

 **ancestry** library edition



Provides a great amount
of genealogy and ancestry
information.

For those interested in the stories
of their families' past and helping
one better understand how those
stories have shaped and influenced
the current circumstances he or
she faces in our present times.

A Brief Introductory Information Session

Ancestry Overview Introduction

- The breadth and scope of information relating to genealogy and family history available in Ancestry is unmatched by any other online resource.
- In order to appreciate the vast collection of records on Ancestry, you're going to want to start with a general search of their card catalog.
- As of August 10th, 2026 there are over 33,000 datasets with new datasets added every 3 or 4 days.
- Datasets available range from birth, marriage, death records to passenger lists to city directories to authoritative census records from the U.S. and foreign countries that several Rhode Islanders claim ancestry from such as Canada, the U.K., Ireland, France, and Germany.

How to Access

- Ancestry Library Edition may only be accessed “in-house” at the Woonsocket Harris Public Library.
- While connected to the library’s internet network, open a web browser to woonsocketlibrary.org
- Next, hover the mouse over Services in the top-center.
- Third, click on Research & Reference.
- Fourth, hover the mouse to the third database on the right-hand side labelled Ancestry.com Database and click into it.

Where to Begin

- Depending on the individual's circumstance, you're going to want to begin your family history journey with a paternal or maternal side of your ancestry.
- My maternal family history is not ideal to research because of my mom's personal emigration to the U.S. in the early 1970s.
- On the other hand, my paternal family history dates as far back to newly arriving in North America as far back as the 1600s.
- Before my father passed he had repeatedly mentioned how his Anglo ancestry dated back to Colonial New England and 18th century Nova Scotia.

Lets Get Started

- My father's paternal family history is the one that is going to generate the most information.
- What I mean by this is that his father's ancestors holding the Jordan surname will produce documentation of a Jordan living in New England, going as far back as the early 1600s.
- The new search feature on Ancestry is rather user-friendly and we're going to want to search All Collections.
- If your parent or grandparent have a common name, there are enough filters, such as year of death, to narrow it down to the correct search return.

The screenshot displays the Ancestry search page. At the top, the word "Search" is centered. Below it, there's a link to "Switch to Smart Search". A prominent message box states: "Don't miss out on making meaningful discoveries. Ancestry works better when you have a family tree. Even a small tree can help. Start a Tree >". The main search area includes fields for "First & Middle Name(s)", "Last Name", and "Place your ancestor might have lived" (with a dropdown for "City, County, State, Country"). There's also a "Birth Year" field. Below these are buttons for "Search" and "Show fewer options^", along with a checkbox for "Match all terms exactly". Further down, there are links for "Add event" (Birth, Marriage, Death, Lived In, Any Event, Arrival, Departure, Military) and "Add family member" (Father, Mother, Sibling, Spouse, Child). A "Keyword" field is labeled "Occupation, street address, etc.". At the bottom left, there are dropdowns for "Gender" (set to "-- Select --") and "Race/Nationality", and a "Collection Focus" dropdown set to "All Collections". On the right side, there's a "Jump back in" section with links to "Guatemala, Civil Registration, 1877-1980", "Worcestershire, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1812", and "Worcestershire, England, Militia Records, 1604-1914". Below that is an "Explore by collection" section with links to "Birth, marriage & death", "Birth, baptism & christening", "Marriage & divorce", "Death, burial, cemetery & obituaries", "Census & voter lists", "U.S. Federal Census Collection", "UK Census Collection", "Canadian Census Collection", "More...", "Immigration & travel", "Passenger lists", "Citizenship & naturalization records", "Border crossings & passports", "More...", and "Military".

Grandfather or Grandmother

- Upon obtaining information of Grandfather and Grandmother, you have to make a decision on which lineage you would like to explore first.
- In my case it was easy to go with the Grandfather because of childhood stories from my father telling me that his father's ancestry may be traced back to early 1600's New England.
- There could be other James Chester Jordans out there, but unlikely for there to be another James Chester Jordan who lived in Rhode Island and was also married to a Pearl Monk.

Search the Grandfather

- Now you have two options from here forward.
- Option 1 you may plug in the information about the grandfather from the Search All Collections.
- Option 2 you may plug in the information on Story Scout.

