

# Monthly Newsletter July 15, 2025



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Please Note: Hot Links are in [BLUE](#)



## Articles Published Since Last Issue

- [Ancestry New and Updated Collections – June 1-15, 2025](#)
- [10 Bits of Advice for New Genealogy Researchers](#)
- [10 Clever Ways to Find More Ancestor Newspaper Articles](#)
- [10,330 Free Online United States Death Records and Indexes](#)
- [100 Best Free Online Genealogy Websites](#)
- [11 Ways That Historical Photos Provide Clues About Our Ancestors Lives](#)
- [13 Reasons to Include Tax Records in Your Genealogy Research](#)
- [13 Types of Genealogical Information You Can Find in Old Yearbooks](#)
- [13 Ways to Find Physical Characteristics Without Photos](#)
- [13,950 Free Online Marriage Collection and Index Links for the United States](#)
- [15 Reasons to Research Funeral and Memorial Books](#)
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- [25 Reasons to Research Probate Records and Wills](#)
- [27 Ways to Find Ancestor Marriage Information](#)
- [32 Ways to Find Ancestor Birth Information](#)
- [32 Ways to Find Ancestor Locations and Addresses](#)
- [33 Things You Can Find in City Directories](#)
- [4 Big Challenges in Downloading Historical Newspaper Articles](#)
- [45 Reasons to Research Immigration Records](#)
- [5 Things to Consider When Selecting an Online Newspaper Subscription Site](#)
- [5,880 Free Online Marriage Collection and Index Links for the Southern States](#)
- [500 Free Library of Congress Digital Collections](#)
- [64 Genealogy Items to Collect from Your Home](#)
- [75 Best State Genealogy Websites of 2025](#)
- [8 Ways to Mess Up Your Newspaper Research](#)
- [8,795 Free Online United States Birth Records and Indexes](#)
- [80 Old Time Illnesses and Their Current Names](#)
- [9 Ways to Effectively Find Obituaries in Online Newspapers](#)

## New From The Newspaper Corner


- [7,620 Free Western States Online Historical Newspaper Titles Now Available](#)
- [British Newspaper Archive Adds/Updates 96 Titles – June 2025](#)
- [California Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [Chronicling America Updates – June 2025](#)
- [Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection Adds/Updates 11 Titles – July 2025](#)
- [Find My Past Adds/Updates 81 Historical Newspaper Titles – June 2025](#)
- [Florida Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [GenealogyBank Adds/Updates 57 Titles – July 2025](#)
- [Hawaii Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [Kentucky Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [Louisiana Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [Maine Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [Montana Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [New Hampshire Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [New Jersey Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [NewspaperARCHIVE Update – June 2025](#)
- [Newspapers dot Com Update – June 2025](#)
- [North Carolina Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [Pennsylvania Online Historical Newspapers Summary](#)
- [Using the Newspapers.com Map Feature](#)
- [Veridian Adds/Updates 265 Titles – July 2025](#)
- [Washington Digital Newspapers Adds/Updates 5 Titles – July 2025](#)
- [21 Online Newspaper Research Do's and Don'ts](#)

### Strange Newspaper Ads

## A Home Remedy!

### THE ELECTROPOISE.

Rheumatism. Indigestion. Nervous Troubles. General Weakness.	Liver and Kidneys. Inflammations. Indigestion. Dyspepsia.	Sleeplessness. Coughs and Colds. Paralysis. Spinal Troubles.
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ORDINARY METHOD OF USE.

**SIMPLE!—SAFE!—NOT A BATTERY!—NO SHOCK!**

Any Intelligent Person can apply it.

**I**N CURING or greatly alleviating the above Diseases, the ELECTROPOISE has been especially successful, as shown by results in more than 200,000 cases in this country and in America; but any trouble that can be overcome by purer blood, and a better circulation throughout the System, will yield to this treatment. It causes the System to absorb an extra amount of Nature's own great vitaliser—

