

Lancashire Family History & Heraldry Society



Chorley Branch Education Group Talk Handout First Steps

Family History an Introduction

Where do we start?

- **You!**
- Your research should always start with yourself
 - First fill in a Pedigree Chart
 - Next gather together bits & bobs you may have at home
 - Then find out what other members of the family know or have

Pedigree Charts

- These are a good starting point to help you get all the information you already have into some kind of order
- There are two main forms – a vertical tree and a horizontal style chart
- Choose a starting person, usually yourself or one of your children, but it could be one of your parents or indeed one of your grand children

Ancestor Tree for :

Name :					
Born : _____					
Bapt. _____					
Died : _____					
Buried : _____					
Marr : _____					
Name :					
Born : _____					
Bapt. _____					
Died : _____					
Buried : _____					
Marr : _____					
Name :					
Born : _____					
Bapt. _____					
Died : _____					
Buried : _____					
Marr : _____					
Name :					
Born : _____					
Bapt. _____					
Died : _____					
Buried : _____					
Marr : _____					
Name :					
Born : _____					
Bapt. _____					
Died : _____					
Buried : _____					
Marr : _____					

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 Chorley Branch
 Lancashire Family History & Heraldry Society

Ancestral Chart



Chart No. _____

No. 1 on this chart is
the same person as No. _____
On Chart No. _____

<p>BORN _____ PLACE _____ MARRIED _____ PLACE _____ DIED _____ PLACE _____</p>	<p>BORN _____ PLACE _____ MARRIED _____ PLACE _____ DIED _____ PLACE _____</p>
<p>BORN _____ PLACE _____ MARRIED _____ PLACE _____ DIED _____ PLACE _____</p>	<p>BORN _____ PLACE _____ MARRIED _____ PLACE _____ DIED _____ PLACE _____</p>
<p>BORN _____ PLACE _____ MARRIED _____ PLACE _____ DIED _____ PLACE _____</p>	<p>BORN _____ PLACE _____ MARRIED _____ PLACE _____ DIED _____ PLACE _____</p>
<p>BORN _____ PLACE _____ MARRIED _____ PLACE _____ DIED _____ PLACE _____</p>	<p>BORN _____ PLACE _____ MARRIED _____ PLACE _____ DIED _____ PLACE _____</p>
<p>NAME OF SPOUSE _____</p>	
<p>CONT. ON CHART _____</p>	<p>CONT. ON CHART _____</p>
<p>CONT. ON CHART _____</p>	<p>CONT. ON CHART _____</p>
<p>CONT. ON CHART _____</p>	<p>CONT. ON CHART _____</p>
<p>CONT. ON CHART _____</p>	<p>CONT. ON CHART _____</p>

With the horizontal type pedigree chart the male in the marriage goes above the female. Fill in as much information that you have and add in more when you have it.

What information do you have at home to help you trace your Family?

- Search out any of the following that you might have
 - Certificates (BMD)
 - Photographs
 - Newspaper clippings
 - War records
 - Legal Documents
 - Wills
 - Postcards
 - Letters
 - Family Bibles
 - Bills
 - Diaries
 - Address Books
 - Heirlooms
 - Medals
 - Video and Audio recordings
 - Computer, internet
 - Etc.
- Make a note of what you have, where you keep it and what information it contains.
- Photograph or scan any of the documents or photographs that you have to make a backup.
- Store the backup in a different place to the documents
- Get the original documents / photographs into an acid free environment.

What do we do next?

- Talk to your relatives particularly the older ones and their children

Information you should ask about each individual.

In each case you should ask

- **What** they did
- **When** they did it
- **Where** they did it
- **Why** they did it

Quizzing your relatives.

- Ask to copy any documentary information / photographs that they might have. (Photocopy, scan or photograph)
- Get the basic information that they can remember and record it. Names, dates, places, relationships etc. as far back as they can remember, plus all nephews and nieces and more recent relations.
- You will need Births, Christenings, Marriages, Deaths and Burials.
- Ask them to name the people in photographs and make a note of what they say.
- You will need much more than this, but do not overstay your welcome. If necessary, go back again and again.

- If you get side tracked then let them go on and, if relevant, record it.
- If they feel happy with it, a tape recorder is a good way of keeping a record of what they say.
- If they will let you, photocopy / scan / photograph all documents.

Information you should ask about each individual.

- School?
- What kinds of Jobs did they do?
- What different places did they live?
- War / Military Service?
- Were they members of any clubs or societies?
- A description of them?
- Were they involved in any special events? (e.g. Preston Guild)
- General health & cause of death?
- Holidays? Sports? Hobbies?
- Family traditions and legends?

Record Keeping

Storing Documents

- The Photographs, certificates etc. that you have gathered or bought are precious.
- They should be stored in acid free containers and handled as little as possible.
- If you can afford it they should be stored in a fireproof container. This should also contain your backups, audio tapes etc.

