

Monthly Newsletter March 15, 2025



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**Check out the New Silver Premium Program
And
The New eBook Bundle**



Please Note: Hot Links are in **BLUE**



Articles Published Since Last Issue

- [FamilySearch New and Updated Collections – March 1-15, 2025](#)
- [Ancestry New and Updated Collections – March 1-15, 2025](#)
- [Ancestry New and Updated Collections – February 1-28, 2025](#)
- [FamilySearch New and Updated Collections – February 1-28, 2025](#)
- [MyHeritage New and Updated Collections – February 2025](#)
- [Free Online Genealogy Website of the Day – Billion Graves](#)
- [Free Online Genealogy Website of the Day – Digital Library on American Slavery](#)
- [Free Online Genealogy Website of the Day – German War Graves Commission](#)
- [Free Online Genealogy Website of the Day – Historic Map Works](#)
- [Free Online Genealogy Website of the Day – JSTOR](#)
- [Free Online Genealogy Website of the Day – Nationwide Grave Locator](#)
- [Free Online Genealogy Website of the Day – Stephen P. Morse – One-Step Portal for On-Line Genealogy](#)
- [Free Canada High School and College Yearbooks Online](#)
- [4,160 Free Online United States Digital Archives](#)
- [10,350 Free Online United States Death Records and Indexes](#)
- [13,970 Free Online Marriage Collection and Index Links for the United States](#)
- [8,805 Free Online United States Birth Records and Indexes](#)
- [18,000 United States High Schools and Colleges with Free Online Yearbooks](#)
- [10,725 Free Mid West States Online Cemetery and Burial Records](#)
- [14,065 Free Southern States Online Cemetery and Burial Records](#)
- [4,385 Free Mid Atlantic States Online Cemetery and Burial Records](#)
- [1,050 Free Online Mid Atlantic States Birth Record and Index Collections](#)
- [1,055 Free Online Mid Atlantic States Death Record and Index Collections](#)
- [1,285 Free New England States Online Cemetery and Burial Records](#)
- [1,465 Free Online Marriage Collection and Index Links for the Western States](#)
- [1,590 Free Online Marriage Collection and Index Links for the Mid Atlantic States](#)
- [2,035 Free Online Mid West States Birth Record and Index Collections](#)
- [2,280 Free Online Southern States Birth Record and Index Collections](#)
- [2,475 Free Online Mid West States Death Record and Index Collections](#)
- [2,880 Free Online New England States Birth Record and Index Collections](#)
- [2,965 Free Online New England States Death Record and Index Collections](#)
- [3,110 Free Online Marriage Collection and Index Links for the New England States](#)

New From The Newspaper Corner

- [Advantage Archives Adds 1.4 Million Historical Newspaper Pages – February 2025](#)
- [Find My Past Adds/Updates 170 Historical Newspaper Titles – February 2025](#)
- [British Newspaper Archive Adds/Updates 104 Titles – February 2025](#)
- [NewspaperARCHIVE Update – February 2025](#)
- [Chronicling America Updates – February 2025](#)
- [Newspapers dot Com Update – February 2025](#)
- [Delaware Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [South Carolina Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [Minnesota Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [Veridian Adds/Updates 311 Titles – March 2025](#)
- [Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection Adds/Updates 33 Titles – March 2025](#)
- [NY State Historical Newspapers Adds/Updates 25 Titles – March, 2025](#)
- [Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections Adds/Updates 19 Titles – March 2025](#)
- [Indiana Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [100 Commonly Used Abbreviations in Old Newspapers](#)

Strange Newspaper Ads

Sa-a-y this is terrific!

Nothing keeps an eye shut like Johnson's Winking Glue.

Have you ever been trying to give a shy wink, only to find that both of your eyes are embarrassingly wide open? The glue will be hopping mad if you leer at them with both eyes across the bar. And if you're long about something and need a friend to play along, they'll never get the message if you can't wink properly.

That's why your friend Johnson's Winking Glue. Just a dab on your fingertip is enough to keep your eye shut all day long, and it safely washes off with acetone or rubbing alcohol. Try it today, and you'll wish like never before.

Always get your glue from your Johnson's dealer. If you know one that doesn't, please write us.

Johnson's Winking Glue has been awarded the Grand International "Glueing King" award.

Johnson's Winking Glue is a trademark of Johnson's Winking Glue Co., Inc.

Johnson's Winking Glue is a powerful adhesive in a variety of applications.

JOHNSON PRODUCTS CO., INC., 6033 South Green Street, Chicago 21, Illinois

FALSE TEETH BOUGHT ANY CONDITION.

6d. per tooth pinned on vulcanite; 2/- each on silver; 3/- each on gold; 8/- each on platinum. Cash immediately. Satisfaction guaranteed or teeth returned promptly. Or write for FREE BOOKLET, which fully explains the value of any false teeth. Bankers: London and Midland Bank.

