

YESTERDAY'S FOOTPRINTS
Alberta Genealogical Society
Lethbridge and District Branch
Vol. 40 No. 1
February 2023
ISSN 0836-5319

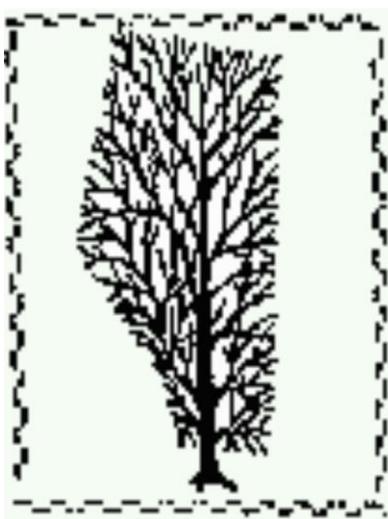


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Editor's Corner



If you want to submit articles, genealogy humor, interesting web sites or have any queries you want us to print feel free to contact us. You can send your submissions to our library email at lenthags@theboss.net or phone (403) 328-9564 for some research help--Susan Haga, Newsletter Editor.

Lethbridge A.G.S. Branch Hours

Library Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday 1:30–4:30 p.m. Meetings are all virtual for the time being (3rd Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.) Visitors Welcome! Our library will be closed July and August and December but can be open on request. See our web site at:

<http://lenthbridgeags.theboss.net/Exec.htm>

Address: 1:28; 909 – 3rd Avenue North.

Phone: (403) 328-9564

Membership Dues

Individual or Family Membership (Includes 1 Branch)-\$50.00, Seniors (65+) Individual or Family (Includes 1 Branch)-\$45.00. If you receive Relatively Speaking digitally your membership is \$10.00 off except for Youth membership \$5.00—Young Adult membership is \$25.00 (includes RS).

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President's Message

As of the February AGM, I am the immediate past president of Lethbridge Branch AGS. Since we have not succeeded in electing a president at that meeting, Susan Haga has asked me for another newsletter message. As my November message thanked members who have carried out their various responsibilities over the years, I will use this one to reflect on my time in AGS.

I was introduced to the society by Phyllis Burnett when we both worked at the Lethbridge (Community) College and I attended a few meetings in 1997 before my husband and our young son and I moved to the United Arab Emirates for 9 years. When we returned to Canada we settled in Edmonton and I joined Edmonton Branch where I especially appreciated the SIG meetings. For a time, I served as Branch Secretary until I moved over to coordinate the Tracing Your Family Tree course.

I visited Lethbridge frequently and in November 2012 when I was housesitting in Lethbridge. I went to the Resource Centre when Doug McLeod was on duty. He invited me to the International Dinner which at that time was being held in November. I attended with my brother, another former Lethbridge resident, who was visiting me.

When I moved to Lethbridge in 2017, I transferred my membership to this Branch. I have enjoyed our speakers at our general meetings and the Legacy SIG where I learned a great deal. It is wonderful to spend time with people who have a shared interest. With my move back to Edmonton area I am now member of both Branches.
Marilyn Astle, Past President

Monthly Meetings

On Thursday, January 19th at 7:00 p.m. at the Resource Centre (Zoom) Sheryl Olson presented (via Zoom from Montana) her story on how she produced a 700-page historical fiction book about the imagined life of her great-great grandmother who immigrated from Sweden to the US in 1853 using all the available written records, oral histories, and some DNA. She traced the life of her ancestor from 1853-1914.

On Thursday, February 16th at 7:00 p.m. our Annual General Meeting was held at the Resource Centre and by Zoom. Afterwards Velda Svold gave a presentation on the history of our Lethbridge AGS Branch. She said “We do not know where we are going until we know where we came from. Past and present members have

worked very diligently and left us with a wonderful gift of the AGS Branch History. Anne Baines prepared 'The Early Years: 10 May 1977 to 21 February 1985.' Velda thanked all the past and present that have contributed to the Lethbridge Branch. It was a great history of the Lethbridge Branch. After which there was a discussion about storing and sharing your information.

