

Understanding and Using Fulton History Website Owner Tom Tryniski

www.fultonhistory.com provides images
and an index for over 51 million pages of
newspapers



Tom & His Staff



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www.dennisAhogan.com

...but really it's a 1
person operation!

Notes

- A copy of all slides of this presentation are available on on my site, www.dennisAhogan.com

Why use Newspapers

- Birth/Marriage/Death info
 - Substitute for Vital Records & Church Records
- Info about relatives & associates
- Learn tidbits about personality
- Get Lucky!

Newspaper Sites

- New York State Free Sites
 - www.fultonhistory.com 51+ million pages
 - <https://fultonsearch.org>
 - <http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/> 11+ million
 - <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/> 19+ million
(mostly downstate papers, only 1 upstate)

Newspaper Sites - Cont'd

- Other newspaper resources
 - www.theancestorhunt.com
 - <https://theancestorhunt.com/quicksheets.html>
 - <https://www.cyndislist.com/us/>
 - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:List_of_online_newspaper_archives
 - <https://www.elephind.com/>
 - <http://icon.crl.edu/digitization.php>
 - <https://www.europeana.eu/en/collections/topic/18-newspapers>

Some Website Background

- Tom was Corporate Director of Systems for a NYC firm
- In 1998 a friend's mother had some boxes of postcards from Fulton & upstate
- Some organizations that have used his site include: US Executive Office, Secretary of State, FBI, and CIA

In the News

- 2018 article about Tom Tryniski
- https://www.cjr.org/the_profile/tom-tryniski-fultonhistory.php
-
- [YouTube interview](#)

Presentation Background

- The Church Records Preservation Committee (CRPC) of the Rochester Genealogical Society (<https://nyrgs.org/>) digitalizes records of the oldest churches in Rochester
- In August 2011, the CRPC visited Tom Tryniski in Fulton, NY.

OCR Intro

- OCR stands for Optical Character Recognition
- OCR software translates words in image files into text files
- Image file >> OCR >> text file

OCR for mere mortals...

- We would use an image of a newspaper clipping of so-so quality
- We would use free or inexpensive OCR software. See www.freeocr.net for a list of free OCR software.
- We would edit the resulting text file to make corrections.
- Note - OCR is not perfect...a word that is human-readable may be interpreted differently by OCR.

Tom's Approach

- High-end Hardware
- High-end Software
- Automation

Scan Microfilm to digital images



- Microfilm is his input of choice
- Needs 35MB image for successful OCR
- This Wicks and Wilson 8850 scanner lists for \$80,000 - he paid \$3,500

The "slides" on the screen are individual images as they are being digitalized from microfilm. The images scroll from right to left. Once he has calibrated, the images fly by.



Convert digital images to text

OCR (ABBYY FineReader)

He builds his computers.



3 Business Class Road Runner Modems with a balancer (in 2011)



Tom Monitoring Usage in Gazebo




Website Usage

- www.fultonhistory.com

Search over **51,185,714** Old Newspaper pages from US & Canada

Enter search request Search

 [Help and Support](#) this on going project

Items per page

all of the words

Stemming

Fuzzy searching -- Fuzziness

Phonic searching

WordNet synonyms

WordNet related words

User-defined synonyms

Sort type

Time Radio while you search.

[Help & FAQ](#)

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– It's a free site, consider a donation

Enter search request Search

 [Help and Support](#) this on going project

"Results May Vary"

- How this site displays, depends on your:
 - Computer - pc, mac, tablet, ...
 - Operating System - Windows 7, 8, 10, Mac, ...
 - Browser & version - chrome, firefox, ie, ...
 - PDF Reader & ver - Adobe Reader, foxit, ...
 - chrome & firefox browsers have their own readers...
 - Version of the Hit Highlighter plug-in

Search Hit Highlighting

- Do a simple search, select a result
- You want your search hits to be highlighted, like in this example:

16 THE GENEVA TIMES Friday

Geneva beats DeSales Panthers

W-Fl. Baseball

STANDINGS

Northern Division				
	W.	L.	Pct.	GB
Geneva	9	1	.900	—
Newark	6	4	.600	3
Candaigua	5	5	.500	4
DeSales	3	6	.333	5½
Lyons	1	9	.100	8

Southern Division

Mynderse	8	2	.800	—
Penn Yan	7	2	.778	½
Watertoo	7	3	.700	1
Whitman	2	8	.200	6
Victor	1	9	.100	7

Sports Menu

SATURDAY

Baseball
Utica at Hobart, noon.
Clyde-Savannah at Mt. Carmel (2), 6 p.m.