E. LEWIS & CO., Dental Mechanics,
29, London Street, Southport, Lancs. Est. 1873.



Useful Articles from Other Sources

- [10 Clever Ways to Sneak Family History into Everyday Conversations](#)
- [Voting Created Some Fascinating Genealogy Records! Here's Where to Find Them](#)
- [Documenting the Dead: How Death Records Can Bring Your Family History to Life](#)
- [Interment.net's Grave Listings: A Quick Guide](#)
- [How To Use Clues from Family Stories in Genealogy Research](#)
- [Valentine's Day: A Love Letter to Small Town Love's Greatest Witness](#)
- [How to Decipher Your Ancestors' Letters and Diaries](#)
- [13 Genealogy Myths and Misconceptions](#)
- [The Silent Crisis in Family History: Why We Must Act Now to Preserve Our Stories](#)
- [What Is Acadian Genealogy, and How Can I Find My Acadian Ancestors?](#)
- [Genealogy Tips: Find Obituaries for Your Ancestor's Siblings](#)
- [How To Preserve Family Heirlooms In a Digital Era: An Interview with Artifacts](#)
- [Dear Grandma, I Love You But Your Dates Are Wrong: When Family Stories Conflict with Records](#)
- [The Case of the Missing Ancestors: 8 Genealogy Tips from Nancy Drew](#)
- [10 Proven Techniques to Validate Your Sources](#)
- [4 Ways US Census Records Can Fool You](#)
- [How to Find Naturalization Records](#)
- [Genealogy Sleuthing Part II: Using Women's Fashion to Date Old Photos](#)
- [Land Patents: Your Step-by-Step Guide](#)
- [How to Search Military Records for Family History](#)
- [German Naming Traditions Genealogists Should Know](#)
- [New U.S. Civil War Collections](#)
- [Hidden Clues in Death Records That Most Genealogists Miss](#)
- [6 Tips for Organizing Your Digital Genealogy Files](#)
- [10 Signs You're Officially a Genealogy Addict](#)
- [Inside the 1790 U.S. Census](#)
- [Fire, Conspiracy, and the Lost 1890 Census: What Went Wrong?](#)
- [Online Tools for Finding Your Ancestors' Germanic Villages](#)
- [5 Ideas to Get to Know the Females in Your Family Tree](#)
- [Celebrate the Women in Your History](#)
- [Browser Tabs Every Genealogist Has Open Right Now \(And Why We Need Them All\)](#)
- [Genealogy Websites Comparison: Ancestry.com, FamilySearch, Findmypast and MyHeritage](#)
- [Facebook for the Deceased: Tips for Memorializing Relatives on Facebook](#)
- [How to Use Search Engines for Genealogy Research](#)
- [9 Ways to Find Female Ancestors in Newspapers](#)
- [8 Reasons Why Genealogists Make the Best Detectives](#)
- [Genealogy Writing](#)
- [How to Create an Outline for Writing an Interesting Family History](#)
- [How to Learn What Your Ancestor's Life Was Really Like](#)
- [6 Historical Irish Jurisdictions Genealogists Should Know About](#)
- [The Genealogist's Bucket List: Bold Research Goals Worth Chasing](#)
- [7 Steps for Fact-Checking Online Family Trees](#)
- [Family History Writing Prompts \(Over 40!\)](#)
- [It Takes a Village: How to Do Cluster and Collateral Research](#)

Are You a frequent visitor to The Ancestor Hunt website?

Make sure that you check out the Ancestor Hunt Gold Premium Program

All Gold Subscribers receive a DISCOUNT

Check out the Brand new EBook Bundle!

Check out The Ancestor Hunt on Social Media



Thank You for being a loyal reader and visiting The Ancestor Hunt. To Subscribe, Click [HERE](#)

This newsletter contains affiliate links. The Ancestor Hunt will be compensated if you purchase after clicking on these links. There is no additional cost to you. Thank you for supporting The Ancestor Hunt.

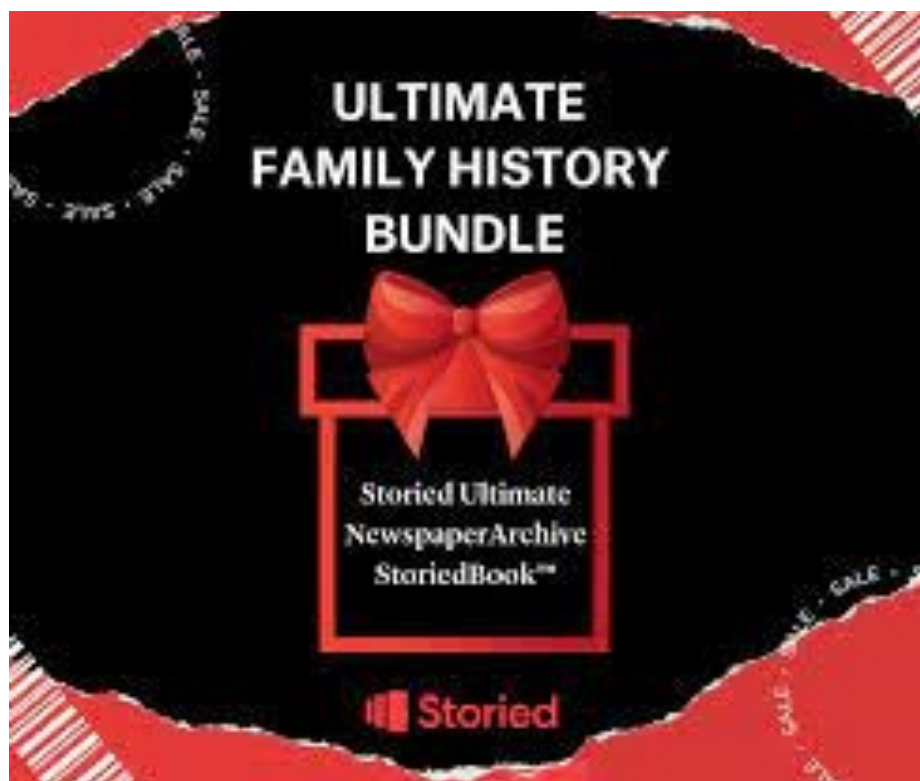


Monthly Raffle

This past month (February 15th through March 14th), I offered a raffle for all subscribers.

Congratulations to the Raffle Winner!

And what did they win?



Yes. A full year of Storied Ultimate—for free. Includes a full year of Storied, a full year of NewspaperArchive, and also the publication of your very own StoriedBook!

I have been a user of NewspaperArchive for over a decade, and have found hundreds of articles about my ancestors and relatives. I started using Storied over the last year to capture written stories, clippings, and photos of my ancestors (and myself). And I really like it. It is so easy.