Lethbridge Family History Centre

The Family History Centre is open Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Understanding Old Handwriting

Skills to Reading Old Handwriting

You can train yourself to read old handwriting. This is a necessary skill if you want to read old handwritten documents or any type of record that was produced before the typed records in 1920s.

Tips for Reading Old Handwriting

1. Read entire document and write down the words you can easily make out.
2. Study how the letters are formed from what you can read.
3. Compare the entries before and after.
4. Use a magnifying glass.
5. If you have been working on it for awhile then take a break.
6. Ask a friend to look at it,
7. Trace the letters.
8. Start with current modern writing and work your way back.,
9. Read it out loud remember that most scribes spelled phonetically.
10. Read through entire doc. for content.
11. Find common wording or terms and expressions for the area.
12. Remember to keep practicing. The more you read old handwriting the easier it becomes.

Paleography

Paleography is the study of old handwriting. At some point, every genealogist comes across an old handwritten record of their ancestor, looks at it and pronounces it totally phonetically wrong.

There are two aspects to reading handwritten historic documents,

--Understanding what letter of the alphabet the cursive script represents.

--Understanding all the words, spelling, the abbreviations, and acronyms that were typical of the time period and the type of document.

Understanding the letters in the cursive script for most people is usually the most difficult and challenging part of reading old handwriting. The second aspect is normally easier because most record collections contain lists of common abbreviations and word associated with the records.

Alternatively, you can consult online dictionaries of historic words and spellings.

1. One of the best online tutorials is offered by the UK National Archives. It will teach you to read documents written in English from 1500-1800.
2. Cambridge University also has an excellent paleography tutorial that breaks down the alphabet by letter for old English documents
3. Checkout GenealogyInTime Magazine list of the five best free resources that will help you read old handwriting.

Handwriting Practice Exercises

Early American Handwriting Game

<http://www.reed.edu/handwriting/#>

BYU Script Tutorial

<https://script.byu.edu/Pages/English/en/home.aspx>

The Ducking Stool www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/ducking-stool-game/ (Compiled Susan Haga--Editor of Yesterdays Footprints)

Unlocking the Treasures of the Parish Chest

Family historians with ancestry in England will certainly be familiar with Church of England parish registers. These registries of baptisms, marriages and burials provide the trunk on which most pre-1837 English family trees are built. Even after the 1837 implementation of civil registration, parish registers continued to be a significant source of useful genealogical information. What is less well-known however, is that the Anglican parish created more than just baptism, marriage, and burial registers in the management of their parish--these records are collectively known as "parish chest" records, after the chest they were

typically preserved in. The parish chest was a strong wooden box wherein the parish registers, alms for the poor, and church silver were kept.

All kinds of records have been found in parish chest records, but the most common fall into a few categories: settlement, illegitimacy, care of the poor, and care of the church, any of which could be useful in your family history research. Settlement laws were officially revoked in 1834 when the poor law unions were instituted, but mentions of the practice have been found even through 1876.

Settlement

Insight into the concept of a parish of settlement is foundational to understanding the care and keeping of all other parish chest records. A parish of settlement was responsible for the care and keeping of paupers, widows, and orphaned children. Thus, if an individual became dependent on the state, it was expected their parish of settlement became responsible for them--even if they moved elsewhere. An individual's parish of settlement was established one of eight ways.

Certificates: Settlement certificates were issued by the original parish of settlement giving the holder legal status within that parish and stating that they would accept the parishioner back in case of hardship or by the new parish settlement. In the case of an original parish issuing a settlement certificate, the hope was that the individual could travel to find new work without the new parish immediately rejecting them as a resident--the new parish had the promise of the old parish to receive them back without argument.

