



Exploring “Death Register” in Norway

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This class is designed to teach family history researchers how to find ancestors in the Death Register for Norway.

Objectives:

Patrons will be able to find ancestors in the Death register online.

Dødsmeldinger (Death Register)

Death register are a source not often used in searching for ancestors in Norway, but they may list information about both families and properties not found anywhere else. Probate records (skifteprotokoller) are often used, but not everyone who died left a probate. However, there should be a death register listed for every person. This includes the very young to the very old, and it does not matter if a person was rich or poor. Often a whole family is listed in a death register.

The *Sorenskriver* or Judge was usually the authority over both probates and death register, but as he could not do everything himself, he relied heavily on the sheriff (Lensmann) and therefore gave him power to deal with such cases. As soon as a person died, the sheriff was to be notified and to keep a record in the Dødsmeldings protokoll (Death Register records). This dates back to a law of 1792 and is still the law today.

Accessing the Death Register

Death Register are available at the respective archives in Norway, many are online at the Digital Archives of Norway in a scanned format. These online scanned records are not complete for the whole country as of yet, but they are well worth searching if your area has been scanned. The plan is that every person who died in Norway- or was born in Norway and died elsewhere will be included. Therefore there will be many who came from Norway, but died in the USA.

You will find them by going to the Digital Archives main page:

<https://digitalarkivet.no/en/>

- click on “find source,” which brings you to a page with several options.
- click on the word "Probate records" and under this tab click on “Death register” and then click on “Search.”
- you should now see “Death register” for all of Norway starting with “Oslo.”

If you want to narrow your search to a county/parish hit the back button or go back to “Find source” and choose an area under “Geography”. Norway has been divided into five parts: *Østlandet*, *Sørlandet*, *Vestlandet*, *Trøndelag*, and *Nord-Norge*. Each of these parts include several counties, and as you click on one of the counties a list of all the parishes belonging to that county will appear. If you choose “Østlandet” a list of the counties in (East Norway) will appear and you may choose a county from that list, and as you click on that county you may click on any one of the parishes under that county. If you click on “Sørlandet” the two counties in (South Norway) will appear and you may click on either Aust-Agder or Vest-Agder to find the parishes belonging to these counties and then click on the parish of your choice and choose “Probate records”, then “Death register,” and lastly click on “Search” and a list of all the “Death register” for that parish will appear.

Let us say you are looking for a death record in Krødsherad parish in Buskerud County for Guttorm Olsen of Hovden farm who died 28 September 1820.

- click on “Østlandet” and then click on the county “Buskerud.”
- click on the parish “Krødsherrad” and then click on “Search.”
- choose the entry for Krødsherad lensmann, death register no. 1, 1820-1916, and click on “Browse scans.”
- click on the word “upaginert” to the right for years 1820-1821.

Here you find farmer Guttorm Olsen [of] Hovden farm, who died 28 September 1820 and his death was reported to the sheriff 5 October 1820. The next column states that he has heirs and they are of age (age 25 and older) as well as heirs under age (under age 25).

You should now be able to search the “Death register”

Death register usually include the name of the deceased, occupation, residence, age, and date of death, but many include more detailed information about a family.

Make sure you check the “Death registers” often as this is a work in progress and more information is added continually.

See: https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Norway_Death_Notices

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