

# **Bootleggers & Bawdy Houses**

## **Jews and Crime in Early 20th Century Philadelphia**

Sharon Taylor

### **Getting Started**

- Interview your family.
  - Take notes or make a recording. Include the date of the interview and the name of the person being interviewed.
  - When researching a sensitive topic like crime, be patient.
  - Taking a drive through the old neighborhood can help bring back memories.
- Collect records including birth, marriage, death, and census records.
- Search for clues.
  - Did they own or rent their home?
  - Look at their neighborhood and neighbors.
  - Did they move frequently?
  - Does their stated occupation hold any clues?
- Look for books and articles about crime in your ancestors' hometown.
- Search old newspapers online.
  - In the search bar, place proper names in quotes. Also search for aliases, nicknames, and alternate spellings.
  - Search for words associated with crime such as "holdup" or "bootlegger."
  - Search by location, but also try searching without a location.
- Visit or contact local archives.
- Join your local genealogical society and network.

### **Resources**

#### **Search Period Newspapers from Home**

- Chronicling America – free – <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>  
This partnership with the Library of Congress contains browsable newspaper pages from 1777 to 1963 and includes all 50 states.

### **Period Newspapers continued**

- GenealogyBank.com – subscription – <https://www.genealogybank.com/>  
One of the largest collections of digitized U.S. newspapers.
- Newspapers.com – subscription – <https://www.newspapers.com/>  
The largest online newspaper archive. It is affiliated with Ancestry.com.

### **Philadelphia Archives**

- The Philadelphia City Archives - 548 Spring Garden St., Philadelphia, PA  
<https://www.phila.gov/departments/departments-of-records/city-archives/>  
Collection includes genealogical records along with property and building records, criminal court, police, and prison records.
- Historical Society of Pennsylvania - 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA  
<https://www.portal.hsp.org>  
A repository for genealogical and family papers, business and organizational records, photographs, and postcards. Their library contains books, pamphlets, serials, and newspapers.

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### **Contact**

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