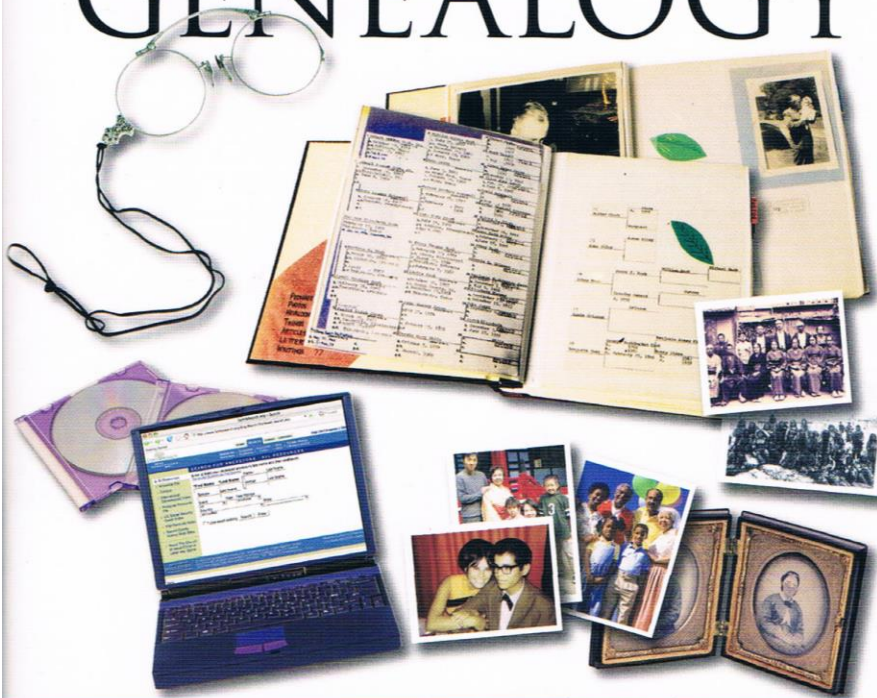


Troop 1292 # 56A

MERIT BADGE SERIES



GENEALOGY



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
MERIT BADGE SERIES

GENEALOGY



 BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

HOW TO USE THIS PAMPHLET

The secret to successfully earning a merit badge is for you to use both the pamphlet and the suggestions of your counselor.

Your counselor can be as important to you as a coach is to an athlete. Use all of the resources your counselor can make available to you.

This may be the best chance you will have to learn about this particular subject. Make it count.

If you or your counselor feels that any information in this pamphlet is incorrect, please let us know. Please state your source of information.

Merit badge pamphlets are reprinted annually and requirements updated regularly. Your suggestions for improvement are welcome.

Send comments along with a brief statement about yourself to Youth Development, S209 • Boy Scouts of America • 1325 West Walnut Hill Lane • P.O. Box 152079 • Irving, TX 75015-2079.

WHO PAYS FOR THIS PAMPHLET?

This merit badge pamphlet is one in a series of more than 100 covering all kinds of hobby and career subjects. It is made available for you to buy as a service of the national and local councils, Boy Scouts of America. The costs of the development, writing, and editing of the merit badge pamphlets are paid for by the Boy Scouts of America in order to bring you the best book at a reasonable price.



Requirements

1. Explain to your counselor what the words *genealogy*, *ancestor*, and *descendant* mean.
2. Do ONE of the following:
 - a. Create a time line for yourself or for a relative. Then write a short biography based on that time line.
 - b. Keep a journal for six weeks. You must write in it at least once a week.
3. With your parent's help, choose a relative or a family acquaintance you can interview in person, by telephone, or by email or letter. Record the information you collect so you do not forget it.
4. Do the following:
 - a. Name three types of genealogical resources and explain how these resources can help you chart your family tree.
 - b. Obtain at least one genealogical document that supports an event that is or can be recorded on your pedigree chart or family group record. The document could be found at home or at a government office, religious organization, archive, or library.
 - c. Tell how you would evaluate the genealogical information you found for requirement 4b.
5. Contact ONE of the following individuals or institutions. Ask what genealogical services, records, or activities this individual or institution provides, and report the results:
 - a. A genealogical or lineage society
 - b. A professional genealogist (someone who gets paid for doing genealogical research)
 - c. A surname organization, such as your family's organization
 - d. A genealogical educational facility or institution
 - e. A genealogical record repository of any type (courthouse, genealogical library, state or national archive, state library, etc.)
6. Begin your family tree by listing yourself and include at least two additional generations. You may complete this requirement by using the chart provided in this pamphlet or the genealogy software program of your choice.
7. Complete a family group record form, listing yourself and your brothers and sisters as the children. On another family group record form, show one of your parents and his or her brothers and sisters as the children. This requirement may be completed using the chart provided or the genealogy software program of your choice.
8. Do the following:
 - a. Explain the effect computers and the Internet are having on the world of genealogy.
 - b. Explain how photography (including microfilming) has influenced genealogy.
9. Discuss what you have learned about your family and your family members through your genealogical research.



Some material in this publication is reprinted by permission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In granting permission for this use of copyrighted material, The Church does not imply endorsement or authorization of this publication.

Contents

Introduction	6
Your Life and Your Family History	9
Gathering Information From Family Members	16
Gathering Information From Records and Other Sources	19
Recording and Organizing Information	39
Developments in Genealogy	49
Glossary	60
Genealogy Resources	62

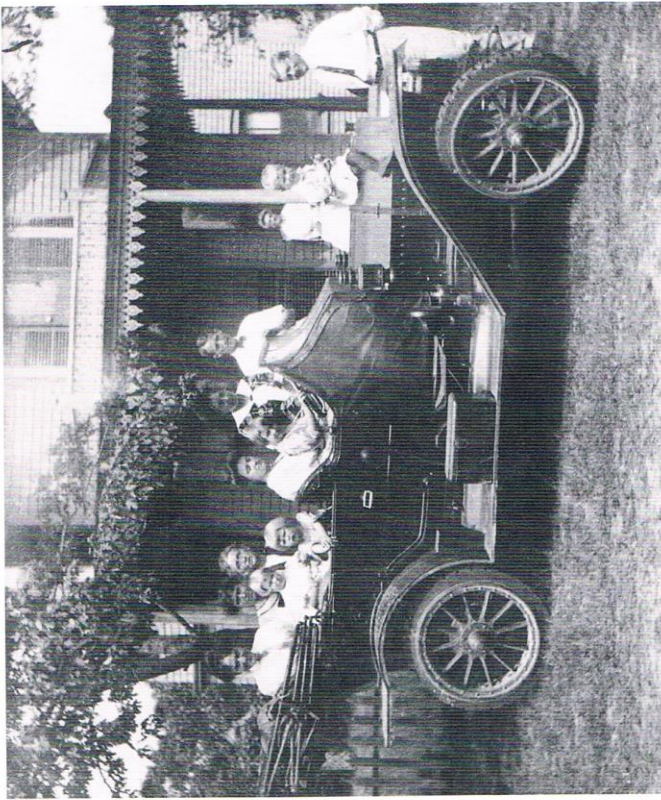
Introduction

Exploring your roots—where your family name came from, why your family lives where it does, what your parents and grandparents did for fun when they were your age—can be fascinating. Discovering your *ancestors*—your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and so on—back through history is what *genealogy* is all about.

Doing genealogical research is like being a private investigator. Getting started is easy: You list your name, your birthday, and the places you have lived. Then you record the same information for your brothers and sisters and your parents and their parents. This pamphlet will help you find and organize the information you gather, learn new skills, and gain a new appreciation of who you are.

The Influence of Family and Personal History on Society

As you research your family, you will discover what life was like for your ancestors and will feel more connected to them. For example, you might find out how your grandmother felt when her first child was born or what your great-grandfather did for a living.



Discovering your ancestors' history will open doors to your own past.

Daily life might not have changed as much as we may be led to believe. As you trace your ancestors' history, you may learn that they lived in a different country, ate different food, or wore different clothes, but you probably will find that the same things that make life meaningful to you today are the things that made life meaningful to your ancestors.



Your Life and Your Family History

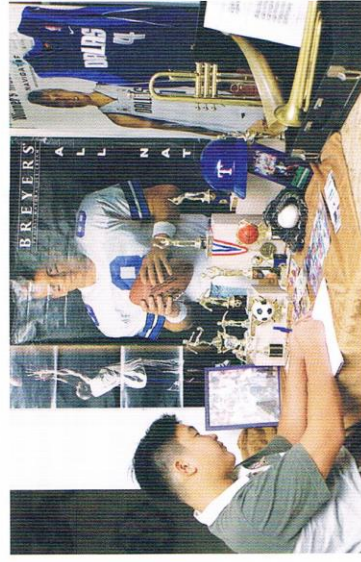
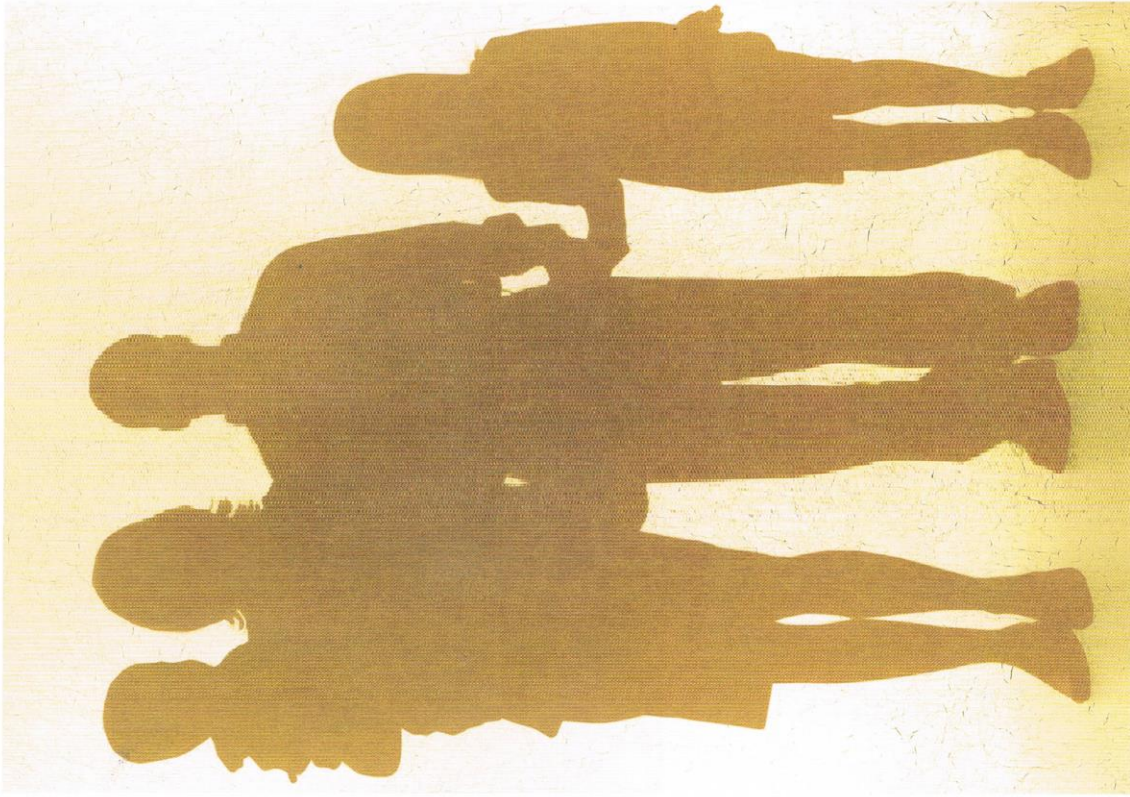
The easiest place to start your family history is with your own history. You can begin your life story by doing some of the following activities.

