



# Research in Canada: An Introduction

Racheal Minns Kay, AG

## History

- Read more about Canada's history on the following sites
  - [Britannica.com](http://Britannica.com)
  - [The Canadian Encyclopedia](http://The Canadian Encyclopedia)
  - [Canada's History](http://Canada's History)
  - [Discover Canada](http://Discover Canada)

## Census

Years	Provinces
1825, 1831	Lower Canada (Quebec) and only head of household
1842	Canada East and Canada West, only head of household
1851 - 1861	Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island (added 1861), head of household New Brunswick, Ontario, Quebec, everyone named
1871- 1921	Every province included Manitoba enumerated in 1870
1906, 1916, 1926	Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta had additional censuses

- Visit [this FamilySearch Wiki article](#) for links to the censuses on Library and Archives Canada, FamilySearch, and Ancestry.

## Civil Registration

- Civil registration was a provincial responsibility and varies from place to place in content and availability.
- Alberta
  - Begin in 1870, general compliance reached 1930
  - Provincial Archives of Alberta: [Birth, Marriage, and Death indexes](#)
  - FamilySearch Wiki: [Alberta Birth, Marriage, and Death Records \(National Institute\)](#)
- British Columbia
  - Begin in 1872, general compliance reached 1920

- Royal British Columbia Museum: [Genealogy General Search](#)
  - FamilySearch Wiki: [British Columbia Vital Records](#)
- Manitoba
  - Begin in 1882
  - [Manitoba Vital Statistics Branch](#)
  - FamilySearch Wiki [Manitoba Civil Registration](#)
- New Brunswick
  - Births begin 1800, marriages and deaths 1847
  - Provincial Archives of New Brunswick [Vital Statistics from Government Records](#)
  - FamilySearch Wiki [New Brunswick Civil Registration](#)
- Newfoundland and Labrador
  - Begin in 1891
  - [The Rooms](#) (provincial archives) have microfilms of their civil registrations
  - For a full list of Newfoundland civil registration on FamilySearch visit the FamilySearch Wiki [Newfoundland and Labrador Civil Registration](#)
- Nova Scotia
  - Begin in 1864
  - Nova Scotia Archives [Nova Scotia Births, Marriages, and Deaths](#)
  - FamilySearch Wiki [Nova Scotia Civil Registration](#)
- Ontario
  - Begin in 1869
  - Archives of Ontario [Vital Statistics: Registrations of Births, Marriages and Deaths](#)
  - FamilySearch Wiki [Ontario Civil Registration](#)
- Prince Edward Island
  - Began in 1906
  - Provincial Archives and Records Administration [PARO Standard Search](#)
  - FamilySearch Wiki [Prince Edward Island Civil Registration](#)
- Quebec
  - Began 1621 – copied from Catholic Church records (Drouin Collection)
  - FamilySearch Wiki [Quebec Civil Registration](#)
- Saskatchewan
  - Marriages started 1878, births and deaths 1888
  - eHealth Saskatchewan [Genealogy Index Searches](#)

- FamilySearch Wiki [Saskatchewan Civil Registration](#)

## Church Records

- FamilySearch Wiki [Canada Church Records](#)
- The Drouin Collection
  - Civil copies of Catholic Church baptisms, marriages, and burials in French Canada
  - To access this collection, visit the FamilySearch Wiki [The Drouin Collection: Six Databases](#)
- Protestant church records
  - Search the FamilySearch Catalog at the town and county level where your ancestor lived

## Probate and Wills

- FamilySearch Wiki [Quebec Notarial Records](#)
  - For a more in depth explanation of notarial records view a recent webinar on the Family History Library Facebook Page titled [Skimming the Surface: A Look into Quebec Notarial Records](#)
- FamilySearch Wiki [Canada Probate Records](#)

