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Genealogical Resources  
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# Introduction

**This guide aims to inform genealogical researchers about resources available at the Texas State Library. With this guide, we hope to encourage the widest possible use of the Library's genealogical resources.**

**Patrons can obtain more information by contacting or visiting the State Library. Consult the inside back cover for addresses and telephone numbers.**

## A Word of Advice

The key to successful genealogical research is patience. Beginners must realize that research is often complex and time-consuming. A complete family history cannot be constructed in an afternoon — dedicated researchers may spend years tracing a particular family line.

Before starting their projects, beginners should first learn about the methods involved in genealogical research. Numerous books can provide information on research techniques and search strategies. The following titles are available in the State Library's Genealogy Collection, as well as in many public and academic libraries.

Doane, Gilbert H. and James B. Bell. *Searching for Your Ancestors: the How and Why of Genealogy*. University of Minnesota Press, 1980.

Greenwood, Val D. *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy*. Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., 2nd ed. 1990.

Linder, Bill R. *How to Trace Your Family History*. Everest House Publishers, 1978.

Stratton, Eugene A. *Applied Genealogy*. Ancestry, Inc., 1988.

Stryker-Rodda, Harriet. *How to Climb Your Family Tree: Genealogy for Beginners*.  
Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., 1987.



Photo courtesy R. S. DeBellis.



# GENEALOGY COLLECTION

## Available Materials

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The Genealogy Collection is the State Library's primary site for family history research. Materials are shelved in open stacks for direct use by the public, and include microforms, books, periodicals, and family file material.

### Microforms

#### **Federal Population Census Schedules and Soundex**

The Genealogy Collection owns all available census schedules for all states from 1790 through 1910 (most of the 1890 census was destroyed by fire in 1921). The collection also owns the 1920 census schedules for Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Colorado, Florida and Nevada.

Information in these schedules can be accessed more easily using the large collection of printed and electronic (CD-ROM) indexes and through Soundex microfilm. The Soundex is based on a coding system that groups together names with similar sounds but variant spellings. The Genealogy Collection has Soundexes for the following years and states:

1880: Texas, Mississippi, South Carolina

1900: Texas, Oklahoma Territory, Indian Territory, Institutions, Military and Naval Forces

1910: Texas

1920: Texas

## Special Schedules

### *1890 Census Enumerating Union Veterans and Widows of Union Veterans of the Civil War*

This official record of Union veterans and widows provides information about individual military service, including the veteran's rank, company, regiment or vessel, date of enlistment, date of discharge, and length of service in years, months, and days.

### *Texas Mortality Schedules: 1850-1880*

These schedules include information on all persons who died within the twelve months preceding the census. The date and cause of death are noted. These schedules predate Vital Records (see below) and contain more than 13 percent of all deaths in Texas for the period covered.

### *Texas Agricultural Schedules: 1850-1880*

Exact information in the schedules varies from year to year, but most include data on the quantity and value of acreage, machinery, livestock, and produce. Later Schedules are no longer available.

## Other Microfilm

### *Texas County Tax Rolls*

Yearly tax rolls are available for each county from its incorporation date through the late 1970s. The taxpayers' names are grouped under the first letter of the surname for each year.

Tax rolls do not include genealogical data (e.g., birth and death dates or family relationships), but they do provide information on the amount of land and personal property owned and the amount of tax paid. By tracking from year to year in the tax rolls, a researcher can estimate when a head of household came to a county, how long he or she resided there, and when the taxpayer left the county or died.

### *Military Records*

Military service records on microfilm include:

1. *Compiled Service Records of Volunteers Soldiers During the Mexican War from Texas,*



1846-1848- Names on these records are arranged alphabetically under each unit's name, (eg., Bell's Regiment; Texas Mounted Volunteers; 1st Texas Foot Riflemen).

2. *Index to Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers from Texas* - This is a name index for the Texas Confederate military service records housed in the National Archives.

#### *Texas Voter Registers, 1867-1869*

After the Civil War, citizens of seceded states had to sign a loyalty oath to qualify to vote. In some cases, these entries give the number of years the voter had lived in the state, county, and precinct; whether he was native-born or naturalized; and his home address and place of birth.

#### *Naturalization Records*

This is a partial index to naturalization records filed in selected Texas courts ca. 1846-1939. These records were in the custody of the San Antonio district office of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. Each entry gives the subject's name, birth date or age, country of allegiance, the record's location, date of the proceeding, and whether the record is a petition, declaration, or affidavit.