Writing a Journal

You should write in your journal on a regular basis—every day, every week, or every month. It is a log of your activities, thoughts, and feelings. You can write about things such as:

- Where you live and the room in which you sleep
- What you ate for breakfast, lunch, or dinner
- Your likes and dislikes
- The people you live with
- Other relatives and friends
- What happened in school or with your friends
- After-school and weekend activities
- Your future plans—what you hope to do or want to be

This list is just a suggestion of some topics you might discuss in your journal. Write about what is important to you.



Recording Your Life Story

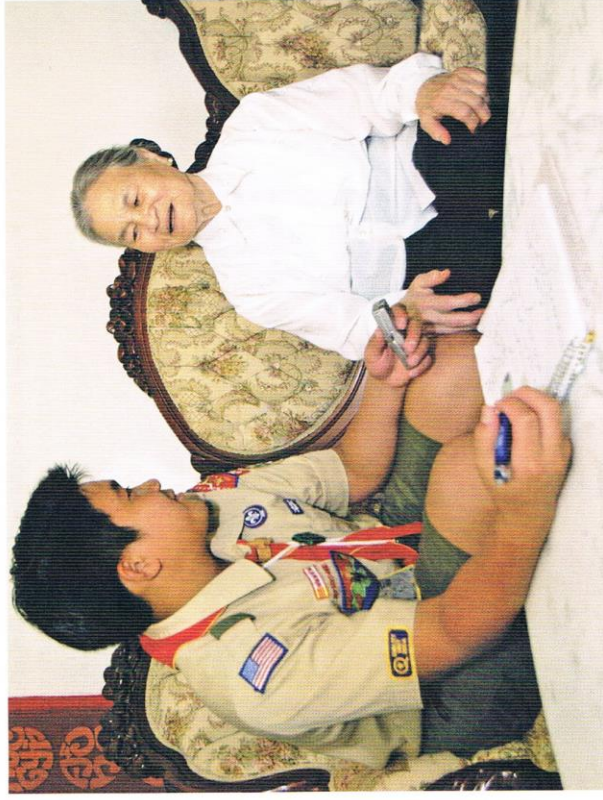
A personal history, or life story, tells about what happened in the past. It may include quotes or stories from your journal or diary. In a small way, writing about your own and your family's history helps preserve the history of our nation. Start your life story by listing the following:

- Your full name
- The date and place of your birth
- The full names of your mother and father, brothers and sisters, and other relatives
- The addresses of any places you have lived

Flesh out your list by writing what you know or remember about your past and current life. You might describe the following:

- Your earliest memories
- The different places you have lived
- Your friends and what you do together
- What your father, mother, or other relatives do (or did) for a living
- Errands or household duties
- Any health problems you have had
- Hobbies
- Community activities
- Vacations
- Favorite sports, books, or music
- Schools you have attended
- Your favorite and least favorite subjects in school

You might also tell about happy, funny, or hard times in your life. Be honest about your thoughts and feelings.



Recording Family History

A family history tells of the family as a unit and describes each person in that unit. It may include quotes or stories from different relatives. A family history should include as many *generations* as possible.

When gathering family information from relatives, you will need to talk or write to them to obtain information about their lives. You might ask about the following:

- Their full names
- What they do (or did) for a living
- The names of their parents, brothers, and sisters
- What their clothes, food, and homes were like when they were growing up
- Where they lived and what was the community was like
- Community activities they were involved in
- Military service and what it was like

- Choices they made in life such as whether or not to go to college or to take a certain job
- Stories of things that happened to them—the funniest one, the most embarrassing one, the one they learned the most from, or the one they feel is most important to share with you



Once you start interviewing your relatives, you may learn they played an important role in history. For example, during World War II, these Navajo Marines transmitted top-secret radio messages in a military code based on the complex Navajo language. The code could not be cracked by the enemy and was crucial in a number of Allied victories during the war.

When interviewing, always be sensitive to people's feelings. Do not pressure anyone who seems uncomfortable. Move on to a question about another memory the person would be happy to share.

When you talk to someone about his or her past you are obtaining an *oral history*, as opposed to reading a history that is already written. We all have oral family histories. A good way to collect oral history is through interviews. To learn how to interview, try interviewing yourself first. Write down the questions you want to ask. Then ask yourself those questions. Either write down the answers or speak into a recorder or video camera. Once you have done a self-interview and have familiarized yourself with your recorder or camera (if you plan to use one), you can then interview your mother or father, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, or other family members.

Using a video recorder makes the interview process easier and more accurate. By using a tripod, you can give your full attention to the person you are interviewing and will not get distracted by trying to write down what she or he says. Plus, the recording will become a family treasure.



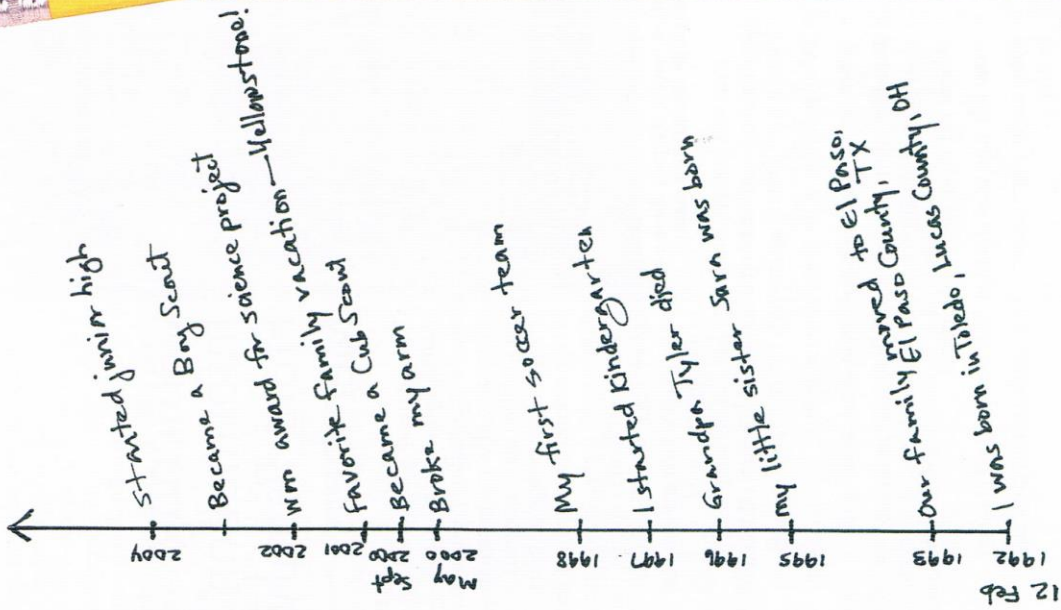
Making a Time Line

A *time line* is a chart that shows the *events* in a person's life. A time line can show the events from a person's birth until the present or from birth until death if the person has died.

You can make a time line as simple or as complex as you like. It should include at least 10 items. If you want to make a detailed, illustrated time line, use large paper (such as butcher paper) so you will have plenty of space for drawing or for adding photographs. If you choose not to illustrate your time line, an 8½-by-11-inch sheet of paper will work well.

The time line shown here has a horizontal line that represents a person's life. The vertical lines indicate dates and events. The distance between the lines shows the time span between events. For example, if there is a span of five years between two events on the time line, the space on the line between those two events will be larger than the space between two events that occurred one year apart.

You can make a time line for yourself or for your father, mother, or another relative. Show the events that were important in your life or your relative's life, such as birth, births of brothers or sisters, starting school or a sports or music program, vacations, or health problems. You also can include the dates of community or world events such as the year a new president was elected.



Gathering Information From Family Members

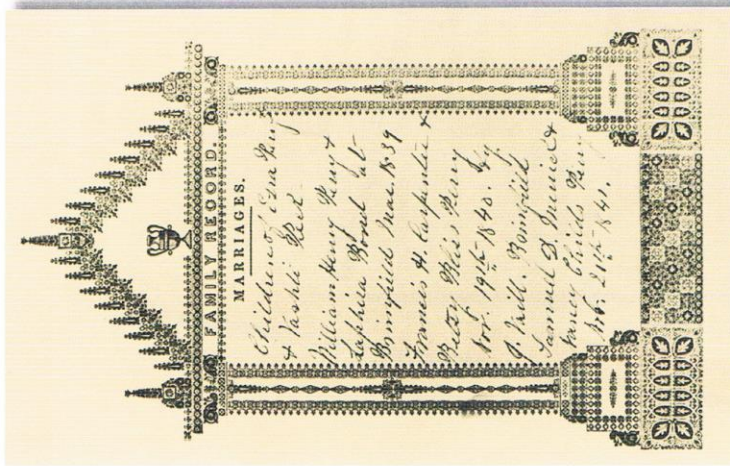
Once you have interviewed a relative, you have begun the process of collecting genealogical information about your family. You can then start preparing a family tree, or pedigree chart.

When making a family tree, you should try to gather information from several sources so that you can evaluate the information and decide which information is the most accurate.

Research into any subject consists of deciding which questions you want answered and then collecting information until you have found the answers. For example:

- **Whom** do you want to learn more about?
- **What** do you want to know about these individuals?
- **When** did certain events take place, such as births, marriages, or deaths?
- **Where** did those events take place?
- **How** did your ancestors get from one place to another?
- **Why** might your ancestors have made certain choices in life?

Pages from information kept in a family Bible can tell you important dates in the family's history.



In other words, to get the right answers in genealogy, you must begin by asking the right questions. Then you must know where to go to find accurate answers. The first place to start is your home.

As discussed in the previous chapter, you should begin by asking questions of your mother and father, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other relatives. You can do this in person or by telephone, email, or letter. Longtime neighbors may add helpful bits of information as well. If your family recently moved to the United States from another country, it is important to ask your parents and other relatives about the country where they lived. Even if you are not formally interviewing all these people, write down or record the information they tell you.

Not all the information someone tells you is necessarily correct. Relationships (such as Great-uncle Ralph was Grandpa Erickson's brother) are usually correct. But names, places, and dates may not be accurate. People tend to forget details as time passes. Later, you will need to double-check the information you gather from your family against other records.

In addition to talking with your family, look for the following sources of family history in your home:

- Certificates (of birth, baptism, marriage, death)
- Birth announcements
- Funeral programs, obituaries, and other newspaper clippings
- Wedding invitations and announcements
- Family Bibles
- Letters, diaries, and journals
- Military records and other personal records
- Deeds and wills
- Photographs

After locating these sources in your home, you can visit other relatives (or call or write to them) to find out what helpful family records they have. It can be fun to talk to them and discover what they have and to hear about what they know.



Family heirlooms can be good sources of historical information. Memorabilia such as war medals, report cards, and newspaper clippings might give a glimpse of an ancestor's personality.

