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Read All About It! Historical Newspapers Online

YESTERDAY'S STEAMSHIP ARRIVALS.
New York Times (1857-Current file); Jul 12, 1890; ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times
pg. 3

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Thawing Your *Swedish Roots*

Exploring University Libraries

Your Family History in Stitches

Historical Newspapers *Online*

A quick-start guide for genealogists

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BIRTHS.

New York Daily Times (1851-1857); May 13, 1852; ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times pg. 4

BIRTHS.

On Wednesday morning, Mrs. ALFRED C. MARIEN of a son.

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MEN AND WOMEN OF THE COAST

Los Angeles Times (1886-Current File); Jul 4, 1895; ProQuest Historical Newspapers Los Angeles Times pg. 6

MEN AND WOMEN OF THE COAST

Prof. G. W. A. Luckey, well-known in Riverside, has been elected to the chair of pedagogy in the University of Nebraska at Lincoln.

Edgar W. Crane, a young man of Riverside, has just graduated with high honors at the State University at Madison, Wis., especially in electrical engineering.

United States Senator John H. Mitchell has returned to Oregon from Washington, D.C., and will spend the remainder of his congressional vacation in that State.

Lieut. William M. Crofton of the First Infantry, U.S.A., who is now at Angel Island, has been detailed to report at Fort Leavenworth School of Instruction for Infantry and Cavalry.

Rev. M. F. Colburn, who was, for four years, pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church at San Diego, and who has been traveling around the world the past three years, has returned to San Diego on a visit.

Prof. Henry Tillman of Carson Valley, Nev., who has just returned from a two years' course at the Hopkins University, Baltimore, and is elected to the chair of mathematics in the Puget Sound University, visited San Jacinto last week.

Three hundred wire decorators at the works of the American Wire Company at Cleveland, O., struck yesterday for a 10 per cent. increase in wages.

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New York Times graphics courtesy of Proquest.

Among the most exciting new tools for researchers are scanned and digitized indexes and records. Censuses, vital record indexes, passenger manifests, land records, and full-text, every-word-searchable books and periodicals have helped to revolutionize the way we, as genealogists and historians, conduct our research. The results are nothing short of breathtaking.

Among the finest of these new research tools are digitized, every-word-searchable databases of historical newspapers. Click a button and search two hundred years of *The Times* of London, more than one hundred years of the *Toronto Star*, 150 years of *The New York Times*, sixty-one years of the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, or three hundred-year-old pages of the country's first newspapers in seconds. Millions of pages of historical newspapers from around the world are now instantly at your disposal.

Before you start researching in these collections, be sure to be well rested, because once you begin—as all of us bleary-eyed folks can attest—it will be difficult to take your eyes off the genealogical jewels popping up on your computer screen!

Some of the publishers of these databases, available in libraries and via remote access, for free or via subscription, include Readex, EBSCO, Thomson Gale, Ancestry, Accessible Archives, Otherdays.com, Brooklyn Public Library, British Library, University of Utah, Colorado State Library, Cold North Wind, Library of Congress, Chadwyck-Healey, and ProQuest. New organizations are entering the field daily. It's no wonder that they

are—the market for these databases is unlimited.

And it's no surprise that we genealogists are among the most eager researchers. Not only can newspapers lead us to new insights about our families, but those insights can also be our treasure maps to finding vital records, estate files, deeds, judgments, passenger lists, and other documents.

More and more libraries offer these collections to their patrons. The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society Library, for instance, has made ProQuest's database of *The New York Times* available to members onsite in the library and via remote access on members' home computers.

Including *The New York Times*, ProQuest has put together a huge and user-friendly collection of every-word-searchable, digitized newspapers. Spanning millions of pages and hundreds of collective years, ProQuest's Historical Newspapers Collection includes *The New York Times* (1851–2001), *The Washington Post* (1877–1988), *The Los Angeles Times* (1881–1984), *The Chicago Tribune* (1890–1946), *The Wall Street Journal* (1889–1987), and *The Christian Science Monitor* (1908–1991). In image quality, simplicity of use, and amount of material offered, ProQuest's collection allows researchers a greater depth and ease of research than any other currently available index or database of these newspapers, whether in book or digitized form.

