

# DEAD IN THE GARDEN STATE:

## The Who, What, When and Where of New Jersey Death Records

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This syllabus provides suggested resources for locating death records in New Jersey. This list is not intended to be a complete list of all possible resources. If you would like to suggest a resource not included in the syllabus, please e-mail the lecturer.

#### **I. CIVIL DEATH RECORDS**

- **New Jersey State Archives (NJSA), Trenton, New Jersey:** Death ledgers from May 1848 to May 1878 and death certificates from June 1878 to 1963 are available on microfilm for in-person searching at NJSA. Copies from the microfilms are only \$0.50 each. Mail-in/online requests are available at NJSA, \$10.00 per request, for deaths from 1 May 1848 to 31 December 1940.
  - Death Record Search Request: May 1, 1848 - December 31, 1940: [https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS\\_ArchivesDBPortal/index.aspx](https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS_ArchivesDBPortal/index.aspx)
  - Death Indexes:
    - > Death Records, May 1848 - May 1878, Over 301,128 death records (Online index – data entry ongoing): [https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS\\_ArchivesDBPortal/index.aspx](https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS_ArchivesDBPortal/index.aspx)
    - > Death Records, June 1878 – December 1900, Over 628,584 death records (Online index – data entry complete): [https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS\\_ArchivesDBPortal/index.aspx](https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS_ArchivesDBPortal/index.aspx)
    - > Geographical Index, 1916-1929 (Microfilms at NJSA).
  - Reclaim the Records: New Jersey Death Indexes, 1901-1903, 1920-1929, and 1949-2000, with an online database for 2001-2017. Database and more information found at: <https://www.newjerseydeathindex.com/>. Images to browse on Archive.org at: [https://archive.org/search.php?query=creator%3A%22Reclaim+The+Records%22&and\[\]=subject%3A%22New+Jersey%22&and\[\]=subject%3A%22deaths%22](https://archive.org/search.php?query=creator%3A%22Reclaim+The+Records%22&and[]=subject%3A%22New+Jersey%22&and[]=subject%3A%22deaths%22)
- **Department of Health and Senior Services, Bureau of Vital Statistics and Registry:** Death certificates from 1941-present. Certified and genealogical copies available for mail order and in-person requests at the Office of Vital Statistics in Trenton. Cost is \$25.00 for initial search and 1 certified copy or certification of the record or a 'No Record Statement;' and \$2.00 for each additional copy. Now accepts purchases via credit card with a processing fee added.
  - **Non-Genealogical/Certified Copies:** Proof of a qualifying relationship (subject's parent, legal guardian, legal representative, spouse/civil union partner, child, grandchild or sibling) required for certified copies. If you do not meet a category, a certified copy will only be issued upon court order. For more information: <https://www.state.nj.us/health/vital/order-vital/non-genealogical-records/>
  - **Genealogical/Certification Copies:** For a death record to qualify as a genealogical record, the death must have occurred more than 40 years ago (i.e. 1982). For more information: <https://www.state.nj.us/health/vital/order-vital/genealogical-records/>.
- **Local Vital Records Offices:** Death records are also available from local vital records offices located within the municipality where the death occurred. Visit the municipality's website to review all requirements and fees for non-genealogical/certified copies and genealogical/ certification copies of death records.
  - **New Jersey Department of Health's List of Registrars by County:** <https://www.state.nj.us/health/vital/order-vital/local-vital-records/>

#### **II. CHURCH DEATH RECORDS**

Many churches kept track of the deaths and burials of their congregants in addition to recording baptisms and marriages, and maintaining membership lists. Below is a sampling of sources of church records for New Jersey.