Gathering Information From Records and Other Sources

After you have gathered as much information as you can from your family, it is time to start searching through records. Records will help you make sure the information you have gathered from your family is correct and will help you discover new information that your family did not know.

Helpful Genealogical Records

Now for the great mystery in genealogy—which records do you use? It is really not much of a mystery at all. Just think about how many records about you there already are. A birth certificate was issued when you were born. Your place of worship may have a record of your birth or of ceremonies you participated in. Schools you have attended have records on you as well. These are some of the basic record types that are often used in genealogy.

A good place to start looking for records is your local library or genealogical society. To find out if your community or county has a genealogical society, check the business pages of the telephone book or use an Internet search engine. If there is not such an organization near enough for you to visit, you can always call or write to one. The staff cannot trace your ancestors for you, but they can point you in the right direction.

Even if your parents or ancestors were not born in the United States or Canada, there are usually records made about them in the country where they lived. Many of the records are of the same type as those used in the United States. Use a research guide for the country to find the records that will be most helpful. Such research guides and other helps can be

Get your parent's permission before using the Internet to search for family records.

found by using the Internet sites <http://www.cyndislist.com> or <http://www.familysearch.org> along with other websites mentioned in the resources section.

Using Vital Records

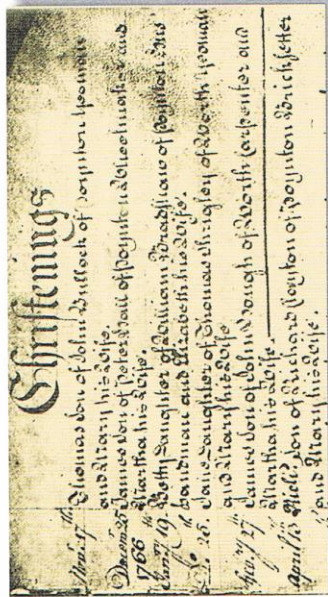
Vital records are created to record births, marriages, and deaths. By obtaining copies of these kinds of certificates, you can get accurate information about names, dates, places, and other details from your ancestors' lives. These records may be created by governments or by families.

Some families keep a record of the names and birth dates of all family members. In earlier times, many people recorded vital events in the family Bible.

In the United States, each state now creates the basic vital records. This has not always been the case. In many parts of the country, counties created these records, while in other areas (in some New England states), towns created them.

Hundreds of years ago in Europe and colonial America, religious institutions often were the only groups that kept such records. Records made by a place of worship, however, are not called "vital records." We call them "church records" or "religious institution records."

Such records can be very helpful if you are researching ancestors who were born or married in another country or in this country at a time when government records were not kept.



Christenings (baptisms) in the parish register of Poynton, Cheshire, England, 1766.

Locating Various Vital Records

The pamphlet "Where to Write for Vital Records" tells when a state began to keep vital records and gives the address and amount of the fee you need to pay to get copies of certificates of birth, death, marriage, or divorce. This pamphlet also will tell you where the records for modern time periods are housed. They may be in state archives, vital statistics bureaus, or state libraries. Records created by counties are usually stored in the county courthouse. Town records are normally in the office or home of the town clerk. You often can get copies of these records (on microfilm, microfiche, or printed in books) in genealogical libraries.

"Where to Write for Vital Records" is available free on the Internet at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2/w2welcom.htm>. The same information is also available at <http://www.vitalrec.com>. If you do not have access to the Internet at home, find out whether your local library has the Internet available. Or for a small fee, you can obtain a printed copy of the pamphlet by writing to the Government Printing Office at:

Government Printing Office
732 North Capitol St. NW
Washington, DC 20401

If your parents or ancestors came from another country, the *International Vital Records Handbook* can help you find out where to obtain birth, marriage, and death records for them (see the resources section). This book is available at many public libraries and contains instructions and forms for ordering vital records from more than 200 countries.

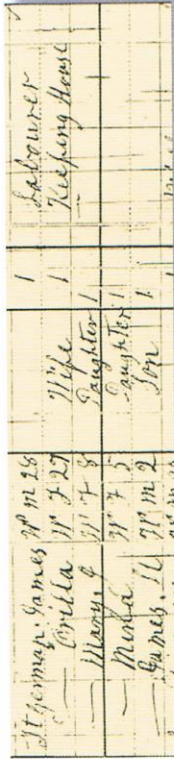
Using Indexes to Vital Records and Other Records

Many genealogical records have *indexes* that make them easier to use. An index takes all the names from a large number of records and puts them in alphabetical order, so you do not have to waste time looking randomly through several volumes of records. Sometimes the index is in the record. Often it is a separate volume. Indexes to state vital records are sometimes available in major genealogical libraries, such as the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. In addition, there are many indexes to vital records on the Internet.

An index is just a shortcut for finding a record. It does not contain the full content of the record itself. You should always try to find a copy of the *original record*. For example, an index of birth records may include the person's name and birth date but may not include the names of the person's parents.

BIRTH REGISTERED IN NEWTON, MASS., 1903
 BOOK 6 FOLIO, 181 NO. 418 WARD 4
 ALL NAMES IN FULL 1903 MONTH DAY 6
 DATE OF BIRTH, YEAR 1903 MONTH DAY 6
 NAME AND COLOR, Edward Joseph D. Darnold
 SEX AND CONDITION, M. 26 Nobby 2. norm
 PLACE OF BIRTH, Michael D. norm
 FATHER'S NAME, Mother, Mrs. Darnold
 MOTHER'S NAME, Mother, Mrs. Darnold
 RESIDENCE OF PARENTS, Darnold, Ireland
 FATHER'S OCCUPATION, Darnold, Ireland
 FATHER'S BIRTHPLACE, Darnold, Ireland DAY 20
 MOTHER'S BIRTHPLACE, Darnold, Ireland MONTH DAY 20
 DATE OF RECORD, YEAR 1904
 ATTENDING PHYSICIAN, F. M. O'Donnell
 RESIDENCE, Newtonville
 CANVASSER, [Signature]

There is another good reason why you should always try to find the original record. Every index has at least a few mistakes in it. Sometimes the mistakes are small, such as the misspelling of a name, but other times a mistake such as the one shown below could throw you completely off the trail of your ancestors.



The index showed the family's surname as Styerman. The family's surname was actually St. German. By looking at the handwriting on the original record, you can see how the person who copied the record for the index misread the name.

Some records have been destroyed by fire or other disasters. For example, many records in the southeastern United States were destroyed in the Civil War (1861–65). And in other cases, the records may never have been created. Just after the war

people were too busy trying to rebuild and survive to bother with making vital records.

When government records are not available, then family and religious institution records become more important. Good supplements also are found in federal and state censuses and military records.

1880 United States Census Household Record

Page 1 of 1

1880 United States Census

Household Record

Search results | Download

Previous Household Next Household

Name	Relation	Marital Status	Gender	Race	Age	Birthplace	Occupation	Father's Birthplace	Mother's Birthplace
James STYERMAN	Self	M	Male	W	26	NY	Laborer	NY	CAN
Mary J. STYERMAN	Wife	M	Female	W	27	NY	Keeping House	CAN	CAN
Mina STYERMAN	Daughter	S	Female	W	8	NY		NY	NY
James H. STYERMAN	Son	S	Male	W	2	NY		NY	NY

Source information:
 Pittsburgh, Clinton, New York
 Course Place
 Family History Library Film 1254820
 NA Film Number 19-0220
 Page Number 447B
[View original image](#) [Download image](#)
 for use with [familysearch.org](#)

© 1999-2009 by Intellectual Properties, Inc. All rights reserved. English version: 201009
 Use of this site constitutes your acceptance of our Conditions of Use (last updated: 2/22/2009).
 Privacy Policy (last updated: 10/12/2007) 29 <http://www.familysearch.org> 92.0.0

1880 U.S. Census Index, <http://www.familysearch.org>

Using Census Records

Census records are another major type of record used in genealogy. Census records are created to help determine the number of representatives for government, how many people should pay taxes, and similar information. Census records help us piece together family histories because they often list the people who are living together in the same house. Census records exist for most countries.

In the United States, census records are one of our best genealogical sources. U.S. census records began in 1790, and in 1850 U.S. census records began to list every family member by name.



Among the legacies of slavery is the way in which enslaved African Americans were counted in U.S. censuses from 1790 to 1860. They were listed only by their first names. It was not until slavery was outlawed that African Americans who had once been slaves were able to choose surnames. Members of the same family did not always take the same name, which can make compiling an in-depth family history extra challenging.

U.S. federal census records are taken every 10 years. They are arranged by state and then usually by county within each state. Several types of indexes often are available to help you find the record of a specific person or family within the census record. The Internet has many of these indexes, together with scanned images of the actual census, and some of the services are free to use.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE—BUREAU OF THE CENSUS 453
 FOURTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1920—POPULATION
 ENUMERATED BY ME ON THE 24th DAY OF January 1920.

NAME	SEX	AGE	MARRIAGE	SINGLE	MARRIED	DIVORCED	WIDOWED	CITIZENSHIP	BIRTHPLACE	RESIDENCE					
										PREVIOUS PLACE	PREVIOUS PLACE	PREVIOUS PLACE	PREVIOUS PLACE		
C. M. N. S.	M	42	1	0	0	0	0	U. S. B.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.
F. W. S. P. H.	F	37	1	0	0	0	0	U. S. B.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.
M. W. H. S.	M	35	1	0	0	0	0	U. S. B.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.
M. W. H. S.	M	35	1	0	0	0	0	U. S. B.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.
M. W. H. S.	M	35	1	0	0	0	0	U. S. B.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.
M. W. H. S.	M	35	1	0	0	0	0	U. S. B.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.	Pa.

If you need to find census records for a country other than the United States, check a research guide to find out for which years censuses exist for particular countries and to learn how to access them.

A wealth of genealogical information can be found when you locate the record of your ancestor's family in the U.S. census. The censuses of 1880, 1900, 1910, and 1920 are particularly rich in detail. The 1850, 1860, and 1870 census records are helpful, but they give less information about each person. The majority of the 1890 census was destroyed by fire.

Census records do not become available until 72 years after the census was taken. Until then, everything in the census is private and can be obtained only by a close relative, who must show a need to have a copy of the entry from the census record. The latest census that is available now is the 1930 census.

To find a relative in a census record you need to know the following:

- **The name the relative was using.** For a married female ancestor this is important because she would be listed under her maiden surname. A After she married, she would be listed under her married surname.
- **The place where the relative was living at the time of the census.** If you are looking for a person in a U.S. census, for example, you need to know which state and county the person was living in at the time the census was taken. In a county, you need to know which town your relative lived in. In a city, you should know the person's address or at least which part of the city he or she lived in.

Steps for Finding Someone on the Census

- Step 1**—Decide which census you want to search.
- Step 2**—Is it on the Internet? Many U.S. censuses available (and many for other countries) are on the Internet.
- Step 3**—Is it indexed? All of the U.S. censuses available are indexed. You can access the indexes by searching the following websites: <http://www.ancestry.com>, <http://www.genealogy.com>, and <http://www.heritagequest.com>. Be sure you know whether the index you are using includes every name on the census or only the heads of households. Knowing this will affect your search strategy.
- Step 4**—Is there a local library, genealogical society, or Family History Center near you that has a subscription to the above websites? Access to the censuses on these websites is not free.