The screenshot shows the Ancestry search interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Trees', 'Search' (highlighted), 'Memories', and 'DNA'. A 'Hire an expert' button is on the right. The main heading is 'Search', with a link to 'Switch to Smart Search'. A notification box says 'Don't miss out on making meaningful discoveries. Ancestry works better when you have a family tree. Even a small tree can help. Start a Tree >'. The search form includes fields for 'First & Middle Name(s)' (James Chester), 'Last Name' (Jordan), 'Exact...' checkboxes, 'Place your ancestor might have lived' (City, County, State, Country), 'Birth Year', and a 'Search' button. Below the search button are filters for 'Add event' (Birth, Marriage, Death, Lived In, Any Event, Arrival, Departure, Military) and 'Add family member' (Father, Mother, Sibling, Spouse, Child). There's also a section for 'Spouse' with fields for 'First & Middle Name(s)' (Pearl), 'Last Name' (Monk), and 'Exact...' checkboxes. A 'Keyword' field is at the bottom. On the right, there's a 'Jump back in' section with links to 'Guatemala, Civil Registration, 1877-1980', 'Worcestershire, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1812', and 'Worcestershire, England, Militia Records, 1604-1914'. Below that is an 'Explore by collection' section with links to 'Birth, marriage & death', 'Birth, baptism & christening', 'Marriage & divorce', 'Death, burial, cemetery & obituaries', 'Census & voter lists', 'U.S. Federal Census Collection', 'UK Census Collection', 'Canadian Census Collection', 'More...', 'Immigration & travel', 'Passenger lists', 'Citizenship & naturalization records', 'Border crossings & passports', and 'More...'.

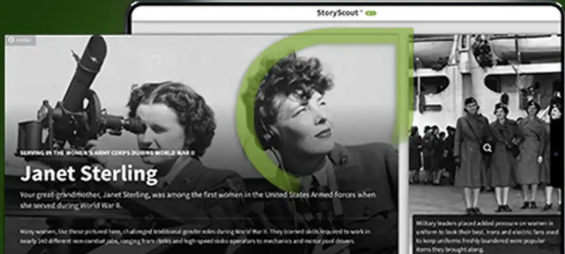
Story Scout

 [Home](#) [Trees](#) [Search](#) [Memories](#) [DNA](#) [Hire an expert](#)  

Welcome to StoryScout®

Family history search.
Simplified

StoryScout® can bring the fascinating details of your ancestors' lives directly to you, and put you on a path to start making your own family history discoveries.



Tell us about a grandparent and we'll find your ancestors in your family tree.