- **Catholic Archdiocese of Newark:** Records held by the Archdiocese of Newark were filmed by the Family History Library (FHL). The microfilmed church records are available at the FHL and are available online at FamilySearch.org. FHL microfilms also available at Seton Hall University's Msgr. William Noé Field Archives and Special Collections Center in South Orange. The microfilms can be viewed at the Center (by appointment) or record searches can be requested remotely via the Center's 'Genealogy Research Requests' page on their website: <https://library.shu.edu/archives>. The following PDF document provides a listing of all the church records filmed by the FHL: [https://library.shu.edu/ld.php?content\\_id=14834131](https://library.shu.edu/ld.php?content_id=14834131). Additional church records not filmed by the FHL: [https://library.shu.edu/ld.php?content\\_id=14834136](https://library.shu.edu/ld.php?content_id=14834136)
- **The Archives of the Reformed Church in America, New Brunswick, New Jersey:** Guide to local church records: <http://images.rca.org/docs/archives/churchrecords.pdf>
- **Greater New Jersey United Methodist Church Commission on Archives and History, Madison, New Jersey:** <https://www.gnjumc.org/our-history-and-values/archives-history/>
- **The Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey:** <https://dioceseofnj.org/archives/>
- **The New Jersey Historical Society's Collection of Church Records and Cleric's Papers:** <https://jerseyhistory.org/archives-browse-church-records-and-clerics-papers/>
- **FamilySearch.org Collections - Examples:**
  - **First Presbyterian Church, Princeton:** <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/127659>
  - **Presbyterian Church, Madison:** <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/453770>
  - **True Reformed Church of Paramus, Ridgewood:** <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/221851>
  - **Protestant Dutch Reformed Church of Acquackanonk:** <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/308298>
  - **Dutch Reformed North Church, Passaic:** <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/769607>
- **Ancestry.com Collections:**
  - **U.S., Presbyterian Church Records, 1701-1970:** <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/presbyteriansociety/>
  - **New Jersey, Episcopal Diocese of Newark Church Records, 1809-1816, 1825-1970:** <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/njepiscopal/>
  - **New Jersey, United Methodist Church Records, 1800-1970:** <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/newjerseymethodist/>
  - **U.S., Dutch Christian Reformed Church Vital Records, 1856-1970:** <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/christianreformedchurchrecords/>
  - **U.S., Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Church Records, 1781-1969:** <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/elcabmd/>
  - **U.S., Quaker Meeting Records, 1681-1935:** <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/quakermeetmins/>
  - **U.S., Dutch Reformed Church Records in Selected States, 1639-1989:** <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/nydutchchurch/>

### **III. COUNTY CORONERS' INQUESTS & PHYSICIAN'S DEATH CERTIFICATES**

- **New Jersey State Archives Holdings from Online Catalog:** Below is a sampling:
  - **Hudson County:** Control no. CHDCR001. [https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS\\_ArchivesDBPortal/NJSArchivesCatalogDetail.aspx?SeriesNo=CHDCR001](https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS_ArchivesDBPortal/NJSArchivesCatalogDetail.aspx?SeriesNo=CHDCR001)
  - **Middlesex County:** Control no. CMICR001. Microfilm copies of original records housed at Special Collections and University Archives at Rutgers-New Brunswick. [https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS\\_ArchivesDBPortal/NJSArchivesCatalogDetail.aspx?SeriesNo=CMICR001](https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS_ArchivesDBPortal/NJSArchivesCatalogDetail.aspx?SeriesNo=CMICR001)
  - **Passaic County:** Control no. CPACR001. Coroner's Office, 1837-1901: [https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS\\_ArchivesDBPortal/NJSArchivesCatalogDetail.aspx?SeriesNo=CPACR001](https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS_ArchivesDBPortal/NJSArchivesCatalogDetail.aspx?SeriesNo=CPACR001)
  - **Union County:** Control no. CUNCL011. [https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS\\_ArchivesDBPortal/NJSArchivesCatalogDetail.aspx?SeriesNo=CUNCL011](https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS_ArchivesDBPortal/NJSArchivesCatalogDetail.aspx?SeriesNo=CUNCL011) and Control no. CUNCR001. [https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS\\_ArchivesDBPortal/NJSArchivesCatalogDetail.aspx?SeriesNo=CUNCR001](https://wwwnet-dos.state.nj.us/DOS_ArchivesDBPortal/NJSArchivesCatalogDetail.aspx?SeriesNo=CUNCR001)