Examination: If an individual became, or was likely to become dependent on the parish, and could not prove legal settlement, they could be, and frequently were forcibly removed and transported back to their parish of settlement. When there was a question of settlement, an examination was held. Settlement examinations were conducted by the churchwarden and could take place at the request of the parish of current residence or the parish that was expected to receive

the parishioner back--or both. Settlement examinations are goldmines of genealogical information and might include parents' names, place and date of birth, the reason for a claim of settlement, and the reason for hardship.

Removal Orders: If an individual's parish of settlement was established as outside the parish of residence during the examination, a removal order was issued. The removal order was given to the parishioner who was escorted to the parish boundary and directed to return to their parish of settlement. Upon arrival the original parish might accept the parishioner back or might fight the removal order, leaving the parishioner in limbo until the matter was resolved.

Illegitimacy: Illegitimacy can be one of the most challenging of genealogy's brick walls; however, an act of Parliament from 1732/33 stipulated the creating of records that provide some aid in obtaining fathers' names.

Examination: It was the responsibility of the pregnant mother to present herself before the overseer of the poor and name the father of the unborn child. Parishes were particularly aggressive in pursuing this if the woman and child were likely to become paupers and thus dependent on the parish. The examination usually names the father and might include information about the mother's parents and the parish of settlement.

Summons: The alleged father would then be summoned to the quarter sessions or vestry to answer the allegation and provide assurance that he would care for the child.

Bastardy Bond: Was a promise to the parish that the father would care for the child and lying-in expenses of the mother.

Vestry Minutes: The church vestry were the male members who gathered to aid in decision making for the parish church. Vestry minutes are the minutes taken during the actual meeting and can contain a wide variety of material, including discussion of what care should be given

to any particularly poor parishioner, charities and their distribution, and repairs to the church and church yard etc.

Many of these responsibilities were transferred to other authorities in 1834 with the creation of poor law unions.

Overseer Accounts: Two vestry members were elected to act as overseers of the poor. The responsibility fell to these two men to determine what kind of care was needed.

Apprenticeship: Overseers of the poor retained the option to apprentice foundlings or pauper children to local tradesman or husbandman. The parents of the child had no say, and neither did the man to whom the child was apprenticed. If he did not want to take the child on as an apprentice, he could pay a fine for refusal.

Poor Rates:

Poor rates were charged to parish householders and covered the care. Householders included all parish residents who were not paupers, including laborers, not just landowners.

Locating Parish Chest Records

The variation in what parish chest records have survived from parish to parish is staggering. Some parishes may have an almost complete set of record types, while others might have virtually nothing still extant--and every combination in between. When searching for parish church records, keep an open mind and search multiple repositories. What is filmed versus what is at the county records office will vary again from what might still be at the local parish church.

In addition to the difficulties in locating the physical records, locating pertinent entries within the records can be difficult. Many of the records are spotty and unindexed, requiring a patient researcher with a strong knowledge of early English handwriting and practices.

County Record Offices

The most complete collection of parish chest records for a given county will be in the local county record office. While not all have been filmed by the LDS

Church, virtually all have been placed at the local county record office.

London

London and the parishes that made up Greater London in neighboring Essex, Kent and Surrey are generally found either at the London Metropolitan Archives, or Guildhall Library, though some have been filmed by the LDS Church. In addition, numerous smaller repositories within London still hold parish records. A careful review of the jurisdictions involved is necessary for locating parish records within London. While parish chest records are a fantastic source for genealogical research and should never be overlooked in tracing a difficult family, they are also extremely difficult to obtain and analyze.

(Information taken from www.familysearch.org and the National Institute for Genealogical Studies)

Free Genealogy Websites

www.familysearch.org Research Wiki

This is a go to resource to find what exists for a wide range of family history topics, even beyond Family Searches extensive databases. It is a free collaborative and essential tool to share genealogical knowledge throughout a worldwide community. It provides current and contemporary direction to the very best of key records, resources, and methodology.

National Archives & Records Administrations (NARA)

Maintained by the US Federal Government, NARA houses millions of microfilmed, printed, and manuscript records. Excellent for census records; governmental and military history records; military pension files; product patents; passenger lists, early naturalization records and more.

