Beginning Your Family History Research

WHERE DO I START?

1) Genealogy can be very overwhelming so start with what you know best – *yourself*, then proceed with each generation adding names, dates and places onto your charts. Research is done from the known to the unknown. The recent past and present need to be researched first while there are still family members to answer your questions. *Start at home. Talk with all the relatives you can. No amount of library research or online databases can replace what people can tell you. Each generation has clues to the generation that preceded it.*

2) Pedigree/Ancestor Charts (PC) & **Family Group Record Sheets (FGRS)**
--Pedigree Chart (PC): lists your *direct-line* ancestors (self, parents, grandparents, great-grandparents etc.)
--Family Group Record Sheet (FGRS): *contains birth, marriage and death information on one specific family* (parents and
   children) and provide a way to list and track *collateral lines* (aunts, uncles, cousins and siblings)
--Each person on a pedigree chart will be on two FGRS: 1 – as a child; 2 – as a parent (if married).
--Download forms at: <misbach.org/download/5GenPedigree.pdf>
                          <misbach.org/download/FamilyGroupRecord.pdf>

3) Filling out charts:
a) Names – CAPITALIZE SURNAMES. **Women** *always go by their maiden name on PC & FGRS. Do not write* Mrs. John Smith. *If you don't know her given or maiden name, leave it blank.* If you include her maiden name on records, enclose it in parentheses: Margaret (Carter) SMITH. **Children**: do not use *child* or *unknown* as a first name; if you don't know their name, leave it blank. An ancestor's **nickname** can be enclosed in quotes so it won't be confused with a middle name – John "Johnnie" Smith. The key: *be consistent.*

b) Dates – DAY – MONTH – YEAR. Always write the year w/4 numbers. Write the full name of the month or at least an abbreviation, but *never as a number*. It is better to leave a date blank than to estimate it.

c) Places – town, county, state, country. Write out the state names; do not use the 2-letter postal abbreviation. Always record the event's location (town/city/country) as it existed when the event occurred. Include in your notes the area's current name or if the town/city/country no longer exists.

d) Sources – *Do not enter names, dates or places without a source for each.* Some source examples are:
   Internet (site name, URL & date searched)   Book (title, author, page #, published date)
   Census (year, city, state, page # & where viewed online)   Newspaper (title, city, page #, date)
   Birth/Death/Marriage certificates (where obtained: county courthouse or state vital records; certificate #)
   Bible (published date, original if known & current owner of Bible)
   information obtained from …   *personal knowledge of …*

e) Notes – notes are not the same as a source. A *source* is where the actual document or record can be found. *Notes* include family stories and additional information to clarify a source or to explain your conclusions.

ORGANIZING YOUR RESEARCH

   Remember that for every *one* ancestor you research and find information on, you will discover *two* more to take its place. There are 15 direct-line ancestors on a 4-generation pedigree chart which covers approximately 100 years. By the time you have traced eleven generations beyond yourself, you will have 2048 direct-line ancestors – and that doesn't include all those cousins, aunts and uncles. You devote too many hours, months and years seeking these elusive ancestors to not have your research organized so you can find the information you want when you need it.

1) Don't let research sit and gather dust on your computer table. Enter new material into your computer, online family tree or onto charts before beginning research on the next ancestor. Keeping your FGRS and PC up-to-date avoids duplication of research. Periodically review your notes and files. You might have your grandparents' wedding date or your great-grandmother's maiden name in your files and just forgot to enter it onto your charts.

2) Organization enables you to see what you have and don't have so you can make research goals. Sometimes genealogy is overwhelming, and we think we are missing information when we aren't.

3) Whether entering names, dates, and places in your genealogical program or online, *always include sources.* Ask yourself – *why* do I have that name, date and place and *where* did I find the information? If you don't have a source for the information, place it in the person's notes. Finding the source now becomes a research goal.

