The Library of Congress website is a wonderfully massive, underexplored resource for anyone interested in U.S. history and for applying that history to genealogy. It would take more than an hour (and probably more than several) to adequately highlight what is available. We will discover both obvious and hidden treasures, as well as explore the most effective ways to search and browse on the site. The most rewarding areas are listed below. Give your curiosity free reign and roam the site at all levels to find unexpected, hidden treasures of your own.

Collection Highlights

American Memory - 18 topics. Most pertinent for genealogists include Immigration, American Expansion; Maps; Native American History; War, Military; and Women's History.

Prints & Photographs - nearly 70 collections including daguerreotypes, posters, cartoons, fine prints, and architectural drawings.

Historic Newspapers - including Chronicling America, digitized historic American newspapers, 1836-1922.

Performing Arts - nearly every decade of American history is explored through music, theater, and dance.

Veterans History - the American Folklife Center collects, preserves, and makes accessible the personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war. Includes first-hand accounts relating to most 20th-century wars.

Sound Recordings - listen to American leaders, Vaudeville acts, John Philip Sousa, and Civil War Band era music, among many other offerings that bring historic sounds and melodies to your ears.

Film - early films of New York City, San Francisco before and after the 1906 earthquake, and hundreds more early motion pictures.

Maps - panoramic, Sanborn, railroad, and military maps are only a few of this collection's thousands of map images.

Manuscripts - including letters, diaries, scrapbooks, personal papers, and important documents from American history.
Topics
The following links on the home page lead you to vast topical resources within the Library of Congress collections described previously.

- American History
- Arts & Culture
- Government, Politics & Law
- Maps & Geography
- News & Journalism
- Religion & Philosophy
- Science, Technology & Business
- Sports & Leisure
- World History & Cultures

Don't overlook these resources
There is so much information on the loc.gov homepage, it's easy to overlook some of the most interesting and rewarding content. Be sure to check out:

Especially for ...
Specialized how-to aids, resources, and collections targeted at:
- Kids & Families
- Librarians
- Publishers
- Researchers
- Teachers

Today in History - there is always something new to learn about our nation's history and these daily pages are always intriguing.

Digital Preservation - learn how to preserve your personal papers and photos.

Webcasts - streaming video files, viewable on RealPlayer.

Specializations - Do you know what MARC records are? They're responsible for providing you with content whenever you search for something in the online catalog of a library or archive.

Rights - You can learn a lot about copyright via loc.gov. As far as your rights, using content from the site, there are usually no restrictions. But, be sure to check the page on which you find something you want to use, just to be sure. And, always give credit and cite your sources.