#### *Port of Galveston Records*

The index and lists contain information from 1896 through 1951. Entries are for passengers arriving at Galveston and clearing U.S. Customs. Information includes name, age, sex, vessel name, country of citizenship, and last residence.

#### *Archives of Nuevo Leon*

The history of this region in northeastern Mexico is closely tied to that of Texas. The *Archives* contain a variety of records of genealogical interest created between 1713 and 1966, primarily in Spanish.

#### *Nacogdoches Archives*

This major collection of materials from the original Spanish alcalde in Texas has been reorganized into its original order. Entrance certificates and citizenship applications are

particularly useful to genealogists tracing family histories back to the Republic era. The *Nacogdoches Archives* are in Spanish and cover the years 1756-1836.

#### *Local County Records*

The Genealogy Collection is one of 25 regional depositories for local records of historical value and currently houses microfilm records from the counties surrounding Travis and Bexar counties. This program is described in more detail below in the "Texas State Archives" section of this guide. The records are available through interlibrary loan.

#### *Microfiche*

There is also a growing collection of microfiche. Two titles of particular interest are the *Boston Transcript* and the *North Carolina Marriage Bonds*. The Collection also holds *Civil War Unit Histories* for many of the Southern states.

## Printed Sources

The Genealogy Collection has selected books on the basis of their usefulness to researchers. Some of these books contain genealogical data; others help guide researchers to information in other sources. Other types of material include "how-to" books on genealogical research, the origins of family names, heraldry, and research in foreign countries. There is also a large collection of individual family histories.

Geographical emphasis is, of course, on Texas materials, with secondary emphasis on areas from which many Texans came to the Lone Star State. There is a comprehensive collection of Texas materials such as marriage indexes, cemetery records, and county histories. In addition, there are research sections on all regions of the country, with particular emphasis on the southern states: Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The collection also has extensive New England holdings. Important holdings include:



Compendium of American Genealogy

Gandrud's Alabama Records

American Genealogical-Biographical Index

Archives of Maryland

Colonial and State Records of North Carolina

Daughters of the American Revolution Lineage  
Books

Massachusetts Vital Records

Pennsylvania Archives

E. G. Swem's Virginia Historical Index and a  
complete set of the materials it indexes

## Vital Records

The Genealogy Collection has indexes to those Texas birth certificates issued from 1903 through 1976, indexes to those death certificates issued from 1903 through 1994, and "probate," or delayed birth indexes covering approximately 1880 through 1945. The indexes were produced by the Bureau of Vital Statistics of the Texas Department of Health and are based on their records only.

The law providing for registration of births and deaths in Texas went into effect in 1903 but did not become mandatory until 1921. Many births went unrecorded before that date, especially if they occurred in rural areas. Some births and deaths may have been recorded only in the county where the event occurred. An individual who established a birth record later in life may be listed in the "probate" indexes.

The indexes, arranged alphabetically by last name, include the subject's name, county of birth or death, date of birth or death, and certificate number at the Bureau of Vital Statistics.

The Genealogy Collection also has a set of indexes to marriage certificates from 1966 to 1994 and to divorce certificates from 1968 to 1994. Earlier records are with the county and district clerks, respectively.

The Genealogy Collection does not house the actual certificates. With certain restrictions, patrons may obtain copies of certificates by sending a fee of \$11.00 per birth certificate, or \$9.00 per death, marriage, or divorce certificate, to the Bureau of Vital Statistics, Texas Department of Health, 1100 W. 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756-3191.

## Periodicals

Patrons will find in the Genealogy Collection periodicals published by major American genealogical societies as well as those from most of Texas' societies. Important titles include *Genealogical Helper*, *Heritage Quest*, *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*, *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, *Virginia Genealogist*, *Kentucky Genealogist*, *Family Puzzlers*, *New Orleans Genesis*, and *Stirpes*, the quarterly publication of the Texas State Genealogical Society.

## Vertical File

The Genealogy Collection owns more than 2,500 files of loose manuscript materials on many subjects and on individual families. Information is arranged alphabetically. These materials include family charts, clippings, maps, and pamphlets on research facilities in other states.





Photo courtesy Austin History Center, Austin Public Library. Item #PICB 00933 (detail).

## GENEALOGY COLLECTION

### Equipment and Services

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#### Equipment

Microfilm and microfiche readers are available for patron use. A limit on use of readers may be imposed during peak periods. A coin-operated reader-printer is available for making prints from microfilm. Two coin-operated photocopiers are also available. A bill changer for \$1 and \$5 bills is available — the staff does not make change.

