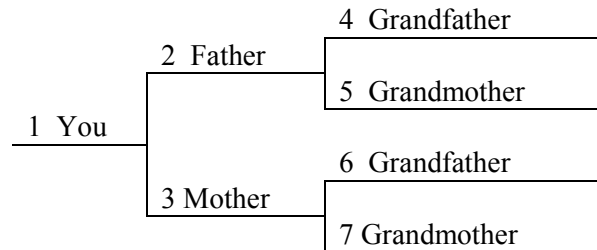


BEGINNING GENEALOGY
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BASICS

1. Begin with yourself and work backwards generation by generation.
2. **Pedigree Chart** – Outlines your direct line of ancestors only.
 - a. Fill in with as much information as possible, including counties of residence.
 - b. A number of forms are available.
 - c. Male line is always first and is an even number.
 - d. Use birth/ maiden name for female and always is an odd number.



3. **Family Group Sheet** - one marriage.
 - a. All known information about one father, one mother, and all their children.
 - b. List children in birth order if known.
 - c. Forms available in a variety of designs.
 - d. Record source of information.
4. Forms are available for free download at <http://www.familysearch.org/>.
4. Dates - always use day, month, year to avoid confusion; example - 12 Dec. 1870.
5. Research Log.
 - a. Record of research to avoid duplication.
 - b. Document source of information (Copy title page of publication).
6. Computer Data Bases
 - a. There are a number of commercial computer programs available.
 - b. Check with other researchers for demonstrations and recommendations.
 - c. The Personal Ancestral File (PAF) program is available free from <http://www.familysearch.org/>.
7. Start your search.
 - a. Gather family records and enter information on Family Group Sheets and Pedigree Charts along with source of the data.
 - b. Search for family records such as Bibles, newspaper clippings, old letters, scrap books, diaries, baby books, wedding books, photo albums, birth, death, and marriage certificates.
 - c. Contact other family members locating and interview oldest living relatives.
 - d. Try to locate others who are researching your family or a common ancestor; possibly, someone has done some research on your family.
 - e. Join genealogical group in area where your family lived.

EVALUATE INFORMATION

1. Sources of information:
 - a. Original Material - based on firsthand knowledge.
 - b. Derivative Material - everything else.
 - c. Some records may contain both such as a death certificate.
2. Always evaluate the information that you find; just because it is in print does not make it correct.
 - a. What sources were used?
 - b. What dates and places?
 - c. Are there inconsistencies or contradictions in the information?
 - d. Does data appear reasonable in conjunction with time period and source materials used?
 - e. Who provided the information?
3. When you talk to relatives, check the information against other sources. Often you will be given some valuable clues but those family stories can be garbled truth.
4. A good genealogist is a good detective!

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Can be by mail or now more often by email.
2. Be short, simple, direct and sincere; do not ramble.
3. Limit request to 2 to 3 direct questions; don't ask for all of the person's information.
4. If by mail, always include a business size self addressed stamped envelope (S.A.S.E.).
5. Write in a friendly letter, express thanks for any information and offer to share.
6. Ask about anyone else who might have some information. Keep a copy.

LIBRARY SEARCH

1. **Surname** – Check Catalog for publications on the known surnames.
2. **County** - Search under the name of the county.
 - a. County Histories - can provide clues about your family but the person paid to be in these "mug" books and the biographies were complimentary.
 - b. Look for sketches on related families.
 - c. Review other printed information such as Cemetery, Census Indexes, Marriage, Probate, Land and other published records that are available.
3. Most libraries now have computer catalogs rather than a card catalog, it is usually best to use a "keyword" search. Start with as broad a search as possible. If the list is too long then start to modify it to produce a smaller list.
 - a. Surname - Modify by using family such as brown family.
 - b. Location - Modify by using *and* state. Spell out both county and state name (Washington county and Wisconsin) or name of town/city and state.
4. In New England search under the name of the town.

RECORDS

1. Important to know why the record was created and where it is presently located.
2. **Today** - State Registration of Birth, Death, and Marriage; with Social Security numbers and computerized information.
 - a. State Registration started in the early 1900's in most states.
 - b. Death Certificates give correct death date and place but other information may be wrong, look at who provided the information.
 - c. Most states will provide Vital Records by mail for a fee, some have digitized them and posted them on the web. Others have indexes available on the web.