## Crown Land Grants

- Library and Archives Canada [Land Petitions of Lower Canada, 1764-1841](#)
- Library and Archives Canada [Land Boards of Upper Canada, 1765-1804](#)
- Provincial Archives of New Brunswick [Index to New Brunswick Land Grants, 1784 - 1997](#)
- Nova Scotia Archives [Nova Scotia Land Papers 1765-1800](#)
- For more information about Loyalists, view a recent webinar on the Family History Library Facebook Page titled [From the Colonies to Canada: Researching Your United Empire Loyalists](#)

## Domain / Western Land Grants

- Read more about the Western Land Grants [here](#)
- **Finding Letters Patent**
  - Search the [Land Grants of Western Canada, 1870-1930](#) index on Library and Archives Canada
  - Search for the microfilm film number withing [Canadiana Heritage](#)
  - Browse the digitized film for the patent
  - If the film you are looking for is not on Canadiana Heritage, request a digital copy [using this form](#)
- **Finding Homestead Files**
  - Manitoba
    - Archives of Manitoba Keystone Database [Lands Branch \(1930-1970\)](#)
  - Saskatchewan
    - [Index by the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society](#)
    - Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan [Land Records](#)
    - FamilySearch [Canada, Saskatchewan Provincial Records, 1879-1987](#)
  - Alberta
    - [Index by the Alberta Genealogical Society](#)

- Provincial Archives of Alberta [Digitized film on Internet Archive](#)
- British Columbia
  - GATOR [Historic Land Grants Index](#)

## Passenger Lists

- Library and Archives Canada [Passenger Lists, 1865-1922](#)
- FamilySearch [Canada Passenger Lists, 1881-1922](#)
- [Canada Museum of Immigration at Pier 21](#)
  - Ship arrival database, ship images, photo collections, immigrant letters, and more
  - In person visits to the family history center or submit a research request
- Read more about Library and Archives Canada's holdings [here](#)
- FamilySearch Wiki ["Canada Passenger Lists \(National Institute\)"](#)

## Border Crossing Records

- **Entering Canada**
  - Not all crossings were recorded
  - 1908-1918: lists by port and date
  - 1919-1924: individual forms filed by the first letter of surnames
  - 1925-1935: lists by port and date
  - Ancestry [Canada, Border Crossings from U.S. to Canada, 1908-1935](#)
- **Entering the United States**
  - Not all crossings were recorded
  - 1895-1914: recorded at seaports and train stations along the border from Washington to Maine
  - 1914-1954: recorded arriving at train stations along the border from New York to Vermont
  - Ancestry [U.S., Border Crossings from Canada to U.S., 1895-1960](#)
  - FamilySearch [United States Border Crossings from Canada to United States, 1895-1956](#)

## Naturalization Records

- British subjects did not naturalize until 1947
- **Pre-1914 Naturalization**
  - After 3 years of residency individuals would apply through the local courts
  - Search for court records in the FamilySearch catalog and local archives
- **Post-1914 Naturalization**
  - After 5 years adult men and unmarried women would apply to the national government
  - Wives and children were naturalized under the husband/father
  - When individuals were naturalized it was announced in the national newspaper the Canada Gazette and the annual Secretary of State reports
  - Search for our ancestor in the [Naturalization lists, 1915 to 1951](#) database on LAC
  - Use the certificate number to order original record copies from [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#)
- **Provincial Sources**
  - Library and Archives Canada: [Naturalization Records, 1828-1850 - Upper Canada and Canada West](#)

- Library and Archived Canada: [Citizenship Registration Records, 1851-1945 - Montreal Circuit Court](#)
- FamilySearch [Canada, British Columbia Naturalization Records, 1859-1926](#)
- FamilySearch [Naturalization papers, Nova Scotia, ca. 1849-1917](#)
- FamilySearch [Saskatchewan Maple Creek, Regina, Swift Current, Yorktown, and Saskatoon Judicial District naturalization files](#)

## **Military Records**

- [First World War](#) records on Library and Archives Canada
- [Second World War](#) records on Library and Archives Canada
- For other military records visit Library and Archives Canada [Military Heritage](#)