If there is a good *statewide index*, you may not need to know exactly where the relative lived within the county or state. However, if you do have this information, it will help you recognize your family if several people in the area have the same name.

MARRIAGE INDEX			
NAME	PLACE	GUIDE VOL.	YEAR
Antes, David Merritt	Broward	244	1934
Anthony, Beatrice Florence	Broward	266	1934
Anthony, Jamie Laruth	Taylor	276	1934
Anthony, John M.	Dade	236	1934
Anthony, Johnnie Lee	Marion	250	1934
Anthony, Laura Inez	Hillsboro	262	1934
Anthony, Lucy	Duval	260	1934
Anthony, Neva Mable	Pinellas	268	1934
Anthony, Sidney	Duval	236	1934
Antinori, Angelina	Hillsboro	237	1934
Antinori, Joseph	Hillsboro	257	1934

Using Newspapers

You can find information about your ancestors in newspaper articles. You may find some in your home or in libraries or in newspaper offices. Obituaries and birth and wedding notices are where you will most often find family history information.

Tens of thousands of newspapers have been published in the United States, past and present. When looking for information about your ancestors, do not overlook smaller newspapers that cater to a particular city neighborhood, ethnic or racial group, or religious group. For example, more than 5,000 African American newspapers have been published at one time or another, some dating back to the early 1800s. Such newspapers might have printed a detailed obituary of your ancestor if he or she was well-known in the community, whereas large-circulation newspapers often print only brief death notices. A librarian can help you find newspapers that might be useful to you and can assist you in obtaining microfilm copies if they are available.





Using Cemeteries

Tombstones are a great source of information about people. For many cemeteries, the names, dates, and other information on tombstones have been copied, or transcribed, and the information put into books or on the Internet. A local genealogical society or Family History Center might be able to help you locate a *transcription* of a cemetery that is too far away for you to visit.

Books about the history of towns and counties often include biographical sketches of early settlers and leading citizens. If your ancestors have been in the United States for several generations, you may find information about your ancestors in one of these books.

Using Family and Local Histories

Family histories—those put together by family members—are another source of genealogical information. Relatives may have kept a copy of their family history in their homes, but sometimes they are available in libraries. They may be just lists of family members with their dates and places of birth, marriage, and death, plus the names of relatives. Or they may include detailed biographical information about each person.

Using Family Organizations

An extended family organization is one that includes your grandparents, aunts, uncles, and first cousins. It also may include your great-grandparents, your grandaunts and grand-uncles, and your second cousins. Members of your extended family can be helpful in telling you about your family history and genealogy.

In addition to these informal family organizations, two types of more formal family organizations are organized with genealogical purposes in mind: ancestral family organizations and surname organizations.

Ancestral family organizations are created around an ancestral couple and include all of their descendants. For example, John and Jane Clough who came to America in the early 1600s are the center of a Clough family organization. Everyone who belongs to this organization should be able to trace his or her ancestry to this couple. The purposes of a family organization are to do good research into the ancestry and descendants of a couple and to record and share the information. Such an organization often publishes major family genealogies and newsletters that may be available in some major libraries.

A surname organization is based on a surname that is associated with a specific geographical area and time period. The geographical area may be quite small, or it may include an entire country. For example, the Deweese Family of America covers the entire United States from the 1680s to the present.

Lineage Societies

Lineage societies are organizations that require a person to be able to trace and document his or her ancestry to the group of people the society is honoring. For example, the Society of California Pioneers is for the descendants of California settlers before the gold rush (pre-1850). The International Society of Sons and Daughters of Slave Ancestry is a lineage society that honors ancestors who were enslaved. Lineage societies have both national and local chapters. Your local library or genealogical society can help you identify and obtain current addresses for lineage societies that may be of interest to you.

Surname organizations are interested in the genealogical records of anyone with the surname, and they use the information they collect to try to establish various family relationships. A surname organization often records this information and deposits it in a library or archive where interested persons can access the information.

Using Genealogical Periodicals

Genealogical periodicals or magazines can provide helpful information on how and where to find sources. Information taken from censuses and vital records (from counties, towns, religious institutions, cemeteries, and family records) may also be published in them. Some of these magazines are listed in the resources section of this pamphlet. Contact your local or state genealogical society for a list of periodicals that would be helpful for your research.

Many of the periodical articles have been indexed in the Periodical Source Index, or PERSI for short. You can search PERSI for free at <http://www.ancestry.com>.

Deciding Which Records to Use

Now that you are familiar with the type of records that are available, you can start thinking about what information you want to track down. Here is one example of some steps you might take to uncover new information.

Step 1—Decide what you want to find out. For example, “Who were my great-grandpa’s parents?”

Step 2—Find out what kind of record will give you that information. You might recall that your birth certificate gives the names of your parents, so maybe your great-grandpa’s birth certificate will give the names of his parents. You also remember that your mother told you your great-grandpa was born about 1903 in Massachusetts.

Step 3—Find out where the records you need can be found. If you discover that records for births in Massachusetts in 1903 are available at the Family History Library, you could rent a microfilm copy from a local Family History Center and get a copy that way.

The Family History Library and Family History Centers

The Family History Library was founded in 1894 to aid members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with their genealogical research. Today the FHL is the largest genealogical library in the world and is open to the general public. Anyone can use the library’s resources free of charge. In addition, more than 4,000 associated branch libraries called Family History Centers are located throughout the world. Family History Centers are often located in local meetinghouses of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and staffed by volunteers. Most Family History Centers have computers with Internet access to genealogy websites.

The FHL’s collection includes more than 2.3 million rolls of microfilm and thousands of bound books. New microfilm of genealogical records from all over the world is continually being made. There are currently 200 cameras taking microfilms in 44 countries.

All of the library’s holdings are described in the Family History Library Catalog, which is available on the Internet at <http://www.familysearch.org>. Most of the microfilms in the FHL’s collection can be rented through a local Family History Center. Usually the films must be ordered, and there is a small fee to cover the postage and other expenses.

This new information enables you to start the process over again with a new question. For example, you might now decide to see what you could find out about your great-grandfather’s brothers and sisters. A census record would list the whole family together, so you might decide to look at the first census that was taken after your great-grandfather was born. A librarian at your local library could help you access a website the library subscribes to that indexes census data. Suppose you find that the census you want—the 1910 census—has not yet been indexed. That is not a problem. You go to Plan B and search the

1920 census, which has been indexed. Your experience searching the census record might go something like this:

Librarian: "Just type in *Edward Quirin* and choose Massachusetts as the state."

You: "There are no matches."

Librarian: "Are you sure he lived in Massachusetts in 1920?"

You: "Maybe not. I think my mom said that the family lived in Rhode Island, too."

Librarian: "Let's try that."

You: "Still no matches."

Librarian: "Do you know anything else about Edward's family?"

You: "I know his father's name was Michael and his mother's name was Catherine."

Librarian: "Maybe we should try searching on *Michael Quirin* in Rhode Island."

You: "There are 11 matches! One has a wife Catherine and a teenage son named Edward!"

Librarian: "Looks like you found what you were looking for."

As you can see, you do not always get instant results. Sometimes you need to do a little creative thinking to come up with another name or place that may yield the results you are looking for. When you find a useful census record, make a copy of it.

The record can give you quite a bit of information, including the ages and names of family members and the type of job the head of the household had.

How to Use the Information You Gather

As you gather information on your family, you may find that some of it includes errors and/or contradictions. Contradictions occur when two records show different things. When you find an error or contradiction, you have to figure out which sources are the most trustworthy. You might need to do some detective work in evaluating the material you have gathered.



Case Study

Your dad tells you that your grandpa—his dad—Zacharias Smith, was born January 26, 1925, in Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, to parents Ebenezer Smith and Sara Woodbury. Your dad also told you that Ebenezer was a famous lumberjack. You go to a local library and find a history of Portland, Oregon. Believe it or not, you find Ebenezer mentioned as a lumberjack, but it does not say that he was particularly famous. The book mentions Sara, but it gives her maiden name as Woodburn, not Woodbury. You decide to get Zacharias' birth certificate, hoping that it will tell you his parents' names. It does, and there Sara's name is listed as Sara Elizabeth Woodbury (she was also the informant, that is, the person who informed the clerk of the birth). The birth certificate also says that Zacharias was born January 22, 1925. You check the 1930 census to find out how old Ebenezer and Sara were. You find them in Portland with Zacharias and his brothers and sisters. Ebenezer was a 35-year-old lumberjack and Sara was a 37-year-old housewife. The census also shows that he was born in Tennessee and she was born in Nebraska.

What was Sara's maiden name? Two out of three of your sources said her name was Woodbury, while only one said Woodburn. Also, which of the three sources is most likely to be trustworthy? Zacharias' birth certificate is probably the most reliable (as long as the clerk who wrote the record did not

make a mistake) because the information about her name came from Sara herself. Your dad's memory is a pretty reliable source. The least reliable source would be the Portland history. That is because it is not a firsthand source, and you are not sure where the author got the information.

About when were Ebenezer and Sara born? You can estimate their years of birth because you know how old they were at the time of the 1930 census. If you subtract Ebenezer's age, 35, from 1930, you get 1895. If you subtract Sara's age, 37, from 1930, you get 1893. Ebenezer would have been born around 1895, and Sara would have been born around 1893. Remember, however, that these are only estimates. You still do not have their exact birth dates.

Can you trust your father's memory? He was right about some of the facts he gave you. However, he did not know Sara's middle name, and he was off four days on his father's birthday. Also, you have not uncovered anything so far that proved your great-grandpa was famous. Family stories are always a good place to start, but they are not always completely correct. They usually have some truth in them, but they can get changed or exaggerated over the years, so it is always a good idea to dig a little deeper.

When evaluating information, use the facts and data you already have and compare them with the new evidence. Then decide whether they fit together well with the rest of your information. Do this continually as you look at more sources of information to be sure the genealogical information you gather is accurate.

Spelling

When evaluating records, do not write off a record simply because the surname you are researching is not spelled the way you are used to seeing it spelled. Surnames have not always been spelled consistently. In earlier times, not everyone had the privilege of learning to read and write. The person writing down the name spelled it the way it sounded. In addition, many countries do not use the Roman alphabet we use in the United States. For Russian, Indian, Chinese, Korean, and many other names must be transliterated into the Roman alphabet. Often a name can be transliterated in several different ways, which means the spelling of the name will not always be the same. The table provided shows some different spellings for a selection of names.

Surname	Different spellings
Borukhin	Brukhin, Bryukhin, Brokkin
Bouverie	Boverie, Bovary, Bouvry
Gines	Gynes, Gimes, Joines, Jeynes
Hofmeister	Hovemester, Havemeister, Hommester
Kapoor	Kapur
Mendes	Menendez, Menendes, Méndez, Méndes
Nichols	Nickles, Nickel, Nicole
Siebert	Segebrecht, Zieprecht, Sibbert
Walters	Walter, Waters, Wallers
Zhao	Chao, Chew, Chieu, Chu

Nicknames are another thing to check. You might have trouble finding an ancestor because you know only the person's nickname and not the full name, or vice versa. The table here shows some first names and the nicknames for them. Would you have guessed some of them? Your ancestor's name might also be abbreviated to the initials of his or her first and middle name.

Names of places are often spelled in different ways, too. The key to finding your ancestors is to have an open mind!

