THE ANCESTOR HUNT

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Learning More About Your Ancestors Online

Genealogy Guides for Newbies, Hobbyists, and Old Pros

By Kenneth R. Marks
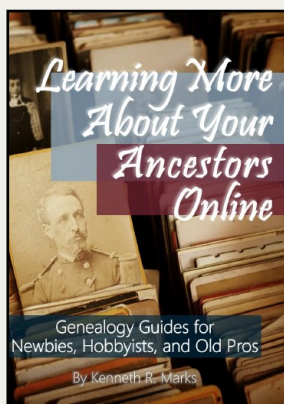
Check out my book!

https://amzn.to/3kUrebJ

Check out the New Pages on The Ancestor Hunt Website:

Discounts

Videos

Hit a Brick Wall? Need Help?

Sometimes, we need to call in an expert, and yes, we may have to pay a few bucks, but it's worth it.

Get some help from

Trace.com

trace

Risk-free genealogy research from the most talented professionals on Earth

Stop overpaying researchers you don't know or who don't have the specific skills you need. Our process and network give you the best price with high-quality results.

Please Note: Hot Links are in BLUE

Articles Published Since Last Issue

- *FamilySearch New and Updated Collections – January 1-31, 2022*
- *Ancestry New and Updated Collections – January 1-31, 2022*
- *Free United States Online Cemetery and Burial Records*
- *Free Iowa Online Cemetery and Burial Records*
- *Free Ohio Online Cemetery and Burial Records*
- *Using The Internet Archive for Genealogy Research*
- *15 Reasons to Research Funeral and Memorial Books*
- *13 Ways to Find Physical Characteristics Without Photos*
- *When Were State Birth Records Started and Required*
- *24 Ways to Find Ancestor Death Information*
- *Free Online California Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Alaska Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Hawaii Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Idaho Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Montana Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online New Mexico Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Utah Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Colorado Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Arizona Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Oregon Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Washington Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online New Hampshire Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Massachusetts Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Maine Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Rhode Island Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Vermont Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Connecticut Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Pennsylvania Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Maryland Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online New Jersey Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online New York Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*
- *Free Online Iowa Mortuary and Funeral Home Records*

New From The Newspaper Corner

- *GenealogyBank Adds/Updates 31 Titles – January 2022*
- *Veridian Adds/Updates 116 Titles – January, 2022*
- *Why You Should Be Using a Newspaper Research Log*
- *4 Big Challenges in Downloading Historical Newspaper Articles*
- *NewspaperARCHIVE Update – January 2022*
- *Chronicling America Updates – January 2022*
- *British Newspaper Archive Adds/Updates 132 Titles – January, 2022*
- *Find My Past Adds/Updates 108 Historical Newspaper Titles – January, 2022*
- *Historical Free Caribbean Newspapers Online*
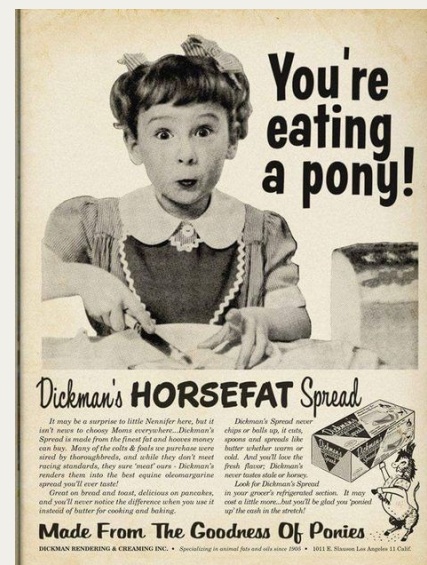
Useful Articles from Other Sources

Looking for a Genealogy Event?

- *Remember to Check Out Conference Keeper!*

Are You Using PERSI?

- *PERSI – Search Tips Part 1*

Do You Have a Criminal Ancestor?

- *Criminal Records Resources*

Is Your Ancestor In The Often Overlooked U. S. Federal Non-Population Schedules of 1850-1880?

- *Non-Population Schedules*

Interested in the 1950 U.S. Federal Census?

- *Ancestry® to Apply Handwriting Recognition Artificial Intelligence to Create a Searchable Index of the 1950 U.S. Census*

Are You a Newspaper Researcher?

- *5 Unexpected Genealogy Goldmines You Can Find in Newspapers*

Do You Have "Rural" Ancestors?

