
Sources of Family History

299 Research
Guide

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This research guide lists resources at the Archives of Ontario that may help you in researching your family's history. Please keep in mind that:

- This guide only refers to records that are available at the Archives.
- This is not an exhaustive list of resources available at the Archives
- Our reference staff may be able to help you identify additional outside sources

All guides mentioned in this guide are available in the "Start Your Research" section of our website.

GETTING STARTED

Doing research on your family history can involve using a wide variety of records and sources of information in various institutions (such as archives and libraries), starting with information that you and your family already have.

The Archives of Ontario has prepared an information brochure with tips on doing your research, called *Digging for Roots*, which can be sent to you on request (see our contact information at the end of this research guide).

THE RECORDS

Birth, Marriage and Death Records

We have microfilmed copies of government registrations of births (1869-1914), marriages (1800-1929) and deaths (1869-1939), registrations of death of Ontarians overseas (1939-1947), cemetery transcriptions and various church, court and municipal records. For more information, consult:

- [Research Guide 202: Vital Statistics Records](#)
- [Research Guide 203: Understanding the Vital Statistics Indexes](#)
- [Research Guide 204: Sources for Birth, Marriage and Death Records](#)
- Pathfinders to birth, marriage and death records (Reading Room only).

Cartographic records

Maps, plans and atlases can provide useful information about land ownership, occupancy and use. For more information, consult:

- [Research Guide 215: From Grant to Patent- Early Land Settlement Records, ca. 1790 to ca. 1850](#)
- [Historical County Atlases](#). (visit the Microfilm Interloan catalogue, in the “How to Access Your Records” section of our website)

Census records

We have microfilmed copies of census records from 1851 to 1901, and some pre-1851 municipal census and militia muster rolls. For more information, consult [Research Guide 220: Census Records](#).

Change of name records

We have records documenting changes of names, up to 1979. For more information, consult [Research Guide 229: Finding change of name files in Ontario](#).

Criminal justice system records

We have some records created from the start of the police investigation to the end of a sentence, probation or parole. For more information, consult [Research Guide 233: Criminal justice records at the Archives of Ontario](#).

Directories and telephone books

These records may help you find the location where an individual lived. For more information, consult [Research Guide 221: Directories, Telephone Books and Voters' Lists](#).

Divorce records

We have divorce records from 1930 to 1978. For more information, consult:

- [Research Guide 210 - Finding Divorce Files in Ontario](#)
- [Research Guide 211 - Finding York County divorce files](#)

Education records

We have various records pertaining to students and teachers. For more information, consult [Research Guide 216: Student and Teacher Records](#).

Genealogy collections and published genealogies

We have a small number of published and unpublished genealogies, as well as genealogical files and indexes. For more information, consult [Research Guide 222: Genealogy Collections and Published Genealogies](#).

Guardianship and adoption records

We have records documenting guardianships, mostly pre-1921. The Archives of Ontario does not have adoption records. For more information, consult [Research Guide: 223: Guardianship and Adoption Records](#).

Health Records

We have records from psychiatric hospitals, from centres for people with developmental and emotional disability conditions and from a very limited number of doctors and other hospitals. For more information, see [Research Guide 224: Patient and Health Practitioner Records](#).

Immigration, Citizenship and Naturalization Records

We have provincial immigration records, microfilmed copies of federal immigration records (including passenger lists) and some naturalization records. For more information, consult [Research Guide 228: Immigration, Citizenship and Naturalization Records](#).

Land Records

Our holdings document sales and grants of Crown lands, as well private transactions, from the late 1700's to the early 1900's. For more information on our holdings, consult [Research Guide 225: Resources for Researching Land Records](#).

Library Material

The Archives has a library reference collection. It includes periodicals and books on Ontario, local history and family history research. To search our library holdings, consult our [BiBLION Library Catalogue](#) (you will find BiBLION in the "Start Your Research" section of our website).

Militia and Military Records

Our holdings include microfilmed copies of British military records, as well as miscellaneous records regarding militia and army units, mostly from the 1800's. For information on our holdings, consult [Research Guide 226: Militia and Military Records](#).

Municipal Records

We hold records from various municipalities in Ontario. These may contain assessment rolls, census, voters' lists, and birth, marriage and death records. For more information, consult:

- [Research Guide : Municipal Records at the Archives of Ontario](#)
- [Research Guide 204: Sources for Birth, Marriage and Death Records](#)
- [Research Guide 220: Census Records.](#)

Newspapers

Newspapers may include birth, marriage and death, sale notices and information about local events. For more information, consult:

- [Research Guide 212: Newspaper Holdings of the Archives of Ontario](#)
- [Finding aid L 23: Original and microfilmed newspaper collections in the Archives of Ontario.](#)

United Empire Loyalist Records

We have registers and lists of Loyalists, records of claims for compensation and land records. For more information consult [Research Guide 227: United Empire Loyalist Records.](#)

Voters' Lists

These records have the residence of people entitled to vote in local, provincial or federal elections and, sometimes, their occupation. For more information, consult [Research Guide 221: Directories, Telephone Books and Voters' Lists.](#)

Wills

We have estate files (which contain wills) from the courts for the 1780's to the 1960's. For more information, see [Research Guide 206: How to Find a Will in Court Records.](#)

MAKING CONTACT

Ready and Willing

Although unable to do your family history research for you, our reference archivists are waiting to assist you. You may telephone or write to them by mail or email or — best of all — visit the Archives of Ontario.

Contact us

Telephone: 416-327-1600 Toll free (Ontario): 1-800-668-9933

Fax: 416-327-1999
Email: reference@ontario.ca
Address: Archives of Ontario, 134 Ian Macdonald Blvd., Toronto, ON M7A 2C5

Website

For information about the Archives' holdings, as well as access to research guides and other customer service materials available through the Archives of Ontario, please visit our website www.ontario.ca/archives.

Customer Service and Research Guides

The Archives of Ontario has published a series of in-depth research guides on a variety of specific topics. For more information, please see "Customer Service and Research Guides" under "About the Archives" on the home page of the Archives website.

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This document may contain references to electronic links that can be activated only by using the HTML version found on the Archives of Ontario website.

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