

Ancestry will let you search online for relatives who were displaced by the Holocaust

August 1 2019, by Edward C. Baig



Ancestry is digitizing millions of Holocaust and Nazi-persecution records and making them searchable online for the first time ever. Anyone, not just Ancestry's paid members, can explore the records at the company's site.

The [family tree](#) and consumer genomics company partnered with the Arolsen Archives—International Center on Nazi Persecution, which has the world's most comprehensive UNESCO-protected archive on victims of National Socialism.

There are two distinct databases included in the records:

Africa, Asia and European passenger lists of displaced persons (1946 to 1971)

This collection mostly consists of immigrants who left European ports

and airports following World War II. These are Holocaust survivors, former concentration camp inmates and forced laborers, as well as refugees from Central and Eastern European countries and certain non-European countries. About 1.7 million records and 300,000 images are included in this database.

Europe, Registration of Foreigners and German Individuals Persecuted (1939-1947)

This grouping includes registers of people who were living in Germany and German-occupied territories with non-German citizenship, stateless persons and also German Jews. It is not restricted to people who were incarcerated in camps or other locations. The documents may also include information on people who died, including where some are buried. Nearly 10 million records and 900,000 images are housed in this collection.

Though some of the records in both databases are in English, most are in German.

You can search records by name, birthdate and place, destination, or browse by resettlement region.

"With the number of Holocaust survivors dwindling every day, it is more important than ever to ensure these records live on," says Arolsen director Floriane Azoulay in a statement.

Prior to Ancestry making these collections available online, people searching for information about relatives who were persecuted during the Holocaust had to manually request copies of documents that could take time for the [archive](#) to locate and provide.

The records that were just made available include those from the American zone of post-war occupied Germany. Ancestry plans to add more documents from the Arolsen Archives to its digital database early next year, including records from the British, French, and Soviet zones.

Ancestry has also worked with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on digitizing 35 collections and more than 1.8 million records from the museum's archives.

Copies of the indexed records will be donated to Arolsen Archives and to the 11-nation commission of digital copy holders of the archives, which include Yad Vashem in Israel and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. The organizations will be able to post records on their own websites.

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