

A Guide to Researching Family History
at the Cloverdale Library

British Columbia



Updated June 2022



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Surrey Libraries recognizes that our work takes place on the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territories of the SEMYOME (Semiahmoo), q̓íç'əy' (Katzie), k̓wík̓wəł̓əm (Kwikwetlem), q̓w̓ɑ:n̓ł̓ən' (Kwantlen), q̓iq̓éyt (Qayqayt), x̓m̓əθk̓wəy̓əm (Musqueam) First Nations and on the ancestral and traditional territory of the sc̓əwəθən m̓əsteyəx̓w (Tsawwassen) First Nation.

This guide is intended to familiarize you with the British Columbia family history resources in our Family History department's print and microfilm collections. It will also provide information and links to online resources that may further assist you in your research.

The Family History department is located at the Cloverdale branch of Surrey Libraries at 5642 176A street, Surrey, British Columbia.

Our Family History department has trained staff that are willing to assist you in your research. Please contact us at familyhistory@surrey.ca or call us at 604-598-7328.

Databases

A large part of family history research involves searching within databases. The Family History department has several databases for you to use at the library. The main databases we will refer are the following:

- *Ancestry Library Edition*: International genealogy resource with the largest online Canadian family history collection, searchable by surname. Many digitized records are available for viewing, printing, and saving. Ancestry Library Edition is available at all Surrey Libraries branches. A list of resources within Ancestry, relevant to British Columbia can be found by following these steps:
 - Click TWICE on the Search Tab
 - Under "explore by location" select British Columbia
- *FamilySearch* - Affiliate Library Access. A large, free database available anywhere that is administered by the Church of Latter-Day Saints and has many digitized collections not found elsewhere. Surrey Libraries has Affiliate Library status with *FamilySearch*, allowing users at the library to access many digital images of original documents that would otherwise be locked to home users. Available at all Surrey Libraries branches.
- *FindMyPast*. An international genealogy resource with a large collection of Canadian records, searchable by surname. Many digitized records are available for viewing, printing, and saving. Available only at our Cloverdale branch.
- *TheGenealogist*. A key site for British research, this database contains over 800 million records and includes collections not found in other databases. Its international holdings include emigration and military records for Canada, Australia, South Africa, and India, and Scottish directories from the 15th to 19th Century. The majority of its records are independently transcribed – useful for addressing indexing errors in other databases.
- *Points to the Past*. This is a gateway to a world-class collection of primary sources, made up of nearly 200 million pages of digitized historical content – maps, photos, newspapers, manuscripts, pamphlets, portraits, and much more. Includes a solid collection of UK historical newspapers from the 17th to 19th Centuries.

Census Records

GENERAL

Census returns are a very useful resource for family historians. You can learn a variety of information about your family; e.g., where they were born, where they lived, what they did for a living, their religion, and much more.

ONLINE

Census returns for British Columbia are available online and searchable by surname. When searching, remember that British Columbia joined Confederation in July 1871 so the first Federal Census record would be 1881. Of note, the most recent census is 1921 for national census and 1926 for the prairie census. Below is a list of websites where you can find Canadian Census records.

- *Ancestry Library Edition* available at all branches of Surrey Libraries
<https://www.surreylibraries.ca/services/family-history>
- *FamilySearch.org*: www.familysearch.org.
 - The 1921 census is not available on this site.
- *Automated Genealogy*: <http://www.automatedgenealogy.com/index.html>
 - 1901, 1906, 1911 and partial 1851 census available
- *Library & Archives Canada*:
<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/Pages/census.aspx>
 - Information centre for all Canadian censuses (1640-1926) and links to searchable databases.

- 1666-1891 Census:
The library has several copies of a Finding Aid called *Catalogue of Census Returns on Microfilm 1666-1891*. This book is organized by province, and then town or county with the matching microfilm numbers noted for each location.

- Prairie Census 1906, 1916, 1926
These are special census records released for the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. There is a binder marked "1916 Census," located on the census book shelves near the print directories, which summarizes the census districts and sub-districts by name.

To find the corresponding microfilm number for a certain location, see the list in the binder of film numbers and areas covered on each reel.

