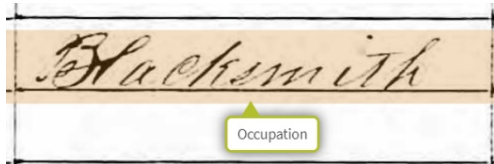


Occupations Tie Records & Ancestors



[VIDEO LINK](#)

When conducting genealogical research, one should not overlook occupations. Sometimes occupations can be the key that ties records and family together. At times you may discover that occupations run in the family, as trades or businesses were handed down from parents to their children.

The **1820 Census** gives clues to ancestor's occupation when the government collected our ancestor's information in one of three categories, **Agriculture, Commerce, Manufacturing**.

Beginning in 1850 occupation information was collected for each adult. According to the [Occupations at the Twelfth Census](#), "Detailed inquiry was made in 1850, for the first time, as to the name, sex, color, age, nativity, etc., of each person enumerated, and in this connection a specific return was required of the profession, occupation, or trade followed by **each free male over 15 years of age**."



In **1850, 1860, 1870 and 1880** and for those states that took an **1885** census, an agricultural schedule was made. For more on agricultural schedules [go here](#).

List of places to find occupational information about your ancestors.

- U.S. Census Records 1820 and 1850-present day.
- City Directories
- Draft Registration Cards
- Social Security Statement of Earnings
- Military Records
- Obituaries
- Find A Grave
- Billion Graves
- Newspaper Articles
- Vanity Books
- Wills

Types of occupations you may see are: farmer, seamstress, machinist, miner, fishing, land broker, banking, railroad worker, wood mill, grist mill, judge, clerk, barge pilot, sea captain, deck hand, postal



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worker, dairymen/women, rancher, wood chopper, actors, musicians, engineers, doctors, clergymen, dentists, lawyers, teachers, bartenders, nurses, servants, waiters, soldiers, sailors, marines, watchmen, police, fireman, hunter/trapper, boatmen, store clerk or owner, hotel worker, banks, telegraph office, cabinet maker, drug stores, lumber companies, apparel, book binder, coal workers, boots and shoes, the list goes on.

[Free Census forms](#) on FamilySearch shows what information was collected and when.

Additional places to look are trade associations, U.S. Census Agriculture Schedules, military, and religious records.

Using comparison graphs (shown below) can help in tracking the occupation of ancestors and help further our proof of family groups.

Records Compared for William T. DeWorth (1849-1928 Bordentown, Burlington, NJ) Demonstrating consistency in Occupation												
Item	1920 Census	1915 NJ State Census	1910 Census	1905 City Directory	1903 City Directory	1900 Census	1899 City Directory	1881 City Directory	1880 Census	1870 Census	1860 Census	1850 Census
Head of Household	William DeWorth	William F. DeWorth	William T. DeWorth	William T. DeWorth	William T. DeWorth	William T. DeWorth	William T. DeWorth	William DeWorth	William DeWorth	William T. (21, single, living	William (11, living with	William (1)
Occupation	Machinist - Steel Mill	Machinist	Machinist - Shop	Machinist	Machinist	Machinist	Machinist	Machinist	Machinist	Machinist	Older man in HH as Machinist	
Name	Catherine	Catherine H.	Katherine				Katherine			Catharine		
Occupation	None								Keeping House			
Name	(son)	Joseph								Joseph		
Occupation	Operator at Western Union	Tel. Operator										
Name	Enoch (son)	Enoch	Enoch				Enoch					
Occupation	Machinist at Wire Mill	Machinist	Machinist - Shop				At School (17)					
Name							William J. DeWorth (son)					
Occupation							Tel. Operator		William			

The short of it is, don't overlook occupations. They can be as valuable as other evidence in your ancestor's profile. Make sure to note it as a fact in their profile and associate the records that demonstrate it.

How to Add an Occupation & Associate Sources to the Occupation Fact

- Go to the Facts tab in a profile.
- Click +Add
- Scroll down and choose Occupation
- Give a Date Range from the records
- Add a Location
- Note the Occupation in the Description Field.
- On the left click Attach Source.
- Assuming you already have sources in the fact's column, click the green + on the right side to rise the appropriate sources to the top.
- You can attach media if you have previously uploaded an image to the gallery.
- Click the X in the upper right corner to close