

Canadian Genealogy – Manitoba Research Resources

Manitoba was originally a part of a vast territory granted to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670. Manitoba joined Confederation 1870, and its boundaries were extended twice after that, reaching its modern size in 1912.



On November 19, 1869, the Government of Canada acquired all the land belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, commonly called Rupert's Land. Canada then created the Province of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories from Rupert's Land and the former North-Western Territory.

Most immigrants came from Eastern Canada, the United States, and Europe. The first major white settlement took place in Manitoba in 1812, through the Earl of Selkirk's efforts. A major land rush occurred in the 1870's with the completion of the railroad as well as the migration of many people from Ontario coming for the free farmland that had been made available. Today most of the population lives in the extreme south of the province.

Land Records

The most helpful genealogy records for Manitoba are land records, particularly "homestead" records. Land records date from the 1800's and newspapers from 1859. Many researchers ignore land records because they believe there is not enough information in them to make them worthwhile for researching.



At least one valuable piece of information can be gleaned from land records and that is the spelling of the surname. Because land ownership was important, people made sure that their names were spelled correctly and other details were added so the individual was clearly distinguished from others bearing the same name. Also often the names of a relative will be identified in the land record.

Library and Archives Canada holds the Letters Patent issued by the Lands Patent Branch of the Department of the Interior. The records refer to grants issued in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the railway belt of British Columbia, 1870-1930. Those records can be searched in at Library and Archives Canada, [Land Grants of Western Canada, 1870 – 1930](#).

Civil Registrations



Civil registrations for births, marriages and deaths were required by law in 1882 but as usual are incomplete in the first years of the law. Access to Manitoba birth, marriage, and death records is available with these restrictions:

- Births - after 100 years
- Marriages - after 80 years
- Deaths - after 70 years

You can do a free search for your ancestor's records at the [Manitoba Vital Statistics](#) website. If you wish to obtain a certified copy of the original record for genealogical purposes based on a search you have done, the fee for each record is \$12.00.

Census Records

Some Census returns date to as early as 1832; but the first nominal return was 1879.

[Canadian Genealogy](#) has links to various census records for Manitoba.

The 1916 Census was the ninth census for Manitoba and the third census for Saskatchewan and Alberta. It officially began on June 1, 1916. Information and a searchable database for this census can be found at [Library & Archives Canada](#).

Hudson Bay Company records



Hudson Bay Company records 1670 to 1951 can be found at [Archives of Manitoba](#). Especially check the [Hudson Bay Company Biographical Sheets](#) that were created for many of the employees of the Hudson's Bay Company and/or the North West Company. These sheets contain not only birth, death, and occupational information on the individual but also the wife and children are listed with the marriage date and children's birth dates.

Though Manitoba's civil records were incomplete when they were part of the Northwest Territories, there are still many types of alternative sources available online for research other than the civil records.

Considering the Manitoba Census records that are online, the Manitoba Civil Registrations that are online and the Cemetery Records that are online, the genealogical data for a very large part of the population of Manitoba prior to 1911 with the possible exception of the native populations is available online. Consider that the size of the population of Manitoba in 1871 was only 25,228. In 1881 it had more than doubled to be 62,260. Another ten years brought another doubling of population to be 255,211 and again the Census of 1911 showed the population had doubled to 461,394. This is still a relatively small population and the records I have mentioned in this article represent a significant portion of this population.

Cemeteries

There are several web pages that list links to Manitoba cemeteries but most of the links are invalid because the website has moved or the link has just changed. Here is a list of cemetery search links that will lead you to indexes for an individual Manitoba cemetery and in some cases multiple cemeteries.



- [City of Brandon Cemetery Map and search engine](#) features searching over name first or last and or birth year or death year. The location of the grave will show on the map.
- [Town of Neepawa Cemetery Database](#) search engine allows a search using first names, last names or burial year of the deceased.
- [Search the City of Portage la Prairie Cemetery Database](#) by entering the first name or last name in the search box.
- The City of Winnipeg had three Cemeteries listed on their website. This is the link to the [Brookside Cemetery search](#).
- Another cemetery database search from the City of Winnipeg website is the [St. Vital Cemetery](#).
- The third cemetery database search from the City of Winnipeg website is the [Transcona Cemetery burial search](#).
- The [Commonwealth War Graves Commission](#) has a search engine that contains a casualty database listing the names and place of commemoration of the 1.7 million men and women of the Commonwealth forces who died during the two world wars. It also records details of the 67,000 Commonwealth civilians who died "as a result of enemy action" in the Second World War.
- The [Kelwood Cemetery Inscriptions Index](#) shows the complete name of the individual and the birth and death year and any relationship information in the inscription. An email link is provided for additional questions.
- [Rosedale Cemetery](#) is located four miles (6.5 km) north of Neepawa on the old #5 highway.

- CanadianHeadstones.com. Browse over 25,700 headstone photo records from across Manitoba submitted by more than seventy volunteers!
- [Rosenhoff Cemetery](#) was used from approximately 1907-1930 by the Scratching River Reserve Mennonites. 2 miles west on the PTH 23 out of Morris, Manitoba Canada north on Road 2E for approximately 3.5 miles. It is located on the west side of the road. There is no sign on the graveyard, however the headstones are visible from the road.
- [St. Francis Xavier](#), Manitoba Burials 1834-1865 From Roman Catholic Parish Registers.

Obituaries

Most of the obituaries that are online are for deaths that have occurred after 1960. [The Newspaper Archive](#) may have some Manitoba obituaries that date from an earlier period because it has scanned and indexed some of the major newspapers for the region.

Source: MyTrees.com