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**Genealogy – Trace Your Family's History**

**By Catherine Olivia**

Did you ever consider that your great-great-grandfather may have fought in the civil war? Perhaps

your great-great-great grandfather made his way here from the "old country" on a great old sailing ship with just a few pence in his pocket. What of your grandmother? Perhaps she was the local librarian in her town. Once they start a genealogy search most people find tracing their family history fascinating. What may start with the simple desire to know a few names and dates turns into nothing short of a fascinating archaeological "dig" of sorts.

There are many ways to get tidbits on your family history. Perhaps you're lucky like me and your family never threw any scrap of paper away. You may have a handwritten birth certificate, as I do, for my great-great-grandfather who was born in England in the 1800's. Birth, death and marriage records are generally easy to find, especially if the family members you are searching about were born here in this country. Maybe you have letters sent back and forth that have information about your ancestors in them. I have a bible that belonged to my great-great-grandmother that has in the back pages where she recorded family births, deaths and marriages.

My father was interested in our family history and had quite a collection of information about our ancestors. When my sister took over the work on the family tree that my father had started one thing she did was to contact the local historical society in the town where we knew my great-grandparents lived. They were able to give some family history as my great-grandfather was a rather prominent citizen. From there she contacted the cemetery where family members were buried and was able to get birth dates and dates of death. When she made a visit to another town where some of our ancestors lived she took a camera to the cemetery and took pictures of the tomb stones.

The internet is a great starting point for your genealogy search. You can visit a website where you can check the passenger arrival records from Ellis Island. AOL has a site where you can type in name, birth and death info on your ancestors to see if there is any information online. Some sites offer genealogy information by country. There are some sights that offer the ability to see information that others have already searched out. Some of these are paid membership sites. You may even find out that you have an unknown family member out there doing the same search on your family members.

To search public records please visit

<http://public-records-finder.com>

## **Finding Your Genealogy**

**By Kadence Buchanan**

One activity that many families find rewarding and exciting is researching their genealogy. Who doesn't want to know where they came from? Plus, if you research your roots back far enough, odds are that you could be surprised with some type of connection to a historical figure. While there are many sites that provide genealogy packages, doing the work yourself can really be rewarding when it comes to getting to know your relations.

First, when researching your genealogy, you should get some paperwork organized. You should create forms that you should distribute to the relatives that you know of that consist of places to fill in information regarding the births, deaths, marriages, and spouses of those that they know of in the family. Some people find it important to make the entries as complete as possible, listing family stories, occupations held, and other information about the entrants. You may also want to consider purchasing a program that helps you to log this information to ease the amount of paperwork that you will be doing. When you get information from a relation, be sure to ask them if they have any genealogical information that can help you in your hunt. Family bibles are one thing that can provide information about lineage that you may not be able to find elsewhere.

Once you seem to have reached the end of the paper trail when it comes to those that you can contact, you may want to turn your search towards census records. Census records have been around for almost the complete history of America, with censuses being conducted formally since 1790. These records can provide a wealth of information when it comes to finding relations that you may not know about due to the long length of time. Other sources of records for genealogy may include birth certificates, death certificates, adoption papers, divorce papers, and school records. Searching on the internet for your family name can also prove to be effective.

Now that you know the basics when it comes to finding your genealogy, indulge in it! Get your whole family in on the fun, it's exciting for everybody to find out about their roots.

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