

24 Places Where You Can Find Your Ancestors Occupations

If you are like me, you want to know as much as possible about the lives of your ancestors. Determining their stories is a challenge, especially if there is no one alive who remembers the ancestor that you are researching.

But fortunately, there are a number of documents that record at least, the occupation of the target ancestor, and that can tell you a lot about the person.

Knowing how the ancestor worked tells you a lot about how they lived and possibly their standing in the community.

- Census Records
- City Directories
- Draft Cards
- Death Certificates
- Passenger Lists
- Birth Certificate/Record of child – the parents occupations are often provided
- Military Enlistment and Other Records
- Photographs – although not written – if in some kind of uniform, this can be a good hint as to occupation
- Marriage Certificates
- Voter Registrations
- Mortuary Records
- Naturalization Records
- Passport Applications
- Patent Applications
- Social Security Applications – Employer’s name is often included
- Obituaries
- Membership in Fraternal Societies
- Union Membership Documents
- Wills/Probate
- Newspaper Articles of all kinds – Legal notices, advertisements and classified ads are often useful
- Miscellaneous Court Documents
- Apprenticeship Records
- Recorded local and town histories
- Alumni Directories

Was one of your ancestor’s occupation a word that you don’t understand?

Make sure and check out the “280 Old Occupations Used in the Census and Newspapers in the U.S. and U.K.” Quicksheet. Click on the blue link to download the list of [Old Occupations](#) pdf

