

LET'S JUMP START YOUR GENEALOGY!

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HOW TO BEGIN YOUR GENEALOGY

- 1. Gather up the home sources:** Birth certificates, marriage certificates, newspaper clippings. Make a note of the names, dates, places and the events. Note the document number from any certificate. If newspaper clippings; record the name of the newspaper the complete date and the page number.
- 2. Pedigree Charts and Family Group Sheets:** There are many variations of each. Pick the one that works best for you. You can get various copies from: LDS Family History Centers; and internet sites such as Ancestry. Some genealogy programs will allow you to print blanks. See Internet for FREE downloads.
- 3. Begin with you:** We always work from the known to the unknown. Record your birth, and marriage, children's names, and dates of birth. Then, record the document numbers, and cite your sources using Elizabeth Shown Mills book, *Evidence! Citation and Analysis for the Family Historian*. You will be using the family group sheet for this. All surnames (last names) are in capital letters. Dates are day, month (3 letters), and year. A mans information is ALWAYS on top, women below.
- 4. Contact your living relatives:** Tell everyone that you are working on your family history. Ask each family to help fill out the information on their immediate family. Look at the family photos. Are they identified? Do you know them all? Ask family for copies of documents, clippings or records of any kind. Make copies of these documents. NEVER carry around original documents with you. Bring unidentified photos to family events for help!
- 5. Visit an LDS Family History Center:** These centers are an extension of the Salt Lake City Family History Library. They have many people that can help you. You do NOT have to be LDS to use these facilities. Check your phone book for a Family History Center near you.
- 6. Locate libraries with genealogical collections:** Locally, check on line for genealogical societies, Historical Society or a large county Public Library. Also check for the state archives. Google is your friend!
- 7. Join a genealogical society or family history center:** Your local genealogical society can help you with learning how to research, classes on beginning genealogy, how to use your computer to do better genealogy, help with specific genealogy programs, round table discussion groups, or

help with technique. You will meet many other people with the same interests. As your skill progresses, you'll want to join genealogy societies where your ancestor lived. This can help your research to progress even further.

8. **Internet sites** to further your genealogical research. See listings below.
9. **Locate resources:** You want to find books, periodicals or newsletters with your ancestor's names. You will use these to lead you to original documents.
10. **Census searches and soundex searches.** There is an overview of census materials on the internet. It would be easier for you to understand if you went to a Family History Center or an in depth class to learn more about this resource.
11. **Successful researching:** You must be organized. *Organizing Your Family History Search* by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack is a good reference book with several ideas to work with. For every fact you write, list the source documented using Elizabeth Shown Mills book for guidance, (also noted below).
12. **Keep taking classes! Keep learning!** In the San Mateo/San Francisco area: [**NOTE: to open any Internet link in this handout, simply right click the link; choose Open Hyperlink.**]

- Genealogical Forum of Oregon: <http://www.gfo.org/>

- Mills, Elizabeth Shown, CG, CGL, FASG, FNGS. *Evidence! Citation & Analysis for the Family Historian*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1997. ISBN: 0806315431
If you own no other book, you need this one to make sure you cite your sources correctly.
- Mills, Elizabeth Shown, CG, CGL, FASG, FNGS. *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2007. ISBN: 978-8063-1781-6. The next step in learning to cite your sources. Hundreds of document types are covered.
- Carmack, Sharon DeBartolo, CG, FUGA. *Organizing Your Family History: Efficient & Effective Ways To Gather And Protect Your Genealogical Research*. Cincinnati: Betterway Books, 1999. ISBN: 1558705112
- Eichholz, Alice, ed. *Ancestry's Redbook: American State, County and Town Sources*. Revised Edition. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry, Rev. 1992. In depth explanations of record sources for each state.
- Greenwood, Val D. *The Researchers' Guide to American Genealogy, 3rd Ed.*, Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2000. In depth information on various aspects of genealogy from beginning to professional. Covers censuses, church records, military records, etc. Often used as a college and university textbook.

Magazine:

- Family Tree Magazine: <http://www.familytreemagazine.com/>

E-Newsletters:

- Ancestry.com you can sign up to receive FREE newsletters via email: <http://www.ancestry.com/>
- Dick Eastman writes a weekly column. There is a FREE version and an expanded version costing \$20 per year. Links for the FREE and pay version available from his blog. EGON's Newsletter: <http://blog.eogn.com/>

Windows based Genealogy Programs:

- RootsMagic Essentials (FREE) This is the trimmed down version of the full RootsMagic program: <http://www.rootsmagic.com/>
- GenSmarts is an artificial intelligence analyzing program. It can help you locate records you might not otherwise know about finding on line: <http://www.gensmarts.com/>. GenSmarts works *with* many genealogy programs. It has a one time cost.
- CNET has four you can test drive for free: <http://download.cnet.com/windows/genealogy-software/>

Macintosh based Genealogy Programs:

- Reunion: <http://www.leisterpro.com/>
- Dick Eastman has written a wonderful blog on Macintosh genealogical software with great insight: http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans_online_genealogy/2008/09/genealogy-progr.html

Bible records to donate?

NGS is always delighted to accept Bible Records for the collection. Please photocopy the title page of the Bible along with pages that have family information, and send the material to the Bible Record Collection, National Genealogical Society, 4527 17th Street North, Arlington VA 22207. @

Books:

- Looking for a family book? Check out: <http://www.bookfinder.com/>
- GoogleBooks: <http://books.google.com/>
- BYU's Family History Archive: <http://www.lib.byu.edu/fhc/index.php>
- HeritageQuest online. (Log into YOUR County Library with your library card) and see the books they have. Read more about HQ online here: <http://eogn.com/HeritageQuestOnline>
- Open Library: <http://openlibrary.org/>

Internet Links to expand your research:

About three pages of links have been posted for your use here:

<http://www.lawsonresearch.net/1/post/2011/07/jump-start-your-genealogy-links.html>

AND

If while on www.LawsonResearch.net you click on the tab called 'Toolbox' you'll find useful links to help you with your research across the United States, alphabetic by state.

Interview Questions: At the Google.com and type in quotes, "genealogy interview questions" You will receive about four thousands suggested web sites. Read the first dozen or so and apply those you like to your personal needs.

Research Plans:

How to Develop a Genealogy Research Plan

A major goal in developing a genealogy research plan is to identify what you want to know and formulate the questions which will provide the answers you seek.

Elements of a genealogy research plan include:

- ✓ **Objective** - What specifically do you want to learn about your ancestor? Their marriage date? Spouse's name? Where they lived at a particular point in time?
- ✓ **Known Facts** - What have you already learned about your ancestors? This should include facts -- identities, relationships, dates and places -- that are supported by original records.
- ✓ **Working Hypothesis** - What are the possible or probable conclusions that you hope to prove or disprove through your research?
- ✓ **Identified Sources** - Which records are most likely to provide support for your hypothesis? Census records? Marriage records? Land deeds? Create a list of possible sources, and identify the repositories, including libraries, archives, and societies or published Internet collections where these records and resources can be researched.
- ✓ **Research Strategy** - Plan the order in which to consult or visit the various repositories, considering the available records and your research needs. If you require information from one resource to use in checking another, be sure to take that into account.

Example:

1. Describe the research problem.
2. Summarize the known details. Include the names, dates, and relationships.
3. Identify fully all records and repositories to be included in the project.
4. Identify any limitations on the research time, inaccessible records, knowledge.
5. Present both positive and negative findings. Be sure to include the reasoning and details.
6. Summarize the findings.

7. Develop a work plan for continuing the research. This plan should be based on the research.