Section 2
Noncredit
William G. Hartley, M.A.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## WRITING FAMILY HISTORY

### FAMILY HISTORY—GENERAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FROM THE PRESIDENT</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LET’S GET STARTED</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Me First</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why You Should Take Writing a Family History</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What You Should Already Know</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What You’ll Learn to Do in This Course</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What You’ll Need</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How This Course Works</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking Your Progress</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When You Should Seek Help</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Icons You Should Know</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LESSON 1: STARTING POINTS</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facts to Consider when Choosing a Topic</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrowing the Scope</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing Your Approach</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking Notes While Researching</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing the First Draft</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revising to Create a Second Draft</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make Assessments, Evaluations, Analyses, Comparisons</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Book-Publishing Decision</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family History CD</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Does It Mean to You?</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can You Apply What You Learned?</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANSWER KEY: DID YOU GRASP THE FACTS?</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A: SAMPLE LESSON OUTLINE</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Portraits: A History of Barzillai Ansley and Nellie Peterson</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B: SAMPLE FAMILY HISTORY</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C: RESEARCH LOG</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF

William G. Hartley, M.A.

If it’s true historians live in the past more than in the present, then we are either weird or we are hooked on some kind of really fascinating and satisfying activity (or maybe a mix of both). Researching and writing history, hard and challenging though it is, is fun. It’s an adventure.

Perhaps we should tape a warning label to the cover of this course, “Danger, Doing History is Addictive.” It’s addictive in a positive way. To explore the past is to enjoy “highs” like those felt by hunters and fishermen, by detectives solving mysteries, by snoops prying into others’ diaries and lives, by explorers venturing into the unknown regions, by travelers standing in a fascinating foreign land, by kids playing hide-and-seek.

I’ve spent more than two decades researching and writing history, full time and on my own time. Because I’ve “been there” so to speak, I enjoy the chance to be something of a guide for others venturing into history projects. Through this course, I’ve been able to help hundreds of students craft some pretty good histories, even several outstanding ones.

Most of my students produce products that become gifts to their families, that end up being photocopied dozens of times for others, and, in a few cases, that expand into book-length histories that they or their families publish.

Currently I am an associate professor of history at Brigham Young University. My primary assignment is with the Smith Institute for Church History where I work full time researching, writing, and promoting Latter-day Saint history, family biographical history, and western U.S. history. My mainstream interest is immigration, which leads me to focus on the grassroots history of the lives of common people.

For six years I directed BYU’s Family History and Genealogy Research Services. There, I was involved in three of the eight book-length family biographical (not genealogical) histories I’ve written. I produced the other five books as part of my BYU research work or on my own time as contract projects for various families around the United States.

To spend so much time with old diaries, documents, and life stories is to be drawn to the places those old records talk about. So I’ve become a “site” person who visits the places I write about, if at all possible. I’ve gotten lost in Kentucky cornfields looking for Butler family sites, driven in a Toyota 4Runner from Douglas, Arizona, into Mexico to find where a research subject was buried in Colonia Morelos, rowed in a raft across the Mississippi River to follow a pioneer trail route, made gravestone rubbings at Cape Cod, and stood on the Liverpool docks by the River Mersey where so many immigrants embarked on sailing ships in the nineteenth century. My interest in the overland trails led me to join the Oregon-California Trails Association, serving two years as president of the Mormon Trails Association, and assisting the National Park Service to map and mark historic trails in Iowa.

Research has taken me to musty county courthouse basements in Ohio, public records desks behind bullet-proof windows in downtown Detroit, old red-brick homes in Tennessee, microfilm machines in Canada’s national archives, wind-swept sandy bluffs in northern Nebraska, the beautifully quiet Anza-Borrega desert in southern California, and to such efficient research libraries as the Huntington and the Bancroft in California, the Beinecke at Yale University, the Canadian National Archives in Ottawa, and the Library of Congress.
and National Archives in Washington D.C. These great repositories of records are the historian’s choicest hunting grounds and fishing ponds.

We five Hartley sons are the biological and personality products of ancestors named Hartley, Swalley, Hipskind, and Martin on Dad’s side—basically a Catholic heritage—and of my mother’s ancestors with names of Miner, Bunker, Abbott, Thorn, Chase, and McClellan—staunch Latter-day Saint crows a few generations back. Because Dad was a freight and passenger agent for the Southern Pacific Railroad, the company transferred him a lot, so our family lived in several places. I was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, spent my boyhood in Butte, Montana, and lived my busy teenage years in my “hometown” of San Lorenzo, California. I fulfilled a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to New York and New Jersey from 1962 to 1964. In 1965 I married Linda Perry, who is a native Californian of Yankee and Swiss heritage, coming from ancestors named Perry, Fullmer, Curtis, Burgi, Mueller, and Statler. Linda and I have six children.

I received B.A. and M.A. degrees in history at Brigham Young University and completed doctoral course work at Washington State University. In 1972 I joined the LDS Church Historian’s staff as a full-time research-and-write historian. For five years I directed (half-time assignment) the LDS Church’s Oral History Program. In 1980 our crew of historians transferred as a unit to BYU, where we became the new Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History.

While deeply involved in oral history projects, I was invited by state, community, and church groups to teach workshops and classes on family oral history and about writing diaries, personal histories, and family histories. My workshop handouts evolved into three how-to-do-it books: An Oral History Primer for Tape Recording Personal and Family Histories (1973, with Gary Shumway), Preparing a Personal History (1976), and Diaries and Personal Journals, Why and How (1979).

I’ve published more than sixty history articles in scholarly and popular journals. In 1982 I published Kindred Saints, an in-depth family history commissioned by a prominent Salt Lake City family. That project caused me to earn my journeyman papers, so to speak, as a family historian, and led to my writing several other family biographies dealing with such people as the Barzillai and Nellie Peterson Ansley family of New Brunswick, Iowa, and California; the Oakley Evans family of Connecticut and Utah; and the Joseph and Polly Peck Knight family who had New England heritage and lived in places from New York to Nebraska during the 1800–1850 period. My Best for the Kingdom, a history about the John and Caroline Skeen Butler family who started in Kentucky and Tennessee about 1830 and moved to Missouri and Illinois and finally to Utah, received two biography-of-the-year awards in 1993.

I have taught this Writing Family Histories class since 1983. Over the years I have learned much from my students’ research and writing ventures, some of which is incorporated here.
LET’S GET STARTED

Read Me First

If you have not yet read the Read Me First pamphlet you received with your course materials, please do so before continuing. It contains information you need to know to successfully complete this course.

The Read Me First pamphlet is also available on the Internet at http://ce.byu.edu/is/readme.htm

Why You Should Take Writing Family History

As you have spent time doing family history research, you have undoubtedly seen the lives of your ancestors come together and form complete pictures. You have probably not only found their dates of birth, marriage, and death, but information and stories about those events and many others from their lives. This course will help you to take that information and present it in an interesting and readable family history that you can share with your family and perhaps many other interested people. This course can give you the guidance you need to present an inaccurate, interesting and organized family history.

What You Should Already Know

Before starting this course, you should have already completed the BYU Independent Study course, Introduction to Family History Research, or have equivalent skill. Before you start writing a family history, you should also have thoroughly checked as many genealogy sources as possible for information about your ancestor or ancestors that you plan to write about. These sources include, but are not limited to:

- Family records
- Compiled records
- Vital records
- Census records
- Computer sources
- Military records
- Land and Probate records
- Immigration records
- Religious records
- Newspapers

If you have not checked any of these sources or need additional help in finding or using any of them, consider registering for the BYU Independent Study course that deals with the record or records you need help with.

Besides having thoroughly researched all the available records on your ancestor(s), you also need to utilize all the other sources available to you. This includes interviewing living family members who have memories about the ancestor(s) you are writing about, finding photographs...
and identifying the people in them, reading family journals, and more. Simply put, writing a family history requires a lot of information from prior research. You will save time if you are adequately prepared to complete the task ahead of you.

