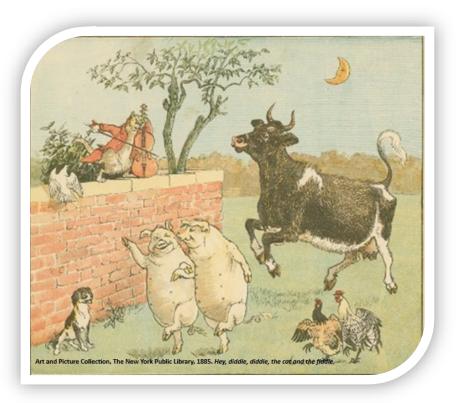


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- ✓ I use the term "artificial brick wall" to refer to genealogical problems that aren't actually brick walls; they are cases where we simply haven't done thorough enough research yet to reach a conclusion.
- Let's not be too quick to declare something a brick wall. There is so much of our research that can easily take *years* to complete.

## 12 WAYS TO PREVENT ARTIFICIAL BRICK WALLS

1) Redouble your efforts to find missing families/people in the census.

Use multiple search strategies and learn to <u>extract every single clue from the</u> <u>census.</u>

2) Visit multiple repositories in person.

At a minimum visit the state archives, the local genealogical society, the local library, and the local courthouse.

- Always strive to examine the original source.
  <u>Don't just rely on an indexed record or a date provided by a book or database.</u>
- 4) Research in a wide variety of sources, even the ones more difficult to access. Have you researched <u>land</u> & <u>court records</u>? What about church & <u>probate</u> <u>records</u>? Have you located historic maps?
- Search the <u>"cluster" of people</u> associated with your ancestors.
  Research the extended family, associates, and neighbors that keep appearing

near your ancestors. Some of them may actually be family.

6) Research every sibling in each generation.

<u>Every sibling left different records.</u> The information you need may be in *their* records.

7) Remember that human behavior hasn't changed.

People <u>had children before</u> and <u>outside of marriages</u>. They also lived and loved <u>across the fictional boundaries of race</u>.

 Move beyond searching for new records; <u>analyze and correlate</u> the records you already have.

Learn how to evaluate and correlate evidence; learn how to resolve conflicts.

 Double your efforts to <u>find living descendants</u>. They have information no archives will.

Use death certificates, obituaries, yellow pages and the Social Security databases to find names of living cousins. Can you find them on social media?

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10) Consider your ancestor may have had multiple marriages. Verify each parent separately.

*Never* assume <u>the wife is the mother</u> of all the children in a household.

11) Expand your research to less commonly used records.

Manuscripts and special collections archives and libraries <u>can yield valuable</u> <u>sources</u>.

12) Grow your genealogical skills by reading, taking classes, and joining genealogy groups.

You will learn new skills by joining genealogy groups, and gain inspiration from others on the same journey.

✓ <u>Note:</u> *Reclaiming Kin* has hundreds of useful genealogy-skillbuilding posts. Easily find them at this <u>Archives link</u>. Also, *Reclaiming Kin* has downloadable <u>Microsoft tables</u> for sale.

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