

Brief Guide to the BC Archives Collection Search

The screenshot shows the BC Archives Collection Search homepage. At the top left is the Royal BC Museum logo. The main header features the text 'BC ARCHIVES COLLECTION SEARCH'. On the right, there is a search bar with a 'Browse' button and a search icon, and a 'Log in' button. A navigation menu on the left lists categories: Archival descriptions, People/Organizations, Subjects, Places, and Digital objects. Below this is a 'POPULAR THIS WEEK' section with a list of items and their visit counts. The main content area contains a welcome message, 'Access and Search Tips', and 'Other Resources'.

1 Browse Search
Advanced Search

2 To search within a particular type of record, please see the links below:

- Cartographic records
- Visual records
- Moving image records
- Sound recordings
- Textual records

3 Other Resources

Please visit our website to learn more about the [Royal BC Museum](#) and the [BC Archives](#). If you would like to consult records in person, please look at the [visitor information](#) section. To place a reproduction order, or for more information on licensing, please consult the [reproductions](#) section.

To search indexes for births, deaths, marriages, colonial marriages and baptisms, please consult our [genealogy database](#). To consult the BC Archives research library holdings, please visit the [online catalogue](#).

4 BROWSE BY

- Archival descriptions
- People/Organizations
- Subjects
- Places
- Digital objects

5

POPULAR THIS WEEK

- McDonald
79 visits
- M - McCa
68 visits
- McCh - McDonag
59 visits
- McDone - McFl
54 visits
- Robert James Roberts fonds
36 visits
- Photographs
31 visits
- Entrance to Esquimalt Harbour
Vancouver Island
28 visits
- Swearing-in Cabinet
20 visits
- Bay near Macaulay's Point
19 visits

Welcome to the online catalogue for the BC Archives. This catalogue contains the archival descriptions of government and private records that are of enduring value to the province of British Columbia. New information is continually added, including some digital copies of records, giving ever growing access to the archival materials.

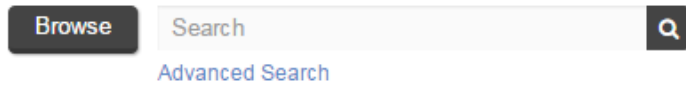
Access and Search Tips

To begin accessing the descriptions, explore the records by using the search box or advanced search options above. Alternatively, use one of the browse options to access records by title or associated authority (people/organizations, places or subjects).

For precise searching, use the search operator AND (must be in uppercase) in any given search box (e.g. Begbie AND Douglas; Esquimalt AND Macaulay; etc.). Quotation marks should be used when searching for phrases and/or numbers (e.g. "Denman Island"; Princeton AND "coal mine"; "E-07403", "GR-1372.1.9a"; "CM/B1580", etc.). You can also use the * and ? symbols as multiple and single character wildcards (e.g. parade*; legislat*; m?crae). For more detailed information about searching, please visit our [brief](#) or [full](#) user guides.

Also known as the "Welcome" page, this page is the entry point for any searching. The main features are described briefly below. For more detailed information and instructions see the [Guide to the BC Archives Collections Search](#).

1 Search Box

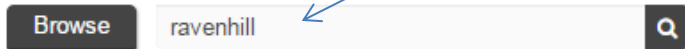


This is the main search access point and is located in the header bar on most AtoM pages. It offers three search options: **Search** (i.e. Basic Search), **Advanced Search**, and **Browse**. A brief explanation of each is given below.

For more information about each see the full [guide](#). There is an additional search option – Quick Search – once you are looking at a record description, which is explained in the full [guide](#) as well.

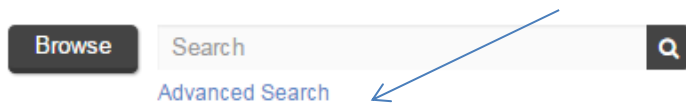
- **Search (Basic Search)**

Enter term(s) directly into the search box (the box with the word Search in it), e.g..



The search box searches all archival descriptions (textual, cartographic, images, sound recordings and film) and searches by default for **any** of the terms entered rather than for all of the terms. To search for all terms use AND e.g. *ravenhill AND arts*, to search for a phrase use quotation marks, e.g. *"indian arts and welfare society"*, and to search for a number with a hyphen, also use quotation marks, e.g. *"MS-2907"*.