There are also two computers with CD-ROM readers for public use. The Genealogy Collection's CD-ROM holdings have been purchased based on their usefulness to genealogists; they include family histories, marriage records, census indexes, the Social Security death benefits index, and a nationwide telephone directory. Time on the computers is limited to one hour during busy periods.

## Staff Services

Staff members will provide brief orientations to the collection, assist in locating and using materials, and direct patrons to useful resources outside the Genealogy Collection. *Actual research is conducted by the patrons.* A current list of private researchers is available on request.

## Mail Requests

Staff members will search indexed materials in response to specific requests. They cannot, however, do extensive research or copying. When requesting information by mail, please write concisely, make specific requests, and type or print all names and places legibly. Correspondents are limited to five requests per letter, one letter per week.

There is a fee for photocopies and microfilm printouts provided to patrons by mail, with a minimum charge of \$1.00. *Do not send checks or cash with requests.* The Genealogy Collection staff will include a bill for the exact amount with the response.

## Interlibrary Loan

Genealogy Collection staff can request materials for local residents from other libraries through interlibrary loan. Many libraries will not lend genealogical materials, however, and the process of locating a library willing to lend may take several weeks. Complete information, including author, title, and publisher, will speed the interlibrary loan process.

The Genealogy Collection will lend duplicate copies of its materials. A list of many duplicate titles is available via the Internet from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's World Wide Web information gateway (<http://>



*www.tsl.state.tx.us*). The following microfilmed materials are also available for loan:

Index to Texas Births, 1903-1976

Index to Texas Deaths, 1903-1940

Index to Texas Deaths, 1941-1945

Index to Texas Deaths, 1946-1973

Index to Texas Probate Births, approximately  
1880-1945

Texas County Tax Rolls (from the creation date of  
the county through 1901)

Selected local county records.

Any library may request this microfilm with a standard ALA interlibrary loan form. The 1903-1940 and 1941-1945 death indexes and the probate birth indexes are arranged alphabetically, so patrons must provide their local librarians with the surname they need. Requests for death index microfilm after 1945 and the 1903-1976 birth indexes must include the year as well as the surname. For tax rolls, patrons must provide the name of the county and a specific year or range of years.

## Gifts

The Genealogy Collection welcomes gifts of books of genealogical interest. In particular, donations of family history books are welcomed, since the Library does not purchase them. Donated books are cataloged and become a permanent part of the Library's holdings.

Patrons may also wish to consider cash donations to the Genealogy Collection to honor or memorialize a friend or relative. The staff will select a title for the collection and see that an appropriate bookplate is placed on the item.



Photo courtesy Austin History Center, Austin Public Library.  
Item #PICB 04052 (detail).

## REFERENCE/DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

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The Reference and Documents Collection provides reference services for state agency employees and officials, and it serves as one of two regional depositories in Texas for U.S. government documents. It also houses a permanent depository collection of Texas state documents.

### Library Catalog

An online catalog, containing the holdings of all State Library collections as well as those of other agencies, is available for public use. By consulting this catalog, patrons can easily locate the State Library's holdings on any subject. The catalog may be accessed at the Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library Building or via the Internet (telnet to *gabi.tsl.state.tx.us* or point your WWW browser to *http://www.tsl.state.tx.us*). Older material is constantly being added; please consult the card catalog or contact a librarian if you are unable to



locate an item.

## Reference Materials

Genealogists may find useful the general reference materials housed in the Reference and Documents Collection. These include biographical reference works, atlases, gazetteers, almanacs, dictionaries, and current Texas telephone directories.

## Federal Documents

Because it is a regional depository for U.S. government documents, the Reference and Documents Collection receives thousands of publications. Some of these government documents are useful to genealogists, including:

*The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* — This multi-volume publication includes an index that contains references to hundreds of Civil War soldiers mentioned in the records.

*Territorial Papers of the United States* — These papers are the official records of the territories, including Northwest Territory, Mississippi, Illinois, Indiana, Orleans, Michigan, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Wisconsin, and Louisiana. The information includes petitions from settlers, land claims, and tax rolls. An index is included in each volume.

*American State Papers* — Publications of the first 25 Congresses, from 1789 to 1838, are contained in 38 volumes. Included are pension records of soldiers of the Revolutionary War, as well as land claims in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Georgia, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri, and Mississippi. Information may include an individual's name and location of land or place of residence when the claim was made. *Grassroots of America*, an index to the *American State Papers*, is available in the Genealogy Collection, which also owns a

microfilm copy of the *Papers*.

