

FOCUS ON

Session Topic: Scandinavian Research

Millions of Americans have ancestors from the major Scandinavian countries—Sweden, Norway or Denmark. Yet the thought of doing research on them can be daunting. An obvious difficulty lies in reading handwritten, foreign-language records and then interpreting them. Yet with patience, determination and the tools needed to access available databases, dictionaries, maps and guidebooks, tracing your amazing Scandinavians is easier than ever. *We will focus on **Sweden and Norway** today.*

HOW DO I BEGIN?

Start with the ancestor about whom you know the most. You need a **name**—but realize that names often were changed after your ancestor arrived in America. It is extremely helpful to find a **birth date** and the **place** in the old country from which your ancestor came. Unless someone in your family has done prior research and provides names, dates and places, you must use your sleuthing skills to determine them. The key to doing Scandinavian research is to find out what **county, parish and farm** (or **village or city**) your ancestor called home.

CLUES TO FINDING NAMES, DATES AND PLACE OF ORIGIN

Legal Documents and Vital Records (b/m/d, wills, deeds, probates, etc.) • American church records • Census Records • County Courthouse Records • Naturalization Records • Immigration/Emigration Records • Military Records • Obituaries • Newspaper Articles • Letters • Postcards • Photographs • Older relatives' memories • Family Bible

WHAT ARE MY "GO TO" WEBSITES?



Google (use this!!!)

Ancestry (records — free in the library)

FamilySearch.org (records) *plus* **FamilySearch Wiki** (research tips!)

Digitalarkivet (Norwegian archives — free of charge)

ArkivDigital (Swedish archives — pay site \$\$\$)

Rigsarkivet – Arkivalieonline (Danish national archives — free of charge)

Danish Family Search (not associated with FamilySearch.org)

Cyndi's List (links to various websites)

Findagrave



WE'LL START IN SWEDEN

Let's begin with an example from Sweden. I know that my ancestor's name was Anna Sofia Carlsdotter and that she was born between 1849 and 1851 in Sweden. I'll use ANCESTRY LIBRARY EDITION to try to find her. Go to Ancestry and click the SEARCH button to expose the dropdown menu. Click "All Collections" to see the map. Click "EUROPE" to see the map of Europe. Click "Sweden" to see all of the records for Sweden. Click "Sweden, Select Baptisms, 1611-1909." This will open the page shown below.

Sweden, Select Baptisms, 1611-1909

Sverige, valda dopuppgifter, 1611-1920

! These records are in Swedish
For best results, you should search using Swedish words and location spellings.

Match all terms exactly

First & Middle Name(s)

Exact

Last Name

Exact

Birth

Day

Month

Year

+/-1 yr

Location

Lived In

Any Event

Add family member: Father Mother

First & Middle Name

Father

Mother

Spouse

Child

Exact to...

this year

+/-1 year

+/-2 years

+/-5 years

+/-10 years

Related data collections

[Sweden, Births from the Swedish Death Index, 1901-2006](#)
This database contains birth information of over 7.5 million individuals who died in Sweden between 1901 and 2006. The records include births from about 1800 to 2006. The data, comprising given name and surname, birth date and place of each person, is taken from the Swedish Death Index, 1901-2006 (Sveriges Dödbok 1901-2006), compiled by the Swedish Federation of Genealogical Associations (Sveriges Släktforskarförbund).

[Sweden, Church Records, 1451-1943](#)
This database contains over 19 million images scanned from microfilm of the original Swedish church records. The collection features various records from the 15th through the 20th century, including birth/baptismal, confirmation, marriage, and death/burial records; church ledgers; moving-in and moving-out registers; and household examination rolls. The collection also contains government transcripts of certain church records.

[Sweden, Indexed Birth Records, 1859-1947](#)
This database contains over 13 million

Fill in the search wells as shown on the left. Notice that I've used **wildcards** (? and *), in case her name is spelled "Sophia" or "Sofia," and "Carlsdotter" or "Karlsdotter." I usually check the box marked "Match all terms exactly," in order to narrow my choices. (We can always change that setting if we fail to get enough hits.) Also, I've chosen 1850 +/- 1 year.

Click now on the blue "SEARCH" button. Shown below are some of our 25 results.

Click "View Record" for the Anna Sofia from Fellingsbro, as shown by the green arrow.