- *How to Find Old Rural Addresses on a Map*

WHAT I AM WORKING ON IN FEBRUARY

- *FINISH MILITARY RECORDS CATEGORY*

- *START TAX RECORDS CATEGORY RESEARCH*

- *CHECK FOR BROKEN LINKS AND FIX THEM*

- *PUBLISH MORE QUICKSHEETS*

Interview With Jeff Kiley, CEO of Advantage Archives

About 4 years ago, I interviewed Jeff Kiley, the CEO of Advantage Preservation (now named Advantage Archives). Since a lot has changed in that period of time, I thought it helpful to conduct a new interview.

Hello, Jeff. Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Could you tell us about Advantage Archives and its mission?

My business partner Chris and I started Advantage with a clear and straightforward mission: *Protect The Past, Make It Accessible In The Present, And Ensure Its Future*. To do so, we partner with communities across the United States to archive and provide free, practical digital access to local historical content.

Two words dictate every decision we make: Partnerships and Community. At the end of the day, it all boils down to "How does what we are doing (or plan to do) contribute to the partnership? How will that, in turn, benefit our partner's community?"

We know partnerships only work if all parties are pulling their weight, which is why we enter into them with the intent of shouldering our fair share. We take the burden off of the community for the ongoing costs associated with storage, hosting, development, and maintenance of their Community's History Archive. There is no license, subscription, or annual contract. We do this for free for our partners, so in turn, they can make it free to their communities.

I know that preserving and providing online newspaper collections record "the first rough draft of history." This, of course, is very important for community libraries and historical societies. You seem to be adding online collections at quite a rapid rate. To what do you attribute this increase in activity?

First and foremost, is the strong and meaningful relationships we have formed with those institutions in each community, because only through those partnerships is any of this possible. There are several hundred individual communities that we have partnered with to provide free online access to their community's newspapers, yearbooks, journals, and historical documents. They take their local history out of a drawer or off a dusty shelf and put it at the fingertips of anyone interested. Most of these institutions add to their collections each year, and each year several new partnerships are formed.

While a majority of our partnerships provide access to their collection from anywhere, we also work with a number of institutions that have chosen to restrict some or all of their digital archive to within the library's walls. While that content may not be available from home or on the go, it is still free to access and equally valuable. That being said, the number of communities that choose to use their archive as an "in-house" resource has dropped off considerably the last 24 months.

Since March of 2020, COVID-19 has presented an enormous challenge to libraries. The vast majority of our partners found themselves faced with closures or operating with restrictions in place that limited access to the physical library space. I found it inspiring to see how they adapted and found new ways to serve and continue to support their communities. They developed new outreach strategies, enhanced virtual offerings, and expanded their online resources to weather the storm until they could again open their doors and welcome their patrons back. Now, libraries across the country are making it a priority to digitize resources previously only available in print and ensure that their archives are "open for business" even if the library is temporarily not.

In addition to library and cultural institutions, many local government agencies are taking full advantage of funding and grant opportunities unavailable to them in years past. The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), for instance, has allocations for local governments and municipalities to digitize and provide access to materials to aid in their ability to serve their community.

All of these factors have contributed to an increase in volume, and I only see signs that suggest the demand will continue to grow.

Check out the **Advantage Archives Website**

Check out the **Advantage Archives Directory**

Interview With Jeff Kiley, CEO of Advantage Archives

I am interested in the history and educational "bent" of these activities. It sounds to me that just like genealogists in the past were not making use of historic newspapers, that maybe historians, educators, and students should add historic newspaper research to their research repertoire. Do you agree?

Chris and I both feel that using local primary resources to teach national or world events in specific courses or lessons, especially history or social studies, presents a huge opportunity. I can't think of a better way to connect with those lessons than by viewing them through the lens of those in the community who were witnesses to history. How did the student's community react to different historical events? Were there any local connections? How was the community impacted or changed by those people, places, and events? How has the perception of those subjects changed over time? Are there local historical landmarks, street names, buildings, or festivals honoring community members, and how did their actions or contributions tie to the bigger picture?

This is "history as it happened," and by reading people's accounts using their own words, terminology, phrasing, and verbiage of the time, we can better understand our past and how it informs our present. It provides context, adds perspective, and I feel it just makes the history a little more "tangible." I see more and more collaboration between the libraries and school systems to build and grow their Community History Archives, and I couldn't be more pleased.