What You’ll Learn to Do in This Course

When you have completed this course, you should be able to do the following:

1. Determine an appropriate scope and audience for your family history.
2. Organize your family history notes so that you can use them to write a family history.
3. Write an interesting, organized, and accurate family history.
4. Share your family history with the rest of your family and others who are interested in your ancestors.

What You’ll Need

Textbooks

All the materials required for this course are included in this manual. You will want to decide how you want to write your family history: on paper or on a computer. It will obviously be easier to do on a computer if you have access to one.

How This Course Works

This course consists of one lesson. This lesson introduces the topic to be explored, provides some objectives to guide your learning, and then presents important material about the topics of the lesson.

This lesson contains an outline for you to fill in as you proceed. This outline is intended to help you identify the major points in the lesson and to reinforce these main ideas by causing you to use more than one way of learning: both reading and writing. If you wish to compare your answers, a sample outline is provided in Appendix A at the end of the course. Your outline may differ from the sample outline, and this is just fine as long as you identify all the key points. You do not submit this outline to Independent Study.

To help you feel assured that you are mastering the ideas, the lesson has self-check questions called “Did You Grasp the Facts?” with an answer key at the back of this course manual.

You will best learn to apply these ideas and skills to your own family history research by trying your hand at applying them to typical research situations. At the end of the course, there are questions to help you do this called “Can You Apply What You Learned?” When you finish answering them, you are invited to use WebGrade to get instant feedback on your choices, or you may use the bubble form and submit it to BYU Independent Study. In either case, see the Read Me First pamphlet for instructions.

The final step, of course, is applying what you learn to your own family history research. There are practical suggestions for doing so, called “What Does It Mean to You?” at the end of the lesson.

Checking Your Progress

As noted above, you are encouraged to check your ability to apply what you learn. Many people like to gauge their progress, and so the following grading scale is used for the Can You Apply What You Learned? questions in this lesson.

Grading Scale

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<td>100–90</td>
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<td>A−</td>
<td>89–85</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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When You Should Seek Help

None of us can do everything well. Family histories can be difficult to write and put together, even if you have all the necessary information available to work with. Some people want to write a family history but bog down when they need to make decisions concerning whom to write about or about how much information or detail to include. Others have trouble with correct grammar or other writing skills. Whatever your problem, the key point is that you should never give up! If you make an earnest effort and find that some writing or research skills are beyond you, here are some additional things you can try:
Ask someone who is experienced. You can find such people at genealogical libraries, including the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. You can also often find them at your local LDS Family History Center. Sometimes you can get help by placing an inquiry on an appropriate list on the Internet.

If even that fails and you’re unable to proceed on your own, you might consider hiring a professional genealogist who also writes family histories. Keep in mind, though, that these services can be quite expensive. You may consider asking relatives to help you raise the funds. A list of accredited genealogists is available from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City (35 North West Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150). The National Genealogical Society also maintains a list of their certified genealogists.

Through persistence, and occasional assistance, we can record the stories of our ancestors.
Icons You Should Know

Independent Study uses several icons to identify key sections of the lessons in your course manual. Here is a list of icons you may run across, along with their meanings:

**Lesson Objective (What You’ll Learn to Do)**

A statement from your instructor explaining what you should be able to do after you have successfully completed a lesson or a section of a lesson. Referring frequently to the objectives will help you stay focused on those things your instructor wants you to learn.

**Did You Grasp the Facts?**

An ungraded exercise, or set of exercises, to help you check your mastery of the lesson material before completing a graded exercise. You can check your answers to these exercises with the Answer Key at the back of the course manual. Do not submit these exercises to Independent Study. They are for your benefit only.

**Read and Study**

Material you should carefully read and study to successfully meet the lesson objectives.

**Speedback Exercise (Can You Apply What You Learned?)**

A question, or a set of questions, that you will answer and record on a Speedback bubble sheet. You will submit the bubble sheet to Independent Study for computer processing after completing the lesson.

**Instructor Tips**

Insights or helpful hints from your instructor.

**Video Exercise**

Instruction is enhanced, or provided, by a video that accompanies your course materials.

**On the Internet**

Instructional material is supplemented by Internet sites.

**Steps**

Specific directions you should follow to meet a lesson objective.

**What Does It Mean to You?**

An ungraded exercise, or set of exercises, to help you apply the lesson material. Do not submit these exercises to Independent Study. They are for your benefit only.
STARTING POINTS

Most students enroll in this course because they have a history project already in mind, which they hope the course will help them complete. Others have several possible subjects in mind.

Objective 1

Select a subject, a scope, and methods of organizing your approach.

Facts to Consider when Choosing a Topic

Your choice of subject matter for your personal family history should be based on five considerations:

1. As a minimum, your study should treat wholly or partially at least two generations of your family or someone else’s family. To do an essay the length I require, many students write a history of one set of grandparents and then of the grandparent’s children (which includes one of the student’s parents).

2. Pick a topic of interest to you. Can you live with that topic for several months of intensive study?

3. Does your topic offer opportunities for investigation, for discovery of something new, different, or original? Is it ground that needs or deserves plowing?

4. Select a topic for which you can find materials. Location and availability of sources will shape your decision. You need a subject for which you have a reasonably good chance of finding sources without taking expensive research trips.
5. You are required to use family, government, church or private organizations, and local sources, and oral history interviews, unless you convince your instructor that your project should be exempt from using some of those sources.

6. Limit your study to fit the limited time-frame this course allows. This is a semester class on campus. You will probably take a minimum of a semester and a maximum of a year to complete your final paper.

Good history is directed by questions the research seeks to answer. Ask, when you start out, “What do I want to know?”

For example, here is a mix of questions to consider (based on my own lists and those of Allan Lichtman in his book, *Writing Family History*):

**Fact Chronology**
What are the basic facts about the family—genealogy data, places of residence, and main events, including dates?

**The Household Residents**
A fundamental question is “Who lived together in the family household?” That is, did the relatives other than the parents and children live there? Or did hired hands, boarders, childcare children, or family friends reside in the family home?

**Household Geography**
A related question is, “Where did the family live?” Lichtman suggests we identify houses and properties the family occupied. Then, in terms of the residences themselves, what was the family routine in terms of basic things like eating, sleeping quarters, bathing and bathroom facilities, laundry, and storage?

**Yard, Neighborhood, and Community**
Moving outside the front door, what were the neighbors like? Where did the family do its shopping? for clothes? for food? for hardware? Where did it receive medical and dental care? What did the family use for transportation?

**Family, Work, Income, and Finances**
How did the family provide for its financial needs, or if it did not, why not? Work often determines where a family lives and what their daily and yearly routines are like. So, tell for whom one or both parents worked. Did children work? Did they receive allowances? Did father or mother or both manage the family’s finances? Did the family suffer any major financial reversals or windfalls? What effect did inheritances have?

**Religion, Beliefs, and Values**
What were the religious backgrounds of the parents? What role did religion play in the home they created? Were there religious differences?

With what churches or religious groups did the family participate, and how actively? What religious practices took place in the home? What values of right and wrong were of most importance in the family? What educational aesthetic values did the family support? Where did family members stand in terms of political parties and issues?

**Family Members’ Personalities and Characteristics**
We can ask about what the individuals in the family were like. How were the children alike or different than the parents? How did the children differ from one another physically? mentally? socially? in school? in terms of personalities? Who had what hobbies, talents, and interests? What were the family’s religious practices? politics? What were the relationships of family members to and with each other? What disruptions to family harmony were there, and why?

**Family Travel and Vacations**
Where did the family travel? What memorable vacations did they take? What relatives did they regularly visit?

**Health**
Were there any major health developments, such as injuries, hospitalizations, operations, diseases, or disabilities?

**The Extended Family**
In terms of generations, how did the family compare with the families the parents came from? How did the families of the children, when adults, compare with the families they grew up in?

**Strengths and Weaknesses**
What general conclusions or evaluations can you draw about the family? What aspects of the family were not successful? Where did the family fall most short? What were the family’s major problems and how did they deal with them?

**Family in Society**
What about the family and what Lichtman terms the “outside world”? What was society like in their day? What were the customs? What kind of dress, money, language, ceremonies, male-female roles, entertainment, rules, etc., were current in their place and time?