All Sweden, Select Baptisms, 1611-1909 results for Anna So*ia ? Arlsd*R

Results 1-20 of 25

Your search

anna so*ia

?arlsd*r

Born: 1850

All Categories

- > Birth, Marriage & Death
- > Birth, Baptism & Christening
- Sweden, Select Baptisms, 1611-1909 (in Swedish)
- This collection includes baptism records from Sweden.
- Learn more about this database...

View Record	Name	Birth Date	Baptism Date	Baptism Place	Relatives
View Record	Anna Sophia Carlsdotter	1850	20 dec 1850	Hålanda, Älvsborg, Sweden	Carl, Beata
View Record	Anna Sofia Carlsdotter	11 mar 1850	13 mar 1850	Bollebygd, Älvsborg, Sweden	Carl, Anna
View Record	Anna Charlotta Sophia Carlsdotter	4 jun 1850	5 jun 1850	Hjälmseryd, Jönköping, Sweden	Carl, Carin
View Record	Anna Sophia Carlsdotter	18 dec 1850	20 dec 1850	Hålanda, Älvsborg, Sweden	Carl, Beata
View Record	Anna Sofia Carlsdotter	6 aug 1850			Carl, Johanna Br.
View Record	Anna Sofia Carlsdotter	29 jul 1850	4 aug 1850	Färentuna, Stockholm, Sweden	Carl, M. S.
View Record	Anna Sophia Carlsdotter	24 mar 1850			Carl Ad., Helena
View Record	Anna Sofia Amalia Carlsdotter	27 nov 1850	29 dec 1850	Lidingö Stadsförsamling, Stockholm, Sweden	Carl, Margaretha Sofia
View Record	Anna Sofia Carlsdotter	4 aug 1850		Färentuna, Stockholm, Sweden	Carl, M. S.
View Record	Anna Charlotta Sophia Carlsdotter	11 nov 1849		Valleberga, Kristianstad, Sweden	Carl, Brita Sophia
View Record	Anna Sofia Carlsdotter	26 jun 1849	1 jul 1849	Fellingsbro, Örebro, Sweden	Carl, Anna Cajsa

After clicking "View Record," we get birth and **baptism** information for Anna Sofia Carlsdotter of Fellingsbro parish in Örebro county.

On page 3, we'll use that information to browse through Swedish church books to find her birth and baptism—and more about her family.

Anna Sophia Carlsdotter

in the Sweden, Select Baptisms, 1611-1909

Detail Source

Name: Anna Sophia Carlsdotter [Anna Sophia Pehrsson]

Gender: Female

Baptism Date: 1 Jul 1849

Baptism Place: Fellingsbro, Örebro, Sweden

Residence Place: Fellingsbro, Örebro, Sweden

Father: Carl Pehrsson

Mother: Anna Cajsa Åkerlind

FHL Film Number: 1794702

Reference ID: Item 102

Send Your Find Home!

Enter your email address and we will send you a link to your personalized Discovery Page where you can view and download all of the great finds you make while here.

We value your privacy. [Read our Privacy Statement](#)

Suggested Records

- [Sweden, Select Baptisms, 1611-1909](#)
Anna Sofia Carlsdotter
- [Örebro, Sweden, Church Records, 1635-1860](#)
Anna Sofia

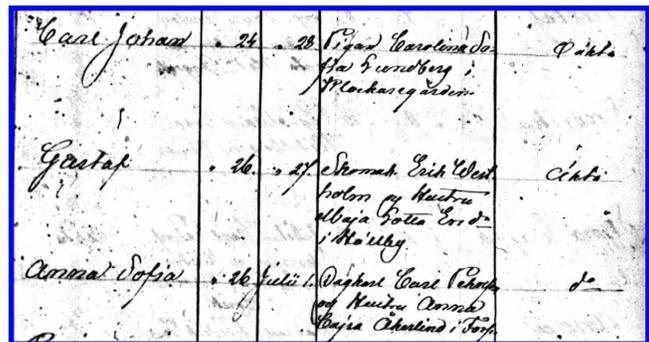
2

Go to the Ancestry home page and proceed to the map of Sweden as outlined in the blue box on page 2. Click “Sweden” and then click “Sweden, Church Records, 1451-1943.” The page shown below will appear. Select the “County” and “Parish” and “Födde (Births)” record types, as I’ve done. The records have not yet been indexed—we must browse.

