



ROYAL BC
MUSEUM

Guide to the Genealogy Search

Introduction

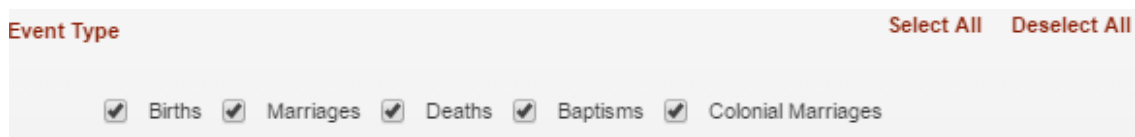
This guide provides an overview on how to look up records on the Genealogy Search. It covers the three different search options ([General](#), [Browse](#) and [Keyword](#) searches), and offers tips on how best to find results.

General Search

The General Search is the default search screen for the Genealogy Search, and below are explanations of how to use each search field. Note that researchers do not need to fill in all the fields available. Once you have filled in all the fields you wish to use, click on the "Search" button or hit "Enter" on your keyboard to execute your search.

Event Type

Select which type of event(s) you wish to search; Births, Marriages, Deaths, Baptisms and/or Colonial Marriages. The default is to search across all types. Click on the box(es) to deselect event(s) you do not wish to search.



Event Type Select All Deselect All

Births Marriages Deaths Baptisms Colonial Marriages

General Fields

Name Fields



General

First Name:

Last Name:

Enter the first name or all given names (if known) in the field labelled First Name. You may want to try using the [wildcard character](#) (*) after the first name to get more results as individuals may have additional names or initials indexed.

Enter the last name (if known) in the field labelled Last Name. Use the [wildcard character](#) if you are not certain about spelling.

You can use upper or lower case letters. It is not necessary to enter both first and last names.

Using the wildcard character

If you are uncertain about the exact spelling of a name, or if it is a name known or suspected to have variant spellings, the wildcard (*) may be helpful.

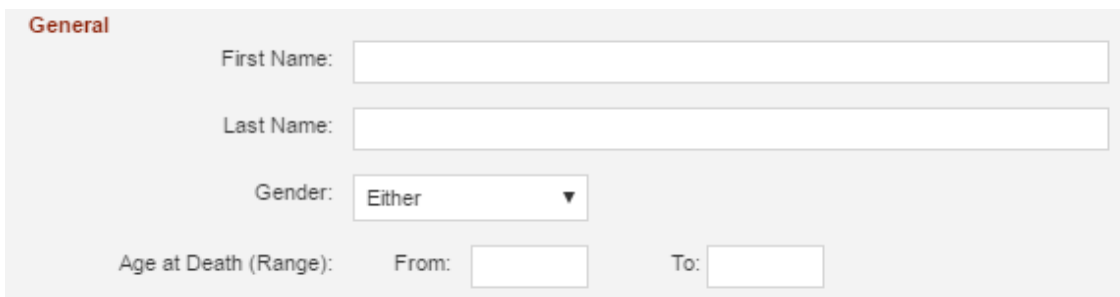
- gray : Equals ("gray")
- *gray* : Contains ("gray")
- gray* : Starts With ("gray")
- *gray : Ends With ("gray")
- gr*ay : Starts With ("gr") & Ends With ("ay")

Examples of search results using "Lena" in the First Name field, with and without the wildcard:

- Lena – will result in records where Lena is the first name and there is no middle name(s). E.g. the name "Lena Reid" will be displayed, but NOT "Lena Mary Reid" or "Lena Susan Dixon"
- Lena Susan – will result in a record with any first and middle names with "Lena Susan" – in that specific order. E.g. the name "Lena Susan Dixon" will be displayed, but NOT "Susan Lena Smith"
- Lena* – will result in a record where Lena is the first name; it will include records both with and without a middle name(s). E.g. the names "Lena Belle Freeman" and "Lena Reid" will be displayed
- *Lena* – will result in records with Lena as first name, middle name or portion of a name. E.g. the names "Lena Reid", "Annie Lena Holly", "Lena Belle Freeman" and "Magdalena Sansregret" will be displayed
- Le*na – will result in names that start with "Le" and end in "na". E.g. the name "Leandina Hartnage" will be displayed

Additional Fields

You may use them to expand or narrow your search, or to search when you have other pieces of information but only a partial name.