Lacrosse
Army at Hobart, 2 p.m.

What if your search hits are NOT highlighted?

[Note - If you are seeing highlighted search terms, you do NOT need to follow the steps below.]

Follow these 4 steps to implement Adobe Reader.

- Install or Upgrade Adobe Reader (free) to the latest version
 - <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
- Install the highlighter plug-in for Adobe Reader
 - Click on FAQ_HELP_INDEX button (how to find this is described later)
 - Ctrl-F to search for *highlighter*
 - Click on Hit Highlighter for Acrobat 10 for instructions on installing the plug-in.
- Upgrade your browser to the latest version
 - Chrome: www.google.com/chrome
 - Firefox: www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/
- Modify your browser to use Adobe Reader as the default PDF reader
 - Chrome: <http://www.thechromesource.com/how-to-enable-adobes-pdf-reader-in-chrome/>
 - Firefox: http://howto.cnet.com/8301-11310_39-57570666-285/how-to-change-the-built-in-pdf-viewer-in-firefox/

Search Hit Workaround

- Why would search hits not be visible?
 - Software issue (fixes discussed above)
 - Old or Poor Quality or Large images (2 pages in 1 image)
 - But there is a workaround...

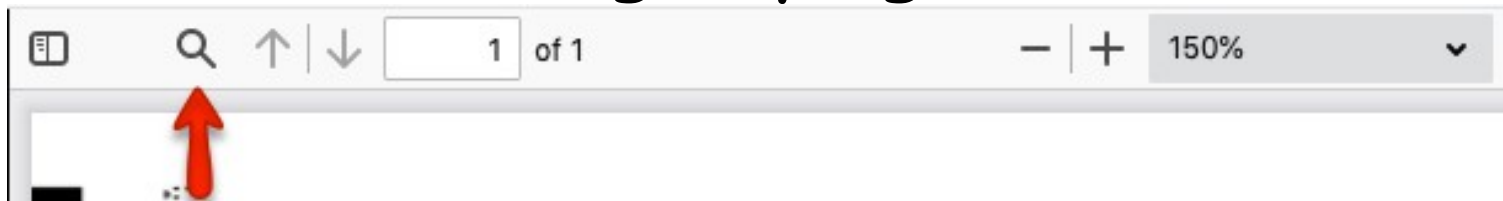
Search Hit Workaround Cont'd

- When image displays in the Image frame, Click on "Automatic Zoom" (Optional)

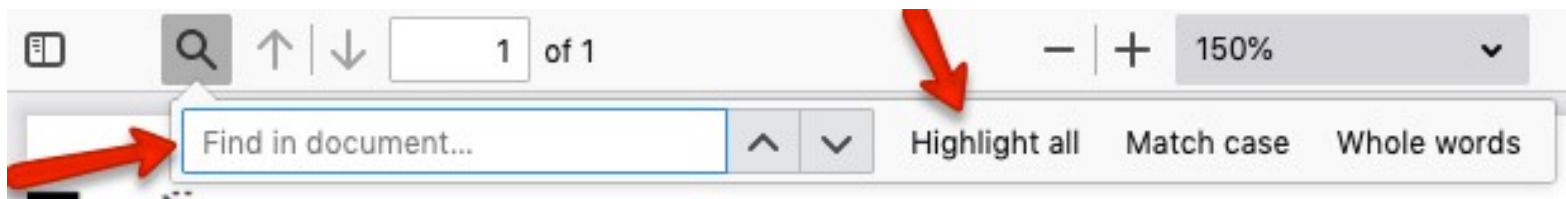


Search Hit Workaround Cont'd

- Click on the Magnifying Glass



Click on "Highlight All" and enter search string



Searching

Search Over 21,790,000 Old New York State Historical Newspaper Pages

Hogan Canandaigua

all of the words



Search

- Enter your string
- Choose from dropdown (click on arrow):
 - All of the words
 - Any of the words
 - The exact phrase
 - Boolean
- Press *Enter* or click *Search*

Searching Examples

- *john hogan canandaigua* with all of the words chosen, yields pages containing all 3 words which may be scattered. (case does NOT matter)
- "*john hogan*" *canandaigua* with all of the words chosen, yields pages containing all 3 words with john & hogan next to each other.
- "*john hogan*" -*hulk* with all of the words chosen, yields pages containing john & hogan next to each other and NO occurrence of hulk.

