

# Newfoundland

## Research Outline

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This outline describes major sources of information about families from Newfoundland. As you read this outline, study the *Canada Research Outline* (34545), which will help you understand terminology and the contents and uses of genealogical records.

## RECORDS OF THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

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The Family History Library has many of the records described in this outline. Some of the sources described in this outline list the Family History Library's book, microfilm, microfiche, and computer numbers. These are preceded by *FHL*, the abbreviation for *Family History Library*. You can use these numbers to locate materials in the library and to order microfilm and microfiche at Family History Centers.

You can use the computer number if you have access to the Family History Library Catalog on computer. The "Computer Number Search" is the fastest way to find a source in the catalog.

## RESEARCH STRATEGY

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When researching in this province, you should begin by checking the following records in the order suggested:

1. Vital records
2. Church records
3. Census returns
4. Probate records
5. Land records

## ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

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- Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (P.A.N.L.)

Colonial Building  
Military Road  
St. John's, NF A1C 2C9  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-757-8030  
Fax: 709-757-8031

The major holdings of the archives are listed in:

*The Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories.* Ottawa: National Archives of Canada, 1975. (FHL book 971 A3cp.) Two inventories of its holdings have also been published: Preliminary Inventory no. 1 (1970) and Preliminary Inventory no. 2 (1972); both are out of print.

- A. C. Hunter Library

Arts and Culture Center  
Allendale Road  
St. John's, NF A1B 3A3  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-737-2133  
Fax: 709-737-2660

- Centre d'archives de la Capitale

2424 Watt St.  
Sainte-Foy, PQ G1P 3T3  
CANADA  
Telephone: 418-683-5784

- Centre for Newfoundland Studies

Queen Elizabeth II Library  
Memorial University  
St. John's, NF A1B 3Y1  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-737-7475 or 709-737-7476

- Family History Library

35 N. West Temple Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3400

- Folklore and Language Archive

Education Bldg., Memorial University  
St. John's, NF A1C 5S7  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-737-8401

- Labrador Institute of Northern Studies

P.O. Box 309, Station 'A'  
Goose Bay, Labrador A0P 1S0  
CANADA

- Le Centre d'études acadiennes (Center for Acadian Studies)

Université de Moncton  
Moncton, NB E1A 3E9  
CANADA  
Telephone: 506-858-4085  
Fax: 506-858-4086

- Legislative Library

House of Assembly  
P.O. Box 8700  
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-729-3604

- National Archives of Canada

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0N3  
CANADA  
Telephone: 613-996-7458  
Fax: 613-995-6274

- Provincial Reference Library

Public Library Services  
125 Allandale Road, #1  
St John's NF A1B 3R6  
CANADA

- Queen's College Library

214 Prince Philip Drive  
St. John's, NF A1B 3R6  
CANADA

- Family History Library

35 N. West Temple Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3400  
USA

Most microfilms available at the library can also be distributed to its Family History Centers. A current list of branch libraries in your area can be obtained from the Family History Library.

## **Computer Networks and Bulletin Boards**

Computers with modems can be useful tools for obtaining information from selected archives and libraries. In a way, computer networks themselves serve as a library. The Internet, certain computer bulletin boards, and commercial on-line services help family history researchers:

- Locate other researchers.
- Post queries.
- Send and receive E-mail.
- Search large databases.
- Search computer libraries.
- Join in computer chat and lecture sessions.

You can find computerized research tips and information about ancestors from Newfoundland in a variety of sources at local, state, national, and international levels. The list of sources is growing rapidly. Most of the information is available at no cost.

Addresses on the Internet change frequently. As of September 1997, the following sites are important gateways linking you to many more network and bulletin board sites:

- Canada GenWeb

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~canwgw/>

A cooperative effort by many volunteers to list genealogical databases, libraries, bulletin boards, and other resources available on the Internet for each county and province.