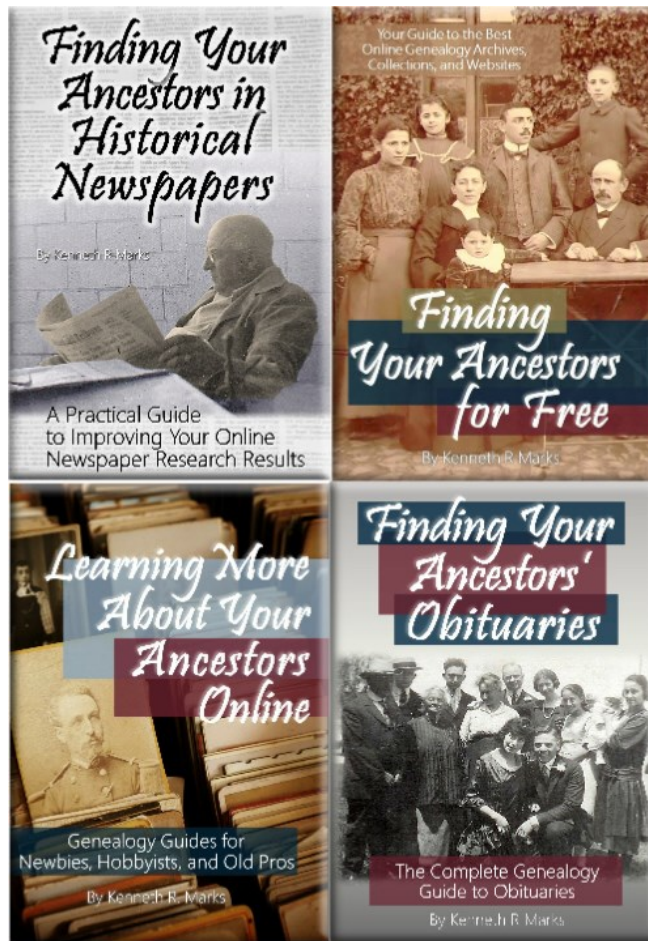
So I wanted to share these tools, and with the cooperation of the folks at Storied we are doing this.

To get an idea of what the winner is receiving and the details of all the options, please go to [STORIED](#)

BUT—There is more!

Next month's raffle will be for the same Storied Prize and will include Existing Subscribers as well as new subscribers

Just Announced - The eBook Bundle



If you were to purchase all 4 from Amazon as paperbacks, you would pay \$75.00 plus sales tax and shipping. If you were to purchase these as eBooks through Amazon, you would pay \$36.00 plus sales tax.

By purchasing all 4 eBooks here, you will receive a 25% discount (and tax is included). The price is \$27.00. All you need to do is purchase below. After doing so, I will email you links to all 4 books that you can download as a PDF (for each one).

Just go to [eBook Bundle](#) to see more details and to purchase.

All 4 books are still available in paperback at Amazon:

- Finding Your Ancestors for Free: Your Guide to the Best Online Genealogy Archives, Collections, & Websites <https://amzn.to/3GPcbf1>
- Improving Your Online Newspaper Research Results <https://amzn.to/4fMRZZI>
- Finding Your Ancestors Obituaries: The Complete Genealogy Guide <https://amzn.to/3JxiiWB>
- Learning More About Your Ancestors Online: Genealogy Guides for Newbies, Hobbyists, and Old Pros <https://amzn.to/3kUrebJ>

2 Million Occupational Records and Postcards

Historical Record Lists

A while ago, I stumbled upon a very interesting genealogy database that I want to share with you. The author of the site, Ray Gurganus, has created several databases, with an Occupational Records database being the most interesting to me. There are almost 2 million records in this database, and it is searchable. It is free.

Check it out at <https://www.ourfamtree.org/records/>

I recently interviewed Ray, and he shared with me the history of this database, plus several other databases that he has created.

1. What prompted you to create an Occupational Records database?

This started when I found a list of ministers in my home Methodist church in North Carolina, and when researching their lives, I wanted to know what other towns and churches they had served, so that their locations could be documented in each person's individual history. As I began collecting these lists of ministers and their churches, I put them together in a searchable list for others to use as well.

2. When did you start creating this database, and how has it changed over the years?

When searching around online to find ministers and where they served, this expanded to other church denominations, and then to other occupations wherever I have found documented information that could be added. Some church ministers also served as teachers, professors, and other occupations. It is currently up to over 1.84 million records altogether, but still growing regularly. All are searchable by name, by location, by occupation, and where applicable by church denomination or subject taught in schools.

3. What sources do you use to collect these important records?

Many come from online college, university, and seminary alumni directories, listing alumni and chronologies of the places they have worked. Also, many directories of professional occupations, listing doctors, teachers, professors, librarians, railroad officials, etc.; state, county, and town histories, listing people in their offices or institutions; city directories; school yearbooks; US government publications listing army and navy deployments; individual church websites, and many more. The sources are summarized on a "sources" page, listed on the menu at the top of the page.

4. On your site I noticed you have other databases, such as Postcards. Please tell me about these other databases.

In the same spirit of documenting history and trying to help it be more easily searchable, I have compiled a collection of digitized postcards, searchable by locations pictured on the front and names and locations written on the back. This started with a collection of about 1,000 postcards my family had collected, and rather than letting them just sit in the closet, I photographed and indexed them online. Adding to these are thousands more postcards from stores and online, now over 29,000 and growing.

5. Any changes for the future?

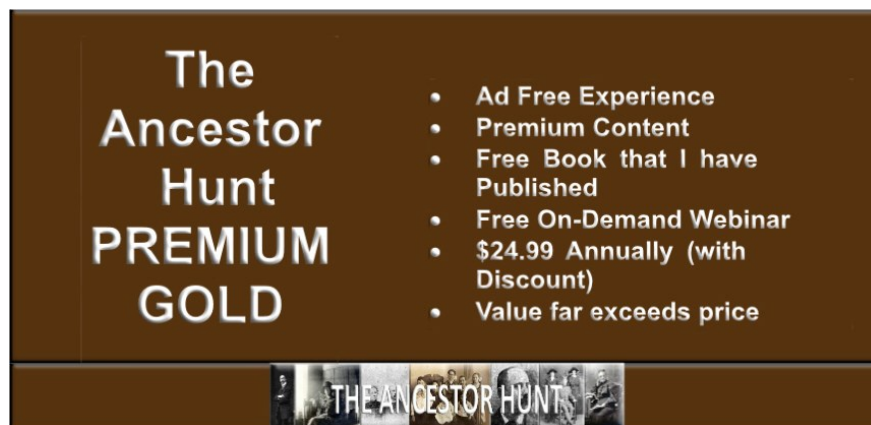
Current plans are just to keep adding more to both.

Thank you Ray for providing all of this information, and especially the painstaking work you have put in to create these free databases for genealogists to access.

Access the databases at <https://www.ourfamtree.org/records/>



The Gold Premium Program from The Ancestor Hunt



The Ancestor Hunt PREMIUM GOLD

- Ad Free Experience
- Premium Content
- Free Book that I have Published
- Free On-Demand Webinar
- \$24.99 Annually (with Discount)
- Value far exceeds price

THE ANCESTOR HUNT

Take advantage of the discount! Details at the bottom of the page.