Searching - Potential Problems

- Middle Names/Initials - "John Hogan" vs "John F. Hogan" vs "Hogan, John"
- Abbreviations - "William" vs "Wm" vs "W"
- Married names - "Mary Hogan" may be in the newspaper as "Mrs. John Hogan"
- Hyphenation - "Hog-an" vs "Hogan"
- Long words (Canandaigua, O'Shaughnessy) increase the odds of OCR "mistakes"

Searching with Wildcards

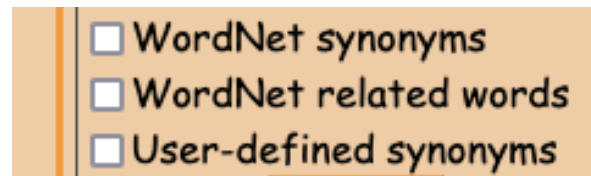
- **Wildcard** characters:
 - Partial-word wildcards:
 - **?** matches 1 character, ex: H?gan would match Hogan, Hagan, Hegan, etc.
 - ***** matches 0 to many characters, ex: Wil* would match Wil, Wilson, Willson, Willoughby, etc.
 - Full-word wildcard:
 - ***** matches 1 word, ex: "John * Hogan"

Other Useful Symbols

- `~~` numeric range, `1912~~1921` matches any page containing a number from 1912 to 1921
- `~` invokes stemming, ex: `hero~` matches `hero` and `heroes`.
- `%` fuzzy symbol, ex: `can%%andaigua`, must begin "can" and allows 2 "errors"

Other Useful Symbols

- **&** synonym symbol, headstone**&** matches tombstone Must select a synonym box!



WordNet synonyms
 WordNet related words
 User-defined synonyms

- **#** phonic symbol, ex: **#**smith matches smithe and smyth

Boolean Searching

- MUST select the *boolean* option in the dropdown menu, for the following **operators** to function correctly:
 - A **and** B, both must be present
 - A **or** B, at least 1 must be present
 - A **w/5** B, A must be within 5 words of B
 - A **w/1** B, A must next to B (also finds B A)
 - A **w/2** B, this is useful to allow for a middle name or initial (also finds B A)
 - A **not** B, A must be present but not B

Boolean Searching Cont'd

- With the *boolean* option selected in the dropdown menu:
 - $A B \text{ not} = A \text{ and } B$
 - *Hogan Canandaigua*
Hogan must be next to Canandaigua
 - *Hogan and Canandaigua*
Hogan does NOT have to be next to Canandaigua

Boolean Searching Cont'd

- With the *boolean* option selected in the dropdown menu:
 - A *w/2* B, this is useful to allow for a middle name or initial (also finds B A)
 - *John w/2 Hogan* finds
 - John Hogan
 - John Francis Hogan (or John F. Hogan)
 - Hogan, John

Boolean Searching Cont'd

- mary w/2 hogan and (john w/2 hogan or francis w/2 hogan)
- Use parentheses to organize complex boolean search strings.
 - Contents of parentheses are evaluated first. Logic is evaluated from left to right.
 - This string will give completely different results if the parentheses are left out.

Searching & OCR Results

- So far we've seen many ways to tailor our search string.
- These work fine assuming the OCR process has provided "correct" results (Hogan in the source doc is OCR'd as Hogan).
- What can we do when the OCR process is not successful? Examples:
 - Hogan OCR'd and indexed as Hagan
 - The source has a typo, Hogen

Fuzzy Searching

Search Over 21,790,000 Old New York State Historical Newspaper Pages

Hogan Canandaigua all of the words Search

Items per page 200 Stemming

Fuzzy searching -- Fuzziness 0

- OCR is not perfect. OCR may produce something like *Hogam Camandugw* instead of *Hogan Canandaigua*.
- As long as I search for *Hogan*, I will NEVER find instances where OCR gave incorrect results for *Hogan*...like *Hogam* or *Hojan* or *Hagan* or ...

