

History and Genealogy in Newspapers

Robin McDonough, MS Ed
History and Genealogy Department
St. Louis County Library
1640 S. Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63131
(314) 994-3300, ext. 2070
www.slcl.org

- I. Overview
 - A. History of newspapers
 - B. Why newspapers are important

- II. What is in a newspaper that will help me with my genealogical research?
 - A. News articles
 - B. Obituaries
 - C. Burial permits
 - D. Births
 - E. Marriages
 - F. Divorces
 - G. Anniversaries
 - H. Photos
 - I. Legal notices
 - J. Family reunions
 - K. Social events
 - L. Achievements
 - M. Club officers and members
 - N. Politics
 - O. Military news
 - P. Sports
 - Q. Classified advertisements
 - R. Advertisements

- III. Guides for newspaper research
 - A. *The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy* (929.1 S724)
 - B. *Family Tree Historical Newspapers Guide: How to Find Your Ancestors in Archived Newspapers* (929.1072 B422F)
 - C. *How to Find Your Family History in Newspapers* (R 929.1 C772H)
 - D. *PastPorts* articles
 - 1. "Historic Newspapers"-May, 2010
 - 2. "Obituaries in St. Louis Newspapers: A Comparison"-April, 2011

3. "Missouri Republican"-April, 2012
 4. "Saint Louis Newspapers"-October, 2013
- IV. In what format(s) does the newspaper I need exist?
- A. Print
 - B. Microfilm
 - C. Abstract
 - D. Database
- V. Print resources for locating newspapers (examples)
- A. National Resources: *American Newspapers* (R 071 A512)
 - B. State-specific resources: *Newspapers and Periodicals of Illinois, 1814-1879* (R 977.3 S425N)
 - C. City/county specific resources (often indexes and clippings): *Marriages and Deaths from Steuben County, New York Newspapers, 1797-1868* (974.783 M383M)
 - D. Ethnic-specific resources: *African-American Newspapers and Periodicals: A National Bibliography* (R 015.73 A258)
- VI. Be aware of name changes and mergers (Example-*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*)
- A. *Daily Missouri Democrat*, 1853-1868
 - B. *Missouri Democrat*, 1868-1872
 - C. *St. Louis Democrat*, 1873-1875
 - D. *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 1875-1986
- VII. Cite your source
- A. Complete newspaper title
 - B. City and state
 - C. Date
 - D. Edition
 - E. Page number
 - F. Column number/letter
 - G. Database and access date or film information
- VIII. Problems with newspapers
- A. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) may misread print
 - B. Creases/folds
 - C. Tears
 - D. Smudges
 - E. Typos
- IX. Tips
- A. Put in other information-address, maiden name, etc. when searching a database
 - B. May need to browse the newspaper instead of searching

