

Genealogical Evidence: New Accuracy for your Genealogy Records and New Success in Tracing your Hard-to-Find Ancestors—

New accuracy for your genealogy records is a direct result of the way in which you record and organize your genealogy data. Let me introduce my unique genealogy record-keeping system mandated by The Jurisdictional Approach (R). This system guarantees at least a 96% success rate in tracing hard-to-find ancestors.

Pre-printed genealogy research forms--whether you enter the data with a pen/pencil by hand or whether you type the data on the computer screen--are *tools of analysis*. You choose the facts to enter on these research forms. This selection process is analysis. And when you record the right data and match the internal links in each record correctly, you can achieve a 96% success rate tracing hard-to-find ancestors.

“**Research forms**” or analysis tools include pedigree charts, research calendars or logs, family group sheets, relationship graphs, surname targets, EXCEL spreadsheets--regardless of size, or format, or origin. They can also include outline maps on which you track a migration pattern or show neighbors surrounding your ancestors.

During this session, I hope to convince you to use charts that include

- 1) space for your own evaluative comments and conclusions, completely separated from the genealogy data you collect;
- 2) family group sheets with burial dates for children as well as parents; and
- 3) marriage **places** for all the persons on the chart. We have already lost several generations of dates and places using family group sheets and pedigree charts which omit those important facts--when you use a form, you fill in the blanks. If there is no blank, there is no entry written down. Huge mistake! Huge!

A haphazard pile of papers, documents, maps, and pictures too often conceals the very evidence you need to establish correct identity or to plan an effective search. If you chart your data, as you go through the sources, you evaluate your evidence in time to use it—to prevent duplication of information, both correct and incorrect, to eliminate frustration, and to prevent costly research mistakes as your research continues.

The charting system offered here has been carefully tested. It works equally well for American, British, European, and Canadian pedigrees. It adapts well to computer input because it is a **one entry system**. It also matches the family unit approach of New *FamilySearch*.

Each genealogy form includes only **one family** or the data from only **one source**. Do not combine data from several sources on the same chart, even if you transcribe all the documents into your notes. People extracted from an 1850 census entry go on one chart, the will on a second chart, the military pension on a third chart, and so on.

If you have already entered your data into your computer program, review your notes for each family chart. Create separate charts from the documents you have transcribed into those notes. This enables the computer software to help you complete the analysis of your data. The **evidence in each document** will now be available for review, comparison, and summary.

And summary charts can draw on the evidence that you have collected to display correct family relationships and proven family identity.

Why Chart Your Property Records?

The final format you want is a family record showing father, mother, and all the kids with their relationships to each other **proven** to be true.

Accompanying these family charts, you want a pedigree or lineage chart showing how each family **descends** from common ancestors. You extract the data to family charts **as you go** through the records for these benefits:

- Standardized data. You can examine each line quickly to draw conclusions provided by the evidence.
- Clearly identified people in each record. You know who, where, when, and how many.
- Separated data. You can easily sort by surname, by naming patterns, by date, by place, by relationship, by migration patterns.
- Itemized property holdings. You can account for each transaction and **all pieces** of property bought, sold, granted, inherited.
- Answers to pedigree and research problems result directly from the data. Could a minor own land? If a woman's name appears first in a property document, is she a wife, a widow, a mother? Could a man own land in more than one jurisdiction?

Charting your evidence **as you go** through the records makes analysis easy.
And allows the evidence to dictate the direction your research takes.

Adapted from *Family History for Fun and Profit: The Genealogy Research Process* by Arlene H. Eakle and Linda E. Brinkerhoff, 30th Anniversary Edition. Available from The Genealogical Institute, Inc., P.O. Box 129 Tremonton UT 84337. <http://www.arleneeakle.com>