

50 Overlooked Genealogical Resources in 50 Minutes! aka Research in Your Jammies!

By Diane L. Richard¹

Introduction

Since 2006 I have authored a Net Notes column for Internet Genealogy. It looks at websites of interest to genealogists (400+) and provides a quick snapshot of mostly free relevant resources that caught my eye. Many of these are home-grown databases that might provide you with an invaluable piece of information. Let's look at some discovered hidden gems available at your fingertips and that you might not be aware of.

"NEW TO ME" & "HOT OFF THE PRESS" FINDS

- (1) [World] Endangered Archives Program (EAP), <https://eap.bl.uk/> -- primarily funds digitization projects to record and preserve the content of archives; includes great archival material for the Turks & Caicos.
- (2) [US] Mexican War Soldiers & Sailors Database, <https://www.nps.gov/paal/learn/historyculture/search-usmexwar.htm> [New January 2020]
- (3) [African American] Frederick Douglass Newspapers, <https://blogs.loc.gov/headlinesandheroes/2020/01/frederick-douglass-newspapers-1847-1874-now-online/> [New January 2020]

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CROWDSOURCED PROJECTS

- (1) From the Page, <https://fromthepage.com/collections> -- resource for collaborative transcriptions used by many in the genealogy community.
- (2) Crowd Source Indexing (CSI), <https://csindexing.com/> -- created specifically for genealogical indexing, houses projects big and small.
- (3) Zooniverse (History), <https://www.zooniverse.org/projects?discipline=history&page=1&status=live> -- includes (Jan 2020) -- African American Civil War Soldiers and Anti-Slavery Manuscripts

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OLDIES BUT GOODIES -- WORLD

- (1) [Germany] Verein für Computergenealogie e.V." (CompGen), <http://des.genealogy.net/start/selectProject>
- (2) Genealogical Society of Finland (Hiski Project), <http://hiski.genealogia.fi/historia/indexe.htm>
- (3) [France & beyond] Geneanet, <https://en.geneanet.org/archival-registers/> -- a contributive, collaborative and freemium website.
- (4) Europeana, <https://www.europeana.eu/en> -- Europeana works with thousands of European archives, libraries and museums to share cultural heritage for enjoyment, education and research.

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OLDIES BUT GOODIES -- UK

- (1) FreeUKGenealogy, <https://www.freeukgenealogy.org.uk/> -- encompasses FreeReg, FreeCen and FreeBMD.
- (2) Genuki, UK & Ireland Genealogy, <https://www.genuki.org.uk/> -- a virtual reference library of genealogical information of particular relevance to the UK and Ireland.
- (3) (\$) The British Newspaper Archive, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

OLDIES BUT GOODIES -- CANADA

- (1) Can Genealogy, <http://www.cangenealogy.com/> -- a handy guide to the best Canadian resources.
- (2) Peel's Prairie Provinces, <http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/index.html> -- a resource dedicated to assisting scholars, students, and researchers of all types in their exploration of western Canadian history and the culture of the Canadian prairies.
- (3) British Home Children in Canada, <https://canadianbritishhomechildren.weebly.com/>
- (4) Ontario Ancestors Databases (not just Ontario), <https://ogs.on.ca/databases/>

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OLDIES BUT GOODIES -- US

- (1) The Ancestor Hunt, <https://www.theancestorhunt.com/> -- I have grown to appreciate this website more and more. Interested to know about newspapers online? You can check out lists for each US State, Canada and the World (only select countries). What about photo archives? The list goes on.
- (2) Online Genealogy Records and Resources (Joe Beine), <https://www.deathindexes.com/sites.html> -- still my go to place to ID what death records I might have ready access to online.
- (3) Linkpendium (Karen Isaacson and Brian (Wolf) Leverich) -- <http://www.linkpendium.com/usa-genealogy/> -- my favorite website to review as I start every project! A quick and easy way to find out "some" of what is online. I like the organization by state and then county.
- (4) Digital Public Library of America, <https://dp.la/> -- gateway to over 37 million images, texts, videos and sounds from across the United States.

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AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCES

- (1) HeinOnline - Slavery in America and the World: History, Culture & Law, <https://heinonline.org/HOL/Index?collection=slavery>
- (2) Digital Library on American Slavery (DLAS), <https://library.uncg.edu/slavery/> -- several databases documenting those enslaved in the south and around the world.
- (3) Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery, <https://informationwanted.org/> -- thousands of "Information Wanted" advertisements taken out by former slaves searching for long lost family members.

AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCES (cont'd)

(4) Freedom on the Move, <https://freedomonthemove.org/> -- Rediscovering The Stories Of Self-Liberating People, A database of fugitives from American Slavery

(5) O Say Can You See - Early Washington, D.C., Law & Family, <http://earlywashingtondc.org/>

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ACADEMIC/SCHOLARLY RESOURCES

(1) Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/texts> -- so many digitized books and beyond, so little time! Check it out. Includes Wayback Machine, <https://archive.org/web/> -- find those seemingly lost, misplaced or no longer existing websites.

(2) Worldcat, <https://www.worldcat.org/> -- large centralized “card catalog” of books “ connects you to the collections and services of more than 10,000 libraries worldwide”

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PHOTO ARCHIVES

(1) Seek out University photo archives such as the one for UNC-Chapel Hill, https://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/archivalhome/collection/dig_nccpa

(2) OldNYC, <https://www.oldnyc.org/> -- “This site provides an alternative way of browsing the NYPL's incredible Photographic Views of New York City, 1870s-1970s collection.”