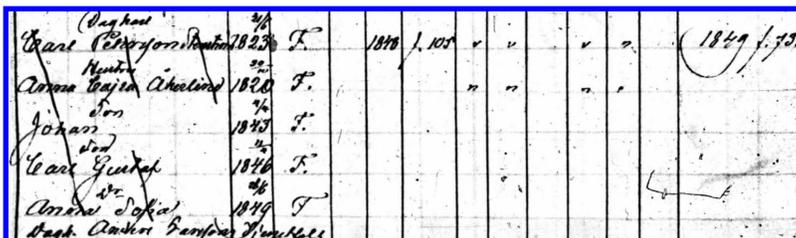
After choosing “Födde (Births),” select the date range of the church book that you wish to browse—for baby Anna Sofia, it’s 1841-1859. The page shown below appears. I’ll now show you the tools that you’ll need to use to navigate the church book. Anna Sofia’s birth and baptism were recorded on image 96 of 217. Let’s go there.



Baby “Anna Sofia” was born 26 June 1849 and baptized on 1 July. Her father was Carl Pehrsson from a farm called Forss. So, the baby’s full name is Anna Sofia Carlsdotter. Her mother was Anna Cajsa Åkerlind. Baptismal sponsors and their farms are usually listed—here, however, they are not. Now comes the fun part! Since we know the farm and the names of the parents, we’ll use the *husförhör* records to trace her family.



The baptismal record showed us that Anna Sofia was born 26 June 1849 on Forss farm in Fellingsbro parish, Örebro county, to Carl Pehrsson and Anna Cajsa Åkerlind. Stay on the same page (image 96/217) of Anna Sofia's birth record. Click on "Födde Births," as shown below, to open the dropdown menu. Click *Husförhör* as shown below, then click the appropriate date range (1846-1855). This opens the church book to the *husförhör*. The *husförhör*, or **household examination**, serves as an annual census. Fortunately, there is a farm index at the end of the book. Forss farm begins on page 90 (image 106/267). Advance to page 98 (114/267) to find Anna Sofia's family. Let's discuss what the *husförhör* record tells us and where we can go from here! **IMPORTANT NEWS: FamilySearch has indexed Household Examination Records for 1880-1930! Go to the Sweden Collection.**



Household examinations provide *amazing* records of our ancestors' families. They give birth dates and places...movement to other farms and parishes...marriage and death information...immigration and emigration dates and places and more. They provide clues that enable us to look into other church records within the parish.

NOW LET'S TALK ABOUT NORWAY

Once again, we need **names, dates** and **places**. Unfortunately, Norway doesn't have *husförhör* records. But they do have indexed census records from various years. Also, Ancestry and FamilySearch have millions of baptismal records. Still, the "go to" website for Norwegian research is *Digitalarkivet*—and it's *free!* *Digitalarkivet* allows us to dig into the *kirkebøker*—the church books with birth, marriage, death, immigration, emigration and more records. Once again, they are written in a foreign language and handwriting analysis can be difficult. However, there are lots of folks online (rootsweb.com) and many love to help out!

Let's begin by focusing on one of my ancestors—my great, great-grandfather, Hans Martinsen Indahl. According to his 1918 Minnesota death certificate, Hans was born 8 Feb 1842 in Norway. What do I do next?

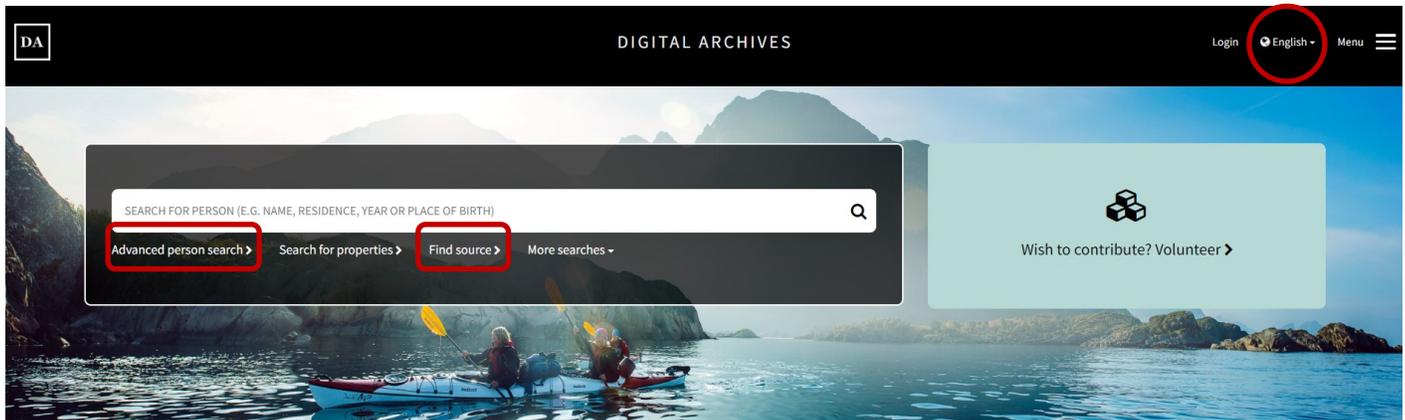
First, let's go to Ancestry and, using the tips in the top box on page 2, get to "Norway, Select Baptisms, 1634-1927." Type in his name as shown below, using wildcards and checking the "Match all terms exactly" box. Put in the exact date of birth as given on his death certificate. Let's see if that date works. Click the blue "SEARCH" button.