- Canadian Genealogy Resources

<http://genealogy.about.com/hobbies/genealogy/msubcanada.htm>

Lists county, provincial, and national sources; personal pages; and publications.

- Roots-L

<http://www.rootsweb.com/roots-l/canada.html>

A useful list of sites and resources. Includes a large, regularly updated research coordination list.

## **CENSUS**

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Census records exist for French and British settlers in Newfoundland. In general, the French records are for Plaisance (Placentia). They are transcripts of copies at the National Archives of Canada. The original records are in France.

## French

1671, 1673, 1691, 1693      Names all household members.  
1698, 1704, 1706, 1711      Names head of household only.

(All of the above census records are available at the National Archives of Canada. Transcripts of most of these are in “Mémoires de la Société Généalogique Canadienne-Française,” vols. 10-11.)

## British

1796                      Names heads of households for St. John’s.  
1800–1801              Names heads of households for Trinity Bay.  
1836–1951              Names statistical abstracts.  
1911                      Names all household members only for Fogo and Port de Grave.  
1921                      Names all household members. Does not include the districts of Bay de Verde, Bonavista, Fogo, and Labrador.  
1935, 1945              Names all household members for entire province.

(These censuses are available at the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (P.A.N.L.)

## CHURCH RECORDS

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The major denominations of Newfoundland include the Anglican Church, the Catholic Church, and the United Church of Canada (the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists united in 1925 to form the United Church of Canada). The P.A.N.L. has parish registers, as follows:

Anglican	1752–1983
Catholic	1793–1981
United Church of Christ	1765–1981

The Maritime History Group, St. John’s holds copies of some English and Irish parish registers.

To find the name and address of a church, consult the appropriate religions or write their central office for assistance. To obtain church directories, write to:

### Anglican

The Archivist  
The Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador  
19 King's Bridge Road  
St. John's, NF A1C 3K4  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-576-6697  
Fax: 709-576-7122

### **Catholic**

Archdiocese of St. John's  
Roman Catholic Archives  
P.O. Box 1363  
St. John's, NF A1C 5N5  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-726-3660  
Fax: 709-726-8021

### **Salvation Army**

East Division Headquarters  
Salvation Army  
21 Adams Avenue  
St. John's, NF A1C 4Z1  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-579-2022  
Fax: 709-754-8336

### **United Church of Canada**

The United Church of Canada  
320 Elizabeth Avenue  
St. John's, NF A1B 1T9  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-754-0386  
Fax: 709-754-8336

## **DIRECTORIES**

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Many Newfoundland directories up to and including 1900 are available on microfiche:

*Pre-1900 Canadian Directories*. Ottawa, ON.: Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions, 1988. (On 4219 FHL fiche beginning with 6360453. These fiche do not circulate to Family History Centers.)

## **EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION**

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There are no records of Newfoundland immigration before the union with Canada in 1949. There are crew agreements of British ships, 1863–1939, available at the Maritime History Archives:

- Maritime History Archives

Henrietta Harvey Building  
Memorial University of Newfoundland  
St. John's, NF A1C 5S7  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-737-8428  
Fax: 709-737-3123

There are also crew agreements of the period 1919–1939 in the P.A.N.L.

## Canadian Border Crossing Records

The United States kept records of people crossing the border from Canada to the United States. These records are called border crossing lists, passenger lists, or manifests. There are two kinds of manifests:

- Manifests of people sailing from Canada to the United States.
- Manifests of people traveling by train from Canada to the United States.

In 1895 Canadian shipping companies agreed to make manifests of passengers traveling to the United States. The Canadian government allowed U.S. immigration officials to inspect those passengers while they were still in Canada. The U.S. immigration officials also inspected train passengers traveling from Canada to the United States. The U.S. officials worked at Canadian seaports and major cities like Québec and Winnipeg. The manifests from every seaport and emigration station in Canada were sent to St. Albans, Vermont.

