

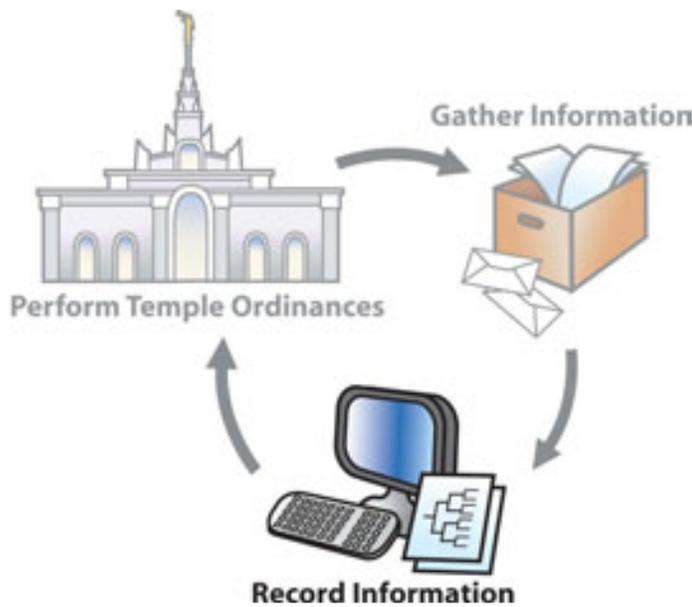
CHAPTER 4

RECORDING FAMILY HISTORY INFORMATION

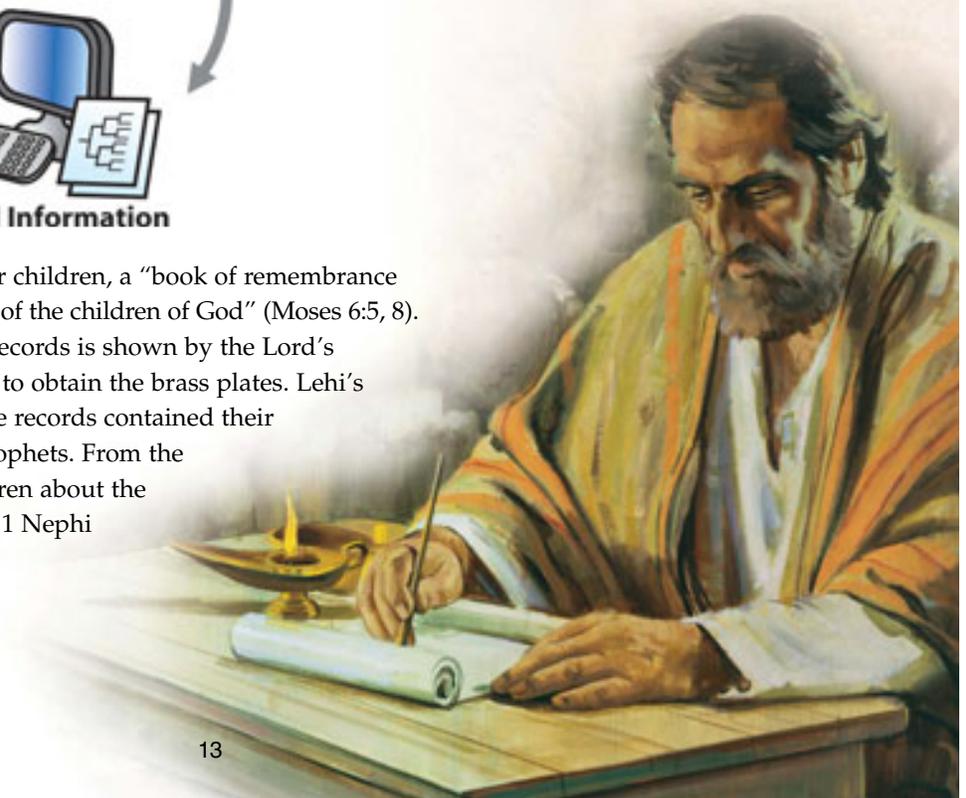
Notes

The Importance of Keeping Records

In this chapter you will learn how to record the family information you have gathered. You will find it most helpful to record information as you gather it. The process of gathering information from a variety of sources and then recording it will be repeated many times as you strive to learn about your ancestors.



