Resources for Genealogists and Family Historians
Researching Kentucky Catholic Ancestors

ARCHIVES

Archdiocese of Louisville Archives
Maloney Center
1200 South Shelby Street
Louisville, Kentucky 40203-2600
Phone: (502) 636-0296
Website: https://www.archlou.org/services-directory/archdiocesan-agencies-facilities/archives/

The Archdiocese of Louisville Archives is the repository for the official and historical records of the Archdiocese of Louisville. The boundaries of the Archdiocese of Louisville include 24 counties in central Kentucky: Adair, Barren, Bullitt, Casey, Clinton, Cumberland, Green, Hardin, Hart, Henry, Jefferson, LaRue, Marion, Meade, Metcalfe, Monroe, Nelson, Oldham, Russell, Shelby, Spencer, Taylor, Trimble, and Washington.

Diocese of Covington Archives
1125 Madison Avenue
Covington, Kentucky 41011-3115
Phone: (859) 392-1500
Website: https://www.covdio.org/archives/

The Diocese of Covington Archives is the repository for the official and historical records of the Diocese of Covington. The boundaries of the Diocese of Covington include the city of Covington and 14 counties in northern Kentucky: Boone, Kenton, Campbell, Gallatin, Carroll, Grant, Owen, Pendleton, Harrison, Bracken, Robertson, Mason, Fleming, and Lewis.

Diocese of Lexington Chancellor’s Office
Catholic Center
1310 West Main Street
Lexington, Kentucky 40508

Diocese of Owensboro Office of Archives
600 Locust Street
Owensboro, Kentucky 42301
Telephone: (270) 683-1545, ext. 333
Email: archives@pastoral.org
Website: https://owensborodiocese.org/archives/


NOTE: Open by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, please contact the diocesan archivist by telephone at 270-683-1545 or by email at archives@pastoral.org at least two weeks before your intended visit.

Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives
Archives Research Room
300 Coffee Tree Road
Frankfort, KY 40601
Telephone: (502) 564-1770 or (800) 928-7000 (toll-free)
Website: http://www.kdla.ky.gov/

Mailing address: P.O. Box 537, Frankfort, KY 40601-0537

The Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives is the central repository for Kentucky’s city, county and state government records. Records include wills and deeds,

Mount Saint Joseph Archives
8001 Cummings Road
Maple Mount, Kentucky 42356
Telephone: (270) 229–4103
Email: archives.msj@maplemount.org
Website: http://ursulinesmsj.org/about-us/archives

The Mount Saint Joseph Archives is the repository for the permanent historical records of the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph (Maple Mount, Kentucky), the Ursuline Sisters of Belleville (Belleville, Illinois), and the Ursuline Sisters of Paola (Paola, Kansas).

NOTE: Open by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, please contact the archivist by telephone at (270) 229–4103 or by email at archives@pastoral.org at least two weeks before your intended visit.

National Archives at Atlanta
5780 Jonesboro Road
Morrow, Georgia 30260
Telephone: (770) 968–2100
Website: http://www.archives.gov/atlanta/

The National Archives at Atlanta holds records from over 100 federal agencies and courts in Kentucky, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Records include microfilms for censuses, diplomatic missions, military service records, bounty-land applications, passenger arrival lists, naturalizations, American Indians, and African Americans.

LIBRARIES

Daviess County Public Library
Kentucky Room
2020 Frederica Street
Owensboro, Kentucky 42301
Telephone: (270) 684–0211
Website: http://www.dcplibrary.org/genealogy
The Kentucky Room of Daviess County Public Library contains special materials on local history, state history, and genealogy. The collection includes over 140 year of local newspapers on microfilm, an obituary index from 1890 to the present, Daviess County marriage records, deeds, and Kentucky Civil War Military records.

**Draper Manuscript Collection**
**Wisconsin Historical Society**
816 State Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
Website: [http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/)

The Draper Collection consists of 491 volumes of records collected by Lyman Copeland Draper on the history of the trans-Allegheny West, a region that includes portions of the Carolinas, Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, all of the Ohio River Valley, and the Mississippi Valley. Most of the materials in the collection cover the time period of the 1740s through the 1810s.

**Durrett Collection**
**University of Chicago Library**
**Regenstein Library**
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637
Telephone: (773) 702-4685
Website: [http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/index.html](http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/index.html)

The Durrett Collection consists of historical materials on the settlement of Kentucky and the Ohio River Valley.

**Filson Historical Society Library**
1310 South Third Street
Louisville, Kentucky 40208
Telephone: (502) 635-5083
Website: [http://filsonhistorical.org/](http://filsonhistorical.org/)

The Filson Historical Society has an extensive collection of materials on early Kentucky history and genealogy.

**Kentucky Historical Society**
**Martin F. Schmidt Research Library**
100 West Broadway
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
Telephone: (502) 564-1792, ext. 4460
Website: http://history.ky.gov

The Martin F. Schmidt Research Library offers many resources for genealogists and local historians, including printed biographies and family histories, Bible records, surname collections, cemetery and church records, photographs, maps, city directories, manuscripts, and oral histories. The Kentucky Historical Society also hosts an online database of cemetery records with over 150,000 names transcribed by volunteers from cemeteries across Kentucky.

