

# 50+ Free Library of Congress Genealogy Resources Online

*A Quick-Reference Guide to America's Greatest Free Family History Archive*

The Library of Congress is the single largest library in human history — and an astonishing portion of its holdings is free to search online. This cheat sheet curates the most valuable LOC digital collections for family historians, organized by record type so you can jump straight to what you need. Whether you're hunting obituaries, tracing immigrant ancestors, or searching for a Civil War great-great-grandfather's portrait, every link below leads directly to a loc.gov resource at no cost. Bookmark it, print it, share it — and happy hunting.

## GETTING STARTED — 5 Quick Tips for First-Time LOC Users

- ▶ **Start with the master search at [loc.gov/search](https://loc.gov/search)** — it indexes photos, books, maps, manuscripts, and audio all at once.
- ▶ **Always check the "Rights & Access" note on each item.** Most LOC-created content is free to download, share, and reuse, even commercially.
- ▶ **Every digitized item has a downloadable high-resolution version** — look for the "Download" dropdown on the right side of the item page.
- ▶ **If you hit a dead end, use the free "Ask a Librarian" service at [ask.loc.gov](https://ask.loc.gov).** Real subject-matter experts respond, usually within five business days.
- ▶ **When a collection says "digitized," it means scanned.** When it says "online," it may include transcribed or indexed text — always read the collection overview.

## ADVANCED SEARCH STRATEGIES

- ▶ **Use quotation marks for exact phrases:** "John Henry Smith" returns fewer, more targeted hits than the same words without quotes.
- ▶ **Use the asterisk wildcard in *Chronicling America*:** Smi\* catches Smith, Smithson, Smithers, Smyth — invaluable for OCR errors and spelling drift.
- ▶ **Narrow any collection page** by date, location, subject, and format using the filters along the left side of results.
- ▶ **Try variant name spellings:** OCR software misreads old newspapers constantly. A search for "Schmidt" might miss papers where the name was scanned as "Sckmidt" or "Schnmdt."
- ▶ **Use the "Collections" filter** to limit a search to a specific archive (e.g., search only the Veterans History Project for WWII ancestors).
- ▶ **Bookmark individual item URLs** — LOC permalinks are extremely stable and perfect for citation and source-listing.
- ▶ **Check the bibliographic record of any item for related material:** LOC catalogers often link items that aren't obviously related in search.



## NEWSPAPERS & CHRONICLING AMERICA

### Chronicling America

A free, searchable database of over 20 million digitized U.S. newspaper pages from 1777 to 1963. The flagship genealogy resource for obituaries, marriage notices, and everyday-life stories of ancestors.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/chronicling-america/>

### U.S. Newspaper Directory, 1690–Present

Locate which newspapers were published in a specific town or county and where surviving copies are held — invaluable for finding papers not yet digitized.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/directory-of-us-newspapers-in-american-libraries/>

### Historic American Newspapers by State

Browse digitized newspapers organized by state and territory to target coverage for ancestors who lived in specific regions.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/chronicling-america/titles/>

### Newspaper & Current Periodical Reading Room

The home of the Library's newspaper, comic book, and current periodical collections — use the reading-room guides to request material on site or by reference email.

 <https://www.loc.gov/research-centers/newspaper-and-current-periodical/>

### Ethnic and Foreign-Language Newspapers

Guides to German, Yiddish, Italian, Polish, Chinese, and dozens of other foreign-language papers published in the U.S. — essential for immigrant ancestor research.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/chronicling-america/titles/>

### World Newspaper Archive Guides

Research guides pointing to international newspaper collections accessible through LOC — useful for tracing ancestors before and after migration.

 <https://guides.loc.gov/newspapers>

### PRO TIP

Chronicling America's OCR is imperfect — historical newsprint confuses scanners. If a search fails, try just the surname plus one distinctive nearby word (town name, occupation, spouse's first name) rather than a full phrase. Also try both "died" and "d." — old papers used abbreviations constantly.