Fuzzy Searching - Cont'd

Search Over 21,790,000 Old New York State Historical Newspaper Pages

Hogan Canandaigua all of the words Search

Items per page 200 Stemming

Fuzzy searching -- Fuzziness 0

- Fuzziness is a way to do non-exact searches. A fuzziness of 1 could be thought of as allowing 1 character to be different than what you had searched for.
 - _ogan or h_gan or ho_an or hog_n or hoga_ or hogany
- Strategy: First search with NO fuzziness, then try fuzziness of 1, then 2, etc.

Fuzzy Searching Alternatives

- The fuzzy search in FultonHistory is a great tool, but as an alternative try substituting letters in your search string. This is also a useful technique to use for search engines that do not offer fuzzy searches.
- For example consider searching for a word containing *rn*. The OCR process could easily yield *m* instead of *rn*. So substitute a *m* and repeat the search.
- A list of potential substitution pairs can be found at <https://moonswings.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/ocr-substitutions.pdf>

-

Stemming Searches

Search Over 21,790,000 Old New York State Historical Newspaper Pages

Hogan Canandaigua all of the words

Items per page 200 Stemming

Fuzzy searching -- Fuzziness 0

- Stemming, when selected, adds extra search words for you. For example, if you search for *run*, the search engine might also search for *runs*, *running*, *ran*, *runner*, etc.
- Stemming is off by default.
- Example: Searching for *hero* does not find *heroes*. Same search with the Stemming box checked, will find heroes.

Synonym Searches

Search over 39,328,000 Historical Newspaper Pages from the USA & Canada

hogan genealogy all of the words Search

Items per page: 200 Stemming

Fuzzy searching -- Fuzziness: 0

Phonic searching

WordNet synonyms

WordNet related words

- Selecting "WordNet synonyms" will cause searches for synonyms of genealogy, like family tree.

Phonic Searches

*Search over **51,185,714** Old Newspaper pages from US & Canada*

smith canandaigua

 [Help and Support](#) this on going project

Items per page ▾

▾

Stemming

Fuzzy searching -- Fuzziness ▾

Phonic searching 

WordNet synonyms


WordNet related words

User-defined synonyms

Sort type ▾

Checking the Phonic searching box enables phonic searching for all words in the search box.

User-defined synonyms

Sort type ✓ hits
date
name
size 

ction to gain some guidance. [Want to Sponsor](#) :

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hogan canandaigua

1 - 500 of 2000

Relevance Newest Oldest Print Prev Next 500

100%	Albany NY Times Union 1898 - 0535.pdf ...the New York state league: MAY. May 12—Palmyra at Canandaigua , Cort- k.nd at Lyon*, Home at Oswego, Auburn atx May U—Utiea at Rome, Oswego at Au- burn, Canandaigua at Cortland, Palmyra at Lyons. May 1*—Open, May 17—Rome at Auburn, Oswego at P.dmyra, Lyons at Canandaigua , Uttca at Curtland. May 18—Cortland at Utiea, Oswego atLyons, Rome st Palmyra, Canandaigua at Auburn. May 18—Pafapyra at Utiea, Rome at Canandaigua ... 62 8/9/2015  1490k
44%	Phelps NY Country Editor 1965 Sep-Dec 1966 Grayscale

Sort Type

Determines order of the Results frame.

- Hits (default)
- Date. Date entered in database **not** date of newspaper
- Name of pdf file
- Size of pdf file

What Newspapers are included?

- Click on "Help & FAQ"
This takes you to the
FAQ_HELP_INDEX page

Search over **51,185,714** Old Newspaper pages from
US & Canada

hogan and canandaigua Search

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Items per page 500 ▾

Boolean ▾

Stemming

Fuzzy searching -- Fuzziness 0 ▾

Phonic searching

WordNet synonyms

WordNet related words

User-defined synonyms

Sort type hits ▾

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What Newspapers are included? Cont'd

- Click Here, which is in the 1st sentence.
 - Click the icon in the upper right corner, "Historical Newspapers United States and Canada"
 - Click the box: "A SPREADSHEET Of Newspapers"
 - Then click the box: "Newspaper_titles"
 - If you don't have MS Excel, choose the *Save* option to save to your computer. Then use FREE spreadsheet software to open: [Google Drive](#), [Zoho](#), [LibreOffice](#).