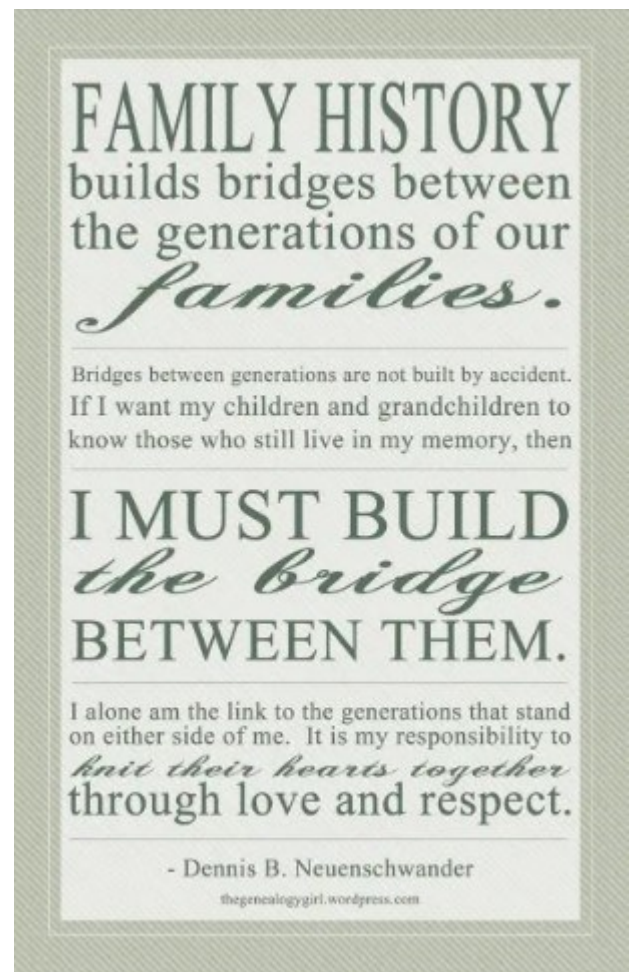
**PURE ATMOSPHERIC OXYGEN.**



## Useful Articles from Other Sources

- [10 Ethical Dilemmas in Genealogy: Navigating the Minefield of Family History](#)
- [100 Questions Every Family Historian Should Ask Their Relatives](#)
- [4 Tips to Trace Your Roots Through American Independence](#)
- [6 Ways to Preserve Your Experiences for the Next Generation](#)
- [87 Genealogists Reveal What They Wish They Knew Before Starting](#)
- [A Genealogist's Research Guide to the Caribbean](#)
- [Beware of These "Red Flags" in Online Family Trees](#)
- [Caught In Between: Tips for Researching Ancestors' Middle Names](#)
- [DNA Q&A: What is Endogamy? \(Plus How to Overcome Common Problems\)](#)
- [Expert Q&A: Tracing Your Colonial and Early American Ancestors](#)
- [Freedmen's Bureau Records: A Genealogist's Guide](#)
- [Irish Genealogy Research: The Collections You Need to Know](#)
- [It Takes a Village: How to Do Cluster and Collateral Research](#)
- [Norwegian Immigration: Discover Norwegian American History](#)
- [Our Ancestors Had Social Lives!](#)
- [Revolutionary War Genealogy and History Websites](#)
- [Scandinavian DNA? 6 Tips for Discovering Your Roots](#)
- [The Underground Railroad in Canada Helped Thousands Find Freedom](#)
- [This Clever Google Search Tactic Will Help You Find Your Ancestors on Any Genealogy Website](#)
- [What Is Pedigree Collapse?](#)
- [What is Prussia? Understanding Prussian History](#)

## Genealogy Memes to Live By



## 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.

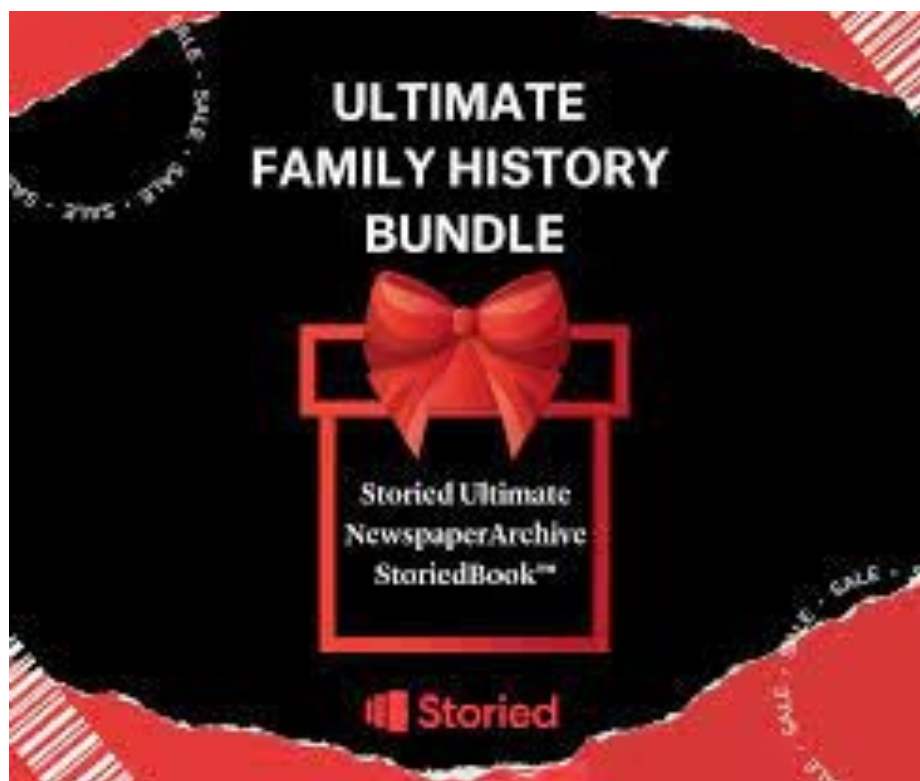


## Monthly Raffle

This past month (June 15th through July 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!

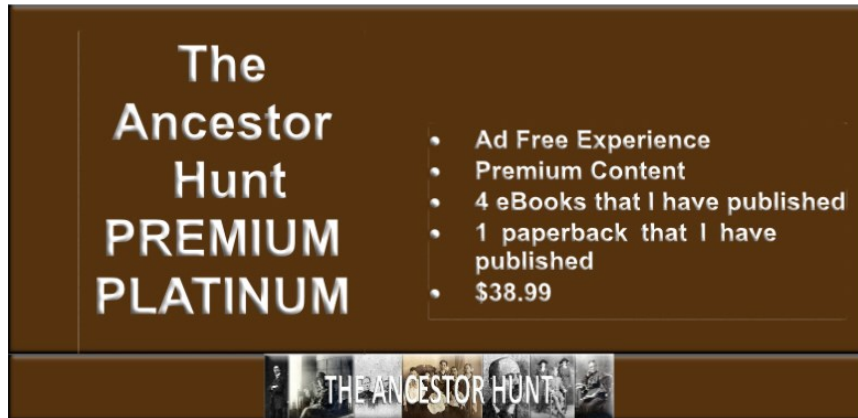
I have been a user of NewspaperArchive for over a decade, and have found hundreds of articles about my ancestors and relatives. I started using Storied over the last year to capture written stories, clippings, and photos of my ancestors (and myself). And I really like it. It is so easy.

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](#)

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

## The New Platinum Premium Program from The Ancestor Hunt



Subscribers to the Platinum Level Premium service will receive:

- An ad-free experience while using The Ancestor Hunt website each year that you are a member
- A Paperback Book of your choice that I have published will be delivered to you.
- All 4 eBooks that I have published will be delivered to you in PDF format.
- 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 must log in 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 Paperback**

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.

### **4 Published eBooks**

Get all 4 of my published books in PDF format without going through Amazon and get a significant discount.

### **Premium Content**

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

### **Cost**

The first year cost is \$38.99. Subsequent years will be \$11.99. 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 sales tax and shipping. The normal price of the 4 eBooks through Amazon is \$36.00 plus sales tax.

### **Registration**

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



# 87 Genealogists Reveal What They Wish They Knew Before Starting

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.



Look, I get it.

You just discovered your great-great-grandmother's maiden name and you're ready to trace your lineage back to medieval royalty.

Maybe you've been at this for years. Maybe you're just starting.

Doesn't matter.

What matters is this: you're about to save thousands of hours by learning from other people's mistakes.

I crowdsourced wisdom from seasoned genealogists. The kind who've been doing this since before the internet existed. The kind who learned every lesson the hard way.

Here's what they wish they knew.

## 1. Don't Trust Everything You See Online

This is the number one mistake. Bar none.

Every experienced genealogist has deleted massive chunks of their tree because they trusted someone else's research.

Think about it.

Some random person creates a family tree on Ancestry. They guess at a few connections. Maybe they mix up two people with similar names. Now their tree shows up in search results.

Another person copies it. Then another. And another.

