

# Historical Newspapers, Newsletters & Periodicals

By *Howard Maynard Faulkner*

The genealogist has an extraordinary resource in historic newspapers, newsletters, periodicals and the like. When Johannes Gutenberg gave the world the first movable type printing press in the mid 15<sup>th</sup> Century the stage was set for recording all manner of *facts* and *fiction* on paper. By the early 17<sup>th</sup> century examples of what would pass for early newspapers could be found in many countries. These become more abundant in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Currently several private and public organizations have extensive historical collections of newspapers, broadsides, newsletters, and periodicals. Many of their holdings are available *online*. Some require a fee while others are free. More are being added almost daily. *Can't find it today, look tomorrow.*

As genealogists we are interested in *historical facts* yet ever mindful that all in print is not perfect. This frequently presents a challenge for the historian. In spite of errors, omissions, and other transgressions it is possible to gather many facts as well as precious leads that will inform us to the life and times of our ancestors. Huge collections are available in various formats including original printed matter (rare), microfilm, CD's and of course online.

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## Content of interest to genealogists in early printed matter would include:

Obituaries	Family Reunions	Awards and Honors
Death Notices	Shipping News	Military Background
Funeral Details	Family Travel	Newsletters of:
Accidental Deaths	Legal Proceedings	Fraternal, Service,
Criminal Activity	Estate Settlements	Professional, Labor,
Birth Notices	Business Transactions	and Veterans Groups
Matrimony Notices	Education	

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The many different resources of these historical gems include but are not limited to public and private libraries, historical societies, genealogical associations, government agencies like NARA, ethnic and religious organizations. Fee based groups such as **Ancestry.com**, **Footnote.com**, and **HeritageQuest.com**. offer enormous collections from a single source, saving the genealogist time and money. Some of my other favorite websites and organizations for newspapers include:

**American Antiquarian Society** (Worcester, MA) <http://www.americanantiquarian.org/newspapers1.htm>

**Ancestry** [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com)

**Boston Public Library**, 700 Boylston Street, Copley Square, Boston, MA 02116  
<http://www.bpl.org/research/socsci/genealogy.htm>

**Footnote**, [www.Footnote.com](http://www.Footnote.com)

**Genealogy Bank**, Historical Newspapers 1690-1980 <http://www.genealogybank.com/>

**Heritage Quest**, [www.Heritagequest.com](http://www.Heritagequest.com)

**Historic Newspapers Online** (Both International and U.S.)  
[http://genealogy.about.com/od/historic\\_online/Historic\\_Newspapers\\_Online.htm](http://genealogy.about.com/od/historic_online/Historic_Newspapers_Online.htm)

**St. Louis County Library (SLCL)**, [www.slcl.org/](http://www.slcl.org/)