

## Newspaper research

Newspapers: begin search by searching only on surname.

Then limit search for fewer hits

List what you know so that you can narrow down/ if you don't find them search for spouse

Limit by area and then timeframe

Search with name variations, including abbreviations

Be aware that you might not be looking in the home town. You may need to look in newspapers that cover all the area surrounding.

Be sure to mine for every clue

Newspapers written to be of interest to local people.

### Key items in newspapers

#### 1. Obituaries

Read carefully

Comb for every date- calculate birth- Can look at census to compare to find if a child missing

Look for information on family

#### 2. Births

Paid classified ads/ free announcements

Look for small town papers where they knew everyone- can find families and names of extended family members

Watch for collateral information

#### 3. Cradle roll: newborns- most often from churches; not as much detail: if you find a birth announcement- don't go looking for a cradle roll

**Birthdays** of children: typically done on first birthday. Sometimes they include photographs

#### 4. Birthdays of older people when they hit a milestone birthday. Be flexible when you approach searching

#### 5. Marriage announcement: engagement, - gives details

a. Names of bride and groom

b. Location of church

c. Date of wedding

d. Where couple will live

e. Names of parents of bride

f. Biographical information

g. Members of wedding party

h. Pictures

i. Be sure to go through list of relatives

j. May give relationships in families

k. Remarriages

l. Anniversary announcements

- m. Divorces: what became of family, why name changes more common in modern times. Sometimes will appear in newspapers are actual court record as legal brief.
- 6. **Family reunions:** give details about ancestors, and lists family members- sometimes notice will be looking for people so that they can find them: will list person and those looking for them: may name specific town there are from.
- 7. **Advertisements:** indentured servants: early in history; apprentices, runaway slaves: names, value, description, family members
- 8. **Military records:**
  - deaths** even outside of wars
    - a. Name and rank
    - b. Name of camp
    - c. Ages
    - d. Information about other family members serving in military
    - e. Illness
    - f. Names and localities of next of kin
    - g. Names of funeral home

Around 1840's newspapers would post about the Revolutionary War, service, and pensions

**Draft lists:** giving names and address and slacker lists published to show who were draft dodgers but often wrong- somebody sick, or died and brought shame to family with cause (1920's)

**Military reunions-** highlights of units

**Letters from soldiers:** last letter written home

- 9. **Passenger lists:**
  - a. Passengers on any mode of transportation;
  - b. Migration across the country (internal migration)
  - c. Immigration from other countries
  - d. Both leaving and arriving lists
  - e. Ship switches, wagon trains, stagecoach
- 10. **Biography and photo or image**
- 11. **Probate and legal notices**
  - a. Probate proceedings
  - b. Change of name
  - c. Debt notices
- 12. **Social notes: gossip/ talk of town**
- 13. **News as our ancestors lived it.**

Ethnic or special focus newspapers will post cultural details, will more likely get foreign places correct. Foreign language newspapers will probably get names spellings more correct  
 Search for birth announcements and obituaries for every member of the family  
 Map out all family to understand where they fit in the family