- 1901-1921 Census:
These Census records are mostly available online, but the Cloverdale Family History department does hold some extracts in print. Please ask a Family History staff person for assistance.

PRINT

Census Indexes: If you prefer to view Census Records in print, rather than online or on microfilm, the Family History department has some finding aids and census extracts. To find a census in print, please check our library catalogue with the keyword search "Canadian Census". An example:

Obee, Dave. *Counting Canada: a genealogical guide to the Canadian Census*.
Library call number: GEN 929.371 OBE 2012

MICROFILM

The Family History department has some items in print which can help you identify the correct microfilm for your ancestor. You need to know the location – town, county, province to your best knowledge. Generally, most census records are available online, but the department has a large collection of Canadian Census Microfilms.

Vital Records

Civil registration in British Columbia began in 1872. Any earlier records are called “colonial” as British Columbia was a colony prior to becoming a province. Privacy laws restrict public access to these records, imposing a waiting period before records are released, as follows:

Births released:	after 120 years
Marriages released:	after 75 years
Deaths released:	after 20 years

Immediate family may bypass privacy restrictions and apply for a copy of a birth, marriage or death directly to the department of vital statistics: This is NOT a free service. <http://www.vs.gov.bc.ca/questions-genealogy.html>

Remember to request the *registration* document as this carries the most genealogical information.

ONLINE

The best resource to find a free, publicly available registration is the BC Archives Index online:

<http://search-collections.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/Genealogy/BasicSearch>.

Most entries are digitized, but if there is no jpg file showing the original document note the microfilm number (which starts with a B) and the registration number, as this will be available on microfilm (see below).

Two other groups of records that are available at BC Archives are the following:

Baptisms: 1836-1888
Colonial Marriage 1859-1872

These are particularly useful for First Nations research, especially when searching by location. *Hint* Use the “Advanced” search form. Please note that the only record is what you see on the BC Archives database. NO microfilm exists for these two types of records.

PRINT

The Family History department has some finding aids for vital records in its print collection. An example:

BC Genealogical Society. *British Columbia Vital Statistics from Newspapers*.
Library call number: 929.3711 POR 1994

MICROFILM

The Family History department has microfilm records for the following years:

Births:	1854-1903
Marriages:	1872-1933
Deaths:	1872-1988

To find your vital record on microfilm, you will need a B series file film number, and the registration number. For example, from the following indexed marriage record from the BC Archives online index, the B number is B13890 and the registration number is 1924-09-008790.

Groom Name:	BROWN, HARRY
Bride Name:	DAWSON, EMMA DOROTHY
Date:	1924/12/08
Event Place:	ALERT BAY
Registration Number:	1924-09-008790
B.C. Archives Mfilm Number:	B13890
GSU Mfilm Number:	2114099
Event Type:	Marriage
Vital Stat Images(s):	

Usually, of the last six digits of the registration number (008790 from the above example), the first 3 digits of the registration number represent the volume number, and the last three indicate the file number. In most cases you will simply find the 6-digit registration number on the film just as you saw it online. However, if you can't find your record on the film because the numbers *appear* to be wrong, your number may be split, check that you are searching the correct volume on the film (top or bottom of the record). Once you are in the correct volume, search within that volume for the last 3 digits of the registration number, ignoring all other preceding numbers on the film record. (From the example above, within volume 008 on the film, look for the file number ending in 790.) If unsuccessful, please ask at the information desk for assistance.

FamilySearch.org is a good secondary resource for digitized BC Vital records. Search results with a camera icon indicates that the record has been digitized.

