

Class 2 Theme - Getting Acquainted with and Learning to Love Your Ancestors

“It doesn’t matter whether your computer is able to compile all the family group sheets for everyone that every lived on the earth, it remains the responsibility of each individual to know his kindred dead. . . Even if the work is done, then it is still each person’s responsibility to study and become acquainted with his ancestors.” – President Joseph Fielding Smith - Turned to the Fathers - p 184

“And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” – Luke 1:17

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with the curse.” – 3 Nephi 25:5-6

“Before he comes, Zion must be built up, temples must rise wherever there are stakes, and the promises made to the fathers must be planted in the hearts of the children”.
– Elder Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah*, p 572

“This is the great work of the dispensation of the fulness of times, by which the hearts of the fathers are turned to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. The uniting and redemption of the family of God was the divine plan before the foundations of the earth were laid.” – Howard W. Hunter, *Conference Report*, Oct. 1971, p. 54; or *Ensign*, Dec. 1971, p. 71-72

“[Our] objective . . . has been to inspire the members to obtain their own temple blessings, attend the temple in behalf of their deceased relatives . . . complete their four-generation records, extend research on family lines, and organize and strengthen the family organizations. The first instruction after the glorious First Vision to the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the act of restoring the gospel of Jesus Christ, was concerning the family unit . . .

‘Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.’

‘. . . And he will plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children will turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.’ [Joseph Smith History 1:36-39.]”

– L. Tom Perry, *Conference Report*, Apr. 1982, p. 79-80; or *Ensign*, May 1982, p. 53

Assignment

1. Make a timeline for an ancestor
2. Make and label a PAF backup, a new one for each time you worked on the file.
3. Keep a journal of your impressions and the little miracles as you search.
4. Bring your PAF backup to class next week

Discussion/Theory

Sources of Evidence

Primary Sources: Personal testimony of an eyewitness or a record created shortly after the event occurred by a person with personal knowledge of the facts. Where and when was the record made? Who made it? For what purpose was it made? Did the information come from someone with personal knowledge of the facts? Was there any reason for the informant to provide inaccurate information, either intentionally or unintentionally?

Secondary Sources: Records copied or compiled from other sources. A record that was created at some time after an event occurred. The passage of time, the lapse of memory and the lack of knowledge or ignorance of the person providing the information all conspire to make the evidence less than reliable. In addition an informant sometimes falsifies information for some reason, and that can throw a whammy into your research

One should not rely solely on secondary sources but should locate and examine the primary sources upon which a compiled account was based. In weighing genealogical evidence, remember that two pieces of evidence from the same source are not really two pieces of evidence. For example, a newspaper obituary might give information which later is used in a compiled county history.

What does each document say?

Direct Evidence speaks directly to the point in question (e.g., a birth certificate is direct evidence of the date and place of birth of the person for whom it was issued).

Indirect or circumstantial evidence provides facts from which a conclusion can be inferred (e.g., approximate year of birth can be inferred from the age on a census).

Questions to ask the document are:

- Where and when was the record made?
- Who made it?
- For what purpose was it made?
- Did the information come from someone with personal knowledge of the facts?
- Was there any reason for the informant to provide inaccurate information, either intentionally or unintentionally?

Evaluating evidence

The best form of evidence is the original document or record. When an original document is not available, a legible scanned copy, photocopy, or microform (film or fiche) copy of the original document should be obtained.

If an original document is not available, no matter what the reason one must rely on the official transcript of a document (such as a deed or will) entered in a record book by the clerk.

5. *Research Log*

Keep good notes and use a Research Log for each family group to keep track of the sources you searched. Record the information you have located and where it came from.

Extract sheet

Use an extract sheet when it is not possible to make a photocopy.

Time Line

A timeline can be created for an ancestor or family group by listing events and facts drawn from various sources chronologically. When a timeline is created for an ancestor or a family, it can be for three major reasons.

- To analyze what we already know and what we need to find out about them.
- To verify that appropriate intervals exist between milestones such as birth and marriage.
- To provide an outline of historical information in order to write an interesting biography/family history.

With all of this information in front of you, blank spots will appear that need to be filled in. Look at the list of records you have checked and see if you have overlooked any resources that can fill in these blanks. Remember if the needed information can't be found in family records this does not imply the record is not extant. Just keep looking.

Summary Sheet/To Do List

Summarize each record as it is searched stating what was found or not found and how it relates to your goal. You can make comments about the condition of the record and your thoughts on where to go from here.

All research materials should be on a consistent size paper. They will fit into a file folder and make locating your notes much faster.

The more we learn about our ancestors the more we love them.

As you search look for small miracles and guidance.

“Spiritual guidance is essential in family history research. All of my research skills don't compensate for what goes on on the other side of the veil — that's the only way to explain it.” Rather than discussing research skills, Brother Rencher told of research situations in which spiritual promptings brought miraculous results.

