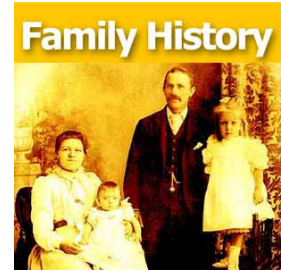


Family History: Genealogy Made Easy

with *Lisa Louise Cooke*

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Welcome to this step-by-step series for beginning genealogists—and more experienced ones who want to brush up or learn something new. I first ran this series in 2008-09. So many people have asked about it, I'm bringing it back in weekly segments.

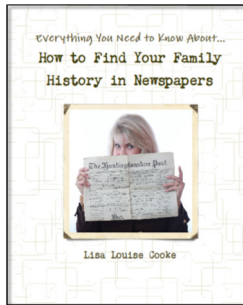
Episode 27: Find Your Family History in Newspapers

Newspapers offer such a unique perspective on history in general, and our ancestors specifically. You can find everything from birth, marriage and death announcements, to school and club event, crime stories, land transactions, sports activities and just about any other activity that your ancestors were part of that made the news. So let's get started and "Read all about it!"

In this episode, you'll hear from Jane Knowles Lindsey at the California Genealogical Society. She is currently the president there and often teaches on the subject of newspaper research.

Here are some take-away thoughts from this episode, intermingled with some updates:

1. Determine which newspapers existed for your ancestor's hometown and time period. Look for ethnic and neighborhood papers, too. The most comprehensive U.S. newspaper directory is at [Chronicling America](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/) (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>)—and it does let you search by language, ethnic background, labor group and more.
2. Look for these newspapers at digitized newspaper sites, starting with the free ones. In the U.S., this means starting with [Chronicling America](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/) and state digital newspaper project sites (search on the state name and "digital newspapers"). These sites came out of the government digitizing program mentioned in the show.
3. Digitized newspaper searching is done with OCR (optical character recognition), which doesn't pick up everything in tough-to-read historical print. Try searching with different spellings, a first name in a particular timeframe, or other people or terms that may have been mentioned.
4. Ancestry has put lots of newspapers on their website—but not everything, and for only limited time periods. Notice what time period is covered for a specific newspaper. Ancestry has since launched [Newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com/) (<http://www.newspapers.com/>).
5. If you've found the name of a newspaper that probably covered your family, but you haven't found it digitized, search the name of the newspaper in your favorite web browsers. Most newspapers are on microfilm somewhere and web directories will likely list holdings. Also, some newspapers have also been indexed on USGenWeb or other sites.
6. State archives and libraries are often a great resource for newspapers. Local libraries may have unique clippings files or scrapbooks.
7. Several websites and databases now focus on obituary content. You can target a search for these.



I loved this topic so much I ended up writing a book on it. Find Your Family History in Newspapers (http://lisalouisecooke.com/lisa-louise-cookes-store/?slug=product_info&products_id=33) walks you through the process of finding and researching old newspapers. You'll find step-by-step instructions, worksheets and checklists, tons of free online resources, websites worth paying for, location-based newspaper websites and a case study that shows you how it's done.

More Newspaper Links

Some of the digital newspaper collections mentioned in the episode are available by library subscription, like The Early American Newspapers collection and the 19th century Newspaper Collection from The Gale Group. Check with your local library.

Fold3.com (formerly www.Footnote.com)
www.fold3.com

GenealogyBank
<http://www.genealogybank.com>

Godfrey Memorial Library
<http://www.godfrey.org/>

New England Historic Genealogical Society (subscription required)
http://www.newenglandancestors.org/database_search/2213.asp

Newspapers.com
<http://newspapers.com/>

Small Town Papers
<http://www.smalltownpapers.com/>

USGenWeb
<http://www.usgenweb.org>