The focus of this bibliography is genealogy, not women’s history. Therefore, general guides and women’s history resources are included only when they make possible the identification of individuals and families, or when they help elucidate repositories or search strategies that can help the family historian seeking female ancestors. An assumption has been made that most researchers would like broader information about the lives and life circumstances. In other words, moving beyond birth, marriage, and death dates if this data is sufficiently concrete and focused on the ancestor’s specific case. For sources with a geographical focus (county, state, and regional sources), a title is included when consulting it may lead the family historian to discover categories of useful primary source materials, or when the title appears to be a unique source worthy of notice. At the county level, increasing amounts of material useful in tracing women, such as marriage license indexes and court records, are becoming available online. For the most part it is impractical to list these web sites because changes in them occur so frequently.

Where sources focus on men, or include men and women together, one assumes that they will be discovered in routine genealogical research and, in general, are not included below. Indexes to vital records, especially marriage records, normally include a list of both males and females; and therefore such indexes are listed here only when, for whatever reason, a separate index for women was published. Exceptions to this rule are bibliographies of diaries, both published and unpublished. Many of these intermix male and female names but may still provide background information and clues about primary sources.

As the product of a search guided by these parameters, this bibliography turns out to be rather quirky. Some titles that might appear to be relevant, but actually contain little information that will assist genealogists, may be omitted while others of a superficially similar nature are included. It is hoped that the focused nature of the bibliography will make it useful.

CATEGORIES OF MATERIALS

Published Guides to Women’s History
Guides to Genealogical Research on Female Ancestors
County, State, and Regional Resources
Diaries and Biographies
Special Topics
Web Sites for Women’s History and Genealogy
Published Guides to Women’s History


Z7164.U5 A47 2001 MRR Ref Desk

Also available online at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/awhhtml/>

Aptly describes the vast collections of the Library of Congress, significant portions of which may contain biographical and genealogical data about the lives of women.

Herman, Kali.


HQ1412 .H47 1984 MRR Biog

Extensive index to published biographical information about American women of moderate prominence. Subdivides women into categories based on career fields, religion, ethnic or racial group, and geography. Where an ancestor’s name is not listed, this source might still provide useful information about women of similar backgrounds.

78015634


Z7964.U49 W64 LH&G, MRR Alc

Inventories the archival collections of a vast array of institutions, listing women’s papers, records of women’s organizations or organizations in which women played prominent roles, family papers, and collections not easily identifiable as valuable to women’s history and biography. Contains more than 18,000 entries arranged by state and town. Index in second volume provides access by personal names, corporate names, modified Library of Congress subject headings, and geographic terms. An excellent publication that includes the names of many women not otherwise documented in existing sources.

78015634

Published Guides to Genealogical Research on Female Ancestors

Carmack, Sharon DeBartolo.


CS14.C38 1998 LH&G
Lists types of records the author has found particularly useful in piecing together life stories of females. The author’s enthusiasm for using general social history of women to fill in areas not elucidated by actual primary sources should be viewed with caution, however.

Schaefer, Christina K.

Elucidates those points in an individual woman’s life at which she was likely to come into contact with various levels of government jurisdiction and thus leave a written record that identifies her with considerable specificity. Thus attention is devoted to the subjects of “marriage and divorce law, immigration, citizenship, passports, military records, suffrage, welfare, slave manumission, miscellaneous federal records, and census records.” (p. ix). Lists by state the important laws and regulations that determined what records would be kept and suggests locations for these records. Brief bibliographies for each state address unique issues.

County, State and Regional

Adams, Donna Burge.

Rather mixed assortment of transcribed information from newspapers, courthouse records, letters, Bible records, oral traditions, and data provided to the compiler by descendants. Each volume has a name index that includes both women and men mentioned. Most items date from the nineteenth century. The “Florida Parishes” incorporated land east of the Mississippi and north of Lake Pontchartrain.

Beedy, Helen Coffin.

Lively narratives of the lives and customs of many Maine women, beginning in the 17th century. Representative women in a variety of occupations, such as ministers’ wives and preachers, doctors and nurses, authors and philanthropists, are highlighted. Interwoven in these descriptions is relatively extensive genealogical information.
Blatti, Jo.  
Z7964.U5 M563 1993

Several sections of this bibliography contain listings potentially useful to the family historian, such as reference books describing document repositories, specific ethnic groups, life histories (biographies and autobiographies); social life, organizations and clubs, and state, local, and regional histories. Some titles include contiguous states.

Egle, William Henry.  
F148.E325 1972 LH&G

Contains entries describing about 70 “matrons of the Revolution,” arranged alphabetically by each woman’s married name (all are married women). Women with loyalist leanings are not included. Entries range from a few paragraphs to several pages. Much space in most entries is devoted to activities of husbands and fathers.

Evans, Helen F.  
Z5313.U5 E9 LH&G

The three volumes treat New Hampshire only, 1756 (initial year of publication of the first New Hampshire newspaper) through 1800. Particularly valuable because compiler has linked the various maiden and married names of a given individual whenever possible. Useful terse summaries of the newspaper reports.

HQ1122—

Quite helpful for genealogy and local history research because it organizes resources by county. Describes archival and manuscript materials in Nevada libraries, archives, and museums. Includes collections from bordering communities in California, Utah, and Arizona. Does not list county or federal records. Many entries list a sample of the women concerning whom the repository has information; these names appear also in the comprehensive index. 195 entities were surveyed.

2005416565

Lists over 400 books that have special relevance for women’s life experiences in Nevada. Includes name index (listing women in some way prominent in the region’s development or featured as authors), topic index, index of Nevada women’s organizations, an index by race and ethnic identity, and index by genre (autobiography/biography, community or regional history, cookbook, fiction, general history, poetry, reference).

Frost, Lenore.  

Excellent overview of published and unpublished materials that document the lives of individual women in Australia and make genealogical research feasible. Also includes helpful suggestions for background reading. Sources listed include help for identifying aboriginal ancestors. Does not provide instructions for basic genealogical research, which the author assumes can be found in other publications.

Howe, Julia Ward.  

Also available online at <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:RAD.SCHL:496409>

Biographies of several hundred women from the 19th century. Most entries contain extensive genealogical information. Some photographs of individuals. Contains alphabetical index of all entries.

Kocher, L. Richard.  

Lists names of female “entrymen” (first individuals to purchase land from Land Offices in Ohio), acres as noted in Land Office books, date of purchase at Land Office, and county and/or state indicated as residence of entryman when purchasing land. Surnames are arranged alphabetically. Individuals are included if their forenames could be interpreted as either masculine or feminine. Indexed also by range/township. Information was assembled from the original plat maps now in the custody of the Ohio Historical Society Archives in Columbus, Ohio.
Kolb, Alexis Ann. 

This source is specific to female ancestors only for the original fifteen women; the charts and the index document both males and females. Illustrates migration of families. Some made the transition directly from east coast to west coast, while others spent intervening years in midwestern states. Original family names are Coombs, Davis, Dickinson, Doerr, Fazel, Grothaus, Helmich, Hillis, Kolb, Miller, Sacre Schaitel, Schumann, Stevens, and White.

88149238


Narratives detail the lives of individual women who resided in 216 townships of the Western Reserve during the first half of the nineteenth century. Informally organized. Five parts are published in two volumes. Second volume contains index to historical sketches of townships and index to personal names mentioned (male and female). Additional indexes list soldiers of the American Revolution and the War of 1812 from the Western Reserve. A final index lists additional towns and counties of the United States mentioned in the volumes, grouped by state. 82123146

Metcalf, Henry Harrison. 

Biographies of about 120 women of nineteenth-century New Hampshire, “all. . . worthy representatives of New Hampshire womanhood in its best estate, whether in literature, music, art, education, in professional, business, public, social and domestic life, or as laborers in the broad fields of charity and benevolence.” Each entry includes genealogical data and a photo of the subject. 45048595

Meier, Judith Ann Highley


The compiler has isolated those notices that may be particularly helpful in tracing individual females of the period. The full text of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 1728-1800, is available online.
through the commercial database “Accessible Archives.”
95143321

F497.P4 P467 1994

Photocopy of the marriage record index held by the Perry County Probate Court. Arrangement is alphabetical by maiden name. Year of marriage is indicated as well as groom’s name. Actual marriage records can be located via indicated “book” and “page.” A separate index for men has been published.
00423375

F825 .P56 1998

Four large volumes containing brief biographies of Utah pioneer women (arriving in Utah between 1847 and 1869, the year the transcontinental railroad was completed). Lists birth dates, parents, spouses and dates of marriages, death date and place, and birth dates of individual children. No specifics about sources of information are given, but the publication was a project of the International Society Daughters of Utah Pioneers. Women are listed under their married names (the last husband in the case of multiple marriages). Photos of many of the women are included.
2001524787

Stanley, Lois and Wilson, George F., compilers.

F465.S749 1981 LH&G

Valuable for the time period it covers, when women were not mentioned by name in censuses. 40 newspapers are covered, with deaths of about 1500 Missouri women and girls reported. The whole state is not included because not every area had a newspaper. If the deceased was married or a widow, the husband’s name was usually mentioned. The existence of children might also be acknowledged, though not necessarily their number. Sometimes a previous residence can be deduced. The name of the woman’s father and her religion are often included.
83175679

F241.W64 vol. 25 LH&G

Biographical sketches with varying amounts of detail concerning the lives of many women from all periods of West Virginia history. Some contain information about births, deaths, and families of origins; others contain only one or two anecdotes about the individual.
78111743
Western Reserve Historical Society, Genealogical Committee.


