

ONLINE PHOTO COLLECTIONS FOR GENEALOGISTS

By Judy Janes
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Old photographs can bring a family to life again. Stories, accompanied by photos, tend to appeal to those family members who would otherwise have no interest in their ancestors' lives. The internet has made it easier than ever to find old photos of our ancestors, the places they lived, the events in which they participated or observed.

Keep in mind that just because you find an old photo online does not mean it is free to use. Some will be in the public domain, others will not. Some institutions will post a thumbnail image, but will charge a fee for a full-resolution image, plus an additional fee if one plans to publish the photo. Always read the copyright information about each image if you plan to post it online or include it in a family history book.

Check local libraries, museums, and historical society websites for important historical collections.

Image Search Engines:

Google Images: <https://images.google.com>

Google search tips: <https://tinyurl.com/yco3e3uh>

Google Images "Advance Search" - https://www.google.com/advanced_image_search

Bing Images: May offer better quality images and filters than Google.

<https://www.bing.com/images/discover?form=HDRSC2>

Reverse image search engines may help you find a distant relative who has posted a copy of the same photo somewhere on the web. The best eight reverse search engines:

<https://beebom.com/reverse-image-search-engines-apps-uses>

Library of Congress: *Digital Collections* includes more than 1.2 million images.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures>

- Includes tintypes, daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, stereographs, and modern photographs.
- LOC Guide to its collections: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/about>

1

Newspaper Navigator – Search through 1.56 million historic newspaper photos contained in the Chronicling of America newspaper collection from 1900 to 1963.

Watch video: <https://news-navigator.labs.loc.gov/search>

Digital Public Library of America: It currently contains 43 million images, texts, and videos from libraries, archives, museums, and universities throughout the U.S.

<https://dp.la/guides/the-family-research-guide-to-dpla>

The National Archives website contain an extensive list of important image collections throughout the U. S. The site also lists significant photo collections held by other institutions. <https://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/photography>

Calisphere: A gateway to digital collections from California's libraries, archives, museums, and more. Almost 2 million items are currently online. <https://calisphere.org/about>

FamilySearch.org: Watch Maureen Taylor's short YouTube video about how to search this website for photos. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8tHsFz1fKk>

Ancestry.com: Search photos uploaded by users. Results may be people, documents, headstones, etc. <https://search.ancestry.com/search/category.aspx?cat=43>

The Ancestor Hunt: A continually growing collection online photo archives throughout the U. S. <https://theancestorhunt.com/photos.html>

eBay: Old photos can be found in the "Collectibles" category. www.ebay.com
You may narrow the results by choosing "pre-1940" or "post-1940" images.

Other items that contain images:

- Postcards contain photos of people, places, and events
- Stereoview/Stereograph cards
- Entire family photo albums
- Old family bibles may also include family photos
- School yearbooks

Facebook: Search for county or city focused FB pages. Genealogist Katherine Willson has posted a 16,700+ downloadable PDF list of English-speaking Facebook groups.

<https://socialmediagenealogy.com/genealogy-on-facebook-list>

The site will now be maintained by Cyndi Ingle of Cyndislist.com, and is currently under construction. Meanwhile I suggest you download the .pdf version:

<https://moonswings.files.wordpress.com/2021/01/genealogy-on-facebook-jan-2021.pdf>

Dead Fred: Contains over 22,000 surnames, and 145,000 records. The site also has some yearbooks, and family photo albums. Please read the FAQ's regarding claiming a photo, or

how to purchase a photo from a contributor. https://deadfred.com/faq_05.php#four

Search for surnames: <http://www.deadfred.com/>

Flickr Commons: As an image hosting service, its goal is to share hidden treasures from the world's public photo archives. <https://www.flickr.com/commons>

Cyndislist: *Photographs and Memories* – Currently there are 112 links to various photo collections, but some links may be broken. <https://www.cyndislist.com/photos/archives> Paste a

broken link URL into the Wayback Machine at Archive.org: <https://archive.org/web>

Internet Archive: A non-profit library containing millions of free books, movies, software, music, and more from around the world. Here you may find photos or illustrations in books that are in the Public Domain. www.archive.org

Old photos of towns and cities:

- HistoryPin: <https://tinyurl.com/yagn5ccd>
- SepiaTown: <http://www.sepiatown.com/>

Major historical photograph collections - Include those from the German National Archives; Digital Archive on Jewish Life in Poland; Library and Archive of Canada; Australia's Trove Collection; The National Library of Scotland, and 17 collections throughout the U. S. <https://www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/22-online-historical-photo-databases/>

Newspaper Photograph Archives: Not necessarily online, but important archival collections that still exist. <https://www.loc.gov/rr/print/resource/newsmorgues.html>

Dating old photographs: <http://www.phototree.com/identify.htm>