Library of Congress

One of the largest collections in the world of printed and recorded materials; outstanding source for free images; resources for all copyrighted materials in America and beyond. LOC maintains collections of nearly all city directories and county histories in the US; houses a

comprehensive directory of all known copyrighted newspapers by timeframe and where they can be located today, in the important US Newspaper Directory and Chronicling America.

New York Public Library (NYPL)

Among the elite tier of library collections second only to LOC in the size and scope of its historical and genealogical collections. The NYPL map Division has one of the best collections in the US; the Milstein Division has extensive local history and genealogical materials, including one of the largest. See also WorldGenWeb Project for records beyond the US, genealogical resources; research resources and content projects driven by volunteers of local and state genealogical societies throughout the US.

Research Guides for Ship Passenger Lists and Immigration Records

Focuses on providing guidance and links to records for passenger lists from about 1820 to the early 1950s. It includes suggestions for finding records for ports of arrival and immigration records.

Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Special collections include African American and a Native American Gateway; military records; and a surname database contributed by researchers. One of the largest genealogical library collections in the US.

Cyndi's List

Offers links organized by topics/categories. A cross-referenced index contains extensive lists of online genealogy resources.

Access Genealogy

Access hundreds of links to genealogical data by state or by topic.

Legacy.com

The global leader in online obituaries, partners with more than 1,500 newspapers, and 3,500 funeral homes across the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the UK, and Europe. Consumers can also express condolences, share direct support

for families, and celebrate the people who have touched their lives.

Rootsweb

One of the first genealogical resources on the Internet; it still offers excellent help with Ancestry Wiki; obituaries; connect to USGenWeb; Family Trees; queries and more.

JewishGenWeb and more.

An easy-to-use website with many record groups and good surname search facilities. Daitch-Mokotoff phonetic search algorithms for Eastern European and Jewish name searches. Some databases require payment.

Society of American Archivists in Using Archives: A Guide to Effective Research

This provides an excellent tutorial on archives: what are archives, the types, requesting materials, visiting and National Archives are rolled into one guideline, copyright and more.,

The Best UK, Irish and Commonwealth Genealogy Websites

CoraWeb

Cora Num has been gathering Australian genealogy links since 1997. You will also find categories for research in New Zealand, the United Kingdom, India, and Sri Lanka.

Library and Archives Canada

Canada's equivalents of the Library of Congress and the National Archives are rolled into one here, with databases of censuses (1640-1926), vital records, immigration, and passenger records (1865-1935), land transactions (1763-1930), military service (from 1777) and more.

The National Archives (UK)

Download documents such as military records, wills, migration records and more.

National Archives of Ireland

Search censuses (1901, 1911 and surviving fragments), marriage license bonds, crew lists, will registers, tithe plotment

books from 1823-1837, Catholic convert rolls, and many more.

National Library of Ireland

The pot of gold here is the browse-only collection of Catholic Parish at the National Library of Ireland. You can also explore newspapers, manuscript catalogs, and collections of old photos.

Public Record Office of Northern Ireland

A handy Name Search allows one-click searching of various early records, such as wills and censuses. Other tools include street directories, old maps, will calendars and freeholder records.

RootsChat

“Bursting with help. Just join in!” Invites Britain’s busiest, largest” free family history forum, with more than 6.5 million posts from some 283,000 members.

Roots Ireland \$

Though somewhat pricey (\$264 per year), an investment in this subscription site could pay off with finds among 22 million records, including Griffiths Valuation and church records from 34 county genealogy centers.

Scotland’s People

“Virtual Volumes” serve up digital copies at the National Records of Scotland not indexed by personal name. That’s in addition to pay-per-view free church records, censuses, valuation rolls and more; certain emigration census are free. (Compiled by Susan Haga)

Best Historical Newspaper Sites

The British Newspaper Archive \$

Get the news about your British ancestors in this collection of nearly 50 million pages from the 1700’s onward. Explore for a month for about \$17, or subscribe for a year at just \$9 per month. A partnership with Findmypast aims to add 14 million more pages by 2023, with 1 million pages per year free to access.

