

# CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY

CALIFORNIA HISTORY SECTION

## RESEARCH GUIDES

SELECTED GENEALOGY RESOURCES



[Visit Us](#)

*California History Room  
900 N Street Room 200  
9:30-4 Monday-Friday*

**This Page  
Intentionally  
Left Blank**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Do you love family history? Do you have California ancestors? Come see us! We have a premier collection of California history and genealogy materials. The following items are just a few of the resources we have for genealogists in the [California History Section](#). If you have any questions on these resources or our other items, please feel free to [contact us](#).

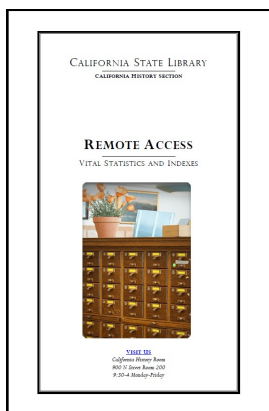
<a href="#">Remote Research</a> .....	4
<a href="#">General Research Tips</a> .....	6
<u>Collections for Genealogists:</u>	
<a href="#">Newspapers</a> .....	7
<a href="#">Local Histories</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Directories</a> .....	9
<a href="#">Other</a> .....	10
<u>Indexes and Vital Records:</u>	
<a href="#">History Room Specific Resources</a> .....	11
<a href="#">Government Records</a> .....	15
<a href="#">General Resources</a> .....	16
<a href="#">DAR Resources</a> .....	17
<a href="#">Other Places to Look</a> .....	18

## ENJOY YOUR RESEARCH!

## REMOTE RESEARCH

Can't come to the library just yet? Trying to do genealogy research on your California ancestors? A number of our resources are available to remote researchers in alternative formats.

---



### Remote Access

If you're curious about which of our indexes you can access remotely, this guide will give you detailed information about which major indexes are available on microfilm or microfiche or were digitized and how to access them.



**URL:** <http://www.library.ca.gov/calhist/pdf/IndexResearch.pdf>



### Digitized Images

Looking for family portraits? Check our images! We have digitized a small portion of our photograph collection for your viewing and research.



**URL:** [http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c-0&local\\_base=images](http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c-0&local_base=images)

**Type in Subject Box:** Family member name

## REMOTE RESEARCH

---



### **Inter-Library Loan**

Many of our materials are available to remote researchers via inter-library loan.

If you have any questions about this process please [contact us](#).



**URL:** <https://askstatelibrary.libraryresearch.info/ref100.aspx?key=Ref>



### **Copying Services**

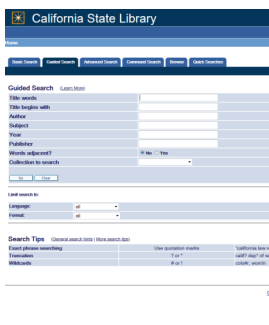
Would you like a copy of one of our items? Our basic copying services include photocopies and low-resolution scans of select items. If you have any questions about this process please see our website and [contact us](#).



**URL:** <https://askstatelibrary.libraryresearch.info/ref100.aspx?key=Ref>

## GENERAL RESEARCH TIPS

Doing genealogy research on your California ancestors? You can use these access points to find specific indexes, collections and even manuscripts related to your ancestors!



The screenshot shows the California State Library Catalog search page. It features a 'Guided Search' section with fields for Title, Author, Subject, Year, Publisher, and Whether adjacent. Below this is a 'Search Type' section with options for Exact phrase searching, Truncation, and Wildcards. The page also includes a 'Language' and 'Format' dropdown menu.

### Catalog

If you're looking for information on general California genealogy, whether how-to's, indexes or periodicals, your best source is our [catalog](http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-a-0).