First name	Nickname
Ann or Agnes	Nancy
Aaron	Ron
Bridget	Delia
Eduardo	Lalo
Ivan	Vanya
John	Jack
José	Pepe
Margaret	Peggy
Mary or Martha	Polly

Keeping Track of Information

You should keep track of where you find your information so that other people will be able to find it if they need to. Plus, documenting your sources shows other people that they can trust your work.

There are two ways to keep track of your steps. One way is to write down your sources on your family group record or some other place that makes sense to you. Another possibility is to keep a *research log*.

There is no wrong or right way to document your sources. The important part is to write them down somewhere so that you or someone else can find the information again.

Write down information such as the name of the ancestor you are researching and in what place the person lived. The goal is just to help you remember what you are trying to learn about this ancestor.

If the source you are looking at is at a library or archive, put the call number here. If your source is a home source, write down the name and address or telephone number of the relative with the information. If the source is from the Internet, write down the name and address of the website.

Research Log			
Ancestor's name			
Objectives		Locality	
Date of search	Location/ call number	Description of source (author, title, year, pages)	Comments (purpose of search, results, years, and names searched)
			Document number

Put down the day you did the research or found the information.

Write the title and a brief description of the record you are looking at. For example, "My grandfather's birth certificate" or "1920 U.S. Census, Marshall County, Mississippi."

Record what you found (or did not find), for example, "I found grandpa's birth certificate in the attic." Even if you do not find information where you expect to find it, you should document where you looked, for example, "I did not find grandpa's family on the 1920 U.S. Census, Marshall County, Mississippi." Doing this will help you know where your family is *not*.

Genealogy as a Profession

Professional genealogists do genealogical research to make their living. Some work for businesses that specialize in genealogical research. The genealogists do the actual research, but the company does all the communicating with clients, reporting, handling of finances, taxes, and other business matters. Some professional genealogists have their own businesses. They do the research and handle the business aspects.

Anyone can call himself or herself a professional genealogist. It is the responsibility of the person hiring a genealogist to determine if he or she is qualified. The Board for Certification of Genealogists and the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists test professional genealogists to ensure they are qualified to do good genealogical research in the area or areas of their specialty. These programs test the genealogist in both knowledge of sources and in actual research skills. These organizations can provide a list of genealogists who have been certified or accredited.

Board for Certification of Genealogists
 P.O. Box 14291
 Washington, DC 20044
 Website: <http://www.bcgcertification.org>

International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists
 P.O. Box 970204
 Salt Lake City, UT 84097-0204
 Telephone: 888-813-6729
 Website: <http://www.icapgen.org>

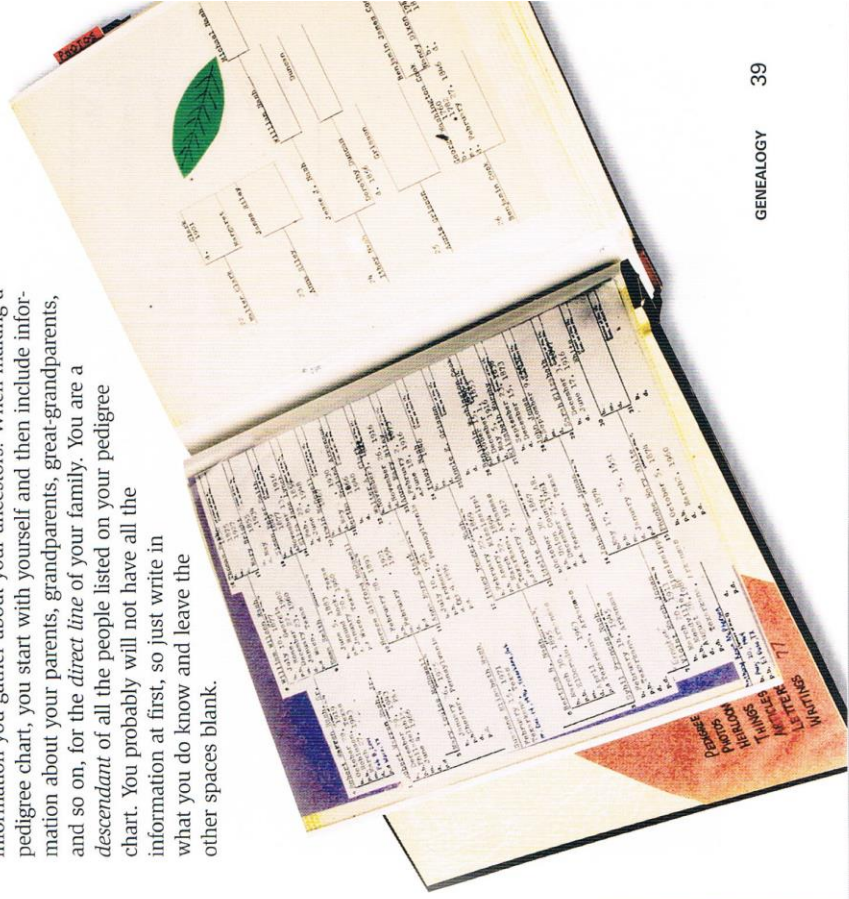
Qualified genealogical researchers almost always specialize in a particular geographical area. This is because the record sources for each area are different and records are constantly changing. It is not possible for one single person to keep current in all geographical areas, although knowledge of basic research procedures is the same in any locality.

If you ever decide to hire a professional genealogist, your local genealogical society can usually provide you with a list of genealogical researchers in your area and help you find out if he or she is accredited by one of the above organizations.

Recording and Organizing Information

The Pedigree Chart

To begin, you need a blank *pedigree chart* form to organize the information you gather about your ancestors. When making a pedigree chart, you start with yourself and then include information about your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and so on, for the *direct line* of your family. You are a *descendant* of all the people listed on your pedigree chart. You probably will not have all the information at first, so just write in what you do know and leave the other spaces blank.



Pedigree chart

<p>1. Me When Born: Where: Married: Where: Died: Where:</p>	<p>4. His Father When Born: Where: Married: Where: Died: Where:</p>
<p>2. My Father When Born: Where: Married: Where: Died: Where:</p>	<p>5. His Mother When Born: Where: Married: Where: Died: Where:</p>
<p>3. My Mother When Born: Where: Married: Where: Died: Where:</p>	<p>6. Her Father When Born: Where: Married: Where: Died: Where:</p>
<p>My Spouse</p>	<p>7. Her Mother When Born: Where: Married: Where: Died: Where:</p>

Step 1—Fill in your information. You are No. 1 on your pedigree chart. Write your complete name, then your birth date with the day first, then the month, and then the year. Always give four digits for the year. Example: 14 May 1994. Then write the place you were born. Write place names from smallest to largest like this: Chicago, Cook, Illinois, United States. Chicago is the city, Cook is the county, Illinois is the state, and United States is the country. For foreign countries, use the same idea—that is, listing the places from smallest to largest. There probably will be some information on your pedigree chart that you will not be able to fill in yet, such as your marriage information!

Here are some more examples of how to write place names, going from smallest to largest. Later on you will see why it is important to include so much detail.

Drakemuir, (village)	→	Dairy, (parish)	→	Ayrshire, (county or shire)	→	Scotland (country)
Ghatol, (town)	→	Banswara, (district)	→	Rajasthan, (state)	→	India (country)
Newport, (town)	→	Hants, (county)	→	Nova Scotia, (province)	→	Canada (country)
Acapantzingo, (town)	→	Cuernavaca, (county)	→	Morelos, (state)	→	Mexico (country)

2. My Father

When Born:
Where:
Married:
Where:
Died:
Where:

Step 2—Fill in your father's information in the No. 2 position on the chart. If you do not know some of his information, such as his place of birth or your parents' marriage date, ask!

3. My Mother

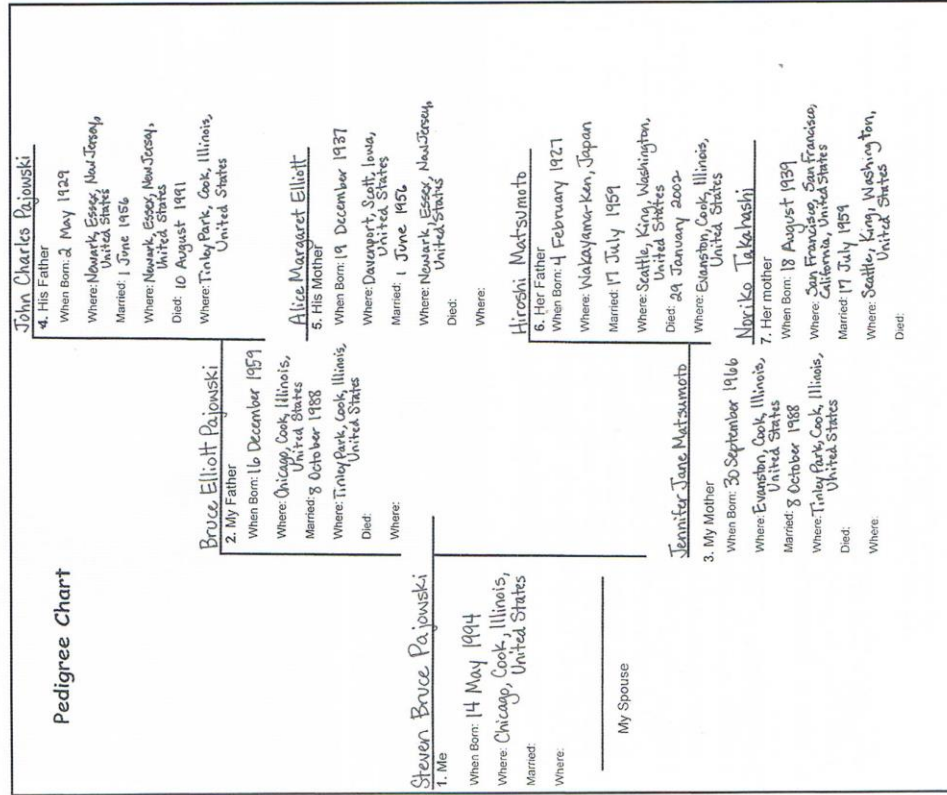
When Born:
Where:
Married:
Where:
Died:
Where:

Step 3—Fill in your mother's information in the No. 3 position on the chart. Use her *maiden name*, which is the *surname* (last name) she had when she was born. In genealogy always use a married woman's maiden name if you know it.

Step 4—Fill in information for other ancestors. Now that you understand how to record information on your pedigree chart, you can find information about the names, dates, and places for your grandparents and, if possible, great-grandparents.

Remember, it is fine to leave a blank space for any information you do not yet have. Some blank spaces for your more distant ancestors may never be filled in because there may be no records or the records may not be available to you.

Some people make their pedigree charts with computers. To do genealogy on a computer, you need genealogy software. See the Developments in Genealogy chapter and the resources section for more information on genealogy software programs.





Adding small photographs to your pedigree chart can make it more interesting. You can buy charts with spaces built in for photos, or you can design your own. Place a photo of each ancestor near his or her space on the chart; do not worry if you don't have a photo of each one.

The Family Group Record Form

Your pedigree chart contains information about your parents, grandparents, and other direct ancestors. But what about other relatives such as brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, and cousins? They, too, are an important part of your genealogy.