In the time of Adam and Eve and their children, a “book of remembrance was kept,” and a “genealogy was kept of the children of God” (Moses 6:5, 8). The value of these records and other records is shown by the Lord’s commandment to Lehi and his family to obtain the brass plates. Lehi’s family needed the plates because these records contained their genealogy and the teachings of the prophets. From the plates, the Nephites taught their children about the gospel and about their ancestors. (See 1 Nephi 3:3–4; 5:14–16.)



Notes

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught the importance of record keeping. He declared: “Let us present in his holy temple . . . a book containing the records of our dead, which shall be worthy of all acceptance” (D&C 128:24).

The records you preserve of your ancestors’ lives and of your own life—including journals, personal histories, and other family history records—can bless your ancestors, descendants, extended family members, and others.

Using the FamilySearch Internet Site

Family history information may be handwritten or recorded by computer, but before temple ordinances can be done for your ancestors, their information must be entered into the FamilySearch Internet site at new.familysearch.org. When your family history information is entered into this site, the system will:

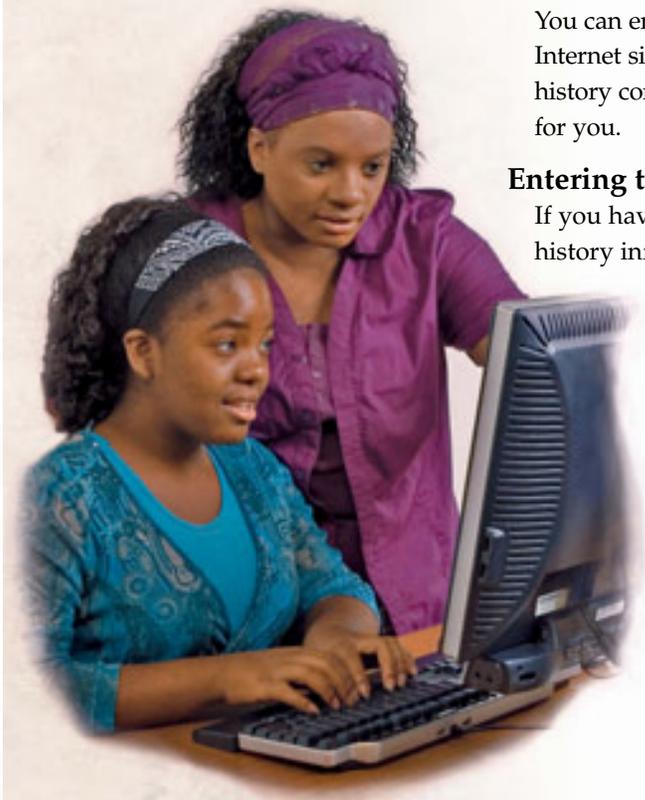
- Show what information has already been gathered about your family.
- Show which temple ordinances have been completed and which ordinances need to be done.
- Provide a way for you to print Family Ordinance Request forms that can be taken to the temple.
- Allow other researchers to use your family history information to help them in their research.
- Help you find and communicate with extended family members who are also searching for your ancestors.

You can enter your family history information directly into the FamilySearch Internet site, or you can give your handwritten information to a family history consultant, who can help you enter the information or do it for you.

Entering the Information Yourself

If you have access to the Internet, follow these steps to enter your family history information directly into the FamilySearch Internet site:

1. **Register or log on to new.familysearch.org.** If you are using the system for the first time, you will need your Church membership record number and your confirmation date to identify yourself.
2. **Enter the family history information** you have gathered, including details about how and where you obtained the information. Correct any incorrect information that your research may have discovered. The system will prompt you about what to enter and let you know if more information is required before you can perform temple ordinances for your ancestors.