GenealogyBank \$

Cannot find your family in other newspaper collections. Try this subscription

site (regular rate: \$99.90 per year), which boasts that 95 percent of its titles are not available anywhere else. In addition to 13,000-plus titles and 260 million obituaries, subscribers get access to censuses, historical books, and government publications.

Newspaper Archive \$

Launched in 1999, this pioneer in online commercial newspaper archives has 16,000 titles and over 100 million obituaries. For \$139.90 per year of \$19.95 per month, you can search its holdings including titles from every US state and 28 countries.

Newspapers.com \$

Another ancestry.com property, this site has a basic subscription (\$44.95 for six months) that includes 210 million pages from 22,000 newspapers dating back to the 1700’s. The Publishers Extra subscription (\$74.90 for six months) adds 530 million pages--many of them from more-recent newspapers--licensed from publishers.

Newspaper Navigation \$

Another free newspaper search site from the Library of Congress, this “LC Labs” project serves up 1.5 million historical newspaper photos from 1900 through 1963. Search by keyword, and the AI “navigators” will return newspaper photos it deems related. (Compiled by Susan Haga, YF Editor)

Research in Switzerland

In order to successfully research your ancestor in Switzerland you must know the exact place and approximate date of his birth as well as his religion. If you do not have this information, you need to search his North American records to find it.

Vital background information

Switzerland is a loose federation of 26 Cantons in central Europe. The country is bordered by France to the West, Germany to the North, Liechtenstein and Austria to the East and Italy to the South.

There are four national languages, and you may find records written in any of them. French is spoken by 20% of the

population, living mainly in the areas bordering France. German is spoken by 64% of the population, living in the North and Central areas of the country. Italian is spoken by 6.5% of the population, living mainly in the Canton of Ticino which borders Italy, and 0.5% of the population living mainly in the Canton of Graubundin in the East, speak Romansch. The remaining 9% speak other languages. Within these languages, there are many dialects.

Switzerland's governmental system is direct democracy, which means that much of its legislation happens as a result of referenda. The basic unit of administration is the Gemeinde or Commune and records are generated and kept at that level rather than nationally. Gazetteers can tell you which Gemeinde or Commune any given place is in.

Naturalization and Citizenship

Swiss citizenship is kept on three levels: the nation, the canton, and the Heimatort, or home community. For most people, citizenship was inherited, and residency was not a requirement. Thus, one or more generations of a citizen's descendants may never have even seen their original home community. A burger and his descendants remained citizens of their Heimatort or Heimatgemeinde until one of them applied for and obtained citizenship in another town.

The home community was charged with keeping track of its citizens. Therefore, if a birth, marriage, or death of a citizen took place in another parish, notice of the event was often sent to Heimatort. The information may have been entered in the regular parish register or a special section reserved for "auswaertige Buerger" meaning "out of town citizens".

These sections are often identified in the FamilySearch Catalog.

The "Heimatschein" officially documented a citizen's home community. When taking up residence in another town, the person presented his Heimatschein as proof of citizenship. In times of need the Heimatort was responsible for providing financial support.

During the 18th and 19th Centuries the community sometimes paid for the overseas passage of poorer citizens. It was also possible to become a Swiss citizen through naturalization. In that case, the citizens of the potential Heimatort often needed to give their consent before the new Buerger could be accepted into the community. Often the applicant had to pay a fairly-high fee to obtain communal rights.

The Records

The most useful records are: Church records, Censuses, Civil Registration, Military records, and Emigration records, but others, such as Court records, internal migration records and family histories may also be of help.

Church Records

The two main churches in Switzerland are the Catholic Church and the Swiss Reformed Church (Evangelisch-Reformierte Kirche). Most French and Italian-speaking Swiss were historically Catholic and most German and Romansch-speaking Swiss were historically members of the Swiss Reformed Church. Generally, records in French and in Italian areas are written as a connected passage, whereas in German and Romansch areas they are written in columns. The churches recorded baptisms, confirmations (usually about age 14), marriages and burials.

