

FamilySearch Full-Text Experiment

Warren County Genealogical Society, 406 Justice Drive, Lebanon, Ohio 45036
513-695-1144 wcgsoh@gmail.com

At RootsTech 2024, FamilySearch unveiled an extremely powerful experimental AI tool they call Full Text. They have harnessed the power of AI to search through millions of images to find and transcribe documents for you – in microseconds! Simply type in your ancestor's name and location and see 50-70 million results appear! Fear not, because FamilySearch provides Search Tips to refine your search and bring your results down to a more manageable number, as well as wildcards to help locate the inevitable name variations.

In their initial roll-out, FamilySearch is providing access only to U.S. land and probate records and Mexican notary records, but what a treasure! Expect to find your ancestor mentioned in many land and court documents that you would not have found by using indexes. Read the AI-transcribed documents alongside the originals and then download the original document and the transcribed text. Select "Group Data" in the upper right corner of the page to copy the source citation.

Remember that this is the initial offering of an experimental, or "beta" capability and don't be surprised if you find parts of it to be a little quirky. You must opt in to use this feature. To do so, use the button below to go to FamilySearch Labs, sign in, and select the experiment "Expand your search with Full Text" and have fun exploring! <https://www.familysearch.org/en/labs/>

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/help/helpcenter/article/find-the-new-full-text-search-for-historical-records>

Many thanks to Jim Brokaw for sharing this with our researchers.

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/full-text>

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FAMILYSEARCH FULL-TEXT EXPERIMENT – AI WORKING FOR YOU!

Submitted by Jim Brokaw, WCGS Cemetery Chair and WCGS Research Chair

Have you been hearing a lot about Artificial Intelligence (AI) and wondering just what it is and when it will do something useful for you? Do you struggle to read 200-year-old handwriting? Do you, like us, spend hours browsing image by image through unindexed microfilm, searching for evidence of the life of a particularly elusive ancestor, knowing that there must be a better way? Well, thanks to AI and the good folks at FamilySearch, there is a better way and may all genealogists rejoice!

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Remember that this is the initial offering of an experimental, or "beta" capability and don't be surprised if you find parts of it to be a little quirky. Trust me, you won't mind the quiriness at all when you see your results! Go now to [Full-Text Search • FamilySearch](#) and have fun!

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/help/helpcenter/article/find-the-new-full-text-search-for-historical-records>

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BETTER RESULTS FROM YOUR FAMILYSEARCH FULL-TEXT SEARCH

Submitted by Jim Brokaw, WCGS President and Research Chair
president.wcsgh@gmail.com

Since the April 2024 *e-News* article describing the FamilySearch Full Text experiment, they have added an incredible number of records to the project, including Civil and Probate Court records, vital records, genealogies, and countless more records invaluable to the research you can conduct in the comfort of your living room. Did you know conducting these same searches in a FamilySearch Affiliate Library will give you better results? Did you know the WCGS Resource Library is a FamilySearch Affiliate Library?

Recently, I entered a series of Full Text search requests on my ancestors from home, and then repeated the same searches in the WCGS FamilySearch Affiliate Library with the following results:

"Ferdinand Brokaw"	Home: 22 results	WCGS: 38 results
"Christian Loar"	Home: 38 results	WCGS: 43 results
"Levi Dubois"	Home: 313 results	WCGS: 459 results
"Tobias Dubois"	Home: 284 results	WCGS: 325 results

The additional results included vital records, court and church records, genealogies, and genealogy cards. One of the best surprises was finding my great grandfather living, marrying, and divorcing, all in a very short time, in a state I never would have thought to check.

I noticed over the period of just two weeks of research for this article, the number of returns for a couple of my searches increased! If you check my work, you may find different results. The takeaway here is if it has been a while since you last tried FamilySearch Full Text search for your research, it might be time to try it again.

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/full-text>

Let me know if you discover the same thing when searching from home vs. using a FamilySearch Affiliate Library. Visit the WCGS Resource Library if you are local or happen to be in the area. We have volunteers ready to assist you with your family research!

(Originally published in the July 2025 *e-News*.)

FAMILYSEARCH EXTENDS FULL-TEXT SEARCH

Submitted by Jim Brokaw, WCGS President and Research Chair

In early June, [FamilySearch](https://www.familysearch.org) announced they are extending their powerful AI-based Full-Text Search to include their Catalog and All-Collections search, giving their users greater access to previously hard-to-find records. Although still under development, the Full-Text Search function, which uses AI to create searchable transcripts of hand-written documents, is one of the most powerful tools currently available to genealogy researchers, and it is free! FamilySearch has been adding more records to Full-Text Search at an amazing pace, so if you haven't tried it lately, I encourage you to give it another try. Their article, which includes a helpful tutorial on using the Full-Text Search, can be viewed here: <https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/full-text-search-experimental-ai>