4) *Evaluate the information you have.* Does it conflict with what your relatives have told you or you have found on records? Why does it conflict? Did you find what you were looking for? Where else can you look? Organization is the key and can lead us to additional sources.

5) There are many ways to organize what you have. The most important thing is to set up a system that is not too extensive or complicated. You don't want to spend all your time organizing information and not doing research. Find one that you are comfortable with or design your own. Regardless of the system you choose, *be consistent.*
1) *Organizing Your Family History Search* by Sharon Carmack
2) *Organize Your Genealogy: Strategies and Solutions for Every Researcher* by Drew Smith
3) *Managing a Genealogical Project* by William Dollarhide
4) <familytreewebinars.com/organization> Scroll down to view the free webinar *Organizing for Success* by Karen Clifford
   (presented 3 August 2011). Her website <fileyourpapers.com> offers more tips.
5) "Organizing Your Files" by FamilySearch.org <familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Organizing_Your_Files>

GENEALOGICAL SOFTWARE

1) When do I know it is time to get a genealogical software program? This is an individual decision. Genealogy generates a lot of paper. The software can help you keep organized. Some find errors and recommend search tips that are helpful for all genealogists whether a beginner or experienced. Also, once you are beyond your first pedigree chart, how will you number the charts? A computer program can do it automatically.

2) If you are not sure what type of genealogy program to use, ask other genealogists. Prices vary but many are under $50. Some offer both a limited version (free) and a premium version ($$). Download the free version to see if you like the program.
   Legacy <www.legacyfamilytree.com/downloadlegacy.asp>   RootsMagic <www.rootsmagic.com/Try/Default.aspx?>

3) Do I have to buy the same program as everyone else? What if I change my mind and don't like the one I've been using? Most programs can read each other to transfer data using a GEDCOM file.

4) L.O.C.K.S.S. Lots of copies keep stuff safe. While I recommend everyone use genealogical software and scan documents and photos into their computer, I also don't believe in tossing out *all* paper records. Paper copies can take lots of room to store, get lost or misfiled, or become damaged from repeated handling, improper storage, and disasters (flood, earthquake, fire), *but if your computer crashes, you will still have a paper copy of records.*
- *Original documents or photos should not be destroyed.* Preserve them in archival quality page protectors, file folders or envelopes and in a safe place. Do not store them in your working files, and ***never take original documents or photographs with you when you go to do research.***
- **Have multiple backups.** Genealogist Thomas MacEntee recommends a 3-2-1 backup plan. Examples:
   --at least *3 different backups*: the cloud, external hard drives & a flashdrive. *Your computer is not a backup*.
   --use *2 different media* for backups: cloud & flashdrives; cloud & external hard drives; DVD & external HD
   --at least *1 backup must be offsite*: cloud, safety deposit box, neighbor or family member.

NOW THAT I'm ORGANIZED WHAT DO I DO?
Decide what you want to learn about your family

1) How far are you going to research: To the immigrant ancestor? As far back as you can? Enough to write a family history or have a family reunion? 4 generations? A pedigree chart covers an average of 100 years. Most records will be available for this first 100 years but with each succeeding chart, finding names, dates and places can become a challenge. *Always start your research with yourself and proceed one generation at a time.*

2) After filling out your PC and FGRS to the best of your ability, **highlight the missing names, dates and places.** If you don't know the information, *it is best to leave the fields blank instead of guessing or estimating*. These blank fields then become your **research goals** to help you develop a search strategy. Use a form such as "Research Checklist" <www.mymcpl.org/genealogy/resources/family-history-forms> to give you ideas on which records to search for each ancestor; then mark the records as searched. Other forms can be found at: Genealogy Research Forms <www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Genealogy_Research_Forms>.

3) Which records should you check first? **Start with the known and move towards the unknown.** Genealogy is researched from present to past; death to birth *not* birth to death.

4) Make short and long term goals. But don't set a broad, unrealistic goal such as: *find out everything about grandpa by the end of the month*. Be specific in what you want: *find grandpa's birth date and place.* Break down the goal into manageable parts; narrow the search.