In reviewing your collections online, it looks like you are changing the software's user interface. It was always easy to use and the changes seem to be maintaining that element. I know that you are in a competitive business environment and may not want the world to know just yet, but is there anything upcoming that you can tell us about?

We are very excited about the recent rollout of our updated Community History Archives platform. It had been in development for quite some time, and now that it is here, we are excited by the feedback we are getting from our partners. We designed the new platform to provide a better end-user experience with intuitive (and familiar) controls, better use of screen real estate, and improved performance by making it lightweight, fast, and responsive. We also wanted to provide our partners with more options to adjust the theme to match their identity and branding.

We also wanted the user experience to be seamless across any operating system, browser, or screen size, so the archives are available to be used by anyone, anywhere, on any device, at any time. In 2011 only 7% of all internet traffic was from mobile devices...in 2022, that number is now nearly 55%. Thanks to the new Progressive Web App (PWA) architecture, when you explore the archive on an iPad (my new favorite way to browse the content), you will find that it behaves more like an app downloaded from Apple's App Store or Google's Play Store.

Is there anything else that you would like to share with us?

In addition to the redesigned Community History Archive platform, we also introduced an all-new online user community. We know that a community is more than just a group of people that happen to live in the same place. It is a group of individuals that share a feeling of fellowship with others as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals. Therefore, we have created CommunityHistoryArchives.com as a "community of communities," connecting our institutional partners to ask questions, share ideas, seek or give advice, and tell stories about what they have discovered. It also opens a direct line of communication between our partners and the ownership, managers, and other members of the Advantage team.

The online user community will have a "members only" section reserved for our partners to interact with each other, as well as several spaces that are open to anyone that will feature resources, tips & tricks, news, and announcements. Since the content will be primarily user-generated, I am excited to see how this evolves, and I think it will be a valuable resource for those who use it. I hope you and your followers might join us and help us help others.

I also just want to add that I am a big fan of what you do Ken, and how informative I find your articles and newsletters. I am constantly referring our partners to your site so they can understand some of the challenges inherent to searching historical newspapers. I would like to thank you for your efforts to shine a light on all of the free historical newspaper and document resources online. It doesn't matter if Advantage is involved or not, I am a cheerleader for all of these projects. Each one of these communities needs to be recognized and applauded for providing free access to their local history, and you do a great job of giving their efforts some much-needed recognition and exposure.

Thanks to Jeff Kiley, for his time and for letting us know a bit more about the Advantage Archives Company. For readers who are interested in the free online collections that Advantage Archives provides, check out my recently updated list of links – *95 Million Historic U.S. Newspaper Pages Now Available from Advantage Archives*

Using The Internet Archive for Genealogy Research

The Internet Archive has been around since 1996, and has a magnificent assortment of genealogical materials in many different categories of interest to genealogy researchers. It is a major resource; not to be missed.

Per Wikipedia, "As of December 2021, the Internet Archive holds over 34 million books and texts, 7.4 million movies, videos and TV shows, 797,000 software programs, 13,991,923 audio files, 4.1 million images, and 640 billion web pages in the Wayback Machine." If you didn't know, the Wayback Machine is essentially a capture of webpages over time, thus a digital archive of the World Wide Web.

The Genealogy Project at the Archive includes items from the Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center in Fort Wayne, Indiana; Robarts Library at the University of Toronto; the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Library; Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah; the National Library of Scotland; the Indianapolis City Library's Indianapolis City Directory and Yearbooks Collection, The Leo Baeck Institute Archives of German-speaking Jewry; and the Boston Public Library, just to name a few.

So what types of information are available at **Archive.org** that is of interest to genealogists?

- **Yearbooks**—there are over 69,000 references to yearbooks in the collection. The states of Massachusetts, Virginia, and North Carolina use it as the online archive for high school and college yearbooks.

- **City Directories**—there are about 20,000 city and business directories, not to mention gazetteers and almanacs—another 10,000.

- **Books**—there are over 33,000 genealogy books of all kinds and subjects.

- **Local History**—there are 79,000 references to texts and audio regarding local history. Usually centering on a town, city, or county.

- **Reclaim the Records**—has about 2,000 collections of vital records in the Archive.

- **Town Records**— there are over 52,000 town records (primarily from the New England states). Includes vital record information.