3. **Prior** - Most records on a person were kept in the county of residence.
 - a. Find out what county your ancestor resided in. Look in an Atlas.
 - b. Research history of county, see *Ancestry's Red Book*.
 - c. Note - If your ancestor was an early resident of an area you may find that he/she could be a resident of several different counties or even states without ever having moved because of boundary changes.
 - d. Review what records are available; records may be lost due to fire, flood, etc.
 - e. Determine when your ancestor resided in this community
4. Many records have been published or are available on microfilm through the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) Family History Library system.
5. Information and indexes may be available through internet sites.

COUNTY RECORDS

1. Marriage

- a. Usually indexed and often published.
- b. Will provide date of marriage and names of bride and groom.
- c. May give information such as names of parents, place of residence, witnesses.
- d. Sometimes difficult to locate, if not found in county of residence, search surrounding counties and places where relatives lived.

2. Probate Records

- a. Usually indexed, sometimes abstracts are published.
- b. All records which relate to the disposition of an estate after the owner's death including Wills, Letters of Administration, Petitions, Inventories, Appraisals.
- c. Wills indicate how property is to be distributed, may name children and provide other information about the family such as married names of daughters and family relationships.
- d. Probate Packet is a file of papers which may include death date, appraisal of property, sale of property, location of heirs, distribution of the estate and other clues about occupation and lifestyle.
- e. Possibly there are Court Records pertaining to the estate.
- f. Note witnesses, executor for possible relationships.

3. Land Records

- a. Usually indexed by the names of both the buyer (Grantee) and the seller (Grantor); occasionally found in printed form; original records for many counties are available from LDS Family History Library.
 - b. Deed is a legal document that transfers title in real property from one person to another.
 - c. Important source because land was inexpensive and readily available; may provide clues when no other record exists for relationships, locations, name of wife, married names of daughters, and heirs.
 - d. Land descriptions
 - (1) New England - laid out in towns with adjoining fields.
 - (2) Other colonial states plus TN, KY, TX and HI use metes and bounds.
 - (3) Rest of States use Rectangular Land survey system divided into section, townships and ranges. Use a plat map to locate land.
 - (4) Ohio has all of these.
 - e. Dower Rights - In some states, widow had the use of a portion of the lands that husband owned, usually 1/3 for her support during her lifetime.
4. **Divorce records** may provide interesting information, in some states early divorces granted by state legislatures.

5. **Other** - Court Minute Books, Tax Records, School Census, other loose papers and documents; usually these records are not indexed, may be hard to locate and time consuming to search.
6. **Birth and Death Records** may occasionally be found but varies from state to state, check references. Sometimes delayed birth certificates can be found.
7. Many counties will provide limited amounts of information through correspondence. Do not expect them to do much searching. Limit your request to a few items.

US CENSUS RECORDS

1. Important record because provides personal information at ten year intervals.
2. May give helpful clues about families.
3. Organized by State, County, Township and/or City.
4. From 1790 through 1930 are available for personal research. Some were destroyed when British burned Washington DC during the War of 1812 and the 1890 Census was 99% lost due to another fire.
5. US Government waits 72 years to open Census for personal research.

