

## CHAPTER 3 GATHERING INFORMATION FROM HOME

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You can gather family history information from many sources. Some are easier to access than others. You may make more effective use of your time by gathering information from sources that are close at hand before you go to sources that are less accessible. For example, your own memory is an excellent source of family history information. Also, you may find important family information in records that exist around your home. Follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost as you decide where to begin gathering information.



### Use the FamilySearch Internet Site

The FamilySearch Internet site, found at [new.familysearch.org](http://new.familysearch.org), may already contain some information about your ancestors. Review this information at the beginning of your search to avoid duplicating work that may already have been done.

### Record Information from Your Memory

Your memory is the most readily available source of information about your family. Record the names you can remember and the dates and locations of births, marriages, deaths, and other important events in the lives of your ancestors. You can write this information on family group records and pedigree charts or in a research notebook, or you can record it in the FamilySearch Internet site (see chapter 4 of this guide). Be sure to verify your information by comparing it with information you find in other sources. Memories fade and are not always accurate.

## Notes

## Gather Information from Home Sources

Your home is an important source of family history information. Spend some time looking for records that exist in your home. You may find:

- Family group records, pedigree charts, books of remembrance, or ancestral tablets.
- Family Bibles.
- Journals, diaries, and letters.
- Personal histories and life sketches.
- Family histories.
- Old photographs.
- Obituaries and newspaper clippings.
- Birth, marriage, and death certificates.
- Household registers and tribal registration papers.

President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles suggested one simple way to gather such items:



“Get a cardboard box. Any kind of a box will do. Put it someplace where it is in the way, . . . anywhere where it cannot go unnoticed. Then, over a period of a few weeks, collect and put into the box every record of your life, such as your birth certificate, your certificate of blessing, your certificate of baptism, your certificate of ordination, and your certificate of graduation. Collect diplomas, all of the photographs, honors, or awards, a diary if you have kept one, everything that you can find pertaining to *your* life; anything that is written, or registered, or recorded that testifies that you are alive and what you have done” (“Your Family History: Getting Started,” *Ensign*, Aug. 2003, 15).

The same process can be followed for gathering information about your ancestors. As you locate records that might contain family information, put everything you can find about yourself into one box, pile, or folder. Put everything about the families of your parents or grandparents into separate boxes, piles, or folders.

Within family groups, you can organize the information according to each individual in the family group. For each individual, you can organize information chronologically, putting information into three categories—childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. The family history consultant in your ward or branch may have additional ideas about how to organize your family history information.



## Notes

As you gather information from the records you find in your home, record it in the FamilySearch Internet site or on the appropriate paper forms (see chapter 4 of this guide).



### ASSIGNMENTS

- **Prayerfully choose a family or an individual ancestor** to learn more about. Give special attention to individuals who need to have temple ordinances performed for them.
- **Begin gathering information** you have at home about that family or individual.
- **If you are taking the Temple and Family History course**, prepare for the next class by reading chapter 4. Bring to class some of the information you have gathered.



### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Boyd K. Packer, "Your Family History: Getting Started," *Ensign*, Aug. 2003, 12–17.
- Dennis B. Neuenschwander, "Bridges and Eternal Keepsakes," *Ensign*, May 1999, 83–85.
- Constance Palmer Lewis, "Starting from Scratch," *Ensign*, Feb. 2008, 42–45.
- *How Do I Start My Family History?* (32916; one-page guide).