- **Advanced Search**

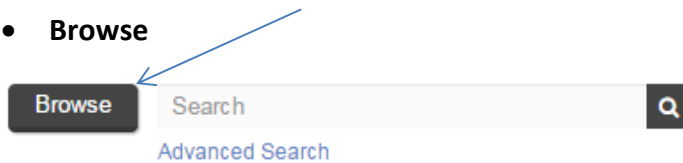


Click on the "Advanced search" link to go to the Advanced Search page. It is a structured search which allows for searching by specific fields singly or in combination.

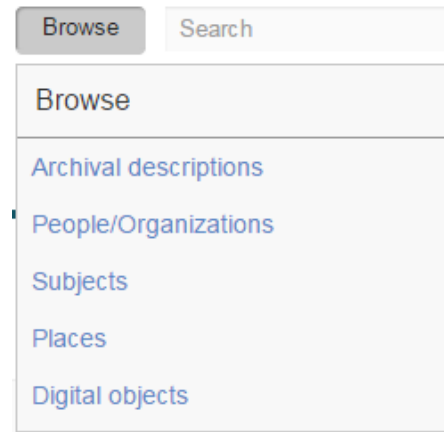
One or more terms can be entered in each box, all fields or a specific field can be searched, and the search boxes can be linked by "and" "or" "not". An "Any field search" is essentially the same as a Basic Search.

A screenshot of the Advanced Search page. It shows two search criteria boxes. The first box contains the term 'attorney general' and the field 'Name access points'. The second box contains the term 'correspondence' and the field 'Scope and content'. The two boxes are linked with an 'and' operator. There is an 'Add new criteria' button at the bottom.

- **Browse**



Clicking on the Browse box will open a drop down menu of direct links to browse pages for the entity types shown here.



The Browse menu is also displayed on the far left side of the home page – see [4](#). The "Digital objects" option, for example, will take you to the first page of over 100,000 images and can be sorted alphabetically by title, identifier or most recent, but will not allow you to go to a specific point in the set of results. "Archival descriptions" is similar. A Basic Search can be performed within "People/Organizations", "Subjects" and "Places" browse pages. There are also some filter options on most of the browse pages.

To search within a particular type of record, please see the links below:

[Cartographic records](#)

[Visual records](#)

[Moving image records](#)

[Sound recordings](#)

[Textual records](#)

This section provides shortcuts to searches (in Advanced Search) limited by type of record, known as the General Material Designation (GMD). Clicking on a link takes you to what is a programmed search for all records of that particular type. For example, clicking on "Visual records" takes you to the following page with a list of ALL the visual records descriptions in the database. Note the "graphic material" filter in the GMD box.

The screenshot displays the 'Advanced search' interface. On the left, a 'Search filters' sidebar contains several dropdown menus: 'Top-level descriptions', 'General material designation' (highlighted with a red box and containing 'graphic material'), 'Media type', 'Digital object available', 'Level of description', and 'Copyright status'. The main search area is titled 'Advanced search' and includes a search input field, a dropdown for 'in' (set to 'Any field'), and an 'Add new criteria' button. Below the search area are 'Search' and 'Reset' buttons. A search result is shown with a thumbnail and the text 'Peace River at Parle Pas Rapids. I-33315 · Item · 1929 ·'. A blue arrow points from a text box on the right to this result.

The first of over 170,000 results, 30 per page.

You can enter a search term or terms to limit the search to specific subjects, etc. You can also change the GMD or leave it blank. Going directly to Advanced Search, choosing a type from the "General material designation," and entering search term(s) will yield the same results. You can only select a single GMD or search all of them. For more information about Advanced Search see the **SEARCH GUIDE**.

3 Links to library catalogue and genealogy search


The genealogy database and the library catalogue are not part of the new BC Archives search engine and each has its own search rules and methods. Click on the [genealogy database](#) link to search for BC vital event registrations (births, marriages, deaths), colonial marriage records and baptismal information. Click on the [online catalogue](#) link to search for library material.


4 "Browse By" and "Popular This Week"

The "Browse By" menu is the same as the Browse drop down menu in [1](#). However, this display only appears on the home page and the drop down menu is available on most search pages.

The "Popular this week" listing, found on the left-hand side of the homepage, includes a list of links to the 10 most visited resources over the last week. Resources listed in the "Popular this week" menu include authority records as well as archival descriptions.

5 Icons

Click on the  icon above the search box to access the **quick links** menu. Like the search box, it appears on most search pages and allows users to navigate to the BC Archives search home page as well as Help documentation, contact information and the About page.

The home page can also be accessed by clicking on the  icon.

