



# NEWSPAPERARCHIVE

## The Context of Their Lives

BY HEATHER HAUNERT

Vital records are a core component of any family history seeker's toolbox. Birth, marriage, and death certificates give us a foundation on which to build our family tree. However, our ancestors are more than the names, dates, and places we associate with them. That's where historical and social context can help fill the gaps and round out the lives and stories of our family members.

Newspapers are an incredible source for digging deep into historical and social context. There are many different types of information, so let's take a look at some examples from a small-town newspaper.

### Current Events

To really understand the life of an ancestor, current events give us a snapshot of what was happening at the time. Newspapers published current events from the local (city and county level) all the way to state, national, and even world news. Read: [A Plethora of Events](#).

### Sickness

Do you ever wonder what ailed your ancestors back in the day? Oftentimes, short blurbs were published in the newspaper telling of sicknesses and diseases afflicting people and how they were faring. If there was more of an outbreak, those were also included to warn the public. Read: [Childhood Diseases](#).

### Property

Similar to migration, real estate transactions in the newspaper give us a snapshot of where our ancestors lived, what they owned, and the cost of property compared to the present day. Things like real estate transfers and Sheriff's sales might hold a missing piece of information about your ancestors.

### Real Estate Transfers

[Be sure to read the full article on our blog for even more ideas and examples of finding historical and social context to build out your ancestors' stories.](#)

### In This Issue...



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Newspaper Highlight: [San Francisco Call](#)

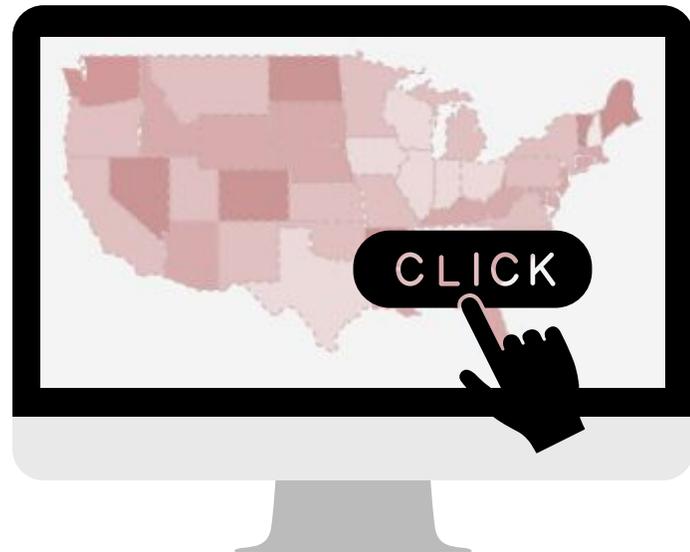


[Sherlock Holmes Stories in Newspaper](#)

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NewspaperArchive has a great interactive tool to aid in your search for newspapers of different states. Hover your cursor over a state on the interactive map on our website, and you can see how many publications are available in our collection for that state.



## NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

### SAN FRANCISCO CALL

1895-1913

Several years ago while doing some family research, I stumbled across the San Francisco Call newspaper. Since then, I have referred back to it many times. The stories, their coverage, the images...they are quite intriguing. If you're looking for an interesting turn of the century read, check out the San Francisco Call.

**DISCOVER**  
**SAN FRANCISCO CALL**

## STORY HIGHLIGHT

### Sherlock Holmes

Stories by famous authors were a popular addition to newspapers of bygone days. The infamous Sherlock Holmes created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had many stories published in newspapers. Look for your favorite Sherlock Holmes story by doing an ADVANCED SEARCH at NewspaperArchive.



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