

The Family History Guide™



Explorer

Family History Newsletter
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Sneak Peek: The Online Tracker

One of the helpful tools in The Family History Guide is the Tracker. These sheets enable you to keep track of your progress, by listing the Goals and Choices for each Project, as well as providing a place where you can update your status and take notes.

M/T	Goals/Choices	Notes	Status	Resources	Date
	Goal 1: Navigate Family Tree.				
	A. Log in to FS, navigate Family Tree				
	INSTRUCTOR TIPS - 1A	<i>Challenge:</i> Find out which students have zero or only a few members in their FamilySearch tree. Go to their computers and select one of your own ancestor IDs to fill in a tree that they can practice navigation with. Couple's boxes - for beginners, explain the concept of male names above, female names below, and how boxes are linked together.			
	B. Change the zoom in Family Tree.				
	C. Expand and contract family lines				
	D. Navigate to earlier ancestors in FT.				
	INSTRUCTOR TIPS - 1D	The video and article introduce many different navigation aspects. Reserve these for a take-home review, or limit to a brief look during class.			

The Online Tracker

Currently, Tracker sheets are downloaded in Word format for individual use. In the future, likely around the time of RootsTech (Feb. 2017) we will move to an online database system for recording Tracker information. This approach will have several advantages:

- Your Tracker data is automatically backed up for you.
- You can choose to share your progress information with others.
- Reporting can be done to show rates of progress.

Let's take a look at some of the features of the upcoming Online Tracker.

Editor's Note: Features and timelines for the Online Tracker are subject to change.

Basic Format

In the first phase of development for the Online Tracker, several changes will likely be made to the basic format:

- Instead of a Word doc, an online file (HTML) will be provided for editing.
- A single Tracker sheet will be used for all 9 Projects. This will eliminate downloading and



managing multiple files. (Country Projects will have a separate Tracker.)

- To conserve space, Instructor Tips will be moved out of the Tracker and into the individual Projects.
- There will be a Steps, Articles, Videos column where each of these items can be separately tracked.
- Links will be added to navigate between Projects in the Tracker.

Individuals

Instead of downloading a Word doc and editing it, users will have the option to open the Online Tracker and edit it. All changes are saved in real time to a Tracker database on a secure server.

Account Login & Privacy

To use the Online Tracker, each user will need to create a free online account with The Family History Guide. A login screen will be provided, and account settings can be managed. It is important to note that The Family History Guide does not collect or share any private information: it only gathers data on status updates and notes that were entered.



Groups

The second phase development for the Online Tracker is the creation of Groups for sharing data. For example, a user could sign up for a Group from a Ward, Stake, Family History Library, or Genealogical Society. Then a Group Administrator could log in to the database, collect data from all members in the Group, and run reports (see below). Each Group Administrator would have a login and access rights approved by The Family History Guide.

Reporting

Group administrators can run reports against the Online Tracker database. These reports show how members in the Group have been progressing with the Projects, Goals, and Choices in The Family History Guide. Here are some examples of reports that may be implemented:

- Number of people completing a Goal or Choice
- Number of people seeing a selected video or article
- Number of people enrolled in a Group, or membership growth or decline
- Progress by time interval (such as increase in Goals or Choices completed in a specified date range).

While data in the Notes field is recorded in the database, it will be available only to the user who created it, not to Group reporting.

Inside the Guide: Organizing Your Research

In a previous issue of the newsletter, we discussed how to get "warmed up" for research. This article takes the next step: organizing your research, using The Family History Guide for suggestions and best practices.



Research Binders and To-Do Lists

A research "binder" can be a physical book with pages, dividers, pockets, and tabs - or it can be a digital filing system or documents on a computer or mobile device. You can preserve research materials via scans and photos, and a document or web browser with links to important websites can be very



useful. Either way - physical, digital, or both - you'll probably want to organize your research material by the surnames of persons you are researching, or the locations where they lived.

"To-do lists" can keep you on track with the tasks you need to complete. These lists go beyond the level of detail in the Tracker sheets for The Family History Guide, as they are more focused on the specific research you are doing.