5) Learn about the records and techniques that can help you extend that family line *before* you use them. Read books, take webinars, attend conferences, or join a genealogical society and ask members for help. The FamilySearch.org Wiki <www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Main_Page> has hundreds of topics to aid your research. Search by the name of the state or country you need. Search the following Wiki page for the various types of US records you may need: <www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States,_How_to_Find_Genealogy_Records>

6) Research one generation at a time. Select either your paternal or maternal line, then choose one ancestor to research. Write down and evaluate what you know about the person. What does this suggest? Do you need more information? Where can you search for this information? Contact and interview all the relatives you can that you think may have information.

7) Don't jump too far into the past too soon. Your 2nd great-grandfather might be more interesting because a family story states he was a spy in the Civil War, but the clues you need to verify this will be in the generations between you and him. **Each generation gives clues to the preceding one.** Don't practice leapfrog research – jumping from ancestor to ancestor, skipping generations or trying to research multiple people at the same time. *Skipping a generation is skipping the clues needed to verify you are researching the correct ancestors.*

ORGANIZING A RESEARCH NOTEBOOK

1) Never take original documents with you when you do research. *Only bring what you can afford to lose.*

2) Use a 3-ring binder and subject dividers. Alphabetical dividers help organize family group sheets. Carry a spiral notebook or blank paper and pens in your binder for taking notes.

3) Many research facilities allow laptops, but if you don't have one bring a flashdrive with you to download images you find. Include your genealogy software program and research on it. **Flashdrives are often left in research facilities.** Label a document on the flashdrive – *if lost return to* and include your name and phone number.

HOW DO I FIND RECORDS TO FILL IN THE BLANKS ON MY CHARTS?

1) Online vs hands-on research. Which is better? *Research is a combination of both.* While much of your early research may be done online at home, many records have not yet, or may never be, placed online.

People are your best resources both for their knowledge and experience. Talk with as many relatives as you can find. Libraries (public/university), courthouses, cemeteries, churches, state/federal archives, museums and genealogical/historical societies may have original documents or photographs in their collections. If they have a website, use the Ask-the-librarian feature if there is one. If not, write letters, make phone calls. *Contact volunteers in the area that can help with some research, but don't ask them to do a search of all records.* Be specific in what you want or need. Use volunteer sites such as 1) USGenweb.org and 2) RAOGK.org. Hire a professional. They will know of and have access to many records you will not. Search by location or specialty at: Board for Certification of Genealogists <www.bcgcertification.org/associates/index.php> and Association of Professional Genealogists <www.apgen.org/index.html>.

Everyone gets to a point where to further their research they must visit the actual places their ancestors lived. For those of us who are limited by time and money, the next best thing to visiting these locations is to join a genealogical society for that

county, state or country. They will know what records are available to search and where they are located. Many local or state genealogical societies cost less than $25/year to join.

When you are ready to do foreign research, joining a society for your country is very important. It can help with tips on doing foreign research, word lists, translation help or suggestions from others who have done research before you. They can recommend researchers in the country to help. Patience is the key in doing foreign research.

2) After you begin to fill in your charts with the information you gain from people sources, you are now ready to search records. These records are divided into two types: original and compiled.

● *Original records are created at or near the time of the event and give primary information* (ex: birth, baptism, marriage, death certificates). Your goal should be to locate and use as many original sources as possible.