The form used to record information about them is called a *family group record* form. One form usually lists information for one family unit, that is, the father (husband), the mother (wife), and all their children (listed in order of birth with the oldest child first).

Slightly different formats are available, but they all show the same basic information. To begin, first get a blank family group record form. You may want to photocopy the one provided here.

Put your father's information here. Put your mother's information here.

Family Group Record

Page ____ of ____

Husband's Name		Place		Other marriages <input type="checkbox"/> See notes	
Born					
Other information		Place			
Died		Place			
Married		Place			
Husband's father Name					
Husband's mother Name					
Wife's Name		Place		Other marriages <input type="checkbox"/> See notes	
Born					
Other information		Place			
Died		Place			
Wife's father Name					
Wife's mother Name					
Children (List them whether living or dead.)					
1	Name	Place		Other marriages <input type="checkbox"/> See notes	
	Born				
	Other information	Place			
	Died	Place			
	Spouse's name	Place			
	Married	Place			
	Name	Place		Other marriages <input type="checkbox"/> See notes	
	Born				
	Other information	Place			
	Died	Place			
	Spouse's name	Place			
	Married	Place			
	Name	Place		Other marriages <input type="checkbox"/> See notes	
	Born				
	Other information	Place			
	Died	Place			
	Spouse's name	Place			
	Married	Place			

List your brothers and sisters and yourself in the places for children. The oldest should be listed first and the youngest listed last.

Husband's Name		Wife's Maiden name	
Children (List them whether living or dead.)			
3	Name	Place	Other marriages <input type="checkbox"/> See notes
Female	Born	Place	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other information	Place	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Died	Place	
	Spouse's name	Place	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Married	Place	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Male		

Notes, explanations, and sources of information

Write down where you found your information. Examples of what you might write include the following.

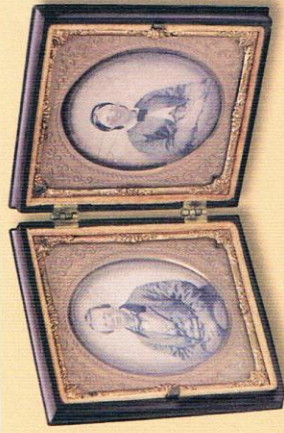
- "Family information from interview with my mother"
- "My grandparents' marriage certificate, in the possession of my Uncle David, 14383 Viewmont Drive, Normal, Illinois"
- "A story my grandpa told me"
- "An old newspaper clipping from the Medford News, Medford, Oregon, 19 June 1945"

Things to do

- This is a place to list ideas about where to look next for more information. Some examples are:
- "I'm going to write a letter to my great-aunt to ask if she has some more family information."
- "I'm going to look for my grandpa's obituary in old newspapers from the town where he died."
- "I'm going to look at old census records for my great-grandma and her family to find out what her father did for a living."

All Families Are Special

There are many different types of families. For example, you may live in a home with the father and mother to whom you were born. Or you may live in a home with only one parent, with two parents where one is a stepparent, or with other relatives. Your family may include half brothers and half sisters or stepbrothers and stepsisters. Each of these persons is an important member of your family.



On your pedigree chart it does not matter if the people you list as your family are biological (bloodline), adopted, step, foster, or other relationships. If you feel they are your family, list them on your forms. Sometimes, however, there is a need to know the biological ancestry of a person, often for medical purposes. For this reason, it may be a good idea to place a note on the back of your genealogy forms that indicates when a relationship is other than bloodline.

If you have questions about what name should be placed in any position on your pedigree chart and family group record forms, ask your parents and your merit badge counselor. There is no right or wrong way to do it. It is a matter of individual choice.

Obtaining Genealogical Forms

You can get pedigree charts, family group record forms, and other genealogical forms from many suppliers. Where you choose to get them will depend on your own personal preferences.

If you have access to a personal computer with genealogy software that prints pedigree charts and family group record forms, you can print some out. If you have access to the Internet, blank forms can be printed for free from the following websites:

- <http://www.ancestry.com/save/charts/ancchart.htm>
- <http://www.familysearch.org>
- <http://www.pbs.org/kbyu/ancestors/charts>

You also can get blank charts and forms from a genealogical supply store or a *genealogical society*.

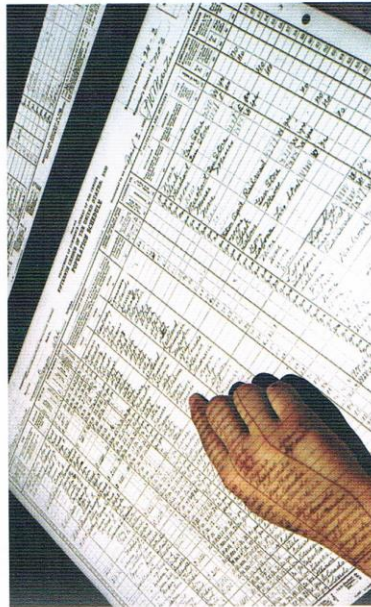
You can obtain pedigree charts in an 8 1/2-by-11-inch letter-size format, a legal-size format, or a large foldout size.

Developments in Genealogy

Years ago, family historians had to travel to the place where the records they wanted were located. They had to copy down by hand any information they wanted to keep. This meant that people who wanted to do genealogy had to have the time and money to travel.

By the middle of the 20th century, however, microfilm had come into use. Microfilm is film of a paper document, such as a newspaper, photographed at a reduced size. The words and pictures on microfilm can be viewed with a microfilm reader, which magnifies them to their original size or larger.

Microfilm copies of original records from various places can be sent all over the world. People no longer have to travel so far to view a record. The records travel to them! Records may be viewed at a nearby genealogical library. The Internet has made accessing records even more convenient. With Internet access, it is possible to view many records on a personal computer in your home or school.

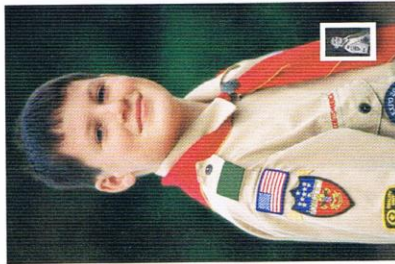


The Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, is the world's largest library devoted to genealogy. It is open free to the public.

Microfilm and Microfiche

Micrographics is the branch of photography that captures images of records at a size much smaller than the original for storage and later use. Microfilm and microfiche are the two formats most commonly used in micrographics.

A microfilm camera reduces the size of the original image to a size that can fit on the film. Microfilm cameras may take pictures that range from a few times smaller than the original to many hundreds of times smaller than the original. Here is an image of a Boy Scout and the same image approximately 10 times smaller than the original. You could fit 10 images of the Boy Scout into the space where you originally only had one. You can see why microfilm is a great way to store records—it takes up much less space than the original records.



Microfiche is

another format

for reduction

photography.

Microfiche is a

clear, flexible card

usually measuring

approximately

6 inches by 4 inches

and is about the

same thickness

as microfilm. It is

possible to fit an

entire book, even

a large one, on a

single microfiche.

Microfilm and Microfiche

Micrographics is the branch of photography that captures images of records at a size much smaller than the original for storage and later use. Microfilm and microfiche are the two formats most commonly used in micrographics.

A microfilm camera reduces the size of the original image to a size that can fit on the film. Microfilm cameras may take pictures that range from a few times smaller than the original to many hundreds of times smaller than the original. Here is an image of a Boy Scout and the same image approximately 10 times smaller than the original. You could fit 10 images of the Boy Scout into the space where you originally only had one. You can see why microfilm is a great way to store records—it takes up much less space than the original records.

Advantages of microfilm include the following:

- There is less wear and tear on the original record.
- Microfilm can be duplicated into multiple copies so that people in many different places can have access to the record. In other words, microfilm makes wide distribution of the record possible.
- Microfilm serves as an archival, or preservation, copy of the record. If something were ever to happen to the original record, the microfilm is a backup.
- Microfilm provides an exact image of the original record, which prevents the possibility of mistakes creeping in when a record is copied by hand.
- Microfilm takes up much less storage space than the original documents.



Microfilm usually comes in either 16 mm or 35 mm widths.

Digital Imaging

During the late 20th century, micrographics was cutting-edge technology for the preservation and distribution of original records. In the 21st century, however, digital imaging is the tool of choice.

A *digital image* is a picture of something, such as an original census record, that is stored electronically. A digital camera is used to take the picture. The camera converts images into a digital code that can then be read by a computer. The code associated with one image, usually called a file, must be stored somewhere so that it can be seen, or retrieved, later when someone needs it.

Data on the earliest computers were stored on paper cards that had the code punched into them. Next, files were stored on magnetic tape, then on magnetic disks (called floppy disks because the first ones were actually flexible). Today, files are stored on floppy disks, compact discs (CDs), digital versatile discs (DVDs), or the hard drive (disk) of a computer or other device. Digital cameras have their own tiny hard disk on which image files are stored until they can be transferred, or downloaded, to a computer and then saved on to a longer-term storage device, such as a CD.

One advantage of keeping images in a digital format is that it is easy and inexpensive to make copies. Another strength of the digital format is that the quality of each copy is as good as the original. However, if you do not have access to a computer or your computer does not have the software to read the files, digital records are of no use to you. In addition, computer technology changes rapidly, so data must constantly be transferred from outdated storage formats to current ones.

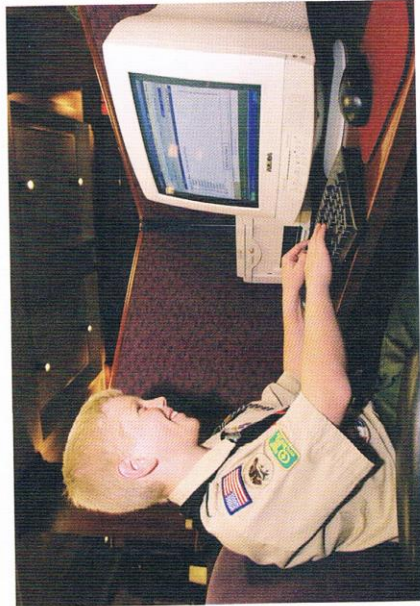
Computers and Indexes

The enormous storage capacities mentioned above and the processing capabilities of modern computers have made possible not only digital imaging but also digital indexing and searching. Suppose you were doing your research 50 years ago. What if you did not find information about your ancestor in the place where he or she lived? You would then have to search in all the places near where your ancestor lived. At the least this would have meant looking through many microfilms. But it also could have meant having to send for, travel to, or hire someone to search the records at another location. Now, many records have been put into databases and indexed so you can enter what you are searching for and let the computer do some of the hunting for you.

The Internet

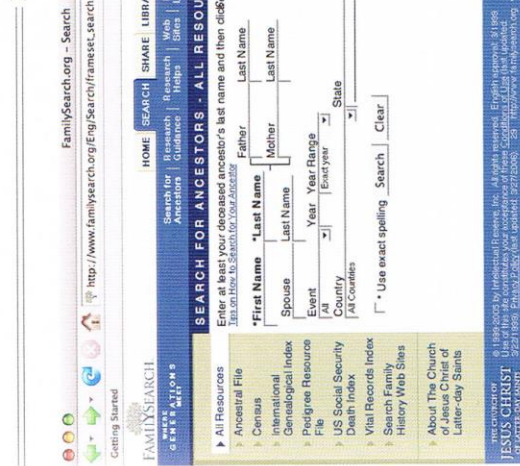
The Internet increases the number of people who can access a database. Instead of people having to get their own copy of a database, many people can use the same database at once.