You may also find some more recent vital records in newspapers. Three good sources for BC historical newspapers are:

Library and Archives Canada: <https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/collection/research-help/pages/newspaper-collection.aspx>

UBC's historical newspapers collection:
<http://historicalnewspapers.library.ubc.ca/>

The Ancestor Hunt: <https://www.theancestorhunt.com/blog/british-columbia-online-historical-newspapers-summary#.XIJGSRKi70>

Divorce Records

ONLINE

After confederation in 1867 and up until 1963, people wanting to divorce were required to place a notice in the *Canada Gazette*. The *Acts of Divorce (1841-1968)* database at Libraries and Archives Canada, includes references to divorce acts published in the Statutes of the Province of Canada, Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, and Statutes of Canada and Journals of the Senate of Canada. Please follow this link:

<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/vital-statistics-births-marriages-deaths/divorce-1841-1968/Pages/acts-divorce-1841-1968.aspx>

MICROFILM

The Family History Department has a microfilm index to *BC Divorce Orders 1901-1983*. They are listed under the husband's surname. This is an index only; any further information must be obtained from BC Archives. For further information please see our guide *Canadian Family History Resources: A Guide to the Resources Held at Cloverdale Library*, pages 5-3 and 5-4.

Church Records

PRINT

The Family History department has a small collection of church histories from British Columbia churches that contain records of church members. For example:

St. Matthew's Anglican Church: 1900 to 1980, Abbotsford
Library call number: 283.711 STM

Nicol, Mary. *St. Mary's Catholic Church: the first 50 years*. [Gibsons]
Library call number: 282.711 NIC 2000

Anglican Church of Canada. *Guide to the Holdings of the Archives of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon*
Library call number: 929.3711 GUI 1993

MICROFILM

Cloverdale Library has an index for Western Canadian parish records on microfilm. They are listed in the library's guide, *Canadian Family History Resources*, under Parish and Vital Records on page 5-83.

Cemetery Records

ONLINE

BC Cemetery Finding Aid: <http://bccfa.islandnet.com//>

An index only site that tells you the location and name of the cemetery. Does NOT include ALL BC Cemetery records.

Old Cemeteries Society (of Victoria):
<https://oldcem.bc.ca/>

St. George's Church Fort Langley & Hudson's Bay Records:
<http://fortlangley.ca/StGeorge.html>

Mary's Genealogy Treasures – Cemeteries, Obituaries, and Funeral homes for BC:
<http://www.telusplanet.net/public/mtoll/locate2.htm#bc>

BC Penitentiary Gravesite:
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~canbc/conlist.htm>

Find a Grave:
<https://www.findagrave.com/>

Canadian Headstones project:
<https://canadianheadstones.com/index.html>

CanadaGenWeb's Cemetery project:
<https://cemetery.canadagenweb.org/>

Canadian Genealogy Select your province of interest from this page:
<http://www.canadiangenealogy.net/index.htm>

PRINT

The Family History department has many books containing transcriptions from cemetery markers in British Columbia. Search for items using the keyword "BC Cemeteries".

City Directories

City directories are a great resource to fill in the gaps from Census records. They are generally published annually, and contain information such as address, occupation, marital status. Directories are increasingly becoming digitized and available online on the databases noted on page 3 above.

ONLINE

Vancouver Public library has digitized the BC directories collection from 1860-1955 and made it available online here; <https://bccd.vpl.ca/>

Library and Archives Canada has a collection of historical directories for some locations across Canada, searchable here: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/directories-collection/Pages/directories-collection.aspx>

Ancestry.ca and FamilySearch.org also have collections of directories for most provinces. See page 3, above.

TheAncestorHunt.com provides links to directories for all provinces here:
<https://theancestorhunt.com/directories.html>

PRINT

Directories from approximately 1980 to present can be found in our print collection. Some of the formats are criss-cross (address and phone number indexes), regular directories, and phone books. There is a small number of miscellaneous directories from the 1960's and 1970's as well.

The Family History also hold the following series that contains BC directory information:

Genealogical Research Library. 1994. *The **Western** Canadians 1600 to 1900: an alphabetized directory of the people, places, and vital dates.* Toronto.
Genealogical Research Library
Library call number – GEN 929.3712 WES

MICROFILM

The Family History department has a collection of BC Directories on microfilm from 1860-1995. Please check each microfilm box for geographic coverage, there are sometimes several reels per year.

Newspapers

ONLINE

Surrey Libraries has the *BC Historical Newspapers* database, searchable, containing full coverage for the *Vancouver Sun* (1912 to 2010), *Province* (1898 to 2010), and *Victoria Times Colonist* (1894 to 2010).