● *Compiled/derivative records* are those records *created by combining information into resources* such as county histories, biographies, family histories, online indexes, abstracts etc. Unless the compiled record gives their original sources so you can verify their content, *the information listed should be considered as clues and not fact. With every copy removed from the original, the margin of error increases.*

3) Evaluate your sources. Who gave the information? Is it a compiled or original document? When was the source created? Don't be surprised to find conflicting information between records and relatives. All could be wrong. *An online family tree without documentation is not a valid source*. You will want to be able to view or find the source they used to verify the names, dates and places. Indexes are helpful but are not the actual document so could have multiple errors that send you in the wrong direction. ***Indexes do not include all information in a record.***

4) How can you be sure your sources are reliable? *No source is absolute.* Ultimately it is your responsibility to prove the information is correct that you gather on your family. All documents are clues to further your research. How do you know you can trust a record? Ask yourself: 1—when was the record created; 2—who created it; 3—who provided the information; and 4—what conclusions do I arrive at from the record.

● Just because a record has an official government seal does not make it 100% accurate. And just because an online family tree has no sources does not make it inaccurate.

● Golden rules of genealogy: **1)** Never assume. **2)** Verify information yourself.

5) How many sources do you have to search? *As many as it takes.* Every record will have clues; at the minimum your ancestor's name and their location *at that time*. One of the first sources beginning genealogists use are online family trees because they are quick and easy to search. Unfortunately many are filled with errors and rarely have documentation to support their family tree. *Using another family tree as a source is not a source.*

●● Remember, there is always one more place to write, one more document to search, one more person to ask.

● You do not have to look at every record ever created, but you will learn more from two documents when studied together than looking at each separately or at only one. Compare death & birth certificates; birth & marriage.

● *Just because several different documents give the same information does not make the information correct.* A death certificate, headstone and obituary are different records and can verify a death, yet if the same person provided the information, it does not mean the dates etc. are correct, only that the informant was consistent.

6) Research Log – *Document all sources you search* even when you do not find anything on your family within a specific record. Start using research logs from the beginning so it becomes automatic. Create your own or use one from FamilySearch.org **<www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/File:Research_Log.pdf>**. To view how to use and fill out a Research Log: <www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Research_Logs>.

7) Cite your sources as you fill out your charts. Citations state where you found a record so you can go back to it. They validate your research. Use a consistent format for citing sources. To see examples of citations download: *Source Citation Cheat Sheet* <www.familytreemagazine.com/cheatsheet/genealogyessentials>. Most online databases and websites now give an example of how to cite them as a source. *However* --- if their source is another record, you must include in your citation both the name of the website you found the information on and the site/resource they created their collection from.

● Aren't sure how detailed to be in citing a source? Anyone (relative, non-relative, genealogical researcher or even yourself years later) should be able to use your citations to find and duplicate your sources.

●● ***Only cite sources you have seen.*** If Great-Aunt Harriet states she got her information from census records, *she is your source not the census records.* If Uncle Paul got the information from his mother's Bible or journal, then he is the source and not the Bible or journal. *You must view the records yourself for it to be your source.*

8) Keep a correspondence log/address list of all genealogical contacts. It will become your genealogical address book. Be sure to: 1) Date when you wrote, 2) brief note of what you requested and 3) when/if you received a reply.

9) FAN (friends, family, associates, neighbors) aka Cluster genealogy. *Don't limit yourself to researching only direct-line relatives (parents, grandparents etc.).* **Practice whole-family research.** Research all siblings and their spouses. Study and explore collateral lines (aunts, uncles, cousins) who might have lived longer or in an area with better preserved records. Research the people your ancestors came in contact with during their lifetime—neighbors, co-workers, friends, witnesses on document such as military pensions, marriage records etc. Any of them could have that one missing piece you need to get you back another generation.

10) But we've always spelled our surname that way. There are no spelling rules in genealogy. Our ancestors weren't as concerned about how names were spelled as we are today. *You can be guaranteed that at some point in your ancestor's life their given or surname was not spelled as it is now.* That doesn't mean you won't find them, it will just be more of a challenge. Keep a list of all the ways you find their names on records – you'll probably see that spelling again. *Immigrant given and surnames names may become Americanized.* Search these sites:
●Given names: <www.behindthename.com> Surnames: <surnames.behindthename.com>
●Spelling variants: <www.werelate.org/wiki/Special:Names>.
●When searching within collections, always try various spellings – but sometimes using the *Exact spelling* option can narrow your search. Learn to use wildcards. On most sites an * replaces 0-multiple letters; ? replaces 1 letter.

