Guide to Using Chronicling America

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Created by Jessica Nay, Librarian for the Iowa Digital Newspaper Project
Guide to Using Chronicling America

Start at the Chronicling America homepage: http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov

There are 3 tabs in a blue bar at the top of the page that you can use to search or browse the digitized newspapers: Search Pages, Advanced Search, and All Digitized Newspapers 1836-1922

The Search Pages tab gives you a quick and simple search option. You can:

- Select a state to limit your search
- Choose a range of years to search
- Enter one or more search terms in the search box

The Advanced Search tab gives you more options to refine your search criteria and narrow down the number of search results you will get back.

The top section of the Advanced Search box lets you put limits on your search before you enter your search terms. You can limit by:

- State
- Newspaper title
• Year range, or a more specific date range
• Front page or other specified page
• Language

Note: To select more than one state or newspaper title, hold down the Control (Ctrl) key and click the states or titles you want to select.

In the bottom half of the Advanced Search box, you can enter your search terms in any of the four search fields. Each one will treat your search terms a little differently and retrieve a different set of results. Your options are:

• **With any of the words** – this will treat your search terms as separate keywords and retrieve newspaper pages containing any of the terms you entered
• **With all of the words** – this will only retrieve pages that include all of your search terms on that page
• **With the phrase** – this will treat your search terms as a single phrase and will only retrieve newspaper pages containing the phrase as you entered it
• **With the words...within [5, 10, 50, or 100] words of each other** – this will retrieve only the pages that have your search terms in whatever proximity you specify. This is helpful if you don’t know exactly how the phrase may appear.

Things to keep in mind:

• Search results are images of full newspaper pages, not individual articles. If your search terms appear in more than one article on the same page, it will still display as a single search result.
• Language used in historic newspapers may be different that the terms used today (i.e. The Great War instead of World War One). This has a big impact on the quality and quantity of results you’ll get from your search.
• Try variations in spelling (even incorrect spellings), especially when searching for a person’s name.
• You may need to try your search in a number of different ways before you find what returns the best results.

**Working with Search Results**

Here’s an example of an advanced search for the phrase “Iowa state fair” in Iowa newspapers only:
After you choose your criteria and enter your search terms, you’ll get a **gallery view** of your search results, with thumbnail views of each page labeled with the title, city and state, date, and image number (where that image falls within that issue).
At the top of your results gallery, you can:

- Choose to **show only front pages**, if you are only looking for articles that appeared on the front page of the issue
- Sort your results by
  - **Relevance** of results based on how closely they fit your search criteria. (There are a lot of elements to this, but, in general, this looks for exact matches for phrase searches, multiple occurrences of search terms, and how closely search terms are grouped together on a page.)
  - Alphabetically by **State**
  - Alphabetically by **Title**
  - Chronologically by **Date**
- Choose to display either 20 or 50 **results per page**.

Note: You can also choose a **list view** of your search results using the link at the top right corner of the results box, but an advantage of using the gallery view is that your search terms will be highlighted in red so you can see how many times they appear on each page.

**Viewing a Newspaper Page**

When you click on one of your search results, you’ll go to the Chronicling America page viewer. You’ll see the **title**, **date**, and **image number** above the viewer box, and right under the title you can link back to that newspaper’s information page. Above the title, you can link back to the search result gallery or go to the directly to the next search result.

The page you selected will be displayed in the viewer below. There are a number of options in the gray bar at the top of the viewing window to work with the image, navigate between images, or save an image.

The 4 buttons on the left side of the gray bar give you options to **adjust the page view**:

- Zoom in
- Zoom out
- Return to the original view
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- Expand to a full window view (you will still have the gray bar at the top so you can still navigate back and forth between pages and issues)

The middle of the gray bar is where you can **navigate between pages or issues**:

- **Image selection box** – go directly to a specific page from the issue you are using
- Navigate through the pages of the issue with the arrow buttons. Click All pages to see a gallery view of all pages in that issue.
- Navigate through the issues of the title you are using. Click All Issues to go to the calendar view and select a different date.