Suddenly, this completely fabricated connection appears in 50 different trees.

Must be true, right?

Wrong.

The same goes for any other site. Take FindAGrave. Photos get mislabeled. Dates get transcribed incorrectly. Information gets added by people who never knew the deceased.

One genealogist found a photo labeled as their ancestor who supposedly died in 1791. Problem? The camera wasn't invented in 1791.

Here's what you do instead:

Treat every piece of information as a lead. Not a fact. Verify everything with actual documents. Birth certificates. Marriage records. Census data. Court documents.

No source? It's not real.

## 2. Your Living Relatives Are Your Most Valuable Resource

This one hurts.

Because by the time most people realize it, it's too late.

Your 85-year-old great-aunt knows stories that aren't written anywhere. She remembers names, places, and connections that no document will ever tell you.

But here's the thing: she won't be here forever.

Neither will her DNA.

Every genealogist has that one relative they wish they'd interviewed. That one person whose DNA could have solved a decades-old mystery.

Don't be that person with regrets.

Interview your oldest relatives now. Today. This weekend. Not "when you have more time."

Ask open-ended questions. Don't lead them. Let them ramble about the old days. Record everything.

## 87 Genealogists Reveal What They Wish They Knew Before Starting

Here's a [list of 170 questions to ask](#).

And get their DNA tested. Store it with FamilyDNA if you have to. That biological information dies with them.

Time is not on your side here.

### 3. Documentation Is Everything (And Nothing Is 100% Reliable)

Paradox time.

You need to document every single source. Every website. Every page number. Every URL.

Every scribble in the margins, every ink spill on the page.

Why?

Because you will forget. I promise you will forget where you found that one crucial record from three years ago.

But here's the kicker: even official documents lie.

Census records? The neighbor might have given the information. "Oh, the Smiths? Yeah, Jim's about 45, I think. From Iowa? Maybe?"

Death certificates? The grieving spouse might not remember their mother-in-law's maiden name.

Or care.

Marriage records? People lied about their age all the time. Previous marriages? What previous marriages?

One genealogist discovered their ancestor's death certificate had the wrong birth date. Off by four months. The church records proved it.

Another found that their great-grandmother's "parents" on her marriage certificate were actually her aunt and uncle who raised her.

Document everything. Trust nothing completely. Verify from multiple sources.

### 4. Names Are Not What They Seem

This will mess with your head.

John Smith in the 1850 census might be Johann Schmidt in the 1840 census.

Mary O'Brien might be Maria Bryne. Or Marie Bryan. Or Molly O'Bryan.

Immigration did weird things to names. So did census takers who couldn't spell. So did transcriptionists 150 years later.

But it gets worse.

That Thomas Jefferson Smith you found? Might be the same person as T.J. Smith. And Tom Smith. And Thos. Smith.

People used nicknames. Middle names. Completely different names.

One researcher found their great-uncle listed as Ray in all family documents. His legal name? Elmer. His birth name? Alek.

And here's the real mind-bender: two people with identical names in the same town might not be the same person. Three John Smiths could live on the same street.

Always check multiple identifiers. Birth dates. Spouse names. Children's names. Occupations. Addresses. Research family networks, not just individuals.

Never assume.

### 5. Slow Down and Go Deep

Everyone wants to build their tree back to Adam and Eve.

Slow down.

Here's what happens when you rush: you miss connections. You miss clues. You miss entire branches of your family.

Good genealogists don't just collect names. They understand families.

They research siblings. Why? Because your ancestor's brother might have left better records. His marriage certificate might list the parents' names that your ancestor's doesn't.

They learn local history. That tornado in 1883? That's why your family suddenly moved three counties over.





## 87 Genealogists Reveal What They Wish They Knew Before Starting

They understand occupations. Your ancestor was a cordwainer? That's a shoemaker. Changes how you search for records.

One family per day is better than ten families per hour.

Build research journals. Create spreadsheets. Track which censuses you've checked for which people.

Depth beats speed every time.

### 6. Beyond the Big Three Websites

Ancestry is not the only game in town.

Neither is FamilySearch. Or MyHeritage.

Most beginners never venture beyond these sites. They're missing 90% of available records.

The FamilySearch Catalog (not the search function – the actual catalog) contains millions of unindexed records. You have to browse them manually. Page by page. For now...

Local historical societies have records that will never be digitized. County courthouses hold land deeds that reveal family relationships.

Newspapers contain obituaries, but also marriage announcements. Birth announcements. Social columns mentioning your ancestor's visit from out-of-town relatives.

Property records show more than ownership. They show witnesses (often relatives). They show previous owners (often parents). They show neighbors (often siblings).

Church records. Specialized ethnic databases. University archives. Military records beyond what's on Fold3.

If you're only using the big three, you're boxing with one hand tied behind your back.

### 7. Manage Your Expectations

Reality check incoming.

You will never finish your family tree. Ever.

Accept it now.

Every answer creates two new questions. Every generation doubles your ancestors. Every record leads to three more you need to find.

You will hit brick walls. Some will last decades.

Not all records exist. Courthouse fires. Wars. Time. Many records are simply gone forever.

Your family might not care about your 400-hour research project. At all.

That connection to George Washington? It's probably fake. Sorry. Gateway ancestors are usually mythology.

One researcher spent 20 years tracing their line back to nobility. Turned out the crucial connection was fabricated in the 1800s by someone trying to claim an inheritance.

Set realistic goals. Celebrate small victories. Enjoy the process.

### 8. Protect Your Work

This one's painful.

Thousands of hours of research. Gone. No backup.

It happens more than you think.

Cloud storage fails. Hard drives crash. Websites disappear.

One genealogist lost 15 years of work because they only stored it locally. No backup. Computer died.

Another had their public Ancestry tree "corrected" by other users. Photos attached to wrong people. Connections changed. Work undone.



## 87 Genealogists Reveal What They Wish They Knew Before Starting

Here's what you do:

Back up everything. Cloud AND local storage. Export GEDCOM files regularly.

Screenshot important records. Websites go down. Databases get paywalled. Images disappear.

Keep your working tree private until you're certain of connections.

Paranoid? Maybe. But paranoid genealogists still have their research.

### 9. Think Like a Detective

Genealogy is detective work.

Period.

You're solving cold cases that are 200 years old with incomplete evidence.

Think beyond direct searches. Can't find your ancestor's parents? Check their siblings' records. Check who witnessed their marriage. Check their children's middle names.

DNA matches are clues, not answers. Build one master tree. Include all matches. The connections will emerge.

