Tracing Your Roots:  
Genealogical Resources in the Boston and Cambridge Area

Genealogical Materials at the Cambridge Public Library

If your ancestors were Cambridge residents, you can begin your search for information about them here at the Cambridge Public Library. We are not a genealogical research center, but we have some materials that may be useful. To do a thorough search you will want to follow the leads you get here by using the other resources in the Cambridge and Boston area.

IN THE REFERENCE ROOM

MICROFILM
Cambridge City Directories on microfilm for the years 1847-1972 (with gaps) and street listings from 1972-1990. The directories list residents in alphabetical order, with addresses, occupations, and family members. Microfilm reader/printing machines are available in the Reference Room.

*The Cambridge Chronicle* on microfilm for the years 1846 to the present contains birth, death, and marriage announcements of some Cambridge residents and is indexed beginning with 1967. A separate obituary index beginning with 1985 is also available.

Vital records of Cambridge, Massachusetts to the year 1850 comp. by Thomas W. Baldwin – in print and on microfilm.


DATABASES

HeritageQuest Online
HeritageQuest Online includes all of the images, and extensive indexing from the 1790-1930 U.S. federal censuses. It offers more than 20,000 book titles, including nearly 8,000 family histories and over 12,000 local histories. Additionally, there are more than 250 primary-source documents such as tax lists, city directories, probate records, and more.

Ancestry Library Edition
The Ancestry Library Edition collection has approximately 4,000 databases including key collections such as U.S. Federal Census images and indexes from 1790 to 1930; the Map Center containing more than 1,000 historical maps; American Genealogical Biographical Index (over 200 volumes); Daughters of the American Revolution Lineage (over 150 volumes); The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England, 1620-1630; Social
Security Death Index (updated monthly); WWI Draft Registration Cards; Federal Slave Narratives; and a strong Civil War collection.

**OTHER RESOURCES IN THE BOSTON AND CAMBRIDGE AREA**

Greater Boston has rich and varied resources available to the beginning genealogist. Below is a list of places to search, with addresses, business hours, and notes to give you an idea of what information may be found in each place. Write or phone for fee schedules. Generally searchers may do their own research for free. Good hunting!

**Cambridge City Clerk**  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
http://www.cambridgema.gov/CityClrk

Phone: (617) 349-4260  
Hours: Monday 8:30 am - 8 pm, Tuesday – Thursday 8:30 am – 5 pm, Friday 8:30 am – noon

The City Clerk will search city records for Cambridge births, deaths, and marriages dating back to 1635. Write or phone for fee schedules.

**Massachusetts Registry of Vital Records and Statistics**  
150 Mount Vernon St. 1st Floor  
Dorchester, MA 02125-3105  
http://www.mass.gov/dph/rvrs

Phone: (617) 740-2600  
Fax: 1-866-881-9699  
Hours: Monday – Friday 8:45 am - 4:45 pm

The state Registry contains records of births, marriages, and deaths from 1916 to the present. There is an index for divorces from 1952 to the present.

**Massachusetts Archives at Columbia Point**  
220 Morrissey Blvd.  
Boston, MA 02125  
http://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcgen/genidx.htm

Phone: (617) 727-2816  
Fax: (617) 288-8429  
Hours: Monday – Friday 9 am - 5 pm and typically the second and fourth Saturdays of each month, 9 am to 3 pm.

The state Archives contain vital statistics from 1841-1910, early census records, early tax records, Port of Boston passenger lists, and some early land, military, and court records.
For vital statistics prior to 1841, contact individual city or town clerks. Please call or see website for more details.

National Archives - New England Region
380 Trapelo Rd.
Waltham, MA  02452-6399
http://www.archives.gov/northeast

Phone: (781) 663-0130
Fax: (781) 663-0154
Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 7 am - 4:30 pm, Thursday 7 am- 9 pm
Open some Saturdays, please call or check website for dates.

The National Archives contain United States census records, 1790-1930, naturalization records, passenger arrival lists (New England ports only), some Revolutionary War military and pension records, and access by microfilm to the holdings of the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

Probate and Family Court Department
Middlesex County Division
208 Cambridge Street
P.O. Box 410480
Cambridge, MA 02141
http://www.mass.gov/courts

Phone: (617) 768-5800
Hours: Monday – Friday 8 am – 4:30 pm

Suffolk Probate and Family Court
P.O. Box 9667
24 New Chardon Street, 3rd Floor
Boston, MA 02114
http://www.mass.gov/courts

Phone: (617) 788-8300
Hours: Monday – Friday 8:30 am – 5:00 pm

The courts maintain records of all wills probated in Middlesex and Suffolk Counties. Searchers must do their own research; the courts do not answer phone or mail inquiries.

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds
Middlesex County Courthouse
208 Cambridge Street
Cambridge, MA 02141
http://www.cambridgedeeds.com
The registries of deeds maintain all land ownership records for Middlesex and Suffolk Counties. Searchers must do their own research; the registries do not answer phone or main inquiries.

The Boston Public Library contains extensive collections of materials of interest to the genealogical researcher, and because of its large holdings, the collection is not limited to one physical area. Materials can be found throughout the Research Library (i.e. McKim Building). Primary locations are Microtext, Social Sciences and the Research Library stacks, although staff may refer patrons to other subject departments as well. All materials are required to be used within the Research Library. Please call or see website for more information.

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For information on the holdings of the State Library, please call or consult their web page.

New England Historic Genealogical Society
101 Newbury Street
Boston, MA 02116
http://www.newenglandancestors.org/

Phone: (617) 536-5740
Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday 9 am - 5 pm Wednesday, 9am -9pm
Closed Sunday and Monday

Admission to the Research Library is free for NEHGS members. Research memberships, non-members (including seniors and students) and members at the subscription level will be charged a $15 day fee.
For information on the holdings of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, please call or consult their web page.

Family History Center - Cambridge
2 Longfellow Park
Cambridge, MA

Phone: 617-491-4749
Hours: Wednesday, 6pm-9pm; Sat 9am-1pm

Family History Centers are branch facilities of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. Centers provide access to most of the microfilms and microfiche in the Family History Library to help patrons identify their ancestors. Most centers are located in meetinghouses of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Centers are administered and operated by local Church members. Everyone is welcome to come to the centers and use Family History Center resources.

Web Sites

www.cyndislist.com (excellent site with many useful links)

www.rootsweb.com/~magenweb/

http://www.familysearch.org/

BOOKS

In recent months, we have added several new editions and new titles to the reference collection. Here are some books you may find helpful.
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<th>Title</th>
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