Why do it?

What were their stories?
• Medical history

• Legacy for your descendants

• Bragging rights

OR... the thrill of the chase!
Where do you start?
Work from the KNOWN to the unknown

- Facts vs. family stories
- Documentation
- Places and dates
- Context
What’s lying around?

• Attics, drawers
• Photo albums
• Heirlooms
• Talk to your relatives

Start at home
Then branch out

- Vital records
- The U.S. census
- Other public records
- Published histories
- Newspapers
- Archival materials
Always ask two questions about sources

• Why was the record created?
  ➢ What information can be expected?

• Who provided the information?
  ➢ How accurate or trustworthy is it?
WRITE IT DOWN!!

- family group sheets
- pedigree charts
- census abstracts
- research logs
- correspondence logs
- genealogy software
Why cite your sources?

• Deal with conflicting information
• Find it again
• Help others evaluate your research
• Prevent you from looking up the same thing twice
• Avoid contributing to the junk genealogy problem

The nitty gritty

• Charts and forms (especially pedigree charts and family group sheets)

• Genealogy software: try out free versions
Charts and more charts
Free genealogy forms

• Ancestry.com:
  https://www.ancestry.com/cs/charts-and-forms

• Mid-Continent Public Library:
  http://www.mymcpl.org/genealogy/family-history-forms

• FamilySearch.org:

• Cyndi’s List:
  https://www.cyndislist.com/charts/
Genealogy software

• Keep track of people, dates, and places
• Know where you got your information
• Analytical tools
• Be able to print out reports without retyping
• Share information via GEDCOM or reports
Free genealogy software

Legacy Family Tree, Standard Edition—Millennia Corporation
http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/

RootsMagic Essentials—RootsMagic Inc.
http://www.rootsmagic.com/Essentials/

Ancestral Quest Basics—Incline Software LC
https://www.ancquest.com/AQBasics.htm
Dare to compare

Gizmo’s freeware reviews


Top Ten Reviews

http://genealogy-software-review.toptenreviews.com
What’s next?

• Look for the holes

• Make a plan—what question do you want to answer?

• Timelines are helpful
The U.S. census: Genealogical goldmine

• Family group snapshot every decade back to 1790
• 1850 was the first census to list everyone by name; questions different on every census
• Most of 1890 census was lost to fire
• 72-year embargo for privacy
Where to access it?

- Ancestry (access at library or personal subscription): images and index
- MyHeritage (home access w/OPL card or personal subscription): images and index
- FamilySearch (free!): images and index
- On microfilm, W. Dale Clark Library
**Vital records**

- Births, deaths, marriages
- Registration not required in most states until late 1800s or early 1900s
- Privacy laws may restrict access
Where to access them?

- County courthouse
- State archives or Dept. of Health and Human Services
- Libraries or historical societies
- Online: Ancestry, FamilySearch, Rootsweb (indexes), etc.
Useful website:

• www.vitalrec.com
  vital records information by state—when registration began, where to write, cost
Other stuff

- Probate records
- Land and tax records
- City directories
- Newspapers
- Published genealogies, county histories
Where to access them?

• County courthouse
• State archives or Dept. of Health and Human Services
• Libraries or historical societies
• Online: Ancestry, other subscription databases, FamilySearch, Rootsweb
Not everything is on the internet!

You may have to:

• Write letters
• Make phone calls
• Visit repositories
• Use interlibrary loan
Getting help

• Ask questions (start with your local librarian!)
• Learning opportunities
• Network
• How-to books (929 call #)
Classes

- Library
- Genealogical society
- Online classes
Networking

• Socialize (I mean network!) with other researchers
• Find distant family members
• Get tips about local research or specific records
• Share record transcriptions
How to do it

• Mailing lists

• Forums and message boards

• Facebook and other social networking sites
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- Facebook pages devoted to genealogy topics or family research
- Twitter: convey genealogical news, updates, and quick info
- Pinterest
- Instagram
QUESTIONS?

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