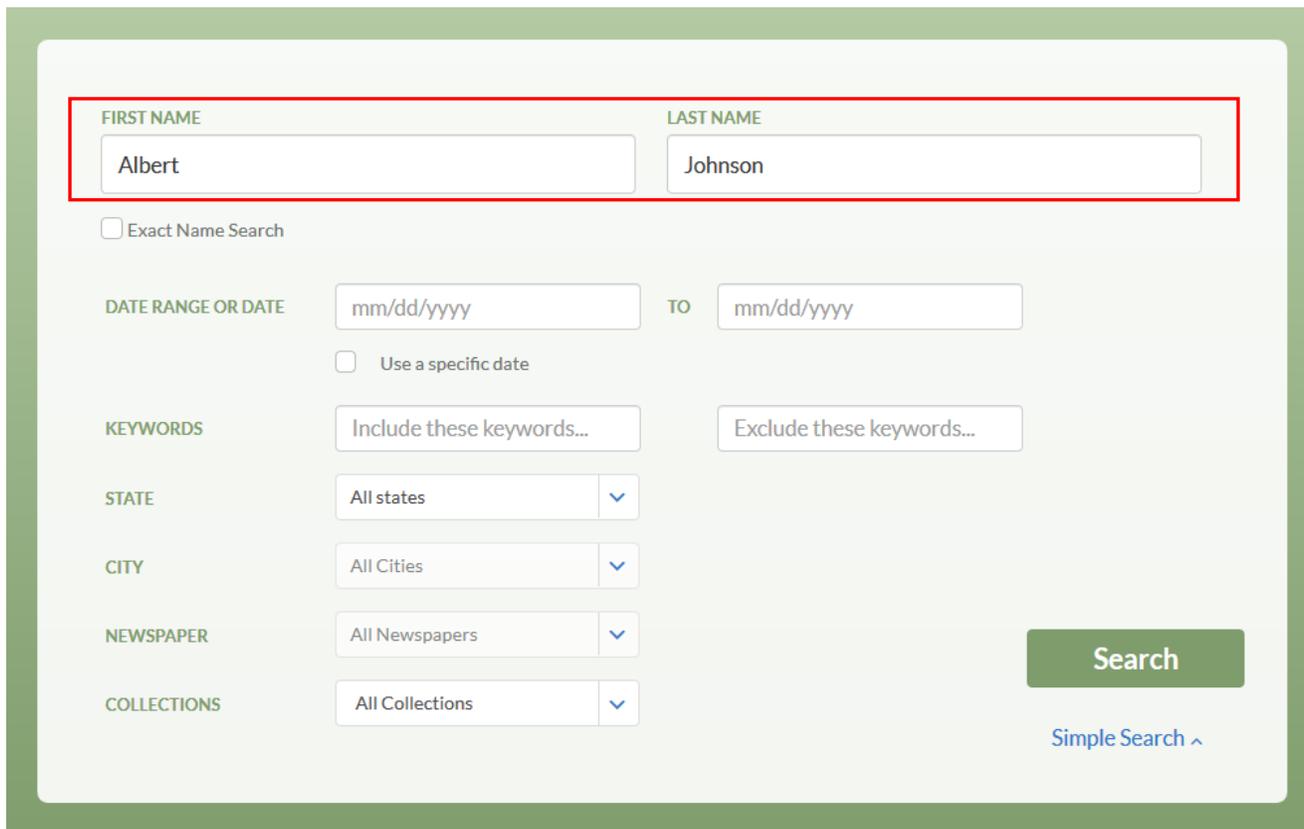# Tips for Searching Newspapers

Searching First and Last Names:

We recommended that you first start broad by beginning your search using only the first and last name of your ancestor.

It may be tempting to enter additional information all at once such as specific dates, middle or maiden names. However, every word or name entered into a search field must be contained in the actual newspaper article in order for it to be retrieved as a match. In other words, if the word or name you're searching for is not contained in the newspaper article itself, GenealogyBank will not recognize it as a match.

For example, if the name in the newspaper article does not contain the middle name or initial of your ancestor, GenealogyBank will not retrieve results for that name even though it may contain results of that name without the middle name.