When you go to a website for a genealogical record database, all you need to do is type in your search request. Your computer sends your request over the Internet to the server, or mainframe computer where the database is stored. The server then sends the information requested back to your computer.



Genealogical research today

Remember that you should always ask for your parent's permission before surfing the web.



Reprinted by permission. Copyright © 1999-2002 by Intellectual Reserve Inc.

The database located at <http://www.familysearch.org> is an example of a large database that comes from two sources: user contributions and indexes of original records.

Genealogical Databases on the Internet

Once you have decided which ancestor you are going to research, try one or more of the following Internet databases:

1. User-contributed (meaning the information is from individual people)
2. Index of an original source
3. Images of an original source (sometimes with an index)

The difference between the three is the source of the information. Remember that before you accept information as fact, you must decide whether it is correct and whether it is about *your* ancestor. Take a moment to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each type of database. Understanding the limitations of a database helps you determine the reliability of the information it offers.

User-contributed databases allow you to take advantage of the genealogy that other people have already traced. You might be able to get in touch with distant relatives who also are working on your genealogy. The drawback is that the person may not have done his or her research very carefully and it may contain mistakes.

Indexes of an original record provide you with an easy-to-search index of records from a documented source. These indexes are based on original records and not someone's opinion. However, the fact that a person had to enter the information into a computer in the first place also means that typos and other mistakes are likely. Often you will have to pay a fee to use these databases.

Images of an original record may or may not be indexed. If they are indexed, they offer one of the easiest ways to access information about an ancestor. You can look for your ancestor and then immediately view the original source to make sure the information is correct. If the images are not indexed on the computer (they may be indexed somewhere else), you can still look at the original record instead of having to find a copy of it. Many times these databases cost money to use.

Before April 1999, the International Genealogical Index was available only at about 4,000 Family History Centers and a few libraries that had copies of it. When it was placed on the Internet, it became available to millions of people. The IGI is just one example of many online genealogical databases.

Other Genealogical Resources on the Internet

In addition to Internet databases, there are many other types of websites that can help you with your family history. For instance, sites devoted to different countries and regions can help you learn about the history, traditions, or customs of a particular place. Many people working on their family histories have put up websites where they post information about the genealogical work they have completed so far. These sites can be quite helpful if you find one that has information about an ancestor you and the other person have in common. There also are websites of archives and libraries that give information about original records. Some of these websites are free, while others require that you pay a fee to use them.

Local family history and historical societies can be excellent sources of valuable genealogical information. Most societies have websites that provide at the least a mailing address where you can write for information. Some have sites that offer complete online indexes of records. Many of these societies have indexes and records that you can purchase if you cannot find the records elsewhere.

Societies focused on tracing certain ethnic groups are very similar to local family history societies. They specialize in finding records about one particular group and therefore can give you help that you might not find anywhere else.

Large archives and libraries almost always have websites. Sometimes they have online indexes. Usually, these websites will give you at least an idea, if not an actual catalog, of the records the archive or library holds. They will also tell you how you can access their records. You may be able to visit and view their records in person, or they may have a search service that will do the search for you for a fee. They might provide information about professional researchers you can hire.

Menu sites, such as <http://www.cyndislist.com>, help you find other websites. They are usually organized by place and then subject. For instance, if you were looking for a local genealogical society that covered Washtenaw County in Michigan you would:

- Go to <http://www.cyndislist.com>.
- Scroll down to the United States Index: States, Regions, and Localities within the States.
- Click on "Localities" for Michigan.
- Click on the first letter of the county, "W," for Washtenaw County.

A list of links to websites about Washtenaw County would appear. Among these websites you would see a link for the Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County. You can follow these steps for any state and county in the United States, or for other countries.

Using Search Engines

Search engines typically use keywords. Keywords are words that are unique to what you are searching for. For example, in the following sentence, "I am looking for the grave of my ancestor Rose Goldman." You would likely pick the words *grave* and *Rose Goldman* because the other words are very common and can be used in many other contexts.

If you just typed in *grave* and *Rose Goldman* you would get thousands of hits. You would need to narrow your search. To do this, you might add the name of the place *Rose Goldman* died or the year of her death to your search terms. Remember, however, that not all the *Rose Goldmans* you find will be your ancestor. In fact, it is possible that none of the matches you get will be your ancestor.

Remember, too, that computers are not as smart as you are. For instance, suppose you are looking for your ancestor named *Marco Angelo Benedetto*. You type his name into the search engine, and it does not find him. However, if you were looking at the original record, you would find him as *M. A. Benedetto*. You would know this is probably him, but the computer was looking for an exact match. This same idea applies to any type of search on a computer, not just a keyword search.

Menu sites are helpful for identifying websites that can assist you in tracing ancestors belonging to a particular ethnic group or nationality. If you were looking for resources related to Jewish genealogy, for example, you could go to <http://www.cyndislist.com> and scroll down the list of places and topics until you get to the heading, "Jewish." Click on the heading and you will find links to many websites for Jewish genealogy. If your particular ancestry is not listed by name then click on the name of the country your family came from. For example, click on the heading, "Italy/Italia" to find information on Italian genealogy.

Search engines are a great way to search the Internet. Bear in mind, however, that they are much more helpful if you are looking for places or things rather than individual ancestors. For example, if you were looking for the National Genealogical Society's website, you would type *National Genealogical Society* into the search engine. Their site will probably be among the first few hits.

Genealogy Software Programs for the Personal Computer

Personal computers are a great help when organizing your genealogical research. You can type your information into a genealogy software program instead of filling out forms by hand. Then you can print out any charts or forms you might need. The best part is that if you make a mistake, it is easy to correct. Another nice thing about genealogy computer programs is that you can easily make copies of your work for other people.

These programs can do a variety of things. Not only can you enter names, dates, and places, but you can keep track of your information sources. If you have photos of your family, you can scan them and position them next to the information for that person. Some programs allow you to keep research logs as well. Some basic programs are free, while others must be purchased. See the resources section for information about a few of these programs.

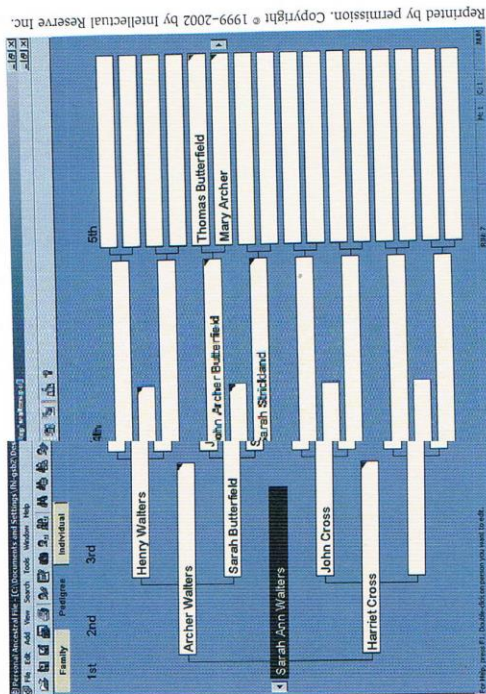
Founded in 1903, the National Genealogical Society serves as a center for genealogical activities and interest at the national level. Members of the society are both amateur family history researchers and professional genealogists. The NGS publishes the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*, featuring genealogical writing, previously unpublished source materials, and reviews of new books in the field of genealogy. The bimonthly *NGS Newsletter* features information about the society's activities and programs.

Tips for Online Safety

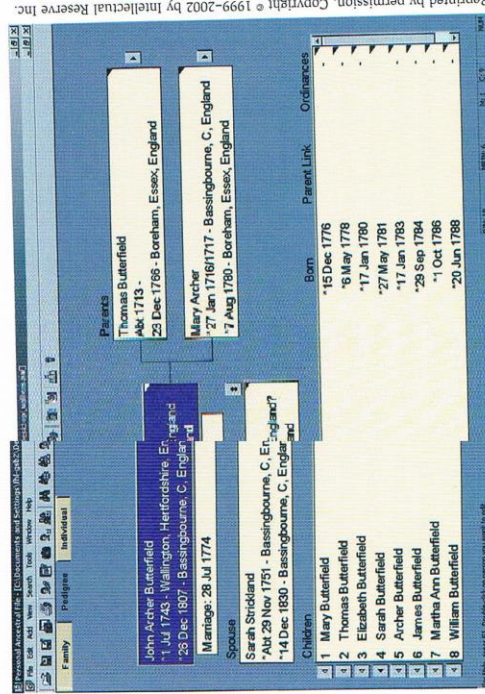
The Internet is a useful and convenient tool. But you should use the Internet only with your parent's permission and knowledge, and when you are online, be careful to guard your privacy and protect yourself from potentially harmful situations.

- These tips will help you stay safe. Your parent, counselor, or librarian may talk with you about other rules for Internet safety.
- Follow your family's or school's rules for going online. Respect any limits on how long and how often you are allowed to be online and what sites you can visit.
- Protect your privacy. Never exchange emails or give out personal information such as your phone number, your address, your last name, where you go to school, or where your parents work, without first asking your parent's permission. Get your parent's permission before sending anyone any family photographs.
- Only open emails or files you receive from people you know and trust. If you get something suspicious, trash it just as you would any other junk mail.
- If you receive or discover any information that makes you uncomfortable, do not respond. Immediately tell your parent or another responsible adult.
- Never agree to get together with someone you meet online, unless your parent approves of the meeting and goes with you.
- Keep your Internet password a secret.
- Always get your parent's permission before doing any online shopping.
- Remember that not everything you see or read online is reliable. Along with lots of great information, the Internet has lots of junk. Learn to separate the useful from the worthless. Talk with your counselor or another experienced adult web user about ways to tell the difference.

- Be a good online citizen. Do not do anything that harms others or is against the law.



Here is a sample screen from a genealogy software program. You can see that it looks much like a pedigree chart.



Software can be used to make a family group record.

