Genealogical Resources at the Maine Historical Society

Maine Historical Society Library
489 Congress Street
Portland, ME 04101
(207) 774-1822
www.mainehistory.org

Since 1822, Maine Historical Society has served as a nationally-recognized research center for the study of the history of Maine and its people. Its collections are arranged in four categories: Library, manuscripts and special collections, museum, and the Wadsworth-Longfellow House & Garden.

Hours: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday (except holiday weekends). Call ahead in bad weather. Museum hours vary.

User access: Free to MHS members, students and first-time uses; for subsequent work by non-members, we suggest a donation equivalent to $2.00 per hour or $10.00 per day to help support the collections and services provided, or invite non-members to join the society.

Membership: Begins at $40/year and includes stack access and other benefits.

Photocopying and photo-reproduction:
- Self-serve photocopying is allowed when the condition of the material permits
- In-house professional photographic service for publication, etc.
- Five microfilm/fiche readers, two of which have printers
- Manuscripts and special collections may not be photocopied, but non-flash digital camera may be used by members.

Other regulations are posted in the Reading Room.

Catalogs and indexes:
MINERVA – http://www.mainehistory.org/library_search.shtml
Past Perfect Online – museum, photographs, and manuscripts
http://mainehistory.pastperfect-online.com/
Maine Memory Network – http://www.mainememory.net

Sample of the Holdings of the Library at Maine Historical Society:

Published Genealogies

- Over 6000 compiled family genealogies primarily from New England. Collection contains many unique, small runs, and privately printed genealogies.
- Manuscript and research notes of many authors including Sybil Noyes, Benjamin Lake Noyes, Charles Thorton Libby, and Walter Goodwin Davis.

State, County and Local Histories

We have a substantial collection of state, county and town histories for Maine and other communities throughout New England and Eastern Canada.
Reference Materials and Research Books

- Over 1000 genealogy and family history “how-to” books.

Vital Records

United States
New England is the home of the oldest set of vital records in the United States. Most towns kept records of births, marriages, or deaths from their founding. Below is a sample of these records available in the Research Library.

Maine
- Published vital records for Maine towns
- Portland births, marriages, and deaths to 1900 (microfilm)
- Originals and transcriptions of many Maine vital records before 1892, especially Cumberland and York counties
- Maine vital records to 1892 (pre-1892 statewide index includes only 80 towns), organized by surname
- Maine vital records, 1892-1955, available on microfilm for every Maine town, organized by surname
- Microfilms of original town record books
- Published county marriage records by Picton Press

Connecticut
Barbour Collection of 136 town vital records up to about 1850

Massachusetts
- Printed vital records from “Official Series” of towns to 1850
- Microfiche of town vital records not included in “Official Series”
- Plymouth Colony vital records, 1636-1686, taken from court records
- Plymouth Colony vital records, 1633-1689, by Nathaniel Shurtleff

Rhode Island
- Town vital records to 1850: James Arnold Series
- Index of Births, Marriages, and Deaths recorded in Providence, RI, by Charles Chapin, MD

New Hampshire
- Vital Records for some towns

Census Records

United States Federal Census
- 1790-1930 - all of Maine via Heritage Quest & Ancestry
- 1790 Indexes for all states
- AIS index books for Maine 1790-1850
- Selected other state indexes
• 1860 York County index
• 1850 Mortality schedule
• A Black Census of Maine, 1800-1910
• 1850 Maine: Census transcribed

Canadian Federal Census
• 1851 New Brunswick only
• 1871 New Brunswick Directory

Census Indexes and Guides
• A variety of census indexes are available for every state.

Obituaries

1900-1941, 1964-1996
• Maine obituaries from Portland area newspapers organized in chronological scrapbooks and indexed on cards

1941-1963
• Maine obituaries from Portland area newspapers organized on index cards alphabetically

1997 - present
• Maine obituaries from Portland area newspapers organized in chronological scrapbooks; index on computer

Other published obituaries
• Death Notices from Freewill Baptist Publications, 1811-1851, David C. Young, Robert L. Taylor
• Vital Records from Maine Newspapers, 1785-1820, David C. Young, Elizabeth Keene Young
• Obits from Maine Newspapers, 1785-1852, David C. Young

Cemetery Records

National Society of the DAR
• Maine cemetery inscriptions of many Revolutionary War soldiers; also includes church records, family bibles, and wills

Maine
• MOCA (Maine Old Cemetery Association) records of cemeteries transcribed in Maine towns
• Miscellaneous transcriptions for cemeteries all over Maine

Annual Town Reports

We have a substantial collection of town reports from all over Maine but primarily southern Maine. The collection is most complete since 1900. Town reports tell the activities of the town for that year and often contain vital records. NOTE: Town Reports are stored offsite.
School Records and Yearbooks

School Records
- Portland’s North School, 1867-1944: Students, parents, nationality, occupation of parents and other information
- Portland High School records, 1863-1901: Names, age, parents, courses, etc.
- Girl’s High School 1862 photographs of students
- Boy’s High School records, 1850-1853
- Stroudwater School records, 1823-1878, warrants for and minutes of meetings

