Pitfalls of Beginning Genealogy

- We get too attached to the family stories.
- Reliance on published family histories and online trees.
- Reliance on indexes, transcriptions, and abstracts rather than the original records.
- Overlooked details in records and conflicts between records.
- Gaps in our own genealogy education; unfamiliar with the type of record, what they say.
- Forgot to cite our sources.
- Same-name, same-place trap.
- Neglected the FAN Club. The FAN Club includes:

_____   _____   _____

Genealogical Proof Standard

Requires a research question, which seeks to learn about a unique person in the world.

- Step One: _____

What's an advantage of tracking your research?

_____

- Step Two: _____

- Step Three: _____

Three Types of Sources:

_____   _____   _____

Three Types of Information:

_____   _____   _____

Three Types of Evidence:

_____   _____   _____

- Step Four: _____

- Step Five: _____

Notes & Ideas:
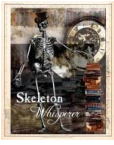
General Tips for Success

- Remember Genealogy Rule #1 – Start with what you know!
- Review all of the research and documents you already have on an individual. Examine every record thoroughly and look for clues that you missed or didn't realize were clues.
- Review the documents of close family members, especially parents' wills and siblings' obituaries.
- Assemble known facts into a chronological timeline to help you see records you're still missing. Include locations and occupations.
- Make a list of sources to check and keep a log of your searches.
- Not every genealogical record is online yet, and some records will probably never be digitized. Consider all leads and be willing to order records based on an educated guess that the record in question is for your individual.
- Search databases using parents' names rather than the child's name, as this search strategy may help you locate individuals who have left the region of their birth, or who married unexpectedly.
- Don't get attached a particular spelling for a name; instead, consider how the name was pronounced, as record creators often wrote names down phonetically.
- Broaden your search beyond the location and timeframe you have started with, especially if that information came from oral history sources.
- Consider the "Current Events" of that person's life and look in likely records for them, even if no family story has been passed down about their participation in that event. As an example, men drafted into Military service might not pass down that information.

Resources

- https://www.cyndislist.com/ : A collection of links to genealogically relevant sources.
- https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Main_Page : FamilySearch Wiki
- https://familytreewebinars.com/ : Over 1000 Genealogically relevant webinars.
- Thomas W. Jones, *Mastering Genealogical Proof,* (Arlington, Virginia: National Genealogical Society), 2013.
- Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Evidence Explained Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace,* 3d ed. (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc.), 2015.

Notes & Ideas: