

## Barbados Family Research Reference Guide

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The following is a list of resources for researching Barbadian family ancestry:

### **Barbados Department of Archives**

The Barbados Department of Archives was established in 1964. It's housed in the old Lazaretto (Lepers Hospital) built in 1907, in the Black Rock section of St. Michael parish. It's the official location for all parish documents (**Parochial Registers**) such as baptisms, marriages, burials, wills, and deeds. It contains many original documents as well as hand-written documents copied from originals dating back to the 1600s. None of the materials can be checked out, but you can research, read and copy any information that you find. The staff is friendly, helpful and very knowledgeable. The Archives is the key place to trace your Barbadian roots or any other type of historical information that's related to the island.

Records that can be found at the Archives include:

- Baptism Records – 1637 to 1930
  - Each entry gives the name of the child, the names of parents, the date of baptism, sometimes the date of birth, and a variety of other miscellaneous data.
- Marriage Records – 1643 to 1930
  - A typical entry gives the date of the marriage, the names of the bride and groom, their age and sometimes their parents' name.
- Burial Records – 1643 to 1930
- Probate Records – 1647 to 1959
  - Each entry gives the name of the testator, the names of all heirs, and all dates, titles, relationships, place names, references, land owners, burial locations, slaves and vessels mentioned in the will.
- Deed Records – 1636 to 1949

The Archives do not charge a fee to search their records. They will not do research for you, but can provide you with names of persons who, for a fee, can research the Archives on your behalf.

Barbados Department of Archives

Black Rock

St. Michael, Barbados

Tel: 246.425.5150 or 246.425.1380

Fax: 246.425.5911

Email: [archives@sunbeach.net](mailto:archives@sunbeach.net)

### **Barbados Museum and Historical Society**

The Barbados Museum and Historical Society was established in 1933. It collects, preserves and publishes materials, relating to Barbados' history, and seeks to promote knowledge of Barbadian history and culture. The society has over 1,000 members.

The museum is housed in the historic Military Prison of St. Ann's Garrison, erected to accommodate the British Army between 1790 and 1853. In addition to its permanent displays, the museum also has a gallery for temporary exhibits. Its library of current and historical publications is open to the public for research purposes.

The museum's Shilstone Memorial Library contains books, old maps, journals, **family genealogies** and other information that chronicles the life and people of Barbados. Key publications to research include "Caribbeana" and "The Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society".

Barbados Museum and Historical Society  
St. Ann's Garrison  
St. Michael  
Barbados, BB14038  
Tel: 246.427.0201  
Email: [museum@caribsurf.com](mailto:museum@caribsurf.com)  
Web site: <http://www.barbmuse.org.bb/>

### **Barbados Registration Department**

Created in 1890, the Records Section of the Registration Department maintains records (**District Registers**) relating to the births, deaths and marriages of Barbadians going back to the 19th century. Records for the years prior to the 20th century are archived, but 20th century records must be kept readily available to the Section so that staffers can verify information as required.

Records that are readily available at the Registration Department include:

- Baptisms - 1890 to the Present
- Marriages - 1930 to the Present
- Deaths - 1925 to the Present

The Registration Department charges a fee to search their records.

Barbados Registration Department  
Supreme Court of Barbados  
Law Courts  
Coleridge St.  
Bridgetown, St. Michael, Barbados  
Tel: 246.426.3461 or 246.426.2131

### **Barbados Land Registration Department**

The Barbados Land Registration Department contains current information on land deeds and titles (1950 to the present). Older records can be found in the Department of Archives.

Barbados Land Registration Department  
Chelsea House  
Chelsea  
St. Michael, Barbados  
Tel: 246.436.5978  
Fax: 246.435.0433  
Email: [landreg@caribsurf.com](mailto:landreg@caribsurf.com)

### **FamilySearch.org**

FamilySearch.org is the Internet Genealogy Service maintained by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). The Web site contains Parochial Baptism and Marriage records originally compiled by the Barbados Department of Archives. The online records are indexed and searchable:

- Baptism 1739-1891
- Burials 1854-1885
- Marriages 1854-1879

**Note:** FamilySearch.org recently made detailed images of the data available on their Web site. While the images provide a lot more detail than the indexed records, they can only be browsed. They cannot be searched. The data that can be browsed ranges from 1637 to 1887.

For additional information on the records available on FamilySearch.org, search their Wiki, keyword “Barbados”.

Web site: <http://www.familysearch.org/>

### **LDS Family History Centers**

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) operates over 4,600 Family History Centers in 134 countries. The Family History Centers are the branches of the main Family History Library located in Salt Lake City, Utah. Microfilm of the original Parochial Baptism and Marriage records (1637-1930) residing at the Barbados Department of Archives are kept in the main library and can be lent to a Family History Center near your location. If you can't travel to the Barbados Department of Archives, you may be able to visit your local Family History Center to access the records.

For additional information on the LDS Family History Centers, go to FamilySearch.org and search their Wiki, keywords “Family History Centers”.

### **American Family Immigration History Center (EllisIsland.org)**

The American Family Immigration History Center at Ellis Island contains the records of more than 22 million passengers and members of ships' crews that entered the United States through Ellis Island and the Port of New York between 1892 and 1924. Passenger records give names, dates of arrival, ship of travel, age on arrival and more on each individual. Depending on the year of entry, the records may also provide the name of a relative back home and/or the name of the person that they were going to stay with already in the United States.

Web site: <http://www.ellisland.org/>

### **Caribbean Surname Index**

The Caribbean Surname Index is a Discussion Forum containing surname, location, and other "Boards" where registered users may post their relevant information and hope for a response from other family members searching on the Internet. Registration is free!

Web site: <http://www.candoo.com/surnames/>

### **Tracing Ancestors in Barbados**

Geraldine Lane has written one of the most comprehensive guides for researching Barbadian family ancestry. Her book, "Tracing Ancestors in Barbados: A Practical Guide", published by Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 2006 (ISBN: 0806317655) is available at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

Web site: <http://www.barbadosancestors.com/>

### **About This Document**

Donald Hinson is a researcher from Plano, Texas. This document was originally prepared as the reference notes for a presentation made at the April 17, 2004 Genealogy Friends of Plano Libraries workshop on "Hoppin' the Pond". The document has subsequently been updated to reflect changes in some of the original resources. While this document is intended for use by researchers in the United States, it can be used by anyone wishing to learn more about their ancestors from Barbados. No attempt has been made to address resources that are available to individuals researching from outside the United States.

Additional resources for researching Barbadian family ancestry can be found on the Bajan Genealogy page of Hinson's Barbados Resource Guide.

Web site: <http://barbados.dlhjr.com/bajangene.html>

Information resulting from Don Hinson's personal research can be found on his Web site, "We Sailed Great Ships: Dedicated to the Ancestors of Donald L. Hinson, Jr."

Web site: <http://greatships.dlhjr.com/>

**Sources:**

1. The Barbados Department of Archives
2. Encyclopedia.com (<http://www.encyclopedia.com/>)
3. Centre for Barbados Studies in History and Genealogy (<http://www.rootsweb.com/~brbwgw/Archives1.htm>)
4. Government of Barbados Information Network (<http://www.barbados.gov.bb/>)
5. FamilySearch.org (<http://www.FamilySearch.org/>)
6. Caribbean Surname Index (<http://www.candoo.com/surnames/>)
7. Geraldine Lane, Tracing Ancestors in Barbados: A Practical Guide (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 2006)