This outline describes major sources of information about families from Prince Edward Island. 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

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

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 records
4. Probate records
5. Land records

ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

The following archives and libraries have genealogical information:

- National Archives of Canada
  395 Wellington Street
  Ottawa ON K1A 0N3
  CANADA
  Telephone: 613-996-7458

- Personnel Records Unit
  Researcher Services Division
  National Archives of Canada
  395 Wellington Street
  Ottawa, ON K1A 0N3
  CANADA

- Public Archives and Records Office of Prince Edward Island
  Honorable George Coles Bldg, 4th floor
  Richmond Street
  Charlottetown, PE
  Telephone: 902-368-4290
  Fax: 902-368-6327
  Mailing Address:
  P.O. Box 1000
  Charlottetown, PE C1A 7M4
  CANADA
  Their genealogical holdings include those formerly held by the Prince Edward Island Heritage Foundation.
• Director of Vital Statistics
Department of Health and Social Services
P.O. Box 3000
Montague, PE C0A 1R0
CANADA
Telephone: 902-838-0880
Fax: 902-838-0883

• Centre d'archives de la Capitale
2424 Watt St.
Sainte-Foy PQ G1P 3T3
CANADA
Telephone: 418-683-5784

• 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

• Le Centre de Recherches Acadienne
Museum Acadienne
P.O. Box 159
Miscouche, PE C0B 1T0
CANADA
Telephone: 902-432-2880
Fax: 902-432-2884
Their holdings include genealogical records for Acadians from 1720 to 1890.

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 Prince Edward Island 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.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**
  
  
  A useful list of sites and resources. Includes a large, regularly-updated research coordination list.

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**CEMETERY RECORDS**

Cemetery records, especially tombstones, can be very important to the genealogist. Cemetery inscriptions can often provide exact birth and death dates as well as occasionally mentioning a place of origin. Almost all of the cemeteries on Prince Edward Island have now been transcribed, and a comprehensive index is available through the Prince Edward Island Heritage Foundation. These records can be found at the Public Archives and Records Office of Prince Edward Island (see the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline for the address.)

The Family History Library has microfilms of:


Often Protestant church registers do not provide as much information about an individual as do Catholic registers. Protestant cemetery inscriptions, therefore, can often be a source for more detailed information, such as exact birth and death dates.
CENSUS RECORDS

Census records, which contain the official enumeration of the population, are one of the most valuable sources of genealogical information. Returns prior to 1851 usually contain statistics but no names or list only the heads of households and the total number of individuals residing in each household.

Censuses which list each person individually provide details such as age, sex, place of birth, religion, ethnic origin, occupation, marital status, and education. In order to search the census records, the approximate locality must be known because the census is arranged by township within each county.

Information about the following censuses is available at the Family History Library:

1841  Lists heads of families for Princes County, districts 1 and 4; Queens County, districts 5–10; and Kings County, districts 13–15.
1861  Lists heads of families for Princes County; Kings County; Queens County; and townships 20–67, Charlottetown, and Charlottetown Royalty.
1881,1891 Lists all members of the household. Records are available for miscellaneous townships in Queens, Kings, and Princes Counties. See the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND - CENSUS.
1901  The 1901 census also includes date of birth, year of immigration, and address or location of land. (The return is in both French and English.)

CHURCH RECORDS

Church records are extremely important genealogical sources. The Public Archives and Records Office holds microfilm copies of the records of many of the churches on the island, including most of the Catholic records before 1891. Baptism records since 1886 are sealed. Records before 1886 are available. The National Archives of Canada also has the early French Catholic records of Notre-Dame (1724–1758) and St-Pierre (1721–1724, 1749–1758) in St-Pierre-du-Nord. A complete list of the churches is found in:


The Family History Library has several of the National Archives records on film:
Court records can often provide historical information about individuals. The court records at the Public Archives and Records Office include the following:

