



# Utilizing Footnote at the Library of Michigan

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Footnote, an outstanding subscription database available at the Library of Michigan, is aimed at creating and sustaining an online community of users, researchers that discover genealogical records, interact with one another, and share information on common ancestors. Now totaling more than 53 million images, much of Footnote's content is culled from the collections of the U.S. National Archives and available online for the first time. The resulting product is a delightful mix of historical and genealogical gold. Perhaps your ancestor wrote a pro-Left Letter to the Editor and was investigated by the FBI, served overseas in Russia following the First World War, or petitioned the U.S. government for property damage sustained during the Civil War. Find out at Footnote!

### Access

Researchers have full access to Footnote here at the Library of Michigan. Although users can also search for free at [www.footnote.com/](http://www.footnote.com/), full access to the database from home is available only to those with a personal subscription. Although much of Footnote's genealogical content requires a subscription, there are a number of outstanding resources that do not.

### Collections and Content

Among the wealth of traditional genealogy resources, including newspapers, naturalizations, military records, and more, Footnote also contains a wonderful array of material not often associated with family history research. Following is a list identifying many of the genealogical collections available at Footnote; content, both new databases and images to existing collections, continues to be added, so researchers are encouraged to visit the site and explore further. Free collections that do not require a subscription are indicated with a \*.

## City Directories

- Baltimore, MD 1863-1920
- Boston, MA 1789-1926
- Chicago, IL 1843-1923
- Cincinnati, OH 1861-1923
- Cleveland, OH 1861-1923
- Detroit, MI 1861-1923
- Fort Wayne, IN 1861-1923
- Newark, NJ 1861-1923
- New York, NY 1786-1922
- Philadelphia, PA 1785-1922
- Pittsburgh, PA 1861-1923
- St. Louis, MO 1863-1923
- San Francisco, CA 1861-1923
- Washington, D.C. 1822-1923

## Civil War

- 1860 U.S. Census
- \*Brady Civil War photos
- Compiled service records, Confederate
  - AL, AR, AZ, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, MO, NC, SC, TN, TX, VA
- Compiled service records, Union
  - AL, AR, Dak., GA, KY, MO, MS, NE, NV, OR, USCT, UT
- Internal Revenue assessment lists
  - Pennsylvania
- Pensions index
- Southern Claims Commission
  - Claims made by Southerners to U.S. government for items used by the Union Army, property damage, and much more

## Miscellaneous

- 1930 U.S. Census
- \*American Milestone Documents
  - Declaration of Independence
  - The Gettysburg Address
- \*Amistad slave ship records
- Dawes packets
- FBI case files
- Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940
- \*Missing Air Crew Reports, WWII
- Passport Applications, 1795-1905

- \*Pearl Harbor Muster Rolls
- \**Pennsylvania Archives*
- \*Project Blue Book - UFO Investigations
- U.S. Expeditionary Force, North Russia
- \*Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall

## Naturalization Records

Records and/or indexes:

- California (Los Angeles, Southern, San Diego)
- Louisiana (Eastern)
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- New York (Eastern, Southern, Western)
- Pennsylvania (Eastern, Middle, Western)
- World War I Soldiers

## Newspapers

- *Atlanta Constitution*
- *Chicago Tribune*
- *San Francisco Chronicle*
- *The Times* (London, UK)
- *Washington Post*
- Small Town Papers Collection
  - *Clare County Review* (MI)
  - *Montmorency County Tribune* (MI)

## Revolutionary War

- Compiled service records
- Muster rolls
- Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files
  - Not the abbreviated "Selected Records" set, this series contains each pension and bounty land file in its entirety

## Vital Records

- Cuyahoga County, Ohio [Cleveland]
  - Births: 1871-1908
- Massachusetts
  - Pre-1850 series of "Tan books"
  - Indexes to births, deaths, and marriages: 1841-1895
- Texas
  - Births: 1903-1910 & 1926-1929
  - Deaths: 1890-1976

## Creating an Account

The content at Footnote is certainly exceptional, but researchers can utilize the full power of the database by registering with the database as a user; it requires only an email address. Once logged in, researchers can tap into Footnote's interactive features, including annotating, personal record galleries, connecting records to another, and alerts.

## Using Footnote

When researchers find a document of interest, they have several options. They can:

- Annotate the record. By highlighting a field of interest (name, date, or place) and keying in the pertinent information, users improve the value of the record; other interested users will see the annotations, and be able to contact the original researcher. Genealogists looking for the same record or ancestor are likely interested in the same family.
- Save the image to their personal gallery. When they return to the database and log in, their respective images will still be there.
- Connect the record to another image. For example, a researcher could connect an entry in a Chicago city directory, Allegheny County naturalization record, and FBI case file by identifying that it is the same person and/or family. Comments explaining the connection can also be added.
- Watch it. Footnote can alert a researcher if new content is added to a specific database, or if someone else looks at a particular record. This is particularly helpful because many of the databases are not 100% complete.

Navigating Footnote is very intuitive and straightforward, as researchers can do an every-word search for the entire database at Footnote's home page. An Advanced Search gives the user much more flexibility; where researchers can easily search by first and last name, a specific collection within Footnote, date, and much more. When viewing an image, the filmstrip feature makes it easy to navigate a collection or records that contain multiple pages.

On-site users here at the Library of Michigan have full access to all the wonderful records and resources in Footnote. If researchers elect for a personal subscription from their home computer, subscriptions are quite affordable at an annual or monthly rate, or images can even be purchased on an individual pay-per-view basis.

Among the crowded field of genealogy databases, Footnote stands out as an example of fantastic historical content weaved together with user collaboration and interaction. As more users utilize the interactive features to the database – annotating and connecting documents to one another – it will only become more invaluable as a genealogy research tool. Given its amazing breadth of material for historical and genealogical research, and the ever-increasing value of the user-contributed annotations, Footnote has certainly become a top-notch online resource destination worth a closer look.