

[Do Not Neglect Church Records and Denominations:](#)

One of the first things I did when I started my genealogy in the early 1970's, was to obtain as many documents for my American relatives. My primary goal was to gather civil and church records in preparation to learn how to better research my Eastern European ancestors. In **The Family History Guide**, you can find resources for general U.S. church records in [Goal F1](#) at <https://www.thefhguide.com/project-9-united-statesf1.html#a>. For Protestant resources, including denominations, and for Catholic records, see their Faiths menu. The Catholic and Protestant pages in that menu also include "Research by Country" pages with links to country pages that have additional information for church records. To find information on Latter-day Saint church records, see [Choice B](#) at <https://www.thefhguide.com/project-9-united-statesf1.html#b> (scroll down) in Goal F1 of the United States page. ([See all tips at https://thefhguide.com/tip-of-the-day.html](https://thefhguide.com/tip-of-the-day.html))

Closing Comments

Getting started with USA genealogy can be a challenge if you don't know where to look. There are many places to search. Start with civil and church records. But don't neglect immigration and citizenship records, USA and state census records, shipping lists, Ellis Island, newspaper obituaries, cemetery records, probate records, and/or land ownership as there are other kinds of documents to locate for specific details that can open potential windows of opportunities internationally. In my case, the villages in Poland were all misspelled differently on every civil and church record because they were pre-World War 1 & 2. In one small county in southern Poland, some the villages had German, Polish and Hungarian spellings to my amazement. But there are gazetteers online available which can offer you multi-spellings along with their individual geographical locations. See <https://guides.library.ucla.edu/maps/gazeteers>.

Then you can go and do your own *Perry Mason detective* work to figure out the most logical location for each village. With multiple spellings, this puzzle can be easier to finalize. But without doing your USA research first, this task is a difficult challenge even on a good "hair day." Fortunately, most of the borders on European countries were finalized after World War 1. For example, Poland was only created in 1919 and was previously in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire for most of the 19th century. Resulting that the country of origin was not necessarily the same as it exists today. Always good to know the history of the country's origin and history.