Such questions can lead to research in some ponds where fishing might be good. Raise questions you really want answered—not just questions you know can be answered by what you know already. By starting with questions to be answered, your history will be more than a rehash of family records. The more you ask, the more you will find out. The less you ask, the more you will miss.
Narrowing the Scope

To help you pick your topic and design for your paper, tackle this question: What is the scope (area covered) of your history? That is, what segment of the endless family past will you write about? What family unit will you focus on?

When you think you know what you’ll write about, look at a genealogy and history information for your parents, grandparents, and other ancestors. Look through what you have, watching for a suitable family unit to make the subject of your essay-length history. Is there a parent-and-children unit you would like to study? Which ancestor couple could be the heart of your story? Do you want to do a full life story or only one or two aspects of someone’s life? Is there a family theme, such as religion or work, that can help shape your history?

Some students write the history of both sets of their own grandparents, and then of their parents, but give uncles and aunts only brief attention compared to the father and mother.

One of our primary purposes is for you to learn how to do research in both family and nonfamily sources. Therefore, if you pick your parents as your topic, you must use sources beyond just their memories. If you interviewed both of them, that would not be enough source material, because you must use family, community, and government documents, too. And, if you pick your parents as the subject of your history, your own life must not be more than a small part in the history.

It is possible to cover three or four generations in an essay, but that usually works well only for generations farther back in time than your grandparents or if your project is based on very lean information about any of the generations.

Like most historians, students sometimes pick topics related to a large body of information they have—a grandparent’s diary, a collection of letters, or a lengthy autobiography an ancestor wrote.

Book-length family histories usually cover three generations or more. Very likely, the paper you write for this class could become a chapter in such a book. So, before you select your paper topic in the next lesson, consider drawing up plans for a larger history that could include your paper. Such books usually take one of two organizational approaches to the family in the past—starting with a common ancestor and coming down the descendant generations, or starting with someone closer to the present and seeking to tell the story of their parents or grandparents.

A descendant history begins with a particular ancestor and then traces the generations down in time from him or her. This approach, if diagrammed, forms a pyramid with the ancestor at the top and his latest descendants the base. The concern is not for just one direct line of descendants, but rather encompasses all the lines of descent from this ancestor.

By contrast, an ancestral history diagrams as an upside down pyramid. The point is a person or couple later in time. The broad base is at the top, beginning with the person or couple’s four sets of grandparents or eight sets of grandparents or even the great-grandparents. Of concern in this approach is the common descendant of these ancestors’ family lines converging to that person or couple—and not the ever-widening descendance of these people.

Of course, a family history can combine elements of both approaches, such as when it discusses the “roots” of the common ancestor and then becomes a history of that ancestor’s children and grandchildren and so on.

You can choose either approach.

Here is the most workable model my students use and one I recommend. Select one couple no closer to you in time than your grandparents, and then write a history about them that basically follows the pattern below:

- Deal with that one set of people through their life stages.
- Start with the woman in the couple.
  - Tell about her growing-up years in that family.
  - Discuss her family’s circumstances when she was born.
  - Give brief backgrounds (roots) about her father and mother.
  - Discuss what family life was like for her and her siblings.
  - Relay aspects in her life until she met her husband.
- Do the same history for a youth-to-adult-hood story of the man.
- Provide a history of their family during the child-rearing years.
  - Do not separate biographies of each child.
  - Treat the childhood and youth years topically in terms of “the family.”
  - Discuss the family’s role in its community.
  - How did the family provide for itself?
  - Describe the houses and living arrangements.
  - Discuss their schooling and lessons.
  - Describe the main health developments.
  - How and where did they shop for food and clothing?
• What were the family’s recreation, entertainment, and vacations?
• Discuss their customs, traditions, and holidays.
• Describe the siblings’ personalities (similarities and differences).
• Discuss the involvement with relatives.
• Who were the family’s friends and associates?
• Devote a section to the children as adults, a one-to-two-paragraph summary of each.
• Deal with the last years of the couple.
• End the history with the death of the last spouse.
• Make some kind of assessment of how the couple’s family did.

Organizing Your Approach

Once you know the generations you will cover—the scope of your study—you still need to figure out how to organize your information in a way that makes sense to the reader.

Do you bring Person A’s family story down until Person A is old enough to marry, marry him or her to Person B, and then flashback and tell B’s family story? Or will you tell parts of A’s and B’s childhoods, shifting back and forth with youth information until A meets and marries B?

Decide how much emphasis to give to each person and to each generation. For example, in the descendant history (the right-side-up pyramid), will the beginning ancestor receive most coverage (say, half the pages), and succeeding generations less? Or will you give equal coverage (one-third of the pages) to first generation, second generation, and third generation? How much detail will you devote to spouses? To each sibling? Will each child of a couple receive equal attention?

Think through more than one way to limit and organize your history. Try several possibilities first before deciding. Most of us try out several outlines and frameworks before we find one that is realistic and appropriate.

Did You Grasp the Facts?

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

1. Which of the following is not a factor to consider when choosing a topic?
   a. Select a topic of particular interest to you.
   b. Select a topic for which you can find materials.
   c. Select a person whose life is similar to yours.
   d. Consider the amount of time the project will take.

2. What is a descendant history?
   a. a pyramid with the beginning ancestor at the top and the latest descendants at the base
   b. an upside-down pyramid whose base at the top represents a person’s ancestors and narrows down to one person or a couple at the point
   c. a history that discusses the roots of an ancestor and then becomes a history of the ancestor’s children and grandchildren
   d. a chronological history that carefully plots the descendant of a family into troubles and turmoil

Objective 2

Take and file research notes.

Taking Notes While Researching

You cannot write a good history term paper or essay without taking careful notes while doing research. This lesson points out several effective ways for taking and filing notes.

When you locate records, what do you do with them?

You need to examine what the materials contain, take notes of information you need, store those notes and information in a file system (computer files or file folders or both) where you can find and use them, and then write a history based on the notes.

Those who do not use a word processor can store their notes in file folders or index cards or both. Computer users write their notes with the word processor and store them in computer files they create. But, whether you take handwritten,
typed, or computer notes, the techniques for note-taking and for creating file categories work about the same way.

Both those who use computers and those who don’t need to create file folders for storing photocopied materials, photographs, and items loaned to them by the family.

Keep a Research Log

In Appendix C of this course manual is a form for a research log. When researching, we think we’ll be able to remember what we looked at and where it was located. But, once we go deep into the project, our memory will fail us. Experienced researchers keep a research log with them, on which they list every source they consult, and its location. Be sure to list the library call number or microfilm reel number. With such a research log, you can find a source rather quickly, and you can see if you already looked at a particular book or source, saving you time trying to look for it.

Full Source Citations and Footnotes

No responsible history is the “trust me” kind. That is, it cannot be one where the author tells the history but does not document where he or she got the information by using footnotes, endnotes, or some kind of source notes. Readers must be told where the sources from which the author draws the information come from. For the final draft of your paper, you must properly document your findings by using footnotes (not endnotes, source notes, or parentheses notes).

Documenting your sources serves two vital purposes. First, it shows the reader what kind of research you have done and what sources you base your history on. Second, and more important, it documents where you found your information so that the information is findable again by you or by the reader. By checking the sources in your footnotes, an outside reader should be able to find those same sources, read them, and draw the same conclusions from them that you did.

The rule is to document the source of any information you use that is not general knowledge. By common knowledge, we mean such things as the Flu Epidemic of 1918–1919, the Great Depression, various wars, that Los Angeles is a large city in California, or general history knowledge. Even if the information is your own memory, you need to let the reader know that it is your source, either by saying so in the narration or by footnoting that information and saying “personal knowledge of the author.”

College term paper manuals give very precise instructions for how to write proper footnote citations. They show how to footnote information taken from a book, published article, encyclopedia entry, government document, thesis or dissertation, unpublished letters, diaries, etc. These precise footnoting forms have one key purpose in mind: clearly identifying the source and telling where it is found.

The basic information that must be cited from published sources is

1. Full name of author
2. Full title
3. Full publishing information:
   - Place of publication
   - Publisher’s name
   - Year of publication
   - Page number where the information is found

College term paper manuals do not give footnote models for some of the family sources we will find and use. In cases where we must create our own citations, we simply include information needed to properly identify the source and tell where it can be found.