Glossary

- ancestor.** A person from whom you are descended, for example, your parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents.
- database.** A collection of records taken from one or more sources and compiled on a computer.
- descendant.** Person descended from an ancestor (son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter).
- digital image.** A picture that was taken by a digital camera and is stored electronically.
- direct line.** Parents and the parents of parents.
- event.** A birth, marriage, death, religious ceremony, burial, or something that happens in the life of a family member that is important enough to record.
- family group record.** A form that has spaces for organizing information about members of a family. The parents are recorded at the top of the form, then their children below them. Events such as births, marriages, and deaths; the dates of the events; and the places where they happened are recorded.
- genealogical society.** An organization of people with a common interest in the family history either of a particular surname, a religious or ethnic group, or a geographical area. Examples include the Watkins Family Organization, the Catholic Family History Society of England, the French-Canadian Genealogical Society of Connecticut, and the Albuquerque Genealogical Society.
- genealogy.** The study of one's ancestors—parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and so on back through history.
- generation.** Each step back in parents is a generation. You and your brothers and sisters are a generation. Your parents are another generation. Your grandparents are another generation, and so on.

head of the household. The person in a house who is responsible for the others in the house. In most cases this is the father of a family, or if he is absent, the mother.

index. A shortcut to using a record. In genealogy, indexes are usually arranged alphabetically by the names of people in the records, but they may also list place names or other things.

maiden name. A married woman's surname before she got married, that is, the surname of a married woman's father.

micrographics. The branch of photography in which documents are photographed, reduced, and transferred to microfilm or microfiche.

oral history. The passing down by word of mouth from one generation to another of stories and events in a family's history.

original records. Records created at or near the time that an event occurred. In genealogy some examples are vital records, religious institution records, and census records.

pedigree chart. A form that shows several generations of parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, etc. It is also often called a family tree or ancestor chart.

research log. A place where a researcher records the genealogy research he or she has done. A research log helps avoid unnecessary duplication of research.

source. A person, book, record, document, tombstone, or other place where information was obtained.

statewide index. An index that arranges all the counties of a state into one alphabetical list by surname. A countywide index would do the same thing for a county. A nationwide or national index would do the same thing for an entire country.

surname. A person's last name or family name.

transcription. A handwritten, printed, or typewritten copy of something. A transcription requires that someone read, interpret, and then rerecord the information in the record. A photocopy, microfilm, or digital image of a record is not a transcription.

vital record. A record recording firsthand information about a birth, marriage, or death.

Genealogy Resources

Scouting Literature

Boy Scout Journal

Visit the Boy Scouts of America's official retail website at <http://www.scoutstuff.org> for a complete listing of all merit badge pamphlets and other helpful Scouting materials and supplies.

Books

- Brockman, Terra. *A Student's Guide to Italian American Genealogy*. Oryx Press, 1996.
- Burroughs, Tony. *Blackroots: A Beginner's Guide to Tracing the African American Family Tree*. Simon & Schuster, 2001.
- Croom, Emily Anne. *Unpuzzling Your Past: The Best-Selling Basic Guide to Genealogy*. Betterway Books, 2001.
- Hendrickson, Nancy. *Finding Your Roots Online*. Betterway Books, 2003.
- Kavasch, E. Barry. *A Student's Guide to Native American Genealogy*. Oryx Press, 1996.
- Kemp, Thomas Jay. *International Vital Records Handbook*. Genealogical Publishing, 2000.
- McKenna, Erin. *A Student's Guide to Irish American Genealogy*. Oryx Press, 1996.

- Padlock, Lisa Olson. *A Student's Guide to Scandinavian American Genealogy*. Oryx Press, 1996.
- Renick, Barbara. *Genealogy 101: How to Trace Your Family's History and Heritage*. Rutledge Hill Press, 2003.
- Robl, Gregory. *A Student's Guide to German American Genealogy*. Oryx Press, 1996.
- Rollyson, Carl Sokolnicki. *A Student's Guide to Polish American Genealogy*. Oryx Press, 1996.
- Ryskamp, George A. *A Student's Guide to Mexican American Genealogy*. Oryx Press, 1996.
- Schleifer, Jay. *A Student's Guide to Jewish American Genealogy*. Oryx Press, 1996.
- She, Colleen. *A Student's Guide to Chinese American Genealogy*. Oryx Press, 1996.
- United States National Archives and Records Administration. *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives*. National Archives and Records Administration, 2001.
- Warren, Paula Stuart. *Your Guide to the Family History Library*. Betterway Books, 2001.
- Wollman, Ira. *Climbing Your Family Tree: Online and Offline Genealogy for Kids*. Workman Publishing, 2002.

Yamaguchi, Yoji. *A Student's Guide to Japanese American Genealogy*. Oryx Press, 1996.

Magazines

Family Chronicle

Toll-free telephone: 888-326-2476
Website: <http://www.familychronicle.com>

Family Tree Magazine

Toll-free telephone: 888-403-9002
Website: <http://www.familytree magazine.com>

Archives and Libraries

National Archives and Records Administration

8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, MD 20740-6001
Toll-free telephone: 866-272-6272
Website: <http://www.archives.gov>

Library of Congress

Local History and Genealogy Reading Room
101 Independence Ave. SE
Thomas Jefferson Building, LJ C42
Washington, DC 20540-4660
Website: <http://www.loc.gov/tr/genealogy>

Mid-Continent Public Library

Genealogy and Local History Branch
Website: <http://www.mcpl.lib.mo.us/genlh>

New Orleans Public Library

Telephone: 504-596-2610
Website: <http://nutrias.org/~nopl/info/louinfo/louinfo.htm>

The Newberry Library

Website: <http://www.newberry.org/genealogy/collections.html>

Genealogical Societies

Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 73067
Washington, DC 20056-3067
Website: <http://www.aahgs.org>

The Family History Library and Family History Centers

35 North West Temple St., Room 344
Salt Lake City, UT 84150
Website: <http://www.familysearch.org>

National Genealogical Society

3108 Columbia Pike, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22204-4304
Website: <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org>

New England Historic

Genealogical Society

Website: <http://www.nehgs.org>

Genealogy Websites

AfriGeneas

Website: <http://www.afrigeneas.com>

Ancestry.com

Website: <http://www.ancestry.com>

Cyndi's List of Genealogy Sites on the Internet

Website: <http://www.cyndislist.com>

FamilySearch

Website: <http://www.familysearch.org>

Genealogy.com

Website: <http://www.genealogy.com>

RootsWeb

Website: <http://www.rootsweb.com>

The USGenWeb Project

Website: <http://www.usgenweb.com>

The WorldGenWeb Project

Website: <http://www.worldgenweb.org>

Genealogy Software

Family Tree Maker

Website: <http://www.familytreemaker.com>

Gene 4.3.4

Website: <http://www.ics.uci.edu/~eppstein/gene>

Genealogy Pro for Mac OS X

Website: <http://www.macgenealogy.org/genealogy-pro-z>

Family Tree Maker® 2008

Website: <http://www.genealogy.com/softmain.html>

Legacy 6.0 Family Tree

Website: <http://www.legacyfamilytree.com>

Personal Ancestral File

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Website: <http://www.familysearch.org>

Reunion 9

Website: <http://www.leisterpro.com>

Acknowledgments

The Boy Scouts of America is grateful to NaDine Timothy and Evva Benson of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for their expertise and for writing and compiling the text for this revised edition of the *Genealogy* merit badge pamphlet. Thanks also to Noel Cardon, David Cates, Ralph Erickson, Cheryl Howland, Dale McClellan, David Rencher, Yvonne Sorenson, and Leah Trost, who donated their time and knowledge to help write, review, and edit the original manuscript. The BSA thanks The Church's Family and Church History Department, which was instrumental in the development of this pamphlet.

Photo Credits

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, courtesy—pages 20–21 (*both*), 23 (*both*), 25, and 27 (*top*)

Curtis, Edward; Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division; "Salish Childhood," copyright 1910—page 4

Stephen Hernandez, courtesy—cover (*snapshot at bottom left*)

Mary Hill, courtesy—page 7

©1999–2002 Intellectual Reserve Inc., The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, courtesy—pages 53 and 58 (*both*)

©Jupiterimages.com—cover (*all except merit badge, scrapbooks, computer, snapshot at bottom left*)

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.—page 33 (*both*)

National Archives and Records Administration; Navajo code talkers, photograph No. 127-GR-137-57875; July 7, 1943—page 12

©Photos.com—cover (*computer*); pages 6, 8, 13, 14, 15 (*pencil*), 24, 38, 44, 47, and 51

Town of Newton, Mass.—page 22

Wikipedia.org—page 48

All other photos not mentioned above are the property of or are protected by the Boy Scouts of America.

Some material in this publication is reprinted by permission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In granting permission for this use of copyrighted material, The Church does not imply endorsement or authorization of this publication.

MERIT BADGE LIBRARY

Though intended as an aid to Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, and qualified Venturers and Sea Scouts in meeting merit badge requirements, these pamphlets are of general interest and are made available by many schools and public libraries. The latest revision date of each pamphlet might not correspond with the copyright date shown below, because this list is corrected only once a year, in January. Any number of merit badge pamphlets may be revised throughout the year; others are simply reprinted until a revision becomes necessary.

If a Scout has already started working on a merit badge when a new edition for that pamphlet is introduced, he may continue to use the same merit badge pamphlet to earn the badge and fulfill the requirements therein. In other words, the Scout need not start over again with the new pamphlet and possibly revised requirements.

Year	Merit Badge Pamphlet	Year	Merit Badge Pamphlet	Year	Merit Badge Pamphlet
2010	Landscape Architecture	2004	Management	2006	Reading
2006	Astronomy	2009	Fishing	2003	Railroading
2002	American Business	2010	Fly-Fishing	2005	Reptile and Amphibian Study
2005	American Cultures	2008	Forestry	2001	Rifle Shooting
2006	American Heritage	2008	Gardening	2011	Robotics
2006	American Labor	2006	Genealogy	2006	Royalty
2006	Animal Science	2007	Geocaching	2006	Safety
2006	Archaeology	2005	Geology	2002	Salemanship
2004	Archery	2005	Golf	2006	Scholarship
	Architecture and Landscape Architecture	2005	Graphic Arts	2004	Scouting Heritage
	Art	2005	Hiking	2010	Scuba Diving
	Athletics	2005	Home Repairs	2009	Sculpture
	Automotive Maintenance	2004	Horsemanship	2007	Shooting
	Aviation	2011	Indian Lore	2005	Shotgun Shooting
	Backpacking	2008	Insect Study	2004	Skating
	Basketry	2005	Inventing	2010	Small-Boat Sailing
	Bird Study	2005	Journalism	2007	Snow Sports
	Bugling (<i>see Music</i>)	2005	Landscaping Architecture	2004	Soil and Water Conservation
	Camping	2005	Law	2004	Space Exploration
	Canoing	2011	Leatherwork	2006	Sports
	Cheerleading	2008	Lifesaving	2007	Stamp Collecting
	Chess	2009	Mammal Study	2004	Surveying
	Cinematography	2006	Medicine	2008	Swimming
	Citizenship in the Community	2009	Metalwork	2003	Textile
	Citizenship in the Nation	2007	Model Design and Building	2005	Theater
	Citizenship in the World	2005	Motorboating	2006	Traffic Safety
	Climbing	2005	Music and Bugling	2005	Truck Transportation
	Coin Collecting	2005	Nature	2005	Veterinary Medicine
	Collections	2003	Nuclear Science	2007	Water Sports
	Communication	2008	Oceanography	2006	Weather
	Composite Materials	2008	Orienteering	2012	Weathering
	Computers	2004	Painting	2007	Welding
	Cooking	2004	Personal Fitness	2007	Whitewater
	Crime Prevention	2008	Personal Management	2006	Wilderness Survival
	Dentistry	2005	Pets	2011	Wood Carving
	Disabilities Awareness	2008	Photography		Woodwork
	Dog Care				
	Drafting				
	Electricity				
	Electronics				
	Emergency Preparedness				
	Energy				
	Engineering				

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA • SUPPLY GROUP

NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION CENTER

2109 Westinghouse Boulevard
P.O. Box 7143
Charlotte, NC 28241-7143

www.scoutstuff.org

DIRECT MAIL CENTER

P.O. Box 909
Pineville, NC 28134-0909
For fast credit card orders—
call BSA operators toll-free
1-800-323-0732

VISA, MasterCard, American Express—