

MAIDEN NAMES

A problem that we often have with our research is finding maiden names. When we find the name in one source, we are eager to assume that this is the maiden name we have been searching for. But the one source may not always carry the correct information. It is best to search several sources in hopes of finding the name repeated.

This is a list of some of the places you might search for the missing name.

1. Death Certificate
2. Obituary - she may be survived by a father, brother or unmarried sister.
3. Marriage Certificate
4. Children's birth certificates - often give mother's maiden name.
5. Children's death certificates
6. Divorce papers
7. Certificate of Naturalization of husband
8. Land records - finding the woman on an index of grantees has sometimes, when followed through, found the grantor to be her father, deeded land to his daughter.
9. County histories - often give biographies of a family, telling the wife's maiden name.
10. Widows military pension - where the woman may have received a widow's pension for her husband's service in the Revolutionary War, Civil War, or War of 1812.
11. A family history of the husband's line may give the woman's maiden name.
12. Census records for 1880, 1900 and 1910 - For these years the relationship to the head of the family was given for each person living in the household. You may find a mother-in-law living in the household; thus, in a large percentage of instances - the woman's maiden name.
13. Printed Church records or printed marriage records.
14. Unpublished Church records - if you know the church the woman was married in and approximate year, often a church will be willing to undertake a search of their wedding records.
15. Wills - She may have left something to her brother or unmarried sister. Likewise, she may have been willed something by her father, mother, brother or unmarried sister.
16. Family Bible Records
17. A query in a genealogical magazine or periodical.

Never assume the first maiden name you find is correct. Search all records that are available to you.

Abstracted from Clark Co., Wa. Trail Breakers; article by Peggy Roberts.