

Reading Room Databases

HSP provides free access to a variety of online tools for researchers who visit our library at 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA.

Visitors can access these subscription-based sites using the public service terminals in the Reference Room and Reading Room, or through their personal computers. You can find more information about each database, as well as links, below.

You can access all of the sites via HSP's [Patron Access Link \(PAL\)](#) [1].

HSP's public service terminals also include links to dozens of free research tools, including Philadelphia city directories, immigration resources, and much more.

For more help accessing any of these sites for free while in the library, drop by the Reference Desk and speak to one of our staff.

America's Historical Newspapers

[America's Historical Newspapers](#) [1] offers access to select digitized newspapers, including ethnic American newspapers from HSP's Balch Collection from 1799-1971. The database includes a variety of early Pennsylvania newspapers, including the *Pennsylvania Gazette* (1794-1802), *Pennsylvania Packet* (1771-1790), *Philadelphia Inquirer* (1829-1922), *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* (1800-1820), *Public Ledger* (1836-1876), and *Harrisburg Patriot* (1866-1922).

Ancestry.com Institution Edition

[Ancestry.com Institution Edition](#) [1] is the world's largest online family history resource. The site includes over 30,000 database collections and 11 billion records, including more than 7 million records from HSP's collection. The site also provides access to historical photos, local narratives, oral histories, indexes and other resources that span from the 1500s to the 2000s.

FamilySearch

[FamilySearch.org](#) [1] has over 6 billion searchable names and 2 billion images of historical genealogical records. The site includes birth, marriage, death, census, land, and court records from more than 130 countries, and adds over 300 million free genealogical records and images online yearly from all over the world.

FindMyPast.com

[FindMyPast.com](#) [1] offers access to a large variety of British historical resources, as well as increasing numbers of U.S., Canadian, and other resources. The site offers more than 1,000

digital collections not available elsewhere, including British parish records dating back to 1538; British newspapers archives from England, Wales and Scotland; passenger lists from ships leaving the U.K. between 1890-1960; British Army records; Irish court records; and much more.

Global Commodities: Trade, Exploration & Cultural Exchange

Global Commodities: Trade, Exploration and Cultural Exchange [1] brings together primary source documents related to this topic from 20 key libraries and more than a dozen companies and trade organizations worldwide, including items from HSP's collection. The database includes digitized correspondence, business papers, government reports, pamphlets, dock records, statistical records, advertising memorabilia and ephemera, historical maps, photographs, paintings, prints, and objects, as well as contextual essays written by scholars.

Heritage Quest Online

Heritage Quest Online [1] offers several collections that may prove of particular interest to HSP researchers. Please note that the site does not offer a central search system; researchers will need to search each collection separately to check them all. The site's Revolutionary War pension and bounty-land warrant applications collection provides information on more than 80,000 military officers and enlisted men. The Freedman's Bank depositor records date from 1865 to 1874, and provide insights for genealogists and scholars interested in African American life during and after the Civil War. The site also includes collections of census records, immigration records, city directories, the Social Security Death Index, and more.

It also offers access to more than 28,000 digitized genealogy and local history books, as well as the Periodical Source Index (PERSI), published by the Allen County Public Library. PERSI catalogs articles from genealogical and historical society newsletters and other local history periodicals, but please note that this is only an index; users can request the actual articles through the Heritage Quest web site for an additional charge.

HSP Encounters (Genealogy Databases)

HSP Encounters [2] offers access to genealogy databases that index and summarize HSP record collections that are particularly rich in information on individuals, including the records of the Philadelphia Home for Infants, Philadelphia Job Placement Office, and the Home Missionary Society. While members can access these databases online through the HSP web site, all visitors to HSP's reading room can also access the databases. Each database collection includes a narrative providing a description and analysis of the indexed records, which will help researchers make sense of the information.

JSTOR

JSTOR [1] offers access to thousands of scholarly journals, books, and primary source documents. Researchers at HSP's library can access the current issues and complete

archival runs of HSP's journal, *Pennsylvania Magazine for History and Biography* (1877-present), and our magazine, *Pennsylvania Legacies* (2001-present). Researchers can also access archival issues for other JSTOR content, which generally excludes the most recent three to five years of issues.

Migration to New Worlds

Migration to New Worlds [1] brings together primary source documents related to the emigration of peoples to the United States, Canada and Australasia during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The resource includes items from 15 institutions, including HSP, and primarily focuses on European emigration but it also includes a wealth of material covering Chinese and Japanese movement to the United States. The database includes digitized correspondence, financial records, diaries, travel journals, printed books, maps, and much more.

Slavery, Abolition and Social Justice: 1490-2007

Slavery, Abolition and Social Justice: 1490-2007 [1] brings together primary source documents related to this topic from 21 institutions, including hundreds of items from HSP's collection. The database includes digitized manuscripts, rare books, pamphlets, periodicals, broadsides, ephemera, maps and illustrative material, as well as contextual essays written by scholars.

The resource is divided into 16 thematic areas, and includes a strong focus on the African coast, resistance and revolts, the Underground Railroad, the records of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, education and desegregation, slavery-related court records, legislation and politics, and much more.

World's Fairs: A Global History of Expositions

World's Fairs: A Global History of Expositions [3] explores the phenomenon of world's fairs from the Crystal Palace in 1851 and the proliferation of North American exhibitions, to fairs around the world and twenty-first century expos. Through official records, monographs, publicity, artwork and artifacts, this resource brings together multiple archives for rich research opportunities in this diverse topic.

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Links

[1] <https://pal.hsp.org/menu>

[2] <https://encounters.hsp.org>

[3] <http://www.worldsfairs.amdigital.co.uk/Introduction/NatureAndScope>