All Norway, Select Baptisms, 1634-1927 results for Han? Mart*N

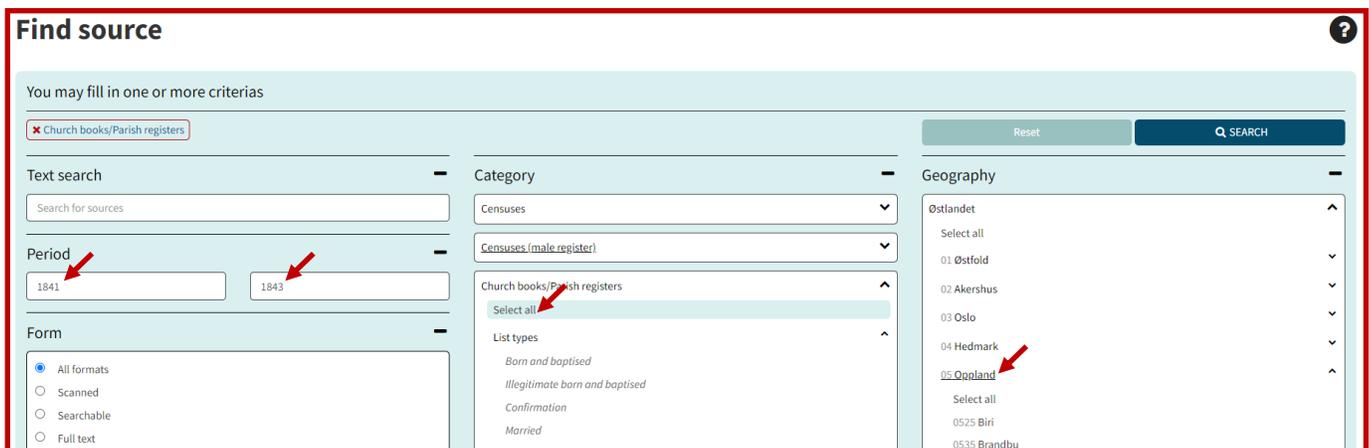
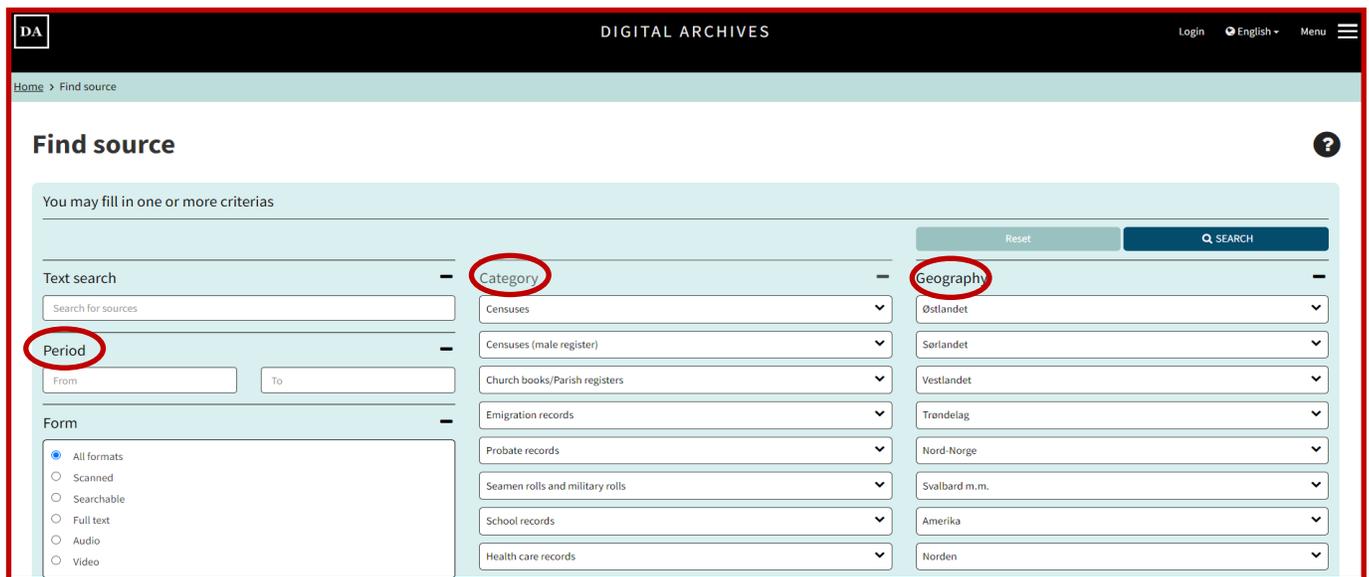
Your search	Broad	Exact	View Record	Name	Birth Date	Baptism Date	Baptism Place	Relatives
han?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	View Record	Hans Marthinsen	8 feb 1842	20 mar 1842	Vestre Toten, Oppland, Norway	Marthin, Nicoline
mart*n	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	View Record	Hans Emil Edvart Martinusen	11 sep 1842	16 okt 1842 (16 Oct 1842)	Oslo, Oslo, Norway	Edvart Martinus, Andrine
Born: 1842	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						