 Grandfather ☒

 Grandmother ☐

Grandparent's First name

James

Grandparent's Last name

Jordan

Any place where he lived

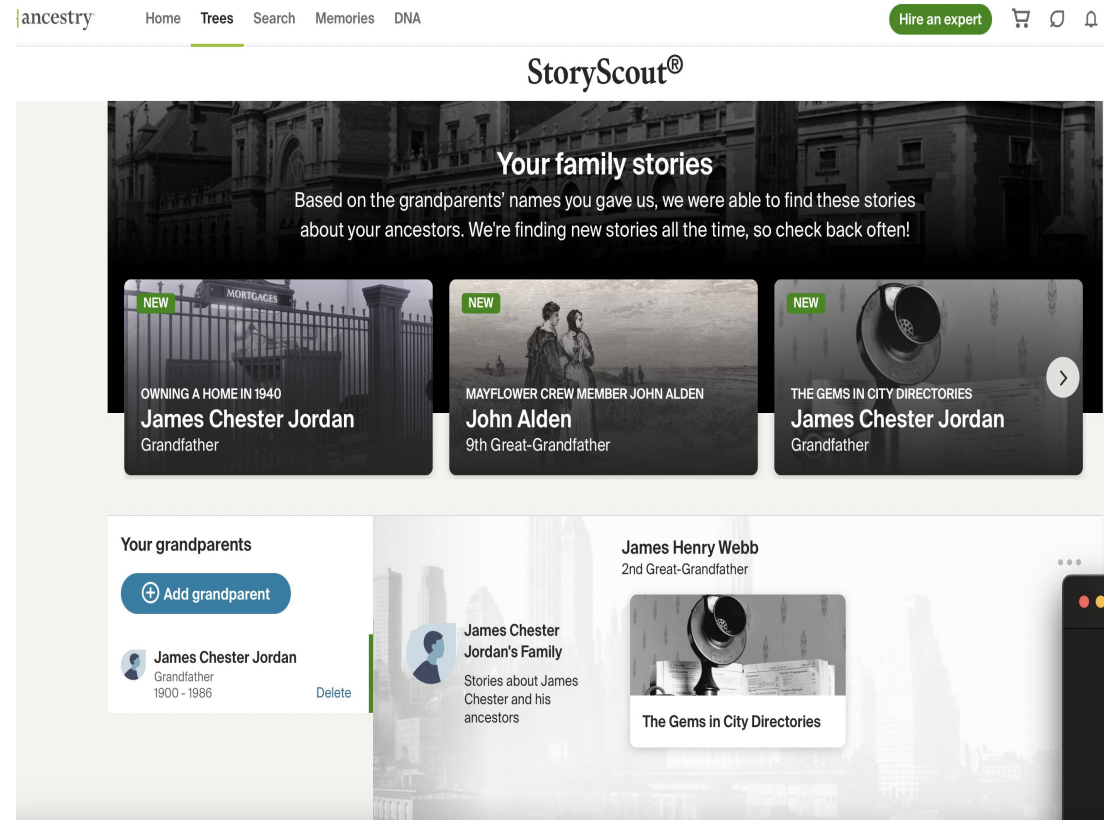
Cranston, Providence, Rhode Island, USA

Find your stories

[How does this work?](#)

Story Scout Usually Brings Up Some Jaw Dropping Information

- In my case, it has brought up a 9th Great Grandfather, John Alden, who was a crew member on the Mayflower.
- I have done previous Story Scout searches with my grandfather James Jordan that elaborated on how the infamous General Benedict Arnold is tied to my bloodline.



Now we can Start Digging Deep

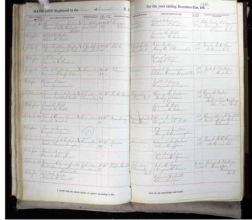
- Now, we're getting some crucial information that can send you far back in American History.
- My Great-Grandfather James Everett Jordan was born in 1863 in Scituate, Rhode Island.
- Here you can take notice that he was born during the U.S. Civil War and was thus ineligible to serve.
- On the other hand, my grandfather was just barely old enough to serve in World War I and his draft card is in the Ancestry system.

The screenshot shows the Ancestry website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'ancestry' logo, 'Home', 'Trees', 'Search', 'Memories', and 'DNA'. A 'Hire an expert' button is on the right. Below the navigation bar, a search filter 'Is your grandfather on this list?' is active. The main content area displays 'Top matches for James Jordan in Cranston, Providence, Rhode Island, USA'. There are six profile cards arranged in a 2x3 grid. Each card shows a person's name, birth and death dates, and a list of family members (Spouse, Mother, Father, Born, Died, Residence) with a 'Show all residences' link. A blue button at the bottom of each card says 'This is my grandparent'.

Name	Birth - Death	Spouse	Mother	Father	Born	Died	Residence
James Everett Jordan	1863 - August 13, 1927	Laura Estella Webb	Mary A Jordan	Henry Martin Jordan	Scituate, Providence, Rhode Island	Providence, Providence, Rhode Island	Providence, Providence, Rhode Island, United States
James Chester Jordan	April 2, 1900 - November 19, 1986	Pearl Rhoda Monk	Laura Estella Webb	James Everett Jordan	Cranston, Providence County, Rhode Island, United States of America	Rhode Island	Cranston, Providence, Rhode Island, USA
James Frederick Jordan	May 11, 1848 - June 1, 1929	Delotia Almeda Taft	Zerviah Williams	Matthew Jordan	Providence, Providence, Rhode Island, USA	Providence, Providence, Rhode Island, USA	Cranston, Providence, Rhode Island, United States
James Edward Jordan	February 18, 1947 - January 23, 2002	Agnes Keenan	Howard Everett Jordan				
James Henry Jordan	1890 - March 29, 1943	Alice Cooney	Marie Marcelline Georgianna				
James Jordan	November 11, 1923 - August 5, 1981	Mary A. Jordan	Mariana Jesus				

Keep Digging

- We have some good momentum here so we have to keep digging.
- Let us plug in James Everett Jordan into the search and see what information pops up.
- From here we learn that James Everett Jordan was married at the age of 23 and his father was a Henry M. Jordan and mother Mary Jordan



James Everett Jordan
Rhode Island, U.S., Marriage Registrations 1853 -1922

Save this record? [Save](#)

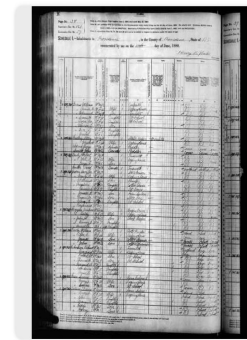
Detail	
Name	James Everett Jordan
Race	White
Marriage Age	23
Birth Date	abt 1863
Birth Place	Cranston
Marriage Date	1 Sep 1886
Marriage Place	Cranston, Rhode Island, USA
Father	Henry M. Jordan
Mother	Mary Jordan
Spouse	Lara Estella Webb

