

# Using The Internet Archive for Genealogy Research

The Internet Archive has been around since 1996, and has a magnificent assortment of genealogical materials in many different categories of interest to genealogy researchers. It is a major resource; not to be missed.

Per Wikipedia, "As of December 2021, the Internet Archive holds over 34 million books and texts, 7.4 million movies, videos and TV shows, 797,000 software programs, 13,991,923 audio files, 4.1 million images, and 640 billion web pages in the Wayback Machine." If you didn't know, the Wayback Machine is essentially a capture of webpages over time, thus a digital archive of the World Wide Web.

[The Genealogy Project](#) at the Archive includes items from the Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center in Fort Wayne, Indiana; Robarts Library at the University of Toronto; the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Library; Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah; the National Library of Scotland; the Indianapolis City Library's Indianapolis City Directory and Yearbooks Collection, The Leo Baeck Institute Archives of German-speaking Jewry; and the Boston Public Library, just to name a few.

So what types of information are available at [Archive.org](#) that is of interest to genealogists?

- **Yearbooks**—there are over 69,000 references to yearbooks in the collection. The states of Massachusetts, Virginia, and North Carolina use it as the online archive for high school and college yearbooks.
- **City Directories**—there are about 20,000 city and business directories, not to mention gazetteers and almanacs—another 10,000.
- **Books**—there are over 33,000 genealogy books of all kinds and subjects.
- **Local History**—there are 79,000 references to texts and audio regarding local history. Usually centering on a town, city, or county.
- **Reclaim the Records**—has about 2,000 collections of vital records in the Archive.
- **Town Records**—there are over 52,000 town records (primarily from the New England states). Includes vital record information.
- **Passenger and Crew Lists**—useful in immigration research, there are over 7,500 passenger and crew list documents.
- **Parish Registers**—over 1,500 parish registers are in the Archive; most from the U.K.
- **Church Records**—over 12,200 items in the Archive; including marriages, funerals, baptisms, membership and other church records.
- **Census Records**—not the most ideal way to find census records (we've been spoiled by the large collectors of census records providing us with indexes and search capability). But they are in the Archive.
- **Pension Files**—payment cards and pension applications are included in collections numbering over 2,700.
- **Passport Applications**—over 3,000 in this category.
- **Family Genealogies**—over 3,700 collections of written materials about specific surnames.
- **Probate**—there are over 2,000 references to probate records.
- **Newspapers**—Over 1.3 million references in the newspapers at the Archive. About 700,000 from the U.S., and over 300,000 from China. Many are local titles; also included is a large collection of high school, college and university student newspapers.
- **Audio and Video**—there are old radio shows; newsreels from the past; old music; military radio shows; oral history interviews. Most from the U.S. But there are many from other countries as well.

Is there more? Yes there is. The subjects are only limited by your imagination. FYI, many of the free online links in The Ancestor Hunt collections of links come from the Internet Archive!

