

Prospecting for Gold?

ArchiveGrid Finds the Nuggets

WHETHER YOU ARE SEARCHING for your ancestor's California gold rush diary, John James Audubon's correspondence, a 16th-century Dutch cookbook, or the records of Jewish relief agencies, ArchiveGrid unlocks the riches of hundreds of archives, libraries, and museums in the US and around the world.

Launched to the public in March 2006, ArchiveGrid is the new name for an archival database of primary source material previously distributed mainly to the academic research community (known as Archival Resources). Redesigned in consultation with historians and genealogists, ArchiveGrid boasts almost one million collection descriptions and online archival finding aids, making it an excellent starting point for adding historical context, documentary evidence or narrative content to your family history. Genealogists will be pleased to find information about the host institution — its location, hours, use restrictions, and how to order copies — readily available alongside their search results.

SCOPE: WHAT'S IN ARCHIVEGRID?

ArchiveGrid is especially strong in history and genealogy, covering a wide range of subjects and types of primary source materials (e.g., correspondence, diaries, manuscripts, church and business records, printed matter, memorabilia, and images), as reflected by the diverse collecting interests of contributing institutions. International in scope, it includes archival collection descriptions from Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, South Africa, the US and many other countries. Along with prominent and familiar institutions — the Library of Congress, Smithsonian Institution, New-York Historical Society, Chicago Public Library, Stanford University, and the British Library — are many more specialized collections, such as those found at the Center for Jewish History, Charles Babbage Institute, East Tennessee State University, National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, University of Amsterdam, and Woody Guthrie Foundation and Archive.

ArchiveGrid simultaneously search-

es across two types of records:

1. 800,000 bibliographic records describing archival and manuscript collections from 166 institutions and
2. Nearly 65,000 full-text online archival finding aids (detailed collection guides and inventories) from 150 institutions.

The number of online archival finding aids has mushroomed in recent years and many of them provide a structured pathway into the collection as well as the ability to search for keywords within the collection guide. These online guides include such elements as:

- Collection Summary
 - Information for Researchers: Access, Publication Rights, Preferred Citation
 - Biographical Note
 - Scope and Content of Collection
 - Arrangement
 - Indexing and Subject Terms
 - Container List
 - Related Collections
- [Ability to search for keywords within guide]

FUNCTIONALITY: HOW DOES IT WORK?

The ability to search across such a vast reservoir of archival primary source materials via a unified search interface (and link to institutional directory information) is unprecedented. ArchiveGrid utilizes a basic keyword search box that



permits combining terms, such as names, subjects, places or events, relying on many familiar search syntax features (e.g., double quotation marks to search phrases and the use of Boolean operators — AND, OR, NOT — to limit or expand queries). Search tips, with



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universities. She developed an interest in genealogy when she discovered intriguing artifacts upon her mother's death as chronicled in: *Family Values: Lessons in Material Culture*, (freely available in *Common-Place: The Interactive Journal of Early American Life*, April 2005, on the Internet at www.common-place.org/vol-05/no-03/brogan/index.shtml). Ms. Brogan currently works as an independent consultant, conducting research and writing about trends in digital libraries.



ARCHIVEGRID™

Bringing the world's archives to the desktop

Sample Nuggets in ArchiveGrid

INSTITUTIONS	COLLECTIONS GUIDES AND FINDING AIDS
American Jewish Historical Society Center for Jewish History	Guide to the Anti-Semitic Literature Collection, 1869-1993
American Philosophical Society	Eugenics Record Office Records, 1670-1964
Bowling Green State University	Northwest Ohio Civil War Newspaper Correspondence Index
Brigham Young University	African Oral History Project
Cornell University	Guide to the Japanese-American Relocation Centers records, 1935-1953
East Tennessee State University Archives of Appalachia	Appalachian Preaching Mission Records, 1954-1980
Getty Research Institute	Inventory of the Collection of Maps of Paris, ca. 1750-1900
Universiteit van Amsterdam [University of Amsterdam]	Inventaris van de collectie kookboeken 1552-heden [Inventory of the cookbook collection 1552-present]
University of California, Berkeley: The Bancroft Library and The Ethnic Studies Library; California Historical Society, San Francisco	Guide to Chinese in the California Virtual Collection The Chinese in California 1850-1925
University of California, Berkeley The Bancroft Library	Guide to the California Gold Rush Letters, 1848-1859
University of California, Santa Barbara	Guide to Stereoscopic Views Collection
University of Minnesota Libraries Immigration History Research Center	Inventory of the American Council for Nationalities Services Records, 1918-1986
University of Miami Cuban Heritage Collection	Cuban Postcard Collection
University of Texas at Austin Center for American History	A Guide to the Natchez Trace Broadside Collection, 1785-1930
Yale University Library The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library	Morris Tyler Family Collection of John James Audubon
Yeshiva University Archives	An Inventory to the Records of the Central Relief Committee, 1914-1918

In the next issue of *Internet Genealogy* we plan to have an update about ArchiveGrid's contents, performance, and pricing

examples, are provided on ArchiveGrid's homepage and reappear when a search query retrieves no results or via the "Help" page. In advanced search mode, users may search by date (range of years), archive or location, in addition to keyword.

Search results can be sorted by title (of the collection guide, finding aid, or inventory), archive name or location. Results are clustered by archive or location in the left-hand margin of the screen, making it possible for users to link directly to those institutions or places of greatest interest. Users can also connect directly from a collection

description to directory information about the institution that owns the materials, making it possible for users to contact archivists, order copies or plan research visits.

ACCESS: WHERE IS IT AVAILABLE?

ArchiveGrid is a product of RLG (formerly Research Libraries Group), a not-for-profit membership organization of over 160 universities, national libraries, archives, historical societies, and other institutions with notable collections for research and learning. Thanks to a generous database re-design grant from the Earhart Foundation, RLG is offering the public free access to ArchiveGrid from March through May 2006, available at www.archivegrid.org. Effective June 1, 2006, it will be offered on a subscription basis to institutions and individuals (annual or monthly basis). As of this writing, the cost has not been determined. Check the ArchiveGrid Website for details.

Researchers may find materials from ArchiveGrid when conducting searches in Google (or other general search engines). Google results are prefaced by: "Find history in ArchiveGrid." After June 1, 2006, users will be able to access ArchiveGrid's records from Google if they have a paid subscription or have an affiliation with a subscribing institution.

WHAT YOU WON'T FIND

In general, ArchiveGrid does not provide access to the full text of primary source materials but rather identifies the finding aids, inventories, and guides which describe collections. Nor does it cover secondary source materials such as published books or journal articles. Also excluded are official documents from the National Archives and Records Administration, including vital statistics, census data and military service records.

CHECK BACK IN THE NEXT ISSUE

This review is based on a prototype version of ArchiveGrid that preceded its official launch. In the next issue of *Internet Genealogy* we plan to have an update about its contents, performance, and pricing. In the meantime, genealogists are encouraged to take advantage of the three-month period of free access and to send RLG their feedback.