Suggested records

- U.S., Find a Grave® Index, 1600s-Current
James Everett Jordan
- 1920 United States Federal Census
James E Jordan
- 1900 United States Federal Census
James E Jordan
- Rhode Island, U.S., State Censuses, 1865-1935
James E Jordan
- 1910 United States Federal Census
James E Jordan

Let us Keep Following the Paternal Ancestry

- Here we learn that Henry M. Jordan was in the 1880 U.S. Federal Census.
- He was 50 years old at the time of the Census and was married to a Mary A. Jordan.
- He worked as a stonemason and had 6 children: 3 sons and 3 daughters.



Henry M. Jordan

1880 United States Federal Census

Save this record?

Save

Detail

Name	Henry M. Jordan
Age	50
Birth Date	Abt 1830
Birthplace	Rhode Island
Home in 1880	Providence, Providence, Rhode Island, USA
Street	Monton Avenue
House Number	0
Dwelling Number	290
Race	White

Suggested records

1870 United States Federal Census
Henry M Jordan

Rhode Island, U.S., State Censuses, 1865-1935
Henry M Jordan

Rhode Island U.S., Death Registrations and
Records, 1852-1946
Henry Martin Jordan
Seen 3 months ago

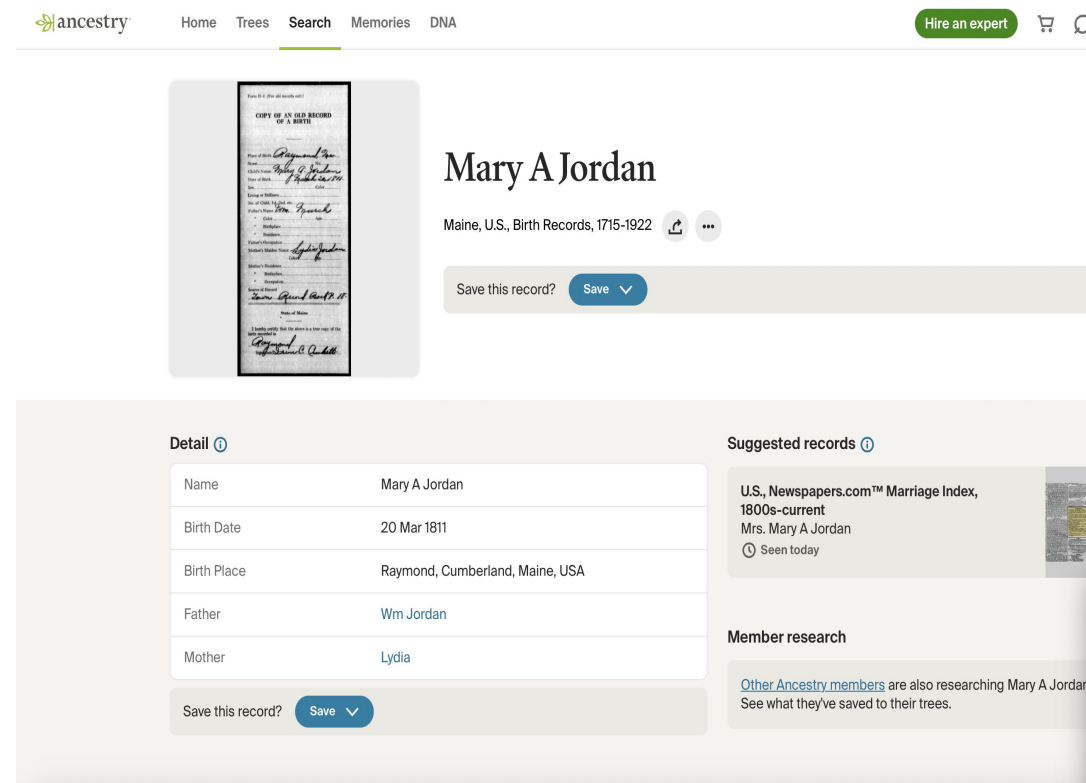
U.S., Find a Grave® Index, 1600s-Current
Henry M. Jordan

A Road Block

- Everything was going smoothly until we hit a slight roadblock.
- After plugging in Henry's information that he was born in 1830 and died in 1910, while living in Rhode Island, we get a limited return on information.
- We do learn that his middle name is Martin and that he was born in Coventry, Rhode Island.
- Unfortunately, Ancestry does not give us his father's name; we only receive his mother's name (Mary) and now have to follow Mary's heritage.

