



## RESEARCHING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY IN THE ARCHIVES



The Western Cape Archives holds the memory of our province with more than 45kms of records. This flyer will help you identify *some* of the main sources of information, to use when researching your *family history* (also called *genealogy*). Our records relate only to those from the Cape.



Always start with the stories and memories within your own family. Gather as much information as you can, working backwards from yourself or, working forwards from your oldest relative. Note down full names, maiden names, dates of birth, baptisms/other religious ceremonies, marriages, deaths, the names of towns and areas they lived in or moved to, as well as what schools they attended and religious organisations they belonged to. Oral history is a key part of genealogy and can give you useful hints. Old photographs, bibles, kitaab, diaries and letters kept within your family are valuable too. The more information you come to the Archives with, the better.

### 1. Home Affairs: Registers of marriages, births and deaths Western Cape (1861-1997), Northern Cape (1860-1990); Eastern Cape (1864-1982), (HAWC Inventories 1/128, 1/62, HANC, Inventory 1/126, HAEC, Inventory 1/127)

- Birth Registers 1895 - 1971
- Marriage Registers (civil marriages only) 1840
- Death Registers and indexes 1758-1833, 1895 – 1971
- Births prior to 1895 and church marriages, please consult church records
- Information on marriages can also be found in the matrimonial court records of the Magistrate of the relevant town/district
- Adoptions are usually indicated in Remarks Column (usually in red) in the birth register. In 1921, the Registrar of Adoptions were established in Pretoria. Today this is part of the Department of Social Development.
- Check dates in birth indexes 3-6 months after the birth as it sometimes took a while to register a birth

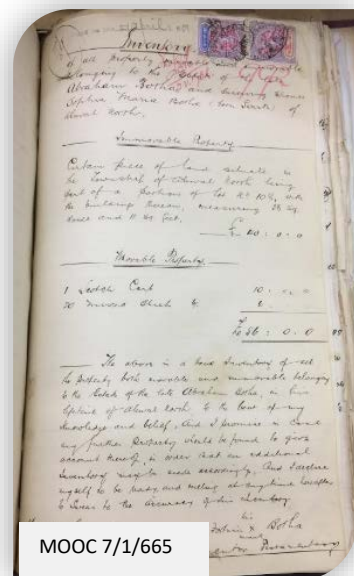
**Note: These are registers and indexes only. Only Home Affairs can issue certificates.**



**2. Estate papers: Master of the Orphan Chamber/High Court (MOOC) Master of the Orphan Chamber/High Court Kimberley (MOK), Master of the Orphan Chamber/High Court Eastern Cape (MOG), "Native" Commissioner of the Cape Peninsula (2/OBS): listed on National Archives database – see QR code below for access**

Estate papers can include wills, inventories and death notices where you will find the names and details of a deceased person, and possibly those of their relatives and place of residence. An estate file /death notice does not necessarily exist for every deceased person as not all person's estates were administered by the Master.

- Inventories 1673-1996
- Wills 1689-1996
- Liquidation and Distribution Accounts 1700-1996
- Death registers 1758-1833 (Prior to the death notices)
- Death Notices 1834-1996
- Combined estate files 1917-1996 (prior to 1917 – death notices, wills etc. are filed separately)
- Estate Papers of persons deceased in Kimberley and District 1871-1956: MOK
- Estate Papers of persons deceased in the Eastern Cape 1957-1961: MOG
- Estate Papers from "Native Affairs" Commissioner of the Cape 1928: 2/OBS 3/1: (17634 names).



**3. Divorce cases: Cape Supreme Court (CSC: listed on National Archives database – see QR code below for access)**

- Cape Town 1828-1980
- Kimberley 1871-1956
- Eastern Cape 1865-1966

**Note: Marriage certificates are often filed with divorce papers**

**4. Property sources: Cape Title Deeds (CTD, Inventory 1/84), Quitrent Registers (QRR, Inventory 1/6), Loan Farm Registers (RLR), Maternity Hospital Records (MHR)**



- Freehold (Cape Title Deeds and Transfers): 1652-1825
- Loanfarm and Perpetual Quitrent systems: Quitrent registers 1792-1939
- Ownership and residence can also be found in estate papers and birth, marriage and death registers, and maternity home registers (1917-2004).
- Lists of properties in and around Cape Town can be found in street directories available in our reference collection.

**5. Population records: Opgaaf Rolls (J, Inventory 1/5), Census and Statistics (CCP)**

- Opgaaf Rolls – tax return: 1692 – 1845
- Wardmaster's censuses: 1790s – 1820 (Magistrate records)
- Census and Statistics: 1865-1911 (publications)

**6. Immigration and naturalisation records:**

- **Colonial Office (CO, Inventory 1/16):** Permits and permissions to remain in or leave the Colony 1806 – 1844; naturalisation papers 1826 – 1911, lists of British Settlers to the Cape 1820
- **Immigration Agent, Cape Town (IAC, Inventory 4/3/3):** Including German immigration 1878 – 1884
- **Immigration Board (IBC):** Including list of emigrants on board various ships from Britain 1857 – 1862
- **Secretary, Immigration Board, Port Elizabeth (PIB, Inventory 4/3/2):** Applications and register of Emigrants 1858 – 1865
- **Principal Immigration Officer (PIO, Inventory 1/117):** 1910-1961: Includes applications for aided passage
- **Port Captain & Dock Superintendent, Table Bay (PC):** Ships' arrivals 1806 – 1913; departures 1853 – 1913