Protestants first required the recording of baptisms and marriages in 1525, Catholics in 1563, at the Council of Trent. However, many of the early church records have been lost.

The records can be written in German, Latin, French, Italian, or Romansch. The following may be included in church records:

- . baptisms, marriages, burials and confirmations
- . lists of communicants, there may be
- . family registers (soul registers)
- . Lists of ministers in the parish
- . church council minutes
- . notations about those who have fallen away, i.e. Anabaptists

Whenever possible, events concerning citizens of the home parish that took place in other parishes are listed in the

home parish as well. Hence, there may be separate sections in the parish register, which in the Family Search Catalog entries may be described as “Auswartige”.

The women’s maiden names are usually given in church in the church records throughout their lives. However, they may be buried under their married or maiden name. Also, the record keeping conventions vary somewhat by region.

Surnames may be abbreviated. Also, there are many unusual forms of given names.

Censuses

These were taken locally at different times. They will give you details of each family member, including the age, residence, and place of birth if it was not in the Gemeinde or commune where the census was taken.

For Canton Zurich there are census records available. These were originally done to make of record of the members of the Protestant Reformed Church.

There are also some censuses for Thurgau, St Gallen, and a few towns from Aargau, Appenzell, and Schaffhausen. A helpful guide for these censuses has been compiled by the genealogical Society of Utah. It is on fiche 6001309 and microfilm 1181849 item 72.

Civil Registration

Civil records of births, marriages, and deaths, as well as divorces, began at different times in the various cantons: 1798 - Geneva, 1821 - Vaud, 1825 - Neuchatel, 1827 - Basel Land, 1826 - Solothurn, 1849 - Fribourg, 1849 - Glarus, 1849 - Schaffhausen, 1853 - Valais, 1855 - Ticino, 1867 - St. Gallen, 1876 - the remaining cantons.

These start dates need to be considered if you are writing to obtain record information. There is no point, for example, in asking for civil records for Ticino in 1840 because they had not yet started to be kept.

Areas are written as a connected passage, whereas in German and Romantsch areas they are written in columns in the appropriate State Archive. Contact information for the civil registration office is found at <http://www.hochzeitsportal.ch/index.asp?aktion=standesaemter>.

An up-to-date Excel file with the same information can be downloaded at http://www.weesen.ch/dl.php/de/0cvo8-t4pgw9/ZVA_Liste_2008.pdf

On the page titled “Zivilstandswesen” (civil registration system) scroll down to the bottom to find the link “Zivistand-samter”.

Emigration Records

The percentage of emigrants who left Switzerland without permission and paying the obligatory “moving away tax” was fairly-high, so there may be no record of their departure.

Passports were not registered until the mid-19th Century. Some passport indexes for Canton Bern have been published by Picton Press on CD-Rom. The FamilySearch Catalog can be checked for additional resources using (canton) emigration/ immigration.

If the canton of origin of a pre-1848 emigrant is known, one can contact the appropriate State Archive for further information. To obtain information concerning emigrants who left after 1848, the Schweizer Bundesregierung, Bundehaus, CH-3000 Bern, Switzerland, can be contacted Resources: <http://www.genealogienetz.de/reg/CH/migra-m.htm>

Cemetery Records

Billion graves have records for: Tierfencastel St. Stefan Roman Catholic Cemetery

Unidentified small cemetery near Geneva, Switzerland Airport, Grand-Sacconex, Geneva

Notarial Records

They are an excellent linkage source. Records show vital information for individuals, families, and relatives.

Records are the best source prior to Church records in French speaking areas. They are records kept by notaries chiefly in French and Italian cantons of local court matters regarding marriage contracts, permissions to marry, wills, divisions and inheritances, land records, living gifts inventories, codicils, powers of attorney, contracts, orphans, declarations of legal age, bonds, etc.