Maine Connection Finally Established (Example)

- Unfortunately, Mary Jordan is a very common name.
- Fortunately, we can limit the true candidates of a proper child-rearing age.
- Furthermore, we may limit our returns because of the crucial middle initial A. that has been provided.



The screenshot shows the Ancestry.com profile for Mary A Jordan. At the top, the Ancestry logo and navigation links (Home, Trees, Search, Memories, DNA) are visible. A green button for 'Hire an expert' is in the top right. The profile features a thumbnail of a birth record document. To the right of the thumbnail, the name 'Mary A Jordan' is displayed, followed by 'Maine, U.S., Birth Records, 1715-1922'. Below this is a 'Save this record?' button with a dropdown arrow. The 'Detail' section on the left contains a table with the following information:

Detail	
Name	Mary A Jordan
Birth Date	20 Mar 1811
Birth Place	Raymond, Cumberland, Maine, USA
Father	Wm Jordan
Mother	Lydia

Below the table is another 'Save this record?' button. To the right, the 'Suggested records' section shows a link to 'U.S., Newspapers.com™ Marriage Index, 1800s-current' for 'Mrs. Mary A Jordan', with a 'Seen today' indicator. The 'Member research' section at the bottom states: 'Other Ancestry members are also researching Mary A Jordan. See what they've saved to their trees.'

Lydia Jordan, Cape Elizabeth Maine (Example)

- The only reasonably aged Lydia Jordan to be able to have a child in 1811.
- In addition to being born in Maine, Lydia's birth record shows her birth year at 1786.
- This means that she'd have been at the prime age of 25 to have given birth to Mary A. Jordan.
- Lydia is the first post-Colonial born Jordan as the Revolutionary War ended in 1783.

Lydia Jordan in Maine, U.S., Birth Records, 1715-1922

← Cumberland > 1786 > J



Form B-1 (For old records only)

COPY OF AN OLD RECORD
OF A BIRTH

Place of Birth Cape Elizabeth Maine.

Sex Female Color W.

Child's Name Lydia Jordan

Date of Birth Dec. 1, 1786

Living or Stillborn Living

No. of Child, 1st, 2nd, etc. 4th

Father's Name Solomon Jordan

Color White Age 51

Birthplace Palmouth Me.

Residence Cape Elizabeth Me.

Father's Occupation Sarah Jordan

Mother's Maiden Name Sarah Jordan

Color W. Age 39

Mother's Residence Cape Elizabeth Me.

Birthplace Palmouth Me.

Occupation Housewife

Source of Record VOL 1 Town Records C. E.

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State of Maine

I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the birth recorded in.

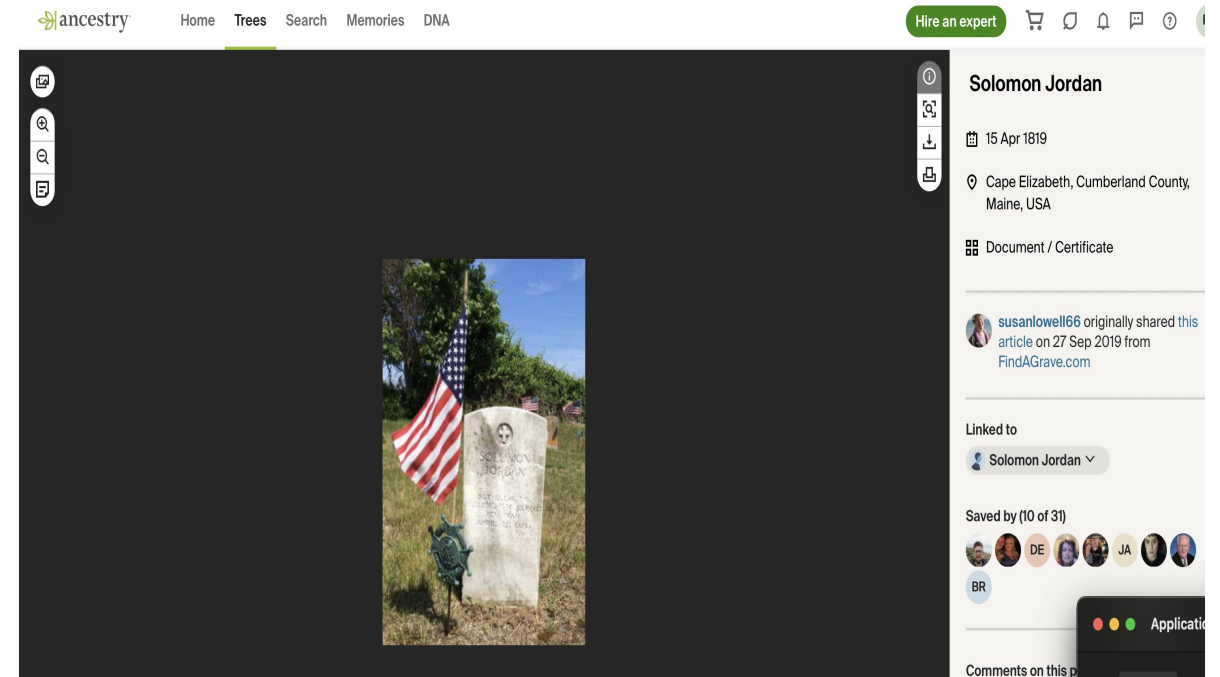
South Portland, Maine.