Index to microfilmed data about pioneer women who came to the Western Reserve, an area in northeastern Ohio, between 1796 and 1840 (in some cases 1850). Index is alphabetical by name and refers reader to anecdotal biographical or genealogical data.

77354950

Wilson, George Francis; Wilson, Maryhelen L; and Stanley, Lois.


F465.W552 1980z LH&G

Similar in scope to entry above under Lois Stanley. Includes newspaper reports of “deaths of any female old enough to have been shown in the 1850 census.” Usually includes name of husband if married and often parents as well. Entries can include interesting details such as place of birth or former residence and cause of death.

83179217


Z7964.U49 W6 1992 MRR Alc

Lists small repositories of historical societies, archives, and libraries of 20 western states. Special attention to women of color and to non-traditional sources (oral history, photographs) that might not be found listed elsewhere. Covers 1610 to 1910. Entries are arranged by state, city, and archive name. Appendix of state listings with the names of archives makes it easy to identify county resources as well.

91024898

**Diaries and Bibliographies**

Only a few researchers are lucky enough to find a published or unpublished diary written by an ancestor. But even for those who do not, the diaries of individual women who shared some aspect of an ancestor’s existence (locality, profession, religion) can be helpful. First, in elucidating aspects of that experience and, possibly more important, suggesting additional, unanticipated sources of information. Because each editor of a bibliography defines “diary” in a different way, sources are included here even when some of their contents overlap.

Addis, Patricia K.


Z7963.B6 A32 1983 MRR Biog
Lists autobiographies, published letters, diaries, journals, memoirs, reminiscences, and travel accounts produced by native-born American women, foreign-born women with American husbands, or other women permanently settled in the United States. Contains author index as well as indexes by title and by profession or salient characteristic. Entries contain helpful descriptive annotations.

Arksey, Laura, Nancy Pries, and Marcia Reed.  
Z5305.U5 A74 1983 LH&G

Covering roughly 5000 published diaries and journals, the two volumes are intended to be both an expansion of and replacement for the earlier publication *American Diaries: An Annotated Bibliography of American Diaries Written Prior to the Year 1861* (1945) by Matthews. Volume I lists diaries written from 1492 to 1844; volume II lists diaries written from 1845 to 1980. Includes name, subject, and geographic indexes. Though most diarists are male, women are also well represented. Citations appear in roughly the chronological order of the diaries’ composition. Span of years covered and brief content notes included in each citation.

Goodfriend, Joyce D.  
Z5305.U5 G66 1987 LH&G

Editor has collected citations to personal, non-retrospective diaries and letters written by women in the United States from the seventeenth century to the 1980s. Predominantly, though not exclusively, writings of privileged women of English background and Protestant religion. Arranged chronologically. Entries describe diarist and summarize contents of diary. Includes subject and author indexes.

Havlice, Patricia Pate.  
Z5301.H38 1987 LH&G

Intended as an extension to William Matthews’ *American Diaries: an Annotated Bibliography of American Diaries Written Prior to the Year 1861*. Includes diaries published in or translated into English, even if they are not American. Arranged chronologically. No limitation on time period covered. Some reviews of diaries are cited. General index includes authors, editors, book titles, and subjects. Also includes index to diarists described in Matthews’ work. Substantial number of female diarists. Brief description of diarist and diary contents.

82010813

83008860

87017908

86013738
Matthews, William.  
Z5305.U5 M3 1959 LH&G

Williams attempted to locate as many diaries as possible, whether identified as such or not, in books, periodicals, family histories, biographies, local, and state histories, published as private, commercial, or organizational ventures. He did not claim completeness even within his limited time frame. Diaries of foreign visitors to America are included provided they are available in English. Some Canadian materials are included.

Matthews, William.  
Z5305.U5 M32 LH&G

Supplements Matthews’ *American Diaries: An Annotated Bibliography.* Contains over 5000 entries describing unpublished diaries. Lists time span and summary of contents but omits biographical data. Arranged chronologically (undated diaries have a separate section). Includes indexes.

Matthews, William.  
*Canadian Diaries and Autobiographies.* Berkeley: University of California, 1950. 130 p.  
Z5305.C3 M3 MRR Alc

Designed as a “companion piece” to Matthews’ *American Diaries* and *British Diaries.* Notes diaries and autobiographies from both British and French Canada, published and unpublished. Entries are arranged alphabetically by author’s name and contain brief biographical data, time span, content notes, and location in the case of unpublished materials. Broad subject index appended.