- Who produced the source
- The recognized name for the source
- When it was generated
- Where it was located
- Page number where the information is found

When any of this information is unknown, then in that part of the footnote we say in square brackets [Author Unknown] or [Date Unknown]. If we need to give a generic title to an item, we do so by using square brackets, such as [Life Sketch of Teresa Sullivan].

Let’s say we find in a relative’s scrapbook a clipping from an unidentified newspaper that is an obituary for a person named Jerome Morgan. We have no way of finding out what newspaper it was or when it was published. So, we give the reader the basics of documentation.


When you find one source of material from which you take notes, the first thing to do is to write down a full citation (a bibliography note) for that source: a proper name for it, what form it is in (handwritten, typed, photocopy of typescript, photocopy of original), where it is located, and how many pages it has. I strongly recommend that this citation note include library or microfilm call
numbers, so you can easily find the source again if you must recheck it sometime. This full citation goes into your bibliography at the back of the final paper.

Create a file (on computer or a file folder) called "Bibliography" and put in it the full citation for every source you use for your paper.

Once you have the full citation on file, then, when taking notes, list on each note a short form title and a page number, indicating where you found the information.

Information Notes

Researchers generally agree with the following basic “principles” of note-taking. My examples deal with note cards, which is the easiest way to explain the process even for those who will take notes using their computer; most of the principles work for both approaches. Computer users, including myself, often do not have a computer at hand when they are researching source materials, and so we have to write down notes by hand.

Writing/Taking Notes

You have a source in front of you. You read through it and find information you want. So, you take notes. But what kind of notes do you take? To “take notes” you do one of three things:

1. You copy the information verbatim; that is, you create a full quotation that is word-for-word exactly like the original information. In this case be sure you place your notes within quotation marks and that you copy it exactly.

2. You paraphrase the information so it isn’t an exact quote but a restatement of the information; this might include a quoted word or phrase here and there.

3. You pick out a detail, fact, or piece of information and list it in your own words. You extract the content, the core information, and summarize it in your own words.

Experienced researchers advise that you make your notes as brief as possible. That means that you use as few full quotations as possible, and that you keep the quotes you copy brief. Also, you must avoid plagiarism—borrowing abundantly from a source, or taking exact words from it, and using them as though they are your own words.

Did You Grasp the Facts?

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

3. What does a research log contain?
   a. a list of your research strategy
   b. every source consulted and its location
   c. an efficient list of quotations
   d. a list of your research subjects

4. Which of the following could be classified as general knowledge in documenting your sources?
   a. The local supermarket secretly sells contaminated meat.
   b. The President of the United States bathes at 8:00 each morning.
   c. World War I occurred between 1914 and 1918.
   d. The Constitution was signed with the cheapest brand of ink.

Objective 3

Write a first draft.

Writing the First Draft

After we’ve done a reasonable job of finding records and source materials, we reach that point when we need to start writing. Let’s be honest here. Collecting can be more enjoyable than writing. For many people, writing is agony.

So, how do we transform our collections of records and notes into a narrated history? There are several “natural” steps we can take that lead us to the finished first draft.

Make a Simple Topic Outline

By listing in outline form some possible ways to organize the paper, we make a final decision about what to cover in terms of people, events, and time periods.

A Sentence Outline Can Start the Writing Process

Once we decide what subjects to write about and when in the paper, we face the question of what we will say about those subjects. By taking each topic or word in our outline and saying something about it in sentence form, we are forced beyond identifying it to telling about it. That is writing; that is narrating.
Write a Segment at a Time

To take the plunge at writing sentences and paragraphs, start with a part of the history you are most interested in writing. Our concern here is not about information we do not have but about working with what we have. We will have time later to fill in the details. And we shouldn’t be overly concerned about precise grammar or best words during this draft. Our main goal is putting our information into sentence form in some sort of reasonable order. After writing one segment, start another, and keep going until you have attempted all the main sections of the history.

Patch the Segments Together

Putting segments together is somewhat like sewing separate patchwork quilt blocks together.

Rewrite the Patched-Together Narration

Patchwork is choppy, awkward narration, but it at least gets the main pieces out where we can see them in relationship to each other. Then we need to seriously rework the material by blending, smoothing, and moving information around. Such labor produces a reasonable first draft.

One way to avoid stringing notes together one after another is to take your pile of notes, read through them carefully, put them aside, and then to write down in your own words what your research notes told you. After your own thoughts are down, then go back to your notes and use them to correct your thoughts, fill in, and illustrate.

Crossing the First Draft Threshold

First drafting is hard work! It is our first effort to make sense out of all our information, and sometimes you must genuinely struggle to make all the pieces fit together. It is frustrating when it reveals information we lack. It is disappointing because what results seems unsatisfactory compared to what we want to have when the history is finished. We need to be patient and accept the fact that writing must go from rough to semi-smooth to polished.

Despite all its flaws, the first draft is a major threshold step. To finish the first draft should produce a great sense of accomplishment. At last we begin to see the shape the next version of the history will take.

Other Suggestions

Create a “leads” or “loose ends” file to note questions you encounter, gaps you need to fill, research materials yet to be searched, and ideas about possible sources.

Do as much summarizing of quotations as you can. Keep only the very best quotations. (Surprisingly, quotations sometimes don’t say what you think they say.)

Carry the documentation in unpolished footnotes or in parentheses so you can create accurate footnotes later. The more done here, the easier footnoting will be later.

Experiment

Look for better ways to organize. Decide if the paper’s scope is too broad or too narrow.

Don’t worry about photographs and maps on the first draft.

Warning: When you finish the first draft, you face a dangerous time. You feel relieved and you need to take a few days off and totally break away from this history project. But, you must not kid yourself that you are anywhere close to being finished. Much revision lies ahead.

Guiding Principle for Illustrative Material: Help the Reader to Read

Too often research paper writers become so involved with the information they are writing up that they forget a very basic, fundamental fact—we want what we write to be read. Why do we write anything? So that someone will read it. Family history is not one of those really exciting subjects, so much as any subject, we need to make our writing “reader friendly.”

One major mistake many family historians make is to clutter up their narration with charts, documents, and pictures. Some published books contain page after page of these “illustrative materials” right in the middle of narration.

There is one simple way to determine whether or not to include a picture, chart, document, or map. If it is quickly illustrative, use it, but if it is reference material which the reader needs to look at closely, put it in the appendix and not in the text. If, however, it helps the reader to read and understand, without breaking the train of thought of the narrative, it’s okay to use it.

Simple Charts

Any illustrative material we place into the text needs to be simple. Complete family group charts and pedigree charts have no place in the narration and should be presented only in the appendix section at the back of the paper. Readers do need genealogy charts to help them understand who the people are within the narration, but these charts need to be very simple and basic.

Simple Maps

The same principle holds for a map. If it can help the reader quickly, without requiring major study, it’s okay to include it. Detailed maps need to be placed in the appendix.
Rarely is a published map just right for our history. It is against copyright law to copy and use someone else's map without obtaining permission. So, what works best is to trace, in outline form, a map or part of a map that seems to cover the geographic area you want to show, and then you insert a minimal number of cities or towns that help the reader know where he or she is. Then draw in your own dots and tape or glue onto the map your own printout of site names. In essence, make your own map tailored just for what you want the map to show.

Insert Only Directly Relevant Photographs

Again, does the picture enhance the reading rather than pose a major interruption? If so, it can be included. A picture of the person being discussed is helpful, but a group picture of thirty people, with all the names listed at the bottom, causing the reader to stop and find the ancestor's name and then his or her picture, is not appropriate. It is best to use only a very few, carefully selected pictures in the narration and then to provide a picture section in the appendix at the back of the essay.

Objective 4

Write a second draft.

Revising to Create a Second Draft

When the first draft is done, the next step is to revise it to create a better organized, better documented, more readable second draft.

There is no detour for getting to the final draft without writing a second draft. The second draft is like the second gear in a manual transmission. First drafts get us off to a good start, but a second draft leads us in a better direction.