Signature Charles A. Jones

Maine State Archives

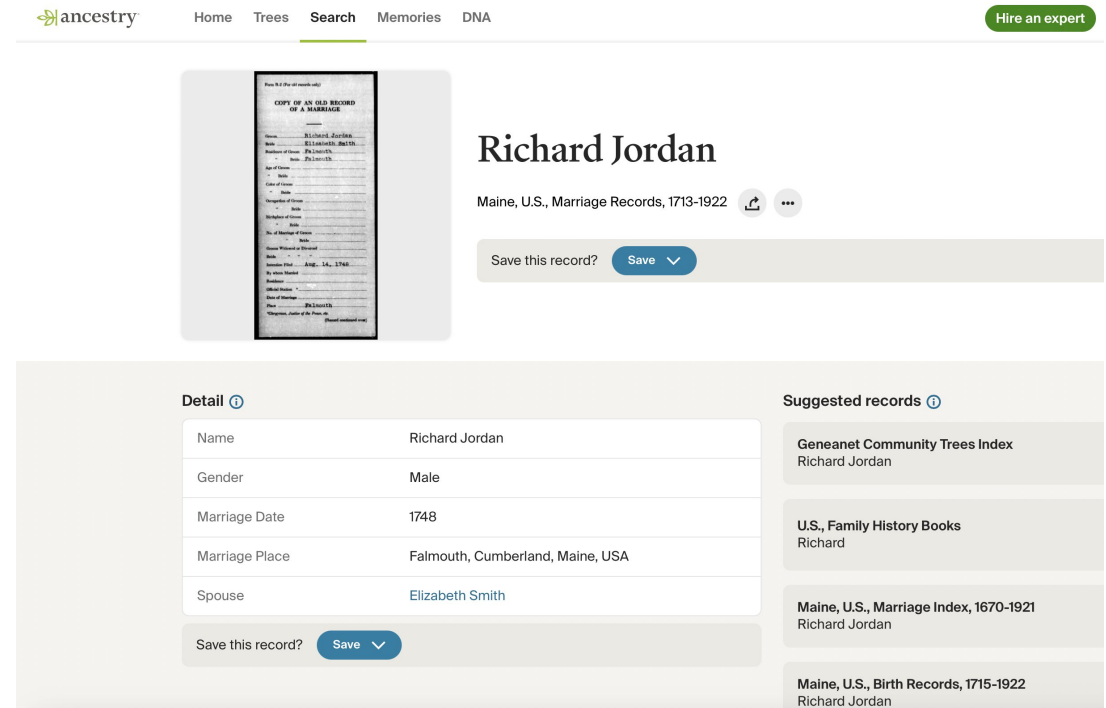
Solomon Jordan, Maine, Colonial America (Example)

- Born a year before (1755) the Seven Years War broke out between Britain and France.
- Born in South Portland, Maine to a Richard Jordan and Elizabeth Smith.
- Served as a soldier in the war of the Revolution.
- Survived the Revolution as his tombstone reflects his death in April 15, 1819.



Richard Jordan, Cape Elizabeth, Maine (Example)

- Richard Jordan born in Colonial America in 1715.
- Worked as a farmer.
- Married twice and had three children with first wife and three with second wife, including Solomon.
- Son to Robert Jordan.



