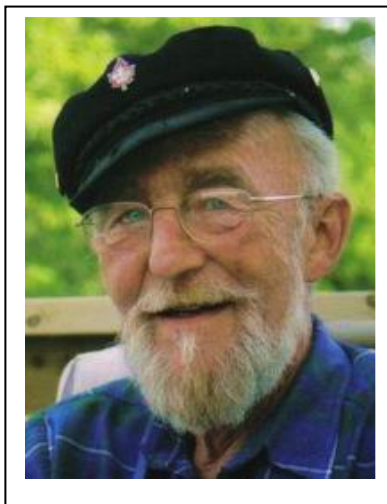


### A Photographer Search



Reader Janis McMahon contacted me recently about finding a photographer. She had several photographs bearing the imprint of Sheldon and Davis in Kingston and wondered when they were in business.

Normally, I would have advised her about where to go to find such information but Library and Archives Canada has recently expanded their online database of City Directories and I thought I would try it out.

The route to the database is: [www.collectionscanada.ca](http://www.collectionscanada.ca) ; select 'Canadian Genealogical Centre', then 'Databases'. You can use multiple terms in your search and elect to search in one specific directory or all of them.

I searched for 'Sheldon and Davis' and 'Kingston' in all directories and got fourteen hits. The quick and dirty way of doing this is to find the earliest and latest dates of responding directories but I opted to check all the entries and I was glad I did. Some entries had bits of

information that was not in others and I was able to find the first names of the photographers, their address and the fact that they remained at the same address for the whole time they were listed (1871-1899).

The next step was to check the directory prior to the earliest hit to see if either or both photographers had been in Kingston prior to opening their joint studio—they were not. The latest hit in that first run had been 1895, so I checked a directory from 1899 (the latest that is available) and found them still listed. They had not showed up in the search because they had misspelled one of the photographer's names.

If you want to go further than the online database, return to the 'collectionscanada' site and select 'Amicus'. This is an online catalogue of published materials in many libraries across Canada. There is a place to register with password but I ignore that and select 'Search'.

One failed search taught me that I had to be pretty specific about what I was looking for. I did a 'Subject Keyword' search for "Kingston(Ont)—Directories" (without the quotation marks) and got 56 hits. At this stage you can select the Directory that you are interested in and select 'Location'. This option will identify the library code and the information you need to order it by interlibrary loan.

Isn't it amazing, how many resources are out there waiting for us?

### Never Give Up

Some years ago I sent a message to a cousin in Munich asking for some help with the history of his branch of the family. There was no response, but three years later, his daughter was visiting him from the United States and somehow saw the message. She was interested and brought it home with her.

One morning I received an e-mail from her introducing herself and opening contact with that branch of the family and we are off and running. You never know where or when the ripples will reach the source you need.

There are several curious questions about this. Why was a three-year old message just hanging around just when she was visiting? Did he feel unequal to the task of sharing the perhaps sometimes difficult story of the family? Or was it just the language barrier? I'll never know but I am very grateful that it turned out as it did.

### Lost Censuses

Researchers may sometimes wonder why certain censuses are rarely mentioned. This is sometimes because they no longer exist. The U.K. Census for 1831 was lost in a fire. Since it was just a glorified head count, genealogists haven't felt that loss too greatly.

The 1890 U.S. Census, however, is a much more serious loss. It was stored with some other government papers in the Smithsonian Institution and, when that building burned in 1921, everything in it was lost. There are surviving bits and pieces of it for different states and researchers are trying to put together as much of it as possible.