British Columbia Historical Newspapers 1859-1995. Site hosted by UBC, contains many smaller newspapers from all across BC.

<https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/bcnewspapers>

Victoria Times Colonist / British Colonist Newspaper:

The University of Victoria has British Colonist Newspaper, which can be searched online by keyword and browsed by date. The university's website now contains all the issues of the *British Colonist* (also called *The Daily British Colonist*, the *Daily Colonist*, and other variants) from its first issue in 1858 to 1980.

<http://www.britishcolonist.ca/index.html>

Ancestor Hunt newspapers links:

<https://www.theancestorhunt.com/newspaper-research-links.html>

The British Columbia Regional Digitized History website (<https://bcrdh.ca/>) has digitized Okanagan region historical newspapers from several Okanagan communities. <https://bcrdh.ca/islandora/object/news%3Aroot>

Canadiana.ca provides a searchable collection of digitized historical newspapers for all provinces: <https://www.canadiana.ca/collection-serials>

Library and Archives Canada provides a geographical list newspapers by province and then by city/town names. Some of the titles have links to digitized copies of the newspapers:

<https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/collection/research-help/pages/newspaper-collection.aspx> (Under Filter options: Region, select British Columbia)

This is a good resource for determining the name of the newspaper in the research location of interest. If the newspaper of interest does not provide a link to a digitized copy, it may be available by searching for it on Canadiana.ca

<https://www.canadiana.ca/collection-serials> .

The Google News Archive has a large collection of historical newspapers.

Researchers will need to know the name of the newspaper. This resource is not keyword-searchable. <https://news.google.com/newspapers>

Native Voice, the Official Organ of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia, has archived newspapers 1947-1955 that focus on the Indigenous community.

<https://nativevoice.ca/>

Smaller communities may have their own online archives of their local newspapers. Contact the newspaper, local archive/museum, or local public library in your area of interest to inquire, or ask our staff for assistance. Many local newspapers are now part of the Newspapers.com subscription database, which requires a paid subscription.

PRINT

While the Family History Department does not hold any print copies of historical newspapers, however we do have some print resources to assist you if you do not know the name of the newspapers that were in publication in the period and place of your area of interest.

MICROFILM

The Family History department has microfilm holdings for the following newspapers:

Vancouver Sun	1979 to 2019
Vancouver Province	1993 to 2019
Surrey Leader	1929 to 2005; Apr – Sept 2006
Surrey Now	1984 to 1989; 1994 to 2009
Surrey Times	1895 (incomplete)
Surrey Gazette	1917 to 1929 (incomplete)

Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Surrey Campus, Special Collections, also has a microfilm collection: <https://libguides.kpu.ca/sc/newspapers>

Wills and Estate Records

The Family History department has the indexes and copies for all probated wills in BC from 1861-1981 on microfilm. Probate files themselves can be requested through BC Archives.

ONLINE

FamilySearch has British Columbia Estate files from 1859-1949, plus 1861-1981 for the probated wills index. Note that *FamilySearch* has the images for wills from 1861-1939 only.

Abbotsford Genealogy Society has indexes for British Columbia wills plus an index for non-BC (strays) wills on their website found here; <https://abbygs.ca/bc-wills.html>.

PRINT

Abbotsford Genealogical Society. *Index to British Columbia Stray Wills*.
Library Call Number 929.3711 IND 2019

Passenger & Immigration Lists

Passenger and Immigration lists can hold valuable information. They can indicate addresses, destinations and names of other family members. Note that census records often include the year a person arrived in Canada, which can be helpful in narrowing down dates for passenger and immigration list records. The 1901 census is the first to include information on the year of arrival and year of naturalization.

ONLINE

Ancestry Library Edition

- “Canadian Passenger Lists: 1865-1935” - searchable by name, port, ship, arrival/departure dates, with digital images of records (this includes records for the ports of Victoria, and Vancouver).
- “Canadian Immigration Records:1790-1906” - searchable by name. Transcriptions of records.