1. Chancery Court records (1794–1940)
2. Minutes of Bankruptcy Court (1903–1921)
3. Small Debt Court records (1811–1868)
4. Supreme Court records (1780–1940)

The Family History Library has:


The Library also has The Loppinot Papers, 1687–1710, which are important genealogical abstracts of the earliest notarial records for the province of Acadia:


Many Prince Edward Island directories up to and including 1900 are available on microfiche:

Pre-1900 Canadian Directories. Ottawa, Ont.: Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions, 1988. (On 4,219 FHL fiche beginning with 6360453. Not available at Family History Centers.)
EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Because British ships entering a British colony such as Prince Edward Island did not have to register the passengers nor the ship’s arrival, early immigration records for the province are practically nonexistent.

The National Archives of Canada has microfilm copies of passenger manifests for ships arriving in Québec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick from 1865–1919. However, the lists have not been indexed. (See the “Archives and Libraries” section for the address of the National Archives.)

The Family History Library has a few Prince Edward Island sources of passenger lists:

Prince Edward Island Ship Passenger Lists. Salt Lake City: Filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, 1978. (FHL film 1036774 item 8.) These are photocopies of the original records in the Public Archives and Records Office of Prince Edward Island. They are 9 ship passengers lists for 1775 to 1848 and a list of arrivals for 1855. Most of the ships embarked from Scotland.

Miscellaneous Records on Emigration from England and Scotland to Canada . . . Ottawa, Ont.: Microfilm ed by [the] Central Microfilm Unit, Public Archives of Canada, [196?]. (FHL film 0393997.) These are copies of the original records at the National Archives of Canada. They include treasury register extracts for people who emigrated from England and particularly for those who went to Nova Scotia, Québec, and Prince Edward Island.

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, they 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 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.


**Acadian Genealogy**

The area comprising today's New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island was once known as Arcadie. 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, 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 fled to Québec 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 of 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 complete only 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 Sainte-Foy and in Le Centre d'études acadiennes (Center for Acadian Studies) in Moncton, New Brunswick. (See the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline for addresses.)

**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 to 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

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:


HISTORY

This information can help you determine significant cultural, ecclesiastical, and political events in the history of Prince Edward Island. Changes in geographical boundaries and ownership of land are especially important in determining where to search for the records of your ancestors.

1534  Jacques Cartier discovered the island, which the Micmac Indians called Abegweit.

1603  Samuel de Champlain claimed the island for France and called it Ile-St-Jean.

1719  Three hundred settlers from France, sponsored by the commercial company of the Count de St-Pierre, established the first colony on the island, Port la Joie, at the entrance to the harbor of Charlottetown.

1745  The French colony was captured by the British.

1748  France regained the lost colony.

1758  The British occupied the island, dispersed many of the French settlers, and renamed it St. John Island.

1763  France ceded the area to Great Britain. It was placed under the jurisdiction of Nova Scotia. Later, the British divided the island into three counties, each with a townsitie and 67 lots (townships).

1765  Charlottetown was named the capital of the colony.

1767  The lots were awarded to grantees or proprietors who were expected to promote settlement but who were mainly absentee landlords.

1769  The island separated from Nova Scotia and the first governor was appointed.

1799  The name was changed to Prince Edward Island.

1851  The island had its first representative government.

1864  A meeting was held in Charlottetown to discuss regional union.

1867  The Land Purchase Act ended the tenure system of 1767.

1873  The Province of Prince Edward Island was formed and became part of the Dominion of Canada.
LAND AND PROPERTY RECORDS

All land registry records from 1900 to the present are located in the Office of the Registrar of Deeds, Box 2000, Charlottetown, PEI, C1A 7N8, telephone: 902-368-4591. Records from 1769 to 1900, such as land registries, mortgage books, rent books, and leases, are located in the Public Archives and Records Office. (See the “Archives and Libraries” section for the address.) The archives also houses a number of atlases and maps which show property owners and the location of their property.

