

YOUR FAMILY TREE

WHERE DO YOU BEGIN? Begin with yourself. Always proceed from the present to the past. Record your name, place and date of birth, marriage and residence. Now search out and record the same information about your parents, then your grandparents, and so on through as many generations as possible.

Start gathering your information by interviewing older living members of your family. Genealogical publications can be helpful. You may find someone else doing research on the same family or in the same area as yours. The library will have some of the following sources: Family genealogies, municipal and county histories, census records, directories, biographies and military records.

Other places to look: Vital records - birth certificates, marriage records, death certificates. Probate records - wills, letters of administration, executor and administrator bonds, inventories and appraisals, adoption proceedings, change of names, secret marriages. Land records - deeds, mortgages, leases, recorded wills, power of attorney, maps and plats. Civil records - partition of property, divorces, foreclosures. Miscellaneous records - voter registration, tax and assessment rolls, naturalization records. Federal records - censuses, military records, passenger lists, passport records, immigration records, homestead applications, pension applications. Church records - membership rolls, baptisms, marriages, burial and cemetery records. School and college records - rosters and rolls. Family records - family bible, old family documents, diaries, letters, signed photographs, engraved jewelery, newspaper clippings, wills, lodge records, insurance papers, social security papers, employment records.

Remember, your number of ancestors doubles every generation - you have 2 parents, 4 grandparents, 8 great grandparents, 16 great-great grandparents, 32 great-great-great grandparents. 20 generations back gives you more than a million ancestors.