

BC Archives Research Guide

GENEALOGY

Family History Research Resources at the BC Archives



Amelia, Lady Douglas, seated in centre, surrounded by family to the third and fourth generation, ca. 1885, A-00840

INTRODUCTION

The BC Archives is an important source of information for those conducting family history research. Holdings include government records, maps, newspapers, as well as personal, family, and other non-governmental records. Researchers who familiarize themselves with the [BC Archives Collection](#) holdings and how to access them will find their search for information more rewarding. Following is an outline of some of the resources available as well as related external resources.

Also see [BC GenWeb](#) webpage for other institutions that provide access to genealogical records and resources.

PUBLISHED MATERIALS

The [BC Archives Library](#) houses a unique collection books, pamphlets, serials, directories, newspapers, atlases, maps, posters, sheets of music, theatre programmes, dissertations, theses, and other publications with a strong emphasis on the geographic, social, cultural and political history of British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest.

Guides to genealogical research

Guides to conducting family history research in the [BC Archives Library](#) can be found by searching "genealogy" as a keyword search or as a subject. Local public libraries are also a valuable source for genealogy research guides.

Family histories

Family histories can be searched within the [BC Archives Library](#) under the name of a specific family (e.g., Rogers).

Cemetery listings

Mostly compiled by volunteers, cemetery listings cover a large number of cemeteries throughout the province and may include transcriptions as well as dates. Search the [BC Archives Library](#) with the truncated keyword *cemeter** together with location or by the name of the cemetery.

The [BC Cemetery Finding Aid](#) database can also assist in determining place of interment.

British Columbia city and provincial business directories

These directories list businesses, individuals, and occupations. Many of them have been microfilmed. Consult the directories binders on top of the microfilm cabinets in the reference room for listings of our holdings.

The Vancouver Public Library also has digitized copies of selected [BC city directories](#) from 1860-1955. Some directories can also be found as [Internet Archive](#) texts.

British Columbia telephone directories

Consult the *Guide to BC telephone directories* binder in the reference room to determine our holdings as well as the directories in which a specific community is listed.

Crockford's clerical directory (Anglican)

The [BC Archives Library](#) has issues for the following years: 1868, 1896, 1910-14, 1916-18, 1920-22, 1923-27, 1929-36, 1939, 1941, 1947-50, and 1953-68. This source and *The Clergy List* cited below provide information on members of the Anglican clergy. [NW 283 C938](#)

The Clergy list for 1841-1917 (Anglican)

The [BC Archives Library](#) has issues for the following years: 1882 and 1911-1916. [NW 283 C629](#)

Navy, Army, and Militia lists

The [BC Archives Library](#) has incomplete holdings of the following, which include names, rank and dates of birth:

- *Navy list*, 1806-1975, [NW 359 N326n](#)
- *The Royal Navy list*, 1879-1916, [NW 359 R888r](#)
- *The Mercantile Navy list and maritime directory*, 1857-1977, [NW 359 M553](#)
- *Army list*, 1789-1976, [NW 355 M789](#)
- *Annual volunteer and service Militia list of Canada*, 1866-1925, [NW 355 C212](#)
- *Defence forces list, Canada*, 1928-1939, [NW 355 C212d](#)

Canadian Expeditionary Force: nominal roll of officers, non-commissioned offices and men

In addition to name and rank, information such as name and address of next of kin, country and date of birth, and former corps may be given. [NW 355 C212](#)

Visit [Library and Archives Canada - Personnel Records of the First World War](#) for references to various First World War personnel records, including fully digitized CEF personnel files.

The Canadian who's who

The [BC Archives Library](#) has incomplete holdings of the following:

- *The Canadian who's who*, 1910-, [NW 920 C212](#)
- *Canadian who's who index*, 1898-1984, [NW 920 C212c](#)

Who's who in British Columbia

The [BC Archives Library](#) has incomplete holdings of the following:

- *Who's who in British Columbia*, c1930-1953, [NW 920 W628b](#)
- *Edgelow's who's who in British Columbia*, 1969, [NW 920 W628b](#)

Who's who in who's whos

This publication is an index to biographical dictionaries of British Columbians. It offers a place to start when looking for individuals in biographical dictionaries. [NW 920 W628m](#)

For earlier and later entries—as recorded in the *Victoria Times*, additional records of deaths of prominent British Columbians from BC biographical dictionaries printed between 1890 and 1953, and the death records of the Reformed Episcopal Church from 1874 to 1906—see also:

- *Index of Deaths 1901-1939*, 1994, [NW 929.3 M152d](#)

- *Index of marriages, indexed by name of groom, 1901-1939, 1994*, [NW 929.3 M152mg](#)
- *Index of marriages, indexed by name of bride, 1901-1929, 1994*, [NW 929.3 M152mb](#)

British Columbia voters' lists

The [BC Archives Library](#) has holdings of voters' lists from 1874-1993, with some gaps. [NW 324.1 B862](#) See *Voters' lists inventory* on our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories](#) webpage for our holdings.