- **Secretary, Cape Town Chamber of Commerce (CC):** Registers of Arrivals and Departures in Table Bay 1822 – 1917, Algoa Bay 1846 – 1901 and various ports 1900 – 1913
- **Secretary of Public Works (PWD):** Passenger lists 1872 – 1884, applications for Aided Immigration 1872 – 1902, Immigration Papers 1873 – 1902
- **Regional Representatives, Department of Home Affairs, Cape Town (IRC):** Indian/Asian and Chinese series 1904-1970s

**Note: The Archives does not have comprehensive lists of all people arriving at the Cape.**



### 7. Records of enslavement: The Slave Office (1816-1848) (SO, Inventory 1.21)

Information on enslaved people at the Cape can be found in Estate inventories, the Opgaaf rolls/tax returns (J), the Council of Policy (C) and Court of Justice (CJ) records from the Dutch East India Period. The establishment by the British of the "The Slave Office" in 1816 required all slave holders to register births, deaths and sales. Registers are arranged by place (e.g. Swellendam) and then by the name of the slave holder

### 8. Records of individuals and organisations: Non-public Records

A few families have donated private archive collections and genealogical research collections to the Archives which are to be found among the non-public records. An index is found in the Reading Room.

Within its collection of non-public records, the Archives holds a *limited* number of church records. These sometimes contain death/burial, marriage and baptism records:

- St George's Cathedral and outlying Anglican parishes (incomplete)
- The Union Congregation Church, Cape Town.

**Note: The NGKerk, the Moravian Church and Lutheran Church houses their own records.**

### 9. Reference Library

The Western Cape Archives houses a small research library housing books of general genealogical interest, as well as genealogical journals and publications on specific families. One can also find old *Cape Directories* in which you can search properties and the names of those who owned them.



Here are few general genealogical publications available at the library of the Archives:

- Boucher, M: *French Speakers at the Cape in the first hundred years of Dutch East India Company Rule*
- Bull, E: *Aided Immigration from Britain to South Africa, 1857-1867*
- Cornell, C: *Slaves at the Cape*
- De Villiers, CC and Pama, C: *Geslagsregister van die Ou Kaapse Families*
- Dickason, GB: *Irish Settlers at the Cape*
- Heese, HF: *Groep sonder grense*
- Hoge, J: *Personalia of the Germans at the Cape, 1652-1806*
- Kannemeyer, AF: *Hugenote Familienaamboek*
- Lombard, RTJ & Heese, JA IGISA: *SA Genealogies (SAG, vols. 1-14)*
- Nash, MD: *The Settler Handbook - A New List of 1820 Settlers*
- Pama, C: *Die Groot Afrikaanse Familienaamboek*
- Philip, P: *British Residents at the Cape, 1795-1819*
- Schnell, ELG: *For Men Must Work (German military settlers)*



## 10. Genealogical organisations

There are a number of Cape-based organisations where people interested in doing family history research can gather, listen to talks, share ideas, leads and experiences. Some will do research on your behalf for a fee. Here are a few:

- Cape Family Research Forum: Specialists in Cape Flats Research: See Facebook page
- Cape Town Family History Society: [www.ctfamilyhistorysociety.org.za/](http://www.ctfamilyhistorysociety.org.za/)
- Genealogical Society of South Africa (GSSA): [www.genza.org](http://www.genza.org)
- Ancestors: [www.ancestors.co.za/databases/](http://www.ancestors.co.za/databases/)

### Online tools

The Archives does not yet have digitised records online. Some records from the Western Cape Archives and other archives can be found on genealogical websites. Please note, sometimes these sites do not correctly attribute or reference the records. There are a number website where you can create family trees for a fee.

Some references useful for family research are listed in the National Archives database: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.za/node/737> or scan the QR code to take you to the correct link:



Always remember to reference your information with the repository, source code and volume number.

The Western Cape Archives and Records Service at 72 Roeland Street, Cape Town is free and open to the public Monday-Friday 8:00-16:00 and the first and third Saturday of the month, 8:00-14:00. Limited telephonic and email assistance can be provided. Tours and programmes can be booked on 021 483 0456



E3219

HAWC 1/3/9/6/43; no. 4838.

**MARRIAGE REGISTER.** B.M.D. 3 (Union).

Cape Town, District Cape Province Cape

Date of Marriage	Groom	Residence at time of Marriage	Birth of Groom	Place of Birth	Parents of Groom	Parents of Bride	Witnesses	Remarks
6th August 1946	HARIEF SHABODIAN	Butcher	1912	Woodstock, Cape				
	MARIAM BHAJI-MOH-AT-INDIA MOORAD	House duties Spinster.	1912	Upper Gheza Rd, Woodstock, Cape				Special licence No 1/382H.

This Marriage was solemnized by me on this the 6th day of August, 1946 in the presence of the undersigned witnesses -

1. B. M. Patel B. M. Patel. 2. H. J. Martin H. J. Martin.

M. Shabedian M. Shabedian. Mariam Bha-Moh-Moh.

HAWC 1/3/9/1/124; no. 745.