survey

- **Research Techniques** – Vital Records – USA > 2,412 entries > search within results [Nebraska: 17 entries; Canada: 29 entries; Missouri: 89 entries]
- **Research Techniques** – Naturalization – USA > 750 entries > search within results [declarations: 9 entries]
- **Location** – US – Individual State >(example: Missouri > Vital Records > 3947 entries)
- **Location** – Other Country - Canada > Quebec > Probate Records [98 entries]
Netherlands > Vital Records [44 entries]
- **Surnames** – Baker : 3,788 entries; Moses: 7 entries
- **Article Title** – Immigration > Switzerland: 9 entries
- **Article Title** – Freight Wagons : 568 entries
- **Article Title** – Steamboats: 413 entries > Arkansas: 4 entries

Here are a few research possibilities. You can use these items to learn how to use PERsi.

How to Order Articles

| | | |
|--|------|---|
| Moses & Sarah Baker Bible, 1827-1949 Tri-County Researcher Vol. 14, Issue 1 (Jan 1990) ACPL Call #: 975.401 M35tc | 1990 | Tri-County Researcher POB 196 Proctor, WV 26055 |
|--|------|---|

[Click here to order articles. \(Will open in new tab.\)](#)

Article ORDER FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

To obtain copies of periodical articles contact The Genealogy Center (Genealogy@ACPL.Info). Send this form describing the articles to be copied, provide the full article title from PERSI and the name of the journal. Request only six articles at a time separately. **The charge is \$7.50 for each order form (up to and including 6 articles), pre-paid to ACPL. Once the order is completed, \$0.20 per page copied will be billed to you. Requests not accepted by phone. Please allow 6-8 weeks.**

Title of Article: _____

Title of Journal: _____

Call #: _____ Vol: _____ No: _____ Mon: _____ Yr: _____

Title of Article: _____

Title of Journal: _____

Call #: _____ Vol: _____ No: _____ Mon: _____ Yr: _____

Title of Article: _____

Title of Journal: _____

Call #: _____ Vol: _____ No: _____ Mon: _____ Yr: _____

Title of Article: _____

Title of Journal: _____

Call #: _____ Vol: _____ No: _____ Mon: _____ Yr: _____

If you find an article that you would like to order from the ACPL each page of results includes a “Click here to order articles” option. A new window will open with a downloadable PDF form that you can either print or save to your computer.

Form can be emailed, but after a conversation with the ACPL last month here is some more detailed information:

They are unable to process credit cards as they have no budget for paying the credit card fee so mailing the form with a check is really the only option. You can email the form, however they will not begin the research until they receive your check.

The \$7.50 is for the actual search. You will be billed 20 cents per page which can either be

Other Ways to Find Articles

- [MCGS Library Online Catalog](#) – LibraryThing > Periodicals Removed:
Search this library
- FamilySearch.org – Some periodicals can be viewed online:
Example - Hawkeye Heritage; Iowa Genealogical Society
- Google Books has some periodicals [<https://books.google.com>] Full View
Search: Tennessee History > 'Battle of Shiloh', Tennessee Historical Magazine, 1919
<https://tinyurl.com/5n6jdtaj>
- Find My Past PERSI Collection – Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/findmypastpersi>
Search for "Periodicals"
Full texts. You can sort and filter by Year, Topics/Subjects/ etc.

Here are a few examples of other ways to locate an article of interest.

How can this help you break past brickwalls?

- Can lead you to detailed genealogies. Example: '*The English Ancestry of Elizabeth Strutt*'. New England historical and Genealogical Register, Vol. CXLI, Jan 1987
- Or, you can find more interesting details that a marriage return does not include, like, '*A Rocky Mountain Wedding*', Details the wedding of Thomas Arthur Folger and Donna Rose Perkins as they snowboarded down a mountain in the Rocky Mountains to be married by Chief Leonard Crowdog Jr, of the Lakota Sioux, at its base on 22 April, 2006. The Mayflower Quarterly, Vol. 72 No. 2. June 2006
- Or, why didn't your ancestor, who was a *Mayflower* passenger, sign the Mayflower Compact? The Mayflower Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3, September 2004.
- Or, in writing about an ancestor who was a steamboat pilot during the Civil War in Arkansas what other details might be available? The article '*Steamboats in the Civil War brief, 1862-1864*', Civil War Roundtable of Arkansas, Oct 2008, could be invaluable.

Here are a few ways that using PERsi can help you break past a brickwall or add more details to your family history.

How it Helped Me

- William Ellis Cummings moved from Iowa to Wallula Junction, Walla Walla County, Washington and died there in 1914.
- I did not know who his parents were.
- A search of PERsi in 1997 on the CD found this listing:
 - Wallula Cemetery; Seattle Genealogical Society Bulletin, Vol. 19, Issue 1 (Sep 1969).
 - At the time I ordered a copy of the article (was not online, now online)

Not Ellis' mother;
Josiah's second wife

Gideon Grant Cummings 9/7/1939 &
Michael Ray Cummings 1/30/1945 sons
of Harold and Bernice Cummings
Mary, child of Enos & Susan E.
Cummings, 2/6/1870 age 6 years
Amos Cummings 1/9/1882 7/23/1909
Erwin Cummings 1/1/1874 2/28/1889
Phebe Cummings 9/1/1814 1878
Josiah Cummings 6/27/1804 5/16/1874
Gideon Cummings 6/12/1889 5/16/1917
Lucy Cummings 6/28/1842 2/28/1918
Ellis Cummings 5/25/1834 6/18/1914
Almira Cummings 1/6/1833 5/14/1913
George Cummings 2/22/1827 11/29/1914

An example of how using PERsi helped me break past a 'brickwall'.

The Wallula Cemetery in Wallula Junction was inundated with the waters of the McNary Dam and Lock in the 1950s, long before I began research in this family.

Bibliography

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- Family Tree Magazine. "What is PERsi? A Quick Explainer for Genealogists". YouTube. Accessed April 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=as5zWYlMLc0>
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- MCGS Member survey – Programs; Question #5 "What primary online tools do you use for researching...". *PERsi was not mentioned.*
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- Kip Sperry, A.G., G.R.S., and Roger Scanland. "Searching the Genealogical Literature: Periodical Indexes". National Genealogical Society Quarterly, Sept. 1975, Vol. 63, Issue 3, pgs 186-193.
- Tyler S. Stahle. "Using PERsi for Genealogy Success". Dec. 5, 2016. familysearch blog, accessed April 2023. <https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/using-persi-for-genealogy-success>.
- Other sites listed on slide #13, "Other Ways to Find Articles" in this presentation.

Here are the items I used to create this presentation.

Just a few notes:

The Allen County Public Library how-to video is about an hour long.

The AncestralFindings is a podcast of older information from when the index was housed on the Find My Past website but it still has some useful information. It is only

The Lisa Louise Cook video is very good and is an interview with a librarian at the Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center. It is about 25 minutes long.

The Family Tree Magazine video is a quick 6 minute intro to PERsi.