11) Everyone with that name must be the same person and related to me. The more we do genealogy, the more we realize our surnames are not quite as unique as we thought. Not all those *John Smiths*, *Jan Kovars* and *Sean Goughs* are the same person and related to us. There can be multiple people in an area with the same name. Creating a timeline for each *John Smith* can help you separate your ancestor from the others. A person cannot be in two different places at the same time for some events such as birth/baptism, death/burial, marriage, serving in the military, migration, occupation; but they could purchase land at about the same time in neighboring areas.

12) Maiden Names. Half of your ancestors are women. Finding maiden names is frustrating but essential to continue your research. Read all records carefully for clues. Death certificates usually list parents' names. An obituary could state *Mrs. Earl Smith was survived by a brother, Fred Jones.* Watch for *nee* or *geb/geboren* on her headstone. Both mean *born* and *usually precede a maiden name*. Research all of her children, not just your direct line, and her husband's siblings. One of them might mention her maiden name in their records. For a widow to obtain her husband's military pension, she had to show proof of their marriage. This could be in the form of a Bible page, certificate or affidavit of a neighbor and might have her maiden name.

ONLINE FAMILY TREES

1) Cousin bait -- posting your family tree online: Should your tree be private, public or a world tree? Should you post it to multiple online sites? Regardless of which type you use, when you find errors or conflicting names, dates and places (and you will) contact the submitter who may be a new cousin for you to share research with. Some submitters do not include a way to contact them but many sites will forward messages to keep personal contact information private. While you can copy information you find in an online family tree, the sites do not allow you to download someone else's tree. All sites protect living individuals by only allowing the submitter to view details.

2) The downside to posting family trees online: Sites can close down and do not always notify subscribers to allow them time to save their work and sources. On sites with *public world trees*, your family tree is not private, *may* be merged with other tress and *other researchers can change names, dates and places. Keep a master database and family tree on your personal computer that no one has access to but you* to avoid others altering your research *which will occur at some point* if you use a public world tree. You will have to constantly monitor your world tree so you can correct data entered by others.

3) Create your own online family tree site. Your site will be indexed by Google and other search engines so new relatives can find it – but they won't be able to change the information you have entered. Remember to respect the privacy of your living relatives or make the site invitation only.

4) Don't submit your family tree without sources. Don't copy information from undocumented family trees. Another family tree is not a source. Websites do not verify information submitted to an online family tree. It is up to you to verify information found online. Take the names, dates and places listed as clues, not as facts. ***Don't add any information to your records from an online tree until you have researched and confirmed it as valid.*** And even if sources are listed, *view the original sources yourself* to make sure they have not transposed dates/numbers or gotten the names and generations wrong.

SEARCHING ONLINE

How did we do genealogical research before computers and the internet? We actually looked for original records, visited courthouses and cemeteries, talked with our relatives etc. Now we depend on others to do our research for us through indexing and online family trees. While this is helpful, it can also be misleading.

The majority of the genealogical information you will need is not on the Internet at this time, and *some may never be placed online due to copyright restrictions*. Don't limit yourself to only searching for online records.

Genealogical research is a combination of four resources, and you need to be familiar with all of them.
1) relatives/people (oral histories); **2)** original/government records—courthouses, vital records etc. (primary documents); **3)** research facilities—libraries, historical societies (compiled records); and **4)** Internet (databases). *No one resource has all the information you will need.* You must learn to use all to find your ancestors.

The Internet has become a valuable *tool* in doing genealogy, but it is still just one of many tools you will use. Even with millions of websites devoted to genealogy, nothing can replace actual hands-on research. There is no quick and easy way of doing genealogy. It is counterproductive to just type in a name or words and click on search, but if you have lots of time to waste, sit yourself down and type away. You will get thousands of hits with most being irrelevant to your search, making you veer off course and forget your original reason for turning on the computer in the first place.