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Working with a Family History Consultant

If you do not have access to the Internet or do not know how to use a computer, you can record your family history information on forms. Then you can work with your family history consultant to get the information entered into the FamilySearch Internet site.

The FamilySearch Internet site allows you to print pedigree and family group information for the family you are researching. Your family history consultant or the staff at a family history center can help you print your family information from the site. As you gather additional family history information, you can record it on these printouts. If you are unable to obtain printouts, you can use blank pedigree charts and family group records (see appendix A for copies of these forms).

After you have written your family history information on printouts from the Internet site or on pedigree charts and family group records, take the forms to your family history consultant, who can help you enter the information into a computer. If Internet access is not available in your area, the family history consultant can help you send copies of your forms to a family history center or some other location where the information can be entered into the FamilySearch Internet site.

How to Record Information on Forms

Pedigree charts show extended family relationships across generations. The pedigree chart shows the direct ancestors of a single person, whose name is recorded on the left side of the chart. Use completed family group records and other information you have gathered to fill out a pedigree chart.

Notes

Follow these steps:

1. **Write the name of the first individual** on line 1 of the pedigree chart. Fill in the details about the individual. If the individual was married, fill in the details about the spouse. Mark the boxes for ordinances the individuals have received. If you are filling out your first pedigree chart, you will probably start with your own name in line 1.
2. **Write the names of ancestors**, starting with the father and mother on lines 2 and 3 of the pedigree chart. Fill in the event details, and mark the boxes for any ordinances. Continue this process for as many ancestors as you can. Make sure you have a family group record for each couple shown on the pedigree chart.
3. **Provide your contact information** on the back of the form. This will allow you to share your family history information with other researchers.

Family group records show detailed information about a single family unit. Use a family group record to organize key information about each family group for which you have information.

Family Group Record Family group record number 6 Page 1 of 2

Instructions:
 • Write all names as full, legal names in the order they are spoken. Write a woman's maiden name (both names), not her married name.
 • Write all dates as day, month, and year, such as 4 Oct 1886.
 • Write all places in order of arrival to legal jurisdiction, preceded by commas, such as Lyon, Ark, North Carolina, USA, or Wymondham, Norfolk, England.

Husband		Wife		USA Ordinances	
Name	Date	Name	Date	Date	Temple or place
John Paul Smith	26 Jan 1826	Topfield, Essex, Massachusetts	17 Mar 1826	Topfield, Essex, Massachusetts	Baptism
	6 Jun 1844	Topfield, Essex, Massachusetts	18 Nov 1877	Lowell, Middlesex, Massachusetts	Confirmation
	20 Nov 1877	Lowell, Middlesex, Massachusetts			Marriage
					Ordinances
					Sending to parents
					Other special

Follow these steps:

1. **Record information about the husband and wife**, including their names and as many dates and places as you can for the events listed.
2. **Record information about each child**, including name, gender, and event information.
3. **List the sources of the information.** Sources may include personal knowledge, family possessions, public records, information from Internet sites, and published information.
4. **Provide your contact information** on the back of the form. This will allow you to share your family history information with other researchers.

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Dates

General guidelines. Record the date as completely as possible.

For example:

- 23 Mar 1842
- May 1901

When you are recording the date on a paper form, be sure to write the date so that the day and month can be clearly distinguished. If you enter a date into the FamilySearch Internet site that cannot be interpreted, you will see some date options from which you can choose.

Other calendars. The FamilySearch Internet site correctly interprets dates from the lunar calendars used in China, Japan, and Korea if you record the dates in Chinese-based characters. If you cannot record dates in Chinese-based characters, convert dates to the Gregorian calendar.

If you have a date that does not correspond to a calendar that the FamilySearch Internet site supports, you can use one of these strategies:

- If possible, convert the date to the Gregorian calendar. Record at least the year.
- If you cannot convert the date to the Gregorian calendar, record its original form.