ProQuest's powerful, user-friendly search engine gives researchers immediate access to every word of the text of the newspapers and

to the graphics. Names in birth, engagement, marriage, divorce, and death notices, plaintiffs and defendants in daily court calendars and file numbers of the cases, grantors and grantees in property transfers, names and addresses of jurors, names of decedents and heirs in probate and administration files, notices of incorporations and dissolutions with names of the companies' owners, contents of advertisements, letters to the editor, passenger lists, photo captions, news stories, gossip (historical, of course!)—every word of over millions of pages—can be searched in seconds. Enter your search words, click on the search button, and a results page of article titles appears. Click on the title of an article you want to view, and up pops a scan of the entire piece in PDF format, including text and graphics, which you can print. Pretty extraordinary stuff.

What's the best method for researching in ProQuest's extraordinary collection and in other digitized historical newspapers? It's tempting to dive in and type the first and last name of the person you're looking for in the search box and click the search button. But hang on. If you really want to find *all* the family gems in ProQuest's Historical Newspapers or in other collections, that's not the best way to go about it. There are some simple yet powerful techniques for the most successful genealogical research. Once you've learned these methods, you'll find that quick and targeted results from millions of newspaper pages are almost instantly on your computer screen. They're the results that we genealogists long to find.

Then, to keep what you've found, follow the tips for printing entire articles or enlarging parts of articles for printing.

I'll illustrate these techniques with examples from ProQuest's Historical Newspapers. You can use many of the same research and printing methods in other newspaper collections. Be sure to read the "Help" and "Search Tips" sections for whatever databases you're using.

Ten Research and Printing Tips

Tip 1: The number of search terms and their order change the results

Type two names, whether given name first (John Bradley) or surname first (Bradley John), and hit the search button. The search engine will look for articles with those two names in the *exact order* you typed them, as a phrase.

Type more than two names or words (John W. Bradley), and the search engine will deliver results where the words appear somewhere in the same article, but not necessarily in that exact order. That means that John could be at the end of the article, W. in the middle, and Bradley at the beginning. Those articles might not have anything at all about John W. Bradley.

What does that mean for a successful search for, say, a death notice? Think about how the name of the deceased person is typically shown in most lists of death notices: last name, then first name. Sometimes the names are separated by a hyphen. So if you're looking for John Bradley's death notice and type...

Basic Search

Tools: [Search Tips](#) [1 Recent Searches](#)

...chances are good that you won't find his death notice. You might find his name as a relative in someone else's death notice, where survivors' names are in given name/surname order. You'll find his obituary, if he has one, where names are written in given name/surname order. (Obituaries are articles written by newspaper staff for the prominent, famous, or infamous, unlike paid death notices, which are written by relatives or friends.) Most people didn't have obituaries in big-city newspapers, and the likelihood of finding a paid death notice is much greater for someone who wasn't famous.

So, if death notices show the decedent's name in surname/given name order, will you find a death notice for John Bradley if you type the following?

Basic Search

Tools: [Search Tips](#) [1 Recent Searches](#)

Maybe yes; maybe no. If, in the list of death notices, for instance, the names are separated by a hyphen, you probably won't find John Bradley's death notice this way.

So how do you find a death notice and other items of genealogical value in the Historical Newspapers Collection? The key to success is search syntax—ways of combining special characters and words (search operators) with your search terms.

Tip 2: How to use search operators

There are five major types of search operators. They're easy to learn and deliver powerful results. For clarity in these examples, search operators are in capital letters. However, lowercase works just fine, too.

Boolean search operators (AND, OR, AND NOT): to include or exclude words in the search.

Use these search operators to join or restrict search words in the same article.

AND searches for combinations of words and is useful for finding family groups in death notices and estate listings. To search for the Reilly family, with parents Thomas and Mary and sons John and James:

Basic Search

Tools: [Search Tips](#) [1 Recent Searches](#)

OR searches any word and is especially useful when you want to search for variant spellings of a name:

Basic Search

Tools: [Search Tips](#) [1 Recent Searches](#)

AND NOT eliminates words you don't want to find within an article—a good search operator to use when you're researching common names. For instance, to find occurrences of the name James Smith in an article, but not Robert Smith or John Smith, use the Boolean **AND NOT** like this:

Basic Search Tools: [Search Tips](#) [1 Recent Searches](#)

It's important to note a caveat here: Using this example, **AND NOT** will eliminate *all* articles with the words Robert and John. So a piece about James Smith's wedding listing the best man as Robert Sherwood will not appear in the results list.

Quotation Marks (“ ”): to specify an exact phrase

Surround three or more search words with quotation marks to find those words as a phrase. For example, to find the exact name John Jacob Astor in articles, type:

Basic Search Tools: [Search Tips](#) [1 Recent Searches](#)

By not using quotation marks, the results list would include the words John and Jacob and Astor anywhere in the article, but not necessarily in that order.

