

# Illinois Digital Resources

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You don't need to live in the Land of Lincoln to get a jump start on your Illinois genealogy research! National subscription databases such as Ancestry and FamilySearch can put you on a good path to sound Illinois research, but nothing beats homegrown Illinois collections! If you are looking for statewide indexes or small town obituary collections, there is something for everyone in Illinois' online collections.

## National Databases

Ancestry [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

- Illinois Probate Records 1772-1999
- U.S. School Yearbooks 1880-2012
- U.S. City Directories 1822-1995


FamilySearch [www.familysearch.com](http://www.familysearch.com)

- Illinois Birth Index 1824-1940
- Illinois Death & Stillbirths Index 1916-1947
- Illinois Marriages 1815-1935
- Illinois State Census 1855 & 1865
- Various Illinois Naturalization Indexes

Internet Archive [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)

To locate Illinois collections in Internet Archives, click on advanced search and limit your search to Illinois within the **Creator** field to see all of the collections submitted by Illinois universities, libraries and museums.

- Illinois county and city histories
- College yearbooks and alumni directories
- Jewish Blue Books and Publications

<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Births and Christenings, 1824-1940	507,005	11 Apr 2012	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths, 1916-1947	2,879,598	11 Apr 2014	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Marriages, 1815-1935	636,536	08 Mar 2012	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Soldier Burial Places, 1774-1974	144,735	24 Feb 2015	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois State Census, 1855	256,004	28 Feb 2011	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois State Census, 1865	380,262	02 Sep 2011	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois, Adams County, Card Index to Deaths, 1877-1990	95,523	12 Aug 2015	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois, Archdiocese of Chicago, Cemetery Records, 1864-1989	1,921,208	31 Oct 2016	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois, Chicago, Catholic Church Records, 1833-1925	107,678	27 May 2014	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois, Church Marriages, 1805-1985	9,190	03 Mar 2016	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois, Civil Marriages, 1833-1889	8,975	03 Mar 2016	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois, Cook County Birth Registers, 1871-1915	962,515	05 May 2010	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois, Cook County Deaths, 1878-1994	6,527,955	20 May 2016	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois, Cook County Marriages, 1871-1920	865,669	31 Mar 2012	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois, Cook County, Birth Certificates, 1871-1940	2,859,465	18 May 2016	

Illinois Collections: [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

Creator		
<input type="checkbox"/> illinois. office of secretary of state	849	<input type="checkbox"/> welt 90.1 fm champaign, illinois u.s.a. 71
<input type="checkbox"/> illinois appellate court	391	<input type="checkbox"/> university of illinois (system). office of school and college relations
<input type="checkbox"/> university of illinois (urbana-champaign campus)	368	<input type="checkbox"/> wdws 1400 am champaign, illinois u.s.a. 67
<input type="checkbox"/> university of illinois at urbana-champaign	244	<input type="checkbox"/> freemasons. grand lodge of illinois 66
<input type="checkbox"/> illinois. supreme court	234	<input type="checkbox"/> university of illinois at urbana-champaign. university high school
<input type="checkbox"/> illinois state historical society	229	<input type="checkbox"/> wgcy 106.3 fm gibson city, illinois u.s.a. 64
<input type="checkbox"/> illinois state normal university	219	<input type="checkbox"/> illinois. environmental protection agency 60
<input type="checkbox"/> illinois	188	<input type="checkbox"/> university of illinois at urbana-champaign. college of agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> illinois state geological survey	187	<input type="checkbox"/> brems, hans 54
<input type="checkbox"/> illinois state medical society	164	<input type="checkbox"/> delta sigma omicron. alpha chap-53 ter 53
<input type="checkbox"/> illinois. regional transportation authority	162	<input type="checkbox"/> university of illinois at urbana-champaign. college of engineering
<input type="checkbox"/> illinois state university	149	
<input type="checkbox"/> university of illinois at urbana-champaign. cooperative extension service	140	

Internet Archives: [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)

Find-A-Grave [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) and Billion Graves [www.billiongraves.com](http://www.billiongraves.com)  
each site includes interment records for numerous Illinois cemeteries

Linkpendium [www.linkpendium.com](http://www.linkpendium.com)

A website aggregator similar to Cyndi's List, this easily navigable site allows you to break down your search by county and subject. Interested in biographies for Randolph County citizens? Linkpendium will provide a list of websites that contain biographies and histories of Randolph county. This is an excellent way to find small libraries and homegrown historical society collections that a Google search may miss.

Archivgrid <https://researchworks.oclc.org/archivegrid>

Managed by OCLC's online library catalog called World Catalog (WorldCat); ArchiveGrid is a worldwide index to archival collections. Within Illinois there are dozens of textual and photographic series that would not be indexed in standard library catalogs or online collections databases.

