

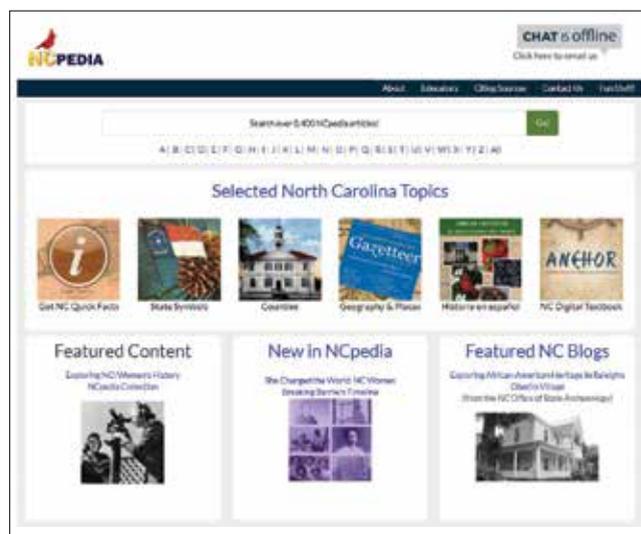


Let's Explore State-Specific Encyclopedias

By Diane L. Richard

I extensively use something called NCPedia, www.ncpedia.org. With almost 9,000 articles, this NC-focused encyclopedia provides great historical context for those researching North Carolinian ancestors. This is my “go-to” page when I have a question about just about anything North Carolinian as I delve into new-to-me historical events, people, geography, and more. I also constantly revisit it as I explore new topics. I can't tell you how often I do a Google™ search on a topic and end up at NCPedia. Maybe I should just start there <grin!>

North Carolina is not the only state that has created a resource like this, a state-specific Encyclopedia. They are all structured differently and have different scopes of what material is and is not included. They typically revolve around articles/posts focusing on a particular person, historical event, etc. The key is that they all provide excellent historical and geographical contextual information, vital to genealogists. Many are housed on a state archive or library platform,



while others via a state historical society. Regardless, they are all searchable and browseable; the latter can help you quickly find relevant material when a search has frustrated you.

Here are a few other state-specific ones that I am aware of. Note that many use Encyclopedia in their name. Look for one for the state you are researching.

- 1) **CALS The Encyclopedia of Arkansas**, <https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net>. Besides the standard options for search or browsing, a link also takes you to a collection of lesson plans, many of which point back to the Encyclopedia <https://arstudies.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/lessonplans/search>. I often find lesson plans a great way to get introduced to a new topic. I hope that if a school student can learn the topic via these, I can as well!
- 2) **Colorado Encyclopedia**, <https://coloradoencyclopedia.org> permits you to navigate via searching, selecting a theme or exploring a digital collection (statewide, regional, county or city). There is also a great collection of Maps and some fun timelines. For the latter, “The Fur Trade in Colorado, c. 1821-1850” and the “Colorado Gold Rush” both caught my eye.