The Ancestor Hunt Gold Premium level service is intended to provide members with an added level of service. Subscribers to the Premium service will receive:

- An ad-free experience while using The Ancestor Hunt website each year that you are a member
- A Book of your choosing that I have published will be delivered each year that you are a member
- An On-Demand Webinar of your choosing that I have created will be provided each year that you are a member
- Premium Content will be provided as it is published

Here are the details of how it will work:

Ad-Free Experience

Upon successful registration, you will need to log in to The Ancestor Hunt website with your email address as your Userid and a Password of your choosing. The Login link will be on the upper right side of each page on the site. You will need to log in so ads will not be served while you are on the site and to receive Premium Content.

Free Published Book and On-Demand Webinar

After you register, I will send you an email requesting which book you wish to be mailed to you and your mailing address. Only U.S. residents will be mailed the paperback version. If you choose an eBook or are an international member, you will be provided a link where you can download the PDF version of the book. You also will choose the On-Demand Webinar. A link to the chosen On-Demand Webinar will be emailed to you.

Premium Content

As I create premium content, members only will be able to access that content.

Cost

The annual cost is \$29.99. There are no refunds if you cancel during any year you are a member.

Value

The normal price of a paperback is \$19.99 plus tax and shipping. The normal price of an hour-long On-Demand Webinar is \$15.00. You also receive an ad-free experience and premium content. Thus you are receiving \$34.99 of value plus the value of an ad-free experience and Premium Content.

Registration

To register, please go to the Premium Page at <https://theancestorhunt.com/premium.html>

Discount for Monthly Newsletter Subscribers

Enter the Discount Code TAHSUBS to receive a 20% discount. Only for Newsletter Subscribers



The New Silver Premium Program from The Ancestor Hunt



If you don't want a free book or webinar and want to save some money, you can choose the Silver Level.

Subscribers to the Silver Level Premium service will receive:

- An ad-free experience while using The Ancestor Hunt website each year that you are a member
- Premium Content will be provided as it is published

Here are the details of how it will work:

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Premium Content

As I create premium content, members only will be able to access that content.

Cost

The annual cost is \$11.99. There are no refunds if you cancel during any year you are a member.

Value

You are receiving an ad-free experience and Premium Content for less than \$1 a month.

Registration

To register, please go to the Premium Page at <https://theancestorhunt.com/premium.html>



The Pull of Place: Answering Your Ancestral Call

This article is shared with permission from Marc McDermott's [Genealogy Explained](https://www.genealogyexplained.com) website. I strongly urge you to subscribe to his website at <https://www.genealogyexplained.com/subscribe/> IMO his blog is one of the very best to follow daily.



You're staring at that village name on your computer screen. Again.

Five generations of your family lived there. Worked there. Built lives there. And now here you are, a century and an ocean away, trying to piece together their world through pixels and papers.

But deep down, you know: Documents can only take you so far.

Every serious genealogist reaches this moment. When records aren't enough anymore.

When you need to see it for yourself. Touch it. Feel it. Breathe it.

Let's talk about taking that next step. About transforming your research from pixels to place. From documents to discovery. From records to reality.

The Power of Place: When Research Comes Alive

Something shifts when you walk the streets your ancestors walked. The names in parish records become real people. The places in ship manifests become living, breathing communities.

That village church isn't just an address anymore. It's where generations of your family marked their most important moments.

Where they gathered. Where they mourned. Where they celebrated.

The market square isn't just a spot on a map. It's where your great-grandmother might have bought her bread.

Where your great-grandfather might have sold his crops.

These places hold stories that no document can tell. Stories written in stone and soil. In architecture and landscape. In the rhythms of daily life that haven't changed for centuries.

The cemetery holds more than graves. It holds context. Family groupings. Naming patterns.

Social connections hidden in plain sight.

When you see familiar surnames carved in stone, generations of research suddenly take on new meaning. These aren't just data points anymore. They're your people.

And the land itself speaks volumes. The steep hillsides that forced terraced farming. The distant church spire that served as a landmark for generations. The ancient trade routes that shaped migration patterns.

The Pull of Place: Answering Your Ancestral Call

From Paper Trail to Sacred Ground: Building Your Path Home

Every family researcher knows the thrill of discovery. Finding that crucial record. Breaking through that brick wall. Connecting another generation.

But here's the game-changer: Taking that research into the real world.

Each document you uncover is more than just evidence. It's a piece of your map home.

Marriage records show you where families joined. Land deeds reveal where they built their lives. Ship manifests trace their journeys.

When you piece these together, something magical happens. Your ancestors' world takes shape. Their choices make sense. Their lives gain context.

Military records show more than service dates. They reveal the political boundaries your ancestors navigated. The conflicts that shaped their decisions. The alliances that influenced their movements.

Tax records tell stories of prosperity and hardship. Of drought years and bumper crops. Of industrial changes that rippled through communities.

Church records speak of more than births and deaths. They reveal religious shifts that split families. Community tensions that drove migrations. Social networks that supported generations.

This isn't just about proving relationships. It's about understanding lives. Communities. Choices that shaped generations.

The Detective Work: Building Your Case for Place

Finding your ancestral homeland takes more than just family stories. It requires methodical research. Cross-referencing. Verification.

Start with what you know. Family stories hold clues. Old letters mention landmarks. Photos show architectural styles. Even recipes can point to specific regions.

Layer in the official records. Census data pins down locations at specific times. City directories map out neighborhoods. Church records anchor families to parishes.

Immigration records often hold the key. Passenger lists name specific villages. Naturalization papers can list precise birthplaces.

But don't stop there. Local histories provide context. Maps show changing boundaries. Newspaper archives reveal community connections.

The goal isn't just finding a place name. It's understanding your family's place within it.

DNA: The Modern Thread in an Ancient Tapestry

DNA testing adds another dimension to your search. Not through ethnicity estimates, but through connections.

Each DNA match represents a branch of your family tree. A potential clue to ancestral origins. A piece of your geographic puzzle.

The power lies in patterns. Multiple matches from the same region. Shared ancestors in specific communities. Genetic threads that lead back to place.

Building trees for your matches isn't just busy work. It's mapping your genetic geography. Finding the intersections where family lines converge.