- **Passenger and Crew Lists**—useful in immigration research, there are over 7,500 passenger and crew list documents.

- **Parish Registers**—over 1,500 parish registers are in the Archive; most from the U.K.

- **Church Records**—over 12,200 items in the Archive; including marriages, funerals, baptisms, membership and other church records.

- **Census Records**—not the most ideal way to find census records (we've been spoiled by the large collectors of census records providing us with indexes and search capability). But they are in the Archive.

- **Pension Files**—payment cards and pension applications are included in collections numbering over 2,700.

- **Passport Applications**—over 3,000 in this category.

- **Family Genealogies**—over 3,700 collections of written materials about specific surnames.

- **Probate**—there are over 2,000 references to probate records.

- **Newspapers**—Over 1.3 million references in the newspapers at the Archive. About 700,000 from the U.S., and over 300,000 from China. Many are local titles; also included is a large collection of high school, college and university student newspapers.

- **Audio and Video**—there are old radio shows; newsreels from the past; old music; military radio shows; oral history interviews. Most from the U.S. But there are many from other countries as well.

Is there more? Yes there is. The subjects are only limited by your imagination. FYI, many of the free online links in The Ancestor Hunt collections of links come from the Internet Archive!
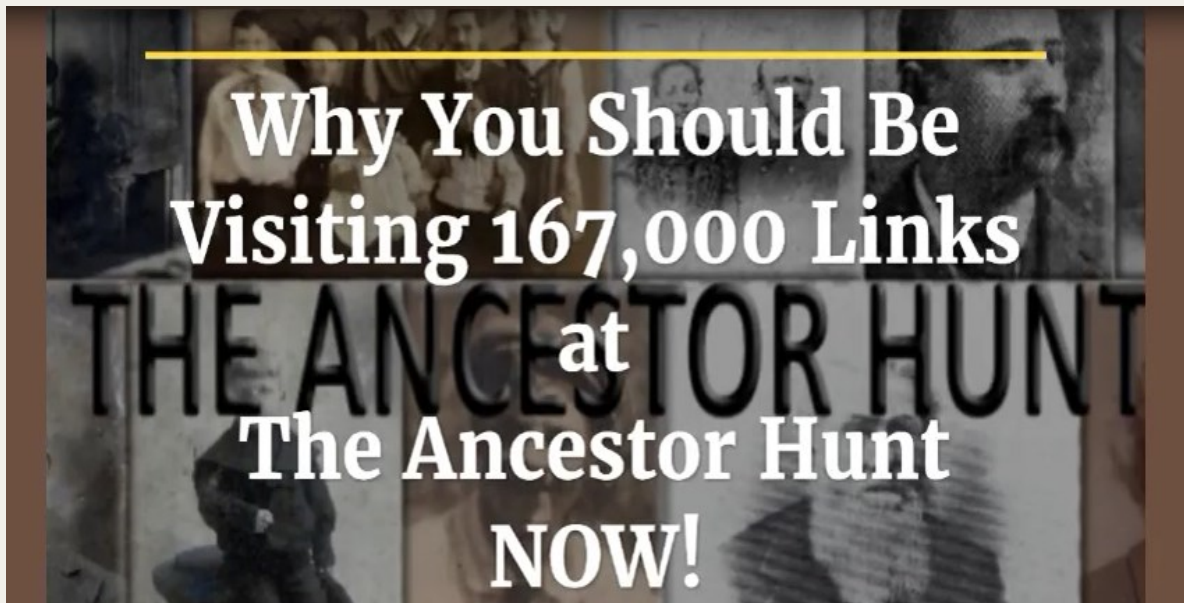
Check Out These New Videos

[View Here](#)

[View Here](#)

Nine Reasons to Love Genealogy

DISCOVER AWESOME FAMILY STORIES: THE HIGHS, THE LOWS AND THE HEARTBREAK

YOU'LL BE IN AWE OF YOUR PIONEERING ANCESTORS

FIND THE BAD BOYS & GIRLS IN YOUR FAMILY

YOU'LL FIND LONG LOST COUSINS ALL AROUND THE WORLD

FINDING OLD FAMILY PHOTOS IS SERIOUSLY COOL

THE THRILL OF THE HUNT AND OF COURSE, THE FIND

IT'S A JIGSAW WAITING TO BE SOLVED

RESEARCH 24/7 IN YOUR PYJAMAS

YOU'LL MAKE SO MANY NEW FRIENDS

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Chapter List for "Learning More About Your Ancestors Online"