The screenshot shows the Ancestry.com profile for Richard Jordan. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Trees', 'Search', 'Memories', and 'DNA'. A 'Hire an expert' button is on the right. Below the navigation bar, there's a thumbnail of a marriage record document titled 'COPY OF AN OLD RECORD OF A MARRIAGE'. To the right of the thumbnail, the name 'Richard Jordan' is displayed, followed by 'Maine, U.S., Marriage Records, 1713-1922'. Below this, there's a 'Save this record?' button with a dropdown arrow. Underneath, there's a 'Detail' section with a table of information:

Detail ⓘ	
Name	Richard Jordan
Gender	Male
Marriage Date	1748
Marriage Place	Falmouth, Cumberland, Maine, USA
Spouse	Elizabeth Smith

Below the table is another 'Save this record?' button with a dropdown arrow. To the right of the table, there's a 'Suggested records ⓘ' section with three entries:

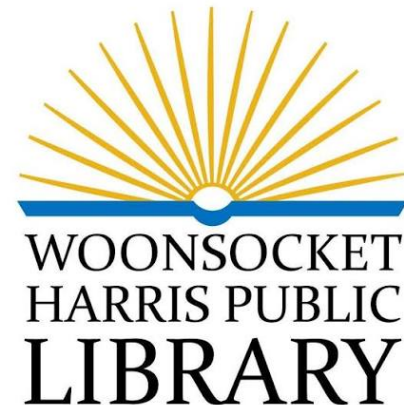
- Geneanet Community Trees Index
Richard Jordan
- U.S., Family History Books
Richard
- Maine, U.S., Marriage Index, 1670-1921
Richard Jordan
- Maine, U.S., Birth Records, 1715-1922
Richard Jordan

Dig Deeper with Print Resources

- Jordan Family Records Book that sheds light on Solomon's service in the Revolution.
- Also reveals information relating to Richard Jordan's father, Robert Jordan, who was born in 1685 on Richmond's Island, Maine.
- Fortunate enough to be able to acquire this resource through Amazon. Realistically, persons who manage to trace their heritage to Colonial America may have to utilize print resources from a library's special collections located in the locality where the ancestors lived.

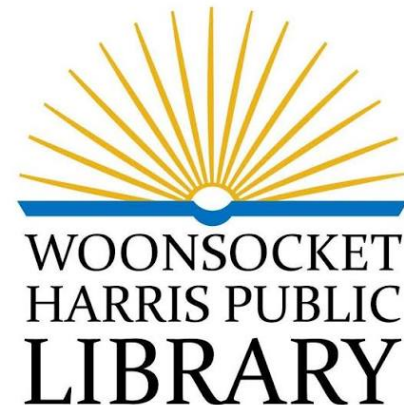
Robert Jordan, Richmond Island, Maine (Example)

- Born in 1685, died in 1750 at age 65.
- Married in 1710 and had four children, all boys.
- Worked as a tailor.
- Inherited from father John, 300 acres on Cape Elizabeth.
- Son of John and Elizabeth (Styleman).
- Again, fortunate to locate additional area history book relating to where the Jordans settled in Maine.

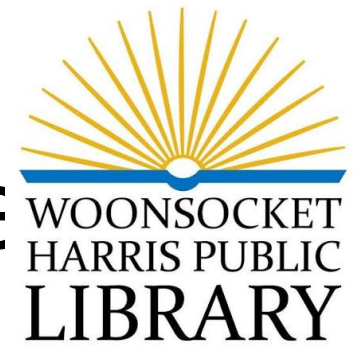


John Jordan, baptized 1650, Spurwink, ME (Example)

- John is the eldest son of the Reverend Robert Jordan and his wife Sarah (Winter) Jordan.
- Appointed Judge for the county of Cornwall at Pemaquid by letter from Governor Edmund Andros, September 15, 1680.
- Received deed conveying to him the whole of Richmond's Island.
- Married Elizabeth Styleman in 1677 or 1678 and had four children with her. Three boys and one girl.

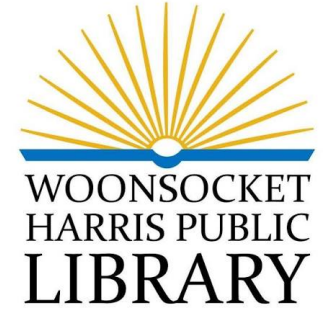


Reverend Robert Jordan (Example)



- Born in England at about 1612.
- Educated at Oxford as an Anglican clergyman.
- Left England during brutal Civil Wars of the 1640s.
- Settled in Richmond's Island and married Sarah Winter in 1645.
- Had 6 children, all boys.
- Oldest son John born in 1650 and part of my ancestral bloodline.
- His father Edward Jordan born in Worcestershire, England.