Library & Archives Canada:

<https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/collection/research-help/genealogy-family-history/immigration/pages/immigration.aspx>

- Home page for information on passenger lists and links to resources for ship’s passenger lists (ocean arrivals) as well as border entries.

PRINT

There are also numerous books of passenger list arrivals (that may not have been captured, or incorrectly indexed, in the online resources) and a variety of books on the topic of immigration to Canada. Browse the bookshelves in the 929.3 area. General books about Immigration are in the 325 area.

MICROFILM

Microfilms for all Canadian incoming passenger lists are available at the library. The films are organized by port of arrival and date. For details on the microfilms, see section 3-10 of the library’s guide: *Canadian Family History Resources*. For an online version of the Guide go to: www.surreylibraries.ca and follow the links to Services >Family History > Canadian Family History Resources.

Naturalization Records

ONLINE

Library and Archives Canada hold the following:

- Naturalization Records, 1828-1850 - Upper Canada and Canada West
- Citizenship Registration Records, 1851-1945 - Montreal Circuit Court
- Naturalization Records, 1915-1951

These are available here:

<https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/collection/research-help/genealogy-family-history/immigration/pages/citizenship-naturalization.aspx>

MICROFILM

See Section 4 of our guide, *Canadian Family History Resources*, for a description of naturalization records available on microfilm. Only immigrants who were born outside of Canada, Great Britain or the Commonwealth were required to become naturalized.

Border Entry Records

ONLINE

Ancestry Library Edition includes “Border Crossings: From U.S. to Canada, 1908-1935” that covers border entries into British Columbia at various locations along

the US border. Ancestry also has Border Crossings from Canada to the U.S., 1895-1960.

The *Ancestry* database also includes “Form 30A records: from 1919 to 1924”. During this time, the federal government required that individual forms be completed and submitted when crossing the border into Canada.

MICROFILM

The library has microfilm records of border crossings from the U.S. to Canada between 1908-1919, organized by date and port. To view a list of ports of entry and the corresponding film numbers, check section 3-41 in our guide: *Canadian Family History Resources*.

Land Records

British Columbia controlled most of its own land upon entering confederation. The practice of Pre-emption, which occurred between 1859 until 1970, was a method of acquiring provincial Crown land by claiming it for settlement and agricultural purposes. Certain areas of British Columbia were excluded from this and the areas were known as the “railway belt”. These lands were controlled by the Federal Government, and homesteading was made possible through Western Land Grants, 1870-1930.

ONLINE

The BC Archives holds the print records for provincial crown land grants, applications for homesteads, and purchases of crown lands. However, they have shared these resources with *FamilySearch.org* and they are available for browsing. In most cases you either must know the specific location, grant number or year to narrow down your search for information. Below is a list of collections available at *FamilySearch.org*.

- “British Columbia Crown Land Grants Records 1851-1874” - by location
- “British Columbia Crown Land Grants 1869-1930” – by year or volume number (vol)
- “British Columbia Crown Land Pre-Emption Registers 1860-1971” – by location
- “British Columbia Dominion Land Branch Records 1885-1949”

The government of British Columbia has an online resource, searchable by name, known as “GATOR”:

[http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pls/gator/gator\\$queryforms.menu](http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pls/gator/gator$queryforms.menu) If your grant is found you can find 2 documents related to it: a type of contract explaining the conditions of ownership, and a map which shows the legal description of the land. Free access.

Western Land Grants can be searched through the online database at *Library and Archives Canada* at this site: <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/land/land-grants-western-canada-1870-1930/Pages/search.aspx>. If you find a record, click on the item number, then note the microfilm number and the Liber (page) number. You can view the next document on <http://heritage.canadiana.ca/>. Search for the microfilm reel in the search box, then view the reel digitally and find your page number.

For both historical and contemporary land records, you can obtain information from the Land Title and Survey Authority of BC (LTSA) here; <https://ltsa.ca/about-ltsa/research-records>.

Please refer to our *Indigenous/Métis genealogy research guide* for information about Métis land records.