Success! Notice that the name is spelled *Marthinsen* instead of *Martinsen*. Thanks, wildcards! He's from Vestre Toten parish in Oppland county (*fylke*). Let's use *Digitalarkivet* to find his church records and to further explore his family.

Digitalarkivet means **Digital Archives**. I get there by Google. Type “Digitalarkivet” into the Google search well and hit enter. From the list of search results, click on “The Digital Archive—Digitalarkivet.” This opens the Digitalarkivet homepage. The site is written in English, as well as Norwegian (Bokmål or Nynorsk)



Let’s find Hans Indahl. You could try the “Advanced person search.” But since we know *where* and *when* he was born, let’s use “Find source” to find the church book with his baptism. Clicking on “Find source” opens the search window shown below. To find the church record for Hans, we’ll fill out some of the forms. Under “Period,” type in 1841-1843. Under “Category,” choose “Church books/Parish registers.” Under that, choose “Select all.” Under “Geography,” choose “Østlandet.” Under that, choose “Oppland” (*fylke*) and then “Vestre Toten” (parish). Then click the “Search” button.



Find source

You may fill in one or more criterias

Vestre Toten Church books/Parish registers

Reset

SEARCH

Text search

Period

1841

1843

Form

- All formats
- Scanned (2)
- Searchable (2)
- Full text (0)
- Audio (0)
- Video (0)

Tags

Depository

Archive

Category

Your search resulted in 2 hits:

1

Church book from Vestre Toten parish 1836-1848 (0529P) >

Archive: Vestre Toten prestekontor

Browse scans >

Born and baptised: 1836-1848

Browse >

Search >

Confirmation: 1837-1840

Browse >

Not searchable

Married: 1836-1843

Browse >

Search >

Deceased and buried: 1836-1845

Browse >

Search >

In- and out-migrated: 1836-1841

Browse >

Not searchable

Church book from Vestre Toten parish 1836-1843 (0529P) >

Archive: Vestre Toten prestekontor

Browse scans >

Born and baptised: 1836-1843

Browse >

Search (1836-1843) >

Confirmation: 1837-1843

Browse >

Search (1837-1843) >

Married: 1836-1843

Browse >

Search (1836-1843) >

Deceased and buried: 1836-1843

Browse >

Search (1836-1843) >

In- and out-migrated: 1837-1842

Browse >

Not searchable

Vaccinated: 1837-1843

Browse >

Not searchable

Other list: 1839-1839

Browse >

Not searchable

Some books are searchable (indexed), while others are not (yet!). Click "Browse" to bring up the *Klokkerbok* page shown below. Note that baptism (*Døbte*) records begin in 1837—but we want 2 Feb 1842. You can drag the slider (red) to advance pages, or simply click on "Contents" (yellow) to bring up the page shown at the bottom. Click on 1842 to advance to that year in the book!