They cover the time period of 1400-present. Some are as early as 1275.

Court Records

They can help establish family relationships, clarify church register entries, determine name changes, provide previous residences.

There are selected civil records for German cantons, similar to the notarial records, of the French cantons.

Documents include local court matters regarding marriage contracts, permission to marry, wills, divisions and inheritances, land records, and living gifts, inventories, codicils, powers of attorneys, contracts, orphans, declarations of legal age, and bonds etc.

They cover the time period from 1500-present. Some are as early as 1290.

Citizenship Records and Household Registers

These can sometimes be a useful linkage tool where several generations may be given. They include: Citizen lists and inhabitants of given town; lists of persons entitled to the rights, and privileges, and protection of a town or a community. They cover the time periods from 1300-present, and some are as early as the 12th Century.

They contain names, ages, sometimes social and economic status of citizens, occupations, town of origin, dates when citizenship rights in a town were acquired, sometimes family

Relationships including father, wife and father-in-law.

Location: State, city and town archives, some in print.

Population: Coverage 20%

Wills and Probates

They cover the time period from the 12th century to the present and include the names of the testator and heirs, relationships and places of residence and occupation.

Location: Kantonal and Amtsgericht, some in state and city archives.

Tithing Records

These are lists of Tithing payers in the various churches. They cover the time period from 1400-1876. They contain

names, date of payment, place of residence, sometimes places of origin and of family citizenship. (Submitted by David Tyler)

Best European Gen. Websites

Archion \$

Now with more than 125,000 digitized church books, improved zooming and search capability, this subscription site (about \$21 per month) is a must for German Protestant genealogy.

Filae

Recently acquired by MyHeritage, this French genealogy site launched in 1994 now hosts more than a billion civil registrations, censuses, early church records and documents from 60 regional partner associations. Premium access costs about \$86 per year, with discounts available for MyHeritage users.

Genealogy Indexer

The bare-bones home page of this search engine for Central and East European records is your gateway to 1.9 million pages from 3,443 historical directories, plus memorials to Jewish communities (Yizkor books), military lists, community and personal histories and school resources.

Geneanet

Another magnificent site for French research, Geneanet has recently been acquired by Ancestry.com. It is free to explore user-submitted trees, genealogical society indexes and resource guides.

Geneteka

Volunteers from the Polish Genealogical Information Society have made searchable church registers covering more than 43 million individuals, organized by voivodeship (province) or country.

Hungaricana

After you've researched your Hungarian ancestors in the more than 4 million pages of digitized publications, 100,000 because they had not yet started checking out the "Budapest Time Machine."

JewishGEN

Explore databases of East European towns, Jewish surnames, Holocaust victims, and families in this site affiliated with the Museum of Jewish Heritage.

Il Portale Antenati

Search by name or location in “The Ancestors Portal,” which serves up more than 115 million images and 1.5 million registries from 80 Italian archives.

Routes to Roots

This genealogical guide to Jewish and civil records covers archives in Poland, Belarus, Ukraine, Lithuania, and Moldova.

WieWasWie

Find your Dutch ancestors in civil registrations, population records, church books and more, covering more than 220 million people. (Compiled by Susan Haga)

Using North American Records to Trace Your European Ancestors

To be successful in finding European records for your ancestor, you will need to know at least the name of the village or town they came from and his religion, and approximately when he was born, in order to know where to find the civil and church records and where to look in them.

North American Sources Are Where You Find That Information

They will also help you to find members of his family which will help verify that you are looking at the right person.

The following are just some of the records that you can search.

