

A New and Improved World Vital Records

A LOT HAS HAPPENED at World Vital Records since I last wrote about them in January 2008. They have launched a huge new "World Collection" and changed their name to better reflect the wide range of what they now offer.

NAME CHANGE

World Vital Records has changed its name to FamilyLink.com to better reflect the company's mission of connecting families to one another through innovative online tools. As reported by the company early in 2008, FamilyLink.com will continue to operate the WorldVital-

tions are in the works.

WORLD COLLECTION LAUNCHED

In mid-February, WorldVital-Records.com released the World Collection, an online genealogy database containing more than 1.5 billion names from 35 countries. This collection includes significant acquisitions from countries such as England, Canada, Australia, France, Ireland, Scotland and Hungary.

More than 20 companies have partnered with WorldVital-Records.com to make this new collection possible. They include

items have now been moved to the World Collection. So, for a subscriber who had access to these via one's original subscription, what now? I asked Whitney Ransom, Corporate Communications Director for the Family Link Corporation what this means for "current subscribers". Would they lose access to these databases? The short answer is "No". Essentially, as long as a person maintains one's subscription (i.e., does not let it lapse), any database that a subscriber had access to prior to the introduction of the World Collection, they will continue to

WORLDVITALRECORDS.COM

FAMILY LINK.COM
growing together

Records.com website, with its 6,000 databases, over one billion records and more than 25,000 paying subscribers.

Additionally, it will also continue to grow its FamilyLink.com social network that has attracted more than 47,000 customers and has doubled its site traffic already this year. (See the December/January 2008 edition of *Internet Genealogy* for an article about the FamilyLink.com social network.) It will also continue to operate the We're Related Facebook application, the top social application for families out of nearly 14,000 Facebook applications. We're Related has more than two million users and is growing at a rate of 6,000 users a day. More FamilyLink.com Facebook applica-

FindMyPast.com, Genealogical Publishing Company, Archive CD Books Australia, British Origins, Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild, Archive CD Books Canada, Eneclann, Quintin Publications, Gould Genealogy, Familias Argentinas, Godfrey Memorial Library and Moravian Heritage Society.

At the time of writing, an annual subscription costs \$149.95 US (US and World Collection), \$49.95 US for US Collection.

To create the World Collection, a lot of new content has been added and some already existing data sets have been relocated to the World Collection. For example, many of the Quinton Publications' databases cover French-Canadian genealogy and history and these

have access to these same databases, as well as any added "free" databases and new databases added to the basic subscription service. In order to gain access to any of the new content in the World Collection, current subscribers would need to upgrade their subscriptions to include the World Collection.

I also found that the navigation, structure and features of the website have not changed. You still search and access the data the same way as before.

With those important questions answered, let's take a look at what you can currently access in the new World Collection and also talk about some of what the future holds for this collection.

NOW IN THE WORLD COLLECTION

A lot of new data from many different sources and representing many different countries is part of the inaugural launch of the World Collection. Let's focus on a few of the larger and also a few of the unique additions we discovered. These are not listed in any particular order, either by size or geographically. Remember that many of these are a "work in progress", which means that all of these are not necessarily 100 percent online at press time. If not, they will be online shortly!

Genealogical Publishing Company (GPC)

<http://www.genealogical.com>

The collection from Genealogical.com consists of a series of books and some CDs, most of which cover immigrants to America during its earliest days. Most of the books focus on settlers who came from the British Isles, although there is also content regarding German, Swiss, Huguenot (French), Irish and other settlers. This portion of the collection will represent about 600 of the approximately 2,000 titles currently available at GPC.

UK BMD and Census Records

The addition of these records helps make the World Collection comparable to Ancestry's World Collection. The records available will include a myriad of birth, marriage and death records and census records. Currently, the 1851, 1861, 1881 and 1891 censuses are available. By early 2009, the remaining available censuses — 1841 and 1871 — will also be available. These are both important records for researching British ancestors.