INFORMATION CONTAINED ON CENSUS RECORDS

- 1790** Name of head of family, number of free white males 16 and up, free white males under 16, free white females; all other free persons, number of slaves.
- 1800** Name of head of family, number of free white males and females under 10, 10 and under 16, 16 and under 26, under 45, 45 and over, number of slaves.
- 1810** Same as 1800.
- 1820** Same as 1800, also male and female slaves and free colored persons under 14, 14 and under 26, 26 and under 45, 45 and up. Foreigners not naturalized.
- 1830** Name of head of family, number of free white males and females in 5 year age groups to 20, 10 year age groups from 20 to 100 and 100 years and older, number of slaves and free colored in 6 age groups, foreigners.
- 1840** Same as 1830, also number of pensioners for Revolutionary or Military Service.
- 1850** First to list all persons in the household, sex, color for each person, value of real estate, occupation for all males over 15, place of birth, if married within year; if attended school, if able to read and write for all over 20.
- 1860** Same as 1850 and value of Personal Property.
- 1870** Same as 1860 also if parents foreign born, if able to read and write for all over 10.
- 1880** Name, relationship to head of family, sex, race, age, marital status, married within year, occupation, number of months unemployed, if sick what illness, attended school, able to read and write, place of birth of person and parents. Soundex (Index) only for households with children 10 and under.
- 1890** Over 99% destroyed by fire in 1921.
- 1900** Name, race, sex, month and year of birth, age at last birthday, marital status, number of children born to wife of that marriage and number living, place of birth of person and parents, citizenship if foreign born, year of emigration, occupation, can read, write or speak English; home or farm, owned or rented. Indexes can be rented.
- 1910** Same as 1900 except for month and year of birth, also Civil War Veteran.
- 1920** Same as 1910, year of naturalization.
- 1930** Same as 1920, age at first marriage

US CENSUS ACCESS

1. The census is available both on microfilm and as digitized images.
2. Some libraries have census indexes and microfilmed copies.
3. Ancestry (Ancestry.com) and Heritage Quest (Heritagequest online.com) offer indexes and digitized images for a subscription fee. These may be available free through your local library.
4. The Family History Library is currently indexing and digitizing census records. These are available at no charge on the web site at <http://www.familysearch.org/>
5. Some states conducted state census, check references for information. These may be available on microfilm or as digitized images

EVALUATE CENSUS INFORMATION

1. Census takers were often political appointments.
2. Problems with spelling of names due to misunderstanding between the person giving information and person recording it. Data given orally and could be misunderstood.
3. People not always at home, don't know who gave the information, could be a child or neighbor.
4. Sometimes use nicknames or middle names for people in the household.
5. If the same information appears in several census years, probably reliable information. Compare to other data about the family.
6. Unfortunately, some people were missed by the census takers.

NEWSPAPERS

1. Can be an important source of genealogical information.
2. Articles and notices found in newspapers usually are published about the time of the event, making them a good source. However, errors do occur so compare with other data.
3. The following may be found in newspapers:
 - a. Obituaries which may give parents or ancestry of deceased, religious affiliation, close relatives, some accomplishments, movements and activities.
 - b. Marriage notices may give information about the event, names of parents and close relatives, residence, life events, religious affiliations.
 - c. Birth announcement may provide information about time and place of birth, parents, other relatives.
 - d. Family reunions and social events may give accounts of family gatherings, relatives visiting or trips to visit relatives or for business, other information.
 - e. News items such as graduation, appointments, accomplishments, movements of people in a community. May be important in preparing family history or biography and in tracing relationships.
 - f. Advertisements may identify their professions or businesses.
 - g. Legal notices of land sales, tax rolls, probate of wills, settlement of estates, divorce proceedings and reports of civil and criminal cases may give information about the family.
4. Locating Newspapers:
 - a. Look on the map to locate the closest towns to the place of residence. Try to identify the place that they may shop and/or the county seat.
 - b. If there are no newspapers published in a town or county of interest, try to identify a news center for the area even if it is in another state.
 - c. Don't overlook the foreign language papers for more recent immigrants.
 - d. Look for religious newspapers if you know the religious affiliation because they might provide information about your ancestor.

- e. Check the publication; Newspapers on Microfilm or write state historical society for information on availability. Many newspapers are available through interlibrary loan.
 - g. Some newspapers have been digitized and are available online for free or for a subscription fee.
5. Searching Newspapers:
- a. Look for newspaper indexes.
 - b. Metropolitan newspapers usually are be daily and contain more international, national, and state news. Do not contain as much personal news.
 - c. Newspapers from smaller communities may contain a wealth of information especially if the person is politically or socially active, an early settler, or a business owner. Tend to be published weekly with one page devoted to local news.
 - d. May provide information about the historical period.