Home > Search Parish Registry Norway > Content

Content

Oppland

Vestre Toten parish

Born and baptised - Kolbu, Ås local parish

1830-1839	1836-1837 (s. 2-3)	1837 (s. 6-7)	1838 (s. 14-15)	1839 (s. 26-27)	1839-1840 (s. 38-39)
1840-1849	1839-1840 (s. 38-39)	1840 (s. 42-43)	1841 (s. 60-61)	1842 (s. 76-77)	1843 (s. 98-99)

Confirmation - Kolbu, Ås local parish

1830-1839	1837 (s. 160-161)	1838 (s. 166-167)	1839 (s. 172-173)	
1840-1849	1840 (s. 190-191)	1841 (s. 188-189)	1842 (s. 196-197)	1843 (s. 206-209)

Married - Kolbu, Ås local parish

1830-1839	1836-1837 (s. 220-221)	1838 (s. 222-223)	1839 (s. 226-227)	
1840-1849	1840 (s. 230-231)	1841 (s. 236-237)	1842 (s. 244-245)	1843 (s. 254-255)

Deceased and buried - Kolbu, Ås local parish

1830-1839	1836-1838 (s. 280-281)	1838-1839 (s. 282-283)	1837-1841 (s. 284-285)	1837-1842 (s. 286-287)	1838 (s. 288-289)	1838-1839 (s. 292-293)	1839 (s. 296-297)
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Source information

The Regional State Archives in Hamar

Physical location
Statsarkivet i Hamar

Archive reference
SAH/PREST-108/H/Ås/Haa/L0003
[Link to Arkivportalen](#)

Archive
Vestre Toten prestekontor

Series and subseries
H: Kirkelege handlinger
Haa: Kirkebøker
Haa: Kirkebøker

Piece/folder
L0003: Kirkebok for Vestre Toten

Source type
Parish register (official)

Protocol no./period
no. 3 / 1836 - 1843

Area
Oppland county
Vestre Toten parish
Kolbu local parish
Ås local parish

Knowing that Hans was born 4 February 1842, we can use the tools at the top right to navigate to the page (80-81) showing his birth and baptism. His father is Martin Hansen of Inddal farm, and his mother is Nicoline Larsdatter. Five sponsors are listed on the right. Hans was born a legitimate (*ægta*) child. A baby whose mother was not married was considered *uægta*.



Return now to the Digitalarkivet home page. This time, click on “Advanced person search” to open the search page shown below. When you have time, experiment with the search fields. No need for wildcards with Digitalarkivet—they allow for spelling variations. Remember: It’s very helpful to have the name of the parish in which your ancestor lived, or at least the county (*fylke*). Also, be sure to use the **Family Search Research WIKI** (at familysearch.org) to improve your search.

Advanced person search

You may fill in one or more criterias Disable name variants

Period Source period: 1835 <input type="text"/> 1845 <input type="text"/>	Individual information First name: <input type="text" value="sigrid"/>	Event information Event year: From <input type="text"/> To <input type="text"/>
Category <input type="checkbox"/>	Last name: <input type="text" value="torbjørnsdatter"/>	Event date (mm-dd): <input type="text" value="mm-dd"/>
Geography Østlandet <input type="checkbox"/> Select all 01 Ostfold 02 Akershus 03 Oslo 04 Hedmark 05 Oppland <input type="checkbox"/> Select all 0525 Biri 0535 Brandbu 0511 Dovre 0530 Eina 0541 Etnedal	Gender: <input type="text"/>	Related person First name: <input type="text"/>
	Role: <input type="text"/>	Last name: <input type="text"/>
	Birth year: From <input type="text"/> To <input type="text"/>	Birth year: <input type="text"/>
	Birth date (mm-dd): <input type="text" value="mm-dd"/>	Role: <input type="text"/>
	Place of birth: <input type="text"/>	
	Domicile: <input type="text"/>	

Let’s find Hans Martinsen in the 1865 Norway Census. Digitalarkivet has digitized censuses. But **Ancestry Library Edition** (free at our libraries!) has indexed versions of them. On the Ancestry home page, navigate to the Norway page and locate the 1865 census. Once again, I used a wildcard to find Hans. The results are shown below.

Search

Match all terms exactly

First & Middle Name(s): Last Name:

Exact

Year: Location:

Birth: +/-1 yr

Lived In: Exact to this place

Any Event:

Add family member: Father Spouse Child

Father:

Spouse:

Child:

All 1865 Norway Census results for Han? Mart*N

Your search Results 1-1 of 1

han? mart'n Born: 1842 Lived In: vestre toten, o...

View Record	Name	Birth Year	Birth Place	Home in 1865	Relatives	View Image
1-1 of 1	Hans Martinsen	abt 1841	Vestre Thoten	Vestre Toten, Oppland	Marthin	