Lists are arranged by provincial electoral district and polling division and provide names, occupation, and address (for urban areas) or community (for rural locations). Researchers need to know where the individual resided in order to determine the correct electoral district. Although names are listed alphabetically by polling divisions within each electoral district, there is no comprehensive list or index. For the larger urban ridings such as Vancouver and Victoria with a large number of polling stations (identified only by number), city directories can be used to help identify a more precise location. Note that women could not vote until 1917 and various groups were disenfranchised prior to 1952. Under the *Elections Act*, lists less than 25 years old are not open to the public.

Also see:

- *Electoral history of British Columbia, 1871-1986, 1988*, provides results, party affiliation and names of candidates, and election dates. [NW 324.1 B862e](#)
- *Statement of Votes*, various years, includes candidate occupations [NW 324.711 B862s](#)
- [Elections BC – Electoral History of B.C.](#)
- [Elections BC – Statistics](#)
- For federal elections, [Parliament of Canada – Parlinfo – Elections and Ridings](#)

Canadian parliamentary guides

The [BC Archives Library](#) has the following, which includes brief biographies of federal MPs and provincial MLAs:

- *The Canadian parliamentary guide, 1862-1912, 1973*, [NW 328.71 C214a](#)
- *Canadian parliamentary guide*, various years, [NW 328.71 C214](#)

Also available online from 1862-1897 via [The Online Books Page](#).

The British Columbia gazette

The [BC Archives Library](#) has holdings of *The British Columbia gazette* (also known as *Official gazettes of the province of British Columbia*) from 1859-1980. This weekly publication, accumulated into annual volumes, includes notices of government appointments, land grants and leases, licenses, name changes, etc. An index for the year is found at the beginning of the bound volume(s) for each year starting in 1873. Commencing in 1958, the *Gazette* was published in two parts. [NW 320.05 B862](#)

Also available online from 1859-1985 via [Internet Archive](#).

The Canada Gazette is available online from 1841-1997 via [Library and Archives Canada - Canada Gazette](#).

Public accounts of British Columbia

The [BC Archives Library](#) has holdings from 1880-1997. Prior to 1951 provide not only the names and remuneration of public service employees but also the position held or the service provided. From 1951 to 1954 names are listed with only the position of the person in charge identified. Starting in 1954 names are listed alphabetically by Department (later Ministry) or Agency. More recent *Public Accounts* limit employee listings to those with salaries exceeding a specified minimum amount. [NW 336.711 B862p](#)

Also available within the *BC Sessional Papers*, available online via [UBC Open Collections](#).

Annual report on the public schools in the province of British Columbia

The [BC Archives Library](#) has holdings from 1872-1945. Includes the names of teachers and information about schools. [NW 371.0171 B862](#)

Also available within the *BC Sessional Papers*, available online via [UBC Open Collections](#).

British Columbia Department of Mines annual reports

The [BC Archives Library](#) has holdings from 1874-1977 and indexes covering 1874-1964. Older reports in particular include the names of individuals killed or injured in the mining industry. [NW 971.35 B862a](#)

Also available within the *BC Sessional Papers*, available online via [UBC Open Collections](#).

GOVERNMENT TEXTUAL RECORDS

Government records provide a wealth of information on demographics and lives of British Columbians, as well as many other topics. They are searched via the [BC Archives Collection](#) unless otherwise indicated.

Vital event registrations of births, marriages, and deaths

Marriage and death registrations date from 1872, birth registrations from 1854. Birth registrations are available 120 years following the date of birth, marriage registrations are available 75 years after the date of marriage, and most death registrations are available 20 years after the date of death. Records can be searched via the [BC Archives Genealogy Collection](#). For tips on searching the database, click on 'Help' to access the *Guide to the Genealogy Search*.