GenealogyBank will look for the first and last names within four words of one another. This allows two gaps for possible middle names in-between the first and last name. For example, Albert _____ _____ Johnson. If you search for the first name Albert and the last name Johnson, you may get results for "Albert and Sally Johnson", "Albert C Johnson", "Albert Carey Johnson" and even "Johnson, Albert".
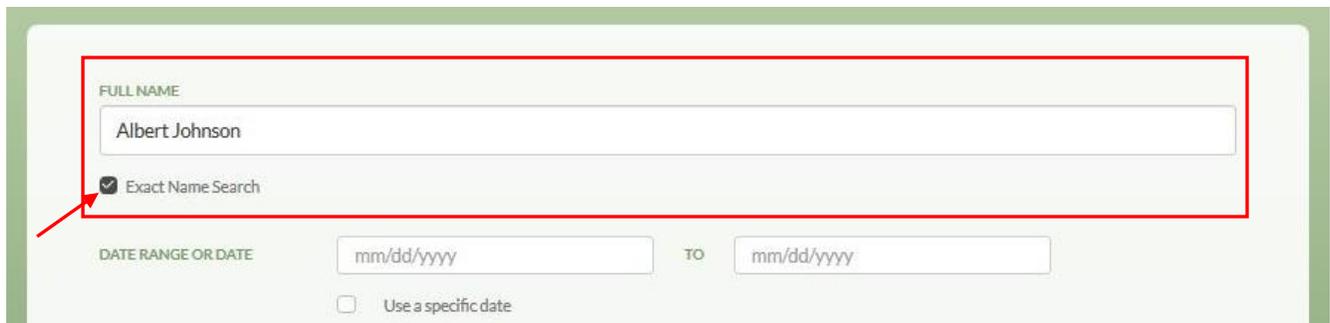
If the first or last names are uncommon, try searching the uncommon name without the other.

Remember, you can always add more information to narrow your search results.

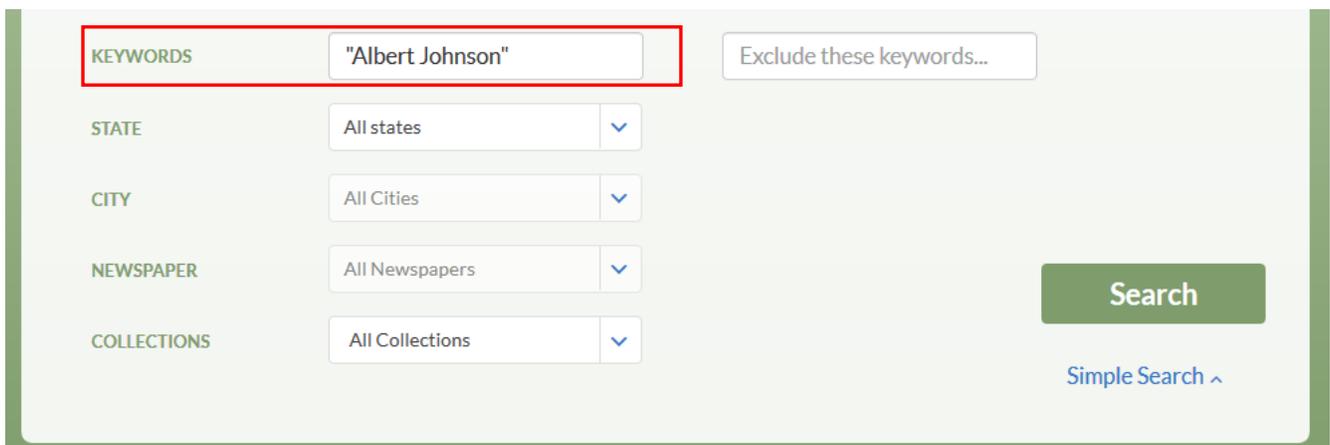**Performing an Exact Search:**

You can search for an exact phrase or name in an exact order. This will eliminate the gaps in-between the first and last names as mentioned above. It will also keep the names in order.

To conduct an exact search, click 'Advanced Search'. Enter the first and last name and click the 'Exact Search' checkbox. Using the example above for Albert Johnson, we would enter Albert in the first name field and Johnson in the last name field. After clicking the 'Exact Search' checkbox the two names would appear in this exact order and without middle names. You could also enter "Albert C Johnson", "Albert Carey Johnson", or "A. C. Johnson" for example.