Read between the lines. Your ancestor sold their farm for \$1 to their "friend"? That's probably their son-in-law. Pre-marriage property transfer.

Use modern tools wisely. ChatGPT can decipher old handwriting. Google Earth can show you why your ancestor's farm was valuable.

Look for patterns. Seven families with the same surname moved from Virginia to Kentucky to Missouri? They're probably related. Follow the group.

Question everything. Family stories about Native American ancestry? Usually false.

Evidence. Always evidence.

### 10. The Community Is Your Friend

Here's a secret:

Other genealogists want to help you.

But most beginners either never ask or ask wrong.

Post specific questions in forums. Include what you've already searched. Show your work.

Bad question: "Looking for information on John Smith."

Good question: "Looking for parents of John C. Smith, born approximately 1832 in Ohio, married Mary Jones 1855 in Clermont County, died 1889 in Hamilton County. I've checked census records 1850-1880 and found..."

See the difference?

Distant cousins have pieces of your puzzle. They have photos. Letters. Family Bibles. Stories.

One researcher posted about a brick wall ancestor. Within days, a fourth cousin responded with the family Bible that contained three more generations.

Share your findings. Correct transcription errors. Upload record images.

Give first. Get second.

### 11. The Geography Factor

Location changes everything.

Your ancestor lived in the same house for 50 years but their address changed three times? County boundaries shifted.

Can't find birth records? Check the parent county. Check neighboring counties. Check the state next door.

People didn't travel far to get married. Or buried. Or to file legal documents.

Map your ancestors' movements. Literally. Use old maps. Understand why they moved where they moved.

That cluster of families in Indiana? They probably came from the same county in North Carolina. Together.

Software that doesn't search by location is worthless for serious research. You need to know everyone who lived in that town. They're probably related somehow.

## 87 Genealogists Reveal What They Wish They Knew Before Starting

One genealogist kept researching the same Illinois records for years. Finally mapped the family. Realized they should have been searching Missouri. The county line had moved.

### 12. Document Analysis Goes Beyond Reading

Reading records isn't enough.

You need to analyze them.

Who witnessed that will? Usually family members. Or close friends who might have married into the family.

Your ancestor's occupation was "yeoman"? They owned land. Changes where you look for records.

Check handwriting. Same person wrote multiple death certificates? Might be the doctor or undertaker. Their information might be less reliable.

Legal documents are goldmines. Read every word. That random person mentioned in paragraph six? Might be your ancestor's mother's maiden name.

Look at the margins. Clerks made notes. "Proved by brother" next to a signature? There's your family connection.

One researcher stared at a marriage record for years. Finally noticed the witness signatures. The bride's "friend" had the same rare surname as the groom's mother.

Always view the full document. Indexes miss crucial details.

### 13. The Emotional Journey No One Warns You About

This hits different than other hobbies.

You'll cry over people who died 150 years ago. You'll get angry at ancestors who made terrible choices. You'll feel proud of struggles you never knew existed.

One day you're researching names. Next day you're sobbing over a child mortality record from 1847.

I wrote another article all about this phenomenon called The Ghost in Your DNA: Why You Feel Connected to Ancestors You've Never Met.

You'll discover affairs. Abandonments. Crimes. Heroes. Villains. Regular people who did extraordinary things.

Family members might hate what you find. That pristine family mythology? Sometimes it's covering something painful.

You'll dream about dead people. You'll see their faces in old photos and feel like you know them.

The obsession is real. Set boundaries. Your living family needs you present.

But also? Embrace it. This connection to your past changes you.

It's supposed to.

### The Bottom Line

Genealogy is not a sprint.

It's not even a marathon.

It's a relay race where you might never meet the next runner.

Start with one thing from this list. Just one. Implement it today.

Interview that elderly relative. Document that source. Map that cluster of families.

Small actions compound. Bad research compounds too.

Twenty years from now, you'll thank yourself for starting right. Or curse yourself for trusting that unsourced Ancestry tree.

Your choice.

The dead can wait. They're patient like that.

But the living can't. And neither can you.

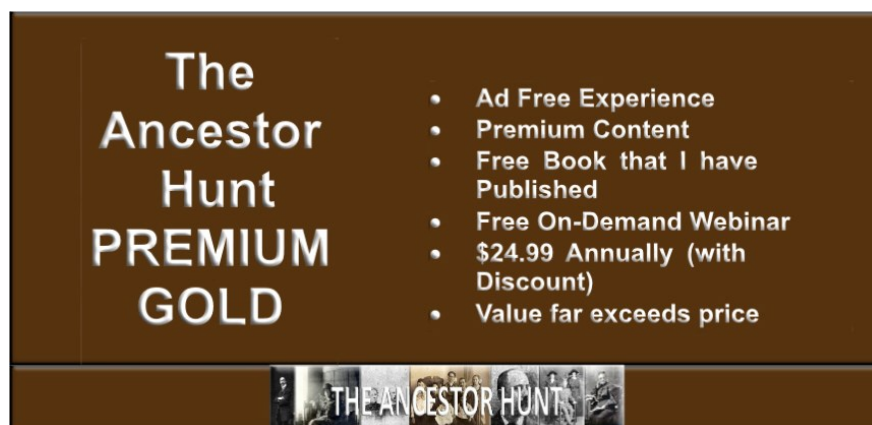
Start now. Start right.

Your ancestors are counting on you to tell their story correctly.

Don't let them down.



## The Gold Premium Program from 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



## Free Online Genealogy Website of the Month – Sanborn Maps



The Sanborn Map Collection is available via the Library of Congress. There are maps available from all 50 states in the US, and DC, as well as Canada, Cuba, and Mexico.

From the website: *"The Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps Online Checklist provides a searchable database of the fire insurance maps published by the Sanborn Map Company housed in the collections of the Geography and Map Division. The online checklist is based upon the Library's 1981 publication Fire Insurance Maps in the Library of Congress and will be continually updated to reflect new acquisitions."*

By clicking on the Collection Items link on the site, it displays over 35,000 online maps. Using the filters, you can narrow down the maps by date range and location, such as state and county.

There also are some Articles and essays with detailed information about the maps, including:

- Introduction to the Collection
- Sanborn Samplers
- Sanborn Time Series

To access the site, go to [LOC.gov/collections/sanborn-maps](https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps)

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## Genealogy Cartoons





## Updated State Toolkits

I have recently updated the Toolkits for each state in the U.S. What are Toolkits? Simply, they are links to websites, digital archives, and other genealogy-related collections in each state that are free.

