

I use Ancestry for Canadian Census Records and Images

By Joe Petrie

For Canadian Censuses from 1851 on, Ancestry is the best! The fact that the images are available is the deciding factor in my view.

The following image, a JPG file downloaded from Ancestry Library, is one page from the Census of Canada for 1911. My Petrie family from Dominion in the Reserve Polling District is enumerated on page 22 (of 23) lines 41 – 46. The family was listed as: Peterie, Edward through Peterie, Russell. To get to the record's image and to save it, in Ancestry Library, I selected Canada Censuses & Voters Lists and then 1911 Census of Canada. I searched for Hester Peterie (the Census taker consistently misspelled Petrie as Peterie). When I was viewing the record, I pressed the SAVE button to save the image. The software downloaded the image to the Download folder on the library's computer. I copied the file to a flash drive and backed it up to my laptop to take home.

The image shows a page from the 1911 Canadian Census, Schedule 1, titled 'POPULATION BY NAME, PERSONAL DESCRIPTION, ETC.' The form is divided into several columns for personal details, marital status, and household information. Handwritten entries are visible, including names like 'Peterie, Edward' and 'Peterie, Russell'. The form is numbered 'Page 22' and 'Tableau No. 1'. The census taker's name, 'Hester Peterie', is noted at the top right. The form is filled with detailed information for each individual, including their name, sex, age, date of birth, and marital status.

I am usually not a fan of Ancestry. There are two related reasons. First, it is a subscription service and it really is not an inexpensive subscription service. Second, there usually are other web sites offering the same or much of the same information that are less expensive or even free. I am an Ancestry Library user for non-USA Censuses only because of the images and because my local library in Norwood MA, offers Ancestry Library on-site during library hours to holders of a Minuteman Library Card. Note that because of the lack of 24/7 availability, I list the items to be researched when I go to the library. There are other non-subscription databases with Canadian Census records. For example, Family Search and the Automated Census of Canada offer very useful features. There are however no images.

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Memberships: Association of Professional Genealogists; Friends of Irish Research; Cape Breton Genealogy and Historical Association; Family History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador and New England Historic Genealogical Society.