## MILITARY RECORDS & WAR COLLECTIONS

### Veterans History Project

First-person interviews, letters, diaries, and photographs from American war veterans (WWI through recent conflicts). Search by name, war, branch, or state.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/veterans-history-project-collection/>

### Military Legal Resources (Military Law)

Court-martial records, judge advocate reports, and legal documents spanning U.S. military history — helpful for tracking ancestors involved in military justice proceedings.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/military-legal-resources/>

### Rochambeau Map Collection

Maps carried by the French general during the American Revolution — useful for locating Revolutionary War ancestors and battle sites.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/rochambeau-maps/>

### World War I Posters

Over 1,900 WWI-era posters. Beyond imagery, captions often name regiments, fundraising campaigns, and units tied to specific communities.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-i-posters/>

### World War II Maps

Military situation maps, theater maps, and planning charts from the Second World War — context for ancestors who served overseas.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-ii-maps-military-situation-maps-from-1944-to-1945/>

### Civil War Maps

Nearly 2,240 Civil War-era maps of battlefields, troop positions, and regions — locate where an ancestor's unit fought or was stationed.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/civil-war-maps/>

### Civil War Glass Negatives & Related Prints

Thousands of images documenting soldiers, camps, and battlefields. Identify uniforms, regiments, and sometimes named individuals.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/civil-war-glass-negatives/>

### Stars and Stripes: The American Soldiers' Newspaper

Complete WWI-era run of the U.S. Army newspaper — soldier profiles, casualty lists, unit movements, and letters home.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/stars-and-stripes/>

### Spanish-American War in Motion Pictures

Early film footage of troops, camps, and events from the 1898 conflict — rare visual context for ancestors in that war.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/spanish-american-war-in-motion-pictures/>


#### PRO TIP

The Veterans History Project indexes by service member name, war, branch, and state of residence. Always search every known variant of an ancestor's name (J. Smith, John Smith, Jack Smith) — volunteers entering metadata weren't always consistent. Interview transcripts frequently name fellow soldiers, officers, and hometowns.

## IMMIGRATION, ETHNICITY & MIGRATION

### Immigration and Ethnic History Research Guides

A curated gateway to ship manifests, naturalization records, ethnic-press holdings, and migration studies across every major immigrant group.

 <https://guides.loc.gov/local-history-genealogy-research-guides>

### American Folklife Center – Ethnographic Collections

Field recordings, interviews, and cultural documentation from immigrant and ethnic communities — a goldmine for oral-history context.

 <https://www.loc.gov/research-centers/american-folklife-center/collections/digital-collections/>

### Swann Collection of Caricature & Cartoon

Political cartoons documenting immigrant experiences and public attitudes toward specific ethnic groups from the 18th–20th centuries.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/cartoon-drawings-swann/>

### Hebraic Section – Jewish Genealogy Resources

Guide to Yiddish newspapers, Jewish community histories, yizkor (memorial) books, and ancestral-shtetl resources.

 <https://guides.loc.gov/jewish-studies>

### European Reading Room Research Guides

Country-by-country guides to European archives, gazetteers, emigration records, and Library holdings for tracing ancestors to specific regions.

 <https://guides.loc.gov/european>

### Asian Reading Room – Genealogy Guides

Guides for Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Southeast Asian family history research — including rare surname dictionaries and clan records.

 <https://guides.loc.gov/asian-american-pacific-islander>

## Hispanic Reading Room Resources

Guides for Spanish, Mexican, Caribbean, and Central/South American genealogy research including parish registers and colonial-era records.

 <https://www.loc.gov/research-centers/hispanic/about-this-research-center/>

### PRO TIP

Before searching U.S. records, use LOC's European and Asian research guides to learn what records existed in your ancestor's home country. Knowing that German parish registers exist in a specific archive, for example, can save months of dead-end searching on American sites.