You can also perform an exact search using the 'Include Keyword' field. When using this field you will need to include quotations around the name or phrase when using this field. For example, **"Albert Johnson"**.
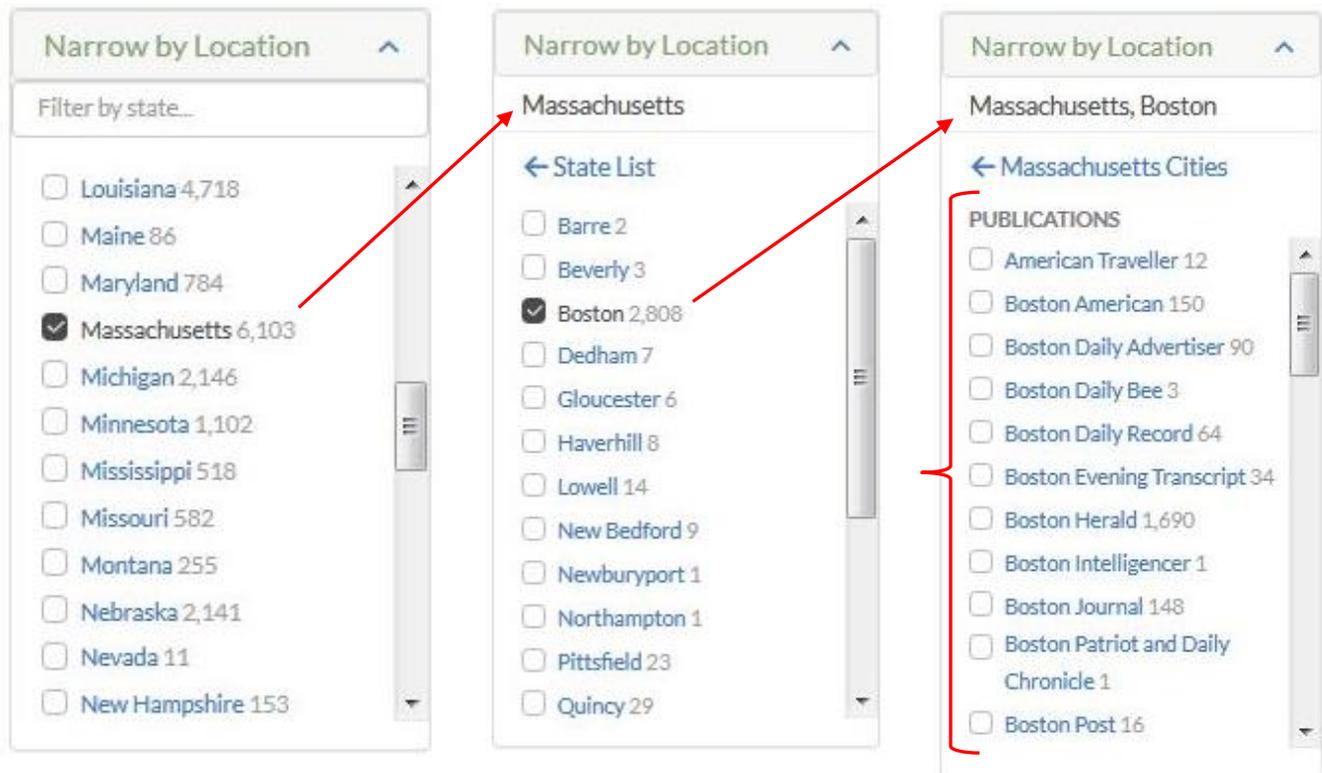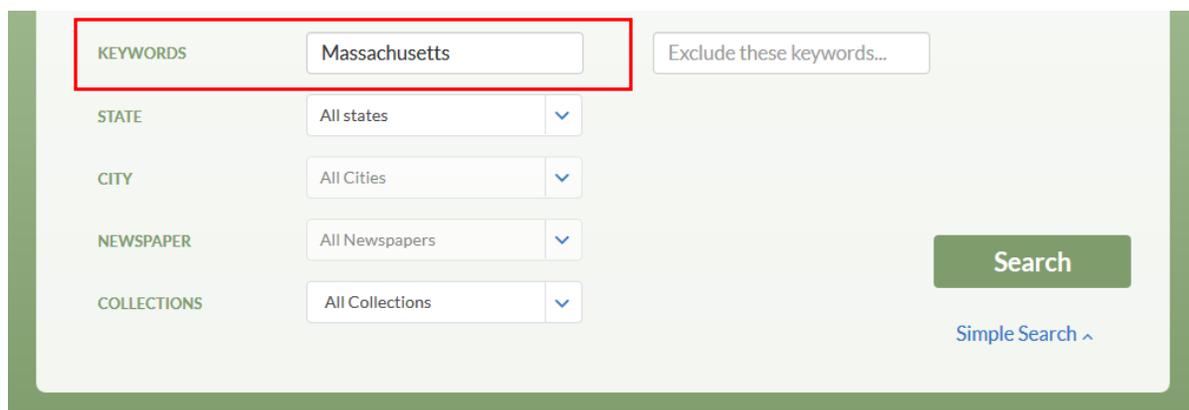

Searching Locations:

Think of your local newspaper and how few of the articles are from the city or state in which it's published. This was common throughout history. One misconception is that small town news didn't travel, when in fact it did.