- **FamilySearch.org Collections:** Many of the Coroner's collections held at the New Jersey State Archives were filmed by the Family History Library and are available online at FamilySearch.org. Below is a sampling:
  - **Hunterdon County:** These are digital versions of the microfilm records available at the New Jersey State Archives. <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/25260>
  - **Middlesex County:** These are digital versions of the microfilm records available at the New Jersey State Archives. <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/241995>
  - **Union County:** These are digital versions of the microfilm records available at the New Jersey State Archives. <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/257059>
- **Monmouth County Clerk Archives:** Coroner Inquests 1786-1915 Database Search. <https://mcapps.co.monmouth.nj.us/Web/Archives/CoronerInquests.aspx>

#### IV. DEATH NOTICES & OBITUARIES

- **Local Public & State Libraries:** If you are searching for an ancestor's death notice or obituary, be sure to contact the public library in the municipality where the relative died.
  - **Directory of New Jersey Newspapers, 1765-1970 - edited by William C. Wright, Paul A. Stellhorn.** <https://dSPACE.njstatelib.org/handle/10929/40729>
  - **New Jersey State Library's Newspaper Collections:** [https://libguides.njstatelib.org/ld.php?content\\_id=42731539](https://libguides.njstatelib.org/ld.php?content_id=42731539)
  - **Rutgers University Library Newspaper Portal:** <https://libguides.rutgers.edu/c.php?g=336360&p=2265617>
  - **Newark Public Libraries Newspaper Collections at the Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center:** Their newspaper collections are not limited to Newark or Essex County. <https://npl.org/collections-services/charles-f-cummings-new-jersey-information-center/inventory-of-new-jersey-newspapers-on-microfilm/>
  - **The Morristown and Morris Township Library:** Historical Newspapers at the North Jersey History and Genealogy Center: <https://www.jfpl.org/HCFindingAids/historicalnewspapers.html>
- **New Jersey Archives & Historical Societies:**
  - **New Jersey State Archives Newspapers on Microfilm:** <https://www.nj.gov/state/archives/pdf/newspaperSale.pdf>
  - **New Jersey Historical Society's Newspaper Collections:** [https://jerseyhistory.org/newspapers\\_a-f.html/](https://jerseyhistory.org/newspapers_a-f.html/)
  - **Passaic County Historical Society's Newspaper Collections:** <https://lambertcastle.org/newspapers-on-microfilm-at-pchs/>
- **Online Newspaper Sources:**
  - **New Jersey State Library's List of Digitized Historic Newspapers:** <https://libguides.njstatelib.org/digitized-newspapers>
  - **GenealogyBank.com:** Newspaper archives and recent obituaries for New Jersey. <https://www.genealogybank.com/newspapers/sourcelist/nj>
  - **Newspapers.com:** Has a collection of 120 papers published in New Jersey. <https://www.newspapers.com/papers/>
  - **NewspaperArchive.com:** Has a collection of over 3 million obituaries from New Jersey newspapers. <https://newspaperarchive.com/us/nj/>
  - **Library of Congress - Chronicling America:** Chronicling America is sponsored jointly by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress. To search their collections based on where the newspaper was published: <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/search/titles/>
  - **GoogleNews Archive:** Alphabetical list of all newspapers on the site - <https://news.google.com/newspapers>
  - **Old Fulton New York Postcards:** A free and searchable repository of New York State and U.S. newspapers. <http://fultonhistory.com/Fulton.html>
  - **Readex - Division of NewsBank:** Early American newspapers from 1690-1922. To search their collections by location: <https://www.readex.com/early-american-newspapers-place-publication>

- **New Jersey Digital Portal:** a free collection of open access out-of-copyright publications, including newspapers, located within New Jersey. Link: <https://www.digifind-it.com/njhistoricalportal/index.php>
- **WorldCat:** This is the world's largest library catalog. Use WorldCat's search function to locate libraries that have local newspapers in print or on microfilm. Link: <https://www.worldcat.org/>.