<a href="#">Alabama Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Montana Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Alaska Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Nebraska Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Arizona Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Nevada Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Arkansas Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">New Hampshire Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">California Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">New Jersey Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Colorado Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">New Mexico Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Connecticut Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">New York Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Delaware Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">North Carolina Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">District of Columbia Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">North Dakota Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Florida Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Ohio Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Georgia Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Oklahoma Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Hawaii Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Oregon Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Idaho Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Pennsylvania Free Online Genealogy Research</a>
<a href="#">Illinois Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Rhode Island Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Indiana Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">South Carolina Free Online Genealogy Research</a>
<a href="#">Iowa Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">South Dakota Free Online Genealogy Research</a>
<a href="#">Kansas Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Tennessee Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Kentucky Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Texas Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Louisiana Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Utah Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Maine Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Vermont Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Maryland Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Virginia Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Massachusetts Free Online Genealogy Research</a>	<a href="#">Washington Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Michigan Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">West Virginia Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Minnesota Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Wisconsin Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Mississippi Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	<a href="#">Wyoming Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>
<a href="#">Missouri Free Online Genealogy Research Toolkit</a>	

## The 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.

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### **Cost**

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# 10 Reasons You May Not Be Finding What You Are Looking For in Newspapers

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

Searching historical newspapers can be an incredibly rewarding way to uncover family stories, community history, or details about significant events. However, it can also be frustrating when your searches don't return the results you expect. Before giving up or assuming the information doesn't exist, take a step back and consider the possible reasons behind your lack of results. Here's a detailed guide to troubleshooting common search issues and getting your search back on track.

## 1. Did You Search For It The Way It Appears in the Newspaper?

When looking for an event, did you consider what it would have been called in the time and place it was recorded in the paper?

Searching for "World War I" or the "First World War" in the early 20th century will likely yield no results. The Great War, or just the War was a singular event...until it wasn't. The Second World War was the reason that the First is now known as such. It wasn't until a reason to differentiate two world wars was necessary for the "War" to be labeled as the "first".

When looking for a place, has it always been known as such, or has the name changed over the years? Place names can change significantly over the years due to political shifts, annexations, or evolving local usage. A city, town, or region you're searching for might have been known by a different name in the past. For example, Constantinople is now Istanbul, and New Amsterdam became New York.

Smaller communities may have had informal names, merged with neighboring towns, or been renamed entirely. When researching, consider historical maps, older documents, and regional histories to identify alternate or previous names for the location you're searching. Including these variations in your search can greatly improve your chances of finding relevant results.

When searching for someone, do you know how the name was put into print? Searching for someone using their full legal name is tempting, but historical newspapers often didn't use formal naming conventions. Instead, individuals might be identified using initials, abbreviations, nicknames, or titles.

For example, John Henry Smith might appear as John H. Smith, J.H. Smith, Jno. Smith, Mr. Smith, or even just "Smith" if the context made it clear who the article referred to.

Additionally, women were often identified in relation to their husbands, such as "Mrs. John Smith" rather than their own first name. Keep these naming variations in mind and try multiple combinations to increase your chances of finding the right match.

## 2. Are You Searching in the Right Time and Place?

Timing and geography are key factors in successfully locating historical newspaper articles. While daily newspapers might cover an event within hours or a day of its occurrence, weekly newspapers often delayed coverage by days, weeks, or even months.

This delay was common, especially in smaller towns where newspapers had limited space or prioritized other stories. If you don't find an article in the immediate days after an event, broaden your search window significantly. You may find follow-ups, corrections, or more detailed stories published later, offering new insights. Additionally, some weekly newspapers summarized a series of events in one edition, so a single issue might be a goldmine for multiple reports.

It's also important to think beyond the primary location where the event occurred. Neighboring towns, especially those with close community ties, often reported on events happening just across the county line or in nearby cities.

These papers may have published their coverage earlier or offered a different perspective, sometimes including details omitted by the local press. For example, a wedding, accident, or business announcement might receive mention in both the hometown paper and a neighboring city's publication, with each providing unique information.

Consider, too, the movements of your ancestors during the time in question. People often traveled for work, to visit relatives, or to attend important events, and their names could appear in a newspaper far from where they lived. An ancestor traveling to a different city for a family reunion or business deal might be mentioned in that city's paper, even if no record exists in their hometown. Expanding your geographical search to include places they may have visited can uncover surprising connections and stories that enrich your research.

Timing and geography play a crucial role in newspaper research. Weekly newspapers, for example, often reported events days or weeks after they occurred. If you can't find an article in the days immediately following an event, broaden your search to include a longer timeframe. It's also worth checking neighboring towns' newspapers, as they might have reported the news sooner or provided additional details.

Don't forget to consider where your ancestors might have traveled. If they visited relatives in another city, attended a major event, or were involved in a legal matter, they may appear in a paper outside of their hometown. Expanding your geographical focus can uncover unexpected mentions and connections.

# 10 Reasons You May Not Be Finding What You Are Looking For in Newspapers

## 3. Are You Using the Verbiage of the Day?

Language evolves constantly, and the words used in historical newspapers often differ significantly from the terms we use today. When searching for specific topics, it's important to consider the terminology of the time period you're researching.

A profession, event, or concept might have been described using entirely different words or phrases depending on the era, region, or cultural context. For example, what we now refer to as a "trolley" might have been called a "streetcar" in one city, while in another, it was known as a "tram." Similarly, social or medical terms, like "consumption" for tuberculosis or "lunatic asylum" for mental health institutions, reflect the language and attitudes of their time.

Occupations, in particular, often carried terminology that has since changed. If you're searching for a nurse, terms like "trained nurse" or "attendant" were more common in the past. The same applies to professions like "domestic servant" instead of "housekeeper" or "engineer" instead of "mechanic."

The terms used to describe events, like "aviatrix" for a female pilot, reflect both societal norms and linguistic trends of the era. Expanding your search to include historical synonyms or alternate phrases can help you uncover records that might otherwise remain hidden.

To improve your results, spend some time familiarizing yourself with the language of the period. Look at articles from the time to identify the terms newspapers commonly used, or consult historical dictionaries or reference materials for guidance.

Searching for "great fire" instead of "fire disaster" or "suffragette" instead of "women's rights advocate" could make all the difference. By aligning your search terms with the verbiage of the day, you'll increase your chances of finding the articles and stories you're looking for.