## MAPS & GEOGRAPHY

### Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

Block-by-block, building-by-building maps of roughly 12,000 U.S. towns and cities (1867–1970). Identify exactly where an ancestor lived, worked, or attended church.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps/>

### Panoramic Maps Collection

Bird's-eye-view lithographs of American towns from the 19th and early 20th centuries — gorgeous visual context for ancestral hometowns.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/panoramic-maps/>

### Railroad Maps, 1828–1900

Charts the expansion of American railroads — useful for tracing migration routes, rail-worker ancestors, and the growth of towns.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/railroad-maps-1828-to-1900/>

### American Revolutionary War Maps

Battle plans, campaign maps, and colonial-era surveys — trace Revolutionary ancestors to specific skirmishes and encampments.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/american-revolutionary-war-maps/>

### General Maps Collection

The Library's flagship cartographic collection: hundreds of thousands of maps covering every continent, era, and theme from the 15th century forward.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/general-maps/>

### Land Ownership Maps

Over 1,200 county landownership maps, primarily from the 19th century, naming individual landowners — fantastic for locating rural ancestors.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/land-ownership-maps/>

### Discovery and Exploration Maps

Early maps of the Americas showing colonial settlement patterns, indigenous territories, and exploration routes that shaped ancestor migration.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/discovery-and-exploration/>

### Cities and Towns Map Collection

Detailed street and ward maps of cities worldwide — invaluable for urban ancestor research and neighborhood context.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/cities-and-towns/>

#### PRO TIP

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps are the single most underused genealogy tool at LOC. They show individual buildings with street numbers, identifying churches, schools, saloons, and factories. Pair a Sanborn map with a city directory to reconstruct an ancestor's daily life block by block. Use the "zoom" icon on each map for print-quality detail.

## PHOTOGRAPHS & VISUAL COLLECTIONS

### Prints & Photographs Online Catalog (PPOC)

The Library's master search portal for more than 1.5 million digitized images — the single best place to look for photos of ancestors, occupations, and hometowns.

 <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/>

### Farm Security Administration / Office of War Information Photographs

Over 175,000 Depression-era and WWII photographs of everyday Americans at work and home — often captioned with names and locations.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/fsa-owi-black-and-white-negatives/>

### Detroit Publishing Company Photographs

Approximately 25,000 color-tinted images (1898–1924) of American street scenes, businesses, and landmarks.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/detroit-publishing-company/>

### Carol M. Highsmith's America

Modern-day photographs of all 50 U.S. states — useful for visualizing the present-day communities your ancestors founded or inhabited.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/carol-m-highsmith/>

### Daguerreotype Collection

Over 650 of the earliest American photographs (1839–1864), including rare portraits from the dawn of photography.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/daguerreotypes/>

### **Harris & Ewing Collection**

Over 40,000 photographic negatives of Washington, D.C. life (1905–1945) — portraits of politicians, workers, families, and events.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/harris-ewing/>

### **Bain News Service Collection**

Early 20th-century news photographs documenting immigrants arriving at Ellis Island, labor strikes, sports, and celebrities.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/bain/>


### **National Photo Company Collection**

Approximately 35,000 glass negatives of Washington-area life (1909–1932) — workplaces, schools, churches, family groups.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/national-photo-company/>

### **Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS)**

Photographs and drawings of historic homes, churches, and businesses across the U.S. — see the actual buildings your ancestors built or lived in.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/historic-american-buildings-landscapes-and-engineering-records/>

### **PRO TIP**

To download the highest-resolution version of any LOC photograph, click the image to open its item page, then look for the "TIFF" or "JPEG (Full)" link — often tucked under a "Download" dropdown on the right side. TIFFs can exceed 100 MB but print beautifully at poster size. These files are public domain when produced by the U.S. government.



## **MANUSCRIPTS & PERSONAL PAPERS**

### **Manuscript Division**

The Library's central gateway to over 70 million items: personal papers, diaries, letters, and family archives of notable Americans.

