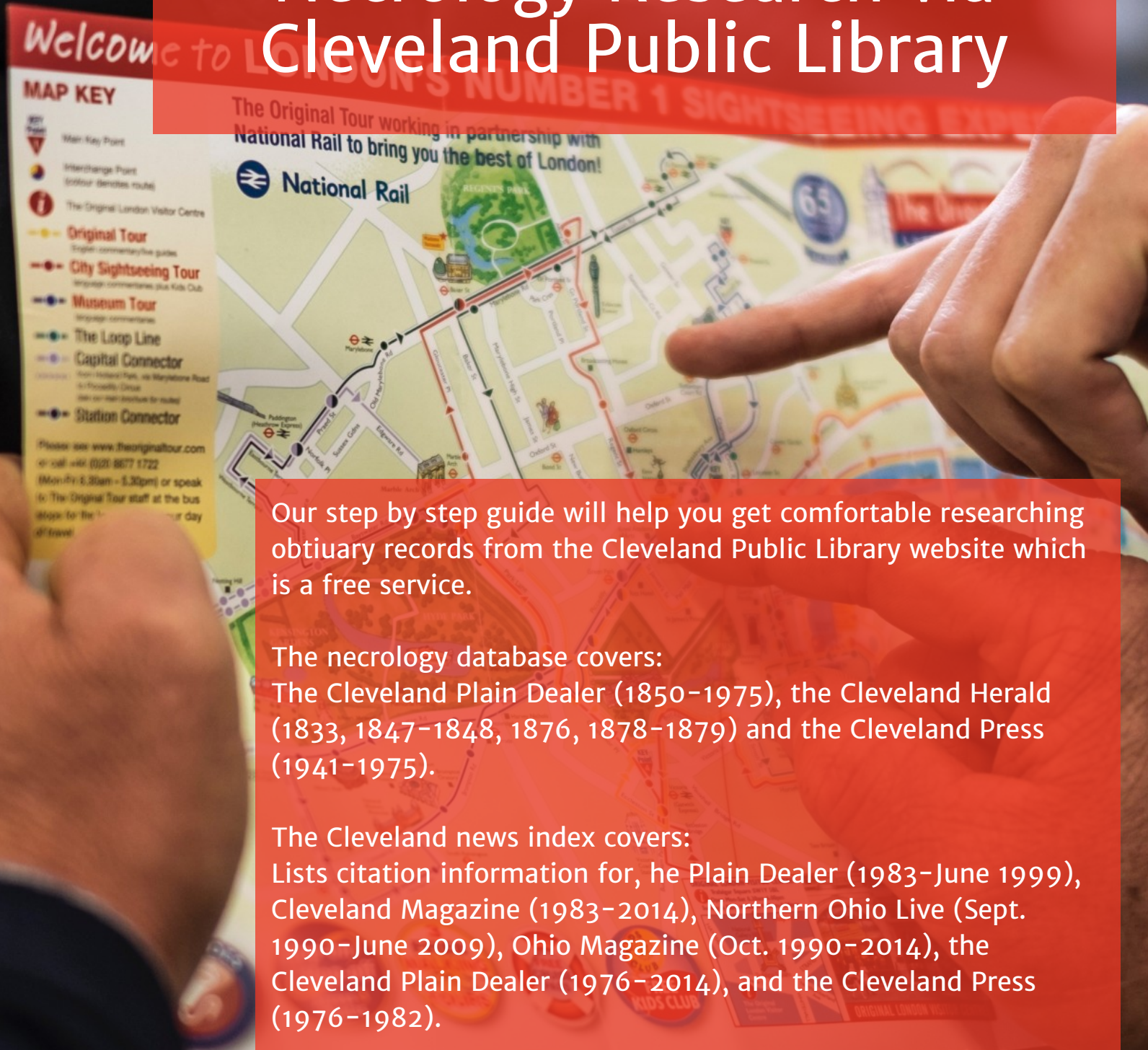# Necrology Research via Cleveland Public Library

Our step by step guide will help you get comfortable researching obtiuary records from the Cleveland Public Library website which is a free service.

The necrology database covers:
The Cleveland Plain Dealer (1850-1975), the Cleveland Herald (1833, 1847-1848, 1876, 1878-1879) and the Cleveland Press (1941-1975).

The Cleveland news index covers:
Lists citation information for, he Plain Dealer (1983-June 1999), Cleveland Magazine (1983-2014), Northern Ohio Live (Sept. 1990-June 2009), Ohio Magazine (Oct. 1990-2014), the Cleveland Plain Dealer (1976-2014), and the Cleveland Press (1976-1982).