Archive CD Books Australia

<http://www.archivecdbooks.com.au/>
This collection currently includes 343 titles, with the possibility of

adding more titles in the future. The majority of these books are comprised of directories, police and government gazettes, and almanacs. Additionally, there are newspaper abstracts which span several time periods and multiple locations. Some of the databases cover New Zealand as well.

It was clear at the latest NGS conference, when I actually spent quite a bit of time talking with people about this project (after

known figures and biographical sketches about many individuals. Also included are city directories.

Germans and Hungarians 1828 Land Census

This collection is an English transcription of a census that was taken of men who owned land in Hungary in 1828. The census was originally written in Latin, and was translated and transcribed by Martha Remer Connor and her late

husband. It includes data from 25 counties, including several counties that were at the time, located in Hungary but now are located in Germany or Romania. As with most censuses of the time, only the head of household is listed and there are about 300,000 names.

Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild

<http://www.immigrantships.net>

This is a series of 9,000 plus ship lists from all over the world. The coverage includes more than 30 different countries, though some countries have more coverage than others; England and France have records of several hundred voyages, whereas Japan, Trinidad, Barbados, India, Sierra Leone, etc. may have only a few. Now, instead of searching on your immigrant's passenger record in isolation from other records, you can not only find them on a passenger list, you can

possibly learn about them via census, vital records, directories or other sources.

International Newspapers

This collection includes hundreds of newspapers from several countries. They are completely indexed and include images. They include: Three newspapers from England, 1886-1964; two newspapers from Australia, 1840-1902, 1977-79; one newspaper from the Bahamas, 1849-1961; one newspaper from



Above: The Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild features more than 9,000 searchable ship lists.

Below: Archive CD Books Canada is a good resource for the Canadian genealogist and features histories of cities, provinces and regions.



having been a long-term proponent and client of the recently closed Archive CD Books UK project), that this was an excellent collection of material for anyone researching ancestors in Australia!

Archive CD Books Canada

<http://www.archivecdbooks.ca/acdbcanada.html>

These titles are primarily histories about cities, provinces and regions. These histories also include names of historically significant or well-

Belgium, 1944-45, one newspaper from Ireland, 1859-2000; 74 newspapers from Canada, 1752-2003; and more will be coming.

Additionally, the collection includes the Ryerson Index, <http://www.ryersonindex.org>, an index to death notices appearing in current Australian newspapers. It also includes some funeral notices, probate notices and obituaries.

Moravian Records

This database consists of about 8,000 names. It is from the Moravian Heritage Society and contains a list of known emigrants from the region of Moravia in the Czech Republic.

Eneclann

Do you have Irish ancestors? If yes, check out these databases for a complete index of wills and other probate materials from the Public Record Office of Ireland (PROI). This site already has a 1909 index to Irish wills and this index reflects only materials in the Public Records Office in Dublin that survived the 1922 bombing. The index was made before the 1922 bombing. It includes names and addresses of 60,000 heads of household. The index is accompanied by scanned images of the original 1847 Ordnance Survey Town Plans, to help users identify specific addresses. Plus, there is an index to the 1851 Dublin census.

British Origins

<http://www.britishorigins.com>

This website has been busy expanding its offerings; this has greatly benefited those researching British ancestry. Combined with the UK birth, marriage and death records and census records mentioned previously, the World Collection now makes it easier to one-stop-shop for your British ancestor research. Some of the

included databases are:

- Militia Attestations Index — Nearly 100,000 records. These are indexes to the attestation documents completed by applicants to join militia regiments in England, Ireland and Scotland in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- British and Irish Passenger Lists, 1890 — Approximately 200,000 records. These are full transcripts of passenger lists for passengers sailing from British and Irish ports to North America in 1890. Work has started on the 1891 lists, which will become available later this year. From 1892, the Ellis Island records contain details of

mission records of the Pimería Alta (southern Arizona and northern Sonora, Mexico) containing baptisms, marriages and burials from the late 17th century to the mid-19th century. Names of persons associated with each event (i.e., priest, baptized, parents, godparents, husband, wife, witnesses, deceased, etc.) and personal information about each person are included. Many ethnicities are represented.

