

## Research by Risa

Risa Daitzman Heywood

<https://www.researchbyrisa.com/>  
[researchbyrisa@gmail.com](mailto:researchbyrisa@gmail.com)



### The Power of the Catalog – Unindexed Records and How to Find Them

IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy  
 28 July – 2 August 2019, Cleveland, Ohio

#### Why access a catalog?

- Learn more about the site’s data collections, such as what is new, size of a collection, etc.
- Determine how an indexed data collection is organized so you can search more efficiently
- Access unindexed records that would not be found through the search page

#### FamilySearch Catalog

- FamilySearch has more than 750 unindexed record collections that can be browsed
  - <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/search/>
  - Contains references to digital collections, microfilm/microfiche, books and more
  - FamilySearch is in the process of digitizing all of its collections on microfilm

#### Navigating the FamilySearch Catalog

- Search by Place, Keyword, Subject, Film Number, etc.
  - For instance, typing ‘Jewish’ in the Subject box will bring up all of the specifically Jewish collections – some indexed and some not
- Clicking on the collection name will bring up the collection’s title page
- **It is very important to read the Notes of the collection.** The description gives important information on how the collection is organized, what years are included, what towns are included, etc.
- Scroll down to Film/Digital Notes – these notes will tell you where to find the collection in the online images and how you may access the collection

#### Example - Karolin (Pinsk) Jewish Metrical books, 1860-1872

Film/Digital Notes (This family history center has 1 of 1 films/fiche.)			
Note	Location	Collection/Shelf	
Volume 917-1/2 Births 1860-1872	<a href="#">Family History Library</a>	International Film	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid red; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">Film</div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">DGS</div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">Format</div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;">1794309 Item 4</div> <div style="margin-left: 20px;">4388730</div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 10px;">📷</div>

- Film
  - This is a digitized version of the microfilm with the old film number 1794309
  - The Karolin Metrical books are Item 4 on this microfilm. There can be multiple Items on one microfilm and they can be from different collections.
- DGS
  - DGS are Digital Filming Numbers. The DGS # for this microfilm is 4388730

- Format symbols



This collection can be viewed from home

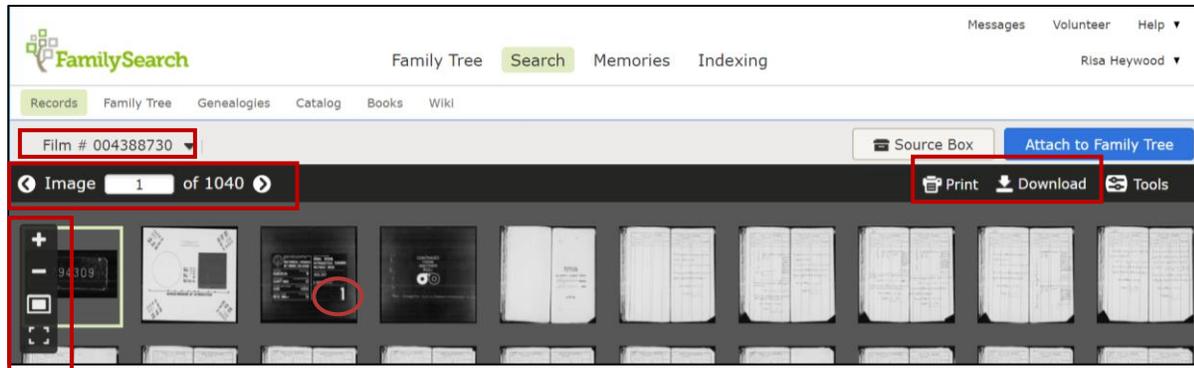


This collection is available online but can only be viewed at a Family History Center. Find the closest Family History Center: <https://www.familysearch.org/locations/>.



This collection has not yet been digitized and is only available for viewing at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. All microfilms will eventually be digitized.

### *How to navigate through a digitized microfilm*



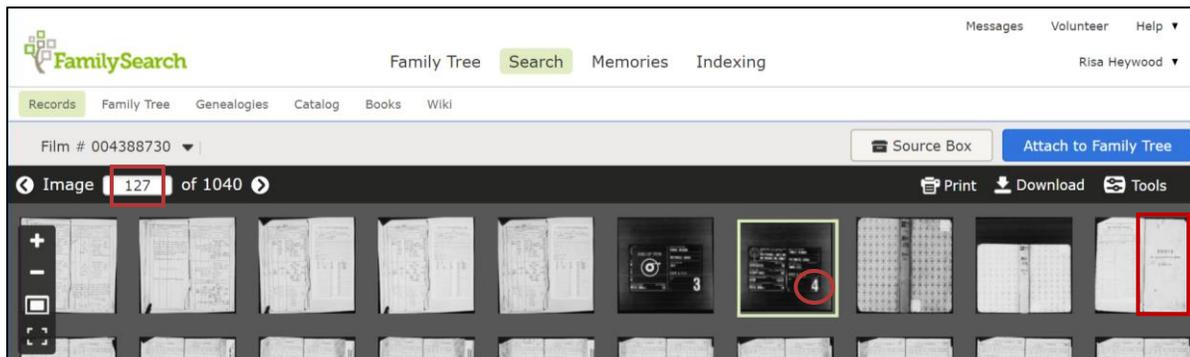
- DGS Film # is on the left below the menu
- “Image ‘x’ of ‘x’” with arrows on either side
  - Allows you to page forward or backward, one image at a time, or type a frame number in the box to jump to that image
- Vertical menu on the left side of the page
  - The plus sign (+) and minus sign (-) can be used to enlarge or diminish the size of the images
  - Clicking on the box or boxes below the minus sign (-) will toggle between “View single image” and “Browse multiple images”
  - The next symbol below will toggle to Full Screen
- Once you find the correct image, it can be printed or downloaded using the options on the right of the screen