When DNA and documents align, magic happens. Paper trails gain confirmation. Family stories find validation. Places of origin come into focus.



The Pull of Place: Answering Your Ancestral Call

Local Knowledge: The Key to Deeper Understanding

Local historical societies guard the heart of community memory. They know the stories that never made it into official records.

They understand how communities evolved. Which families traditionally intermarried. How natural disasters or economic changes drove migration patterns.

These local experts can translate more than just documents. They can read the landscape. Interpret architectural clues. Recognize patterns in settlement and movement.

They know which church records survived the fire of 1875. Which land records were lost in the courthouse flood. Which oral histories fill the gaps in written documents.

But their greatest value lies in context. They can tell you why your ancestors lived where they did. Worked where they did. Moved when they did.

Planning Your Journey: More Than Just Travel

Most people travel to see new places. You're traveling to understand your past.

Think about that for a moment. Every year, millions of tourists rush through European capitals. They snap photos of cathedrals. Check boxes on must-see lists. Move on to the next destination.

But you're different. You're going to walk into a tiny village that most tourists will never see. A place that might look ordinary to others. But to you? It's the center of a story generations in the making.

You're not going to stand in line for tourist attractions. You're going to stand in the exact spot where your great-grandparents were married. Huge difference.

This isn't tourism. This is pilgrimage.

The planning needs to match the mission. This journey deserves more than just booking flights and hotels.

Start with deep research. Know every available record. Understand the historical context. Map out family connections.

Contact local resources early. Archives require appointments. Churches need advance notice. Historical societies appreciate preparation.

Learn about the culture. Not just the history, but the present. These communities aren't museums. They're living places with their own rhythms and rules.

Master a few key phrases in the local language. "Thank you" opens doors. "Please" smooths paths. "I'm researching my family" can work miracles.

Plan thoroughly, but stay flexible. Sometimes the best discoveries come from unexpected detours.

The Tools of Modern Discovery

Technology has transformed ancestral research. Mobile apps translate on the fly. GPS leads to remote cemeteries. Databases put records at your fingertips.

But technology should enhance, not replace, the human connection.

Use digital tools to prepare. To navigate. To document. But don't let screens become barriers between you and experience.

Take photos, but also take time to simply observe. Record video, but also record memories. Scan documents, but also touch the paper.

Modern tools serve the journey. They don't define it.



The Pull of Place: Answering Your Ancestral Call

Making the Connection: When Past Meets Present

The moment will come. You'll stand where they stood. Breathe the air they breathed. See the views they saw.

You'll understand why they settled here. Why they left. Why they remembered.

Their stories will become real. Their struggles will make sense. Their triumphs will feel personal.

This is when genealogy transcends hobby. When family history becomes your history. When inherited memory becomes lived experience.

The Journey Begins Now

Your ancestral homeland is waiting. The streets your grandparents walked still wind through towns. The churches still stand. The communities still remember.

You've done the research. Built the trees. Gathered the documents.

Now it's time to bring it all to life.

The path from records to roots lies open before you. The tools are in your hands. The knowledge is in your grasp.

Your ancestors' world is waiting to become real.

Take that first step. Start that deeper research. Plan that journey.

Their story is your story.

Time to bring it home.

Irish Genealogy

5 Free Online Resources

#1

The National Library of Ireland
<http://www.nli.ie>

#2

The National Archives of Ireland
<http://nationalarchives.ie>

#3

GENUKI
<http://genuki.org.uk>

#4

IreAtlas Townland Database
<http://thecore.com/seanruad>

#5

Irish Ancestors (some fee-based areas)
<http://johngrenham.com>

Genealogy In Action with Julie Cahill Tarr
GenealogyInAction.com



Women's History

5 Free Online Resources



#1

Discovering American Women's History Online
<http://digital.mtsu.edu/digital/collection/women>

#2

National Women's History Museum
<http://womenshistory.org>

#3

Women Working, 1800-1930 (Harvard)
<http://tinyurl.com/974hv52y>

#4

American Women: Guide to Resources
<http://guides.loc.gov/american-women>

#5

Women's History Month
<https://womenshistorymonth.gov/ExhibitsandCollections.html>

Genealogy In Action with Julie Cahill Tarr
GenealogyInAction.com



Free Online Genealogy Website of the Month – Stephen P. Morse – One-Step Portal for On-Line Genealogy



One-Step Webpages by [Stephen P. Morse](#)

Stephen Morse is pretty much a legend in the genealogy industry with his One Step Online Search website.

From the site:

In the “old days” genealogical research was done by traveling great distances and then going through dusty archives or using microfilm readers. But the advent of the World Wide Web has changed that. Today much of the data useful to genealogists has been put on websites and can be accessed from the comfort of home.

Unfortunately, many of these websites are not easy to use. And those that are don't always offer all the versatility that is possible. For that reason I have created alternate ways of accessing some of these websites. In addition I have developed some of my own databases and programs to facilitate doing genealogical research. These are all collected together under what I call the One-Step website.

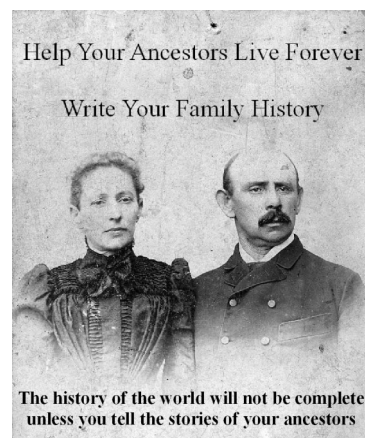
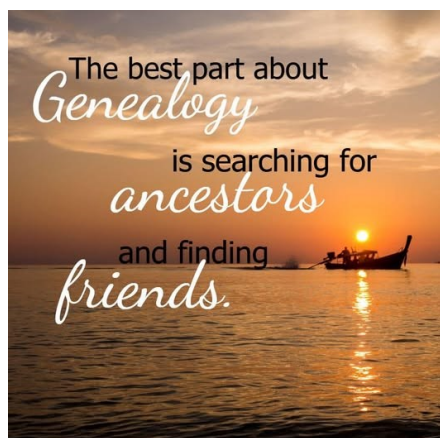
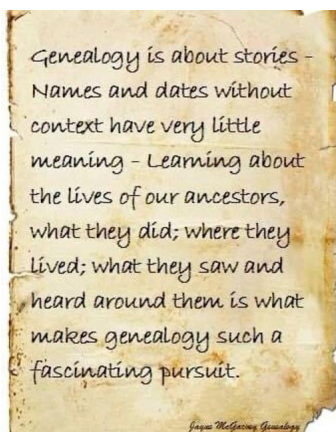
The name “One Step” was chosen when I developed my first search tool, which allowed for searches through the Ellis Island records. A search done from the ellisland.org website involved many steps, whereas my search tool was able to do it all in one step. Hence I called that tool “Searching the Ellis Island Database in One Step.”