A photo of a woman helping a pet duck cross the road in Allentown, Pennsylvania was published in a newspaper as far away as Illinois and Tennessee. An article indicating that the mail would be delayed because the part-time, rural Indiana carrier fell ill was published in a South Carolina newspaper. You never know where articles with your ancestors' may have been published! Therefore it is recommended that you start by searching all states and then narrow your search from there.

You can narrow your results to a specific state, city or newspaper publication. Note that state and city locations return results from the location of where the article was published and not the location of the actual event.

You can also enter the name of a state, city or town in the 'Include Keywords' field. This will search for articles published <u>anywhere in the U.S. that mention</u> the state, city or town along with the name you're searching.

The exact spelling of each word entered into the 'Include Keywords' field must be in the newspaper article in order for it to be retrieved as a match. Therefore it is recommended that you start by using either the city or state name but not both. Sometimes the name of a location in the article is abbreviated. For example, the state of Massachusetts can be abbreviated MA or MASS. If you're entering more than one word, remember to use quotations. For example, West Springfield should be entered as **"West Springfield"**.

Browse Newspapers by State & Title:

Browse a current list of all newspaper titles, including the years of coverage available for each title or browse all titles for a given state by clicking 'Browse' in the top menu and selecting 'Newspapers by State' or 'Newspapers by Title'.

Using Date Fields:

Entering a specific date or a date range can help narrow your search results. The date field pertains to the publication date of the newspaper and not necessarily when the actual event occurred. The newspaper article may not have been published on the exact date of the event so it is best to start with a broad date range.

Dates can be entered in various formats such as: 09/16/1880, September 16, 1880, Sept 16, 1880 or 16-Sept-1880. When using a date remember to start broad and then narrow your results from there.

Date Range: March 14, 1802 to Oct 15, 1855

Specific Date: October 15, 1855

Using Keywords:

Include Keywords: As mentioned above, every word or name entered into the keyword field must be contained on the actual newspaper page or article in order for it to be retrieved as a match. Using this field will eliminate any results that do not contain <u>both</u> the name you're searching as well as the keyword entered.

For example, if you are searching for a war veteran, try entering the keyword vet or veteran.

The most effective keywords are often the name of the city or state where your ancestors' lived at that time. When searching for an obituary you may also try searching for the first name of a surviving family member or keywords like teacher, chemist or cemetery.

Exclude Keywords: The 'Exclude Keywords' field is helpful in eliminating results that do not apply to the individual you are searching for.

For example, if you are looking for an article on a man named Henry Ford but you don't want articles about the founder of Ford Motor Company entering words like "Motor", "Company", or "Auto" into the 'Exclude Keywords' field will remove articles from your search results that include those words. You can enter more than one keyword into the 'Include Keywords' and 'Exclude Keywords' fields. Do this by adding the word OR (with both letters capitalized) between each word.

You can also include a phrase in quotation marks. For example if searching for an ancestor whose name was Thomas Edison but not the famous inventor, entering "Thomas Alva Edison" into the 'Exclude Keywords' field would be helpful in eliminating results that include the full name of the inventor. Entering this name in quotation marks will only remove the results for Thomas Alva Edison and <u>not</u> results for Thomas Edison.

Searching 'Recent Obituaries *1977- Today'*:

When searching the collection 'Recent Obituaries' the first and last name field will search for the deceased individual's name only. It will not search the entire text of the obituary, unlike the Newspaper Archive collection mentioned above. To search for names that may be contained in the body of the obituary, enter the name of the individual with quotations in the 'Include Keywords' field. This will search the entire text of the obituary for that name. Tip: Surviving family members are rarely listed with their first and last name but rather as: "Mr. Johnson is survived by his children: Andrew (Linda), Jake (Sarah), Julie (Max) Johnson, and Joseph."

U.S. Obituary Search (1977 - Today)

Search over 250 million obituaries to find out who your ancestors are and what they meant to those who knew them best!
Enter your ancestor's name below and we'll search recent obituaries to help you learn more.

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME

☐ Exact Name Search

DATE RANGE OR DATE   mm/dd/yyyy   TO   mm/dd/yyyy

☐ Use a specific date

KEYWORDS   "Albert Johnson"   Exclude these keywords...

STATE   All states ⌄

CITY   All Cities ⌄

NEWSPAPER   All Newspapers ⌄   **Search**

Simple Search ⌃

Additional tips can be found under the 'Help' section on GenealogyBank.com at http://bit.ly/16otHSK

If you need further assistance, contact a site expert at 866-641-3297, Monday thru Friday 10 am to 7 pm EST.