●**To get the most out of an online search:**
1) Before you even turn on that computer *get organized.* Stay focused. Decide *who* you want to research and *what* you need to find out about them. Learn *where* you can find the information you need.
2) Found a record online? That's great. But before you rush to find that next document, *did you glean everything you could from the records you have?* **SEARCH – ANALYZE – EVALUATE – PLAN**
3) Google Alerts <www.google.com/alerts> will search 24/7 for your preferences and will email you the results but you need a Google account.
   RootsSearch <www.rootssearch.io> searches multiple genealogical sites for you.
   Lisa Louise Cooke <lisalouisecooke.com> has tips on using Google or Google Earth in the *Start Learning* dropdown menu. Learn more at: <www.youtube.com/user/GenealogyGems>.
4) The Internet is not a primary source unless the collection contains the actual document to view. *Indexes are not the original document. Transcriptions and abstracts are not original documents.* Remember, *there are few original documents on the Internet compared to the documents you will need.*
5) Can you be sure the digitized images weren't edited? Are any parts of an image/document missing or cut off for editing purposes? Every document has a front and a back. Sometimes they are filmed out of order or the back is not filmed. And unfortunately that back side may include information you need. Is the digital version clear and easy to read? *Image quality varies between sites.* Another site may have a clearer image.

●**Can't find your ancestor in an online database?**
1) No site is perfect. *Don't depend solely on indexes.* They might make your research quicker, but *they are not always accurate and do not give you all the information found on the original record.*
2) *Don't avoid using a record just because it hasn't been indexed.* Not all *online* records at FamilySearch.org, Ancestry.com or other genealogical sites have been indexed yet there may be images to view and search.
3) *Don't use the same databases over and over again.* Think outside of the genealogical box. Be willing to try new ones for your ancestors—even those you aren't sure they would be on. There are more sites to search than just Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org that have records you can use in your search for ancestors.
4) Titles can be misleading, and the collection may not contain what the title implies. Always *read the collection's description.* Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org have many of the same records, but they do not always use the same titles *and* they usually change the collection's name from the one used by the original source.
5) *First time using that database? Take information you already know and test it to see how the site works.* If the information should have been in the collection but isn't, ask yourself why you can't find it. *Recheck collections, whether printed or online, every few months. Most genealogical sites place records online before they are completely indexed.* Sites will have a

listing of new collections and those which have been updated. Some records may never be placed online due to copyright restrictions.

6) The *shaky leaf* or *record hints* found on sites Ancestry.com & FamilySearch.org *are recommendations*. Don't ignore them, but realize that not all will apply to your ancestors. You know your ancestors better than a computer-generated hint. *You must research each leaf/hint before* 1) disregarding it; 2) attaching it to your ancestor at an online family tree; or 3) copying the information into your genealogical software.

7) Spelling rules do not apply in genealogy. Try various spellings for names and places.

8) *Does the online database allow wildcard searches.*

●**Online Databases --** *To subscribe or not to subscribe, that is the question.*

1) Some offer 7/14 day free trials. Many libraries (public, historical society & FHL/FHC) allow free access to some subscription sites. Watch for registration discount offers during holidays. Some collections may offer a free search during specific holidays (ex: military records on Veterans Day or Memorial Day weekends).

2) Before subscribing, *does the site even have the collections you will need?* Most catalogs are free to view. Many sites offer a free guest registration which allows limited access (usually only to free collections). You can do a lot of research in the 1-2 weeks free trial period if you know what you need and are searching the correct sites.

3) Compare sites. Why subscribe to 3 sites if 2 will do. FamilySearch.org is a nonprofit site and shares many of their historical records with paying sites. It also links to several subscription sites and you may need to have a personal subscription or be in a FHC/FHL to view the images. *No one site has all the records available.* Ancestry.com may have the largest collection of records, but if all you need are census records, there are free sites which offer these.