The site has many features beyond the Ellis Island search capability. They include:

- **Ellis Island & Castle Garden**
- **Other Ports**
- **US Census**
- **Phonetic Matching**
- **Canada/UK Census**
- **New York Census**
- **Vital Records**
- **Calendar, Maps, etc**
- **Foreign Alphabets**
- **Holoc & East. Europe**
- **Genetics (DNA)**

It is a fantastic site, not to be missed. To access the main site, go to [One Step Webpages](#)

Memes to Live by



Different Routes To The Same Discovery – Two Common Newspaper Search Approaches

This article is reprinted with permission from Jeff Kiley, The CEO of [Advantage Archives](#).

When adopting a search strategy, remember: *There are many roads that lead to the same destination!*

Digging into the archives can feel overwhelming at first. How do you even begin to sift through the millions and millions of pages of newspapers and documents to find the stories that matter to you? The good news is that with the right strategies, searching those pages can be simpler and more efficient than you may think. Whether you're looking for a family member's wedding announcement, a local event, or clues about a historical figure, the right approach can help you uncover the information you need.

The way you search for historical newspapers and similar records significantly impacts the results you uncover. While there are many methods and approaches, two common strategies stand out: starting broad and narrowing your results or beginning with a precise query and expanding outward. Each approach has unique benefits, and both can be powerful tools when used effectively.

Let's explore these methods using the example of researching an ancestor, Stephen Smith, who was married to Sarah in Belleville, New York, sometime in the early 1920s. Each approach can lead to the same result—a wedding announcement or related articles—but each journey offers unique benefits and discoveries along the way.

Casting a Wide Net

When you have limited details, starting with a broad search is a great choice...sometimes your only choice. Perhaps all you know is that Stephen Smith was married to Sarah in Belleville in the early 1920s. With this approach, you begin with minimal information and refine your search as you gather more context.

Begin by entering just the basics into the search: the name "*Stephen Smith*" and the keyword "*wedding*." This casts a wide net, pulling up a diverse array of results. At first, your search may feel overwhelming—hundreds of mentions of "*Smith*" (a very common surname) could appear in everything from advertisements to court records completely unrelated to your ancestor. But don't be discouraged; the goal here is to uncover breadcrumbs to guide your next steps.

As you sift through the results, you may stumble upon a reference to Stephen in a social column discussing a luncheon to celebrate his engagement, hosted at the home of the bride-to-be's parents, the residence of "*Mr. & Mrs. Frank McCall*." This clue gives us Sarah's maiden name—and allows you to add "*McCall*" to your query, narrowing the results. Now, you're looking for "*Stephen Smith*" **AND** "*Sarah McCall*" in Belleville, which might reveal an announcement about their upcoming wedding.

But this is just one stop on the journey. As you analyze these articles, you notice another interesting detail, once again in the town's social columns, noting that Jim McCall would be in town the week of June to attend his sister's wedding. Now we know the wedding took place the week of March 9th, 1922. Armed with this new information, you can refine your query only to return results for that week or possibly include the week prior and the week after to ensure any other event mentions are found. Suddenly, you are finding exactly what you were looking for despite starting out with very little information.

Along the way, you find more than just the wedding announcement. A newspaper article might mention Sarah McCall's parents hosting the ceremony at their home, offering you a glimpse into her family's history. You might also discover Sarah's involvement in a local charity, or references to Stephen's career or community engagement in Belleville. These side discoveries enrich your understanding of their lives and place in history.

By starting broad and narrowing your focus, you not only uncover the wedding details but also build a more comprehensive picture of Stephen and Sarah's world—details you might never have thought to look for by using context clues that only a very broad search would have led you to.



Different Routes To The Same Discovery – Two Common Newspaper Search Approaches

Starting With A Narrow Focus

The opposite approach is effective if and when you have more specific details about your ancestors. If you begin your search knowing Sarah's maiden name and the exact year of the wedding, you can become hyper-focused on crafting a query that will only return the results related to your quest.

Knowing that Stephen Smith and Sarah McCall were married in Belleville in the spring of 1922, you can create a query tailored to capture different ways the wedding announcement might have been phrased. For instance:

- Use the exact phrases: “*Stephen Smith*” **OR** “*Steve Smith*” **AND** “*Sarah McCall*” **OR** “*Sarah Smith*” **OR** “*Mrs. Stephen Smith.*”
- Include keywords like “*married*” **OR** “*wedding*” **OR** “*wed*” to capture various terminologies used for weddings.
- Add associated terms such as “*bride*” **OR** “*groom*” **OR** “*matrimony.*”
- Exclude irrelevant results by adding **NONE** of “*Stephen McCall.*”
- Limit the search to **BETWEEN** March 1st and June 30th, 1922, to focus on the likely date range.

Running this query may yield an immediate hit: a wedding announcement in the Belleville Times, complete with details about the ceremony, the officiant, and even the couple's honeymoon plans. While a precise query might lead you directly to the announcement, the journey doesn't end there. You have confirmed the details you already suspected but don't know much more than when you started. Adjusting your search query a little at a time can start to uncover additional context and connections.

For instance, you could adjust the date filter to **BEFORE** March 9th, 1922, and remove any mention of Stephen or Weddings to explore Sarah's life before her marriage. This might reveal articles about her schooling, social activities, or mentions of her family on Belleville society pages.

Alternatively, you might remove Sarah's name and the surname “*McCall*” from your query during the same time frame, uncovering mentions of Stephen in business directories, civic events, or other news items.

Another adjustment to the query could involve reintroducing the names “*Stephen Smith*”, “*Steve Smith*”, and “*Sarah McCall*” while maintaining the date selection of **BEFORE** March 9th, 1922, and you might begin to learn about Stephen and Sarah's lives before they married. It is possible you might find overlaps that could point to how and when they met.

