

# Global Access To Our Shared Heritage

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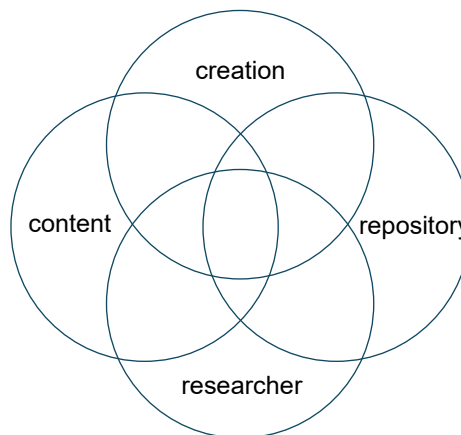
[dutchgenealogy.nl](http://dutchgenealogy.nl)

## Four Types of Locations

When dealing with historical records, we have four types of locations to consider:

- ❖ The place where the record was **created**.
- ❖ The place that the record is about (**content**).
- ❖ The place where the record is kept (**repository**).
- ❖ The place where the **researcher** is located.

These locations are rarely all the same. For example, a Canadian researcher may be interested in a letter written in New York to a family member in the Netherlands, that was captured by the British navy during the Anglo-Dutch Wars, and now kept in the National Archives of the United Kingdom.



## Why Records May Be Elsewhere

- ❖ **Former colonial relations.** Parts of New York were formerly colonies of the Netherlands and England. Colonial archives of these countries preserve records of these former possessions.
- ❖ **Foreign companies** that have interests in other places. The Dutch West India Company controlled the colony of New Netherland. The Holland Land Company, based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, owned large parts of Western New York. The shipping company Holland America Line, out of Rotterdam, the Netherlands, transported passengers to New York.
- ❖ **Displaced archives.** Especially during times of war or colonial occupation, records are sometimes removed and taken elsewhere.
- ❖ **Theft and oversight.** Records may be stolen, or not returned by researchers.
- ❖ **Preservation challenges.** Some countries lack the facilities to preserve records. Tropical conditions require specialist equipment to protect records from humidity and pests. Records may be kept in other countries, perhaps the former colonial power, to keep them safe.
- ❖ **Connections to the country of origin.** Immigrants may continue to have interests in the country of origin. For example, they may still own property there, or may inherit from family members. Correspondence to family members and associates may have been preserved.
- ❖ **Donations.** Typically, archive management of non-governmental records is unregulated. The owner of records are free to deposit them anywhere. Though many repositories have collection acquisitions profiles, specifying they only accept records that are relevant to their mission or geographic locations, some repositories accept other records.

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## Repatriation

Displaced archives can be returned to the country of origin in two ways:

- ❖ **Physical repatriation**, where the physical records are returned to the country of origin. Sometimes, the country that preserved the records digitizes them before returning.
- ❖ **Digital repatriation**, the return of digital versions of records to the countries where they were created.

## Digital Access

Thanks to technological advances, consulting the records no longer requires physical access to the original. The following methods can be used to provide or improve digital access.

### Digitization

- ❖ **Scanning**, which creates a digital version (scan) of the original records.
- ❖ **Scanning on demand**, a service that allows people to order scans remotely.

### Making the content findable and understandable

- ❖ **Archival descriptions**, which describe the contents of records, typically presented in catalogs and finding aids.
- ❖ **Indexing**, extracting names of people or other entities in the records to make them searchable.
- ❖ **Named Entity Recognition (NER)**, which automatically indexes names.
- ❖ **Transcribing**, turning the record into printed form.
- ❖ **Optical Character Recognition (OCR)**, which automatically turns type-written records into machine-readable text.
- ❖ **Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR)**, which automatically turns handwritten records into machine-readable text.
- ❖ **Translating**, making the record available in a different language than the original.
- ❖ **Large Language Models (LLMs)**, like ChatGPT, which can help summarize, translate, or analyze documents.

### Preservation

- ❖ **Digital preservation**, making sure authoritative versions of digital objects remain available for future use. This includes backups, information security, migration to newer file formats, or emulating outdated systems.

### Presentation

- ❖ **Online publication**, with or without a paywall.
- ❖ **Open data**, making the information available in a format that encourages reuse.
- ❖ **Portals**, websites where records about a certain topic or location are presented, regardless of where the records themselves are kept.

