Ancestry Basics

Get started with searching

1. Visit *PPLD.org*
2. Click **Research & Learn**
3. Click **Regional History & Genealogy**
4. Scroll down to the Genealogy section
5. Click **Genealogy Databases & Resources**
6. Click **Ancestry Library Edition**
7. Click **Begin Searching**

Three search methods:

General Records Search

Search billions of records in the AncestryLibrary database using your ancestor's

- Name
- Life events (e.g. places and dates of birth, marriage, death, residence, etc.)
- Family members

Filter searches by record categories, locations, and dates to further narrow your results.

Card Catalog

Every record is part of a collection. Use the **Card Catalog** to view collection categories (e.g., **Immigration & Travel**), search for collections by title or keyword, and filter collections by category, location, and/or date. Then, you can search within those collections for individual records.

Explore by Location

Select a continent, country, or state to view a list of collections for that location. Click **View all [place] research options** to view collections by category, narrow by region, and view additional resources.

TOP TIPS

Read the Collection Information box on each collection page to determine if the records are relevant to your research.

AncestryLibrary Features

Home - Return to the AncestryLibrary homepage.
Search - Search for records by category, location, or collection.
Message Boards - Search or browse community boards and posts related to record types, topics, surnames, and locations.
Learning Center - Find Research Aids for various record types and ethnic groups. View U.S. state maps and guides to learn about the location your ancestors lived.
Charts and Forms - View and download ancestral charts, family group sheets, research calendars, blank census forms, and other resources to keep organized.
New Collections - Access a searchable list of AncestryLibrary record collections, sorted by the most recently added collections.

What is AncestryLibrary?

AncestryLibrary is the library's institutional subscription to the world's largest genealogical database, *Ancestry.com.* AncestryLibrary provides library users with access to many of the same records included in an individual paid subscription. This database is accessible from all PPLD library locations.
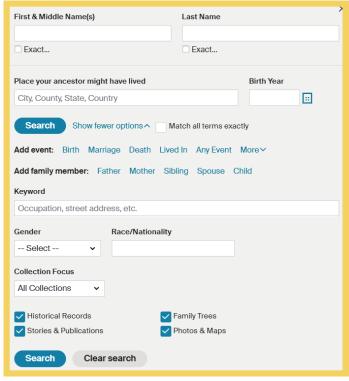
AncestryLibrary vs. Ancestry.com

AncestryLibrary provides access to a variety of U.S. and international record collections. You can also view and search public family trees and message boards and access the Learning Center. You cannot create a family tree using AncestryLibrary.

An individual *Ancestry.com* account provides access to additional collections (which vary by subscription level) and allows you to post to public trees and message boards, create a family tree, access "hints," and use the "Shoebox."

AncestryLibrary Search Basics

Start with your ancestor's name, location, and birth year. **Show more options** let's you add other life events, family members, keywords, and more.

Start Searching

- Start with information you know. You do not need to fill every search field.
- Use the **Exact...** checkbox to include similar names, a date range, or adjacent areas.
- The **Match all terms exactly** box excludes similar names, initials, and misspellings.
- The **Collection Focus** dropdown box narrows your search to a specific country or ethnicity.
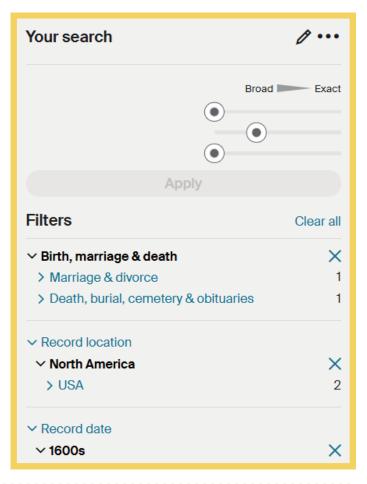- Limit your search to specific formats (e.g. **Family Trees**) if desired.

Narrow or broaden your search

- Add, remove, or edit your search terms by clicking **Edit Search** - the pencil icon near the top of the search results (see image below).
- Adjust the **Broad>Exact** sliders to refine the exactness of the search.
- Filter your search by a specific record category, location, or date

Additional Resources for AncestryLibrary