General

First Name:

Last Name:

Gender:

Age at Death (Range): From: To:

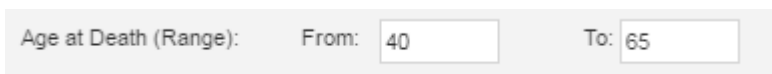
Gender

This drop-down menu allows a user to select either "Male", or "Female". This is useful when you need to reduce a large group of results or when you are searching for registrations based on gender.

Age at Death

Researchers may find this field useful for conducting more specialized searches based on age at death, and it is useful for narrowing a search when you have a large group of results.

The search boxes act as a range search in which you enter the youngest possible age at death in the "From" field and the oldest possible age in the "To" field.



Age at Death (Range): From: To:

The above example returns a results list of people who died at age 40 through to and including, age 65.

It can be used to search single age at death. In this case you need to enter the age at death in both fields, as below.



Age at Death (Range): From: To:

If you use the first field only you will get results for deaths at 33 years and up.

Age at Death (Range): From: To:

If you use the second field only, you will get all deaths up to and including 33.

Age at Death (Range): From: To:

Use caution when relying on memory for age at death fields. Experience has shown that people often are mistaken when recalling dates and ages. These fields can be extremely useful for narrowing searches, but if you don't get the result you want, try searching without using the Age at Death field.

Event Place

This field is used for narrowing results or for obtaining results for a specific community. You may find it useful to consult [Browse Search](#) to search for variants of place names.

Registration Number

This field is used for searching the unique number assigned to the registration itself. The registration number is used to locate the registration on a reel of microfilm and/or to locate the digital image of the registration, where it exists.

If you visit the BC Archives reference room to view a registration, please note the event date, registration number, and microfilm number.

BC Archives Mfilm Number

This field is used for searching the number assigned to the microfilm reels by the BC Archives. The numbers begin with the letter "B" followed by a five digit number. Not all registrations exist on microfilm so not all records are expected to have BC Archives Mfilm Numbers. However, if a digital scan of the registration is not available, it may still be available on a reel of microfilm.

Note: Registrations are no longer released on microfilm; they are transferred in a digital format.

If you visit the BC Archives reference room to view a registration, please note the event date, registration number, and microfilm number.

Note: The reels containing baptism records, with the exception of microfilm reel B16242, are in the custody of the Vital Statistics Agency and not available at the BC Archives. B16242 can be viewed in the BC Archives reference room.

GSU Mfilm Number

This field is used for searching the number assigned to the microfilm reels produced by the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU). Not all registrations are expected to have a GSU Mfilm Number.

Event Date Range

Use these fields to narrow a search to a specific year or range of years. Be aware that the site currently contains information relating to births (1854-1903), marriages (1872-1944), deaths (1872-1999), colonial marriages (1859-1872) and baptisms (1836-1888), and searching outside of those ranges will yield no results for those events.

Event Date Range			
Start Date:	Year: <input type="text"/>	Month: <input type="text"/>	Day: <input type="text"/>
End Date:	Year: <input type="text"/>	Month: <input type="text"/>	Day: <input type="text"/>

- To search for a range of years: enter earliest year in *Start Year* field and latest year in *End Year* field.
- To search for a single year: enter year in both the *Start Year* and *End Year* fields.
- To search before a specified year: enter previous year in *End Year* field. Leave *Start Year* field blank.
- To search after a specified year: enter next year in *Start Year* field. Leave *End Year* field blank.

Month and day boxes have been added for your convenience but their use is optional. You can enter either with place holder zeroes or as single digits (e.g. "09" or "9" for September). However, the search does not work if you enter letters as abbreviations for months, such as "Sep" for September.

If you visit the BC Archives reference room to view a registration, please note the event date, registration number, and microfilm number.

Additional Marriage Fields

These fields have been included for searching specific marriage criteria. Use as required and only if exclusively searching for marriage registrations. Remember that the more fields you complete, the narrower your search and the shorter your list of results.

