

USING THE RESOURCXS AT HERITAGE QUEST ONLINE

By Randy Seaver

I have accessed **HeritageQuestOnline (HQO)** for several years. It is a subscription genealogy site, but libraries or societies do the subscribing. You can access HQO for free from home if you are a member of the subscribing societies or libraries (over 2,500). There is a list of known subscribing sites [here](#).

HeritageQuestOnline includes the following genealogy information:

1) U.S. Federal Census records from 1790 through 1930. There is a head of household index for the 1790 to 1820, 1860, 1870, and 1900 to 1920 census, but there is no index for 1830 to 1850, 1880, and only a partial index for 1930. You can search by surname, given name, place of birth, age, ethnicity, etc. You have to use the exact names in the index to find them, and it does not permit wild cards. I use the **Advanced Search** quite a bit. You can also search for a specific film/roll/page if you know the numbers (say from another site). You can use the **Browse** button and search a specific state/county/town or ward. You can download the census pages to your computer files.

2) The "People" button leads you to more than 20,000 searchable surname and local history books that are not under copyright protection (basically those published before 1923). The challenge here is to use the Search function judiciously - it finds books with every one of your search terms (e.g., if you put in "Seaver" and "Worcester" in the Search box, it will provide every book that has these two words in the book - whether they are in the same article or not). You can use some search words like "near" (within 25 words) and "exact" (for exact spelling of a name or place) to narrow the search, and you can use a wild card asterisk as a suffix (such as Seav* would give you Seaver, Seaverance, Seavey, etc). You can download the scanned pages to your computer files.

3) Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files of 81,000 Revolutionary War veterans. They are searchable by name, with exact spelling required (so if you don't find your guy initially, try alternate surname spellings). You can view images of the original applications and save them to your computer files. However, only 10 pages from the file are online - you have to access the full file at the Archives to see the rest of the pages in the file.

4) PERSI (the PERiodical Source Index) is a comprehensive subject index covering more than 1.6 million articles in more than 6,500 genealogy and local history journals written in English and French since 1800. This is an index only, not an every name index. You may find surname specific articles, but you can't read the article text. If you find an article you want to peruse, you can search for it in your local libraries and copy it, or contact the [Allen County \(IN\) Public Library](#) to obtain the article for a fee.

5) Freedman's Bank Records is a database of African-American depositors to the Freedman's Savings and Trust Company after the Civil War. The files may contain personal data, family data and signatures of depositors. You can download the images to your computer files.

HeritageQuestOnline is an excellent resource for the pajamas-bound genealogist, and it is free if you have a library card to a participating institution. If you don't have one, please consider obtaining one – Carlsbad Public Library is the closest location!