

# The New England Historic Genealogical Society

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The New England Historic Genealogical Society, founded in 1845, is the oldest genealogical society in the country. The staff genealogists include leading experts in the fields of American, Canadian, English, Irish, and Scottish research. The Society's website, [www.NewEnglandAncestors.org](http://www.NewEnglandAncestors.org), provides direct access to many of the materials in the collection through searchable databases.

The research library, located at 101 Newbury Street in Boston, holds over 300,000 volumes of family and local histories, records, and reference materials. Over 50,000 microfilms and microfiches of vital records, deeds, probates, censuses, and other materials from the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, and Ireland can be found in the Dean C. and Roberta Smith Technology Room.

One of the most significant contributions that NEHGS made to the genealogical field was the transcription and publication of Massachusetts town vital records. This effort was first undertaken in 1902, and new tan volumes were consistently issued over the next forty years. This project not only made Massachusetts vital records available to researchers, it also saved a good many records from destruction.

The Society has been the leader in genealogical scholarship since the first edition of its flagship journal, *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, was published in 1847. The *Register* contains many compiled genealogies, record transcriptions, and historical information of use to genealogists. The Society's publishing program is very active today, publishing many books as well as the five-times-a-year *New England Ancestors* newsmagazine.

Although the methods have changed over time, many things have stayed the same. NEHGS members continue to use one of the finest genealogical libraries in the country, consult original documents in the manuscript collections, and read the *Register*. And, perhaps most of all, our fundamental goals today are strikingly similar to the purposes of the founders. Our mission - to borrow the language of the founders - is still "to cultivate a taste for genealogy, give it a direction, facilitate these labors, and render them of practical importance."

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