For information on how to search and access these records, see the BC Archives *Vital Events: an introduction* and *Vital Events: comprehensive guides* available from our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#).

Divorce records

From 1935 to 1985 the BC Division of Vital Statistics collected certified copies of final divorce decrees from BC court registries

For information on how to search and access these records, see the BC Archives *Divorce Records* guide available from our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#).

Pre-confederation marriage records, 1859-1872

BC Archives' Vancouver Island and British Columbia pre-confederation (colonial) marriage records from 1859-1872 can be searched via the [BC Archives Genealogy Collection](#).

Once you have located a marriage listing, see [GR-3044](#) to access digital copies of the volumes, which contain certified copies of marriage certificates, or returns of marriages, as submitted by clergy of various, but not all, denominations. The most notable absence is that of the Church of England (Anglican Church). Those records can be found in [MS-0520](#).

Federal census records

Federal censuses were intended to record information about every individual in a given area and can be of immense value to genealogists. Note that some records referred to as censuses may only provide aggregate numbers or only name heads of families.

Censuses are available online from 1825 to 1926 via [Library and Archives Canada - Censuses](#). British Columbia is first included in the 1881 Census of Canada.

The BC Archives also holds a microfilmed copy of the Manitoba and Red River Censuses 1832-1847, 1849, 1856, 1870 ([GR-2017](#)).

For information on how to search and access these records, see the BC Archives *Canada Census Office* guide available from our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#).

Land records

Crown Land Grant Records, 1851-1930

[Crown grants](#) were routinely issued by the province of British Columbia to convey surface, subsurface, and other rights. The BC Archives has a copy of crown land grant records for the following years:

- [GR-3139](#) – Crown land grants, 1851-1878
- [GR-3097](#) – Crown land grants, 1869-1930
- [GR-3096](#) – Crown land indexes, 1869-1930
- [GR-3140](#) – Crown land auctioneers' agreements, 1899-1914

The records were microfilmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah and, except for [GR-3140](#), are also available on [FamilySearch](#).

The BC government's [Historic Crown Grant Search](#) is an online index searchable by personal or business name, land district, and date. The results can be used to obtain volume and grant number as well as the microfilm reel number for a record. Indexing was done by volunteers. Note that not all crown grant information is included in these records. See [GR-3096](#) for a complete index.

For information on how to search and access these records, see the BC Archives *Land Records (includes crown grants)* guide available from our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#).

Pre-emption Records, ca. 1859-1970

Pre-emption was a method by which colonial or provincial Crown land in British Columbia that had not been fully surveyed could be acquired by claiming it for settlement and agricultural purposes and improving it.

BC Archives series [GR-0112](#) contains information on name of the pre-emptor, date, and description of the land. There is an incomplete card catalogue index by name of pre-emptor located within the reference room. Entries provide only a pre-emption number, volume number, and the district.

The Crown Lands Grants Index ([GR-3096](#)) and the [Historic Crown Grant Search](#) can also be used to locate completed pre-emptions. Part of [GR-0112](#) was microfilmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah and is also available on [FamilySearch](#).

For information on how to search and access these records, see the BC Archives *Pre-emption and Homestead* and *Land Records* guides available from our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#).

Surveyor of taxes assessment rolls ,1876-1948

BC Archives series [GR-1999](#) contains information for the owners of a property, not necessarily the residents that lived there. They are searchable by taxation district. The records are incomplete.

Dominion Lands Branch Land Settlement Records for the BC Railway Belt and Peace River Block, 1885-1930

BC Archives series [GR-0436](#) includes correspondence and applications to homestead in the Railway Belt and Peace River Block. Names of applicants can be searched using the hardcopy [GR-0436.A.408](#) finding aid available within the reference room.

For information on how to search and access these records, see the BC Archives *Pre-emption and Homestead* guide available from our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#). The records are also available on [FamilySearch](#).

Immigration records

As immigration is a federal responsibility, the majority of official records dealing with immigration are held by the federal government or archived with [Library and Archives Canada - Immigration Records](#). The BC Archives has copies on microfilm of some federal immigration records (RG 76) dealing with BC, including those described below.

Immigration Branch Central Registry Files

BC Archives series [GR-1547](#) includes records which deal with immigration, child immigration and Doukhobor settlements in BC as well as registers of Chinese immigration at the Port of New Westminster, 1887-1908, and headquarters registers of Chinese immigrants and residents, 1885-1903. A [selective subject list](#) is available online or consult the complete hardcopy subject index in the reference room.