Yearbooks
We have a large collection of yearbooks from various schools and colleges in Maine, including:
- Portland High School
- Cheverus High School
- Deering High School
- Bonny Eagle High School
- University of Maine
- Hebron Academy
- Fryeburg Academy
- Bates College
- Bowdoin College
- Colby College
- University of Southern Maine
- Westbrook Junior College

Military Records

Maine
- Adjutant General’s Report, Maine, 1861-1866
- Roster of Maine in the World War 1917-1919 (2 volumes)
- Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War (17 volumes) includes Maine

Connecticut
- Connecticut Military Record 1775-1848
- Record of Connecticut Men in the War of Rebellion 1861 to 1865 (Adjutant General’s Office)

New Hampshire
- Adjutant General’s Report, New Hampshire, 1865, 1866, 1868

Massachusetts
- Adjutant General’s Report, Massachusetts, 1863, 1864, 1865
- Record of the Massachusetts Volunteers, 1861 – 1865
- Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines in the Civil War (8 volumes)
- Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War (17 volumes) includes Maine

Other
- Official Records of the Union & Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion, Series I & II, 31 volumes
- Roster of Ohio Soldiers, 1861-1866 (12 volumes)
- Index to War of 1812 Pension Files, (3 volumes), by Virgil D. White
- U.S. Quartermaster’s Dept. Roll of Honor (27 volumes)
- Genealogical Abstracts of Revolutionary War Pension Files, 4 volumes, by Virgil D. White
• Official Army Register of the Volunteer Force of the United States Army for the Years 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864, 1865, Part 1, New England
• War of the Rebellion, Official Records (128 books in 70 volumes in 4 series; also on CD)
• Maine Regimental histories for the Civil War

Periodicals

Maine History, formerly the Maine Historical Society Quarterly, 1961 - present
• Published by Maine Historical Society and is the only scholarly journal on Maine History
  o Online full text in Members Only section: index online.
• Includes book reviews
Collections of the Maine Historical Society, 1831 – 1916
• Series 1, 2, 3, and Doc. history series

The Maine Genealogist
• Published by Maine Genealogical Society, contains queries

Your County Genealogical Society Journal

The New England Historical and Genealogical Register, 1847 – present
• Published by NEHGS, the Register is the oldest journal in the field of American genealogy
• Indexed in book volumes
  Vols. 1-50 (name and subject)
  Vols. 51-142 (name only)
• Entire set of books from vol. 1-148 available on CD-ROM with indexes and search capabilities
• Access to NewEnglandAncestors.org

National Genealogical Society Quarterly, 1912-present
• Vols. 1 to present

The American Genealogist (TAG), 1922-Present

New York Genealogical & Biographical Record, 1869-present
• Vols. 1 (1869) to present
• Master Subject Index, vols. 1-113

Historical Journals
• New England Quarterly
• Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography

Ethnic Periodicals
• Irish at Home and Abroad
• Connections (French-Canadian/Quebec)

Other Periodicals
• DAR Magazine (last 5 years only)
• Rhode Island Roots
• Connecticut Nutmegger
• Genealogist’s Magazine
• Various other genealogical magazines and journals
Directories

MHS has an extensive city directory collection for Maine, including:

City Directories

- Bath
- Brunswick
- Biddeford/Saco
- Portland, 1824 to present
- Lewiston/Auburn
- Various Mitchell directories for many other smaller Maine towns, 1905 to 1907

Other Directories

- New England Business Directory and Gazetteer, 1900-1924
- Maine Register, 1820 to present
- Various County directories, late 1880s-1900

Newspapers

Newspapers are in original format or on microfilm:

- Bangor Daily Whig & Courier, 1837–1862
- Eagle (Castine), 1809-1812
- Deering News, 1891-1915
- The Eastern Argus, 1803-1853
- Le Justice de Biddeford, 1897-1950
- Kennebec Journal, 1825-1913
- Lewiston Evening Journal, 1861-1866
- Maine Times, 1968-1996
- The Oxford Democrat, 1833-1891
- Portland Evening Express, 1960-1967
- Portland Gazette, 1798-1824
- Portland Press Herald, misc years
- Portland Daily Press, 1862-1900 (incomplete)
- Republican Journal (Belfast), 1829-1868
- Cumberland Gazette (original papers and on microfilm), 1785-1788
- Boston – Evening Transcript, microfiche, 1848-1912 (contains biweekly genealogical columns)
- Portland, ME - Index to newspapers, 1785-1835
- Other selected small town newspapers

Canada

New Brunswick

- New Brunswick Vital Records from Newspapers 1784-1889, by Daniel F. Johnson
- 1871 Directory

Prince Edward Island

- 1871 Directory

Nova Scotia

- 1871 Directory

Québec

- Many Repertoires of marriages in parishes in Quebec
- Dictionnaire National des Canadiens Français by Drouin
  Books cover 1608-1800
• *Dictionnaire Généalogique des Familles du Québec* by Jetté  
Families of Quebec into the 1720/30s

• *Dictionnaire Généalogique des Familles Canadiennes* by Tanguay  
Families of Quebec to the 1780s