DIRECTORIES

1. City and Telephone Directories can help identify residence of ancestor, locate the person on the census, estimate death dates, identify other relatives at the same residence, may give occupation or profession.
2. County and regional directories can provide information about residence, property owned, and other adult relatives in the area.
3. Professional directories may provide information.
4. College directories may give years of attendance, area of studies, other activities, and biographical data.
5. Religious directories; if your ancestor served as clergy with an established church, may be a source of biographical information.

CHURCH RECORDS

1. Vary in content and emphasis based on theology and social role of the church.
 - a. State or established church - considered every person in state a member and in Europe the pastor was an official record keeper for the state for events such as birth, baptism, marriage, death and burial. In this country, these churches continued to record these events and can provide important genealogical information. Examples of this type of church are the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Episcopal Church.
 - b. Free or "gathered" Church - considered only those who have been "born again" in Christ are the true members of their church. The sign of this event was baptism and thus in these churches baptism of infants is not practiced and baptism is not an indication of age. Examples of this type of church are Baptists, German Brethren, and Mennonites.
2. Identify religious background of your ancestor based on family tradition, obituary, county histories, town histories and cemetery records.
3. Many church groups maintain archives. (*Survey of American Church Records* by Kirkham or *The Source* by Ancestry.)

MILITARY RECORDS

1. Military records may provide valuable clues and personal information.
 - a. Pre Revolutionary records are generally historical in nature and seldom contain specific individual genealogical information.

- b. Records created since the Revolution contain more information such as birth, marriage, death, parents, pension, bounty land.
- 2. Revolutionary War Records.
 - a. Pension records relating to service began in 1776.
 - b. Individual states provided benefits beginning in 1776, mainly to officers.
 - c. Pension acts in 1818, 1823, and 1832 liberalized pension requirements, allowing the enlisted man, his widow, and his orphans certain benefits.
 - d. Bounty Lands were granted to veterans of U.S. service or state militia from 1776 to 1885.
 - e. Files relating to a soldier, his widow, or children are on file in the National and Branch Archives and are available for a fee. On microfilm; should request all information in the file including unselected material.
 - f. Much information has been published so check printed materials first.
 - g. Patriot Index – Daughters of the American Revolution, early applications not well documented. May be closed to new members and must be reproved for membership.
- 3. The Old Wars
 - a. Pension applications for claims of service between the end of the Revolution (11 Apr. 1783) and the beginning of the Civil War (4 March 1861).
 - b. Files located in National Archives.
- 4. War of 1812, Indian Wars, Mexican War
 - a. War of 1812 - Service from 1812 to 1815.
 - b. Indian Wars - Service from 1817 to 1898.
 - c. Mexican War - Service from 1846 to 1848.
 - d. Records available through National Archives, similar to Revolutionary War.
 - e. Microfilm indexes available through libraries.
- 5. Civil War
 - a. Indexed service and pension files relating to Union are in the National Archives.
 - b. Some Confederate Records are located in the National Archives while others are retained by the states.
 - c. Records that may be found are; Service, Certificate of disability, when dropped (death) marriage, birth of children, and medical records.
- 6. Ordering Records - <http://www.archives.gov/> - Military Service Records for information.
- 7. Modern Wars - World War I to present
 - a. WW I draft records located at Federal Records Center, 221 St. Joseph Ave, East Point Georgia. Also available by subscription from Ancestry.com.
 - b. Other records at National Personnel Records Center, GSA, Military Personnel Records, 9700 Page Blvd., St Louis, MO 63132. Records are not open to public but genealogical data will be provided to close relatives upon application with sufficient information to locate the records such as name, service number, branch of service. Many of these records were destroyed in a fire

CEMETERY

- 1. Can provide valuable information, but dates can be wrong.
 - a. Birth, death dates.
 - b. Clues about family relationships.
 - c. Other information.
- 2. Locating the cemetery.
 - a. Publications by individuals or organizations.
 - b. Family records.
 - c. Obituaries and/or death certificates.