Ships' passenger lists, 1900-1922 (Vancouver and Victoria)

BC Archives series [GR-1739](#) includes lists organized by port and date of arrival. They contain information such as the name, age, country of origin, occupation and destination of each passenger. Passenger lists were considered official immigration documents until 1935.

For newspaper listings that included departures and arrivals, see [NW 929.3711 B862d](#) (*Victoria, Vancouver Island 1859-1860: Victoria, ship's passenger departures, 1859-1861*) and [NW 929.3711 V645](#) (*Victoria ships' passenger lists, 1858-1861 arrivals*).

[Library and Archives Canada - Passenger Lists](#) (1865-1922) provides access to passenger lists for Canadian ports, including Vancouver and Victoria for 1900-1922. It can be searched by name of ship name, year of arrival, port of arrival, shipping line, and port of departure. [Library and Archives Canada - Home Children](#) (1869-1932) records can also include passenger lists.

BC border entry lists, 1908-1918

BC Archives series [GR-1918](#) records document the entry of immigrants coming across the border from the United States, some American, others from other countries via American ports, starting in 1908. Prior to that date, no record exists for those crossing the border. Records include age, country of birth, last residence, occupation and destination. The lists are arranged by port and date of entry.

Also see [Library and Archives Canada - Border Entries](#) webpage for information about federal records.

British Columbia naturalization and citizenship records

BC Archives holdings are mostly county court records, consisting of indexes, record books, registers of certificates, notices of intention to apply, etc. Coverage is incomplete with no records for some registries (e.g., Vancouver) and date coverage varying for others. Prior to 1947 immigrants to Canada could petition the court to become naturalized British subjects (those immigrants already British subjects did not need to apply). Canadian citizenship status was introduced in 1947. These are not official naturalization or citizenship records.

Official naturalization or citizenship records are federal documents. See [Library and Archives Canada – Citizenship and Naturalization Records](#) and [Library and Archives Canada – Naturalization lists, 1915 to 1951](#) to search digitized records.

Coroners' records, 1859-1967 or 1970

Coroners' inquests and inquiries are often of a sensitive nature, and may include autopsy reports, photographs, jury findings, and police reports. Access restrictions apply to records after 1908. For information on how to search and access these records, see the BC Archives *Coroner's records* guide available from our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#).

Civil and criminal court records

Records of civil and criminal proceedings, both records and indexes, are incomplete and vary from court registry to court registry. Some court records finding aids have nominal lists. Access restrictions may apply. For information on how to search and access these records, see the BC

Archives *Court records* guide available from our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#). For wills and probate records see below. For divorce records see above.

Probate case files

Probates case files are court records relating to the probate of an estate, with or without a will. Probate files can provide information about property and heirs. Holdings of both records and indexes are incomplete and vary from court registry to court registry. For information on how to search and access these records, see the BC Archives *Probate case files* guide available from our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#).

Wills, 1861-1981

Wills probated in British Columbia between 1861 and 1980 are available at the BC Archives.

Wills probated in 1981 are available through the Victoria Court Registry. To access wills dated after 1981 that have not been probated, contact the [Vital Statistics – Wills Registry](#). To access wills dated after 1981 that have been probated, contact the [court registry](#) where it was registered. For information on how to search and access these records, see the BC Archives *Wills* guide available from our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#).

Digitized copies of [GR-1417](#) (Indexes to Victoria probate files and BC probated wills, 1861-1981) and [GR-1052](#) (BC wills, 1861-1939) are also available on [FamilySearch](#).

BC Provincial Police, 1858-1950

BC Archives series [GR-0055](#) includes a list of constables names and the stations at which they were serving (1891-1910) taken from the *Public Accounts*. [GR-0091](#) consists of personnel records including applications, oath books, pay lists, and nominal rolls. Access restrictions apply to records after 1908. Search the [BC Archives Collection](#) and the [BC Archives Library](#) for additional records related to the BC provincial police (BCPP).

Health Care Records

The BC Archives holdings of health care records consist primarily of patient case files for provincial institutions such as Essondale (Riverview), Tranquille, and Woodlands. Access restrictions apply. Contact privacy@royalbcmuseum.bc.ca for information on how to access these records.

Colonial correspondence, ca. 1849-1872

BC Archives series [GR-1372](#) consists of correspondence records of the governments of the Colony of Vancouver Island (1849-1866), the Colony of British Columbia (1858-1866) and the United Colony of British Columbia (1866-1871). The correspondence was often accompanied by enclosures such as reports, sketches and maps which were considered part of the file.

