

Hidden Genealogical Treasures in the Library of Congress

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Library of Congress Website
<http://www.loc.gov>



The Library of Congress is the largest library in the world. Along with supporting the research of Congress, the Library collects materials that tell the American story. Over 51 million items from the Library of Congress are available on the Library's website available at no charge to anybody with access to the Internet.

Searching the Library's website is not like searching a genealogy database. Searches are performed in two methods: bibliographic details (title, author, description) and full text (if available). In performing a general search, try using a surname with a location (i.e., Barnes Custer Nebraska – to find information about the Barnes family in Custer County, Nebraska). Also try doing a search on a specific location (i.e., Will County Illinois) to see what is available for that county and then look through or search that item for your family.



Books

In performing a general search, some of the items could be books that have been digitized by the Library of Congress. These books were most likely published prior to 1923 as anything since then may still be under copyright. When clicking on a book in a search list, the bibliographic details will be displayed. In the details, look for **Links** and click on the link for hdl.loc.gov. The Library of Congress has placed their digitized books in archive.org and this link will bring up the item in archive.org. To do a full-text search in the book, click in the black oval search box

 and type the name or place that you want to search in the book. It will search the entire book and show where the word appears within the book.

SELECTED SAMPLING OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Prints & Photographs Online Catalog

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



This catalog contains records to over 1.2 million digitized items. The material in this collection includes photographs, fine and popular prints and drawings, posters, and architectural and engineering drawings.

Farm Security Administration/ Office of War Information Black-and-White Negatives

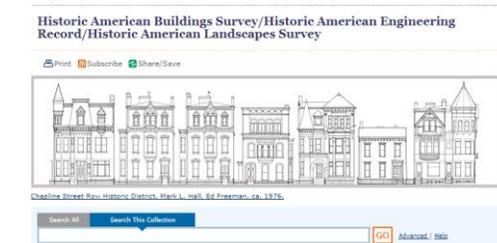
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/fsa/>



This collection is an extensive pictorial record of American life between 1935 – 1944. Photographers travelled the United States documenting life within the United States especially during the Depression era. It contains over 175,000 black and white images.

Historic American Building Survey/ Historic American Engineering Record/ Historic American Landscapes Survey

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/>



This collection documents a wide variety of building types, engineering technologies, and landscapes across the United States. It contains more than 556,900 measured drawings, large-format photographs, and written histories for more than 38,600 historic structures.

Ansel Adams's Photographs of Japanese-American Internment at Manzanar

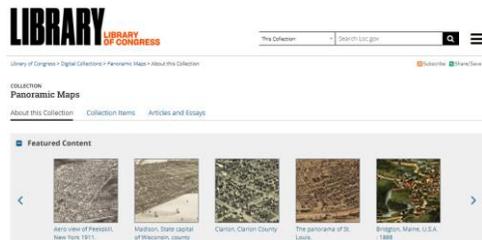
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/manz/>



In 1943, Ansel Adams, a well-known photographer, documented life within the Manzanar War Relocation Center for Japanese-Americans. The collection contains over 200 photographs.

Panoramic Maps (Birds-Eye View Maps)

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



These panoramic maps were popular pieces of art during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Artist would walk the town or city and portray each building and house in the down on the map.

Sanborn Maps

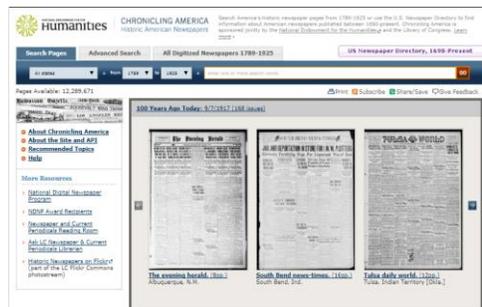
<https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps/>



The Sanborn Maps includes maps create for the fire insurance industry. Over 25,000 sheets have been digitized for over cities in the Unites States, Canada, Mexico, and Cuba.

Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>



This collection provides access to historic newspapers from 1789 – 1925. Over 12 million pages of newsprint have been digitized from both large and small communities throughout the United States.

Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936 – 1938

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



During 1936 – 1938, American authors were hired to travel the United States interviewing individuals. One of the projects was to interview former slaves. More than 2,300 first-person account interviews and 500 black-and-white photographs were collected of former slaves.

American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936 – 1940

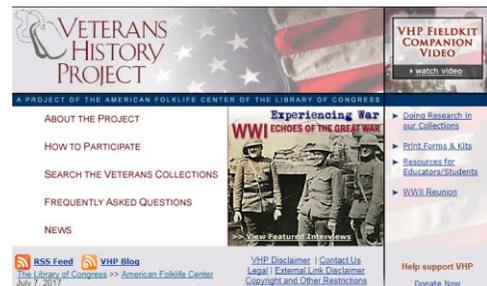
<https://www.loc.gov/collections/federal-writers-project/>



During the Depression era, American authors were hired to conduct oral history interviews across the county. More than 300 authors conducted interviews throughout the United States.

Veterans History Project

<http://www.loc.gov/vets/>



In 2000, Congress passed an act that the Library of Congress was to collect interviews with U.S. Veterans of any of the military conflicts. Many of these interviews have been digitized and are available online.