Onondaga County Content

Newspaper Title	County	Time Period																				
		1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Skaneateles NY Columbian 1835 - 1853	Onondaga				1835	1853																
Skaneateles NY Democrat 1843 - 1921	Onondaga					1843	1859						1921									
Skaneateles NY Free Press 1892 - 1989	Onondaga											1892									1989	
	Onondaga						1856				1898											
Syracuse NY Daily Courier 1856 - 1898	Onondaga										1898		1922									
Syracuse NY Evening Telegram 1898-1922	Onondaga										1898		1922									
Syracuse NY Standard 1851-1899	Onondaga						1851				1899											
Syracuse NY Daily Journal 1847-1921	Onondaga					1847							1921									
Syracuse NY Evening Herald 1877-1897	Onondaga								1877		1897											
Syracuse NY Post Standard 1900-1921	Onondaga											1900	1921									
Tully NY Independent 1967 - 1978	Onondaga																	1967	1978			
Tully NY Times 1855 - 1945	Onondaga						1855								1945							
Fayetteville NY Bulletin 1901-1989	Onondaga											1901									1989	
Fayetteville NY Luminary 1840 - 1842	Onondaga					1840 1842																
Fayetteville NY Onondaga Independent 1899	Onondaga										1899											
Fayetteville NY Weekly Recorder 1866-1897	Onondaga							1866			1897											
Fayetteville NY Thrift News 1935 - 1941	Onondaga													1935	1941							
Fayetteville NY National Citizen & Ballot Box 1878-1881	Onondaga								1878	1881												
Baldwinsville NY Republican 1843 - 1846	Onondaga					1843 1846																
Syracuse NY Daily Star 1847 - 1852	Onondaga					1847	1852															
Syracuse NY Empire State Democrat 1843 - 1844	Onondaga					1843 1844																
Syracuse NY Evening Chronicle 1853 - 1855	Onondaga						1853 1844															
Syracuse NY Gazette & General Advertiser 1828 - 1829	Onondaga				1828 1829																	
Syracuse NY L'UNIONE (Italian Newspaper) 1908 - 1909	Onondaga											1908 1909										
Syracuse NY Onondaga Standard 1841 - 1849	Onondaga					1841 1849																
Syracuse NY Republican 1853 - 1854	Onondaga						1853 1854															
Syracuse NY Sunday Times 1876-1880	Onondaga							1876	1880													
Syracuse NY The Carson League 1851- 1854	Onondaga						1851 1854															
Syracuse NY Weekly Express 1887 - 1892	Onondaga									1887	1892											
Syracuse NY The State league 1851 - 1869	Onondaga						1851	1869														
Syracuse NY Wesleyan 1853 - 1856	Onondaga						1853 1856															
Syracuse NY Religious Recorder 1851 - 1853	Onondaga						1851 1853															
Baldwinsville NY Onondaga Gazette 1846 - 1857	Onondaga					1846	1857															
Baldwinsville NY Messenger 1941 - 1988	Onondaga													1941							1988	
Baldwinsville NY Gazette Farmers Journal 1879 - 1965	Onondaga								1879								1965					
Marcellus NY Observer 1879 - 2007	Onondaga								1879													2007
Baldwinsville NY Gazette Anniversary 1846-1896	Onondaga					1846					1896											
Syracuse NY Herald 1904-1929	Onondaga											1904		1929								
Syracuse NY Journal 1922-1945	Onondaga													1922		1945						
Cicero NY Patriot 2000-2013	Onondaga																					2000- 2013

How to Search in a Specific Newspaper

- Assume I want to search the *Holley NY Standard* for time frame of 1931 or 1932 for surnames *Molison* and *Totter* within 20 words of each other.
- Select Boolean from the drop down

How to Search in a Specific Newspaper

- Then enter the following:
Holley NY Standard and 1931~~1932 and Molison w/20 Totter
 - Name of paper must be in same format as in the fulton history list. (same as used in the results frame)
 - ~~ = 2 tildas (keyboard upper left) indicates year range (year range is optional)
 - w/20 indicates within 20 words