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## Records About New York in European Collections

### Netherlands

Repository	Record Group	Description
Nationaal Archief, The Hague	1.01.02, States-General.	Governing body of the Netherlands, includes records about New Netherland. Finding aid, <a href="https://nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.01.02/">nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.01.02/</a> Especially “Loketkast WIC” [cases regarding West India Company] or search for “Nieuw-Nederland.” Resolutions full-text searchable via <a href="https://goetgevonden.nl">goetgevonden.nl</a> and <i>Open Archieven</i> <a href="https://openarchieven.nl/transcripties/">openarchieven.nl/transcripties/</a> .
	1.05.01.01, West India Company.	Company that administered the New Netherland colony. Most WIC records were lost. Finding aid, <a href="https://nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.05.01.01">nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.05.01.01</a> Full-text searchable via <i>Open Archieven</i> <a href="https://openarchieven.nl/transcripties/">openarchieven.nl/transcripties/</a> .
Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Amsterdam.	333, Holland Land Company.	Company that bought and sold land in Pennsylvania and New York, 1792–1855. Finding aid, <a href="https://archief.amsterdam/inventarissen/details/333/">archief.amsterdam/inventarissen/details/333/</a>
	343, Regents of the Almoner’s Orphanage and Predecessors.	Responsible for oversight of care for poor orphans in Amsterdam, sent orphans to New Netherland in 1650s (call no. 437). Finding aid, <a href="https://archief.amsterdam/inventarissen/details/343/">archief.amsterdam/inventarissen/details/343/</a> .
	379, Classis Amsterdam of the Dutch Reformed Church.	Responsible for appointments of ministers, teachers in New Netherland. Finding aid, <a href="https://archief.amsterdam/inventarissen/details/379/">archief.amsterdam/inventarissen/details/379/</a> .
Stadsarchief Rotterdam, Rotterdam.	318-04, Holland America Line, Passage fees.	The Holland America Line was a shipping company that sailed from the Netherlands to New York. Between 1900 and 1969, they transported 1.7 million people from many different countries. Finding aid, <a href="https://hdl.handle.net/21.12133/8540CB7EBAAB47C18AFB6B401DEE978D">hdl.handle.net/21.12133/8540CB7EBAAB47C18AFB6B401DEE978D</a>
	318-05, Holland America Line, journals.	Finding aid, <a href="https://hdl.handle.net/21.12133/CF566D2063204B158968B8338DB17C67">hdl.handle.net/21.12133/CF566D2063204B158968B8338DB17C67</a> .
	318-17, Holland America Line, offices New York and London.	Finding aid, <a href="https://hdl.handle.net/21.12133/798290B5523C4245AB5C75D8AD0E537D">hdl.handle.net/21.12133/798290B5523C4245AB5C75D8AD0E537D</a>

## United Kingdom

Repository	Record Group	Description
National Archives, Kew.	CO 5, Colonial Office, Board of Trade and Secretaries of State: America and West Indies.	Correspondence between the British government and the governments of American colonies, 1606–1822. Finding aid, <a href="https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/r/C57">discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/r/C57</a> . CO 5/1134 has abstracts of grants of land in the state of New York, 1664–1765. Scans and searchable text via “Colonial America,” <i>Adam Matthew Digital</i> , <a href="https://colonialamerica.amdigital.co.uk">colonialamerica.amdigital.co.uk</a> ; institutional access only.
	HCA, High Court of the Admiralty, Prize Papers.	Prize Papers are the documents seized by the British navy and privateers from enemy ships, 1652–1815. This includes some letters sent from New Netherland. Finding aid, <a href="https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C1100">discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C1100</a> . See Prize Papers Portal, <a href="https://portal.prizepapers.de">portal.prizepapers.de</a> . Dutch Prize Papers (including New Netherland) are scanned and partially searchable via <a href="https://prizepapers.huygens.knaw.nl">prizepapers.huygens.knaw.nl</a> . Scans also via <a href="https://nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.22.24">nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.22.24</a> .
	T 79, American Loyalist Claims Commission.	Papers concerning claims of American loyalists, 1777–1841. Finding aid, <a href="https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C13816">discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C13816</a> .

## Other Archives, Libraries, Museums

Search for terms like “New York,” “Nieuw-Nederland” [Dutch version of New Netherland], or specific names and places.

*Archives Portal Europe*, [archivesportaleurope.net](https://archivesportaleurope.net). Searches collections of archives in Europe.

*Europeana*, [europeana.eu](https://europeana.eu). Searches collections of libraries and museums in Europe.

## Further study

“Displaced Archives and Shared Archival Heritage: A Bibliography.” *International Council on Archives*. [ica.org/resource/displaced-archives-and-shared-archival-heritage-a-bibliography/](https://ica.org/resource/displaced-archives-and-shared-archival-heritage-a-bibliography/).

Hoitink, Yvette. “Mutual Cultural Heritage.” *Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly* 32 (December 2017): 40–43.

Jeurgens, Charles and Michael Karabinos. “Paradoxes of Curating Colonial Memory.” *Archives and Museum Informatics* 20.2 (September 2020): 199–220. [doi.org/10.1007/s10502-020-09334-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-020-09334-z)

Zoelen, Wout van. “Shared Cultural Heritage of the United States and the Netherlands.” Cultural Heritage Agency, May 2017. [english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/publications/publications/2017/01/01/shared-cultural-heritage-of-the-united-states-and-the-netherlands](https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/publications/publications/2017/01/01/shared-cultural-heritage-of-the-united-states-and-the-netherlands).