

Using DP.LA for Family History Research

Are you a DP.LA user? If not, you should. I find it to be “better than Google” for finding digitized resources owned by libraries, archives, and other similar institutions. In essence, it is like having online card catalogues from hundreds of institutions that I can search for digitized collections and items all at once.

Here are the partners with the largest collections available to be searched in DP.LA:

| | |
|---|--|
| National Archives and Records Administration (17,840,275 Items) | Biodiversity Heritage Library (288,133 Items) |
| Smithsonian Institution (7,550,609 Items) | NJ/DE Digital Collective (328,645 Items) |
| HathiTrust (3,033,985 Items) | Sunshine State Digital Network (281,887 Items) |
| The Portal to Texas History (1,951,500 Items) | South Carolina Digital Library (281,828 Items) |
| California Digital Library (2,090,523 Items) | United States Government Publishing Office (291,120 Items) |
| Mountain West Digital Library (1,216,743 Items) | Northwest Digital Heritage (317,591 Items) |
| Michigan Service Hub (1,132,092 Items) | Digital Library of Tennessee (172,846 Items) |
| Digital Commonwealth (1,023,755 Items) | University of Washington (141,840 Items) |
| Digital Library of Georgia (997,301 Items) | Kentucky Digital Library (141,608 Items) |
| Minnesota Digital Library (926,349 Items) | Connecticut Digital Archive (120,909 Items) |
| The New York Public Library (794,920 Items) | David Rumsey (125,750 Items) |
| Plains to Peaks Collective (885,210 Items) | Digital Maryland (126,963 Items) |
| North Carolina Digital Heritage Center (702,099 Items) | Artstor (108,681 Items) |
| Internet Archive (706,063 Items) | Big Sky Country Digital Network (59,573 Items) |
| PA Digital (701,282 Items) | J. Paul Getty Trust (99,618 Items) |
| North Carolina Digital Heritage Center (93,941 Items) | Harvard Library (92,066 Items) |
| Recollection Wisconsin (675,963 Items) | Digital Virginias (96,702 Items) |
| Heartland Hub (650,853 Items) | Vermont Green Mountain Digital Archive (97,202 Items) |
| Missouri Hub (629,425 Items) | Digital Maine (63,492 Items) |
| OKHub (715,793 Items) | Orbis Cascade Alliance (61,404 Items) |
| Illinois Digital Heritage Hub (541,301 Items) | Texas Digital Library (93,839 Items) |
| Indiana Memory (646,606 Items) | District Digital (57,753 Items) |
| Empire State Digital Network (443,200 Items) | Community Webs (4,901 Items) |
| Ohio Digital Network (399,155 Items) | Library of Congress (4,463 Items) |

If you are interested in family history research, check out these categories (or choose your own):

- [Family photographs](#)
- [Family Bibles](#)
- [Correspondence, from the Civil War for example.](#)
- [Local maps](#)
- [Yearbooks](#)
- [Military records including photographs and service records](#)
- [Oral histories](#)
- [Family History and Genealogy books](#)

From DP.LA: “To find even more historical materials to help develop context, [browse by topic](#). As you discover useful materials, create [lists](#) of items to come back to later without having to repeat your search.”

Searching DP.LA is easy. I use the standard search tools that I use in Google searching. You can narrow the results by selecting on the left hand side of the results page one or more of the following: Type, Subject, Date, Location, Language, Collection, Contributing Institution, or Partner. One technique that I often use is to search broadly, and then enter a minus sign (-) in front of a keyword, eliminate results from specific states, or specific collections.

There are many more collections available, many from hundreds of local public libraries.