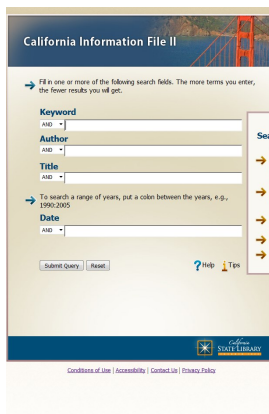


**URL:** <http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-a-0>

### **Type in Subject Box:**

1. Genealogy OR Indexes OR Births OR Registers
2. Desired last name

**Limit:** By desired material type or location



The screenshot shows the California Information File II search page. It features a search form with fields for Keyword, Author, Title, and Date. Below the form are buttons for 'Submit Query' and 'Reset'. The page also includes a 'Help' link and a 'Tips' icon.

### California Information File II

Sometimes the catalog doesn't provide as much detail as you might like. This is why we created the California Information File II, a continuation of the analog California Information File. In this resource, you can find references to periodical articles on genealogy and more!



**URL:** [http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext\\_html/QueryCalinfo.htm](http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext_html/QueryCalinfo.htm)

### **Type in Subject Box:**

1. Genealogy OR Indexes OR Births OR Registers
2. Desired last name

## COLLECTIONS FOR GENEALOGISTS

### NEWSPAPERS

Looking for an obituary? Check our newspaper collection! We have newspapers for every county in California. Some are even [indexed](#)!

---



## COLLECTIONS FOR GENEALOGISTS

### LOCAL HISTORIES

Filled with information about California residents of the past, these publications for both the [entire state](#) and for individual counties provide vital statistics and more!

---



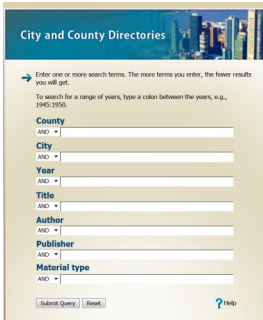


## COLLECTIONS FOR GENEALOGISTS

### DIRECTORIES

Curious about where your ancestor lived? Check these resources to learn not only where someone lived but their occupation too!

---



#### [City Directories](#)

An invaluable resource for anyone researching California history from 1850 forward, city directories will help you pinpoint who lived where, what they did and if they owned their own home. You can see what cities and dates we have by using our online databases.



**URL:** [http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext\\_html/QueryCityDir.htm](http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext_html/QueryCityDir.htm)

**Type in Search Box:** Name of city your ancestor lived in

---



#### [Telephone Directories](#)

Can't find you ancestor in the city directories? Check our telephone book collection. Dating from 1900 onwards, you can learn residence information from this resource. You can see what cities and dates we have by using our online databases.



**URL:** [http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext\\_html/QueryPhonebk.htm](http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext_html/QueryPhonebk.htm)

**Type in Search Box:** Name of city your ancestor lived in

---

COLLECTIONS FOR GENEALOGISTS  
OTHER

Are you looking for an image of your early California ancestors or correspondence from or about them? Then check out these resources!



## Images

Looking for an image of one of your California ancestors? Check our image collection. We have portraits of both prominent and obscure Californians from the state's inception forward.

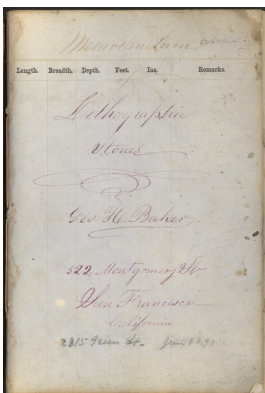


**Subject headings for paper file:**

1. Portrait: Name

Online continuation of file:

- **URL:** [http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-e-0&local\\_base=images](http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-e-0&local_base=images)
- **Type is search box:** Individual name



## Manuscripts

Looking for an ancestral letter? How about a deed? Check our manuscript collections! We have been collecting the papers of Californians since the library began.



**URL:** <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/institutions/California+State+Library::California+History+Room>

**Type in Search Box:** Keyword search by name or topic

## INDEXES AND VITAL RECORDS

### HISTORY ROOM SPECIFIC RESOURCES

Want to find almost forgotten references to specific events and people? Check out these hidden but helpful access points.