- d. Location of property.
- e. Religious affiliation.
- 3. Availability of records will vary and are often difficult to locate.
 - a. Information from monuments.
 - b. Burial records or sexton's records.
 - c. Cemetery deeds and plats.
 - d. Burial permit records.
 - e. Grave opening records.
 - f. Local funeral home.
- 4. Walk the cemetery or family plot, record stones and/or take photos. Look at surrounding stones and record them, may be relatives. Make a sketch layout of stones.
- 5. Hard to read stones.
 - a. Do a rubbing of the stone.
 - b. Take photo in indirect light.
- 6. Not all graves will be marked with a stone.
- 7. Some small family cemeteries may unkempt or destroyed by current owners.

NAMES

1. Just because your surname is spelled a certain way now, does not mean that it is the original spelling or spelled that way in every record.
2. Always check for alternative spellings for your surname.
 - a. Consonants that have similar sounds - C/K, G/J, T/D.
 - b. Double letters, single sound same - l/ll, t/tt, e/ee.
 - c. Silent letters such as K in Knight.
 - d. Additional letter or letters added for local dialect such as r in Hallebone (Hallerbone).
3. Other problems
 - a. Names altered because of different languages.
 - b. Translation from one language to another, Smith for Schmidt.
 - c. Initials or abbreviations - Jim for James.
 - d. Given names interchanged - John Edward Long instead of Edward John Long.
 - e. Nicknames - Bill for William, Polly for Mary, Ann for Nancy.
 - g. Incorrect name given because of lapse of memory or different informant.

COLLATERAL FAMILY RESEARCH

1. **Definition** - Relatives not in your direct line.
2. Can provide information on your family and help solve research problems.
3. A family is made up of relationships not just names.
4. Women tend to retain the strongest kinship ties and tend to be the "keepers" of the family stories and possessions. They are more difficult to locate because their surname will change when they marry.
5. Kinship ties are not broken by mobility; families did keep in touch with each other and did visit each other.
6. Legal records for family members who leave no descendants may help in determining family relationships.
7. Be alert for clues about relationships, know kinship terms for period of research.

MIGRATION

1. Our ancestors did more traveling than we often realize.
2. Once they arrived here, are more likely to move again, further west.

3. In the early days, the migration routes followed waterways; rivers and streams were very important; later overland route and railroads were the means of travel.
4. People usually traveled in groups with relatives and neighbors. If they did not come with the original group, they might migrate to a place where relatives and former neighbors have settled.
 - a. Who were in the "traveling company" with your ancestor?
 - b. Identify people with similar migration patterns.
 - c. Look for information about background of neighbors who may be from the old residence and may be related in some way to your family.
5. Often marriage partners were people who came from the old residence. Marriages between first cousins and other closely related people may be found.

NATURALIZATION RECORDS

1. Three steps to naturalization.
 - a. Declaration of Intention (or First Papers)
 - b. Petition (Second or Final Papers)
 - c. Certificates of Naturalization
2. Prior to 1906
 - a. Early documents may provide little genealogical data, more information required later.
 - b. Often would file Declaration of Intention but may never have completed the process, could then vote, hold office and file homestead claims.
 - c. Process could take place in any county, city, or federal court. Can be difficult to locate.
3. After September of 1906, the process was handled by the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (INS), now called the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Records available through their website <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis> and the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts (see bottom of home page).
4. Look for online indexes and microfilmed records available through LDS Family History Library at <http://www.familysearch.org/>.
5. From 1790 to 1922, wives of naturalized men and citizens automatically became citizens. A woman who was a U.S. citizen could lose it if she married an alien.
6. From 1790 to 1940, children under 21 became U.S. citizens when their father was naturalized.
7. The 1900-1930 U.S. Census Records tell if a person was naturalized and the 1920 U.S. Census gives the year.
8. In Wisconsin, Naturalization Records are mostly held by the Area Research Centers.

TRACING YOUR IMMIGRANT ANCESTOR

1. Must know the location of the small village or region in order to find more records.
2. Find out as much as possible about the immigrant using U.S. sources.
 - a. Church records.
 - b. Death certificates, tombstones, newspapers; obituaries and other articles.
 - c. Naturalization records.
 - d. Military and/or Pension Records.
 - e. Census information
 - (1) 1850-1870 - Birth place of person - province or country.
 - (2) 1880 - Birth place of parents - province or county.
 - (3) 1900-1930 - Year of immigration, citizen if foreign born.
 - (4) 1920 - Also year of naturalization.
 - f. Check the International Genealogical Index (IGI) of the LDS Family History Library at <http://www.familysearch.org/>. Look at source of information.