• *Recueil de Genealogies des Comtés de Beauce – Dorchester – Frontenac, 1625-1946,* (11 volumes)

• *Généalogie de Familles Originaires des comtés de Montmagny, L’Islet, Bellechasse,* (16 volumes)

• *Le Grand Arrangement des Acadiens au Quebec* by Bergeron (8 volumes)

• *Our French-Canadian Ancestors* by Thomas Laforest

Land Records

*York Deeds, 1630-1737* in book form

Probate, Wills, and Court Records

• *Maine Wills, 1640-1760*

• *Maine Probate, 1687-1800*

• *York County Will Abstracts to 1858*

• Several Lincoln County (1760-1800) and Penobscot County (1816-1866) records

• *Maine Province and Court Records,* 6 volumes

Lineage Society Records

• Daughters of the American Revolution Lineage Books

• Sons of the American Revolution Patriot Index

• Daughters of American Colonists Yearbook

• Society of the Order of the Founders and Patriots

• Lineages of the Society of Mayflower Descendants

Voter Registrations

• Portland voter registrations, 1855-1967

• South Portland voter registration, 1899-1986, volumes and index cards

Atlases, Maps, and Gazetteers

• Extensive collection of maps and city atlases for Maine including  
  o Proprietors maps of Kennebec and Pejepscot Companies, 1700+
  o Northeast Boundary Collection
  o Sanborn Fire Maps, 1909-1962, for larger industrialized cities and towns, online access
  o Revaluation of Portland, 1882
  o 1914 Richards maps – Portland and South Portland

• Variety of atlases and maps for United States (country, states, and cities)

• British Isles (mostly for England and Wales, and some of Scotland)
Maine Church Records

- Many published and manuscript church records for Unitarian, Baptist, Quakers, Methodist, Congregational churches
- Portland Area Jewish archive
- Maine Quaker records

Naturalization Records

- Cumberland County Naturalizations Index, 1787-1906
- Portland Naturalization Record index, 1855-1911, contains names, residence, date of papers, court, and date of approval

Passenger List Indexes

- Passenger and Immigration Lists Index on CD 1538-1940
- The Famine Immigrants, 1846-1851
- Passenger and Immigration Lists Index, Filby and Lower, 3 volumes and Supplements for 1982 – 1996
- Mayflower Families, 14 volumes

Databases and CD-ROMs

Family History Library (FHL) Catalog

- References citations of books, microfilm, and other items at the Family History Library Salt Lake City

CD-ROMs

- Mortality Schedules: 1850-1880
- Acadian Genealogies 14th to 19th centuries
- Canadian Genealogy index, 1600s-1900s
- Maine Marriage Index, 1743-1891
- Picton’s Lost Souls (names found in Picton Press Books)
- Early Vital Records of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to about 1850
- 1880 U.S. Census & National Index (LDS)
- Passenger and Immigration Lists Index, 1538-1940 (Brøderbund)

Internet Access

- Free Internet access from the library’s computer to search for genealogical information
- AncestryLibrary.com
- NewEnglandAncestors.org
- Heritage Quest Online
- Sanborn Maps Online for Maine
Biographical Resources

- *Maine Families* (Three generations of people that appear in the 1790 census), Maine Genealogical Society. 7 volumes to date
- *Who Was Who in America*
- *Who's Who in America*
- *Dictionary of National Biography* (British)
- *Dictionary of American Biography*
- *Lamb's Biographical Dictionary*
- *Notable Americans*
- *Sibley's Harvard Graduates*
- Ring’s Index of Maine Notables, index to biographical compilations of Maine people that appear in approximately 50 books in the MHS collections

Ethnic Resources

England

- Various county parish registers in book form
- Additional county parish registers in book form
- The British Isles Vital Records Index on CD-ROM (LDS)
- Various wills and probate indexes for English counties
- Superb collection of county histories

Ireland

- Indexes to Irish wills
- *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, 4 volumes
- Griffith's Valuation (Ireland land valuation for tax purposes), index on CD-ROM
- *The Famine Immigrants 1846-1851*, 7 volumes
- *The Search for Missing Friends*, Volumes 1 – 7

French-Canadian

- See section on Canada above

Scrapbooks

- We have many ethnic scrapbooks containing various materials such as newspaper articles, manuscripts and photographs pertaining to selected ethnic communities in Maine, including Irish, Chinese-American, Native Americans, African-American, Jewish-American, Spanish, Greek, Italian and Polish.

Manuscript Collection (examples)

- Cumberland County Sheriff's Records
- Longshoremen's records 1880-1978
- Pownalborough early court records
- Maine Central Railroad records and station drawings 1837-1952
- Collections donated by genealogists
- Notebooks, index listings, and unpublished genealogies
- Town scrapbooks
• Diaries
• Photographs, postcards, and stereo views
• Church records, original town birth registers, diaries
• Account books, letters, personal records, land deeds, wills
• Typescript or manuscript genealogies
• Typescript or manuscript cemetery records
• Architectural and engineering drawings
• Proprietors’ maps
• A wide variety of various unpublished treasures