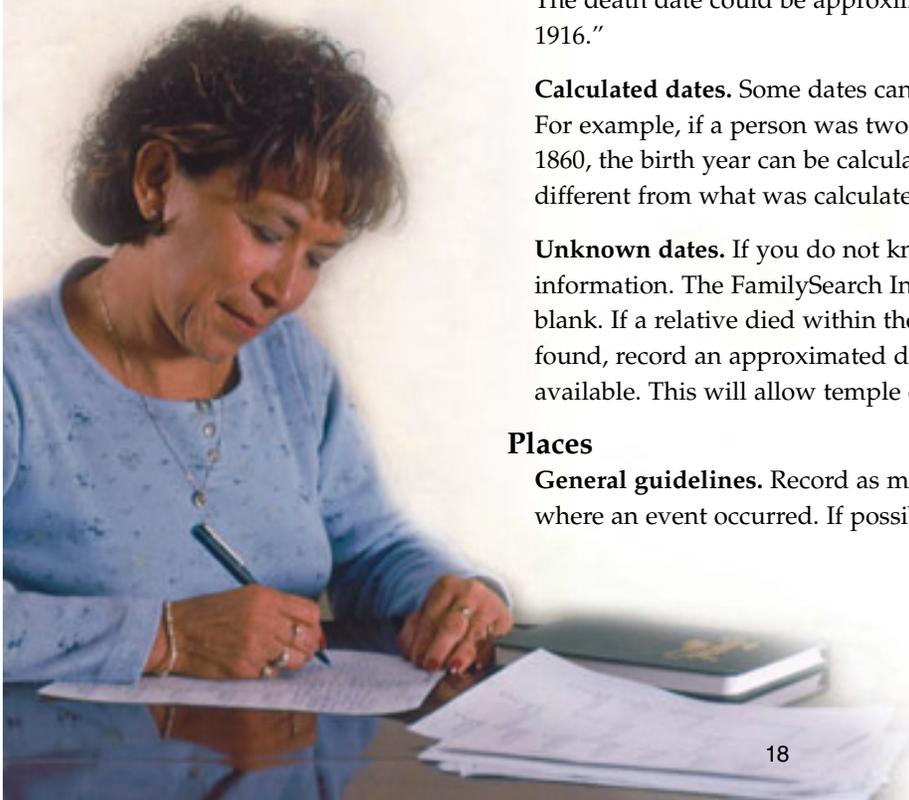
Approximated dates. If an exact year is not known, it can be approximated. Use the words *before*, *after*, or *about* before the approximated year. For example, you may know only that an ancestor died during World War I. The death date could be approximated as 1916 and recorded as "About 1916."

Calculated dates. Some dates can be estimated from other known dates. For example, if a person was two years old when a census was taken in 1860, the birth year can be calculated as 1858. Since the actual year could be different from what was calculated, use the word *about* with the year.

Unknown dates. If you do not know a date, do not try to make up the information. The FamilySearch Internet site allows you to leave the fields blank. If a relative died within the last 110 years but a death date cannot be found, record an approximated date that is based on the best information available. This will allow temple ordinances to be done.

Places

General guidelines. Record as much as you can of the name of a place where an event occurred. If possible, record all the levels of the name, such



Notes



ASSIGNMENTS

- **Begin recording information** you have gathered from home. If you have access to the Internet, record the information directly in new.familysearch.org. If you do not have Internet access, record the information on paper forms.
- **Use the guidelines** in this chapter to help you record names, dates, and places correctly.
- **If you are taking the Temple and Family History course**, prepare for the next class by reading chapter 5.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Spencer W. Kimball, "The Angels May Quote from It," *New Era*, Feb. 2003, 32–35.
- "Keeping Family History Records," lesson 17 in *Young Women Manual 2* (1993), 60–64.
- "Family and Personal Histories," lesson 19 in *The Latter-day Saint Woman: Basic Manual for Women, Part B* (2000), 152–59.
- *Preparing a Family History for Publication* (36023; resource guide).