For tips on using to-do lists effectively, watch this [FamilySearch video](#) (5:00) or this [Ancestry video](#) (20:00)

Note: The articles and video links mentioned in this topic are also available in The Family History Guide.

Organization Tips

Have you ever felt like the person in this picture? Then a few handy organizational tips might be in order.



Here's a [handy article](#) from FamilySearch to help you get started. It covers online family trees, record management software, research logs, transcripts, timelines, and filing systems. For a more in-depth view of organization best practices, check out this [BYU Webinar](#) by Dr. James Tanner.

Notes and Logs

Taking accurate notes and keeping research logs can help you avoid retracing your steps, as well as give you a clearer picture of what needs to be done going forward.

Here are a few resources we recommend:

[Research Logs](#) (BYU video)

[Research Logs](#) (FamilySearch article)

[Genealogy Research Log](#) (Geni podcast transcript)

Write it Down (Ancestry video)

Pre-printed Charts

There are a number of free, pre-printed charts you can download to assist you with research and note-taking tasks. We recommend that you refer to Choice E in [Project 4: Goal 1](#) of The Family History Guide for details and downloads. Why re-create the wheel? Print handy forms and charts that will help you with your research goals.

County & Province Resources

When you're tracking an ancestor and you've narrowed down the location of where he or she lived, exploring county records can be very helpful. This article shows how to find links to county records in The Family History Guide, as well as taking a look at the upcoming Province pages.



County QUIKLinks

To find links to county records in The Family History Guide,

1. Click the Projects tab on the Home page.
2. Select Project 9: Countries/Ethnic.
3. In the United States (just below North America), choose a state. We'll use California in this example; all states work in a similar way.
4. In the QUIKLinks section for California, click the CA Counties link. This takes you to a list at the bottom of the state page.



There are three types of links to county records here: FamilySearch (click the name of the county); Ancestry (click the "A" next to the name); and Linkpendium.com (click the "L" next to the name). Note that not all counties have links to Ancestry search pages.

About the County Pages

Here is a sample comparison of pages for Alameda County in California, using selected info types, between FamilySearch (FS), Linkpendium (L), and Ancestry (A). Generally, the Linkpendium page tends to be the most comprehensive, with the most links available for county pages.

Info	FS	L	A
Links to online records	x	x	x
Start dates for records	x		
Adjacent counties	x	x	
Archives and libraries	x	x	
Histories	x	x	x
Land and properties	x	x	
Maps	x	x	
Newspapers	x	x	x
Obituaries		x	
Photos		x	
Probate records	x	x	
Societies	x	x	
Vital Records	x	x	

Provinces, etc.

Currently The Family History Guide does not include pages for Canadian provinces, Mexican states, English counties, etc. Soon we will start development on many of these, for a number of countries around the world. These pages will follow the same format as the U.S. state pages.

The addition of these pages will greatly increase the scope of information available in The Family History Guide. Progress updates will be available on our Facebook site (www.facebook.com/TheFamilyHistoryGuide).

Training Update

November was a busy month for training with The Family History Guide. Here's a recap of what took place.

Family History Library, Salt Lake City

On Nov. 16, Bob Taylor and Bob Ives of The Family History Guide gave a presentation to about 30 leaders at the main FamilySearch Family History Library in Salt Lake City. The purpose was to familiarize them with how The Family History Guide could be used to train volunteer workers there, as well as to assist guests who come into the library to do research.



The presentation went well, and the Library staff are now preparing to use The Family History Guide as an essential training tool there. We'll keep you up to date with this exciting development in a future issue of the newsletter!

BYU Family History Webinars

We recorded two new webinars for BYU in November:

- Introduction to The Family History Guide
- Training with The Family History Guide



Here are links to the webinars:

[Introduction webinar](#)

[Training webinar](#)

Note: These BYU webinars replace the ones that were previously on the site, as the new webinars show the current Version 2 of the website.

On the Horizon

We will be at all Family History Fairs and events listed below. For details, see the Events link on the website for details (www.thefhguide.com/events.html).

Advisory Board Meeting - Dec 1, 2016 at the Sandy Granite Family History Center.

RootsTech Conference - is on Feb. 8-11, 2017 in Salt Lake City, UT.



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