

Every Family has a Story. . . What's Yours?

Presented by Sue Schlichting, Professional Genealogist

Steps in Researching Your Family

- 1) Review what you already know.
- 2) Create research notes of that information.
- 3) Build a timeline, placing your notes in chronological order.
- 4) See what's missing.
- 5) Set a specific goal.
 - a. Target one individual
 - b. What's one thing you'd like to know about them?
- 6) Create a research plan.
- 7) Select **RELIABLE** resources to search for clues. (Review a **Research Wiki** for records that may be found in the time and place you're looking for.)
- 8) Document your search – "**Cite Your Sources**".
 - a. What did you find?
 - b. What didn't you find?
 - c. What document were you looking at?
 - d. Where did you locate it?

"Who was the father of Hector McLean, born 26 October 1833 in Edinburgh Scotland to Agnes Hunter and unnamed McLean?"

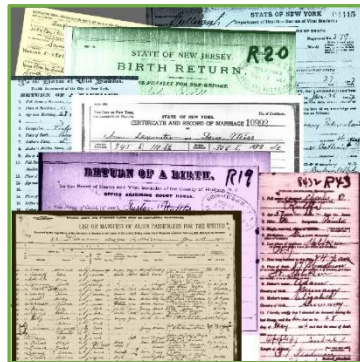
As you research, add this information to your research notes.

- 9) Plan your document organization system. Both for digital and physical documents.
- 10) Create a family tree database – on your desktop and / or in the cloud. Desktop = Family Tree Maker, Roots Magic, etc. Cloud = Ancestry, FamilySearch Family Tree, etc.

Types of Records

Government Records

Births, marriages, deaths
Military & pension
Tax & land (deeds, homestead)
Ship passenger lists
Naturalizations
Wills & estates
Census records



Church & Parish Records

Baptism, marriage, death
Burial records

Family Memorabilia & Treasures

Family bibles & diaries
Newspaper clippings
Tombstone inscriptions
Local histories
Family histories
Birth, wedding announcements
Memorial cards (funeral programs)

"I am bound to them though I cannot look into their eyes or hear their voices. I honor their history. . . I will tell their story. I will remember them for I am the result of the very love, struggle, sacrifice, and journey of thousands."

~ Unknown



Where to Look???

Start at home With your family

Ask your parents
Visit grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins
Interview relatives
Find family documents
Bibles
Diaries
Photographs

County & City Records

Clerk of Court—probate, marriage, naturalization
Health Department – vital records
Register of Deeds Office – land records
Treasurer's Office – tax records
Historical and genealogy societies
Libraries—local, genealogy, state archives

Church

Births, baptisms, marriages, deaths, confirmations

Cemeteries

Funeral home records
Tombstones
Cemetery records
Rubbings

Family History Centers

Volunteer assistance
Worldwide record searches

On-Line

Every Family has a Story Resources

A Few FREE Favorite Genealogy Sites

Cemeteries – findagrave.com

Land Records - Bureau of Land Management - General Land Office (GLO) Records – Land Patents
FamilySearch.org - Historic Deed Records

Military Records – National Archives Military info. for genealogists

Maps - Atlas of Historical County Boundaries
David Rumsey Map Collection
Google Earth

Newspapers - archive.org – Old books, documents, recordings, Wayback machine (archived webpages)
Chronicling America - Newspapers online at the Library of Congress
Advantagearchives – newspaper archive from around the country

Search – “Google It”- google.com – Google Books – <https://books.google.com> Internet Archive – archive.org

Ship Passenger Lists - FamilySearch.org

US Census - 1950 US Census – Other censuses found at a variety of sites, depending on year and location

Will & Probate – FamilySearch.org – Old Court Records, various states



Research Tools

Learning Center – [FamilySearch Wiki](#) – [Ancestry Wiki](#)

Research Aids - Ancestry & MyHeritage – Library Editions – Access through some Public Libraries

[Cyndislist.com](#) – A great place to learn more about ANY genealogy topic!

[FamilySearch.org](#) – Wiki, Records, Trees, Collaboration

[National Archives](#)

[Usgenweb.org](#) – County links for every county in the nation. Volunteer driven, so not uniform across the country.

Education - [Rootstech.org](#)

[Family Tree Webinars](#) - Weekly webinar on a variety of genealogy topics. FREE to view for the first week.

Forms – [Free Family Tree Forms from Ancestry](#) – [Research forms from the National Archives](#)

Research Notes Templates

[GenealogyTV How to Video](#)

[Genealogy Note Taking Form](#) – The Occasional Genealogist

[Research Templates](#) – American Ancestors

Successful Family Interview Resources

Interviewing Ideas

[Tips for Conducting a Family History Interview](#)

[117 Questions to ask Your Family](#)

[Center for Oral History Research](#)

[StoryCorps](#)

Audio Recording

[Creating Oral Histories](#)

[Recording Oral History Interviews at home](#)

[Recording Family Interviews](#)

Publishing Your Work

Writing Tools

Writing Prompts – [52 Stories Prompts](#) - [52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks](#)

AI Tools – ChatGPT – Claude – Perplexity – Google Gemini – Microsoft Copilot

Setting up a Blog – [Blogger.com](#) – [WordPress.com](#)

Grammar Assistance - [Grammarly.com](#)

Talk to Text – Check your word processing program.

Publishing Tools

 [Alifeuntold.com](#)

 [Meminto.com](#)

 [MyCanvas.com](#)

 [MyLifeinaBook.com](#)

 [NoStoryLost.com](#)

 [Shutterfly.com](#)

 [Storied.com](#)

 [Storyworth.com](#)

All links valid as of June 15, 2026

Providing these links does not imply endorsement of any of the above products or services. It is simply a starting place for you to explore resources to help you on this journey.