Each step provides an opportunity to uncover more than just the wedding announcement, offering insights into the lives of those connected to your ancestors.

Comparing the Two Journeys

Both approaches can lead to the same result—the discovery of Stephen and Sarah's wedding announcement—but they offer different advantages:

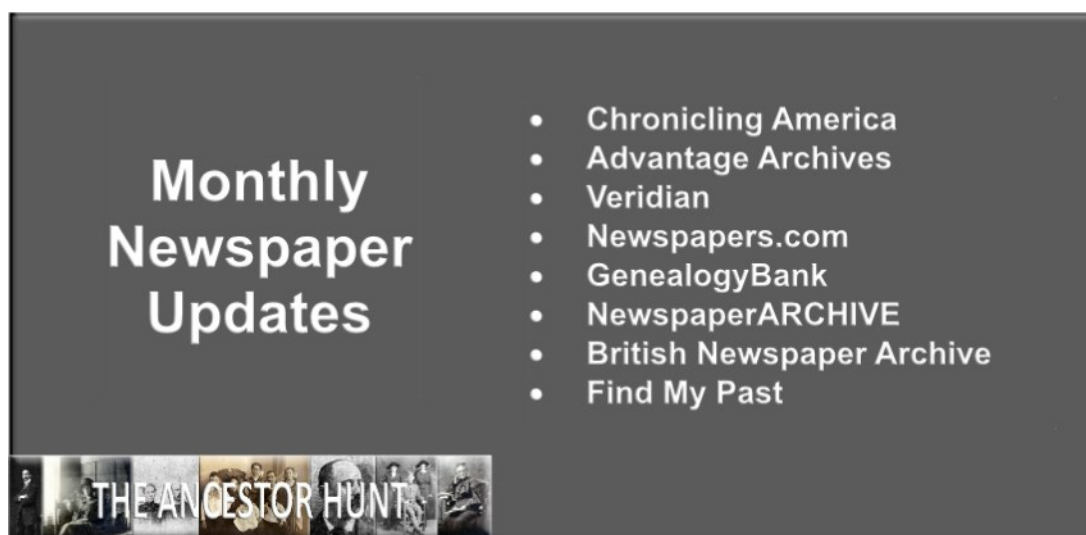
- **Casting a Wide Net:** This method is ideal when you're starting with limited details. It allows you to piece together information as you go, uncovering unexpected connections and enriching your research with every clue.
- **Starting With A Narrow Focus:** With the power of the Query Builder, this approach is highly efficient when you have specific details. It quickly delivers precise results while leaving room to expand and explore additional context.

Keep in mind that these two approaches are not mutually exclusive. By combining these strategies, you can tailor your search to your needs, ensuring that you not only find what you're looking for but also uncover valuable context and connections along the way.

Whether you cast a wide net or start with a precise query, both methods are valuable tools in historical newspaper research. Each offers a unique perspective on the past, allowing you to discover not just the answers you seek but also the stories, connections, and details that bring history to life. As you explore the archives, remember: it's not just about the destination—it's about the journey.



Online Newspaper Database Updates for January/February



Over 1,500 New titles were added by various Free and Subscription databases in the last month. Here are links to all the updates:

Chronicling America - <https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/chronicling-america-updates-february-2025/>

Advantage Archives - <https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/advantage-archives-adds-1-4-million-historical-newspaper-pages-february-2025/>

Veridian - <https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/veridian-adds-updates-311-titles-march-2025/>

Newspapers dot com - <https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/newspapers-dot-com-update-february-2025/>

GenealogyBank - No update this month

NewspaperARCHIVE - <https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/newspaperarchive-update-february-2025/>

British Newspaper Archive - <https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/british-newspaper-archive-adds-updates-104-titles-february-2025/>

Find My Past - <https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/find-my-past-adds-updates-170-historical-newspaper-titles-february-2025/>

Webinars

ON DEMAND WEBINARS

Can't make the scheduled Live Webinars? No problem. You can access the exact same content in an On-Demand Webinar, which means a recorded webinar that you can watch whenever you want. You can pause, rewind, or watch it as many times as you like. And you can ask questions during the recorded webinar by leaving Messages, which I will read and answer back to you via email. P.S. They are less expensive.

These are available On Demand:

- How to Develop Critical Online Newspaper Research Skills
- Using the New Chronicling America Version 2.0 – It is Different and It Is Better
- Exploring 95 Tips for Researching Online Historical Newspapers
- Mastering Finding, and Analyzing Newspaper Obituaries

All Details and Registration can be found at [Webinars](#)

LIVE WEBINAR SCHEDULE

March/April 2025 - To Be Announced

All Details and Registration can be found at [Webinars](#)

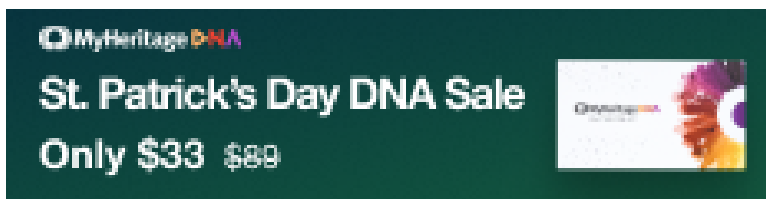
As always we are open for group sessions with genealogical societies and other institutions. Just email me at kenmarksology@gmail.com

Make Sure you check out our New Guided Courses

- Born in Print: Hunting Down Birth Notices in Newspapers
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MyHeritage DNA
St. Patrick's Day DNA Sale
Only \$33 ~~\$89~~

The banner features the MyHeritage DNA logo at the top left. The main text is in white on a dark green background. On the right side, there is a small image of a woman's face, likely related to the DNA service.