1. Family Record
2. Family histories
3. Tombstones
4. Obituaries
5. Civil Records
6. Church Records
7. Census Records
8. Naturalization Records
9. County histories
10. Passenger Lists
11. Immigration Records
12. Military Records

13. Newspapers
14. Family History Soc. Publications
15. Court Records
16. Insurance Records
17. Organization Records
18. Probate Records
19. Land Records
20. Banking Records
21. Business Records
22. Employment Records
23. Electoral Rolls and Voters List
24. Taxation Records

Canadian Special Collections

Prince Edward Island, 1700's-1900's
Master Name Index, Part I (60 films beginning with 1490091)
Master Name Index, Part 2 (24 films beginning with 2135170)

Quebec

Loiselle Card Index to many marriages of the province of Quebec and adjacent areas (174 films beginning with 543721)
Supplement to Loiselle card index (52 films beginning with 15710224)

Ontario

Ontario Archives land record index (129 microfiche beginning with 63304250)

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Homestead Records 1870-1930 and index (164 films beginning with 882996)

The Drouin Collection

This is a French-Canadian Collection with over 15 million genealogical and vital records. The collection is divided into six databases.

1. Quebec Vital and Church Records, 1621-1967
2. Ontario French Catholic Church Records, 1747-1967
3. Early U.S. French Catholic Church Records, 1695-1954
4. Acadia French Catholic Church Records, -1946
5. Quebec Notarial Records, 1647-1942
6. Miscellaneous French Records, 1651-1941

When searching these databases, be creative in the spellings when searching for an ancestor. The French language has

many possible spellings for a name, and there are some errors in the indexing. The Drouin Collection is available on Ancestry.

The 1940 National Registration of Canadian Adults

The 1940 National Registration derives from information collected between 1940-1946. It was instituted by the war office to gather information on all Canadians aged 16 or over, except for those in the armed forces and religious orders and those confined to an institution.

The registration records name, address, age, date of birth, marital status, number of dependents, place, and country of birth of the individual and his parents, nationality, year of entry to Canada (if an immigrant), racial origin, languages, education, general health, occupation, employment status, farming or mechanical skills, and previous military service.

You can apply to the Census Pension Service Unit in Ottawa for them to search for a record. It costs \$45 plus tax and their address telephone number and fax details are available on the Library and Archives Canada website www.collectionscanada.gc.ca.

Spelling of Names

Do not assume that a different spelling of a name means this cannot be the same person or the same place.

Names changed for a variety of reasons:

1. Many immigrants could not speak good (or even any) English, let alone read it or write it, they were dependent on the immigration officer, and later, the census enumerator, who were unfamiliar with the name and wrote down what they heard.
2. Many immigrants had names written in Chinese, or Japanese characters or Russian Cyrillic or other non-Latin scripts which had to be transliterated.
3. Many immigrants deliberately anglicized their name in order to fit in better. This was especially prevalent with German immigrants at the time

of the First World War, when all things German were very unpopular.

4. Some came from countries with different alphabets and spelling rules to English, e.g. the Irish name Meagher would have probably been spelt “Maher”, which sounds the same. Similarly, the Welsh town of “Llanrwst” would probably have been spelt “Lanroost”.
5. Some chose just to translate their name into English--so “Negri” became “Black” and “Schneider” became “Tailor” or “Taylor” and “Rozhdestvenskiy” became “Christmas”.
6. Because over the years, names just changed so that O’Connor or even “Connors”, and “DeRuyter” became just “Ruyter” or “Reuter”.

But What If I Can’t Find the Information I Need

Remember that your ancestor did not come to North America by chance. He either came because he had family already living here, and/or he traveled with a group of people from his own area and he settled in the same place as them. So, if you cannot find him, look at what you can find for others in his family and/or the people on the same page of the ship list or on the census who came from the same country. Finding out about them, will lead you to where to look for him in the European records.

So Where Do I Find These Records

Many of these records are available on familysearch.org, Ancestry.com, MyHeritage.com, and on a host of other websites--just type “Canadian Genealogy” or “US Genealogy” into google.

You should also check on www.familysearch.org wiki (wiki.familysearch.org). It tells you how to do research, what to look for and where to find it, as well as information on the history and geography of many countries and a wide range of other useful tools, including genealogical language guides and links to many other websites. (Submitted by David Tyler)