#### California Information File

Check the California Information File indexes to search over 130 years of California articles, books, and manuscript collections which may include information on your ancestors. If you can't come to the library, check our [remote access guide](#) for more options.



#### Subject Headings:

1. Name



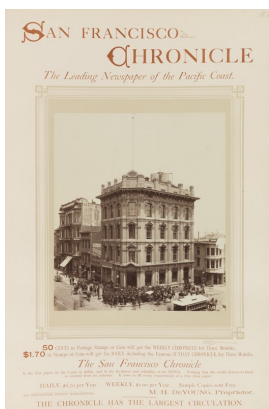
#### [San Francisco Newspapers Index](#)

Did your ancestors live in San Francisco between 1904 and 1949? Check this resource for articles likely to include mentions of your family. If you can't come to the library to use the file, check our [remote access guide](#) for more options.



#### Subject Headings:

1. Name



#### [San Francisco Chronicle Index](#)

A continuation of the San Francisco Newspapers Index, this index covers articles published by the Chronicle through 1980. While best for Bay Area residents, this record also provides information on other Californians. If you can't come to the library to use the file, check our [remote access guide](#) for more options.

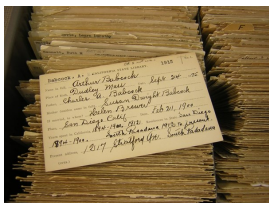


#### Subject Headings:

1. Name

## INDEXES AND VITAL RECORDS HISTORY ROOM SPECIFIC RESOURCES

---



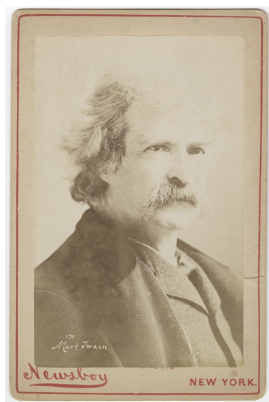
### Pioneer Card File

Do you have an ancestor who arrived in California prior to 1860? Check this file for basic vital statistics supplied by the pioneers themselves or their descendants!



#### Access:

1. In-House paper file
2. Interlibrary Loan: [Microfilm 734 reels 40-49](#)
3. Ancestry.com (See [Remote Access Guide](#))



### Biographical Card File

Was your ancestor a California artist, author, official or other local notable? Check this file for vital statistics and sometimes short biographies.



#### Access:

1. In-House paper file
2. Interlibrary Loan: [Microfilm 734 reels 34-39](#)
3. Ancestry.com (See [Remote Access Guide](#))



### Biographical Information File

Want more information about a notable Californian? Check our biographical files, these include newspaper clippings, letters and sometimes even short biographies about various Californians.



#### Access:

1. In-house paper file

#### Search for available resources:

- [California Information File](#): By Name
- [California Information File II](#): By Name

## INDEXES AND VITAL RECORDS

### HISTORY ROOM SPECIFIC RESOURCES

---



#### Mortuary Records, 1849-1900

Do you need records on individuals who died in Sacramento County? Check this set of mortuary records for further information.



##### Access:

1. In-House paper file
2. Interlibrary Loan: [Microfilm 734 reels 1-13](#)



#### Vital Statistics Index, 1900-1951

Looking for Sacramento county births and deaths after 1900? This index will point you to the information you need.



##### Access:

1. In-House paper file
2. Interlibrary Loan: [Microfilm 734 reels 14-23](#)



#### Voter Registrations, 1867 & 1872

If you want further information on a man residing in Sacramento county in the 1860's and '70's, this record set might shed light on his life and political affiliation.



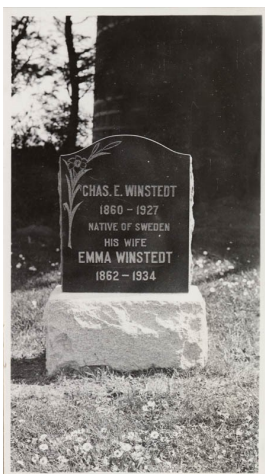
##### Access:

1. In-House paper file
2. Interlibrary Loan: [Microfilm 734 reels 23-29](#)

## INDEXES AND VITAL RECORDS

### HISTORY ROOM SPECIFIC RESOURCES

---



### **San Francisco Death Index, 1848-1863**

Looking for early deaths in San Francisco? Check this file! You can find recorded deaths from the Gold Rush era in this resource.