The By Location Page

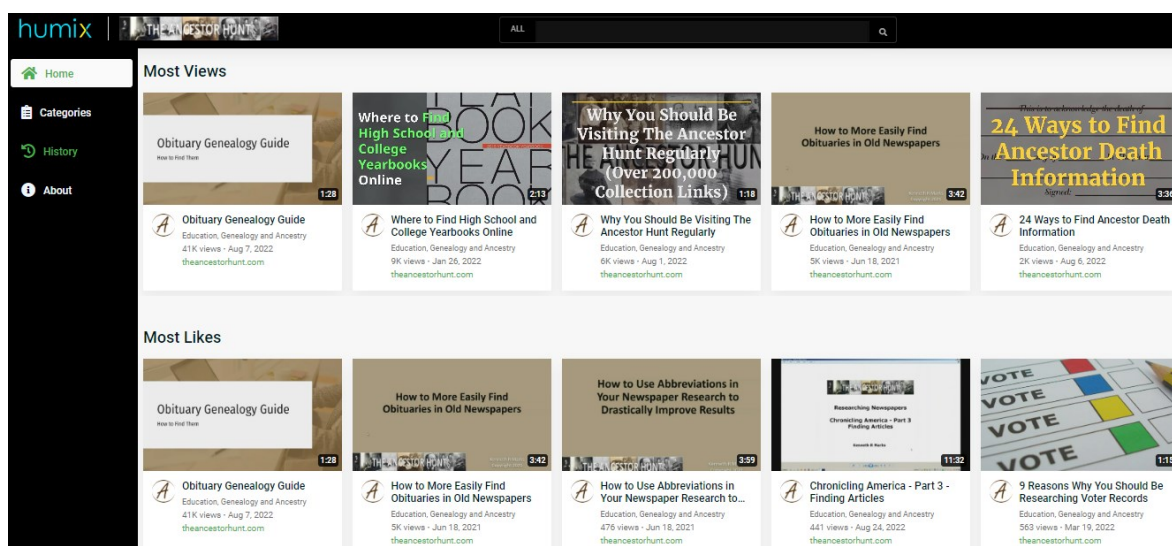
The easiest way to access a particular state's or province's list of collections and categories is via the [BY LOCATION](#) page.

This page has a dropdown for each state or province, with a link to the online collections links for every category available.

Video Channel

There are now over 60 videos. Check them all out at

[The Ancestor Hunt Video Channel](#)



Place Finders

Do you often find yourself wanting or needing to know what county a city is located in or what places might be found in a specific county?

You could do a Google search but what if you had a handy list that included a list of all the cities, other places, and ghost towns that identified their corresponding county along with a list of the counties in a state that listed all of the places in that county?

What is a place? Besides cities and towns, you will find that the names of other places may vary from state to state. Most states have Census Designated Places, Unincorporated communities, Indian Reservations, and ghost towns. Other places may be known as villages, hamlets, historic districts, townships, boroughs, municipalities, and more.

Each state has a list of all the places in the state and their corresponding county. Each place has a link to a page that includes information about that place. The page may include geographical information, historical information, current information about the place and its surroundings, and much more.

Included also for each state, is a Downloadable PDF with two lists: A list of places and their corresponding county, and; A list of counties with the places that are in that county.

Check out [Place Finders](#)

FIND *your* ANCESTORS
Newspapers and more
(1690 to today)

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GENEALOGYBANK

Was Your Ancestor a Member of a Lodge, Club, or Secret Society?

Why is this important? - 20% of men in 1900 belonged to a lodge or club; their membership was often cited in Obituaries. Knowing of their membership in a society helps complete their family "story" and possibly understand them better. Here are some examples of the more well known, with links to more information about them.

- **B'nai B'rith**: a Jewish service organization.
- **Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks**: A fraternal order focused on charity, justice, brotherly love and fidelity with an emphasis on patriotism and belief in God.
- **Colonial Dames of America**: an American organization composed of women who are descended from an ancestor who lived in British America from 1607–1775.
- **Daughters of Norway**: A sisterhood aimed at preserving Nordic heritage.
- **Daughters of the American Revolution** (DAR): a lineage-based membership service organization for women who are directly descended from a person involved in the United States' efforts towards independence.
- **Fraternal Order of Eagles**: "People Helping People" in the spirit of liberty, truth, justice, and equality. Local units are called "Aeries."
- **Freemasons**: The Masonic Fraternity claims to be the oldest Fraternity in the world and seeks men (Masons) wishing to become better men through service and self-improvement.
- **Grange**: A community-based, fraternal organization with an interest in representing rural residents and the agriculture community.
- **Independent Order of Odd Fellows**: To improve and elevate the character of mankind by promoting the principles of friendship, love, truth, faith, hope, charity, and universal justice.
- **International Concatenated Order of Hoo-Hoo, Incorporated** is a fraternal and service organization whose members are involved in the forests products industry. (My personal favorite name!)
- **Job's Daughters International**: a Masonic affiliated youth organization for girls and young women aged 10 to 20.
- **Kiwanis**: an international service club founded in 1915 in Detroit, Michigan.
- **Knight of Pythias**: a fraternal organization and secret society founded in Washington, D.C., on 19 February 1864
- **Knights of Columbus**: A Catholic fraternal benefit society.
- **Lions Club**: an international non-political service organization established originally in 1917 in Chicago, Illinois.
- **Loyal Order of Moose**: a fraternal and service organization founded in 1888 and headquartered in Mooseheart, Illinois.
- **Optimist International**: an international service club organization with almost 3,000 clubs and over 80,000 members in more than 20 countries. The international headquarters is located in St. Louis, Missouri
- **Order of the Eastern Star**: The members of the Order of the Eastern Star are dedicated women and men who sincerely reflect the spirit of fraternal love and the desire to work together for good.
- **Rebekahs**: This is the female organization of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows
- **Rotary International**: an international service organization whose stated purpose is to bring together business and professional leaders to provide humanitarian service and to advance goodwill and peace around the world.
- **Shriners**: Fraternity based on fun, fellowship and the Masonic principles of brotherly love, relief, and truth.
- **Sons of Italy**: A fraternal group focused on preserving Italian heritage.
- **Sons of Norway**: A fraternal group focused on preserving Norwegian heritage. Founded in 1895.
- **Soroptimist International** (SI): a worldwide volunteer service organization for women who work for peace, and in particular to improve the lives of women and girls, in local communities and throughout the world.
- **The American Legion**: commonly known as the Legion, is a nonprofit organization of U.S. war veterans.



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Get the Quicksheet PDF (with clickable links) by Downloading [HERE](#)



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 is my favorite tool 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.



Build your family tree with historical records and bring it to life with vibrant, collaborative stories

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