The right side of the gray bar provides options for **downloading and saving pages** or excerpts from Chronicling America:

- **Text** – see a plaintext version of the newspaper page. This can be a little hard to read – it is generated from the Optical Character Recognition (OCR) program and will contain some extra characters and different spacing than the newspaper page. However, this is a good option if you need to copy and paste a large section of text to quote an article in a new piece of writing.
- **PDF** – open a PDF version of the full newspaper page and save it to your computer. This is a good option if you want to save the full page, but still be able to zoom in and out to read the text easily.
- **JP2** – open a JP2 image file of the full newspaper page and save it to your computer. This is an easy way to use a full page image in another document you are creating.
- **Clipping tool** – clip a specific area of the page to print or download and save as an image file.

**Using the Clipping Tool:**

The clipping tool clips the section of the page that is displayed in the viewing window. The inset box in the upper right corner of the viewer shows a red frame around area of the page that is currently inside the viewing window.

To clip an article or excerpt from a page, zoom in on the page until the article you want is readable but still completely within the viewing window. Then click the Clipping tool button. This will open a new
window with the image of the area you selected from the page. For example, if we clip the selected section from the page above, here’s what we’ll get:

Now you can use the links above the image to either print it directly from that screen or download the image file and save it to your computer.
Saving a Persistent Link

If you don’t want to download or save a newspaper page, but want to be able to return to it later, you can save a persistent link that will always take you directly to that page. The persistent link is located below every newspaper image, at the bottom of the viewing window. It is preceded by the publication information you’ll need to provide a citation for content found on Chronicling America.

Note: When you use the clipping tool as shown above, you’ll also find the persistent link in the new window with your clipped image.

Browsing

If you’d prefer to browse rather than enter specific search terms, use the All Digitized Newspapers 1836-1922 tab.

From here, you can access a list of all newspapers that have been digitized for Chronicling America by clicking the Show All Digitized Papers 1836-1922 link at the top of the box, or you can limit your list by state, ethnicity, and/or language by selecting from any of the three dropdown menus.

For example, selecting Iowa from the State menu and clicking the “Go” button will take you to a list of all Iowa newspapers that have been digitized for Chronicling America:
Using this list, you can find more information about the newspapers themselves and browse through the digitized issues.

- Click on a newspaper title to see the publication information and read a short essay about the newspaper’s history (example below)
- Click the calendar button next to a title to browse through issues of that title starting at a specific date
- Go directly to the Earliest Issue or Latest Issue
- Clicking the Yes link in the More Info column will also take you to the page with that title’s publication information and historical essay. If this column says No, it means that an essay has not yet been uploaded for that title.

This is the title information page for the Cresco Plain Dealer:
In the left column, all the publication information available for the Cresco Plain Dealer is displayed. The Preceding/Succeeding Title information can be especially helpful, since many newspapers have gone through title changes and mergers that can be difficult to follow. Under Related Links, you can go directly to the calendar view to browse digitized issues for this title.

In the right column, you can see the image of the front page of the first available issue for the Cresco Plain Dealer. Next to this, you can browse through the calendar view, browse only the front pages, and go directly to the first or last issue. Under the image and browsing options, you will find the essay about the newspaper’s history.

At the end of the title essay, you’ll see a link that says Provided by: State Historical Society of Iowa.
This link will take you to an overview of Iowa’s contributions to Chronicling America, including when batches of new content were ingested, what was included in each batch, and page counts for each batch. This is followed by links to the title essays and the dates each one was uploaded.

### Batches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingested</th>
<th>Batch Name</th>
<th>Total Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 23, 2013, 2:03 p.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>6,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 21, 2014, 3:27 p.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>8,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 31, 2014, 8:52 a.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>7,169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2, 2014, 3:07 p.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>9,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1, 2014, 12:57 p.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>9,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1, 2014, 1:58 p.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>8,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2, 2014, 4:57 p.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>7,702</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 9, 2014, 10:24 a.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>7,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 15, 2014, 10:05 a.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>7,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 18, 2014, 10:46 a.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>7,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1, 2014, 9:45 a.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>7,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 22, 2014, 2:40 p.m.</td>
<td>batch ia016ver01</td>
<td>8,194</td>
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</table>