Edward Jordan (Example)



- Born in the 16th century in Worcestershire, England.
- Deceased January 7, 1632 in Bath, England.
- Oxford trained Physician.
- Here, I'm fortunate in the sense that I would not encounter a language barrier if I pursued further genealogical research in the United Kingdom.

Paul Hartley Jordan
Paul Geisel Jordan

Edward Jordan, D. Med. Padua, grad. Oxford, fellow College of Physicians, 1597, died at Bath (near Worcester), England, Jan. 7, 1632, aged 63.

Robert Jordan, probably the son of Edward, a resident of Worcester, England, matriculated at Balliol College, Oxford. He came from England to Maine cir. 1639 and died at Portsmouth, N.H. in 1679. Married Sarah, daughter of John Winters. From him, in direct line, we have the following.

Dominicus Jordan, died 1703; married Hannah, daughter of Ralph Tristram. Killed by Indians; his wife and six children into captivity in Canada.

Dominicus Jordan (1683-1749), married Joanna Deering.

Lt. Col. Nathaniel Jordan, born 1718, married 1740, Hannah Woodbury.

Israel Jordan, born Falmouth, Maine, 1745, died 1792; married 1766, Susanna Jordan (1747-1800), daughter of Israel and Joanna (Thorndike) Jordan.

Robert Jordan, born 1773, died Seneca Co., Ohio, 1832; married 1800, Hannah Keating (1781-1854).

Thomas Jefferson Jordan, born 1819, died Henry Co., Illinois 1884; married Susan N. Applebee (1828-1913).

Gilbert A. Jordan, born 1846, died Montana 1930; married 1868, Annabel Couch.

Lorin Couch Jordan, born 1869, died Portland, Oregon, 1918; married 1903, Martha Ferguson Hartley (1876-1924). (Smithson-Glenn-Knapp-Benedict-Budd-Gregory-Horton lines).

Paul Hartley Jordan, born Iowa, Dec. 17, 1903, married: (1) Ann Smalley, daughter of Harvey Smalley and Mabel Kimbell. Issue: Lorin Smalley Jordan, born Minn. March 4, 1945, doctoral candidate in Psych. U. of Minn. Married (2) July 12, 1947, Va. Geisel, psychiatric social worker, born Hawarden, Iowa, Jan. 9, 1909, daughter of George Geisel and Madge Violet Davis, daughter of Flavius V. Davis (of long Quaker ancestry, including Scarborough-Haworth-Vestal-Chamness-Cole-Moffett lines) and Sarah Elizabeth Dunham; the latter a descendant of Hon. and Deacon John Dunham (1588/89-1668) of Plymouth (of Royal Descent). Issue: Paul Geisel Jordan, born Chicago, April 25, 1949. Completing work at Shimer College. The Geisels also had: Carolyn Noreen Geisel, artist, who married Jesse Kennedy, political scientist, has son Geoffrey Garth, born 12-21-39, doctoral candidate in social work, Columbia U. Married Patricia Frank, has two daughters, Misty and Christine.

Paul H. Jordan, M.D. from U. of Iowa, psychiatrist, Who's Who in Am'n. Med. Mrs. Jordan's activities as listed in Who's Who of American Women.

Useful Datasets on Ancestry for Inquiries

- U.S. Census Collection - every 10 years from 1950 to 1790.
- Canadian Census Collection – dating as far back as 1770 to 1931.
- Rhode Island, U.S. Birth Registrations 1846-1921.
- Rhode Island, U.S. Marriage Registrations 1853-1922.
- Rhode Island, U.S. Death Registrations and Records 1852-1946.
- Rhode Island, U.S. Revolutionary War Collection 1775-1820.
- New York, U.S. Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists 1820-1954.
- U.S. Border Crossings from Canada to U.S., 1895-1960.

Some Resources to Consider while Researching your Family History

- City Directories tied to where your ancestor resided. These may be found in the Local History Room/Section of a public library.
- Highschool yearbooks. Similar to City Directories, these may be found in the Local History Room/Section of a public library.
- Local newspapers. Our library has an extensive collection of Woonsocket newspapers dating back to the late 1800s.
- Hand-Copied books or microfilm containing birth, marriage, or death records. Also may be found in public libraries.
- Tax Valuations. To identify residents and landowners of the 17th, 18th, and 19th century. State libraries will hold this resource.

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