Place Names

If you need to find the name of a current or historic location in British Columbia, try searching the British Columbia Geographical Name Information Service (BCGNIS) here: <http://apps.gov.bc.ca/pub/bcgnws/>

Gazetteers can be another option to find place names. A gazetteer is something like a land dictionary; it describes places and place names and shows locations on a map. You can find gazetteers in our print collection under the call number 917.11 or 917.15.

Atlases & Maps

The Family History department has a large collection of historical atlases and maps. Many maps are oversized and cannot fit on regular bookshelves; they can be found on a separate stand close to the print collection. Also check the non-fiction section on the main floor which has many maps and atlases.

ONLINE

The *David Rumsey Map Collection* has a large collection of digitized historical maps. Type "British Columbia" into the search box at the top right, then you can refine your results using the "Refine" menu on the left of your results page: <https://www.davidrumsey.com/>

Old Maps Online: <https://www.oldmapsonline.org/>.

University of Victoria Historical Cartographic Collections
<https://www.uvic.ca/library/featured/collections/cartography/index.php>

University of Alabama
<http://alabamamaps.ua.edu/historicalmaps/canada/bc.html>

Hudson's Bay Company Indexes

The Hudson's Bay Company was active in the development of the western provinces since its establishment in 1670. These records can be useful to research early British Columbian family history. Many types of records exist including contracts, personal accounts, pension records, estate records and census information on Indigenous peoples.

ONLINE

The Archives of Manitoba holds the Hudson's Bay Company Archives collection. For more information about their collection and the research tools available, please visit this link: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/index.html>

MICROFILM

Our Family History department has three Hudson's Bay Company record indexes on microfilm that act as detailed finding aids to what's available at the Hudson Bay

Archives in Manitoba. The films are finding aid microfilms: 20M1, 1M1252 and 1M1253.

PRINT

Duffus, Maureen. *Craigflower Country: a history of View Royal, 1850 – 1950*.
Library call number: 971.128 CRA 1993

Morin, Gail. *Company Men*.

[A series of over 20 volumes of genealogies of men who worked for the Hudson's Bay Company.]

Library call number: 929.37127 MOR 2017

Beattie, Judith Hudson, and Helen M. Buss, eds. *Undelivered Letters to Hudson's Bay Company Men on the Northwest Coast of America, 1830-57*.

Library call number: 971.102 UND 2003

Local Histories

Local histories can be a great resource for filling in many different types of family history details. Local histories can have detailed information about the people who lived there, including photos and biographies.

ONLINE

Digitized Okanagan History

<https://doh.arcabc.ca/>

PRINT

The library has many local histories for towns in British Columbia. To see if the library has a history of a town or area, look in the library catalogue using "Subject browse" and terms: "British Columbia – History". Or if you want to browse our print collection, British Columbia histories can be found under the call number 971.1. Some examples:

Drew, Ralph. *Forest & Fjord: the history of Belcarra*.

Library call number: 971.133 DRE 2013

McCuaig, George. *Kaslo – the first 100 years*.

Library call number: 971.14 MCC 1993

Lumby Historians. *Grassroots of Lumby: 1877 – 1927*.

Library call number: 971.15 GRA 1979

Harris, Lorraine. *Halfway to the Goldfields – A History of Lillooet*.

Library call number:

Indigenous Peoples

[Please refer also to our Indigenous/Métis Genealogy research guide for more information on researching Indigenous people in Canada.]

First Nations, Inuit, Métis are collectively referred to as Indigenous peoples.

An important note on bias and colonial records language in historical records:

Language in historical records reflects the culture of the times in which they were written. As such, you will see terms we would not use today such as “Indian”, “Native”, and racial slurs such as “Half-Breed”, used for Indigenous peoples, “Racial Origins” used for heritage, and “white” for Caucasian people. While we strive to develop new relationships with Indigenous peoples based on recognition of their rights, respect, and cooperation, family historians will need to look for and use these types of historical terms when searching historical records.

Some things to keep in mind when searching for Indigenous people in British Columbia:

Civil registration began in 1872 but many records from reserves or smaller communities may not have made it to the government body. At the time of the vital event (birth/baptism, marriage, death), it was the job of an Indian Agent to record the information and send it to the government agency.