Primarily, the second draft needs to be a revised and markedly improved version of the first draft.

Compared to the first draft, this revision should offer the reader better structure and organization, expanded content material, and a more effective, smoother narration.

Anybody can write, but some are better at it than others. Writing is a talent somewhat like music. Some have a natural ability for it and can play by ear, but others have to practice and practice to become good. Most good writers became good by continually writing. Most good writers also read a lot, which develops broad vocabularies and a good sense of how words and sentences should flow.

Most experts on writing bluntly teach that in order to produce good writing we must revise, revise, revise. Nearly all first drafts, they note, even those of skilled writers, are verbose, awkward, and disjointed. Beginning writers are hurt to learn that the first draft prose is not sacred. We need to be willing to throw pages away and to totally rewrite blocks of our story.

When you finish your first draft, step away from the project for a few days. Let your mind work on completely different matters. Then dust it off and read and reread it as though it is someone else's paper. What do you find that is praiseworthy? What needs to be changed?

Make the changes you see are needed. Freely mark up the rough draft with the corrections, new phraseology, and new information.

What does “revise” mean? How do we revise papers? You revise when you alter your organizational framework, edit for proper sentences, punctuation, and spelling, rewrite to state things better, condense sentences, paragraphs, and sections that are too long, and expand your discussion to fill in gaps.
In some ways the first draft is the first effort of a potter to shape a vase out of clumps of variously colored clay. The potter has two concerns: the shape of the vase, and its color and patterns.

After shaping the vase a first time, the potter stands back and inspects his creation, noting what he likes and does not like. Then he works on the vase again to “revise” it. He finds the shape off a bit in this place and that. Maybe it is too tall and narrow, so he makes it squatter. Perhaps it is round and he thinks an oval shape might work better. He discovers too much of one color clay in one section and not enough in another spot. He wants more blue clay for the handles instead of red. So he pulls the red clay off and finds or makes some blue clay that replaces the red handles. The potter stops work, stands back and looks at this revision, and then figures out what the vase needs in terms of final shaping and polishing to be “finished.”

It is vital that you now consult guidebooks by experts to help you handle grammar and style problems in this way. Please study and use the brilliant little handbook about style and grammar, *The Elements of Style*, by Strunk and White. Read carefully all 85 pages. This little book is worth three times its weight in gold. It is short but packed with vital information about punctuation and grammar, handling quotations, effective paragraphs and sentences, and style do’s and don’ts.

Also, obtain a good college term paper guidebook such as *The Chicago Manual of Style*, Kate Turabian’s *Student’s Guide for Writing College Papers*, or Miller and Taylor’s *The Thesis Writer’s Handbook*.

**Write a Second Draft**

As stated above, the second draft needs to be revised and a markedly improved version of the first draft. Compared to the first draft, this revision should offer the reader better structure and organization, expanded content material, and more effective, smooth narration.

If you are using a word processor, be sure to save a copy of the first draft—don’t revise it out of existence. Save the original as named, but make a copy of it, give the copy a different name, and revise the copy to make it your second draft.

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**Did You Grasp the Facts?**

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

7. How should the second draft compare to the first?
   a. It should be significantly longer and more descriptive.
   b. It should contain a final title and polished footnotes.
   c. It should be organized better and contain smoother narration.
   d. It should contain new subheadings and chapter summaries.

8. What does it mean to revise?
   a. to look at your subject from a new angle and add sections to your work
   b. to let an experienced writer look over your work and make corrections
   c. to step away from your paper for a few days and rethink it
   d. to alter your draft by editing the punctuation, spelling, and content

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**Objective 5**

Write a final draft.

**Make Assessments, Evaluations, Analyses, Comparisons**

Our first major struggle in creating a family history is getting as many facts as we can and then creating a descriptive history from them. Histories that tell us what happened are nothing to be taken for granted. Most family histories that I have read are primarily descriptive histories.

But there is another stage of understanding we can try for. In this stage, the historian stands back from the mass of information he or she has assembled and the story of the family just written and draws some conclusions about what the record shows. He or she looks for patterns, trends, and themes; makes some comparisons between families, spouses, siblings, fathers, sons, grandmothers, granddaughters, or generations; looks for causation; or assesses results of efforts the family made or dreams it had.
Please consider what kind of assessments you should make regarding the family you have just researched. An excellent place for such assessments is at the end of the history as a concluding section.

**Guiding principle**

You want the reader to read, so make your narration “reader friendly.” Don’t interrupt the reader with long quotations, masses of pictures, detailed genealogy charts, complex maps, etc. Write properly. Write creatively.

This course resembles a big recipe. We have described a type of cake to bake, so to speak. We have outlined what ingredients are needed and how to find them. Then, we have suggested ways to mix and blend those ingredients so they combine together well. Now it is cake pan time. Do the final blending of the batter, add some last minute ingredients, and pour the mix into the pan and bake (final type) it properly. In this crude analogy, here are the “baking” instructions.

For an example of a portion of a family history, see Appendix B.

**Final Proofreading**

One final proofreading is essential. By now, you are so familiar with the text of your history that you’ll read right by some obvious errors without seeing it; so, ask someone else to proofread your paper, too.

If you read your final versions out loud, you will catch errors and some awkward expressions. Careful proofreading can save you from a few monumental errors as well as many minor ones. Make your corrections and then print it out—at last, the final version.

**Did You Grasp the Facts?**

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

9. The first objective of writing a family history is to make a descriptive history from all the facts you have gathered. What is the deeper objective you can try for?
   a. Strive to make the history reader-friendly.
   b. Step back from the information and draw conclusions.
   c. Edit the history to include only pertinent information.

10. What is one way to avoid missing errors on your final proofreading due to familiarity with the work?
   a. Read it once quickly and once slowly.
   b. Check every difficult word in the dictionary.
   c. Retype it, paying close attention to detail.
   d. Have someone else proofread it.

**Objective 6**

Write an introduction and conclusion.

You may wish to include some or all of the following introduction and concluding sections in your family history.

**Title Page**

The title page is generally the first page after the cover. It contains the following:

- The title and, if applicable, subtitle; an effective title reflects the content of your family history in as few words as possible
- The edition number if there is more than one edition
- Your name and the names of other authors and editors
- The place and date of publication

**Copyright Statement**

Copyright statements generally appear on the back of the title page. They generally include information that tells readers when the family history was published and who to contact for more information. A sample copyright statement is:

© 2000 by Thomas Alan Smith. All rights reserved.

**Table of Contents**

The table of contents lists the chapters and sections of your family history and gives their page numbers. It also serves as an outline of your family history and guides readers to the sections of most interest to them.

**Other Preliminary Sources**

Your family history may have one or more of the following sections before the main body of the text. If used, a dedication generally appears on a separate page before the table of contents. The other sections generally appear on separate pages after the table of contents.
Dedication. A dedication contains the name of the person to whom you are dedicating your family history and a brief statement explaining why. It is usually written on the page after the copyright page.

List of Illustrations. A list of illustrations contains the name and page number of each picture, map, or illustration in the family history.

Foreword, Preface, and Acknowledgements. A foreword is a statement about the family history that is written by someone other than you or the editor. A preface is a statement written by you. Each of these sections may be written on separate pages and can serve many purposes. They:

- Describe why the author wrote the family history
- Provide an overview of the family history’s scope, content, and organization
- Outline the research methods used
- Provide an address for readers who wish to contact the author
- Show gratitude to persons or institutions that helped. The acknowledgements may also be listed on a separate page

List of Abbreviations
A list of abbreviations contains the abbreviations you have used in your family history and their meanings.

Introduction
The Introduction contains background or historical information that may be needed to understand the family history.

List of Contributors
A list of contributors names the people who helped write the family history.

Chronology
A chronology provides dates and brief descriptions of key events in a family history. It gives your readers an overview of the events that shaped the family and provides a quick reference to important events. Such a list is especially useful if your family history is not organized chronologically.

