



Inside the Clayton Library Collection by Irene B Walters

Clayton Library is the genealogy/family history section of HPL, among the top 10 genealogy libraries in America, 1/3 of HPL's History Research Centers, which are the Family History Research Center at the Clayton Library Campus, the Houston History Research Center at the Julia Ideson building, and the African American History Research Center at the Gregory School.

Clayton library collects...

- material for every state.
- original and compiled records.
- local, state and federal records.
- material in many formats – books, microfilm, microfiche, & digital.
- US historical records from the colonial era to the 20th century.
- foreign historical records from pre-colonial times to the 20th century.

Beginning genealogy

- Start with yourself & work backwards
- Fill out a pedigree chart
- Fill out a family group sheet for each couple & their children

Why fill out charts?

- Your chart acts as your map
- Evaluate your chart as you work
- Ask questions
 - Who were the parents, the children?
 - Where were they born, married, died?
 - When were they born, married, died?
 - Did they own or rent land?
 - Did they move, emigrate or naturalize?
 - What historical events happened in their lifetime – wars, land rushes, epidemics, emancipation?

Start at home

- With family
- Talk to family members about events that took place, find the family member(s) that has/have family "stuff."
- What is in the attic, the trunk, the bible, the drawer, between book pages, shoe boxes, the safe deposit box?
- Get copies of original documents & photos
- Use a tracking or filing system from the beginning
- Write down oral traditions

Records to look for in genealogy research

- Census
- Vitals records – birth, marriage, death
- Wills, Probate, Guardianship
- Land – deeds, grants, bounty
- Military records
- Immigration & Naturalization

Get a MyLink Card (Houston Public Library card)

- Free to Texas residents, \$40 a year for non-residents

Go to the Houston Public Library (HPL) website <http://www.houstonlibrary.org>

- Start by clicking "Research"
- Then click "A-Z databases," choose the "Genealogy" subject heading
- Then choose the resource you want to use

Databases for searching

- Some of the largest genealogy databases in the world
- Have tons of great information, but you must evaluate what you find there, not everything is in the databases or on the internet & not everything in the databases or on the internet is correct
- Ancestry Library Edition -- In library only
- Find My Past -- in Clayton Library use only
- Heritage Quest Online – remote access with an HPL library card
- Fold3 -- mostly military – remote access with an HPL library card
- My Heritage Library Edition – remote access with an HPL library card
- Houston Chronicle Historical Archive 1901-2017 -- remote access with an HPL library card

Resources & Information for genealogy

- Clayton Library's programming
 - Currently hybrid
- Clayton Library's digitized books
 - We are an affiliate library with FamilySearch
- Online sources – HPL – www.houstonlibrary.org – has other databases, such as newspapers, history, & ethnic resources
- Actual record repositories
- Internet sites

Tell your family's story before it disappears

- Genealogy software
- Shared or shareable database
 - Ancestry.com
 - FamilySearch.org
- Family newsletter
- Internet
 - A blog
 - Facebook
- In a book or booklet

Final points to ponder

- Get your library card
- Call, write, email, or visit Clayton Library -- virtually or in person
- Check out your local or state library
- Have fun!

Searching for Revolutionary War materials

- Search the term "Revolution, 1775-1783" in the HPL catalog, restrict to Clayton
- www.houstonlibrary.org

cla.reference@ houstontx.gov

**Monday – noon-5:00 pm; Tuesday & Wednesday – 10:00 am-5:00 pm;
Friday – 10:00 am-5:00 pm; Thursday – noon-7:00 pm; Saturday – 10:00 am-5:00 pm
Sunday– Closed**