At baptism, often names were changed from their birth names to a new Western first name only, with the last name noted as “unknown.” The next generation of this family sometimes took on the parent’s new Western first name as a surname. Here is an example of a baptism from BC Archives;

Event Type:
Baptism
BC Archives Mfilm Number:
B16253 - not available at BC Archives
Event Date (YYYY-MM-DD):
1864-10-31
Event Place:
SAINTE MARIE MISSION
Person:
LOUIS UNKNOWN
Person's Father:
PIERRE PUNICELLO
Person's Mother:
CHRISTINE WALLA-WALLA
Denomination:
ROMAN CATHOLIC
Church Name:
ST MARYS INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL
Other Location:
MISSION CITY
Birth Date (YYYY-MM-DD):
1864-10-21
Affiliation:
KANAK / FORT LANGLEY

CENSUS RECORDS

See page 7-1 of *Canadian Family History Resources* for more information on how to search census records for Indigenous peoples’ information.

Of note, when searching online census records for indigenous peoples, please be aware that the term “Indian” is sometimes used as a racial descriptor in the “racial origin” columns. You can also do a broad search using location and “Indian” in either keyword or race search boxes. When the head of household was white but his wife was not, often times the entire family’s racial origin would be classified as white.

ONLINE

BC Archives has an index of baptisms 1836-1888 which include many Indigenous peoples. Please note that originals are not available for this collection and your

next step to research further would be noting the source – school, church denomination – to see if they hold any records. Please also note that names have most likely been changed many times, or misspelled. Baptisms often occurred at a later age, often just prior to marriage.

Below are some online resources available for Indigenous family history research.

British Columbia Assembly of First Nations – Band list search:

<https://www.bcafn.ca/search/node?keys=band+lists>

Coast Salish Artist Joe Jack band lists for British Columbia:

<http://www.joejack.com/indianbandsinbcmv.html>

Library and Archives Canada Indigenous Heritage site: <https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/corporate/about-us/strategies-initiatives/indigenous-documentary-heritage-initiatives/pages/indigenous-documentary-heritage-initiatives.aspx>

Métis Nation BC: <https://www.mnbc.ca/>

Fraser Valley Métis Nation: <https://www.fvma.ca/>

PRINT

Listed below is a small sampling of Indigenous family history books. When searching in the catalogue for books on this topic use the keywords “Indigenous peoples – British Columbia”.

Barman, Jean. *Invisible generations: living between indigenous and white in the Fraser Valley.*

Library call number: 305.8970711 BAR 2019

Pearson, John. *Land of the Royal Kwantlen: a history of North Surrey, BC*

Library call number: 971.133 PEA 1960

Andrews, G.S. *Metis Outpost: memoirs of the first schoolmaster at the Metis settlement of Kelly Lake, BC.*

Library call number: 971.187 AND 1985

Morin, Gail. *Company Men.*

[A series of over 30 volumes of genealogies of men who worked for the Hudson’s Bay Company, many of whom married indigenous women.]

Library call number: 929.37127 MOR 2017

MICROFILM

Cloverdale Family History department holds all British Columbia Baptisms 1836-1888 indexes on microfilm. This same collection is available online at BC Archives.

Military Records

ONLINE

Ancestry.ca and *FamilySearch.org* (see page 3 of this guide) include searchable military records in their databases.

Library and Archives Canada holds Canadian military personnel and service files. Records that are open to the public are pre-1914, World War 1, and World War 2 for soldiers that died in service. Information is provided on this link, which also provides searchable databases: <https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/collection/research-help/military-heritage/lest-we-forget/pages/selecting-service-files.aspx>

Veterans Affairs Canada: <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng>

Books of Remembrance search page
<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/books/search>

Soldiers of the First World War: <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/Pages/introduction.aspx> Digital images of war diaries of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, searchable by unit name and date

Canadian Expeditionary Force records: <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/search.aspx> searchable database.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission: A site that honors the 1.7 million men and women of the Commonwealth forces who died in the First and Second World Wars,
<https://www.cwgc.org/>