Final Sections
You may wish to include some or all of the following sections, after the main body of the text:

- Appendices. An appendix contains information that is not essential to the main body of the text but that may be useful to readers who want more specific information about a topic.
- Bibliography. A bibliography lists the sources of the information used in your family history. Use a style guide to find guidelines and examples of how to cite various types of sources in a bibliography.
- Index. An index should list all of the individuals, place-names, and subjects mentioned in your family history.

Did You Grasp the Facts?

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

11. What is an effective title?
   a. It is in the form of a complete sentence.
   b. It includes the name of the author.
   c. It reflects the content in a few words.
   d. It includes the dates addressed in the work.

12. What does a dedication contain?
   a. the names of those to whom the work is attributed and an explanation why
   b. an official statement from the author claiming that the work is his or her own
   c. a brief statement from the author to the family addressed in the work
   d. a list of works performed by the author leading to the completion of the history

Objective 7
Identify steps to take in order to publish and share your family history.

The Book-Publishing Decision
Someday you or your family might want to publish a family history book. Most people have no idea how big and expensive a book-publishing project is. They feel that once they have written a book, the real work is done, and that publishing is a minor follow-up effort. But they are wrong. Publishing is a major project, as we will show here.

Chances are that no commercial publisher will publish and sell your family history at his expense. Why? Because there is no market for such a book in retail bookstores. Almost 100 percent of all published family histories are published by the families who contract with a printer or publisher to do the job, which the family pays for. Our discussion therefore focuses on self-publishing.
Placing Copies of Your Book

Set a price for the book. You cannot charge enough to cover the research and writing. Probably you will charge only what the printing and binding costs are with a dollar and two added on. Most family history books carry expensive prices, usually in the $20 to $40 range.

You publish a book so that others can read about the family’s history. But how do you make it available to them? Here is how others have done it:

- Before the book comes off the press, send flyers to as many relatives as you can find addresses for, asking them to send in money to reserve copies. You can use that pre-publication money to defray the first half-payment to the printer. Then you ship them books when the printing is done.
- Send flyers to your family members after the book is printed, so your flyer can display pictures of its pages.
- Send follow-up flyers for the next two Christmases (if you have not sold out your printing by then).
- Take copies to family reunions and other gatherings and show them off.
- You or someone else in the family can host a special open house to honor and display the book and make it available to relatives and friends.
- Send complimentary copies to any and all libraries in places that the book’s contents deal with. This can involve several dozen copies.
- Ask local newspaper book review editors to do a review of your book.
- Run advertisements offering your book for sale. Put ads in local newspapers or in family history publications.

Be sure your publisher sends two books to the Library of Congress as part of your copyright application.

Materials Needed

- A computer with a good amount of speed and enough RAM and disk drive space to handle large image files
- A color flatbed scanner
- A CD writing drive with writable disks
- A word processor
- Suggested: Adobe Acrobat software to capture, read and write image files
- Suggested: published software to make your CD cover

What to Do

- Use the word processor to prepare your family history as you would for a book.
- Scan all your photos, letters, and documents.
- Convert scanned images to files to portable document files (.pdf) using Adobe Acrobat software (Word processor files convert wonderfully to .pdf files).
- Organize .pdf files into folders.
- Family members receiving a copy of your CD can download Adobe Acrobat Reader free at www.adobe.com so they can view the .pdf files on your CD.
- Family genealogy software can save your genealogy as a gedcom file (.ged), save a copy to your CD.
- Copy your histories, scanned photos and documents to the CD.
- Use the publishing software to make a cover for the CD jewel case.
- Make copies of the CD.

Sharing Your Information

You may consider donating copies of your family history to libraries or other institutions or posting it on the Internet. If you decide to make your family history available to others beyond your immediate family, please do not include information in it about people who may still be living. As a general rule, first obtain permission before publishing information about people who were born in the last 100 years for whom you have no death date.

Family History CD

So, how is a family history CD made? Well, it is much like writing a family history on a computer. You follow the same steps. Instead of binding it all in a book, you format the materials for the CD. The options on how that is done is mostly decided by the person putting it all together, but here are some examples of materials needed and how it could be done.

Materials Needed

- A computer with a good amount of speed and enough RAM and disk drive space to handle large image files
- A color flatbed scanner
- A CD writing drive with writable disks
- A word processor
- Suggested: Adobe Acrobat software to capture, read and write image files
- Suggested: published software to make your CD cover

What to Do

- Use the word processor to prepare your family history as you would for a book.
- Scan all your photos, letters, and documents.
- Convert scanned images to files to portable document files (.pdf) using Adobe Acrobat software (Word processor files convert wonderfully to .pdf files).
- Organize .pdf files into folders.
- Family members receiving a copy of your CD can download Adobe Acrobat Reader free at www.adobe.com so they can view the .pdf files on your CD.
- Family genealogy software can save your genealogy as a gedcom file (.ged), save a copy to your CD.
- Copy your histories, scanned photos and documents to the CD.
- Use the publishing software to make a cover for the CD jewel case.
- Make copies of the CD.

Sharing Your Information

You may consider donating copies of your family history to libraries or other institutions or posting it on the Internet. If you decide to make your family history available to others beyond your immediate family, please do not include information in it about people who may still be living. As a general rule, first obtain permission before publishing information about people who were born in the last 100 years for whom you have no death date.
Donating a Copy to the Family History Library™

If you donate your family history to the Family History Library™, please follow these guidelines:

- Give the library permission to microfilm your family history. This allows the library to circulate it to the Family History Centers™ worldwide. To give the library this permission, please do one of the following:
  - Fill out a Permission to Duplicate form (available at the Family History Library™).
  - Send a letter of permission with your manuscript.
  - If possible, donate an unbound copy of the manuscript, because unbound manuscripts are easier to microfilm. The library generally puts a hard cover on it after microfilming.
  - Please note that the library usually puts all new books on the shelf. However, space restrictions and other factors may require that some material be made available only on microfilm. The reference staff decides whether to put an item on the shelf.

Send your manuscript and the Permission to Duplicate form or permission letter to:

Family History Library—Gifts
35 North West Temple Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3400
USA

Did You Grasp the Facts?

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

13. Which of the following statements is true about book publishing?
   a. There is a big market for family histories in retail bookstores.
   b. Most family histories sell from between $20 and $40.
   c. Almost 100 percent of family histories are eventually reissued in paperback.

14. What software is suggested for the making of a CD?
   a. Quark Xpress
   b. Adobe Acrobat
   c. Netscape Communicator
   d. RealPlayer
I. Before writing, you should select a subject, a scope, and methods of organizing your approach.

A. ______________________________________________________________

1. ______________________________________________________________

2. ______________________________________________________________

3. ______________________________________________________________

4. ______________________________________________________________

5. ______________________________________________________________

B. ______________________________________________________________

1. ______________________________________________________________

2. ______________________________________________________________

   a. ______________________________________________________________

   b. ______________________________________________________________

3. ______________________________________________________________

   a. ______________________________________________________________

   b. ______________________________________________________________

   c. ______________________________________________________________

C. ______________________________________________________________

1. ______________________________________________________________

2. ______________________________________________________________

3. ______________________________________________________________
II. Take notes while researching and file them in an organized system.

A. 

B. 

1. 

2. 

   a. 

   b. 

C. 

1. 

2. 

3. 

D. 

1. 

2. 

E. 

III. Now you are ready to work on your first draft.

A. 

B. 

C. 

D. 

E. 

F. 
IV. Revise your first draft to create a second draft.

A. 

B. 

C. 

V. Write a final draft.

A. 

B. 

VI. Write an introduction and concluding sections.

A. 

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

B. 

1. 

2. 

C. 

1. 

2.
Family History—General—Writing Family History

Lesson 1: Starting Points

VII. Once your family history is finished, you can choose whether to publish it in book form or as a CD and whether to donate a copy to the Family History Library.

A.  

1.  

2.  

B.  

1.  

2.  

C.  

1.  

2.  

3.  

D.  

1.  

2.  

3.  

E.  

F.  

G.  

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VII. Once your family history is finished, you can choose whether to publish it in book form or as a CD and whether to donate a copy to the Family History Library.
LESSON 1
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?

Complete the following activities. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

Use the following checklist to guide you in writing your family history.