### Essays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essay Title</th>
<th>Created</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Der Demokrat, Der Wochenliche Demokrat and Der Tagliche Demokrat</td>
<td>Feb. 21, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening Times Republican</td>
<td>April 4, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester Democrat</td>
<td>Feb. 21, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottumwa Tri-weekly Courier and Ottumwa Semi-weekly Courier</td>
<td>Feb. 21, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Daily Gate City and The Daily Gate City and Constitution-Democrat</td>
<td>Feb. 21, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Desmoines Review</td>
<td>Feb. 21, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Leon Reporter</td>
<td>Feb. 21, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twice-a-week Main Dealer and Cresco Main Dealer</td>
<td>Feb. 21, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webster City Freeman</td>
<td>Feb. 21, 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This information is not particularly relevant to searching Chronicling America, but it gives you an idea of the process involved in Iowa’s NDNP participation.

100 Years Ago Today

Another interesting feature of Chronicling America is the 100 Years Ago Today display on the homepage. You can browse through the front pages of all participating states’ newspapers from 100 years ago using the arrow buttons on either side of the display box.

You can also quickly find all the Iowa newspapers from this group without having to click through every one.

Click the 100 Years Ago Today heading at the top of the display box. This will take you to a gallery view of every newspaper page in Chronicling America that was published 100 years ago. At the top of the results gallery, click the Show only front pages box, and choose State from the Sort By menu.
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From there, just scroll down until you reach the Iowa issues.
U.S. Newspaper Directory, 1690-Present

From the Chronicling America website, you can also access the U.S. Newspaper Directory by clicking the pink button at the top right, above the blue search bar.

The U.S. Newspaper Directory provides information about newspapers published in the United States since 1690 and currently includes over 153,000 titles. Each listing provides the paper’s publication information, preceding and succeeding titles, and how you can get access to issues of the paper.

You can browse the directory by title using the alphabet links in the light blue box at the top of the page:

Or, you can use the search options below to find newspapers from particular place or published during a specific time period.

If you are looking for a specific title, try selecting the state and city (if you know them) and then entering the title in the Enter keywords box.

You can limit your search further with the dropdown menus at the bottom, where you can select the frequency of publication, language, ethnicity press, labor press, and/or material type.
The U.S. Newspaper Directory provides a single place to search for a newspaper title and find a way to access it, either physically through a specific library's collection of newspapers or microfilm, or digitally through Chronicling America or another online resource. When you search for a title that is part of Chronicling America, you will be taken to the same page as if you had gone through the search or browse options outlined above.

For example, if you search for newspapers in Cresco, Iowa, through the U.S. Newspaper Directory:

You’ll get a list of results like this one:

1. Twice-a-week plain dealer; online resource. (None). 1895-1913
2. Howard County times. (Cresco, Iowa) 1870-1946
3. The Iowa plain dealer. (New Oregon, Howard County, Iowa). 1887-1885
4. The Times-plain dealer and the Howard County times and Cresco plain dealer consolidated. (Cresco, Iowa). 1951-1951
5. The Times-plain dealer. (Cresco, Iowa). 1951-current
6. Cresco times. (Cresco, Iowa) 1897-1870
7. The Howard County times and Cresco plain dealer consolidated. (Cresco, Iowa). 1945-1951
8. Cresco public opinion. (Cresco, Howard County, Iowa) 1895-1895
9. Cresco plain dealer. (Cresco, Howard County, Iowa) 1911-1945
10. Twice-a-week plain dealer. (Cresco, Howard County, Iowa) 1895-1913
Clicking on Cresco Plain Dealer (#9) will take you to the same title information page we found earlier through the list of Iowa titles in Chronicling America:
Titles included in Chronicling America will often also have a separate listing in the U.S. Newspaper Directory as online resources. Here is one for the Twice-a-week Plain Dealer (Cresco, Iowa):

These listings look slightly different – the term online resource follows the title, and the historical essay, page image, and browsing links shown in the right column in the previous image are not present. However, clicking the link under the Related Links heading will take you to the title’s calendar browse view in Chronicling America.

Note: If a title is digitized somewhere other than Chronicling America, it will also be listed as an online resource and a link to the electronic content will be provided under the Related Links heading. If you want to find how to get access to a title that has not been digitized, click the Libraries that Have It link at the top of the title listing, or the View complete holdings information under the Holdings link in the listing.