Genealogy Tips and Tricks



Where to Start:

- Begin with most recently deceased family member
- 4-5 Tier chart with basics - Birth, Marriage, Death, Residence.
- Census, land, court & tax records, city directories, Wills/Probate records.
- Vital Records - birth and death indexes/certificates, marriage records, obituaries.
- Military records - pensions, draft cards, service records.
- Ship Passenger Lists and Emigration/Immigration records
- Gather family stories from your older relatives

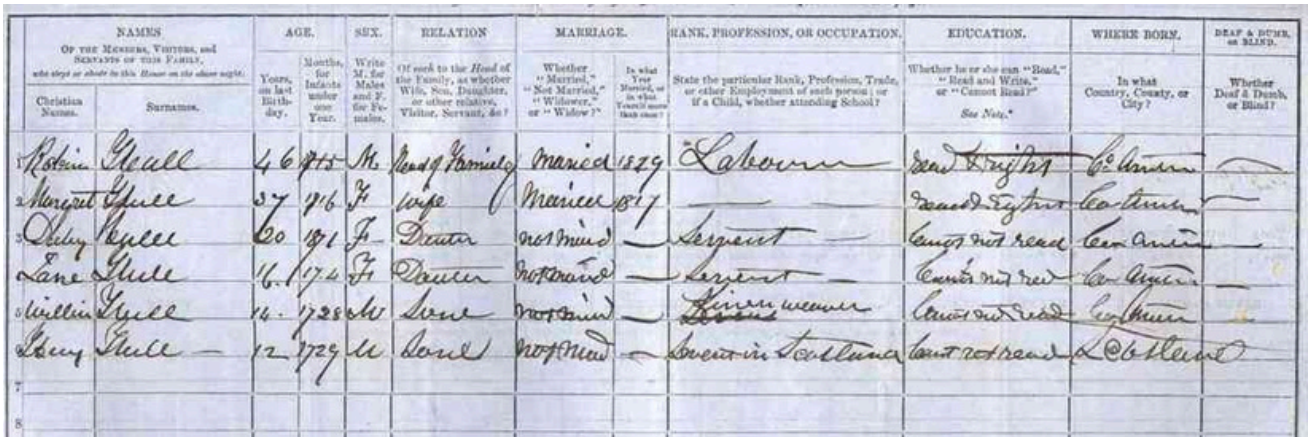
Vetting, organizing, and recording family history:

- Make a timeline of family history events for each ancestor (Name of event, Date, Source)
- Create a Research Log to track your progress and sources for each ancestor
- Gather proof of family lore thru newspaper articles, family bibles, legal records, gravestones.
- Research history of town or county where your ancestor resided.
- Don't rely by one source! Use multiple sources to corroborate information. Trust but Verify!
- Organize your research! Create a folder/binder for each ancestor with their timelines & sources
- Google "FamilySearch Organize Your Genealogy" for best tips to organize family history
- Travel is inevitable. Keep a jump drive or cloud account to store & access info.

Other resources and tips:

- Contact Genealogy societies, Family History Centers, University special collections, and Genealogy Libraries. Librarians can be your best friend!
- Circle around thru extended family members - include the in-laws
- Research potential neighbors, local employers, church members, local schools, etc.
- Native American - Dawes Rolls, Oklahoma Historical Society, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Adjust keyword search methods: alternate spellings of names, broaden searches, etc.

Example of an Irish Census, 1700s



	NAMES Of the Members, Visitors, and Servants of this Family, who sleep or abode in this House on the above night. Christian Names.	Surnames.	AGE. Years, on last Birthday.	Months, for Infants under one Year.	SEX. Write M. for Males and F. for Females.	RELATION Of each to the Head of the Family, as whether Wife, Son, Daughter, or other relative, Visitor, Servant, &c?	MARRIAGE. Whether "Married," "Not Married," "Widower," or "Widow?"	In what Year Married, or in what Year will more than once?	RANK, PROFESSION, OR OCCUPATION. State the particular Rank, Profession, Trade, or other Employment of each person; or if a Child, whether attending School?	EDUCATION. Whether he or she can "Read," "Read and Write," or "Cannot Read?" See Note.*	WHERE BORN. In what Country, County, or City?	DEAF & DUMB, or BLIND. Whether Deaf & Dumb, or Blind?
1	Robin	Gull	46	1715	M	Head of Family	Married	1829	Labourer	Read & Right	Co. Ancn	—
2	Margret	Gull	37	1716	F	Wife	Married	1817	—	Read & Right	Co. Ancn	—
3	Daisy	Gull	20	1791	F	Daughter	not Mard	—	Servant	Cannot not read	Co. Ancn	—
4	Jane	Gull	16	1724	F	Daughter	not Mard	—	Servant	Cannot not read	Co. Ancn	—
5	William	Gull	14	1728	M	Son	not Mard	—	Linen weaver	Cannot not read	Co. Ancn	—
6	Henry	Gull	12	1729	M	Son	not Mard	—	Servant in Scotland	Cannot not read	Co. Ancn	—
7												
8												

BCS PUBLIC LIBRARIES
CARNEGIE • CLARA B. MOUNCE • LARRY J. RINGER

Carnegie History Center
111 South Main St. Bryan, TX. 77803 : Ph. 979-209-5630
Monday - Friday: 10 AM - 5 PM



Recommended Sources

Vital Records (Churches, Clerks' offices):

1. Birth Records: parents, godparents names, residence
2. Death Cert: parents, spouse, child names, residence, place of origin, cause of death
3. Marriage/Banns: spouse – some w/parents' names, residence

Local / U.S. Census(before 1850):

1. Heads of Household & Boarder houses
2. Residence
3. Number of females & males each of different age groups
4. Number of female & male slaves of different age groups
5. Occupation

Local / U.S. Census(after 1850):

All mention:

1. Find persons in each household
2. Ancestor country/state of origin
3. Ancestor parents' state or country of origin
4. Occupation
5. Approximate age
6. Place of residence
7. Neighbors & other family members
8. Race (after 1870)
9. Boarders

Each census has different supp info such as:

1. Literate in English or not at all
2. Disabilities (deaf, dumb, insane, idiocy)
3. Veteran status
4. Rent or Own land/house
5. Language spoken
6. Born citizen, Naturalized or Alien

Maps/Land Records:

1. Original land owner/grantee(s)
2. Trustees, PoA, and Dowars (wives)
3. Plat sizes and abstract & tract numbers
4. Neighbors & other family members
5. Historic Boundaries
6. Bills of Sale (kept w/land records)

City Directories & Phone Books:

1. Residence & Occupation
2. Businesses and service companies

Wills and Probate:

1. Find immediate and extended family members
2. Land and property information
3. Willed slaves, often named
4. Family situation and wealth

Slave Schedules (1850-1860):

1. Lists slave owners (not named slaves)
2. Number of slaves w/ages and gender
3. (B)lack or "(M)ulatto"
4. Number freed or "manumitted"

Military & Pension Records:

1. Records of Service and Combat
2. Family members
3. Birth and Death dates
4. Residence (Draft Cards).
5. Bounty Land awarded
6. POW Status
7. Missed census? Check here.

Ship Passenger Records

1. Family members traveling w/ages
2. Country of origin
3. Year of immigration
4. Ship name

Naturalization and Immigration Records

1. Names of applicant, spouse, children
2. Country of origin
3. Port of entry
4. Vital information
5. Residence & Occupation
6. Physical attributes

Local History and State Sources:

1. TSLAC
2. Published County Histories
3. Handbook of Texas
4. Periodicals of genealogy societies
5. Bound family histories
6. Cemetery records
7. Digitized books online (Internet Archive)