

ONE-NAME STUDIES

Over the years we've been contacted by numerous members who are carrying out One-Name Studies, many with dedicated websites, and as a result we've decided to introduce a One-Name Studies feature.

What is a One-Name Study? Here is one definition, taken from the Wikipedia entry for the Guild of One-Name Studies:

A one-name study is a project researching all occurrences of a surname, as opposed to a particular pedigree (ancestors of one person) or descendency (descendants of one person or couple). Some "one-namers" may restrict their research geographically, perhaps to one country, but true one-namers collect all occurrences world-wide. The Guild only accepts true one-name studies for registration, although anyone with an interest in one-name studies is welcome to become a member.

Typically, the researchers will also study the etymology of the surname, and its geographical distribution. Sometimes, especially if the surname is also a place name, they will try to identify the place or places of origin of the surname, employing the normal methods of genealogy.

At LostCousins we will accept not only global studies that meet the standards laid down by the Guild, but also well-organised One-Name Studies that are geographically-restricted.

HOW THIS WILL WORK

(1) From the point of view of an ordinary LostCousins member

Members who are not conducting studies won't need to do anything differently, and that's one of the key advantages of the way that we've chosen to implement One-Name Studies (and also One-Place Studies).

When a member clicks the Search button on their My Ancestors page we'll not only look for their living relatives, or 'lost cousins', we'll also look for other members with whom they have a common interest, including the compilers of One-Name Studies and One-Place Studies.

(2) For the compiler/co-ordinator of a One-Name Study

As the compiler of the study we need you to identify the people covered by your study by entering them on your My Ancestors page at the LostCousins site. If you are running a very large study you may wish to enlist the help of other interested parties - see the FAQs.

We match members who have common interests by comparing the persons they have entered on their respective My Ancestors pages. All data must be taken from censuses supported by LostCousins:

England & Wales 1841
England & Wales 1881
Scotland 1881
USA 1880
Canada 1881

Before entering information from your study please contact LostCousins with details of the study, including the surnames and geographical area covered; please include the address of your website, if you have one. If we are satisfied that you are conducting a properly-constituted study we will give you permission to start entering data.

Note: if your study is registered with the Guild of One-Name Studies approval will be automatic, but you should still contact us first.

If there are a large number of people covered by your study you may prefer to enter only the heads of household, or to restrict the geographical area that you cover - but a better solution is to enlist help from other interested parties (see the FAQs).

We recommend that you give priority to entries from the England & Wales 1881 census as the 1841 census was added quite recently, and will produce less matches in the short-term.

It is very important that you select the correct relationship. No doubt some of the people in the study will be relatives of yours and they should be entered in the same way as any other relative - but for all the others the relationship shown should be 'One-Name Study'.

CONDITIONS

You must provide a secondary email address in case your primary address fails. Please complete the Secondary Email Address box on your My Details page if you have not already done so.

Misuse of the LostCousins system, or failure to respond in a timely and courteous manner will result in your account being closed. If you will be unable to respond to enquiries within 14 days due to an extended vacation (or for any other reason) please let us know so that we can advise members accordingly.

FAQS

Can I use my existing LostCousins account?

At this time we don't see any reason why you shouldn't use the same account for the study if you wish, provided you are not running a very large study. If we do need to change the system we will transfer the study-related individuals to a separate account on your behalf - you won't need to re-enter them. (Note, however, that if you are running more than one study we won't be able to separate them.)

I am running a very large study, and don't have time to enter thousands of names from the census - how can I take part?

The results you get will be in proportion to the number of entries, so in many ways it's an advantage if you're running a large study. However it can appear very daunting, and in this situation the best solution is usually to enlist the help of others who have an interest in the same surname.

If you do plan to ask others to help then you should open a separate account for the One-Name Study (or for each study if there is more than one). This will enable you to give the log-in details to those who have agreed to help you, without giving them access to your personal My Ancestors page. We recommend that when the entry process is complete you change the password so that only the co-ordinator of the study can access the account.

Will I need to pay a subscription to LostCousins?

No - unless you want to initiate contact with another member. We believe that in most cases it would be more appropriate for you to wait for interested members to contact you.

If you are a paid-up member of the Guild of One-Name Studies you will be entitled to a discounted subscription to LostCousins, and this will apply whether or not the study you are carrying out is registered with the Guild. You'll find the discount code in the Members' Room at the Guild website, and it will apply both to single and joint subscriptions.

Can I simply direct people to my website?

When a member contacts you it is entirely up to you how you respond (though we do, of course, expect that you will respond politely and promptly). You may find that the best approach is simply to refer the other member to your website - although you should bear in mind that they may come back to you with questions or comments