## 4. Is Browsing a Better Option?

Sometimes the challenges in finding what you're looking for have less to do with your search techniques and more to do with the limitations of the tools available. Many digitized historical newspapers rely on Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology, which attempts to identify the words in scanned images and convert them into searchable text. While OCR can be incredibly useful, its effectiveness depends heavily on the quality of the original newspaper image. Clear, well-preserved prints yield more accurate results, but faded ink, damaged pages, or elaborate fonts can cause significant errors in text recognition.

When the text in a newspaper is faint, blurry, or marred by imperfections, the OCR software might misread or entirely skip over words. Common examples include mistaking "Smith" for "Snuth" or misinterpreting punctuation as letters. If you're running into problems with unexpected gaps in your results, these OCR errors may be the culprit. Adjusting your search terms to account for potential misreads—such as substituting similarly shaped letters like "S" and "5"—can help you work around these issues.

In cases where OCR errors seem to be a persistent obstacle, browsing the newspaper manually might be your best option. Focus on the most relevant editions or sections and examine them page by page. While this approach is more time-consuming, it often uncovers articles that automated searches miss, particularly in older papers or those with intricate layouts. By understanding the limitations of OCR and knowing when to pivot your strategy, you can overcome technical challenges and continue making progress in your research.

When searches don't produce the results you expect, consider browsing the newspaper directly. Start by identifying the most likely editions, such as those published in the weeks following a major event, and go through them page by page.

Browsing can be time-consuming, but it's often the best way to locate articles that the OCR missed or that don't match your exact search terms. You might even stumble upon other interesting pieces of information about your ancestors or their community while browsing.

## 5. Are You Searching for Too Much, or Not Enough?

Finding the right balance between specificity and breadth in your search terms is essential for effective research. If your search yields no results or only a handful of matches, it's possible that your terms are too narrow. On the other hand, if your search returns thousands of irrelevant results, it's likely too broad. Striking the right balance often requires a combination of trial and error and strategic adjustments to your approach.

Filters can be a powerful tool for refining your results, allowing you to narrow searches by date range, geographic location, or keywords. For instance, setting a specific time frame can help focus your search on relevant years, while specifying locations ensures you're looking in the right places. However, overusing filters can sometimes work against you, excluding valuable matches that fall just outside the parameters you set. A retrospective article written decades after an event or a mention of your ancestor in a relative's obituary might not appear if your filters are too restrictive.

When you suspect your search terms are too narrow, try broadening them incrementally. Start by removing filters one at a time or simplifying your query by using fewer keywords. Conversely, if your results are overwhelming, try adding one or two filters to eliminate obvious mismatches. The key is to remain flexible and experiment until you find the "just right" approach that delivers meaningful results. By thoughtfully adjusting your search terms and filters, you can uncover valuable insights that might otherwise remain hidden.



# 10 Reasons You May Not Be Finding What You Are Looking For in Newspapers

## 6. Did You Search for EXACTly What You Are Looking For?

Using exact searches can be a highly effective method, especially when dealing with common names or phrases. By selecting “EXACT” for your search type you instruct the search engine to find that exact combination of words in the same order. This technique reduces irrelevant results where “John” and “Smith” might appear independently, such as “John Doe and Mary Smith.” Exact searches are particularly helpful when looking for specific individuals or distinct phrases like “Golden Anniversary.” However, exact searches also have limitations. If the text in the newspaper varies even slightly from your query, the search may miss relevant results. For instance, a search for “John Henry Smith” won’t capture variations like “John H. Smith” or “J.H. Smith.” Additionally, OCR technology’s potential misreadings—such as interpreting “Smith” as “Snith”—can further complicate matters. These small discrepancies can cause you to miss important matches, making it essential to adjust your approach if results seem incomplete.

To overcome these challenges, try broadening your search with an ALL query, which finds results where all terms appear on the same page, regardless of order or proximity. This method offers more flexibility while still narrowing down results compared to an entirely unrestricted search. Experimenting with both exact and broad searches ensures a better chance of finding the information you need, especially when variations in text or formatting are at play.

## 7. Did You Mean to Search for EXACTly What You Typed?

While exact searches can narrow results effectively, they demand precision. If there’s any variation in how a name or phrase appears in the newspaper—such as a middle initial, abbreviation, or omission—an exact search won’t return those results. For example, a query for “Jane Marie Johnson” would miss instances of “Jane M. Johnson” or “Jane Johnson.” This rigidity makes exact searches tricky, particularly when dealing with common variations or incomplete records.

Exact searches also struggle when OCR (Optical Character Recognition) technology introduces errors into the digitized text. If the OCR misinterprets one or more words in your phrase, an exact search will fail to find the match.

For instance, a misread “Johnson” as “Jonnnson” would mean your query won’t connect to the result, even if all other words are correct. These inaccuracies, often due to poor image quality or challenging fonts, highlight the limitations of relying solely on exact matches.

To account for these issues, consider using a broader search method, such as an ALL search, which looks for all terms on the same page, regardless of their order or proximity. This approach provides more flexibility and increases your chances of finding relevant matches, even when OCR errors or slight variations exist. Balancing exact searches with broader techniques ensures a more comprehensive exploration of the records.

## 8. Are You Accounting for Name Changes and Alternate Spellings?

Names in historical records were rarely consistent, and spelling variations were a common occurrence. Women, for instance, were often listed under their married names, maiden names, or even as “Mrs.” followed by their husband’s name.

This means that a search for “Mary Johnson” might miss mentions of her as “Mrs. John Johnson” or “Mary Smith” (if Smith was her maiden name). Additionally, immigrant ancestors frequently adapted or Anglicized their names to fit their new surroundings, making a name like “Giovanni Rossi” appear as “John Ross” or “J. Rossi” in records.

Surnames, in particular, were prone to variations based on phonetics, regional dialects, or even clerical errors.

For example, “MacGregor” might also appear as “McGregor” or simply “Gregor.” Similarly, first names often had shortened or informal versions, like “William” appearing as “Will,” “Bill,” or even “Wm.” Accounting for these variations requires creative and flexible searching, especially when working with handwritten or early printed records.

To maximize your results, experiment with different spellings, abbreviations, and naming conventions that might have been used during the period. Try using broader search terms to catch as many variations as possible.

By accounting for these potential changes, you’ll improve your chances of finding mentions of your ancestors, even when their names appear differently than expected.

