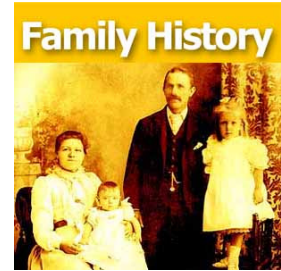


Family History: Genealogy Made Easy

with Lisa Louise Cooke

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Welcome to this step-by-step series for beginning genealogists—and more experienced ones who want to brush up or learn something new. I first ran this series in 2008. So many people have asked about it, I'm bringing it back in weekly segments.

Episode 23: The GPS in Action: Using the Genealogical Proof Standard

In episode 20, we talked about using the Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS), the powerful research process used by the professionals. This process ensures the quality, accuracy and success of our research. Researching by these standards *now* may save you going back and re-doing some of your hard work later down the road.

In today's episode I'm going to help you put the GPS into concrete action with an example from my own research. And I have some downloadable free tools that will help you do the job! In this episode we also follow up with a listener question on how to export your family tree from Ancestry.com—see below for an updated link.

The GPS in Action

Wouldn't it be nice to have a worksheet that prompts you through the GPS process and helps you keep track of everything and stay organized? Well, I wanted something like that myself. I think we need more than just a blank form: we need and want a detailed worksheet that not only gives the area to record our findings, but also incorporates all the key areas of the GPS so that we can be sure we aren't missing anything.

I didn't find something like this so I created it myself. Click on the Research Worksheets, below, for both a filled-out sample version and a blank version that you can save to your computer.

Research Worksheet: Example (Using the Genealogical Proof Standard)

Research Worksheet: Blank Form

According to the Board of Certification of Genealogists the 5 keys elements of the Genealogical Proof Standard are:

- a reasonably exhaustive search
- complete and accurate source citations
- analysis and correlation of the collected information
- resolution of any conflicting evidence
- a soundly reasoned, coherently written conclusion

I've incorporated these elements while keep in mind Mark Tucker's process map worksheet (see Links section below) into my Research Worksheet.

The Research Worksheet is divided into the following sections:

- Research Objective
- Known Facts
- Working Hypothesis
- Research Strategy
- Identified Sources
- Final Conclusions

In your conclusion which is called a Proof Argument you should:

1. Explain the problem
2. Review the known sources which you identified on your worksheet
3. Present the evidence with source citations and the analysis of those sources
4. Discuss any conflicting evidence. This important because it may generate another search that needs to occur, or put to rest questions about evidence that on first glance looks conflicting.
5. And finally summarize the main points of your research and state your conclusion.

Updates and Links

How to download your GEDCOM from Ancestry.com

http://help.ancestry.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/472/~/uploading-or-downloading-gedcom-files-on-ancestry.com

Research Worksheet: Example (Using the Genealogical Proof Standard)

http://lisalouisecooke.com/?attachment_id=5729

Research Worksheet: Blank Form

http://lisalouisecooke.com/?attachment_id=5727

Correspondence Log

http://lisalouisecooke.com/?attachment_id=5728

Mark's GPS Flowchart <http://www.thinkgenealogy.com/map/>