The records have been fully digitized ([GR-1372](#)) and are primarily organized by the name of the originating office or sender. Online records are not fully indexed by subject, date, or place. To search by such criteria use the [finding aid online](#) and/or card catalogue in the reference room.

Centennial records

The BC Archives holds applications for pioneer medallions for the 1967 centennial of Canada's Confederation and the 1971 centennial of British Columbia's entry into Confederation. The forms provide the names of applicants, date and place of birth, names of family members and other genealogical details.

- [GR-1489](#) - Pioneer medallion application forms [Canada's centennial], 1966-1967
- [GR-1490](#) - Pioneer medallion application forms [BC's centennial], 1970

NON-GOVERNMENT TEXTUAL RECORDS

Also referred to as "private" or "manuscript" records, these accessions were created by private individuals, organizations, or companies. They are also searched via the [BC Archives Collection](#) unless otherwise indicated.

Church registers of baptisms, marriages and burials

Consult the [BC Archives Collection](#) under church name, place name, or subject headings (e.g., "Registers of Births," "Religious Records").

In the early part of the 20th century, the [Vital Statistics Agency](#) borrowed and microfilmed church registers containing baptismal information; and then returned the original registers to the churches.

Though baptism records can be searched using the [BC Archives Genealogy Collection](#), reels containing baptisms are not available at the BC Archives, even if a BC Archives Mfilm number is provided. Microfilm reels containing the baptism records are in the custody of [Vital Statistics](#), except for reel B16242. To request access to records on reel B16242, contact the [Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria](#) for permission to consult the original volume that is in their holdings.

Visit [Memory BC](#) to search for church record holdings in other BC repositories.

Family papers and family trees

Genealogical information can often be gleaned from family papers such as correspondence, diaries, etc. The BC Archives also holds few family trees. Search the [BC Archives Collection](#) and the old manuscript (Old MS) card catalogue located in the reference room under the family name.

Colonial farm settler records

BC Archives series [MS-0700](#) was compiled by F.W. Laing, secretary to several B.C. Ministers of Agriculture, "from original records in the Department of Lands and from documents in the Provincial Archives at Victoria."

C.P.R. Land Department questionnaires, 1884-1885

BC Archives series [MS-0467](#) includes three volumes of questionnaires distributed to settlers in the North West Territory in 1884-1885. Includes one volume completed by women settlers.

Hudson's Bay records

To identify BC Archives holdings of HBC records, search the [BC Archives Collection](#) and the old manuscript (Old MS) card catalogue located in the reference room for "Hudson's Bay Company".

Also see the [Hudson's Bay company archives](#) at the [Archives of Manitoba](#) for additional material.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND DOCUMENTARY ART (PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS AND PRINTS)

The photographs and art in our collections provide visual documentation of the history of the province from its earliest days and offer a vital resource to researchers of all kinds.

Search the [BC Archives Collection](#) by keyword for photographs, paintings, drawings, and prints. Try variant names and spellings, truncation, and wild cards. Filter results by clicking on Advanced Search and selecting "graphic material" within the General Material Designation drop-down menu. Filter further by selecting "Yes" from the Digital Object Available drop-down menu or by entering a date range.

SOUND RECORDINGS

Sound recordings include oral histories and interviews as well as radio broadcasts. The following are only a sample of recordings.

Search the [BC Archives Collection](#) by keyword. Try variant names and spellings, truncation, and wild cards. Filter results by clicking on Advanced Search and selecting "Sound Recording" within the General Material Designation drop-down menu. Filter further by entering a date range.

View the Notes area of a catalogue entry to determine available recording formats (e.g., reference cassette, digital copy, preservation compact disc). Digitized copies are not available online due to file-size limitations. Such recordings can be accessed within the BC Archives reference room. Some recordings are held within cold storage for preservation purposes and are restricted.

Selected oral history collections:

- [GR-3376](#) Sound Heritage Series sound programs, 1976-1983
Comprises 20 documentary sound programs produced to accompany publications in the Sound Heritage Series, a historical quarterly published by the BC Archives. Also see *Sound Heritage Series* ([NW 902 S725](#)) and Sound Heritage: Voices from British Columbia ([NW 902 S726](#)), available in the BC Archives Library.
- [GR-3377](#) Provincial Archives of British Columbia audio interviews, 1974-1992
Interviews conducted by staff members and research associates of the BC Archives.

