

WAYS TO FIND A MAIDEN NAME

1. Birth certificate
2. Marriage license
3. Death certificate
4. Obituaries (newspapers in the area of death) – Newsbank
5. Birth certificates of children
6. Death certificates of children
7. Children's marriage license (consent forms)
8. Husband's death certificate
9. Tombstones – check graves around for parents, brothers
10. Will or probate records (father or brothers naming her an heir)
11. Military pension, widow's affidavits, bounty land warrants
12. Church records (published & privately owned by churches)
13. Social Security Applications
14. Land records – her receiving land – dower rights
15. County histories
16. Family histories
17. PERSI – Periodical Source Index (Heritage Quest)
18. Divorce records
19. Diaries, journals, old letters
20. Guardianship records for minor children (may name a brother or her father)
21. Family Bible
22. Check naming patterns of children (if a surname is used, maybe a clue)
23. Census records – reconstruct the neighborhood of the male, just prior to marriage.
Treat brothers and sisters as equals. Search the entire family.
24. Do a time line (data sheet) on the woman, as you have done on the husband. Compare the two.
25. Internet sources.
26. Place queries in periodicals of the area and on the internet.
27. Start over with number 1.

Printed sources of help:

Carmack, Sharon DeBartolo, "A Genealogists' Guide to Discovering Your Female Ancestors"

Croom, Emily Anne, "The Sleuth Book for Genealogists"

"The Genealogist's Companion & Sourcebook"

"Unpuzzling Your Past"

Schaefer, Christine Kassabain, "The Hidden Half of the Family: A Sourcebook for Women's Genealogy"

Family Tree Magazine has excellent articles in their publications.

Quick Facts – Finding Female Ancestors - GPC

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