## 9. Have You Considered Searching For Contextual Detail Instead of Names?

Sometimes, focusing solely on a name of a person, place, or event can limit your results, especially if the name is absent, misspelled, or inconsistently recorded. Instead, try searching for contextual clues tied to the person or event you’re researching. For example, if you’re looking for a wedding announcement but can’t find the names of the bride or groom, search for details like the venue, the officiant, or terms like “nuptials” or “marriage ceremony.” Similarly, if you’re searching for an obituary, consider keywords like “funeral,” “beloved,” or even the name of a cemetery.

Broadening your approach to include locations, dates, occupations, or other relevant details can lead you to results that names alone might miss. For instance, a search for “tailor in Springfield” could unearth references to your ancestor’s business even if their name was omitted. Similarly, searching for events like a significant flood or fire in their town may indirectly mention them as a resident or participant.

# 10 Reasons You May Not Be Finding What You Are Looking For in Newspapers

This method not only helps you navigate challenges like OCR errors or missing information but can also uncover unexpected connections. Articles about related events, neighbors, or community activities often provide valuable insights into your ancestor's life and context, even if they aren't the main focus of the story. Thinking beyond names and searching for associated clues can open new doors in your research.

## 10. Have You Checked for Errors in the Indexing?

Even if the newspaper itself is intact, the indexing process—whether done manually or through OCR technology—can introduce errors. Pages may be misclassified, or articles may be incorrectly linked to the wrong date or location. If you're not finding results where you expect, try browsing nearby dates or other editions of the same newspaper. Additionally, some archives allow user-contributed corrections to the index, so check for alternate transcriptions that might help uncover missed matches.

## Additional Troubleshooting Tips

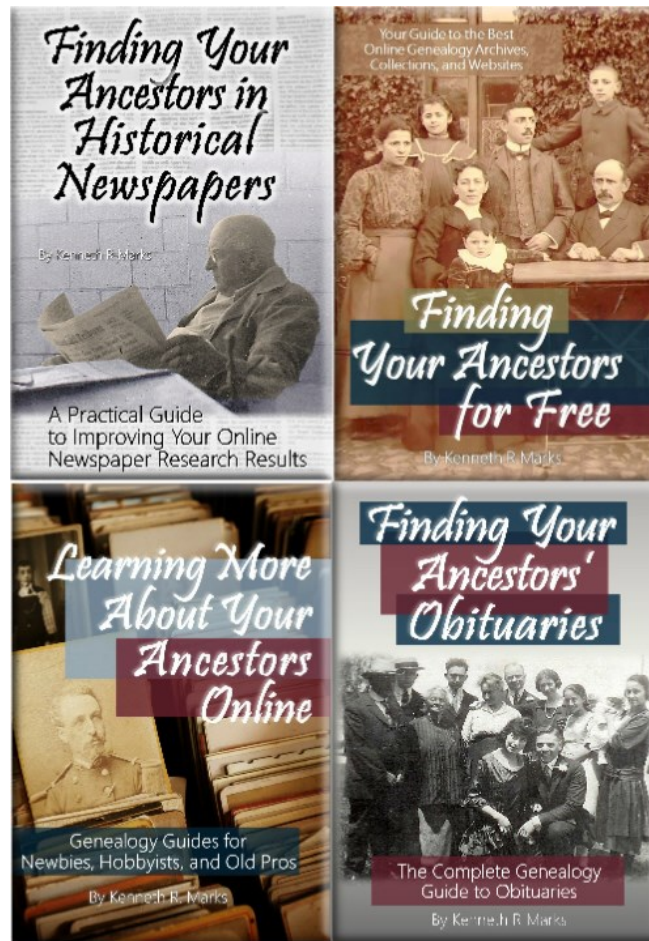
If you're still struggling to find what you're looking for, try these additional strategies:

- **Use Related Terms:** Replace names or keywords with terms that are likely to appear in the same article. For example, search for "wedding" instead of the bride's name, or "mayor" instead of a specific person's title.
- **Expand the Timeframe:** If the event isn't where you expect it to be, broaden your date range. Weekly newspapers may delay coverage, and follow-up articles can appear weeks or even months later.
- **Experiment with Synonyms:** If you're searching for a specific term, try alternate words or spellings. Historical newspapers often used regional or outdated language that may differ from modern usage.
- **Try Alternate Spellings:** Historical records often reflect spelling inconsistencies due to regional accents or clerical errors. Experiment with phonetic variations of names or words. For instance, a surname like "Clark" might appear as "Clarke," and a term like "jail" might be spelled as "gaol."
- **Focus on Local Landmarks or Institutions:** If your ancestor isn't turning up by name, search for schools, businesses, churches, or neighborhoods they were associated with. For example, instead of searching for "Sarah Thompson," try "Central High School Teacher" or "St. Mary's Parish."
- **Look for Adjoining Keywords:** Search for terms that would naturally appear near your target information. For example, searching "accident near bridge" instead of a specific name might help locate an article about your ancestor's involvement in a local incident.
- **Search for Relatives or Associates:** If your ancestor isn't turning up, look for relatives, neighbors, or known associates who might have been mentioned in the same article. A search for "James Carter" might fail, but "Carter family" or "Carter's neighbor, Smith" could lead you to relevant information.
- **Account for Different Calendars or Timekeeping:** If researching older events, be aware that some cultures used different calendars or dated events differently. For example, colonial-era records might use Julian dates instead of the Gregorian calendar.
- **Investigate Common Abbreviations:** Historical newspapers frequently used abbreviations to save space. For example, "Jas." for "James" or "Wm." for "William." Searching these abbreviations alongside full names might yield additional results.
- **Leverage Geographical Clues:** Use place names or locations associated with your ancestor, such as "Elm Street" or "Johnson Farm." Events or family activities might be recorded under these identifiers rather than specific names.

## Don't Give Up

Searching historical newspapers is as much an art as it is a science. By adapting your approach, experimenting with search terms, and troubleshooting potential roadblocks, you can uncover the stories hidden in the pages of the past. Whether it's adjusting for name variations, considering OCR limitations, or browsing directly, these strategies will help you get closer to the information you're seeking. With persistence and creativity, your research will reveal the rich history waiting to be discovered.