**Murray State University**
**Special Collections & Archives**
**Forrest C. Pogue Library**
200 Pogue Library
Murray, Kentucky 42071
Telephone: (270) 809-6152
Website: http://libguides.murraystate.edu/special_collections_index

The Special Collections Department holds collections of materials related to the cultural history of the Jackson Purchase area of southwestern Kentucky and northwestern Tennessee. These collections include regional and county histories, genealogical resources, local church records, regional newspapers, and other published materials.

**University of Kentucky**
**Special Collections Research Center**
179 Funkhouser Drive
Lexington, Kentucky 40506-0039
Telephone: (859) 257-8611
Website: http://libraries.uky.edu/lib.php?lib_id=13

The Special Collections Research Center contains rare books, archival and manuscript collections, Appalachian collections, newspapers, church records, genealogical collections, county and local histories, the Draper manuscripts, county, state, and federal records, and other materials related to Kentucky history.

**Western Kentucky University**
**Kentucky Library Research Collections**
1444 Kentucky Street
Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101
Telephone: (270) 745-5083
Website: http://www.wku.edu/library/dlsc/index.php

Mailing address: WKU Libraries Special Collections, Western Kentucky University, 1906 College Heights Boulevard, #11092, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101

The Kentucky Library Research Collections houses extensive collections of genealogical records, church histories, court records, funeral records, deeds, wills, oral histories, and biographical files related to south central Kentucky and early settlers in the area.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Bible Records

Kentucky Bible Archives
Browse transcriptions of Kentucky family bibles by county.
Website: http://usgwarchives.net/ky/bibles/toc.html

Kentucky Bibles from KYGenWeb
Browse transcriptions of Kentucky family bibles by family name.
Website: http://www.kygenweb.net/bibles/index.html

Kentucky Bible Records from Kentucky Genealogy
Browse transcriptions of Kentucky family bibles by county and family name.
Website: http://www.kentuckygenealogy.org/bible

Cemeteries

Find A Grave
Search an online database of more than 60 million grave records from around the world.
Website: http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gs&

Internment.net
Search and browse cemetery burial records from thousands of cemeteries across the world.
Website: http://www.interment.net/

Kentucky Cemetery Records at Interment.net
Search and browse Kentucky cemetery burial records by county.
Website: http://interment.net/us/ky/index.htm

Kentucky Cemeteries from Kentucky Genealogy  
Browse Kentucky cemetery records by county and cemetery name.  
Website: http://www.kentuckygenealogy.org/cemeteries

Kentucky Cemeteries: The Tombstone Transcription Project  
Search and browse Kentucky tombstone transcriptions by county.  
Website: http://usgwtombstones.org/kentucky/kentucky.html

Kentucky Historical Society Cemetery Search  
Search a database of Kentucky cemetery records.  
Website: http://205.204.134.47/cemetery.asp

Names in Stone  
Search and browse a database of cemetery records from around the world, including interactive maps of grave locations and grave groupings.  
Website: http://namesinstone.com/

Genealogy Sites

AfriGeneas  
This site is devoted to African American genealogy, including researching African ancestry in the Americas and general genealogical research and resources.  
Website: http://www.afrigeneas.com/

Ancestry.com  
A subscription-based service that searches billions of genealogy records, including Census, SSDI and military records. Many public libraries have a subscription to the site and offer patrons free access through public computers at the library. Check with your local public library.  
Website: http://www.ancestry.com/

Archives.gov  
The website for the National Archives and Records Administration includes military records, naturalization records, land records, census records, and immigration records.  
Website: http://archives.gov/
Family Search
This site provides a free online searchable database of millions of genealogical records, including births, baptism and death records.
Website: https://familysearch.org/

Genealogy.com
This site provides resources and information on genealogy research.
Website: http://www.genealogy.com/

Genealogy Buff Obituary Files
This site provides resources and information on Kentucky genealogy data, including obituaries, death notices, and marriage licenses.
Website: http://www.genealogybuff.com/ky/

HeritageQuest
An online collection of genealogical sources including local and family histories, research guides, interactive census maps, census records, books, periodicals, Revolutionary War service records, and Freedman's Bank depositor records. This is another service that many public libraries offer and it is usually accessible to patrons from home via the library’s web site. Check with your local public library.