Additional Marriage Fields	
Bride First Name: <input type="text"/>	Bride Last Name: <input type="text"/>
Groom First Name: <input type="text"/>	Groom Last Name: <input type="text"/>

Bride and Groom First and Last Names

These are especially useful for looking up registrations where only a woman's married name is known, but not her maiden name. For example, there is no marriage registration result for Ethel Wilson when using First Name of Ethel* and Last Name of Wilson in the fields for First and Last Names. However, by using Additional Marriage Fields and entering Ethel* in the Bride First Name and Wilson in the Groom Last Name the marriage registration can be found.

Additional Baptism Fields

PLEASE NOTE: the reels containing baptism records, with the exception of microfilm reel B16242, are in the custody of the Vital Statistics Agency. Reel B16242 can be viewed in the BC Archives reference room. 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. GSU volunteers transcribed all the information from the microfilm reels and entered it into the BC Archives genealogical database. There are no actual registration forms for these records, as there are for other vital events. All the information on the microfilm reels is transcribed in the database. Any request to view the remaining original microfilm reels still in the custody of the Vital Statistics Agency must be directed to Vital Statistics Agency.

These fields have been included for searching specific baptism search criteria. Use as required and only if exclusively searching for baptism registrations. Remember that the more fields you complete, the narrower your search and the shorter your list of results.

Additional Baptism Fields

Mother First Name:	<input type="text"/>	Mother Last Name:	<input type="text"/>
Father First Name:	<input type="text"/>	Father Last Name:	<input type="text"/>
Denomination:	<input type="text"/>		
Church Name:	<input type="text"/>		
Other Location:	<input type="text"/>		
Birth Location:	<input type="text"/>		
Birth Date - Year:	<input type="text"/>	Month:	<input type="text"/>
		Day:	<input type="text"/>
Affiliation:	<input type="text"/>		
Comments:	<input type="text"/>		

Mother and Father First and Last Names

There are fields for searching the mother and father first and last names which provide opportunities to enter combinations of partial names, such as a mother's first name and a father's first name.

Denomination

This field presents a drop-down menu in which you can choose any single option, including blank or any of the options presented. This allows a user to locate all the "Methodist" baptisms, for example.

Church Name

If you know the name of the church, you can search for baptisms performed at that church.

Other Location

This field searches "Other Location" data which often duplicates Event Location, although not in all cases.

Birth Location

In this field you can search by birth location, keeping in mind that a number of these baptisms were adult baptisms so place of birth is not the same as event location. Try entering *USA* in the birth location field to search for someone baptized in BC, but possibly born in the USA.

Birth Date

This allows baptism registration specific searches by birth date. Month and day boxes have been added for your convenience but their use is optional. You can enter either with place holder zeroes or as single digits (e.g. "09" or "9" for September). However, the search does not work if you enter letters as abbreviations for months, such as "Sep" for September.

Affiliation

This is used to search tribal affiliation information. The spellings of these have varied over time and experimentation will be required when using this field. Try any and all variations you have. Some of the entries are also commonly found place names, such as "Yale" or "Fort Hope". Wildcards do not work in this field.

Comments

This field searches comments typically recording the circumstances surrounding the baptism or other family information. Some comments include: "adult", "adult in great pain", "parents not named", "father Chinese", "born in Holland", "father from the USA", "illegitimate", "by immersion in lake", etc. Wildcards do not work in this field.

Browse Search

The Browse Search is useful for place names and variant spellings.

Browse Point
Browse Point:

Start
Words Beginning with Letter:

