

# 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 78,000 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 171,000 city, business, and other directories, as well as gazetteers and almanacs.

**Books**—there are over 19,000 genealogy books of all kinds and subjects.

**Local History**—there are 117,000 references to texts and audio regarding local history. Usually centering on a town, city, or county.

**Reclaim the Records**—there are about 2,500 collections of vital records in the Archive.

**Town Records**—there are over 62,000 town records (primarily from the New England states). Includes vital record information.

**Passenger and Crew Lists**—useful in immigration research, there are over 8,500 passenger and crew list documents.

**Parish Registers**—over 1,600 parish registers are in the Archive; most are from the U.K.

**Church Records**—over 14,800 items in the Archive; including marriages, funerals, baptisms, membership, and other church records.

**Census Records**—over 35,000 items in the Archive. It's 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 3,700.

**Passport Applications**—over 13,600 in this category.

**Family Genealogies**—over 26,500 collections of written materials about specific surnames.

**Probate**—there are over 2,700 references to probate records.

**Newspapers**—Over 2.3 million references in the newspapers at the Archive. Over 1.1 million from the U.S., and over 500,000 from China. Many are local titles; also included are a large collection of high school, college, and university student newspapers.

**Vital Records**—over 5,000 collections.

**Audio and Video**—there are old radio shows; newsreels from the past; old music; military radio shows; oral history interviews. Most are 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!