The Family History Library has copies of both kinds of manifests. Because the manifests were sent to St. Albans, Vermont, most are grouped under *St. Albans District Manifest Records of Aliens Arriving from Foreign Contiguous Territory*. Despite the name, the manifests are actually from seaports and railroad stations all over Canada and the northern United States, not just Vermont.

**Border Crossing Manifests.** Manifests may include information about each passenger's name, port or station of entry, date of entry, age, literacy, last residence, previous visits to the United States, and birthplace. The manifests are reproduced in two series:

- *Manifests of Passengers Arriving in the St. Albans, Vermont, District through Canadian Pacific and Atlantic Ports, 1895–January 1921.* (608 rolls; FHL films 1561087–499; computer number 423848.) Includes records from seaports and railroad stations all over Canada and the northern United States. These manifests provide two types of lists:

—Traditional passenger lists on U.S. immigration forms.

—Monthly lists of passengers crossing the border on trains. These lists are divided by month. In each month, the records are grouped by railroad station. (The stations are listed in alphabetical order.) Under the station, the passengers are grouped by railroad company.

- *Manifests of Passengers Arriving in the St. Albans, Vermont, District through Canadian Pacific Ports, 1929–1949.* (25 rolls; FHL films 1549387–411; computer number 423848.) These list travelers to the United States from Canadian Pacific seaports only.

**Border Crossing Indexes.** In many cases, index cards were the *only* records kept of the crossings. These cards are indexed in four publications:

- *Soundex Index to Canadian Border Entries through the St. Albans, Vermont, District, 1895–1924.* (400 rolls; FHL films 1472801–3201; computer number 423848.)

The Soundex is a surname index based on the way a name sounds rather than how it is spelled. Names like Smith and Smyth are filed together.

- *Soundex Index to Entries into the St. Albans, Vermont, District through Canadian Pacific and Atlantic Ports, 1924–1952.* (98 rolls; FHL films 1570714–811; computer number 423848.)
- *St. Albans District Manifest Records of Aliens Arriving from Foreign Contiguous Territory: Records of Arrivals through Small Ports in Vermont, 1895–1924.* (6 rolls; FHL films 1430987–92; computer number 423849.) The records are arranged first by port and then alphabetically by surname. Only from Vermont ports of entry: Alburg, Beecher Falls, Canaan, Highgate Springs, Island Pond, Norton, Richford, St. Albans, and Swanton.
- *Detroit District Manifest Records of Aliens Arriving from Foreign Contiguous Territory: Arrivals at Detroit, Michigan, 1906–1954.* (117 rolls; FHL films 1490449–565; computer number 432703.) Only from Michigan ports of entry: Bay City, Detroit, Port Huron, and Sault Ste. Marie.

## Acadian Genealogy

The area comprising today's New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island was once known as Acadie. Eventually the name became Acadia. The area was first settled by the French, who established Port Royal (present-day Annapolis) in 1605. The territory passed back and forth from French to English hands many times: 1632 (French rule), 1654 (English), 1667 (French), 1690 (English), 1697 (French), and 1713 (English). In accordance with the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, France ceded the Nova Scotia peninsula and the New Brunswick area to England. England did little to settle the area and the French-speaking Acadians were the majority until about 1750. France still retained Ile Saint-Jean (now Prince Edward Island) and Cape Breton Island (now part of Nova Scotia), where Louisbourg became the capital.

A large number of the Acadians were deported by the English from 1755 to 1760. To escape deportation, many others fled to Quebec or to what is now New Brunswick. In 1759 the Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island areas fell to Britain and the settlers were deported to France. In 1763 France ceded most its maritime lands to England, and the area became known as Nova Scotia.

In 1769 a separate province, Saint John's Island (Ile St. Jean), was established. It became Prince Edward Island in 1799. In 1784 the New Brunswick area also became a separate province. About this time many Acadians who had been deported agreed to sign the oath of allegiance to England and were allowed to take up lands in the Maritime Provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island). They worked primarily as farmers and fishermen. For the most part, they continued to speak French and uphold their Roman Catholic faith.