 <https://www.loc.gov/rr/mss/>

### **Founding Fathers Papers**

Fully digitized papers of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Madison, Hamilton, and Franklin — often naming ordinary correspondents, merchants, and soldiers.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/?fa=original-format:manuscript/mixed+material>

### **Abraham Lincoln Papers**

More than 20,000 documents including correspondence from citizens petitioning the president — names ordinary Americans of the Civil War era.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/abraham-lincoln-papers/>

### Theodore Roosevelt Papers

Extensive correspondence and diaries from Roosevelt (and earlier family members) — often naming family friends and business associates.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/theodore-roosevelt-papers/>

### Frederick Douglass Papers

Letters, speeches, and personal documents — includes references to enslaved individuals, free Black communities, and abolitionist networks.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/frederick-douglass-papers/>

### Woodrow Wilson Papers

Correspondence from the Wilson presidency (1913–1921), including WWI-era letters that frequently name ordinary servicemembers and citizens.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/woodrow-wilson-papers/>

### Susan B. Anthony Papers

Letters, diaries, and speeches — includes correspondence with women activists and everyday supporters across the country.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/susan-b-anthony-papers/>

#### PRO TIP

Presidential papers contain thousands of letters from ordinary Americans — farmers writing Jefferson, widows petitioning Lincoln, WWI families writing Wilson. Search presidential collections by state or town rather than by name. You may find an ancestor who wrote to the White House without your ever knowing it happened.

## BOOKS, DIRECTORIES & PUBLISHED MATERIALS

### Local History & Genealogy Reading Room

The Library's dedicated genealogy portal with guides, finding aids, surname files, and research strategies — a must-bookmark starting page.

<https://www.loc.gov/research-centers/local-history-and-genealogy/about-this-research-center/>

### Digitized Family Histories and Genealogies

Thousands of published family histories freely downloadable as PDFs — check here before paying for them elsewhere.

<https://www.loc.gov/search/?fa=partof:local+history+and+genealogy+digital+materials>

### U.S. City Directories Collection

Pre-census-substitute directories listing residents, occupations, and addresses — especially powerful for the gaps between federal censuses.

<https://guides.loc.gov/united-states-city-telephone-directories/city-directories>


### Selected Telephone Directories

Digitized historical phone books — locate ancestors in specific cities by year when directories are absent.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/united-states-telephone-directory-collection/>

### Americana Collection at the Rare Book Division

Early American imprints, almanacs, sermons, and pamphlets often naming subscribers, founders, and local citizens.

 <https://www.loc.gov/research-centers/rare-book-and-special-collections/collections/>

### Digital Collections – Books

Browse thousands of fully digitized historical books including town histories, regimental histories, and reference works.

 <https://www.loc.gov/books/?fa=online-format:online+text>

### PRO TIP

City directories are census gold between census years. They list residents, occupations, and addresses annually — so you can track an ancestor's moves, career changes, and even widowhood (entries often read "Smith, Mary, wid. John"). Cross-reference with Sanborn maps to pinpoint exact buildings.

## AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COLLECTIONS

### African American History Month Portal

The Library's hub for African American heritage research: collections, research guides, exhibitions, and subject-matter experts.

 <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african-american-odyssey/>

### Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1938

Over 2,300 first-person accounts from formerly enslaved individuals — names, places, owners, and vivid details of antebellum life.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/slave-narratives-from-the-federal-writers-project-1936-to-1938/>

### African American Perspectives: Rare Books

Nearly 400 pamphlets and books (1818–1907) written by African Americans on abolition, civil rights, religion, and family.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/african-american-perspectives-rare-books/>


### NAACP Records

Approximately 2 million items (1842–1999) documenting the Black experience in America, including individual casework files naming thousands of people.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/naACP/>

### **Rosa Parks Papers**

Personal letters, family records, and photographs documenting three generations of a Black Southern family.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/rosa-parks-papers/>

### **Jackie Robinson Family Papers**

Family correspondence, photographs, and documents chronicling a prominent 20th-century African American family.

 <https://www.loc.gov/item/mm2001084832/>

### **Mary Church Terrell Papers**

Letters, diaries, and speeches from the civil rights activist — rich with names of African American educators, ministers, and clubwomen.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/mary-church-terrell-papers/>

### **African American Band Music & Recordings**

Sheet music, recordings, and biographical files documenting Black musicians — often identifying band members, venues, and hometowns.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/african-american-band-music-and-recordings-1883-to-1923/>

### **PRO TIP**

The Federal Writers' Project slave narratives are fully text-searchable. Search by county, plantation name, or enslaver surname — not just by the narrator's name. These interviews name hundreds of family members, neighbors, and community members who appear in no other written source.