4) *If you subscribe and create an online family tree, will you be able to access the photographs and documents you downloaded or linked to your tree if you no longer have a subscription? If the site stops operating, will you be notified so you can download your records and family tree before it goes offline?* If you stop subscribing to Ancestry.com, you will no longer have access to the records you have linked to your tree from their paid collections. If you change to a US only subscription, you will not have access to links from world collections.

COMMON BEGINNER MISTAKES

1) *I thought I was Irish but my DNA states I am Swedish.* DNA testing is not perfect. It can only benefit you when combined with genealogical research. It is not a substitute or shortcut for actual research.

2) *I don't believe sources that disagree with my point of view or family stories.* Your family tree will either stop or become twisted and full of errors if you don't keep yourself open to other possibilities. That is why you use multiple sources to prove or disprove a name, date or place. If you disagree with the sources, state why? What is your reasoning? Write a report and prove your research is correct with documentation.

3) *Get frustrated and give up when don't have immediate results when searching for records.* If searching for our relatives was easy, everyone would be doing it. You need to become a genealogical pit-bull. Everyone has brick walls that they cannot get past, even accredited professional genealogists. If you don't, then you aren't really researching. There is no magical easy button to push for genealogical research. You will always have at least one ancestor that will be hard to find records for due to: 1) no records were kept at the time they were in the area; 2) the records were destroyed; 3) you are researching the wrong name or possibly they were using an alias; or 4) they were never in the area to begin with or not during the time period you are researching. Document your research for the next generation so they can carry on your genealogical hunt.

4) *Don't keep up with the latest research techniques.* Learn more thru classes, webinars, conferences, books or blogs. Talk with other genealogists. No one person knows everything. Many state genealogical societies offer webinars that may be specific to their area, but most techniques can be applied to all types of research regardless of the area. At Google, search by *name of state* and *genealogical society webinar*

●●**RootsTech -- 27 February – 2 March 2019 <www.rootstech.org>** If you can't attend the conference, many syllabus are placed online to download by using an app. Videos of some speakers will be archived and found at the RootsTech site by clicking on *Menu.* Choose *Topics* or *About RootsTech.* Some previous sessions may be available under *Topics.* There may also be videos on YouTube. Search YouTube by word *RootsTech* and year (2011-2018).
RootsTech 2018: <www.rootstech.org/rootstech-2018-videos>

Legacy Family Tree Webinars *are free at presentation and for 1 week, then are archived and you may need a subscription to view.* <familytreewebinars.com/archived_webinars_free.php>
                              <familytreewebinars.com/upcoming-webinars.php>
FamilySearch <www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Family_History_Library_Classes_and_Webinars>
Ancestry.com Academy <www.ancestry.com/academy/courses/recommended> some may require a subscription
Genealogy Gems <lisalouisecooke.com/podcasts> genealogical podcast by Lisa Louise Cooke
<youtube.com> Does not contain genealogy research but offers videos of research tips from: NARA and Library of Congress (include word *genealogy* when searching), FamilySearch, Ancestry.com and BYU Family History Library Webinar Series. Also search by *genealogy, family history,* topic of interest (DNA, German research, 1940 census etc.) or a specific genealogist (Lisa Louise Cooke, Lisa Alzo etc.)
<www.familytreemagazine.com/podcasts> Free monthly & archived podcasts from June 2008 – present

<**www.thoughtco.com/genealogy-4133308>** genealogy research topics & tips by Kimberly Powell
<www.genealogybranches.com> genealogy articles, tips & research guides by Joe Beine
<www.genealogytipoftheday.com> & **<rootdig.genealogytipoftheday.com>** give genealogical tips and examples
<searchtip.genealogytipoftheday.com> gives updated records or new ones to use at FamilySearch.org

<imagineiflibraries.org/explore/databases> Under *Explore*, click on *Databases & Resources,* then *History & Genealogy.* To access HeritageQuest collections you must have a library card.