## V. FEDERAL MORTALITY SCHEDULES

- **Ancestry.com's Federal Mortality Schedules Collection:** <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/usmortality/>
- **FamilySearch Wiki on Mortality Schedules:** [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United States Census Mortality Schedules](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Census_Mortality_Schedules)

## VI. FUNERAL HOME RECORDS

- **Plainfield Public Library's Memorial Funeral Home/A.M. Runyon Funeral Home Records:** [http://www.plainfieldlibrary.info/Departments/LH/LH\\_transcription.html#memorial](http://www.plainfieldlibrary.info/Departments/LH/LH_transcription.html#memorial)
- **New Jersey Historical Society's Funeral Home Collections:**
  - **Terrill Funeral Home, Irvington, NJ Records:** <https://jerseyhistory.org/manuscript-group-1259-terril-funeral-home-irvington-nj/>
  - **James E. Churchman Funeral Home, Newark:** <https://jerseyhistory.org/manuscript-group-1151-james-e-churchman-funeral-home-newark-nj-records-and-journal-1902-1934/>
- **FamilySearch.org**
  - **Terrill Funeral Home, Irvington, NJ Records:** <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/1001174>
- **Hudson County Genealogical & Historical Society's Index for Dempsey & Sons Funeral Home Record Books, Bayonne** (Index provided by Lynn A. Rogers, Executive Director, Friends of Abandoned Cemeteries, Inc.): <https://www.hudsoncountynjgenealogy.org/databases/db-dempsey-bayonne.html>
- **New Jersey Records Preservation Group (NJRPG):** An organization devoted to preserving historical records of cemeteries, funeral homes, and churches, primarily in northern New Jersey, with a current focus on Essex County. They specialize in rescuing records that are on the verge of being damaged or destroyed, whether through age, neglect, harmful storage conditions, or lack of appreciation for their historical value. For a list of their finished and in progress projects see: <http://njrpg.org/njrpg-projects/>

## VII. FAMILY BIBLE RECORDS

- **Genealogical Society of New Jersey (GSNJ) Bible and Family Records Collection Index:** <https://www.gsnj.org/bible-records-index/>. GSNJ Notice: Due to construction at the Rutgers University Alexander Library Special Collections/University Archives, the Bible and Family Records collection has been temporarily relocated to the New Jersey State Archives in Trenton, New Jersey for access by researchers.
- **Genealogical Society of Bergen County (Ridgewood Public Library):** <https://www.njgsbc.org/gsbrc-research-resources/family-files/bible-records/>
- **New Jersey Historical Society Bible Collection (NJHS):** <https://jerseyhistory.org/archives-browse-bible-records/>
- **Atlantic County Historical Society Library's Bible Collections:** <https://www.atlanticcountyhistoricalsocietynj.org/library/collections.html?view=article&id=8:family-bibles&catid=10:library>
- **Morristown and Morris Township Library – North Jersey History & Genealogy Center Collection of Bible Record Transcripts:** <https://www.jfpl.org/HCFindingAids/Bible%20Records.pdf>
- **Passaic County Historical Society Bible Records Index:** <https://lambertcastle.org/bible-records-index/>
- **Plainfield Public Library Bible Record Project:** [http://www.plainfieldlibrary.info/Departments/LH/LH\\_bible.html](http://www.plainfieldlibrary.info/Departments/LH/LH_bible.html)
- **Trenton Free Public Library Bible Records:** <https://www.trentonlib.org/bible-records>