## 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.

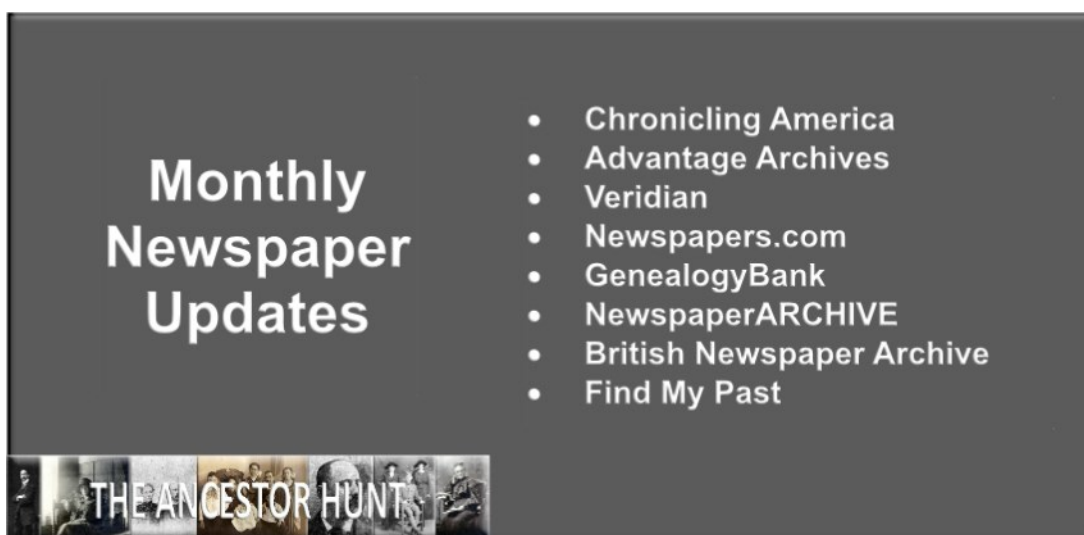
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## Online Newspaper Database Updates for June/July



Over 1,200 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-june-2025/>

**Advantage Archives** - Not Yet Published

**Veridian** - <https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/veridian-adds-updates-265-titles-july-2025/>

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

**GenealogyBank** - <https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/genealogybank-adds-updates-57-titles-july-2025/>

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

**British Newspaper Archive** - <https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/british-newspaper-archive-adds-updates-96-titles-june-2025/>

**Find My Past** - <https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/find-my-past-adds-updates-81-historical-newspaper-titles-june-2025/>



## The By Location Page

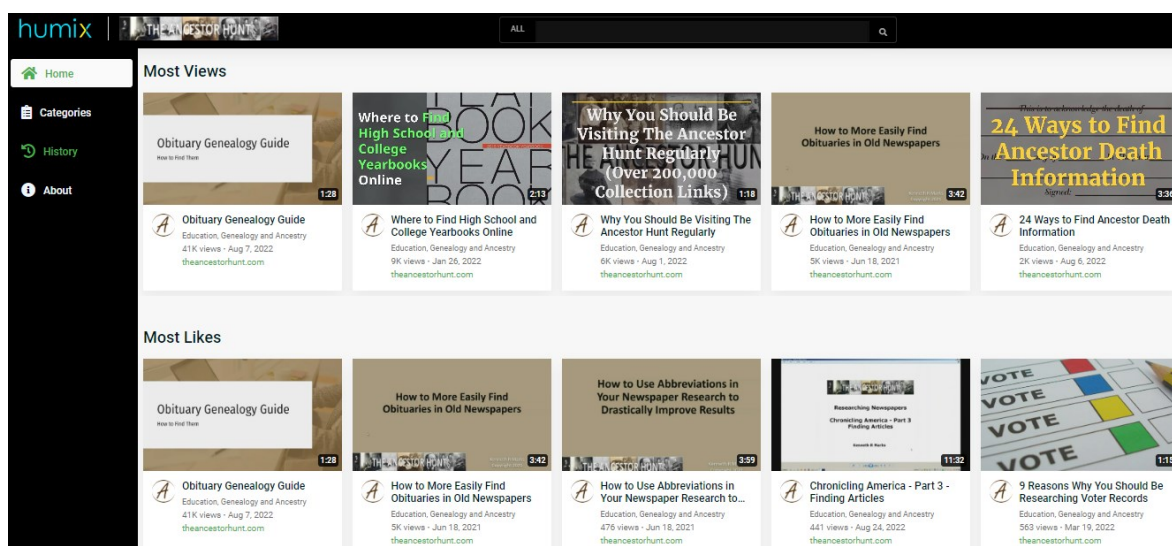
The easiest way to access a particular state's or province's list of collections and categories is via the [BY LOCATION](#) page.

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](#)

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**GENEALOGYBANK**

## Quicksheet of the Month

### Why You Should Research Coroner Records and Where to Find Them

Did you know that about 20% of deaths in the United States are investigated by a Coroner or a Medical Examiner? I first got interested when I accidentally found a Coroner's Report for my Great Aunt, who died in 1911. Her cause of death was accidental, and very sad. So I began researching Coroner Reports and Inquests for those ancestors where their death was questionable.

#### When does a Coroner get involved?

If the death was suspicious, a coroner may be asked to perform an investigation and possibly an autopsy. A suspicious death could be as simple as a person who the relatives or friends hadn't heard from who was found deceased in their home alone. Or it could be the result of an accident, homicide or suicide.

#### What can we find in these records?

Some reports are short, while others may have more details. The cause of death and any liability or crime that has occurred may dictate a more thorough investigation. Inquest testimony particularly may provide clues to family and friend relationships.

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| • Name                 | • Address                                  |
| • Date Received        | • Place where death occurred               |
| • Gender               | • Presumable cause of death                |
| • Color                | • Date and time of death                   |
| • Age                  | • Date of Inquest                          |
| • Nativity             | • Verdict                                  |
| • Marriage Status      | • Witnesses                                |
| • Occupation           | • Inquest Testimony                        |
| • Post-mortem findings | • Necrology report (pathology, toxicology) |
| • Medical Examiner     | • Date of Examination                      |

#### Where can we find Coroner Records?

Always contact the county where the death occurred first to see if there are records or there was an inquest. Generally the files are available to the public, subject to privacy laws in the jurisdiction.

#### What should we research next?

If the death was indeed suspicious, there might be an article in the newspaper describing the event. Obviously, accidents or crimes would likely be included in an article in the newspaper. But discoveries of people who had passed were newsworthy years ago.

#### Where can we find Coroner Records Online?

The jurisdiction that you are searching may have online access, but that is doubtful. The best place to find free online coroner report collections and coroner records is at The Ancestor Hunt's [Coroner Records Links Page](#). There are links to about 350 collections that are available online in the U.S.

*We spend a lot of our research time trying to find the story of our ancestors' lives. It is also important to discover the story of our ancestors' deaths.*



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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.



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