

## OTHER RESOURCES

### Ontario Genealogical Society - Elgin County Branch

(<https://elgin.ogs.on.ca>)

Includes information and indexes to a number of invaluable genealogical resources, including newspaper indexes and a searchable database of cemetery transcriptions for most of Elgin County.

### St. Thomas Cemetery Company

(<https://stthomascemetery.com>)

The cemetery has an online database searchable by surname that provides you with the date of interment as well as the grave location with associated maps.

### Archives of Ontario

(<http://www.archives.gov.on.ca>)

Original vital records including birth, marriage and death certificates are housed at the Archives of Ontario in Toronto. Many records are available on microfilm through inter-library loan. Fees may apply, and there also may be access restrictions due to privacy legislation.

**Please note: This brochure highlights key collections and resources available for genealogical resources, but it is not an exhaustive list.**

## CONTACT US

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*"History remembers only  
the celebrated; Genealogy  
remembers them all."*

ELGIN  
COUNTY  
ARCHIVES

GENEALOGY

# GETTING STARTED

Genealogy is a way to connect with generations before you, to learn where you came from, and to better understand the present. It is also a gift you can pass on to future generations. There are many resources available to help you start your genealogy project, but it is important to make a plan for your research and to develop a method to stay organized before you delve into the records.

## Recommended Methodology

### **1. Identify what you know**

Write down what you know about individual family groups. Talk to living relatives and gather any family records they are willing to share

### **2. Decide what you want to learn**

Identify your research objectives and try to focus on one family line at a time.

### **3. Identify, select and search records**

Make a list of records you wish to search based on your objectives. Make notes as you consult records, even if the records do not return any information. Always include citations and sources, and note discrepancies.

### **4. Evaluate information and conclude**

Evaluate the evidential value of the information you found and record findings with a statement of proof.

### **5. Repeat research cycle**

Based on the information you have discovered, repeat cycle (usually from step 2) with new objectives.

# RESOURCES AT ELGIN COUNTY ARCHIVES

## **Census Returns**

Census returns are official Government of Canada records used to enumerate the country's population. Starting in 1851, they were conducted every 10 years and include the names of household members, as well as additional biographical information such as religious affiliation and occupation. The archives has the 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, and 1901 Ontario census returns available on microfilm.

## **Local Newspapers**

Consulting local newspapers may provide you with additional information by searching for birth, marriage or death announcements and obituaries. The archives has complete or partial editions of the Aylmer Express, Dutton Advance, West Lorne Sun, Rodney Mercury, West Elgin Chronicle, St. Thomas Times-Journal, Springfield Echo, and Talbotville Star, among others.

## **Upper Canada Land Petitions**

Early settlers applied to the Crown for land grants and patents using a document called a "petition". You can view petitions from the years 1791-1850 on microfilm at the archives, or you can search Library and Archives Canada's online database for the years 1783-1841 (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca>).

## **Land Registry Office Abstract Indexes**

Abstract Indexes provide a summary of property ownership for lots throughout Elgin County and St. Thomas. These records are available to view on microfilm, up to approximately 1900. In addition, you can now search the indexes online at [www.onland.ca](http://www.onland.ca), which includes all transactions, from crown to the present.

## **Elgin County Surrogate Court Records**

Probated wills and will registers are available on microfilm for the years 1800-1958. An index is available on our website.

## **Scott Studio Photographs**

The Scott Studio fonds is a collection comprised of approximately 100,000 photographic negatives created by three generations of photographers over 110 years of Elgin County's history. The studio was often commissioned to photograph weddings and family portraits, as well as local schools, organizations and events. You can search the photographs by using our online database.

## **Elgin County Vertical File Collection**

This collection contains miscellaneous subject files containing a wealth of genealogical information. It can be searched using our online database.

## **Ancestry - Library Edition**

Ancestry.ca is available to search in the archives' reference room free of charge.