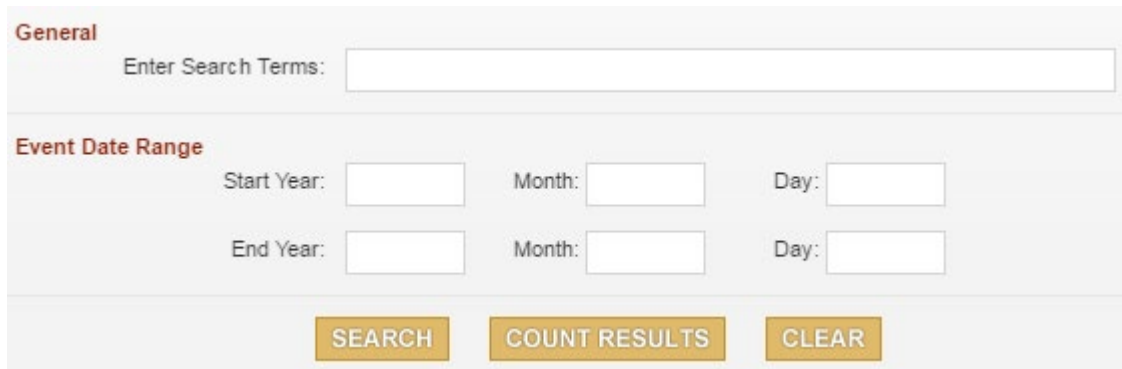
Or Enter a Single Word:

For example, see this results list for Queen Charlotte:

Event Place	Occurrences
QUEEN CHARLOTTE CITY	457
QUEEN CHARLOTTE DISTRICT	1
QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLAND	9
QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS	8
QUEEN CHARLOTTE SOUND	2
QUEEN CHARLOTTE STRA	10
QUEEN CHARLOTTE STRAIT	5
QUEEN CHARLOTTE STRAITS	1

Keyword Search

As the Keyword Search currently has limited functionality, we suggest researchers use the General Search. There is no wildcard functionality in Keyword Search, nor can it search with Boolean operators (and, not, or).



The image shows a search interface with the following elements:

- General**: A section header in red text.
- Enter Search Terms:** A text input field.
- Event Date Range**: A section header in red text.
- Start Year:** A text input field.
- Month:** A text input field.
- Day:** A text input field.
- End Year:** A text input field.
- Month:** A text input field.
- Day:** A text input field.
- SEARCH**: A yellow button.
- COUNT RESULTS**: A yellow button.
- CLEAR**: A yellow button.

For example, a Keyword Search for “Yale” will provide results for a first or last name (e.g. John Yale) and will provide results for Yale as an event place, but will not show results for more complex terms like John Yale-Smith or Yale St Johns (event place).

Further Information

We continue to make adjustments and improvements to the genealogy search. The following information may assist you in your search.

1. It is important not to narrow your search by entering too much or possibly incorrect information. For example, if you are not certain of the exact place where the event took place, you are best to leave this field empty.
2. Use the "Refine Search" button to move from your list of results back to the search page without losing information you've already entered in the Search fields. Using the browser's back arrow or selecting "New Search" clears all the previously entered data in the search fields. When you are viewing a registration you may wish to return to your list of results—use the browser's "back" arrow to return to your results list.
3. Remember to use the [wildcard character](#) (*) to increase the number of results returned (see section two above). It is usually more efficient to enter only the surname unless you are certain how the given names are entered, as you cannot be sure how the individual was registered. For example, "Henry Pering Pellew Crease" might have been registered as Henry Pering P., Henry P.P., H.P.P, or even simply as Henry.
4. Search for last names with an apostrophe, such as O'Connor, O'Hara, and O'Reilly, by substituting an asterisk for the apostrophe. For example, O*Reilly returns results for Oreilly and O'Reilly.
5. Still not finding a registration? Deaths are not registered unless a coroner, doctor or undertaker files a registration; this sometimes does not happen when there is doubt about the death (i.e. in the case of a missing person). Also, Indigenous and Chinese births, marriages and deaths were excluded from 1872 to 1877, and the former from 1899 to 1916 as well. Stillbirths may have been registered as a birth, a death, or both.
6. Some entries for World War II deaths overseas have two images attached. Generally, the first one will match the index entry.
7. If you find a registration on the index that does not have a corresponding microfilm reel number, it was probably a delayed registration. In such cases, please contact the Vital Statistics Agency.
8. Researchers do not need to fill in all the fields in the General Search. They have been provided to give you more fields for advanced searches.
9. Please note that if there is no functioning link to a registration scan you will need to contact the Vital Statistics Agency for copies. Death registrations for

children aged 24 months or younger at death also need to be requested from Vital Statistics Agency.

Last modified: 07 July 2020