Search in a Specific Newspaper II

- Select Boolean from the drop down
- Then enter the following:
(Filename contains (*Holley NY Standard*)) and
1931~~1932 and *Molison w/20 Totter*
OR
(Filename contains (*Holley*))...
 - “Filename” refers to the PDF filename like what is listed in the results frame on the left

How to Display the Next Page of the Paper (or the Previous)

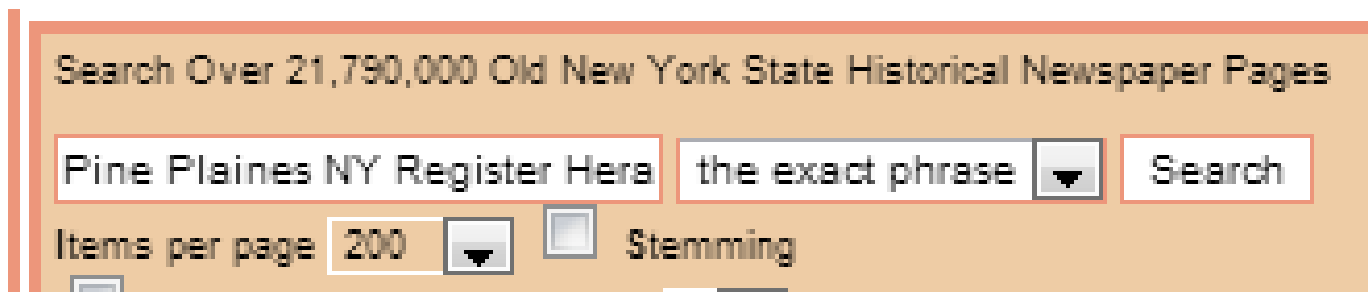
100%

[Pine Plains NY Register Herald 1997 Grayscale - 0520.pdf](#)
...NY Register Herald\Pine Plains NY Register Herald 1997 Grayscale - 0520.pdf

- In the Results frame, the name of the newspaper is listed followed by a 4 digit number & .pdf
- For the Next Page, you want the 4 digit number + 1 & for the Previous Page, you want the 4 digit number - 1
- For the Front page of the issue, you need to work your way back. If the page number is displayed in the current image frame, you may be able to calculate the number for the Front page.

How to Display the Next Page of the Paper (or the Previous)

- From the listing in the Results frame:
 - select the underlined listing & copy it.
 - Paste into the search box
 - Adjust the 4 digit number as desired
 - Select *the exact phrase* from the drop down menu
 - Click Search



Search Over 21,790,000 Old New York State Historical Newspaper Pages

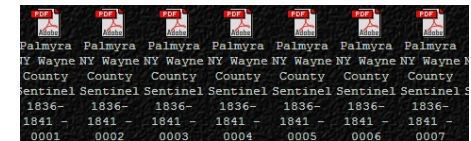
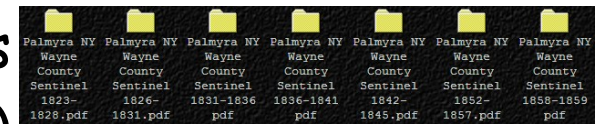
Pine Plains NY Register Here the exact phrase Search

Items per page 200 Stemming

The screenshot shows a search interface with a search bar containing the text "Pine Plains NY Register Here" and a dropdown menu set to "the exact phrase". A "Search" button is to the right. Below the search bar, there are controls for "Items per page" (set to 200) and "Stemming" (checked).

Another way to Display the Next Page of the Paper (or the Previous)

- Click on "Help & FAQ" (described above)
- Click [Here](#), which is in the 1st sentence.
- Click on the desired newspaper name
- Click on the desired folder, which yields a list of PDF files (1 file for each page)
- Click on the desired PDF file & the image displays
- Click on the back arrow (left) to take you back to the PDF listing where you can choose the next or previous (or any) page.



