

# **Enriching Your Ancestors Story Using Occupational Records**

By: Diane S. Romanosky for the Chelmsford Library Genealogy Club, Chelmsford, MA – Nov 2, 2021

## **Why is Occupational information important?**

- Enrich your ancestor's story
- Insight into social status
- Distinguish between people with same name
- Pass down from father to son
- Provide additional genealogical information

## **How to find your ancestor's occupation**

- Census Records
- Vital Records
- Obituaries
- SS Application Records
- Military Draft and other Records
- City Directories – often lists where employed
- Old Pictures

## **How Can You Find Out More About Your Ancestor's Occupational?**

- Research the occupation/industry
- Research the Company
- Research the Location – Museums/Historical Societies/Libraries/Archives
- Read Books hard copy & online
- Watch Videos about the occupation

## **They Did What? Odd Occupation Quiz:**

<https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/occupations-quiz/?icid=bl-2017-6473>

## **What Types of Occupational Records Are There?**

- Govt Reports – Federal, State & Local
- Company Records
- Union Records
- Occupational Clubs/Societies
- Licenses or Certification
- Occupational training/Apprenticeship

## **Where Can You Find Occupational Records?**

- On line at sites such as Google Books, Archive Grid and Hathi Trust  
Example: State Annual Reports on Coal Mines
- Ancestry, Family Search, etc. have some records – may have to search Collection, may not be indexed. Use Family Search Wiki for location.
- Historical Societies, Local History Museums, Libraries, etc. Example: Baker Library, Harvard – Textile Mill Records
- Some online many not online

**Examples:** Farm Census, State Coal Mining Reports, Railroad Pension Records, Catholic Priest Church Records, Textile Mill Company Records.

## How to Find Your Ancestor's Occupation – Reference/Resource Links

### - Discovering the Occupations of Your Ancestors, Finding Clues in Occupational Records:

<https://www.thoughtco.com/discovering-the-occupations-of-your-ancestors-1422324>

### General Occupational Information

-Dictionary of Old Occupations: <https://www.thoughtco.com/dictionary-of-old-occupations-and-trades-1422235>

-Old English Census Occupations: <http://www.worldthroughthelens.com/family-history/old-occupations.php>

-Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Online Catalog – For pictures of people performing different occupations at: <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/>

## How to Research Your Ancestor's Occupation – Resource Links

-How to Research Your Ancestor's Occupation: <https://lusalouisecooke.com/2018/02/17/ancestors-occupations/>

### -Job Hunting: Researching Your Ancestors Employment:

<https://www.familytreemagazine.com/premium/job-hunting-researching-ancestors-employment/>

-Apprenticeship Records to Trace Your Ancestor from the United States to England. Article from Legacy Tree Genealogists Using Family Search Records

<https://www.legacytree.com/blog/findmypast-record-collections>

## Where to Find Records – Resource Links

-Archive Grid <https://beta.worldcat.org/archivegrid/about/>

-Google Books <https://archive.org/details/googlebooks>

-Hathi Trust <https://www.hathitrust.org/>

-Ancestry – Occupational and Organizational Directories:

<https://search.ancestry.com/search/category.aspx?cat=136>

-Ancestry UK – Occupations & Education: <https://www.ancestry.com/cs/uk/occupations>

-Midwives, Menus and Meteors: Using Government Reports for Genealogy:

<https://www.legacytree.com/blog/using-government-reports-genealogy>

-Family Search, United States Occupations Wiki:

[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United\\_States\\_Occupations](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Occupations)

## Apprenticeship/Trade/Union Records

**-Find My Past - Hampshire, Portsmouth Trade Directories 1863-1927**

<https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-Records/hampshire-portsmouth-trade-directories-1863-1927> & **Britain, Trade Union Membership Registers** <https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records/britain-trade-union-membership-registers>

**-Apprenticeship Records to Trace Your Ancestor from the United States to England.** Article from Legacy Tree Genealogists Using Family Search Records

<https://www.legacytree.com/blog/findmypast-record-collections>

## Coal Mining

**-Pennsylvania Museum and Historical Commission – Research Guide Site:**

<https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Archives/Research-Online/Pages/Research-Guides.aspx>

**-Catalogue of the Pennsylvania Department of Mines Annual Reports** at HathiTrust at the link below:

<https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000639797>

**-Catalogue of the West Virginia Department of Mines Annual Reports** at HathiTrust at the link below:

<https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/011482856>

**-West Virginia Coal Mining** information site [www.wvgenweb.org](http://www.wvgenweb.org)

**-Duties of Various Mining Jobs at PA Gen Web:** <http://www.pagenweb.org/~luzerne/mines/minejobs.htm>

## Textile Mill Workers

**-NE Historical Genealogical Society, American Ancestors Magazine, Winter 2013 Issue – *The Lives of New England Mill Workers*** <http://textileworker.com/ckfinder/userfiles/files/NEHGS.pdf>

**-Book: *The Most They Ever Had*** by Rick Bragg

**-Harvard Business School, Baker Library, Soldiers Field, Boston, MA, A Guide to Resources in the Business Manuscripts Collation at Baker Library. Women, Enterprise & Society: A Guide to Resources in the Business Manuscripts Collection at Baker Library.** <https://www.library.hbs.edu/hc/wes/> Open M-F, 9 am to 5 pm, DeGasper Beaubien Reading Room. Factory Labor, Textiles. Has Records for, Lancaster Mills, Clinton, MA, Parkhill Manufacturing, Fitchburg, MA and Slater Companies, RI Mills and many more.

<https://www.library.hbs.edu/>

## Railroad Workers

**-Ancestry.com** has a U.S., **Railroad Retirement Pension Index, 1934-1987** and other railroad related databases.

**-National Archives & Records Administration – Railroad Retirement Board Records:**

<https://www.archives.gov/atlanta/public/railroad-retirement-board-records>

## Catholic Priests and Nuns

**-The Three R's of Researching Roman Catholic Church Records**

<https://www.archives.com/experts/alzo-lisa/researching-roman-catholic-church-records.html>

**-Cyndislist** <https://www.cyndislist.com/catholic/general/>

**-American Ancestors - Vita Brevis Blog – Religious Necrologies**

<https://vitabrevis.americanancestors.org/2018/11/religious-necrologies/#more-11713>