CT3260 .N57 MRR Biog

Biographical essays about more than 1,300 women (with death dates prior to 1951). Articles list both primary and secondary sources of information as available. Arranged alphabetically. Concluding index categorizes names by field of activity.

CT3260 .N573 MRR Biog

### Special Topics


Describes the lives and significant contributions of nearly 300 women, primarily from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Each entry, in alphabetical order by name, includes a valuable bibliography, listing both primary and secondary materials. An appendix subdivides the women by career category; there is a general index. A biographical dictionary may not identify one’s own ancestor, but the entries can be used to elucidate conditions of life for persons of similar background and, by extension, to locate additional sources of information that might not otherwise attract the researcher’s attention.

Claghorn, Charles E.


About 5,000 biographical entries noting activities of women. Not a genealogical study, but useful because it describes many of the more “ordinary” women of the time, not just famous ones.

McDevitt, Theresa


Excellent resource that identifies references sources with biographical information on a large number of women. Chapters focus on areas in which women contributed to the war: soldier’s aid; medical and relief service; aid to freedmen; economic challenges and opportunities (—); ?? women in the war zone; spies, scouts, smugglers, and raiders; and women in camp. Includes author and subject indexes. Resources could be useful as background information for a female ancestor’s living conditions, even where the individual herself is not named.


Though a specific ancestor may not appear in a dictionary naming only a few hundred women, this biographical dictionary has additional uses. The editors have attempted to provide “a broad
cross section of Native women’s experiences in both historical and contemporary contexts” (p. xiii). Each brief biographical entry includes a list of published “references” for further information. Because the book’s indexes subdivide the women according to area of specialization, decade of birth, state/province of birth, and tribal affiliation, the entries can help a researcher locate hard-to-identify additional background materials. Some Native societies are particularly interesting because they were matrilocal and matrilineal. The introductory essay provides useful observations concerning the state of research about Native American women.

2001019749

Pfeiffer, Laura Szucs.  
CS14.P48 2000 LH&G

This handbook does not focus on female ancestors. But because the identity of female ancestors can be so elusive, some of the unusual sources described might lead to a missing link in a given case.

99055060

Reid, Richard, and Cheryl Mongan.  
CS2007 .R45 1996

Documents the migration of 194 Irish orphan girls from famine-stricken southwest Ireland in 1849 to new homes in New South Wales in 1859. Contains journal entries of ship surgeon Charles Edward Strutt on board the *Thomas Arbuthnot*, and additional genealogical information concerning the subsequent fate of the girls and the families they founded. Provides unique, detailed records that shed light on the experience of Irish fugitives from famine (of whom there may have been as many as a million, most of them leaving behind few records specific to themselves). Relevant contemporary correspondence, information concerning additional passengers, and genealogical information about families and descendants of the orphans are listed in the extensive Part II.

97161254

**Web Sites for Women’s History and Genealogy**

Ancestry.com or AncestryLibrary.com

Massive subscription database with constantly growing contents. Census search is especially helpful for female ancestors, permitting combinations of a variety of search criteria (first name or last name only, location, age, birthplace, parents’ birthplaces). Beginning in 1850, all females were listed, not just heads of households.


Useful database providing suggestions on how to make the best use of documentary sources commonly available, to find the most information possible about female ancestors.
“Finding the Elusive Woman” by Diane Snyder Ptak.
< http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Hills/6354/Women.html >
Somewhat randomly presented and not entirely free from errors, this site does provide useful hints.

“Additional Women’s Collections” (University of Texas at San Antonio)
< http://www.lib.utsa.edu/Archives/WomenGender/links.html >
From the “Women and Gender Project” of the University of Texas at San Antonio. Provides valuable links to archival collections by state. The value of the links for genealogical research varies greatly, but the site is worth checking.

“Women’s Studies: A Guide to the Collection of the New York Public Library”
< http://www.nypl.org/research/chss/grd/resguides/women/ >
Includes particularly valuable list of biographical sources for women.

“American Women’s History: A Research Guide.”
< http://www.mtsu.edu/~kmiddlet/history/women.html >
Sponsored by staff of Middle Tennessee State University. Excellent all-purpose women’s history guide, with annotated references and links to a vast array of useful topics.

”Female Ancestors: after the Marriage”
Basic but useful recapitulation of strategies for finding an ancestors whose birth family name is unknown.

ArchivesUSA
Extensive subscription database published by ProQuest/UMI. Online edition of National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (“NUCMC”). “Collection search” permits searching by keyword, particularly useful for locating material on families and individuals. Contains information on nearly 6000 repositories and roughly 154,600 collections of primary source materials throughout the United States.

Washington, D.C., May 2006