## **NATIVE AMERICAN COLLECTIONS**

### **American Indian Histories and Cultures**

Central LOC portal for Native American research, linking to tribal histories, treaties, photographs, and language resources.

 <https://guides.loc.gov/native-american-manuscript>

### **Edward S. Curtis's The North American Indian**

The complete 20-volume photographic and ethnographic documentation of Native tribes (1907–1930) — portraits, cultural details, and community names.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/edward-s-curtis/>

### **Omaha Indian Music**

Field recordings and documentation from the Omaha tribe — includes singer names, song traditions, and ceremonial context.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/omaha-indian-music/>


### **Ancestral Voices: Native American Folklore**

Recordings and manuscripts of Indigenous oral traditions gathered by the American Folklife Center.

 <https://www.loc.gov/research-centers/american-folklife-center/collections/digital-collections/>

### **Indian Land Cessions in the United States**

Maps and documents showing land transfers from tribes — locate ancestral lands of Indigenous families and those who settled them.

 <https://www.loc.gov/resource/llscd.a39v/>

### **Native American Newspapers**

Chronicling America hosts digitized Indigenous-run newspapers — including the Cherokee Phoenix and others naming community members.

 [https://www.loc.gov/collections/chronicling-america/titles/?fa=subject\\_ethnicity:indians+of+north+america](https://www.loc.gov/collections/chronicling-america/titles/?fa=subject_ethnicity:indians+of+north+america)

### **PRO TIP**

Tribal enrollment and citizenship records are not typically held at LOC — they live at the National Archives and with tribal governments. However, LOC's ethnographic recordings, land-cession maps, and treaty documents provide essential historical context. Use LOC to understand the when-and-where; use NARA and tribal offices to confirm ancestry.

## **CIVIL WAR & SLAVERY RESOURCES**

### **Civil War Reference Guide**

The Library's master research guide to Civil War collections, including regimental histories, pension context, and casualty lists.

 <https://guides.loc.gov/us-civil-war-selected-resources>

### **Civil War Sheet Music Collection**

Digitized songs from both North and South — many dedicated to specific regiments or soldiers by name.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/civil-war-sheet-music/>

### **Liljenquist Family Collection of Civil War Photographs**

Over 8,000 ambrotype and tintype portraits of Union and Confederate soldiers — some identified, many awaiting identification by descendants.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/liljenquist-family-collection-of-civil-war-photographs/>


### **Slavery and Abolition Research Guide**

Comprehensive guide to LOC holdings on slavery, including runaway-slave advertisements, plantation records, and abolitionist correspondence.

 <https://guides.loc.gov/chronicling-america-slavery-abolition>

### **Freedmen's Bureau Papers (Selections)**

Reports, labor contracts, and correspondence documenting the transition from slavery to freedom — a critical source for African American family history.

 <https://www.loc.gov/search/?fa=subject:freedmen>

### **Walt Whitman's Civil War Notebooks**

Whitman's hospital-notebook entries naming wounded soldiers he visited — a uniquely personal source for Civil War ancestor identification.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/harned-whitman-collection/>

### **PRO TIP**

The Liljenquist Civil War photograph collection contains thousands of unidentified soldier portraits. If you have a family photo of a Civil War ancestor, compare uniforms, insignia, and backdrops — you may find the same photographer's work or identify a regiment. LOC also welcomes tips on identifying unknown soldiers: descendants have successfully named dozens.