#### **Access:**

1. In-House paper file
2. Interlibrary Loan: [Microfilm 734 reels 29-34](#)

## INDEXES AND VITAL RECORDS GOVERNMENT RECORDS

Do the genealogy databases overwhelm you? Search the original documents! We have a variety of basic government vital statistics here at the library. For information on how to use the censuses, check our specialized [state census](#) and [federal census guides](#).

---



U.S. Census			
Year	Print Index	Soundex	Special schedules
<a href="#">1850</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>	No	<a href="#">Yes</a>
<a href="#">1860</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>	No	<a href="#">Yes</a>
<a href="#">1870</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>	No	<a href="#">Yes</a>
<a href="#">1880</a>	No	<a href="#">Yes</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>
1890	Original destroyed in fire		
<a href="#">1900</a>	No	<a href="#">Yes</a>	No
<a href="#">1910</a>	No	<a href="#">Yes</a>	No
<a href="#">1920</a>	No	<a href="#">Yes</a>	No
<a href="#">1930</a>	No	No	No

---



State Vital Record Indexes	
California	Nevada
<a href="#">Marriage Index</a> (1949-1986)	<a href="#">Marriage Index</a> (1968-2003)
<a href="#">Divorce Index</a> (1966-1984)	<a href="#">Divorce Index</a> (1968-2004)
<a href="#">Great Registers of Voters</a> (1866-1898 & 1900-1944)	
<a href="#">Death Index</a> (1905-1995)	
<a href="#">State Census</a> (1852)	

---

## COLLECTIONS FOR GENEALOGISTS

### GENERAL PUBLICATIONS

In addition to collecting published documents, the library has a number of publications by local groups and individuals that offer genealogical information at the [state](#) and county level.

---





COLLECTIONS FOR GENEALOGISTS  
DAR PUBLICATIONS

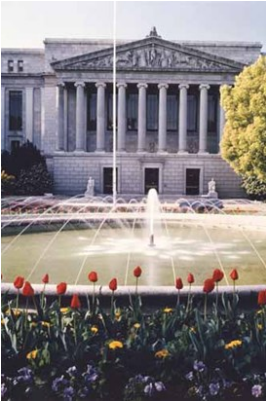
Our Daughters of the American Revolution materials, in addition to holding a number of [statewide resources](#), cover counties in depth. For more information, consult the DAR publications index on top of the reference shelves.



## OTHER PLACES TO LOOK

Of course the California History Section doesn't have everything, so we suggest that in addition to looking at our collections, you contact the following organizations:

---



### **Other California State Library Sections**

[Government Publications Section](#)

[Witkin Law Library](#)

[Sutro Library](#)

[General Information](#)



- <http://www.library.ca.gov/gps/index.html>
  - [http://www.library.ca.gov/collections/law\\_coll.html](http://www.library.ca.gov/collections/law_coll.html)
  - [http://www.library.ca.gov/about/sutro\\_main.html](http://www.library.ca.gov/about/sutro_main.html)
  - [http://www.library.ca.gov/collections/general\\_coll.html](http://www.library.ca.gov/collections/general_coll.html)
- 



### **Government Agencies**

[California State Archives](#)

[Center for Health Statistics and Informatics](#)

County Registrars and Recordors



- <http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/>
  - <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Program-Landing1.aspx>
-

**This Page  
Intentionally  
Left Blank**



CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY  
CALIFORNIA HISTORY SECTION

*California History Section*  
900 N Street Room 200  
Sacramento CA 95814

Phone: (916) 654-0176  
E-mail: [cslcal@library.ca.gov](mailto:cslcal@library.ca.gov)  
Hours: 9:30-4 Monday-Friday