Because of this great dispersion, the Acadian records are only complete for the early years of settlement. There are some good church registers from the late 1600s to 1755. Registers exist for Port Royal only for the earliest years.

The most important remaining sources for Acadian research are:



**Parish Registers.** Most of the remaining registers are housed in the Centre d'archives de la Capitale in the city of Québec and in Le Centre d'études acadiennes (Center for Acadian Studies) in Moncton, New Brunswick.

**Census Records.** See the "Census" section of this outline for information about Canadian censuses.

**Land Grants.** These can be found at the Archives des Colonies in Paris, France, as well as on microfilm at the National Archives of Canada.

**Notarial Records.** Most of these records have been lost or destroyed as a result of the exile of the Acadians from Canada. There are, however, some records for 1687–1758. These are available at Le Centre d'études acadiennes (Center for Acadian Studies) and the National Archives of Canada.

**Other Records.** Several sources exist which are primarily Acadian records. These are lists of deported Acadians, Acadians in transit, and Acadians in the British Colonies; petitions of Acadians in Massachusetts; and allegiance lists. These may be found in periodicals published by various historical and genealogical societies.

Good sources for research are Placide Gaudet's *Acadian Genealogy and Notes* and Archange Godbout's genealogical collection. They are both located at Le Centre d'études acadiennes (Center for Acadian Studies) and the National Archives of Canada. Another good source for Acadian research is *Histoire & Généalogie des Acadiens*, by Bona Arsenault (FHL film 873863).

## GENEALOGY

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A recent index to many published biographies, cemetery records, census records (through 1881), church records, directories, family histories, genealogies, immigration lists, local histories, Loyalist listings, marriage records, periodicals, probate records, and vital records in newspapers is:

Elliot, Noel Montgomery, ed. *The Atlantic Canadians, 1600–1900: An Alphabetized Directory of the People, Places, and Vital Dates*. 3 vols. Toronto: Genealogical Research Library, 1994. (FHL book Ref area 971.5 D22a.) Indexes over 500,000 names from various sources for the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Labrador, and Prince Edward Island. Sources are listed at the end of each volume.

## HISTORY

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1497	Newfoundland rediscovered by John Cabot and claimed for England.
1500s	English, French, Basque, and Portuguese fishermen contested the area.
1534	Jacques Cartier visited Newfoundland.
1583	Sir Humphrey Gilbert reclaimed Newfoundland for England.
1610	First English settlement in St. John's.
1627	St. Mary's settled by Lord Culvert.
1662	The first French colony was established in Placentia Bay.
1692	The French captured and burned St. John's.
1713	By the Treaty of Utrecht, France gave Newfoundland to Britain.

1713–1783	Treaties recognized British sovereignty but granted French fishermen the right to land and to dry catches along parts of the northern and western coasts.
1832	First election held for the local House of Assembly.
1846	St. John's was destroyed by fire.
1855	Newfoundland became a self-governing colony.
1892	St. John's was destroyed by a second great fire.
1898	A railroad was completed across the island.
1927	The coast of Labrador was awarded to Newfoundland.
1934	A royal commission began governing Newfoundland.
1949	The Province of Newfoundland was formed on 31 March.

About 93 percent of Newfoundland's residents have British ancestry and about 3 percent have French ancestry.

Since Newfoundland joined the Canadian Union late (1949), its early organization and records/record keeping differ from other provinces.

Because Newfoundland joined the Canadian Union late (1949), its early organization, records, and record keeping differ from other provinces. Newfoundland has no county or district divisions. Most records are found in the provincial capital, St. John's.

## LAND AND PROPERTY

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Original crown grants and leases are deposited with the Crown Lands Administration.