## Illinois State Websites

Illinois Secretary of State: [www.ilsos.gov](http://www.ilsos.gov)

In Illinois, the Secretary of State is also the State Archivist and the State Librarian. To access the genealogical records, click on **Departments** at the top of the homepage and then scroll down and choose **Illinois State Archives** from the list. From there you will see several options:

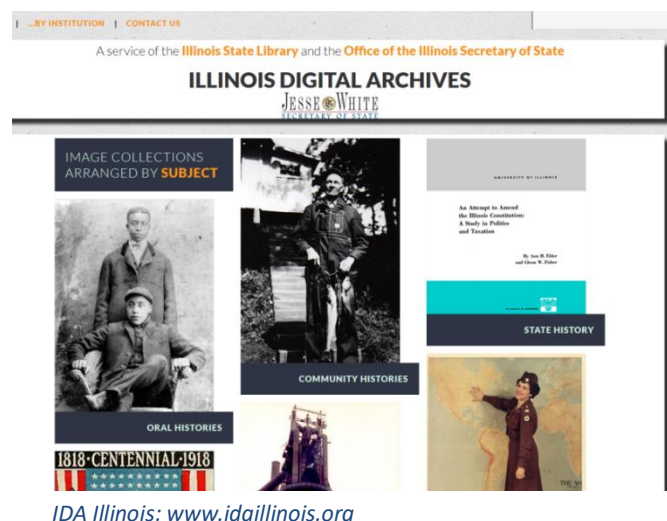
- Illinois Regional Archives Depository System: (IRAD) is a series of regional archives that contain county specific records. Most of these records are on microfilm at the owning repository. [www.ilsos.gov/departments/archives/IRAD/home.html](http://www.ilsos.gov/departments/archives/IRAD/home.html)
  - Illinois did not begin recording births and deaths until November 1877. At that time records were requested, not required. Recording these records was not mandatory until 1914. Check with your ancestor's county for any potential records that may have been recorded before November 1877.
  - The best part about using the IRAD system is the cost. Copies through the regional repositories are only .50 cents each. Each IRAD will search up to two names at a time, but they will not do in-depth research. They provide records to you by mail only. You cannot email them, you must write or call.

- Federal Township Plats of Illinois: include the earliest township maps surveyed and include geologic features like lakes, rivers and swamps. These maps can pre-date the opening of land for sale and do not include property owner's names. <http://landplats.ilsos.net>
- Databases are indexes to statewide records within the Illinois State Archives; they do not contain original digital images. [www.ilsos.gov/departments/archives/databases](http://www.ilsos.gov/departments/archives/databases)
  - Civil War Muster Rolls
  - Illinois Death Records pre 1916
  - Illinois Death Records 1916-1947
  - Illinois Marriages 1763-1900
  - Illinois Servitude and Emancipation Records
- IL Regional Archives Depositories Records Database [www.ilsos.gov/isa/localgovrecordssrch.jsp](http://www.ilsos.gov/isa/localgovrecordssrch.jsp)

## Illinois Digital Archives [www.idaillinois.org](http://www.idaillinois.org)

The Illinois Digital Archives (IDA Illinois) is sponsored by the Illinois State library. Similar to the Virginia Memory Project, it consists of dozens of digitized collections from libraries, museums and archives across Illinois. Items digitized include newspapers, phone directories, government records, personal scrapbooks and dairies, postcards and more. Small towns around the state from Cary to Flora have a chance to share their local history and genealogy collections with a much larger audience.

- Victory Official Weekly Bulletin of the Office of War Information (WWII)
- Eastern Illinois University Booth Library
  - *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*
- Elgin Historical Museum
  - Numerous Elgin city newspapers
- Field Museum of Chicago
  - 1893 World's Columbian Exposition
- Illinois State Archives
  - Alton, Menard & Joliet Prison Records
- Illinois State Geological Survey Library
  - Illinois Historical Aerial Photographs 1936
- The Illinois State Library
  - Illinois State Blue Books
  - Illinois State Highway Maps
  - Railroad Maps of Illinois
- Lake County Discovery Museum
  - Fort Sheridan Army Base Collection



- Spertus Institute
  - Chicago Jewish Sentinel Newspapers

Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries <https://collections.carli.illinois.edu>

CARLI contains digital collections from dozens of college and university libraries across Illinois. Records include university yearbooks and alumni directories as well as government records, genealogical society quarterlies, newspapers, maps and more. Not all collections are created equal! Some libraries created detailed item records, while other libraries uploaded their files with no additional metadata.

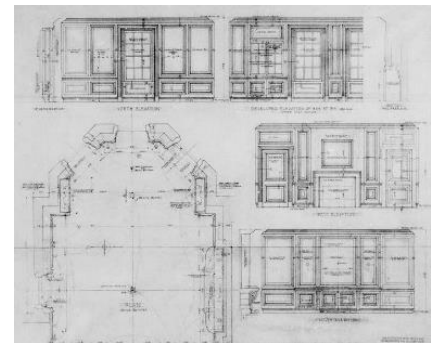
- Governor's State University
  - Monee Township Tax Assessor Records
- Augustana College
  - Swedish American Genealogist Quarterly
- Newberry Library
  - *Chicago Genealogist*, Quarterly of the Chicago Genealogical Society
  - Ayer's Native American Digital Collection
  - Pullman Company Digital Collection

Chicago Collections Consortium: <http://chicagocollections.org>

Representing Chicago museums, libraries and universities like the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago History Museum, Oak Park Public Library and Loyola University. Not all items within the collections are digitized and available online, but each entry provides contact details and item level descriptions so records can be requested by the owning facility.