Remember that just two words entered in the search field are automatically considered a phrase by the search engine and do not require quotes.

Adjacency (proximity) search operator (w/x): to limit the distance between words

Use this search operator to find articles where the search terms are separated by no more than a maximum number of words from each other, such as **w/1** to specify “within 1 word” or **w/10**, to specify “within 10 words.”

The following search will result in any articles that include Higgins no more than one word away from Gordon, such as **Gordon Higgins**, or **Higgins Gordon**, or **Gordon C. Higgins**.

Basic Search Tools: [Search Tips](#) [1 Recent Searches](#)

An adjacency search is among the most useful tools for researching death notices, judgment (lawsuit) indexes, indexes of wills for probate, lists of deeds and mortgages, passenger lists, and any article with a list of names. This type of search is especially helpful because it will find a name in any order of given name and surname, allowing for positive results in various types of articles. Also, because an adjacency search limits the maximum distance words are from each other, you won't be led to irrelevant articles where a given name is located in one part of the article and a surname in another, and the two names have no connection to each other.

Using the adjacency search operator, you'll find the person in his or her death notice, where the order of the decedent's names is typically surname/given name, and as a survivor in someone else's death notice, where survivors are listed in given name/surname order. In a list of property transfers, you'll find a person as a mortgagor, often listed surname first, or as a mortgagee, with given name first. Lists of Administrations and Wills for Probate typically show the surname of the decedent first then the given name, while heirs and distributees are noted in given name/surname order.

Don't know if the person you're looking for used a middle name or initial? Try the adjacency search operators **w/1** or **w/2** to allow for a separation between the given name and surname.

You can increase the value of the adjacency search operator for all searches. For instance, surviving children of the deceased who have the same surname are usually listed with their given names together, then the surname, such as, “Survivors include his sons Ryan, Bruce, and Felix Higgins.” In order to find Ryan with the surname Higgins in this case, the value of the adjacency search operator needs to be **w/3**. Experiment and see what gives you the best results.

Wildcard search operator (?): to change one letter

Was her name spelled Elizabeth or Elisabeth? Cummins or Cumming? The wildcard search operator—a question mark—will search for both spellings in one search. Use a

wildcard to substitute for exactly one letter anywhere in a word, except for the initial letter.

The following, for example, will search for articles involving Elizabeth Cummins, Elizabeth Cumming, Elisabeth Cummins, and Elisabeth Cumming.

Basic Search

Tools: [Search Tips](#) [1 Recent Searches](#)

Eli?abeth Cummin?

Search

Clear

Truncation search operator (*): to add an unlimited number of letters or none

Use an asterisk to search for an unlimited number of letters at the end of a word, including none. For instance...

Basic Search

Tools: [Search Tips](#) [1 Recent Searches](#)

Sam* Hofstatter

Search

Clear

...will search for results that include such entries as **Sam**, **Samuel**, **Saml**, **Samantha**, and **Sammy Hofstatter**.

Tip 3: Use the date range tool to limit the dates searched

Let's say you're looking for a marriage announcement in *The Los Angeles Times* for the wedding of Edward Jones and his bride Mary, whose maiden name you don't know. You've found them in the 1930 census and, based on the enumerator's note of their ages when first married, you've calculated that the couple married in 1922 or 1923. You could search for an announcement like this:

Basic Search

Tools: [Search Tips](#) [1 Recent Searches](#)

Edward Jones w/12 Mary

Search

Clear

Database: News - The Historical Los Angeles Times [Select multiple databases](#)

Date range: On this date:

Before this date:

From: To:

Clicking the "From" segment of the Date Range Tool to limit your search to those years will save you from having to plow through many articles to find the right couple with these common names. Start with 01/01/1922 and end a few days into 1924, such as 01/10/1924, in the event that they married at the end of December of 1923 and the announcement didn't appear until the beginning of the next year. Adding an adjacency search operator (w/x) is optional but will ensure that the names of the couple you seek are near each other and not the names of unrelated spouses in a list of marriage notices. If you know the bride's maiden name, remember as you search that marriages can be announced by the bride's parent(s), and her given name may not appear right next to her surname. In that case, the use of an adjacency search operator is beneficial.

Tip 4: Combine search words, search operators, and dates to target your results

Now that you've learned the elements, you can combine them for the results you want. Let's look at an example.

Samuel Corn, a hat and cap maker, was in business in New York City with his brother in a company called Samuel Corn & Brother (or Samuel Corn & Bro or Samuel Corn and Bros) until, at the latest, 1892. What information about the company can be found in *The New York Times*?