Ebook Author

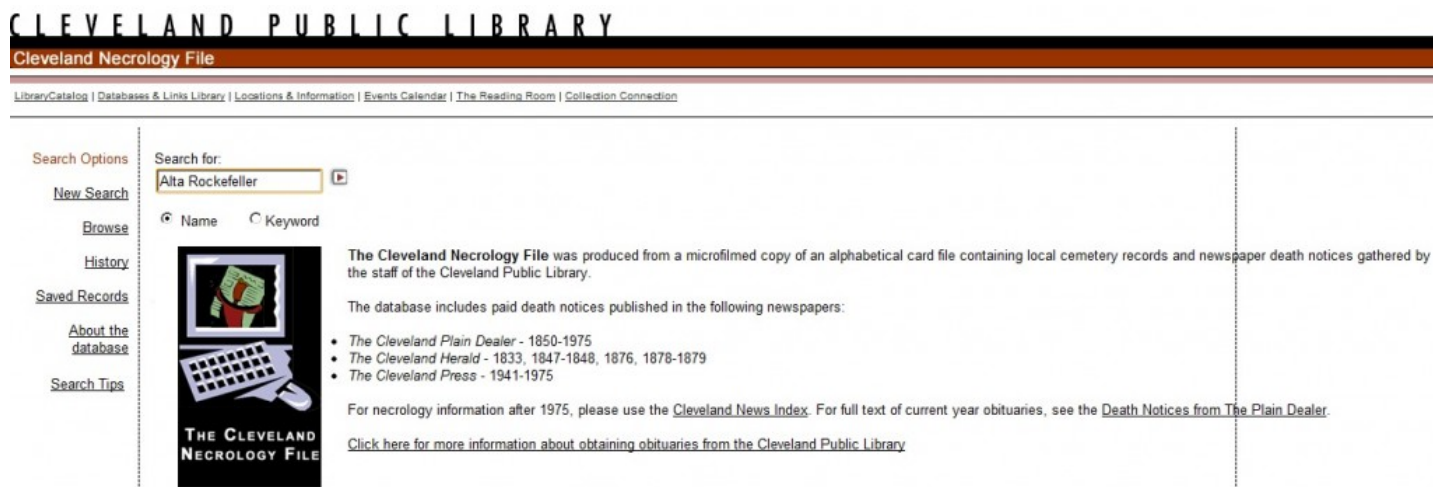# Necrology research via Cleveland Public Library − Ancestry Paths

We are going to use the real world example of John D. Rockefeller's daughter, Alta, who lived in Cleveland and we will look up her obituary using the Cleveland Plain Dealer Necrology file.

I started my research by looking for the obituary of my great grandmother in the local newspaper. In Cleveland, our library has an online necrology file where historic obituaries can be found. Recent obituaries can typically be found on-line using at the local newspaper website. Determining how to search for historic obituaries in each particular city requires a little digging, I recommend starting at your local library website or your local genealogy or historical website to point you to the source.

Here in Cleveland the public library provided access to historic obituaries which is our starting point as we research the daughter of the famous John D. Rockefeller.

https://cpl.org/newsindex/

Once on the libraries site, click on "Research" and then on the second level menu select "Cleveland Necrology File". Our first search will be a simple name search by typing in Alta Rockefeller. (See below)

After pressing enter, we get the following results.

First result: (obituary with less information)

Id#: 0694705   Name: Rockefeller, Alta Prentice   Date: 6/22/1962
Source: Plain Dealer; Cleveland Necrology File, Reel #150.
Notes: died in New York City June 21, 1962. age 91. Survivors: Sons: Spelman Prentice, John Rockefeller Prentice. Daughter: Mrs. Benjamin D. Gilbert.

Second result: (obituary with more information)

Id#: 0680005   Name: Prentice, Alta Rockefeller   Date: Jun 22 1962
Source: Cleveland Press; Cleveland Necrology File, Reel #147.
Notes: Alta Rockefeller Prentice. Alta Rockefeller Prentice, for whom Alta House on the East Side was named, died yesterday in New York at the age of 91. She was the last surviving child of John D. Rockefeller, who lived here while becoming a multi-millionaire in oil. Mrs. Prentice had not lived in Cleveland since childhood. She was the widow of E. Parmalee Prentice, an attorney. She was an aunt of New York Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller. Surviving are two sons, John Rockefeller and Spelman Prentice, and a daughter, Mrs. Benjamin D. Gilbert. Three sisters and a brother, John D. Jr., preceded her in death.

The amount of information found in obituaries varies greatly. For Alta, the results include the above two obituaries. The first obituary gives less information about Alta's husband or parents and the second gives more details. Remember, pay attention to every detail, as even the smallest fact can be a valuable clue in your ongoing research.

The search we just completed was for a first and last name. We could have started with a broader search and typed in Rockefeller (no first name) and the result would have been a longer list.

In some cases the obituary may not be available. When you are stuck, try searching with different names including alternative spellings and married and maiden names as well.