Helpful Tools for working with FultonHistory.com

- Graphics Tools - to edit an image file
 - Paint: free & easy to use. [(Windows) Start Button > All Programs > Accessories] Note - can Not edit PDF files.
 - [Photoshop Elements](#): relatively inexpensive & sort of easy
 - [Gimp](#): free & has learning curve
 - [Photoshop](#): expensive & deadly learning curve
- Snipping Tools - to capture a portion of a screen
 - Snipping Tool: free & easy to use. [(Windows) Start Button > All Programs > Accessories]
 - To find others: search on *free snipping tool*
- Image Organization Tools - to organize image files & do basic editing
 - Vivid-Pic Restore: A new program you might like

Saving an Article

- Some approaches:

- 1)Screen Shot

- 1)Open your graphics program & minimize

- 2)Press *Print Screen* button on keyboard (this copies image of screen to the clipboard)

- 3)Paste (CTRL-V) to the graphics program

- 2)Whole newspaper page

- 1)Right click on link in Results frame & Select *Save Link as...* to save PDF file.

- 2)If editing is necessary, open the PDF file in a graphics program (Paint will not open a PDF.)

Saving an Article - Cont'd

3) Snip relevant portion of the page

1) Open your graphics or text program & minimize

2) Snip the banner (paper name, date, page) and article. (I also copy the blue link from the results frame.)

3) Paste (CTRL-V) to the graphics program

Saving an Article - Cont'd

- Example (text file saved as pdf):

From <https://fultonhistory.com/>

[Geneva NY Daily Times 1937 Dec-May 1938 Grayscale - 0128.pdf](#)

PAGE TWO

GENEVA DAILY TIMES, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 1938

Geneva [NY] Daily Times, 12 Jan 1938, Page 2, Column 5

Couple Mark Anniversary



Saving an Article - Cont'd

- Suggestion: Create a master source in your genealogy database and attach the resulting image.
- If the image is hard to read, create a transcription in a text file and attach that to the master source also.
- **An Easy Way to create a Transcription:**
 - Open your text program (Word, notepad, etc.)
 - In the image frame of fultonhistory.com, select & copy the desired text [Don't snip which results in an image file]
 - Paste into the word processing program (editing will be necessary)

Printing an Article

- First, save the article (see previous slides)
- Then, open the file for the saved article (double click). The program that opens the file should be able to print the file.

Cite what you Sight

- When you use information from the Fulton History site, you are looking at a website, not at a newspaper. So, you must cite the website as your source (as well as the newspaper).
 - If you view a microfilm, cite the microfilm. If you hold a newspaper in your hands, cite the newspaper.
- Citation Content
 - author, article title, newspaper name, date, page, column, indicate digital image, website name, home page URL, date accessed, optional citation detail

Cite what you Sight - Cont'd

- Example Citation

- "Pair to Mark 51st Wedding Date," *Rochester (New York) Democrat and Chronicle*, 9 Jan 1939, p. 12, col. 5; digital image, *Fulton History* (<http://www.fultonhistory.com> : accessed 9 Mar 2013), Rochester NY Democrat Chronicle 1939 - 0333.PDF.

- Citation Authority

- Elizabeth Shown Mills is the recognized authority on citing historical records. For more information about this topic, see her website at www.historicpathways.com.
- See *Evidence! Explained*, section 14.22 for citing online images of newspapers.

site: Another Way to Access FultonHistory.com

- Google can be used to search fultonhistory.com by using the **site:** command in the google search box
 - **site:fultonhistory.com hogan**
 - **"john hogan" OR "john * hogan" OR "hogan john" site:fultonhistory.com**

Another Way to Access FultonHistory.com - Cont'd

- “Quick & Dirty” way to search Fulton History site
- Works for devices without “Flash” like iPads
- **Must use google syntax.** No way to simulate important Fulton History features like fuzzy search.
- `site:` command is useful for GenWeb-type sites!!
 - `site:http://ontario.nygenweb.net/ “john hogan”` [Ontario County (NY) genweb site]
 - `site:http://ontario.nygenweb.net john AROUND(2) hogan`

Want Your Microfilm OCR'd and Indexed?

"If you are a non-profit organization which has microfilm of any New York State Newspaper or other N.Y. Historical Documents which you would like to have converted to digital format and OCR'd for your non-profit use, *and you would allow this site to share a copy of it so all could enjoy*, I would consider doing it at no charge. Contact me at tryniski@fultonhistory.com"

Happy Hunting