

Examples of Negative Searches & Negative Evidence



Diana Elder, AG, and Nicole Dyer

Negative Searches

Anderson County Record of Wills, Vol. 1, 1791-1834, images online, negative search for William Keaton, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org> : accessed 4 May 2018); citing FHL microfilm 004752970.

1830 U.S. Census, Anderson District, South Carolina, population schedule, negative search for William Keaton; database, *FamilySearch* (<http://www.familysearch.org> : accessed 8 Feb 2018); citing NARA microfilm publication M19, roll 173.

1860 U.S. Census, Cass County, Texas, population schedule, negative search for Moses Isenhower; *Ancestry.com*. (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 11 Nov 2017); citing NARA microfilm publication M653, roll 1290.

1860 U.S. Census, Montgomery County, Arkansas, population schedule, negative search for Moses Isenhower; *Ancestry.com*. (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 11 Nov 2017); citing NARA microfilm publication M653.

1860 U.S. Census, Arkansas, population schedule, negative search for Moses Isenhower; *Ancestry.com*. (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 11 Nov 2017); citing NARA microfilm publication M653.

1860 U.S. Census, Texas, population schedule, negative search for Moses Isenhower; *Ancestry.com*. (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 11 Nov 2017); citing NARA microfilm publication M653.

"Arkansas Probate Records, 1817-1979," Wills 1863-1954 vol A-B, negative search for Isenhower, images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org> : accessed 13 Nov 2017); citing Montgomery county courthouses, Arkansas.

"Alabama, Texas and Virginia, Confederate Pensions, 1884-1958" [database on-line], negative search for Amanda Martha Isenhower; *Ancestry* (<https://search.ancestry.com> : accessed 20 November 2017); citing Texas, Confederate Pension Applications, 1899-1975. Vol. 1-646 & 1-283, Austin, Texas: Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

Find A Grave, negative search for Grace Trainor before 1850, Brooklyn, Kings County, New York, (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 19 September 2018).

"New York Roman Catholic Parish Baptisms," negative search for William Trainor, Staten Island, New York, *FindMyPast* (<https://search.findmypast.com> : accessed 11 September 2018).

Sussex County, New Jersey, Grantor Index T-V, negative search for Trainor; *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : accessed 13 September 2018); FHL microfilm 959,520.

"New York Passenger Lists & Arrivals," negative search for Grace Dugan, *FindMyPast* (<https://search.findmypast.com> : accessed 11 September 2018).

Negative Evidence

Example 1 : James Cooper

When did the ancestor James Cooper arrive in Stokes County? The tax lists of North Carolina provide a yearly glimpse into the lives of its inhabitants in the 1790s. Possible relations to James are other Coopers who appear in the tax lists of Stokes County consistently from 1790-1797.¹

- John Cooper listed with 600 acres, and 1-2 white polls depending on the year
- Michael Cooper, 60 acres, 1 white poll
- Thomas Cooper, 100 acres, 1 white poll
- William Cooper, 1 white poll

The absence of James Cooper in the tax lists of 1790-1797 shows that he did not reside in the county until at least 1800 where he is enumerated on the census.

Example 2: Samuel Cooper

The 1800 census for Salisbury, Rowan County, North Carolina, shows several of the sons of Samuel Cooper still residing in Rowan County – David, Thomas, and William.² James is not listed in the county, providing negative evidence that he had probably moved north into Stokes County and is listed there in 1800.

Example 3: William Trainor

To identify whether William Trainor came from an established Trainor family in Sussex County, New Jersey, thus eliminating him as a son of John Trainor of Brooklyn Ward 6, Kings County, New York, additional records were sought. The 1840 census shows no Trainor household in Sussex County, New Jersey.³ Deeds,⁴ mortgages,⁵ naturalizations,⁶ and probate records⁷ were also searched with no results for a Trainor individual in Sussex County, New Jersey.

The lack of records for any Trainor individuals in Sussex County, New Jersey, is negative evidence that William Trainor was not from the area and likely made his way west upon the death of his parents.

¹ Iris Moseley Harvey, *Stokes County, North Carolina, Tax List, 1794*, (Mount Airy, North Carolina : Agnes M. Wells, 1999).

² 1800 United States Federal Census index, search for Rowan County, North Carolina, "Cooper," *Ancestry* (<https://search.ancestry.com> : accessed 22 April 2018).

³ 1840 U.S. Census, population schedule index, negative search for Trainor, Sussex County, New Jersey, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org> : accessed 6 September 2018).

⁴ Sussex County, New Jersey, Grantor Index T-V, negative search for Trainor; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org> : accessed 13 September 2018); FHL microfilm 959,520. Also Sussex County, New Jersey, Grantee Index T-V, negative search for Trainor; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org> : accessed 13 September 2018); FHL microfilm 959,525.

⁵ Sussex County, New Jersey, Mortgagee Index S-Z, 1770-1950, negative search for Trainor, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org> : accessed 13 September 2018); FHL microfilm 959,862.

⁶ Sussex County, New Jersey, Court of Common Pleas, "Court Records, 1778-1902, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org> : accessed 13 September 2018), FHL microfilm 961,012

⁷ "New Jersey, Wills and Probate Records, 1739-1991," negative search for Trainor, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 13 September 2018).