In organizing your information, you have:
- __ Gathered all records
- __ Transcribed interviews
- __ Organized records efficiently

In selecting a focus, you have:
- Chosen a subject . . .
  - __ A single person
  - __ One family unit
  - __ An extended family
- __ Gathered sufficient information about your subject
- __ Chosen a common theme or uniting factor on which to base your paper
- __ Selected an order in which to present your history
- __ Thought about amount of detail you will include

Your introduction includes:
- __ Title page
- __ Copyright statement
- __ Table of contents
- __ Dedication
- __ List of illustrations
- __ Foreward
- __ Preface
- __ Acknowledgements
- __ List of abbreviations
- __ Introduction
- __ List of contributors
- __ Chronology
The main body of your family history includes:
   ___ Sections or chapters
   ___ Divider pages
   ___ Sources cited

Your conclusion includes:
   ___ Appendices
   ___ Bibliography
   ___ Index

Upon completing your family history, you have decided whether or not to:
   ___ Print or bind your history into book form
   ___ Format the materials for a CD
   ___ Donate your history to a library or other institution
Lesson 1

1. c—It’s okay to do research and write a history about a person or people with whom you have little or nothing in common. In fact, that might be one of the main reasons for selecting the person you do.

2. a—A descendant history is a pyramid that stands on its base. It is chronological and begins with one person or a couple before panning out into the broad base that is their offspring.

3. b—The purpose of a research log is to keep track of your sources, so you can go back and review them, and to provide convenience in documenting those sources later in the work.

4. c—General knowledge is information that is generally undisputable and accepted as fact.

5. c—Once you have written an outline, convert it to a sentence outline by changing each idea into a complete sentence. This will help you begin to tell about your ideas, and it will take you one step closer to writing the body of the work itself.

6. a—Quotations should be used sparingly, and you should summarize the material when you can.

7. c—One of the main purposes for writing a second draft is to polish the text you created in the first draft. Make it smoother and better organized.

8. d—to revise is to clean up your work both technically and creatively. Make it more readable, and help others to see what you want them to see in your work.

9. b—Look for patterns, trends, and themes in the information your family history contains.

10. d—You have, by now, become so familiar with this text that you may skip over some errors that another person could find. You may also wish to read your final version aloud to catch errors and awkward expressions.

11. c—An effective title consists of as few words as possible while still acting as a window to the contents of the work.

12. a—a dedication consists of a brief statement from the author to the person or people to whom the work is dedicated.

13. b—it is expensive to print and bind a book. These prices cover the printing and binding of the book, but not the research and writing.

14. b—Adobe Acrobat will enable you to capture, read, and write image files.

How Did You Do?

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<td>Review needed</td>
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Appendix A: SAMPLE LESSON OUTLINE

I. Before writing, you should select a subject, a scope, and methods of organizing your approach.

A. Your choice of subject matter should be based on five considerations.
   1. Pick a topic of interest.
   2. Does your topic offer opportunities for investigation?
   3. Select a topic for which you can find materials.
   4. Use family and nonfamily sources.
   5. How long will the project take to complete?

B. Choose a scope on which to base your paper.
   1. Choose what you’ll write about.
   2. Choose whom you’ll write about.
      a. Look over your sources.
      b. Book-length histories usually cover three or more generations.
   3. Choose how you will present your history.
      a. Descendant
      b. Ancestral
      c. Other

C. Figure out how you will organize your information.
   1. What order will you present to the people?
   2. How much emphasis will you give each person?
   3. Try several possibilities.
II. Take notes while researching and file them in an organized system.
   A. Keep a research log.
   B. Cite sources that are not general knowledge.
      1. Use footnotes.
      2. Write a full citation for each source as you research.
         a. Include call numbers.
         b. Create a “Bibliography” file.
   C. To “take notes,” you do one of three things.
      1. Copy the information verbatim.
      2. Paraphrase the information.
      3. List the information in your own words.
   D. Make your notes brief.
      1. Use as few full quotations as possible.
      2. Keep the quotes brief.
   E. Avoid plagiarism.

III. Now you are ready to work on your first draft.
   A. Make an outline.
   B. Turn the outline into a sentence outline.
   C. Start writing by choosing a segment of the history you are most interested in.
   D. Patch the segments together.
   E. Smooth out the narration.
   F. Create a “loose ends” file.
   G. Experiment with organization.
   H. Keep charts, maps, and photographs simple and relevant.

IV. Revise your first draft to create a second draft.
   A. The second draft should be more structured, organized, expanded, and effective than the first draft.
   B. Don’t be afraid to mark up your first draft and make serious changes.
   C. Consult guidebooks on grammar and style.

V. Write a final draft.
   A. Search for conclusions, patterns, trends, and themes by making comparisons and looking for causation.
   B. Make the history “reader friendly.”
VI. Write an introduction and concluding sections.

A. Title page
   1. Title
   2. Edition number
   3. Name of authors and editors
   4. Place and date of publication
B. Copyright statement
   1. On the back of the title page
   2. Includes publishing information and contact information
C. Table of contents
   1. Lists chapters and sections with their page numbers
   2. Serves as an outline
D. Other Preliminary Sources
   1. Dedication
   2. List of illustrations
   3. Foreward, preface, and acknowledgements
E. List of abbreviations
F. Introduction
G. List of contributors
H. Chronology
   1. Provides dates and descriptions of key events
   2. Serves as an overview and reference guide
I. Appendices
J. Bibliography
K. Index

VII. Once your family history is finished, you can choose whether to publish it in book form or as a CD and whether to donate a copy to the Family History Library.

A. You will probably have to publish and sell your family history yourself.
   1. You will probably want to sell your book for between $20 and $40.
   2. Plan ways to market your book to friends and family.
B. To format your history for a CD, you will need certain hardware and software.
C. You may consider donating your manuscript to the Family History Library.

1. Obtain permission from all living people.
2. Donate an unbound copy.
3. Give the library permission to microfilm your history.
Chapter 9: Photographer’s Family

When the year 1905 opened, Boss Ansley was wearing himself thin hiking and riding mules in the wilderness hills of Durango, Mexico. At the same time, 1500 miles to the north, Nellie Peterson was working in a large department store in Omaha, Nebraska. Before the year ended, the tall, handsome, dark-haired Californian and the tall, beautiful, blonde-haired daughter of Swedish immigrants would marry. The catalyst that brought them together was cameras and photography.

“While-You-Wait” Photography

Twenty miles south of Dallas, Texas, at Waxahachie, Boss met a man named Gerlach on March 5, 1905. Boss bought a half-interest in Gerlach’s photography “outfit.” Five days later, according to Boss’s diary, he and Gerlach opened up “The Electric Studio” in Waxahachie, selling customers photographs they could pose for and then take with them from the studio.

In late March Boss moved to Hillsboro, Texas. His diary ends then, but not before he expressed interest in a girl named Annie. During the next six months, apparently, Boss and Gerlach split their partnership, or else Boss bought Gerlach out. Boss then became a photographer of his own.

He saw a market for two kinds of fast photography: permanent studios in large cities and year-round amusement parks, and temporary concession booths in seasonal fairs, carnivals, and amusement parks.

Boss was in Texas in March and by later summer in Omaha, so it seems he spent the spring and summer months working his way up the Mississippi and Missouri River valleys, setting up photography concessions.

What Gerlach did after that is not known. But during the next decades, photographers used a Gerlach camera named after him.

Omaha Romance

When Boss came to Omaha to establish a fast-photography studio or concession, he met Miss Peterson “through a friend in the stock house,” Nellie said, who introduced them. In her life sketch she says simply: “I met a man of my dreams and married him.” Another version of their meeting, which their son Jack heard, was that Boss advertised for someone to help him with his studio in Omaha, Nellie applied, and he hired her.

Barzillai Sanders Ansley married Nellie Blanche Peterson on October 8, 1905, at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Omaha.
Photo Studios and Concessions

The newlyweds first went to the Dallas area, where Boss had lived when not traveling. Then the couple spent four-and-one-half years in the northeastern United States and Canada, while Boss tried to establish studios in major cities and concessions at major amusement parks. His bread-and-butter work was amusement photos, in which people stood with their head showing from behind funny cut-outs of swimsuits or airplanes.