Familias-Argentinas

A large database that was added last year and is now part of this collection. The largest online

genealogy tree database of Argentinean people includes more than 130,000 entries which are all connected to one another and not a loose list of individuals from different sources. This database is considered to be the largest genealogical database in South America.

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE INTERNATIONAL DATABASES

If you are looking for an easy way to get an idea of what is currently available for International Databases, browse this

page, <http://www.worldvitalrecords.com/international-databases.aspx>.

This page lists the currently available databases arranged by topic. Just scanning the list, besides the obvious databases mentioned above, I came across some intriguing entries:

- Directory of Scots Banished to the American Plantations, 1650-1775
- Irish Emigration to New England Through the Port of Saint John New Brunswick, Canada, 1841-49
- Families Directly Descended from All the Royal Families in Europe, 495-1932 and Mayflower Descendants
- South Australian Directory 1924 (Sands & McDougall)



An example of a page from the South Australian Directory 1924 (Sands & McDougall).

passenger landings in the USA.

These four indexes go online June 2008.

- York Medieval Probate Index — More than 10,000 wills indexed, for the period 1267-1500.
- York Peculiar Probate Index — More than 25,000 wills indexed, for the period 1383-1883.
- Prerogative & Exchequer Court of York Probate Index — Approximately 25,000 records will be available initially, for the period 1842-1858.
- Teachers' Registrations — 100,000 registrations, primarily for England, from the 1890s to the mid-20th century.

Mission 2000

A searchable database of Spanish

- Lovell's Canadian Dominion Directory, 1871, Ontario
- Lippincott's Gazetteer of the World, 1895

Want to search on just the records associated with a particular country? If you are only looking for a particular name in the records of a certain country, check out the Nationality Genealogy Community Pages. For each listed nationality, you may find a list of some references/databases, there will be a search box which only searches the records pertaining to that country and a brief overview of its history and other interesting facts.

The result of all of the above is a fairly diverse geographic collection with some nice depth as part of the inaugural data set for the World Collection. Some key collaborations with good partners and some hard work has resulted in a pretty impressive array of databases, with even more to come!

FUTURE PLANS FOR WORLD VITAL RECORDS

What you see is not what you get for the new World Collection or for the parent World Vital Records Collection. According to Yvette Arts, the Director of Content Acquisition, subscribers can look forward to these upcoming additions to the collections:

- A portion of the 10,000 genealogy books on Australian genealogy

currently on the Gould Genealogy website, <http://www.gould.com.au>, will be made available

- A new alliance with Archive CD Books USA, <http://www.archivecdbooksusa.com>, will make several of their offerings available
- Only 100 of the possible 700 publications from Simmons Historical Publications, <http://www.simmonshistorical.com>, focusing on Western Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina, are currently available; look for more to be added

Additionally, efforts are underway to bring subscribers records from Russia, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, Germany, France, Portugal, the Scandinavian countries and other countries.

Also, the international newspaper collection will be expanded to include a large number of newspapers representing many states in Mexico, as well as other South American countries and newspapers for every Canadian province.

CONCLUSION

By combining social networking systems with a strong foundation of data, FamilyLink.com is making it easier than ever for individuals to both gain access to important original/source documentation for their ancestors and connect to others researching overlapping branches of their family tree.

Through key partnerships and by working with good partners, the World Collection has been able to amass an impressive array of databases, one or more of which will benefit anyone's research!

I can say that there are several elements of the new World Collection that I have hesitated to subscribe to individually to aid in my own family research (never mind any research I do for clients), and for which there is definitely more appeal to gain access to them as a bundle, via WorldVitalRecords.com. Each subscription service on its own was just a bit too narrow for my limited needs, or had enough overlap with other databases that I currently subscribe to, to make it hard to justify individual subscriptions. That is now a moot point as I can "one-stop shop" at WorldVitalRecords.com.

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MANHATTAN SEEDS OF THE BIG APPLE



The heartfelt story of one family's mid 17th century journey and their struggle with the meaning of cultural diversity while living in Colonial America.

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ISBN 978-1-4259-4260-1 (Soft)
 ISBN 978-1-4259-4261-8 (Hardcover)

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