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NOTE: Not all of the resources explored, 50+ are listed above! Do check out the associated talk for the full list of 50+ resources mentioned.

Resources for Learning About Neat “New to You” Overlooked Websites

Newsletters and Blogs (a few of my favorites)

There are many many newsletters (and blogs) for genealogists to choose from. Pick the ones that make the most sense for the research you are doing! Do this because these are the newsletters (and blogs) where you might learn about a great database that won't be big enough or hot enough to get the attention of the larger mainstream newsletters and blogs and yet prove invaluable to those researching a particular region, ethnicity, religion, occupation, etc.

Recognize that many newsletters also have a presence on social media, such as Facebook (FB). Pick which delivery method best suits you. Some newsletters like Dick Eastman's, Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter, <https://blog.eogn.com/>, I receive via email and that's because I've been doing it that way for so long. I could just as easily access this same news via Facebook and Dick Eastman's FB page, <https://www.facebook.com/dickeastman>.

Recognize also that with newsletters (and blogs) you often have a choice on how frequently you receive new posts/news. To help manage my inbox, I typically do the “digest” version and then have my email software automatically sort these to a folder called “Genealogy Newsletters.” I then typically review once a day. Since news is often repeated across newsletters (and blogs) and social media, this helps me also manage repetitive news items.

A few more favorites (in no particular order):

- (1) Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter (already mentioned)
- (2) ResearchBuzz (by Tara Callishain), <https://researchbuzz.me/> -- she finds news from all around the world and from unexpected places! I get a weekly digest though I also follow her on FB.
- (3) Library of Congress, <https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/USLOC/subscriber/topics> – I don’t follow this one closely and every so often some really neat and new material is digitized. It’s really a compendium of items from several blogs that I receive in digest mode. Latest News, Library of Congress Blog, Library of Congress Magazine, New on the Web, Finding Aids and more are just some of the topics that I receive notifications about. For example, in January 2020, Frederick Douglass Newspapers, 1847-1874: Now Online, <https://blogs.loc.gov/headlinesandheroes/2020/01/frederick-douglass-newspapers-1847-1874-now-online/?loclr=easerb>, was announced and that was important to me as someone currently researching several families composed of “Free Persons of Color” and I was curious to see if this newspaper collection would help.
- (4) National Archives and Records Administration, <https://www.archives.gov/social-media/blogs> – Another entity which produces a number of different blogs and you can opt to participate in all or just one!

Facebook Pages (a few of my favorites)

Similarly, I have a few feeds for new genealogy resources that I get just through Facebook:

- (1) Afrigeneas African American Genealogy Community, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/afrigeneascommunity/>
- (2) Free People of Color and Their Descendants in the U.S. South, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1738664083049188/> -- although many African Americans were enslaved there were also large populations of free persons of color living in the country.
- (3) State Archives of North Carolina, <https://www.facebook.com/NCArchives/> -- as my “office away from home” a must keep up with repository for me. Many migrated into, across and out of North Carolina necessitating that many genealogists research records held here.
- (4) Digital Library of Georgia, <https://www.facebook.com/DigitalLibraryofGeorgia> -- with so many North Carolinians migrating into and through Georgia, this feed helps keep me up on GA materials from county records to newspapers and more; a rapidly expanding collection.
- (5) Library of Virginia, <https://www.facebook.com/LibraryofVA/> -- provides news not just about new additions to its collection and also about other valuable Virginia research resources.

Just a reminder that the newsletters, blogs and Facebook pages mentioned above are just a few of the ones that help me as a genealogist.

Family Tree Magazine – Best Genealogy Websites

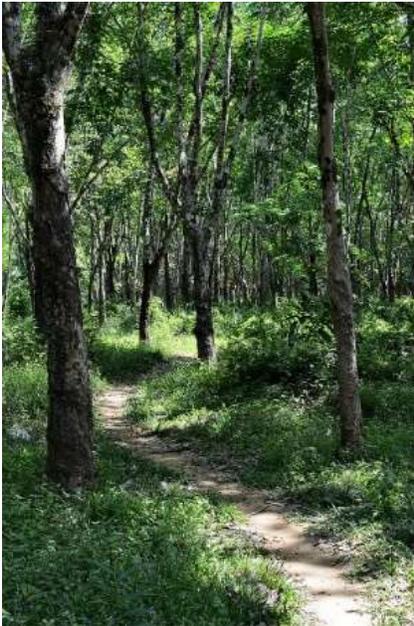
Each year a list of 101 Best Genealogy Websites is produced, <https://www.familytreemagazine.com/best-genealogy-websites/>, and the list is always worth checking out to see if there are any new resources or a website has been greatly expanded. The list is presented alphabetically or you can check out the named categories; these do vary somewhat year-to-year.

Internet Genealogy Magazine, <https://internet-genealogy.com/>

As mentioned in the introduction, I have been writing a “Net Notes” column for 15 years and counting. Many libraries do receive this publication or individuals may subscribe or purchase individual copies.

Conference Vendor/Exhibitor Halls

Whether you are attending a conference in person or virtually or not at all, check out who is in the vendor/exhibitor hall or look up a list of those business and organizations who are attending. If the name is unfamiliar to you, explore their website.



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**May Your Path Through the
Forest of Your Ancestors Be
Enjoyable, Exhilarating, and
Enlightening**

Because this is a talk that I frequently given and for which I “change” the websites I discuss, there are websites mentioned here that may not have been discussed and so a “bonus” for you. Additionally, there are ALWAYS websites only mentioned in the talk that are not listed here!