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## PREPARING FOR A TRIP TO THE WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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### I. Information about WHS collections

- A. Library owns published materials from across the United States and Canada.
- B. Collection of family and local histories started in the 1850s and always had a large scope.
- C. The Archives is the State Archives of Wisconsin so it owns governmental collections deposited with us from various state and local agencies.
- D. Map collection in Archives is international in scope.
- E. Location is on the UW Madison campus. We have access to a variety of online materials because we are on this campus.

### II. 5 Steps to Follow

- A. Choose which family lines you will research on the trip. Choose more than 1.
- B. Organize what you already have found. Read it all over before you come.
- C. Create a research plan. Make a list of “basic” genealogical records to locate. (Vital Records, Censuses, Newspapers)
- D. Write out the more problematic records to locate.
  - i. Military
  - ii. Land
  - iii. Immigration (passenger lists and citizenship papers)
  - iv. Court, etc.
- E. Look at online resources before you come. Print out entries from catalogs.
  - i. Online Catalog (Library and Archives in 1 catalog)
  - ii. Online Digital Collections ([www.wisconsinhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org))
  - iii. Online Indexes ([www.deathindexes.com](http://www.deathindexes.com))
  - iv. Ancestry (Library Edition)
  - v. FamilySearch.org (digital collections, books, film to order)
  - vi. [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

- III. What should you bring to Madison on your trip?
  - A. Pencils and pens.
  - B. Flash drive, digital camera, scanner
  - C. You will need to use a credit card to add money to our new copy card.
  - D. Notebook (not lots of scratch paper).
  - E. Printouts of family group sheets, pedigree charts and timelines
  - F. Lists of records to find and questions to ask.
  - G. Printouts from online catalogs and indexes.
  - H. Your logins and passwords for sites like FamilySearch.org or Ancestry.com
  
- IV. Online Catalogs (found under Research Your Family History at [www.wisconsinhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org))
  - A. Archives
    - i. Manuscripts, public records, photos, maps, etc.
    - ii. Search by location (town, county, state, in separate searches to find records based on those 3 different authors) and the type of record.
  - B. Library
    - i. Published materials, but exceptions exist
    - ii. Use AND between subject words and put “ “ around phrases.
  
- V. [WWW.WISCONSINHISTORY.ORG](http://WWW.WISCONSINHISTORY.ORG)
  - A. Research Your Family History (blue button on [www.wisconsinhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org))
    - i. Name index covers many resources (pre-1907 vital records, property records, obituaries, biographical sketches)
    - ii. Only indexes some collections. Still need to look through newspapers, etc.
  - B. Wisconsin Historical Images (from the front page of [www.wisconsinhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org))
  - C. Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers (look at Wisconsin in the Civil War)
  
- VI. Strategies to make the most out of your trip to WHS.
  - A. Interlibrary Loan (newspapers)
  - B. ARC Network (see Research Your Family History blue button on website)
  - C. Online digital collections
  
- VII. What is left to find at WHS in Madison?
  - A. Vital Records (Actual records for Pre-1907. Cannot scan. Must print (25 cents per page).
  - B. Family and Local Histories (not online if still under copyright)
  - C. Maps (Sanborn maps, atlases, plat maps) (not available through ARC network)
  - D. City Directories (check Ancestry and Fold3 websites)
  - E. Censuses (special schedules not yet on Ancestry) (Agricultural, Mortality, Industrial)
  - F. Genealogical and Historical materials for all other states and Canada.