Boss set up studios to sell them. He would find a location, order cameras and lights from a Kodak supply house, set up the business, and then sell it to someone else to operate. His studios used the title “Electric Studio.” His goal was to start as many while-you-wait studios around the country as he could.

When Boss headed to the northeast, Nellie was pregnant so she stayed behind until he established a residence for them. Boss’ papers show that he opened a photograph concession at Dominion Park in Montreal in 1906. Their first child, Blanche Ethel, was born in Montreal on July 4, 1906. “The nurse took her to Dominion Park at ten days of age,” Nellie wrote in her Wedding Book notebook, “to the Barnum and Bailey circus when four weeks old.” The baby, she noticed with pride, . . . laughed and co’od at six weeks. She went with us up the St. Laurence River ten miles to the Isle of Big Woods and spent the day. At eight weeks we took her with us to Lachine. The train stopped for us. We came back by boat down the rapids (Great). When three months we went to New York and Babe laughed out loud, and knows her name, Papa, Mama, and Aunt Ethel.

Then the Ansleys moved to Toronto on January 8, 1907. Second daughter, Nellie Audrene, was born there on October 6, 1907, at 18 Hamby Avenue. In Toronto Boss opened two studios, one at Scarboro Beach, and one at 47 Queen Street, opposite city hall.

Boss spent much time on the road. On September 25, 1907, for example, he wrote to Nellie from Buffalo, and said he was leaving Buffalo for Cleveland, where he would stay in a hotel. He opened a Cleveland studio. Boss was at the Jamestown, New York, fair in November. The family moved to Philadelphia in early December.

Boss wrote to Nellie from Cleveland on December 26 and mentioned that he is trying to sell “an outfit” there. Since arriving, he said, he had earned $21.75, $20.25, $12.75, or $54.75 total. Apparently his operator in Cleveland, whom Boss termed “the thief,” had reported lesser earnings and pocketed the rest. Boss regretted he had to pack up the outfit and lose what he had invested in Cleveland. He stayed there through the holidays because he needed to do New Year’s Day business before heading home.

In March 1908 Boss signed a contract with the Dominion Park Company in Montreal, an amusement park on the river front. The agreement let him set up a booth there from June 1 to September 1 for carrying on “business of making and selling photographs produced or made on post cards” or to use “Comic Cartoons in connection with a Photograph Gallery of any kind.” The lease cost Boss $1100, payable in four payments, every two weeks until August 1.

That April, 1908, Boss received a letter from Charles Howell and Company, wholesale importers and dealers in cameras and photographic supplies (later the firm became Bell and Howell). What did Boss think, the letter asked, about Howell’s idea of developing a camera that puts numbers on every plate, the same number the sitter for the picture receives? In May Boss bought two lamps from the Howell company.

Between August and October of 1908 the Ansleys lived in Hyattsville, Maryland. Then they moved into Washington D.C. where their third daughter, Muriel Sarah Elizabeth—named for both her grandmothers—was born on April 3, 1909.

In less than three years in three different cities, Boss and Nellie had three daughters. Not one of the three Ansley girls, the family later mentioned as an interesting fact, was born in a state of the United States.

In May 1909, when Muriel was a month old, the family moved to Riverside, Rhode Island, for the summer. Boss signed an agreement for a photo concession with New Vanity Fair in East Providence, Rhode Island. The park gave him exclusive photo studio rights from May 30 to Labor Day, for $725, payable in three installments.

In September 1909 Nellie was living in Philadelphia with her aunts Kathryn and Ethel, who were operating Boss’ Philadelphia studio. Boss, meanwhile, rented a room in Washington D.C. and tried to sell the studio he had established there. He wrote to Nellie on letterhead that reads: “B. S. Ansley & Co., Commercial Photographers, 515 9th St. N. W., Washington D.C.” The letterhead also says: “We make photos of conventions, banquet and large groups.”

Boss marked time, earning $13 one day, $17 the next. On September 19 he wrote to Nellie that a carnival and regatta drew a big crowd downtown, bringing business worth $32.50. “I am fearfully tired,” he wrote; “cannot sleep away from my Darlings. It is too lonesome to be here with no one to talk to.”
The next day he sold the property to a Mrs. Hodge for about $900, who gave him the mortgage on the property until she paid off the entire amount. Boss then turned attention to setting up a booth at the Trenton Fair in New Jersey.

On November 11, 1909, he wrote to Nellie from the Navarre Hotel in Newark, New Jersey. Everything at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, fell through, he said, because the owners wanted an impossible price. He then went to Jersey City and “looked over the town but saw nothing there that would be worth renting.” In Newark he had found two small stores that might do, although one seemed too small:

The first time I walked up the street I thought from the crowd and general look of things “this is about right.” The next day I walked up the street just across the street I walked into a cheap picture while-you-wait-tintype man. Down toward the better section nearer the theaters there is a store with two nice windows in which there has been a cigar store. If I can get it for $125 I’ll take it and run chances on finding someone to rent the half for cigars. The other man has such a poor place it will never interfere with us. . . . Tell Nellie Blanche and Muriel Papa things of them continually and of Momie too. God bless you all.

On November 24 Boss wrote to “Sweetheart” to say that he was waiting for a shipment of his photography equipment from Vanity Fair part in Rhode Island. While he was waiting he “bought lumber, paper for darkroom, paste, nails, and tin affair to put under stove. We must wait on freight, lamp, and background.” He regretted being away from his family for Thanksgiving, and added: “think how good Providence has been to us.” He sent “a succession of good hard hugs for you and kisses—kiss Babies for Papa.”

Moving to California

The next March, 1910, the Ansleys ended their eastern work and headed west to California. Nellie thought that Washington D.C. was the most beautiful city she ever lived in. But little Nellie, not quite three years old, was suffering from breathing problems in the nation’s capital, and doctors said she might die if she was not moved to a drier climate. Boss and Nellie, who was pregnant again, decided to move west.

Boss believed that San Francisco was a good place to make money, but Los Angeles was a better place to raise children.

Boss’ photography work had succeeded. Sales of studios and concessions had given him and Nellie a good sum of money to take with them.

They visited Nellie’s relatives in Iowa on their way west, meeting Nellie’s new step-father, P. Sedarquist, whom Betsy married on March 17, 1909. Then the Ansleys traveled south and west into Arizona. They stopped at Yuma, where Boss became interested in a large irrigation project soon to open. He bought acreage there, gambling that it would mushroom in value once the irrigation project opened.

Then he left Nellie in Arizona while he went ahead to Los Angeles. Before bringing his family to the metropolis, he wanted to find a house for them. He also wanted to lease a downtown space for a photography studio so he could start earning money on the west coast again, for the first time in seven years. When he arrived, Los Angeles had sixty photographers listed in its business directory.

Notes

Boss’ diary tells about his start with Gerlach in Texas. The diary ends in March 1906 six months before he married Nellie. The diary is in Blanche Ansley Webb’s files as are many of Boss’ letters to Nellie while he was on the road and away from her, some of his amusement park agreements, a picture of the Montreal amusement park, and his letter from the Howell Company. Nellie wrote a summary of her life in a letter to Blanche dated Oct. 26, 1935, which gave details about their first years together. Nellie’s wedding book, in the Webb files, includes her and Boss’ wedding date and place and also notations about where the couple lived and moved during the next four years, and birthdate and place data for her three daughters.

Boss’ son Jack, in an oral history interview with the author in February 1984, mentioned the story about Boss hiring Nellie in Omaha. During January 1985 discussions, Blanche told the author that the Ansleys had a good sum of money when they came west.

Yuma land matters are discussed in the next chapters.

Muriel Sarah Elizabeth was named after Grandmother Sarah Ansley and Grandmother Betsy (in America Betsy is short for Elizabeth) Peterson.
Appendix C: RESEARCH LOG

When you do research, keep track of every record or source you consult. This will make it easier to find your sources, should you need to look them up again. It will also keep you from rechecking sources you have already consulted. Include names, addresses, and phone numbers of people who become your contacts for source materials.

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