Dealing with your rough notes.

- Your rough notes should be transcribed and fair copies made as soon as possible while your mind is fresh.
- Keep your rough notes until you are certain you will not need them.
- Keep a record of what sources you have searched even if your search was unsuccessful. This prevents you going over the same ground twice!

Paper Records

Many standard forms are available and we can supply some. The normal ones are:-

- Family Group Sheets
- Individual Record Sheets
- Census Sheets
- To Do Lists
- Research done list, etc. etc.

Whatever you do, keep your records tidy and logically ordered.

Recording your Family History on a Computer

- You can enter much of the data that you collect onto a computer, but not all.
- A computer can print out many of the paper forms described above, but not all.
- The main advantages of computers are that they keep your records well ordered, compact and easily accessible.

Paper records vs. Computer records?

- It is up to you. If you already use a computer, then the move to keeping your records on computer is obvious. The access to the internet is a bonus.
- However, if a computer scares the willies out of you, then you can do just as good a job using paper. Some say better!

What do you do with it all when you have finished?

Possibilities

- Write a book of your Family History and have it published.

- Deposit your work with a Family History Society.
- Put it into a central Internet based database such as that organised by the LDS or Roots.
- Copy it onto a CD. (The worst option.)

Sources

What is your first main source? **YOU!**

Principal Sources

- You
- Your relatives
- Civil Registration Indexes
 - Research Centre at Astley Hall Farmhouse
 - FHC Chorley
 - Harris Library, Preston
 - Internet
- Parish Registers
 - Research Centre at Astley Hall Farmhouse,
 - FHC,
 - Record Offices,
 - Libraries,
 - Internet,
 - CD ROMs
- Census
1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911
 - Research Centre at Astley Hall Farmhouse
 - Libraries
 - FHC
 - Record Offices
- The International Genealogical Index (IGI)
 - Research Centre at Astley Hall Farmhouse,
 - FHC,
 - FH Societies,
 - Internet
- The Internet – Thousands of sites covering every possible subject. Even if you have not got a computer, it is available at almost every library, and also at the Research Centre at Astley Hall Farmhouse, for free

Using Sources

- Prepare before you set out to do research.
- Have with you a list of things you want to do, and a backup list, in case you hit a snag, or you get on quicker than you thought you would
- Take a copy of your data with you, in case you cannot remember a date or name.
- Know the rules that each repository has, to avoid disappointment. (Identification, opening hours, etc.)

Principal Sources

The principal sources will be discussed in more detail in the next few weeks and practical exercises will be done.

For now let's just remind ourselves of the main things that we have said.

Summing up

- Start with yourself and work backwards.
- Talk to and, most of all, listen to your relatives.
- Keep your records tidy and well ordered.
- Only when you have done much of the above, move onto other sources.
- Prepare before going out to do research.
- Record all sources searched, even if you fail to find anything.

Most important

- All the information you discover has to be proved
- Do one generation at a time to start with
- Write everything down
- Keep a record of everything you have or have not discovered
- Keep a record of all your searches

Web Sites

There are some web sites of general interest to be getting on with.
More related to each topic will come later.

<http://www.ukbmd.org.uk/>

<http://www.english.qmul.ac.uk/drwilliams/surman/intro.html>

<http://www.gravestonephotos.com/index.php?from=/index.php?&r=1&width=1680&browser=1680>

<http://www.archersoftware.co.uk/igi/>

<http://www.genuki.org.uk/index.php>

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/catalogue>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_mills_in_Lancashire

<http://www.geograph.org.uk/>

<https://www.old-maps.co.uk/#/>

<http://mario.lancashire.gov.uk/agsmario/>

<http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/>

[https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/England_Maps#Village by Village Maps in the United Kingdom and Irel](https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/England_Maps#Village_by_Village_Maps_in_the_United_Kingdom_and_Irel)

<http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/churchdb/>

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/digital-library.aspx>

<http://www.circushistory.org/>

<http://rtfhs.org.uk/>

<http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/db.aspx?dbid=1728>

<http://www.boatfamilies.org.uk/>

<https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/#wills>

<http://user.xmission.com/~nelsonb/lws>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/categories/>

<http://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/>

Good luck.
Get searching.

Lancashire Family History & Heraldry Society
Chorley Research Centre at Astley Hall Farmhouse

Opening times

2nd & 3rd Saturdays in the month Noon—4:00pm
Monday, Wednesday & Friday 10:00am—4:00pm

Last appointment 3:00pm

Booking advisable—Tel. 01257 231 600 (Answer phone when centre is closed)

Research Enquires - chorleyresaerch@lffhs.org.uk

Website—www.lfhhshorleybranch.com

LFHHS

President – Steve Williams

Society Website – www.lfhs.org.uk

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