Kentucky Genealogy
This site serves as a resource for locating online Kentucky genealogical and historical information including bible records, cemetery records, court records, maps, obituaries, and wills.
Website: http://www.kentuckygenealogy.org/

KYGenWeb
This site serves as a resource for locating online Kentucky genealogical and historical information including maps, obituaries, Kentucky bibles, vital records, Kentucky school photos and yearbooks, and military records.
Website: http://www.kygenweb.net/

RootsWeb.com
A free, volunteer-based project sponsored by Ancestry.com that includes local history, family trees, surname lists, gravestones and old church records.
Website: http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/
The USGenWeb Project
This volunteer-run site provides free online genealogy information for every U.S. state and county.
Website: [http://www.usgenweb.org/](http://www.usgenweb.org/)

**Historic Maps**

**Maps of Kentucky**
Search and browse historic Kentucky maps. Also includes links to map collections and other resources.
Website: [http://www.mapofus.org/kentucky/](http://www.mapofus.org/kentucky/)

**Historic Newspapers**

**Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Kentucky Newspapers**
Search digitized Kentucky newspaper pages from 1847-1922.
Website: [http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/newspapers/?state=Kentucky&ethnicity=&language=](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/newspapers/?state=Kentucky&ethnicity=&language=)

**Land Records**

**Kentucky Land Office**
This site features searchable databases and resources for researching Kentucky land acquisitions and information about Kentucky's cities and counties.
Website: [http://www.sos.ky.gov/admin/land/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.sos.ky.gov/admin/land/Pages/default.aspx)

**Military Records**

**Fold3**
Search and browse United States military records.
[https://www.fold3.com/](https://www.fold3.com/)
Vital Records

**Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics**
Order Kentucky vital records including birth, marriage, divorce, and death records.
http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/vital/

**Online Kentucky Death Records and Indexes**
Browse a list of online resources on Kentucky death indexes, obituaries, and cemeteries.
http://www.deathindexes.com/kentucky/index.html

**University of Kentucky Marriage Index for 1973-1993**
Search indexes to selected Kentucky vital records.
http://ukcc.uky.edu/vitalrec/

**University of Kentucky Death Index for 1911-1986**
Search indexes to selected Kentucky vital records.
http://ukcc.uky.edu/vitalrec/

**University of Kentucky Death Index for 1987-1992**
Search indexes to selected Kentucky vital records.
http://ukcc.uky.edu/vitalrec/

**University of Kentucky Divorce Index for 1973-1993**
Search indexes to selected Kentucky vital records.
http://ukcc.uky.edu/vitalrec/

RESEARCHING WOMEN RELIGIOUS

**Archives of Women Religious**

One of the best sources of information on ancestors who served as Catholic nuns or sisters are the archives of her congregation. Typically the archives of women religious keep information on deceased members, such as baptismal and confirmation certificates, biographical information, photographs, correspondence and other writings, and mission lists.
Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious (ACWR)
Website: https://archivistsacwr.org/

Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious (ACWR) assists lay and religious archivists in the management, interpretation, and preservation of the historical record of Catholic sisters and nuns in the United States and worldwide. One resource on the ACWR website is “Women Religious History Sources: A Digital Guide to Repositories in North America,” which provides a comprehensive list of women religious archives with contact information and summaries of collection holdings. This document can be found at https://archivistsacwr.org/women-religious-resource/.

Catholic Directories
The Official Catholic Directory was first published by P. J. Kenedy & Sons in 1817. It is an authoritative Catholic research resource, offering details about dioceses, parishes, missions, schools, and religious communities. Libraries and archives across the United States have started digitizing older editions of the Official Catholic Directory, making them available on HathiTrust Digital Library at https://www.hathitrust.org/.

Catholic Research Resources Alliance (CRRA)
Website: https://www.catholicresearch.org/

The Catholic Research Resources Alliance (CRRA) provides enduring global access to Catholic research resources in the Americas, beginning with access to rare, unique, and uncommon research materials. Through the Catholic Research Resources Portal (also known as the “Catholic Portal”), the CRRA provides global, freely available access to materials in libraries, seminaries, special collections, and archives. The CRRA also manages the Catholic Newspapers Program, which aims to provide access to North American Catholic newspapers for research use.

Census Records
If you know your ancestor's religious name, you may be able to find her in census records. These records can enable you to discover what city or town she was working in at the time of the census. From this information, you can use Catholic directories to track down her congregation. Something to note is that census takers sometimes wrote “Sister” as the first name, so it is a good idea to include this word in your search.

Family Records
Search family records – obituaries, letters, wills – for clues such as your ancestor's religious name and where/when she may have lived at a particular point in time. With information
such as a year and location, you can use Catholic directories to determine which congregation was working in a particular city or town during that time.

**Cemetery Sites**
If you have information about your ancestor's death or her place of burial, you can use websites like [Find A Grave](https://www.findagrave.com) to track down her tombstone. Tombstones often provide the initials of her congregation, which you can then use to locate the correct congregation to contact for more information.

**Search Engines**
If you know your ancestor's religious name and her congregation, try to find information about her using Boolean search techniques on Google or another search engine. A Boolean search involves combining keywords with operators such as AND, NOT, and OR to produce more relevant results. For example, in tracking down information on Sister Jerome Cooper, an Ursuline Sister who served at Saint James Parish in Louisville, Kentucky, you could use these phrases:

   “Sister Jerome Cooper”
   “Sister Jerome Cooper AND Louisville OR Kentucky”
   “Jerome Cooper AND St. James AND Louisville”
   “Jerome Cooper AND Ursuline Sisters”

**Parish Histories**
Old parish histories (before the 1960s) often list men and women religious who came from the parish. These lists usually include the person's religious name and congregation.