The Family History Library has two good sources for land and property research:


MILITARY RECORDS

World War I (1914–1918)

Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) service records are available through the Personnel Records Unit of the National Archives of Canada (see the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline for the address). These service records contain detailed information from enlistment to demobilization (discharge). Information may include each person's date and place of birth, address at the time of enlistment, name and address of next of kin, marital status, occupation, personal description (eye and hair color, height, weight, and distinctive marks or scars), and religion. When requesting information from the Personnel Records Unit please include the name, rank, and regiment (where known).

NATURALIZATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Until 1947 British immigrants from England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland automatically became citizens of Canada. They did not need naturalization. Non-British immigrants, however, were required to make oaths of allegiance before receiving land grants. Files containing these oaths and petitions for citizenship covering the years 1817 to 1846 are found at the Provincial Archives.

Records created after 1917 are more detailed than earlier records and are found at:

Department of Citizenship and Immigration
Public Rights Administration
300 Slater Street, 3rd floor, section D
Ottawa, ON K1A 1L1
CANADA
Telephone: 888-242-2100 (in Canada only; outside of Canada, write to the above address)

The Public Archives and Records Office has some records of oaths of allegiance as well as naturalization books for the period of 1865–1893.
Requests for copies should be directed to the Department of Citizenship and Immigration at the address above.

NEWSPAPERS

Although early newspapers recorded little vital information, later ones often contained excellent obituaries, marriage notices, and biographies of important persons. Small town newspapers tend to provide information regarding a person’s life, especially in obituaries. The Public Archives and Records of Prince Edward Island has a collection of island newspaper references from 1787 to 1874, which include birth, marriage, and death notices.

The Family History Library has:


PERIODICALS

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.) It indexes thousands of family history periodicals. Annual indexes have been published since 1986. For further details, see the PERiodical Source Index Resource Guide (34119).

PROBATE RECORDS

Probate records such as wills and administrations can be important sources for such information as names of family members, death dates, and relationships. Probate records 1807–1920 are at:

Public Archives and Records Office
P.O. Box 1000
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7M4
CANADA
Telephone: 902-368-4290
Fax: 902-368-6327
After 1920 probate records are held at the provincial courthouse.
Although there are a few wills from the 1700s, most wills begin around 1800. All wills and administrations are indexed. Applications for guardianship are listed by the name of the administrator. There are no executor bonds. The Family History Library has:


**SOCIETIES**

The following society may have useful genealogical information for Prince Edward Island:

Prince Edward Island Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 2744  
Charlottetown, PE C1A 8C4  
CANADA

**VITAL RECORDS**

Official registration of births and deaths began in 1906. Copies of the records are available from:

Director of Vital Statistics  
Department of Health & Community Services Agency  
P.O. Box 2000  
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7N8  
CANADA  
Telephone: 902-368-4420  
The records at the Division of Vital Statistics are not open to the public, but employees will search them for a fee.

Baptisms prior to 1886 and death records prior to 1906 are located at the Public Archives and Records Office. These archives hold a collection of marriage records dating back to 1787 (1813–1824 are missing). This includes licenses from 1831 to 1907 and marriage bonds from 1849 to 1902.

One of the most important resources for vital records at the Family History Library is:

The Family History Library also has:


**Prince Edward Island Card Index to Deaths Prior to 1906.** Charlottetown, P.E.I.: Filmed by the Public Archives of Prince Edward Island, 1984. (FHL films 1487741–44 and 1487754.) These are microfilms of the original records in the Public Archives of Prince Edward Island.

**Marriages, 1843–1892, Prince Edward Island.** (FHL fiche 6048786.)

**FOR FURTHER READING**


**COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

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

We appreciate the archivists, librarians, and others who have reviewed this outline and shared helpful information.
Other Resources

**FamilySearch Wiki**

https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/Main_Page

**History of Prince Edward Island (1875)**

Contains a history and 1798 census index.

**Google Maps**

Summary: Has address finder, allows keyword searching, and allows street, satellite, or terrain views.