To begin the search, the search terms **Samuel Corn** are entered into the search field to find the name in that exact order, with the Boolean **AND** linking **Bro*** to the search terms. The truncation search operator (*) is added to **Bro** in order to find variant spellings of the word, whether Bro, Bros, or Brother. The date is limited to the end of 1892 to restrict the issues searched:

Basic Search

Tools: [Search Tips](#) [2 Recent Searches](#)

Database: [Select multiple databases](#)

Date range: On this date:
 Before this date:
 From: To:

The results include the following:

[Help](#)

Databases selected: ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times

Results

• 9 articles found for: (Samuel Corn AND Bro*) AND PDN(<12/31/1892)

Newspapers

[Mark / Clear all on page](#) | [View marked articles](#) Sort results by:

- 1. [Passengers Arrived.](#)
New York Times (1857-Current file), New York, N.Y.: Jun 29, 1869. p. 8 (1 page)
- 2. [Classified Ad 3 -- No Title](#)
New York Times (1857-Current file), New York, N.Y.: Jan 25, 1873. p. 3 (1 page)

Clicking on the Article Image for the second article reveals (after scrolling down the page to the "Help Wanted" section) this classified help wanted ad, which helped define the size of Samuel's business:

WANTED—GOOD CAP MAKERS AND 50 apprentices at SAMUEL CORN & BROS', Nos. 160 and 162 South 5th-av.

The results of the search could have been further limited by using the proximity search operator (w/x) instead of the Boolean AND.

Tip 5: Look beyond the article titles in the results list

The title in the list of results may not be the title of the article that contains your search words. The title shown is the one at the top of the particular

segment of the page that's been scanned and presented as a unit. So don't be put off by a title that seems to have nothing to do with the result you want. Click to view the scan of the article and scroll down to see all the other articles in that section.

The results of a search for the marriage of Hortense Sichel, thought to have taken place in 1911 at the St. Regis Hotel in New York City, included an article with this title:

JAPANESE GUESTS AT RUSSELL WEDDING; President of Japanese Society Married to Miss M. Flouise Davis in Church of Heavenly Rest. WEDDED AT HOTEL ASTOR Miss Lillian Harris is Married to Aron Schuster - Wolff-Hezlig Nuptials at Sherry's.
 New York Times (1857-Current file). New York, N.Y.: Apr 5, 1911. p. 9 (1.page)
[Article image - PDF](#) [Page map](#) [Citation](#)

It would be easy to dismiss that article as an irrelevant result and pass it by. But by viewing the scanned image and scrolling down, the next article, about the marriage of Hortense Sichel at the St. Regis Hotel, was revealed.

Miss Sichel Bride of Belmont Corn.
 Miss Hortense Sichel, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Simon Sichel, and Belmont Corn, a son of Mrs. Rosalia Corn, were married last evening at the St. Regis. The Rev. Dr. Maurice H. Harris officiated.
 The bride wore a gown of white satin with a court train trimmed with rose

TIP 6: Searching for female ancestors

To find articles about a female ancestor, search for her by using both her own given name and her husband's. In newspapers, women frequently were listed by their husbands' names or initials and the title "Mrs.," such as "Mrs. Robert Hastings," or "Mrs. R. Hastings," instead of "Jane Hastings" or "Mrs. Jane Hastings," unless the woman was a widow or divorcée.

The only indication in newspaper passenger arrivals that a woman was traveling with her husband might be the appearance of her husband's name followed by "and lady" or, if traveling alone, she could be listed by her first initial and married name, his first initial and surname, or by his title and surname. Take a look at the different ways women are noted in the "Passengers Arrived" section of *The New York Times* on 4 June 1860:

Passengers Arrived.
 JUNE 3.—In steamship *Vanderbilt*, from Southampton and Havre—Mrs. Levy, lady of Commodore Levy, Flag Officer of the Mediterranean Squadron; Mrs. A. N. Christie, 6 children and nurses; Mrs. E. Punnett, Miss M. A. Christie, Mlle. E. Guillot, Joseph Roche, David Harrison and lady, Master Frank Harrison, Mrs. E. H. Clapham, Thomas Clapham, Miss M. E. Jauncey, Dr. Augustus Rawlings, bearer of dispatches from the U. S. Legations at London and Paris; Albert Berghaus, artist of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*; S. W. Waterbury, G. W. Sandford, Mrs. A. Sprout, P. S. Kintner, Mrs. Sarah Kelly, Misses Gertrude, Norah and Kathleen Kelly, Mast. Horace Kelly, Mast. Edmund Kelly, A. Binney and lady, E. G. Palmer and lady, Miss Perse, J. Duany, G. de Bethencourt, F. Morgan, Mrs. Maine, son and daughter; G. Godchaux, lady and son; Miss B. Gahn, Julien, Rauber, C. P. Williams, Mme. A.