The BC Archives holds many sound recordings from private radio stations as well as the Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC). A number of CBC radio producers have also donated material, which may contain material relevant to genealogical research.

Selected radio broadcast collections:

- [AAAB2801](#) Jurgen Hesse immigrant interviews, 1974-1975
Consists of short interviews with immigrants, who discuss their experiences and what Canada means to them.
- [PR-0374](#) Imbert Orchard Fonds, 1898-[1950s]; 1959-1985; predominant 1959-1979
Consists of oral history interviews, radio programs, and other sound recordings, as well as scripts, notes, correspondence, photographs, two amateur films, and a drawing created or accumulated during the production of interviews and documentary radio programs for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in Vancouver and as a university professor and freelance radio producer.
- [PR-2263](#) - Robert Chesterman fonds, 1959-1987; predominant 1963-1987
Consists of 524 audio reels, the majority of which (484 reels) contain radio programs produced by Chesterman at CBC Vancouver.
- [PR-2257](#) Don Mowatt fonds, 1959 ; 1965-1987; predominantly 1965-1987
Includes concerts, documentaries, radio plays, most of the programs from the series "The Hornby Collection", several programs from "Testament", and many examples of his work for other series, including "Heritage Theatre", "The Bush and the Salon", "Ideas", "CBC Stage", and others.

MOVING IMAGES

Researchers interested in archival film and video records can search the [BC Archives Collection](#) by keyword. Try variant names and spellings, truncation, and wild cards. Filter results by clicking on Advanced Search and selecting "Moving Images" within the General Material Designation drop-down menu. Filter further by entering a date range.

View the Notes area of a catalogue entry to determine available recording formats (e.g., VHS reference copy, digital copy, preservation compact disc). Digitized copies are not available online due to file-size limitations. Such recordings can be viewed within the BC Archives reference room. Some recordings are held within cold storage for preservation purposes and cannot be accessed.

Two useful guides to films produced in British Columbia are *Motion Picture Production in British Columbia, 1898-1940: A brief historical background and catalogue* ([NW 069 H546 no. 6 1979](#)) and *Camera West: British Columbia on Film, 1941-1965* ([NW 791.43 D858](#)).

MAPS AND PLANS

Search the [BC Archives Collection](#) by keyword for maps, plans, and architectural plans. Try variant names and spellings, truncation, and wild cards. Filter results by clicking on Advanced Search and selecting "Cartographic Material" within the General Material Designation drop-down menu. Filter further by selecting "Yes" from the Digital Object Available drop-down menu or by entering a date range.

Digitized copies are often not available online due to file-size limitations. They must be viewed on microfiche in the BC Archives reference room.

A large portion of the BC Archives' maps and plans have not be catalogued online. They must be searched using the cartographic materials card catalogue the BC Archives reference room and then viewed on microfiche.

BC Archives series [PR-2268](#) includes fire insurance plans from 1885-1970. These highly detailed plans can be an invaluable resource for researchers. The fire insurance plans for Victoria have been made available online via [University of Victoria's Open Collections](#).

NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers can be a useful source of local information as well as a source for public response to events and issues. See the *BC Newspapers* inventory on our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#) for a list of newspapers available on microfilm within the BC Archives reference room. Many of them are also available online:

- [BC Historical Newspapers](#) (1859-1995), for smaller, community-based publications
- [British Colonist](#) (1858-1980), which was published in Victoria but included stories from across the province
- [Victoria Daily Times](#) (1884-1944)
- [ProQuest](#) for access to *The Province* (1894-2010), *The Times Colonist* (1884-2010), and *The Vancouver Sun* (1912-2010)

The Legislative Library of BC also has a unique collection of historical newspapers. See their [Guide to Historical Newspaper Holdings](#).

VERTICAL CLIPPING FILES

The BC Archives' vertical files (ca. 1930-1981) contain newspaper articles and other records about noteworthy individuals or subjects, arranged alphabetically. Files are available on microfilm in the BC Archives reference room. Search the *Vertical File Index* on our [Guides, Indexes, and Inventories webpage](#) for standard subject headings or person's names.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

[Surrey Libraries family history guides](#)

[Vancouver Public Library - Genealogy and family history](#)

[BC Genealogical Society](#)

[Library and Archives Canada - British Columbia: genealogy resources](#)