### *How to navigate to the correct image*

**Tip:** Keep some scratch paper handy to note item #'s and image #'s

**Example:** In the image above, DGS Film # 4388730 begins with a couple of preliminary frames followed by a frame

indicating Item 1. We need to find Item 4 to get to the Karolin Metrical Records.



Rather than paging through each frame one by one, toggle to “Browse multiple images” and use your mouse wheel or equivalent to quickly scroll through multiple frames until you see the frame indicating Item 4 (see image above). Clicking on that image will frame the image in yellow and change the Image # in the menu from 1 to 127.

**Keep in mind:** There may or may not be more than 4 Items on this microfilm.

The Film Notes said these Metrical Books contained Births from 1860-1872. If we are interested in a birth from 1870, then we must see how the collection is organized in order to estimate how many frames we need to jump. Even if we cannot read Russian, we can see that paging forward from frame 127 to 130, takes us to the start of the 1860 records. We can also see, above, that the page denoting a new year has few words and is mostly white space.



If we toggle back to “Browse Multiple Images,” we can scroll through the records looking for frames with lots of white space. We can guess that after seeing 10 frames with lots of white space, we should toggle back to View Single Image to check if our guess was correct. In this way, we can quickly find the records we need.

### Summary:

- Carefully read the Film/Digital Notes and take note of the Item Number
- Scroll to the correct Item Number
- Investigate how the collection is organized and exactly what was filmed. This will help you understand how to navigate and how many frames you must jump to the desired record.
  - Was it a book with page numbers or loose sheets of paper from a file?
  - Is there an index or are the records in date or alphabetical order?
  - How many pages make up one record? For instance, a naturalization record may be four or more pages: Certificate of Arrival, Declaration of Intent, and two pages for the Petition for Naturalization.

### Other sites with unindexed collections

FamilySearch has, by far, the largest number of unindexed collections. But you may find some on other sites, such as:

#### Ancestry

- Click on Search tab and choose Card Catalog from the pop-up list
- Can sort by Date Updated, Date Added, Database Title and Record Count
- Symbol to left of collection name in Catalog says, Image Only, when moused over.
- Symbol stays same, but when mouse over, says Image Only, Index Only or Both Images and Index

#### FindMyPast

- Go to the FindMyPast record search page, <https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records>
- On the right side of this page, just above the search boxes, click on “A-Z of record sets.” This is the FindMyPast catalog.
- In the search box, type the word, “browse.” These are all of the unindexed or partially indexed record sets.

## Combine the use of two sources – one for the index and one for the records

If you find an index record for a document, always see if a digitized copy of the record is available on another site. Below are just a few examples:

### *JewishGen*

JewishGen and its associated Special Interest Groups (SIGs) have indexed many FamilySearch microfilms. The index record will usually provide the Microfilm #, Item # and Image #.

### *Cuyahoga County, Ohio Marriage Records*

Index – *Ancestry* - Cuyahoga County, Ohio, Marriage Records and Indexes, 1810-1973

Records – *FamilySearch* - Ohio, Cuyahoga County, marriage records, 1942-1973

### *Industrial Removal Office*

Information on the records - <http://digifindingaids.cjh.org/?pID=109188>

Index – Center for Jewish History - <https://genealogy.cjh.org/family-collections>

Records – *Ancestry* - U.S., Industrial Removal Office Records, 1899-1922 – access through catalog

### *Russian consular records*

**Index** - Sack, Sallyann Amdur, and Suzan Fishl Wynne. *The Russian Consular Records Index and Catalog*. (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987). Borrow book using Interlibrary Loan. Also, LDS Microfilm 1605681.

**Records** — Records of the Russian Consular Offices in the United States : NARA publication M1486, 1862-1928 - Available online from home on *FamilySearch*

## Glossary

### *Catalog*

- A complete inventory of items arranged systematically with descriptive details
- All of the major genealogy sites have a catalog where you can find information on each of their record collections. Some of these collections are just indices, some are indices and images, and some are just images.

### *Index*

- A list of keywords that identify a unique record and point to where it can be found.
- Indexing captures key information from a document, such as names, dates and places, which allows users to search online and find the record

### *Unindexed records*

- Collections that have been digitized and are accessible online but cannot yet be accessed through the site's search page
- Paper collections needed indices so that the clerks who were using them could find the records they needed. Some of these indices have been digitized along with the collection. In order to make use of digitized collections not accompanied by an index, you must take time to understand the collection's organization or find an index located elsewhere.

## Want to help?

- Many sites recruit volunteers to index records of interest to them. You can volunteer to index records for JRI Poland: <https://jri-poland.org/support.htm> or other JewishGen Special Interest Groups (SIGs): <https://www.jewishgen.org/JewishGen/sigs.htm>. FamilySearch always has projects in need of indexers: <https://www.familysearch.org/indexing/>.