- C. Can use wildcard asterisk and Boolean searches in some databases
 - D. Items like marriages and births sometimes filler so may not always find
 - E. Many families could not afford an obituary or chose to publish one
 - F. Urban vs. rural papers
 - G. St. Louis newspaper obituary tips:
 1. Before 1915, more obituaries in the *Globe-Democrat* than *Post-Dispatch*
 2. 1800s *Post-Dispatch* obituaries found on first page of classified ads
 3. *Westliche Post* obituaries-look for the dark lines
 4. More St. Louis obituaries beginning in late 1800s
- X. St. Louis County Library History & Genealogy online databases
- A. **Access World News**-Includes hundreds of titles, check database for listing. Includes local papers-*Independent News, North Side Journal, South County Journal, Southwest County Journal*.
 - B. **African-American Newspapers: 19th Century**-Consists of primary source material providing insight into the cultural life and history during the first half of the 1800s through articles written by African-Americans for African-Americans.
 - C. **America's Obituaries and Death Notices**-Contains obituaries and death notices for all 50 states. Coverage varies by place and date.
 - D. **AncestryLibraryEdition.com**-Over 2000 U.S. and international papers.
 - E. **Civil War: A Newspaper Perspective**-Includes Civil War-era newspapers published 1860-1865.
 - F. **Historical Newspapers: U.S. Major Dailies**-Full text coverage of several major papers including the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Chicago Daily Tribune*.
 - G. **Historical St. Louis Post-Dispatch**-Covers the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* from 1874-2003.
 - H. **Newspaper Archive**-Contains thousands of historical newspaper titles from the U.S. and many foreign countries. Coverage is spotty.
 - I. **Newspapers.com**-Tutorial can be found on SLCL youtube channel. Offers more than 10,000 newspapers from the U.S., Canada, Australia, Ireland, Great Britain and Panama. Includes the following St. Louis newspapers:
 - St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 1874-1922
 - St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 1853-1963
 - St. Louis Star and Times*, 1910-1922
 - Amerika* (in German), 1872-1914
 - Anzeiger des Westens* (in German), 1842-1898
 - Jewish Voice*, 1880-1920
 - Jewish Tribune*, 1879-1884
 - Le Patriote* (in French), 1878-1887
 - Modern View* (Jewish), 1913-1940
 - Naborhood Link News* (South St. Louis County), 1930-1969
 - St. Louis Palladium* (African-American), 1903-1907
 - Westliche Post* (in German), 1857-1938
 - J. **Nineteenth-century U. S. Newspapers**-Contains hundreds of urban and rural newspapers. Coverage is spotty.

- K. **ProQuest Digital Microfilm™** – *New York Times*-Digital reproduction of the original newspaper, so it contains all the photos and other illustrations found in the print version. 2008-3 months ago.
 - L. **ProQuest Digital Microfilm™** – *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*-Digital reproduction of the original newspaper, so it contains all the photos and other illustrations found in the print version. 2008-3 months ago.
 - M. **St. Louis Post-Dispatch Newsbank/Access World News**-Full text, comprehensive database with access from 1988 to present and partial access from 1981-1987. Text only, does not include images.
- XI. St. Louis Post-Dispatch Options/Years
- A. Newspapers.com: 1874-1922 (best interface)
 - B. Historical Post-Dispatch: 1874-2003 (widest coverage)
 - C. ProQuest Digital Microfilm-St. Louis Post-Dispatch: 2008-3 months ago (most recent)
 - D. St. Louis Post-Dispatch Newsbank: 1988-present, partial access 1981-1987 (text only, no images)
- XII. Other online resources
- A. **Chronicling America (Library of Congress)**-<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>. Includes newspapers for selected states as well as a U.S. newspapers directory from 1690 to present.
 - B. **Ethnic News Watch (SLCL)**–Includes hundreds of titles, includes magazines as well as newspapers.
 - C. **State Historical Society of Missouri Digital Newspaper Project/Newspapers on Microfilm**-<http://shs.umsystem.edu/newspaper/index.shtml>. Newspapers from all over the state of Missouri. Digitized or on microfilm.
 - D. **St. Louis Globe-Democrat Clipping Files**-www.umsl.edu/mercantile/special_collections/slma-112.html. This database of articles covers the 1920s to the 1980s.
 - E. **St. Louis Post-Dispatch Obituary Index**-www.slpl.org. From the St. Louis Public Library homepage, scroll down to the bottom and click on “Obituary Search.” Covers 1880-1930, 1942-1945, 1960-1970 and 1992-July 2020.
 - F. **St. Louis County Library History & Genealogy Indexes** (examples)
 1. *St. Louis County Watchman-Advocate* index
 2. *Westiche Post* obituary index
 - G. A few more (links not found on SLCL): **50 States**-www.50states.com/news, **Cyndi’s List**-www.cyndislist.com/newspapers, **Elephind**-www.elephind.com, **Small Town Newspapers**-www.smalltownpapers.com.
 - H. Local libraries and historical societies
 - I. International newspaper websites