3. Investigate the origins of close family friends and neighbors since people tended to settle near those they knew from the prior location.
4. See who witness probates and deeds, administrators, live nearby, join same church or purchase land at the same time.

PASSENGER LISTS

1. List names of passengers who arrived at ports on East Coast, West Coast, Great Lakes and Gulf of Mexico, consists of passenger lists, transcripts, abstracts, baggage lists, and manifests.
2. Information available from Passenger Lists depends upon time period of arrival.
 - a. 1565-1819 usually provide little personal information; no central location for lists; locate by searching indexes.
 - b. 1820-1893 captains of ships required by Congress to prepare lists of passengers contain name of ship, name of master, port left, date and port of arrival; name, age, sex, occupation and nationality of each passenger.
 - c. 1893-1954 useful personal information was requested from each passenger.
3. Search library catalogs and the LDS Family History Library at <http://www.familysearch.org/>.
4. Check all available indexes first; unless you know port, and approximate date.
5. Ancestry.com has indexed and digitized some passenger lists.
5. If you locate your ancestor, make a copy of the entire list, paying attention to those listed near nearby since they may be relatives or friends who came from the same location.
6. Immigration through Canada and Great Lakes - prior to 1895 no records kept by U.S. Government. From 1895 to 1954 records available through National Archives.
7. National Archives web site for ordering records - <http://www.archives.gov/>

FOREIGN RESEARCH

1. What you need to know:
 - a. ***Place of origin, the small village or area.***
 - b. Name of immigrant (original surname).
 - c. Time of immigration - clues about from where and why the person came.
 - d. Religious preference - what church records to search.
 - e. Other information about family, names of other family members or friends.
2. Study history of area for clues about his/her background.
3. Find a good publication on resources available in the area and how to do research.
4. Check the resources available through the LDS Family History Library at <http://www.familysearch.org/> and at other websites.

ORGANIZING YOUR INFORMATION

1. Begin immediately to organize and file your information as you collect it.
2. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to organize; you may want to use notebooks and/or files. Hanging files work well.
3. Can organize around surnames, family groups, and/or locations depending on your research.
4. Limit size of each file or notebook to a manageable amount of information.
5. Keep updating family group sheets and pedigree charts to focus your research.
6. Document where your information came from:
 - a. Give enough information that another researcher can locate it.
 - b. Guide - *Evidence! Citation & Analysis for the Family Historian* by Mills.

INTERNET

1. Allows access to many websites, indexes, other researchers, and digitized records. Should be used in conjunction with genealogical education, library, and on site research.
2. The LDS Family History Library website at <http://www.familysearch.org/> has a lesson titled "Use the Internet for Family History Research. To access it go to the web site and scroll down to "What's New". Find the "Family History Lesson Series" and go to Lesson 7.
3. Another free site is Cyndi's List at: <http://www.CyndisList.com>
4. The US GenWeb Project at <http://www.usgenweb.org/> provides free access to state and county pages with information and records.
5. Subscription websites such as Ancestry.com and Heritagequestonline.com are also available.
6. Information posted on the web with no documentation should only be used as clues.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU HIT A BRICK WALL

1. Organize
 - a. Do a simple narrative of the information that you have.
 - b. Chronological Chart with dates, ages, and sources.
2. Look for new solutions - keep asking why.
 - a. Pronounce name out loud with accent of ancestors.
 - b. Don't think of your ancestor in isolation, identify other people who came at same time and were friends and/or relatives.
3. Broaden your research
 - a. Back up a generation, research other children.
 - b. Read some history of the time and area.
 - c. Look at patterns of migration.
 - d. Browse.
4. Census - 10 up and 10 down rule - expand research to neighbors of your family for possible relationships.
5. Share problems and research with others.
6. Hire a professional researcher.
7. Let problem sit for a while and then go back to it.

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