Starting the Search for your Family History

OCTOBER 7, 2017
WEEK 1 OF 2
WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY
Introduction

http://libresources.wichita.edu/genealogy
Why do we search?

A 3-month study of 60 amateur genealogists found them to be motivated by three main factors:

• Curiosity

• Preserve and collect in order to create a narrative for distant relatives and future generations to understand their family history.

• Identity & Connection

House Rules

• Not one “right” way to do genealogical research.
• No stupid questions
• I bet you have a brick wall
Realize...this is not Grandma’s research

The internet

- Has changed HOW we search.
- Changes the way information is available.
- Is itself constantly changing.
Tools to get started

• Flash Drive
• Highlighters
• Cotton gloves
• Scanner
• File Folders (Acid Free/Archival Quality)
• Cloud Storage account
• Lots of patience, some tenacity
Storing Your Online Resources: Use the Cloud!

- Dropbox
- Google Drive
- OneDrive
- iCloud
Creating your tree

Your choice:
- Paper
- Online
- Software

Gedcom File=
Genealogical Data Communication
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Cause of Death</th>
<th>View tree overview</th>
<th>Manage tree</th>
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- **Upload a GEDCOM file**
TECH TIPS

More than searching “the internet”
Changes in Search Tools

Card catalogs to integrated library systems
  +
Discovery layers use 1 search box for many sources
  +
Keyword and Soundex
  +
________________________
Social networking
________________________

Improved tools, faster searching, and easier collaboration
Search Tips

Online searching can be tricky:

Boolean Operators

AND, OR, NOT

Quotation Marks

“Look only for exactly this”
Truncation (wildcards)

• Add a symbol at the end of your search term OR at an unknown place within the keyword.

• Different databases have different wildcards
One Name, Many Possibilities

- First Name Last Name                  John Smith
- First Initial Last Name              J. Smith
- First Initial Middle Initial Last Name J. P. Smith
- First Initial Middle Name Last Name  J. Paul Smith
- First Name Middle Name Last Name     John Paul Smith
- Last, First Name Middle Initial      Smith, John P.
- Last, First Initial Middle Initial   Smith, J.P.
- Etc.

Title + Husband’s First Name Last Name    Mrs. John P. Smith
Name: Griffith

Search: Griff#

May return

- Griff-ith
- Griff-iths
- Griff-it
- Griff-itt
- Griff-in
- Griff-ins
Soundex + Truncation = Griphett

Tennessee State Marriages, 1780-2002, ancestry.com
Tips for Web Research

• Use the Find option to locate your search terms rather than reading or scrolling.

• Create a Genealogy folder in your bookmarks to find your way back again. Name the link whatever you want!
Using the Find tool

- Midwest Historical & Genealogical Society

Uncle Wilber (1889-1953)
&
Opal Strader? Rader?

Photo found in family bible,
taken c. 1910-1913?
Very Important!

-Avoid confusion, frustration, and disorientation-

Before you start a research session, identify the specific question(s) you are trying to answer.
Example Genealogy Research Questions

• When did paternal great grandfather die?

• Where did maternal grandmother get married? What was her maiden name?

• Youngest son of great aunt dropped of the census after 1900 when he was 8 years old. Whatever happened to him?
Beware of the B-S-O

Bright Shiny Objects
Get acquainted with your new tools

Tip: Start by searching for someone you know you can find to get acquainted with the software tool.
Websites: Where to begin

Libresources.wichita.edu/genealogy

Family Search
Ancestry.com (free trial, then $$$)
Find My Past
More Web Searching

Find A Grave
Google Books
Cyndi’s List
Search and Question Time