We cannot overcome the promptings of the Spirit and expect to find what we are looking for. We must not build systems in today's age that take the Spirit out of this work. I love my computer, I love it for everything it can do, but. . . the computer is not what turned my heart; what turns my heart are the experiences and impressions I have from the Spirit, and from the things I know and understand.¹

¹David E. Rencher, director of the Records and Information Division of the Family and Church History Department. Church News November 20, 2004 p. 5.

Research Extract

Family	Repository	Call #/Microfilm
Description of Source		
Search Objective	Date:	

ADDING SOURCES in PAF

Definition:

Note: Memorandum or story tidbits

Source: Where you found it

Rules:

1. Give enough information so another can find it
2. Be consistent

Help: Help Topics, Index, [type] source

Exercise 1: Birth Certificate

Double click on your own Individual name.

In the Edit Individual screen, find your Birth Event and double click on the “s” to right

In the Select Source screen, Click **New**

Title: Birth Certificate: Utah

Author: Department of Health - Vital Statistics

Repository: Vital Statistics

288 North 1460 West

Salt Lake City, Utah 84116

Click **OK** in the Edit Source screen

In the Select Source screen, click **Select**

Under Citation Detail add:

File No. and/or document number

Date filed

Actual text from document that proves birth

Click **OK**

Exercise 2: Personal Interview

Double click on the Individual whom the interview is about

Double click on “s” for an event, or if general source, use **Individual Sources** button on the right.

In the Select Source screen Click **New**

Title: Interview with _____

Author: [your own name or person doing interview]

Publication Information: [Oral tape, hand written notes, or whatever form it's in]

Repository: [your own address or person doing interview]

Click **OK** in the Edit Source screen

In the Select Source screen, click **Select**

Under Citation Detail add:

Date of interview

Actual text [may type all or just part that proves an event]

Click **OK**

Sources may be added from the Edit menu and then linked to individuals later

Exercise 3: Book

Click **Edit** drop-down menu and choose Source List

In Edit Source List screen, click **New**

Title: [full name of book]

Author: [main writer or compiler]

Publication Information: [name of publisher, where published, and date]

Repository: [list library where book is located]

Call Number: [give library call number]

Click **OK**

In Edit Source List screen, click **Close**.

To link to an individual, double click on that person

Double click on “s” for an event, or if general source, use **Individual Sources** button on the right.

In the Select Source screen, click on book title and click **Select**

In Citation Detail, add:

Page number

Actual text as desired

Exercise 4: Ordinance Record

Click **Edit** drop-down menu and choose Source List

In Edit Source List screen, click **New**

Title: International Genealogical Index

Author: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Publication Information: Internet

Call Number: www.familysearch.org

Repository: Family History Library

35 N West Temple Street

Salt Lake City, Utah 84150 USA

Click **OK**

In Edit Source List screen, click **Close**

To link to an individual, double click on that person

Double click on “s” by baptism, or endowment, or sealing

In the Select Source screen, click on International Genealogical Index and click **Select**

In Citation Detail, add:

Film number, batch, page etc.

Actual text as desired

SOURCE HELPS

Copy Source

If you want to type a source description that is similar to one that you entered previously, you can copy the previous source and modify it to suit your needs.

- In the Source screen, click **new**.
- Click the source that you want to copy and click **copy**.
- Change the source any way you wish and click **OK**.
- With the new source selected, click **Select**.
- Enter citation information as needed.
- When you are finished, click **OK**.

Memorized Citation

If you want to use the same source description *and* citation in another place in the PAF file, you can use Memorize Citation to copy it and then paste it in the other location.

1. Display the individual or marriage record that has the citation that you want to copy.
2. Double-click the appropriate source button to display the citation with the source.
3. Click icon for memorize citation. Then click **OK**

- To paste the source description and citation to a different event, display the individual or marriage record where you want to copy the information.
- Double-click the appropriate source button.
- When the Select Source screen appears, click **Use Memorized Citation**.
- Make any needed modifications and click **OK**.

Citation Referencing a Source

Click **Print**, Lists, Citations referencing a source.

Select the source you want and click **Select**, the computer will compile a list of all citations connected to the same source. This is very helpful if you need to change a source—you will see who it affects. With a census source, it lets you know all the family members who lived in the same town at the same time.

Merge Sources and Repositories

If you have duplicate sources, edit them to make them identical (every space must be the same, repositories must also be identical, and even the use of italics and parentheses must be the same.) Then go to **Tools**, Merge Duplicate Sources and Citations.

Deleting a Source

When you delete a source description from a PAF file, it will delete it from all individual records, all marriage records, and all family records where it is used.

All the citations associated with it will also be deleted. Before deleting a source, print out a list of citations referencing that source. If only one citation exists—and it's the one you wish to delete—then go ahead and delete it.

1. In family view screen, click **Edit**.
2. Click Source List.
3. In Edit Source List screen, click source you wish to delete and click **Delete**.