Tip 7: Use given name initials

Speaking of first initials, certain types of articles, such as passenger lists, as shown above, and court calendars, often refer to persons by the first letter of their given names and their surnames. Try searching for someone by using the person's first initial(s) and surname. This example from "The District Courts" in *The Washington Post*, 20 May 1880, shows the use of surnames and initials:

The District Courts.
 DISTRICT COURT IS GENERAL TERM.—Called States vs. Hoffman et al.; against the contractors; adjournment till to-day at 10 o'clock.
 Stewart vs. Gress—Jurying. BROWN. — HILL vs. National Hair Growth's Association, hearing resumed. HARKNESS vs. Bowditch; M. U. Creditors against George W. Adams. WHITE vs. Hartman; adjournment without costs. SMITH vs. Douglas; the same against W. H. & A. M. Douglas adjournment till to-day at 11 o'clock.
 A. M.

Tip 8: When nothing else works, think typos or variant spellings

No newspaper was printed without typographical errors. Though accuracy is high, no software that converts images to text (Optical Character Recognition) is perfect. And the same name can be spelled different ways. If the names of people you're seeking don't show up in article results, it's possible that a typo or variant spelling is the cause—especially if the name is unusual. Try using wildcard and truncation search operators. They allow greater flexibility in the search. (See Tip 2.)

Tip 9: Printing

When you've found something you like, you'll want to print the results. Computers, whether PC or Mac, and various printers can give different results, but, by and large, no matter what you use, the following should help you print legible articles and parts of articles.

Important: To successfully size and print an article or part of an article use the print icon on Adobe Acrobat Reader's menu bar not your browser's print button or the print command from your computer's drop-down menu.

Using the Graphic Tool

Let's say you want to print just one marriage or death notice from a long page of notices. Adobe Acrobat Reader's default is to print an article on one page. Hit the print button and you'll print the entire newspaper page in a type size only an ant could read. How to remedy this? The solution lies with the Graphics Tool.

You'll find the Graphics Tool icon on Acrobat Reader's menu bar. Click on it, and your cursor will turn to crosshairs. Click and hold your mouse button and drag the crosshairs around the text you want to print, being careful not to erase the lines by clicking again. Then click Acrobat Reader's print icon.

You should be led to your computer's print screen. Be sure that the box "Expand Small Pages to Paper Size" is checked. Then click "Okay" or "Print." The little death notice should now fill the printed page. Finally, don't forget to note the citation.

Printing a Large Article in Legible Type

Using the Graphics Tool, as described above, you can print the article over as many pages as necessary for ease of viewing.

Click the Graphics Tool, then click and hold your mouse button and manipulate the cursor, now showing as crosshairs, to surround the article in a manageable section. Then print that section. Continue until you've

printed the entire article. How you section the article may take some experimentation. Printers with a print preview option make sizing easier. As you print in sections, try checking the box, "Expand Small Pages to Paper Size," to fill the printed page. Some printers have a size-scaling option to enlarge the size of the image in percentages.

Printing a Small Article

For a small article to print in large enough type, you may need to check the "Expand Small Pages to Paper Size" box.

Tip 10: Experiment!

The best way to learn how to use the ProQuest's Historical Newspapers Collection or any every-word-searchable database is to play with it. Explore, press buttons, don't be afraid to make mistakes! There's no one way to be successful in finding genealogical treasures in these magnificent databases. With a little practice, you'll be amazed at what you'll find!

Future Promise

We've just begun to see the power and reach of the "digital printing press." Many newspapers are digitizing their current issues and making years of their archived issues available online in all-word-searchable format. Libraries across the country and around the world, such as the Colorado State Library, the University of Utah Library, and the British Library are making historical newspapers available to online patrons. The National Endowment for the Humanities recently launched the National Digital Newspaper Program, a twenty-year



project to "create a national, digital resource of historically significant newspapers from all the states and U.S. territories published between 1836 and 1922." The Library of Congress will maintain this database of millions of pages from newspapers and will offer it online at no charge to researchers.

With the availability of more and more digitized, every-word-searchable newspaper databases will come greater insights into our ancestors' lives and personalities, relationships, successes, and struggles than we ever dreamed we'd see. These newspapers make the world a small place with the promise of large discoveries. ☞