

DISCOVER SOCIAL HISTORY IN NEWSPAPERS

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Newspapers offer a rare glimpse into the past unlike any other. They recorded the events that shaped out ancestor's lives, their successes and failures, both happy times and sad. Within newspaper pages we can learn what it was like to live in a community whether it was 50 or 200 years ago. We can gain insight into why and how families migrated, their occupations and who their employers were, who came to visit, and countless other day-to-day events that shaped their lives. Look for clues in your family files, and begin the journey of a lifetime chasing down all those little tidbits that bring your ancestors back to life again!

SEARCH TECHNIQUES

It is best to begin your search using only a surname unless it is a very common one such as Jones or Smith. If a surname search returns too many results, try adding additional search terms such as a location. Some websites offer search boxes such as "Exact Words" or "With the Phrase" where you can enter both a first and last name. Initials sometimes skew the results. If exact search capabilities aren't available, place quotation marks around your search term such as "John Guice" or a place such as "Amelia County." Misspell the surname, or search for variants. Use abbreviations such as "Thos" instead of Thomas, or Abe or Abram for Abraham. Next look for counties or towns where families lived; military events in which they took part or were witnesses to; epidemics; local advertisements, and illustrations and photos.

LISTS OF HISTORICAL NEWSPAPERS AND COLLECTIONS

- U. S. Newspaper Directory 1690 to present: <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/search/titles>
Arranged by state, county, city
- This may be the most up-to-date worldwide list available.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:List_of_online_newspaper_archives
- For U.S. collections see: <http://viewshare.org/views/refhelp/historical-newspapers-online-usa-2>
- Stanford University's Data Visualization: Journalism's Voyage West maps the expansion of newspapers using a map of the U.S. and an interactive timeline:
http://www.stanford.edu/group/ruralwest/cgi-bin/drupal/visualizations/us_newspaper

FREE DIGITAL NEWSPAPER COLLECTIONS

- Chronicling of America sponsored by the Library of Congress: Now there are collections from 43 states, and the District of Columbia. Publication dates range from 1836 to 1922. Site continues to grow so check back often. <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>
- Google News Archive – Search engine not useful – search by title, date, and then browse page by page. Title List: <http://news.google.com/newspapers> (Some contemporary issues require a small payment for each article.) Use the newspaper directory at Chronicling of America to find local newspaper titles.

- Old Fulton Postcards: An enormous collection of almost 36 million New York newspapers, and now those of many other states. Check back often. It is absolutely necessary to read the Frequently Asked Questions section to learn how to properly formulate searches. <http://www.fultonhistory.com>
- Los Angeles Public Library – <http://www.lapl.org> Collections available to library card holders include *NewspaperArchive.com*; *ProQuest Newsstand* covers over 300 U. S. and foreign contemporary newspapers; *Historical Los Angeles Times* 1881-1990; *Historical Los Angeles Sentinel* 1934-2005; *Newsbank* 1992 and later, and *The San Francisco Chronicle* 1865-1922.
- The Stars and Stripes 1918-1919: Library of Congress
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/sgphtml/sashtml/sashome.html>
- Try a Google search for a newspaper title as small county libraries and historical societies may have digitized their local collection.

SUBSCRIPTION SITES

- GenealogyBank.com – More than 7,000 digitized newspapers. New content added often.
- Newspapers.com - Currently over 4,200 newspapers. New content added often.
- Ancestry.com – Only available with a paid subscription through “Stories & Publications” section.
- FindMyPast.com – British, Irish, and U. S. Newspapers. New content added frequently.