## Newspapers

The Reference and Documents Collection also houses a limited collection of Texas newspapers on microfilm. While Reference staff cannot search the papers to fulfill patron requests, the newspapers may be borrowed by patrons of other libraries on interlibrary loan. Patrons may write for a list of available newspapers; this list is also available on the Internet through the TSLAC WWW gateway (<http://www.tsl.state.tx.us>).

## Borrowing Privileges

All Texas residents may register *in person* as borrowers with proper identification. Circulating materials may be borrowed for a four-week period.



Photo by P.H. Polk, provided courtesy of k. anoa monsho.



Patrons who are unable to visit the State Library can borrow circulating materials on interlibrary loan through their local public library.

## TEXAS STATE ARCHIVES

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The Texas State Archives houses the permanently valuable, non-current records of Texas government. Both these records and the Archives' private manuscript collections may provide vital information for someone researching family or local history.

Government records include colonial, Republic, and State documents spanning a period from the mid-1700s to the present day. They include statistical abstracts of county government activities, application forms for government benefits, vouchers and warrants, muster rolls, election returns, agency correspondence, newspapers, photographs, and maps. The Archives' private manuscript collections include the papers of many prominent individuals in Texas history.

Most government records are filed in the order they were originally maintained; however, many records commonly used by genealogists are indexed by surname for easy access.

Researchers will need to consult the records of a number of different agencies to locate all that deal with a particular person. Which agency records series to consult will depend largely on when and where a person lived in Texas. Researchers should note, however, that state government records rarely include information about anyone except the person with whom an agency is transacting business.

Since the original records in the State Archives are unique and irreplaceable, persons wishing to work with them are required to complete a short registration form. All personal belongings are kept locked in individual lockers. Pencils and paper for note taking are provided by the program.

Staff will personally assist researchers at the State Archives. For telephone and mail requests, the staff can conduct limited searches for records concerning individuals for a definite geographic location and time period.

Photocopy facilities are available; patrons may also bring their own cameras and equipment to make photographic copies of original documents.

## Local Records

The State Archives also administers the Regional Historical Resource Depository (RHRD) program, which preserves archival records created by local governments (mostly counties, although some city, school district, and other local records are available). These holdings are extremely important to genealogists researching Texas family histories.

The RHRDs (of which the Genealogy Collection is one, holding records for most counties in Central Texas excepting Travis County) maintain microfilm copies of marriage, deed, probate, naturalization, and other records important to genealogists. Microfilm records may be transferred to any library in the nation through interlibrary loan.

The publication *Texas County Records* is the finding aid to this film. This county-by-county inventory lists the type of record, date and volume number of the record, and the microfilm reel number. The guide also provides complete contact information for each of the 25 depositories in the RHRD network. *Texas County Records* is available for use in the Archives, Reference and Genealogy Collections and can be purchased from the State Library. Contact the Archives for purchase information.

One of the RHRDs, the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in Liberty (between Houston and Beaumont), is owned and operated by the State Library. The center serves the ten Southeast Texas counties that make up the old Atascosito District.





Texas  
State Library  
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all Texans

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Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives  
and Library Building • 1201 Brazos Street

Post Office Box 12927  
Austin, Texas 78711-2927

**Genealogy Collection Room 110**  
Hours: 8:00-5:00 Tuesday through Saturday  
(512) 463-5463 • [geninfo@tsl.state.tx.us](mailto:geninfo@tsl.state.tx.us)

**Reference Services Room 300**  
Hours: 8:00-5:00 Monday through Friday  
(512) 463-5455 • [reference\\_desk@tsl.state.tx.us](mailto:reference_desk@tsl.state.tx.us)

**Texas State Archives Room 100**  
Hours: 8:00-5:00 Monday through Friday  
(512) 463-5480 • [archinfo@tsl.state.tx.us](mailto:archinfo@tsl.state.tx.us)

Limited parking is available, with a parking permit,  
on the north and west sides of the Lorenzo de Zavala  
Building. Patrons can get a permit from the  
Genealogy or Archives libraries on the first floor.

**Parking permits are not required on Saturday**

**GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES AT  
THE TEXAS STATE LIBRARY**

**To learn more about the  
Texas State Library  
and Archives Commission,  
contact the Public Information Office  
at 512/936-INFO**

**or e-mail: [pio@tsl.s](mailto:pio@tsl.s)**

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