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Birth and marriage
- Chapter 3: Death records and information
- Chapter 4: General advice about genealogy research
- Chapter 5: Immigration, naturalization, travel
- Chapter 6: Military
- Chapter 7: Miscellaneous records (societies, illnesses)
- Chapter 8: Newspaper research
- Chapter 9: Occupations
- Chapter 10: Photos and physical description
- Chapter 11: Residences and other locations
- Chapter 12: Schools and yearbooks
- Chapter 13: Resources

Help Your Ancestors Live Forever - Write Your Family History And Write Your Own History While You're At It

One of my goals in my personal genealogy is to make sure that my ancestors are remembered. Many had no descendants, so absolutely no one alive remembers them. That's sad to me, which is why I created a couple of family history websites. But recently I have been seeking even better ways to memorialize their lives. Their stories are important to be documented, which might explain why I am such a fan of newspaper research.

In any case, here are a few tools that I have discovered that provide a unique means to memorialize our ancestors.

And guess what? We need to produce our own autobiographies. We aren't getting any younger and memories do fade.

WhooWe
Produce an online history easily with text, video, and audio from online questions on your phone. You can contribute content in minute or several minute increments.

Whoowe is available from the AppStore and Google Play. Info at whoowe.com Try it out for free. Discount coupon for readers coming soon.

StorySpot
Produce an online memorial with text, video, timelines, photos, favorite songs, and audio, and produce an optional book. Great for family reunions also

Available at www.storyspot.com. Try it out for free. 25% discount available by using "ANCESTOR" as coupon code.
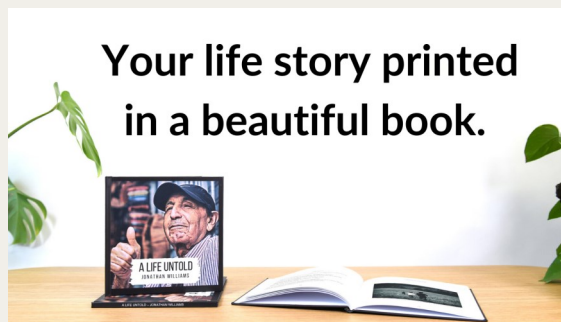
A Life Untold
Produce an online history easily with text, video, and audio from online questions. Proceed at your own pace, and add questions if you like. Very easy to use.

Available at A Life Untold. Try it out. 10% discount available by using "HUNT as coupon code.

Audiobiography
They say the closest you can feel to someone without touching them, is hearing their voice. Produce an online autobiography or memorial with audio; add photos and coordinate with a book.

Available at Audiobiography. Try it out. 10% discount available by using "HUNT as coupon code.

Last But Not Least

Newly Completed States with All Categories Created

- *1,951 Free Online South Carolina Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *5,407 Free Online Georgia Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *2,296 Free Online West Virginia Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *2,826 Free Online Tennessee Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *2.183 Free Online Nebraska Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *1,924 Free Online Arkansas Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *2,576 Free Online Florida Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *4,598 Free Online Indiana Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *1,879 Free Online Mississippi Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *1,066 Free Online New Mexico Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *1,179 Free Online South Dakota Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*

- *4,635 Free Online Kentucky Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *1,981 Free Online Louisiana Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *718 Free Online Delaware Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *4,804 Free Online Michigan Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *3,277 Free Online Minnesota Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *3.168 Free Online Oklahoma Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *7,814 Free Online North Carolina Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *2,344 Free Online Alabama Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *2,339 Free Online New Jersey Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *2,997 Free Online Maine Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*
- *2,499 Free Online Vermont Collections Available Now in 20 Genealogy Record Categories*

The Ancestor Hunt Research Link Categories:

- **Newspapers**
- **Obituaries**
- **Military Records**
- **Directories**
- **Photos**
- **Yearbooks**
- **Divorce Records**
- **Naturalizations**
- **Cemetery and Burial Records**
- **Marriage Records**

- **Mortuary Records**
- **Immigration**
- **Church Records**
- **School Records**
- **Voter Lists**
- **Coroner Records**
- **Probate and Wills**
- **Alumni Records**
- **Birth Records**
- **Death Records**

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