Canadian Virtual War Memorial: <http://www.virtualmemorial.gc.ca/>

Royal Canadian Armored Corps Battle Honors:
<http://regimentalrogue.com/battlehonours/rcac.htm>

Canadian Military Heritage Project: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~canmil/>

PRINT

When searching for military print items in our library catalogue use keywords such as “soldiers – Canada”, “soldiers - Canada - indexes”, or “soldiers -location- registers”. Some examples here:

BC Genealogical Society. *British Columbia War Memorials: An index of names*
Library Call number 929.3711 BRI 1990

British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa. *Index to Canadian Service Records of the South African War (1899-1902) held at the National Archives of Canada.*
Library call number 929.371 IND 1999

Cox, Kenneth. *A Call to the Colours: Tracing Your Canadian Military Ancestors.*
Library call number: 929.1072071 COX 2011

MICROFILM

See Section 9 of the library’s guide *Canadian Family History Resources* which describes Canadian military records on microfilm available at the library.

In 2001, vital events records were released that were related to the deaths of 3423 British Columbians in World War Two. Although British Columbia death registrations normally cover only deaths that occurred in British Columbia, these records are an exception. These records can be found on the BC Archives

genealogy site. Search the site as usual by name but try adding “overseas” as a place name, as well as each war year between 1940 and 1945. You may also try searching by place name – most common are England, Holland, Hong Kong, India, Italy, France, and Germany.

These records are available in microfilm format in our Family History department. The film numbers are B14424, B14425, B14426, and B14427.

Other Resources

General Register of Chinese Immigration

The UBC department of History has indexed the General Register of Chinese Immigration for the years 1885-1949. The following database at Library and Archives Canada includes this Register, as well as other Chinese Immigration records: <https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/collection/research-help/genealogy-family-history/immigration/pages/immigrants-from-china-1885-1949.aspx>

Between 1887-1923 Chinese people wishing to immigrate were required to pay a \$500.00 tax. The records of these payments provide a wealth of information about the immigrants. The microfilmed records are organized by the date immigration certificates were issued. To view these microfilms consult section 3-52 to 3-54 of the library’s guide: *Canadian Family History Resources*.

ONLINE

Google Books: <http://books.google.ca/bkshp?hl=en&tab=wp>
Search by place name (location) for access to digital books

BC Genealogical Society:
<https://www.bcgs.ca/>

BC School records: lists of school districts and contacts
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/apps/imcl/imclWeb/Home.do>
Contact BC Archives for extensive collections of school records (subject to access to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act). Use the search box at the top right corner and type in schools – British Columbia https://search-bcarchives.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/?_ga=2.48558758.1412526946.1573243061-598450383.1572301170

Miscellaneous lists for British Columbia:
<http://sites.rootsweb.com/~canbc/bc.htm>

For example:

Patients admitted to BC hospitals in 1878
<http://sites.rootsweb.com/~canbc/bchospitals.htm>

Unclaimed letters New Westminster post office 1871
<http://sites.rootsweb.com/~canbc/letters2.htm>

Doukhobor Collection UBC
https://guides.library.ubc.ca/spcoll_Canadian_History/Doukhobors
A collection that started in the 1950’s and has grown to include; books, pamphlets, journals, manuscripts, tapes, theses, photographs, and government publications.

Jewish Genealogical Society of British Columbia:

<http://jgsbc.ca/>

Memory BC:

British Columbia archives portal.

<https://www.memorybc.ca/>

Newsletters and Magazines

The department holds a collection of popular family history magazines such as *Internet Genealogy* and *Family Tree*. Articles within these magazines may include information specific to Canada and Canadian provinces.

The department also holds newsletters from various genealogy societies around British Columbia. For example:

The British Columbia Genealogist: Quarterly newsletter of the British Columbia Genealogy Society

Splitting Heirs: Quarterly newsletter of the Vernon and District Family History Society

Newsletters and magazines can be borrowed with a Surrey Libraries card.

Need help? Have questions? Contact us!

Surrey Libraries Family History

<https://www.surreylibraries.ca/services/family-history>

Email: familyhistory@surrey.ca

Tel: 604-598-7328