Chicago Collections include:

- Art Institute of Chicago
  - Century of Progress Collection
  - Chicago Memorabilia & Map Collection 1877-2008
- Chicago History Museum
  - Aerial Photograph Albums Collection 1936-1975
  - Architectural Records Collections
- Theatre Historical Society of Chicago
  - Chicagoland Theatre Digital Photos
- University of Chicago
  - Chicago Committee of the Fifteen Records 1909-1927
  - Rush Medical College Records 1923-1941



*Ogden Residence, Lake Park, IL Blueprint*  
[www.chicagocollections.org](http://www.chicagocollections.org)

## Illinois Newspaper Collections

- **The Ancestor Hunt** [www.theancestorhunt.com/newspapers.html](http://www.theancestorhunt.com/newspapers.html)
- **Chronicling America** <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>
  - *Chicago Day Book* 1911-1917
  - *Chicago Dziennik Narodowy* (Polish) 1900-1918
  - *Chicago Dziennik Chicagoski* (Polish) 1890-1922
  - *Joliet Signal* 1846-1864
  - *Ottawa Free Trader* 1843-1890
- **Elephind** [www.elephind.com](http://www.elephind.com)
  - *Chicago Broad Ax* 1895-1922
  - *Chicago Western Railroad Gazette* 1856-1870
  - *Great Lakes Bulletin* (Naval Base) 1918-1919
- **Google News Archive** <http://news.google.com/newspapers>
  - *Aurora Daily Express* 1882-1901
  - *Aurora Daily Star* 1921-1932
  - *Joliet True Democrat* 1859-1862
  - *Ottawa Illinois Free Trader* 1843-1944
- **Internet Archive** [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)
  - *Antioch Newspapers* 1888-1999
  - *Aurora Beacon News* April-June 1917
  - *Oak Lawn Independent* 1933-2014
- **Online Newspaper Obit Indexes:**
  - **Frankfort Public Library Obituary Index**  
[www.frankfortlibrary.org/research/genealogy/obitindex](http://www.frankfortlibrary.org/research/genealogy/obitindex)
  - **Park Ridge Public Library Obituary Index** [www.parkridgelibrary.org/obituaries](http://www.parkridgelibrary.org/obituaries)
  - **Plainfield Public Library Obituary Index** <http://wcphh.org>



## Online Vital Records

- **DeKalb County Vital Records** [www.dekalbgenealogy.com](http://www.dekalbgenealogy.com)
- **Kane County Vital Records** <http://genealogy.kanecountyclerk.org>
- **Kane County Recorder of Deeds** <http://lrs.kanecountyrecorder.net/Search/DocumentBooks>
- **Kankakee Vital Records Search** [www.kankakeegenealogy.com](http://www.kankakeegenealogy.com)
- **Lake County Vital Records Search**  
[www.lakecountyil.gov/398/Genealogical-Records-Search](http://www.lakecountyil.gov/398/Genealogical-Records-Search)
- **Montgomery County Vital Records Search**  
<http://history.montgomeryco.com/Research/Vital-Records>



## Chicagoland Genealogy Resources

- **A Look At Cook** [www.alookatcook.com](http://www.alookatcook.com)
- **Center for Research Libraries, University of Chicago** <http://catalog.crl.edu/search~S3>
- **Chicago Ancestors** [www.chicagoancestors.org](http://www.chicagoancestors.org)
- **Chicago Building Permit Index**  
[www.chsmedia.org/househistory/1898-1912permits/search.asp](http://www.chsmedia.org/househistory/1898-1912permits/search.asp)
- **Chicago Daily News Photo Collection (Library of Congress)**  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/updatedList.html>
- **Chicago History Museum** [www.chicagohistory.org](http://www.chicagohistory.org)
- **Chicago Homicide Index** <http://homicide.northwestern.edu>
- **Chicago Public Library: Chicago History** [www.chipublib.org/chicago-history](http://www.chipublib.org/chicago-history)
- **Cook County Circuit Clerk Naturalization Index**  
[www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/NR](http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/NR)
- **Cook County Coroner's Inquest Records to 1911** [www.ilsos.gov/isairad/cookinquestsrch.jsp](http://www.ilsos.gov/isairad/cookinquestsrch.jsp)
- **Encyclopedia of Chicago** <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org>
- **Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois** [www.jgsi.org](http://www.jgsi.org)
- **University of Chicago** [www.uchicago.edu](http://www.uchicago.edu)