## **STATE & REGIONAL COLLECTIONS**

### **American Memory – State Collections**

A consolidated gateway to state and regional digital collections across LOC, organized geographically.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/>

### **California as I Saw It: First-Person Narratives**

Over 190 first-person accounts of California from 1849–1900 — names of miners, pioneers, and settlers not found elsewhere.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/california-first-person-narratives/>

### **New Deal Programs in the American South**

Photographs and reports documenting everyday Southerners during the 1930s, often naming subjects and locations.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/?fa=subject:new+deal>


### **Mapping the National Parks**

Historic maps of U.S. national parks — useful for ancestors who homesteaded near or worked in what became protected lands.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/national-parks-maps/>

### **Buckaroos in Paradise: Ranching Culture in Northern Nevada**

Oral histories, photographs, and documents from ranching communities — specific families and ranch-hand names.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/ranching-culture-in-northern-nevada-from-1945-to-1982/>


### PRO TIP

Always check whether LOC partners with your ancestors' state archive on a digitization project — many state-focused collections (Florida, Nevada, California, the Northern Plains) were built cooperatively. These partnership collections are often more thorough for that region than LOC's general holdings.

## AUDIO, ORAL HISTORIES & FOLKLIFE

### **American Folklife Center Online Collections**

Field recordings, interviews, and cultural documentation from across the U.S. — thousands of hours of ordinary Americans telling their stories.

 <https://www.loc.gov/research-centers/american-folklife-center/collections/digital-collections/>

### **StoryCorps at the American Folklife Center**

Selections from the largest oral-history project in American history — searchable by name, place, and topic.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/storycorps/>

### **Voices Remembering Slavery: Freed People Tell Their Stories**

Audio recordings supplementing the written slave narratives — hear the voices of formerly enslaved Americans.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/voices-remembering-slavery/>

### **National Jukebox**

Over 17,000 historic sound recordings (1901–1925) including ethnic and regional music — cultural context for immigrant ancestors.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/national-jukebox/>

### **Occupational Folklife Project**

Oral histories from workers in disappearing trades — recent, but deeply useful for 20th-century occupational ancestor research.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/occupational-folklife-project/>

### **Florida Folklife Collection**

Recordings and photographs of Florida's diverse communities — Cuban, Bahamian, Seminole, Cracker, and Greek heritage groups.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/florida-folklife-from-the-works-progress-administration/>

### PRO TIP

Most American Folklife Center recordings are indexed by state and community rather than by individual name. If your ancestors lived in a tight-knit ethnic or occupational community (Welsh coal miners, Cajun musicians, Basque shepherders), search by community name and listen to the recordings — relatives are often mentioned by neighbors and relatives in the interviews.

## GENERAL SEARCH TOOLS & CATALOGS

### Loc.gov Master Search

The Library's unified search across digitized books, manuscripts, maps, photos, audio, and catalog records — the single most powerful starting point.

 <https://www.loc.gov/search/>


### Digital Collections Browser

Browse every digital collection the Library hosts — over 700 themed collections awaiting exploration.

 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/>

### Research Guides (Guides.LOC.gov)

Thousands of subject-expert guides on every research topic LOC covers — start here when you're unsure where a record type lives.

 <https://guides.loc.gov/>


### LOC Online Catalog

Search the Library's full cataloged holdings — books, manuscripts, periodicals, music, maps — digitized and on-shelf.

 <https://catalog.loc.gov/>

### Ask a Librarian

Free reference help from LOC subject-matter experts. Ask questions by subject division — they often find material not surfaced by search.

 <https://ask.loc.gov/>


### LOC Labs – Experimental Tools

Experimental search tools and data sets including historical newspaper API access, crowdsourced transcriptions, and visualization tools.

 <https://www.loc.gov/apis/>

### By The People – Crowdsourced Transcription

Transcribed manuscripts from volunteer efforts — searchable full-text for documents that were previously only available as images.

 <https://crowd.loc.gov/>

### LOC's YouTube Channel

Free expert lectures on genealogy, research techniques, and collections deep-dives — hundreds of hours of tutorial-quality content.

 <https://www.youtube.com/user/LibraryOfCongress>

### PRO TIP

The By The People crowdsourced-transcription site is a secret weapon. Documents that have been volunteer-transcribed become fully text-searchable — meaning an ancestor named in the middle of a 40-page Civil War letter can now be found instantly. Check this platform before assuming LOC "has nothing" on a surname.

 **ALL RESOURCES ARE 100% FREE** 

*No subscription. No paywall. No account required for most research.*  
Visit [loc.gov](https://loc.gov) to begin your family history journey today.

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