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
   Start here **<www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/online-catalog-guide>** learn about how to do research at the NARA site. Look at the sidebar for forms, topics, tutorials & workshops etc. Wildcards * and ? are allowed when searching, and you can use quotation marks to search phrases or specific names.
Library of Congress (LoC)
   <www.loc.gov) click on tabs *Library Catalog, Digital Collections* or *Researchers* to get started. Some of the major collections include photographs, maps, music, oral histories (veterans and slave narratives), and newspapers. At the home page view *Plan Your Visit, Research Center* and *Ask a Librarian.* Search the LoC catalog <catalog.loc.gov>. You can search by browse, keyword or advanced. Wildcards: % is for a single character and ? is for multiple characters.
WorldCat <www.worldcat.org> free catalog of items held in over 10,000 repositories in 170 countries. Includes holdings at the Family History Library (FHL) in Salt Lake City, Utah (*but the FHL is not a lending library*.)
Internet Archive <archive.org> a non-profit digital library offering links to archived web content, books, films, audio, television, software, images, concerts and more. The site *does not index* its records by individual names but allows searching within a record. Is a great site to find and download old books, especially county histories.

<www.americanancestors.com> New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS); subscription site. Register for a free quest account <www.americanancestors.org/guest-user-resources>. Majority of records are for New England but has collections for NY, PA, Ireland, Jewish and African American records (including slaves). For webinars (not all are free) and guides: <www.americanancestors.org/education/learning-resources/watch>
<findmypast.com> offers a 14-day free trial. Contains records for England, Wales, Ireland, United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Scotland. To view the site's free records, at the home page click on *Free Records*. You must create an account to use. Free to use at a FHC.
<www.fold3.com> Searching is free, but a subscription is needed to view almost all records. A 7-day free trial is available. Free at a FHC. The site's main focus is preserving military records, but it does have other records.

Where do I find?		
I need --	**Check these records first –**	**Then try --**
Age	census, vital records, cemeteries	military records, taxation, obituaries
Birth date	vital records, church records, Bible records	cemeteries, obituaries, census, newspapers, military records
Birthplace	vital records, church records, census	newspapers, obituaries, military records
City or parish of foreign birth	church records, genealogy, biography, obituaries, naturalization and citizenship	emigration and immigration, vital records, history
County origins & boundaries	history, maps	gazetteers
Death	vital records, cemeteries, obituaries, probate records, church records	newspapers, military records, court records, land and property
Divorce	court records, divorce records	newspapers, vital records
Ethnicity	minorities, Native Races, societies	church records, emigration & immigration, naturalization and citizenship records
Historical background	history, periodicals, genealogy	church history, minorities
Immigration or emigration date	emigration & immigration, naturalization and citizenship, genealogy	census, biography, newspapers, church records
Maiden name Marriage	vital records, church records, census, newspapers, Bible records	biography, genealogy, nobility, military records, probate records, land and property
Occupation	census, directories, occupations, emigration & immigration, civil registration, probate records	newspapers, court records, obituaries, officials & employees
Parents, children and other family members	vital records, church records, census, probate records, obituaries	Bible records, newspapers, emigration & immigration, land and property
Physical description	military records, biography, court records	Naturalization/citizenship, civil registration, church records, emigration/immigration, genealogy, newspapers
Place-finding aids	gazetteers, maps	directories, history, periodicals, land/property, taxation
Place (town) of residence when you know only the state	census, genealogy, directories; military, vital & church records	biography, probate records, history, land and property, taxation
Places family has lived	census, land and property, history	military records, taxation, obituaries
Previous research/ compiled genealogy	genealogy, periodicals, history	biography, societies, nobility
Record-finding aids	archives & libraries, societies, genealogy	periodicals
Religion	church records, civil registration, history, biography	Bible records, cemeteries, obituaries, genealogy