Crown Lands Administration  
 Department of Forestry and Agriculture  
 P.O. Box 8700  
 St. John's, NF A1B 4J6  
 CANADA  
 Telephone: 709-729-3174  
 Fax: 709-729-6136

A register of crown grants after 1831 is at the P.A.N.L. Records of subsequent transfers of land are with:

Registrar of Deeds  
 Confederation Building  
 St. John's, NF A1B 4J6  
 CANADA  
 Telephone: 709-729-3302

The P.A.N.L. also has miscellaneous land records as contained in the register of deeds for the period 1815–1931.

## MILITARY RECORDS

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The P.A.N.L. has no militia files for Newfoundland. It has some records of British troops in Newfoundland prior to 1870 and of Newfoundland servicemen who served in World War I and World War II.

## NEWSPAPERS

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The P.A.N.L. and the public library have newspaper collections covering the period from 1810 to the present.

## PERIODICALS

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Many local periodicals are indexed in:

*PERiodical Source Index (PERSI)*. Ft. Wayne, Ind.: Allen County Public Library Foundation, 1987-. (FHL book 973 D25per; 1847-1985 on **fiche 6016863** [set of 40]; 1986-1990 on **fiche 6016864** [set of 15]; computer number 658308.) Indexes thousands of family history periodicals. Annual indexes have been published yearly since 1986. For further details, see the *PERiodical Source Index Resource Guide* (34119).

## PROBATE RECORDS

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Pre-1832 records may be located at the Registry of Deeds, the P.A.N.L. of Newfoundland and Labrador or the Probate Office of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland. Post-1832 records are at the Probate Office of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland.

Probate Office  
Supreme Court of Newfoundland  
Courthouse Building  
Duckworth Street A1C 5M3  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-729-2569  
Fax: 709-729-6174

## SOCIETIES

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- Newfoundland Historical Society

Room 15, Colonial Building  
Military Road  
St. John's, NF A1C 2C9  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-722-3191  
Fax: 709-729-0578

- Newfoundland & Labrador Genealogical Society

657 Topsail Road  
Waterford Valley Plaza  
St. John's, NL, Canada A1E 2E3  
Telephone: 709-754-9525  
Fax: 709-754-6430

- Port au Port/Bay St. George Heritage Association

P.O. Box 314  
Stephenville, NF A2N 2Z5  
CANADA  
Telephone: 709-643-9042

## VITAL RECORDS

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Birth, death, and marriage records from 1891 on are available from:

Vital Statistics Division  
Department of Health  
P. O. Box 8700,  
5 Mews Place  
St. Johns, NL A1B 4J6  
Telephone: 709-729-3308

CANADA

Personal searches of these records are not permitted, and the registry staff will do only limited searches for each genealogical request.

## FOR FURTHER READING

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Bracken, Susan, ed. *Canadian Almanac & Directory*. (FHL book 971 E4ca; Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., Annual.)

Canadiana Company Limited, a subsidiary of Grolier Society of Canada Limited. *Encyclopedia Canadiana*. Ottawa, 1957. (FHL book 030.71 En 19.)

Jonasson, Eric. *The Canadian Genealogical Handbook*. 2nd ed. Winnipeg: Wheatfield Press, 1978. (FHL book 971 D27j.) Indexed.

*Major Genealogical Records Sources for Canada*. Genealogical Research Papers, Series B, no. 3, rev. ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1976. (FHL book 929.1 G286gs ser. B no.3; Fiche 6010027.)

*Mémoires de la Société Généalogique Canadienne-Française*. Montreal: Société Généalogique Canadienne-Française, 1944-. (FHL book 971 C4s; vol. 10, pages 179–188; vol. 11, pages 69–85.)

Punch, Terrence M., ed., *Genealogist's Handbook for Atlantic Canada Research*. Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1989. (FHL book 971.5 D27pt.)

*Tracing Your Ancestors in Canada*. 12th edition. Ottawa: National Archives of Canada, 1997. (FHL book 971 D27k.)

## COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

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The Family History Library welcomes additions and corrections that will improve future editions of this outline. Please send your suggestions to:

Publications Coordination  
Family History Library  
35 N. West Temple Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3400  
USA

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