

## Sources of Evidence

The record itself.

The records you gather in your research will fall into two categories: Primary Records or Original Records and Secondary Records or Compiled Records.

### Primary Records or Original Records

- A record created shortly after the event occurred by a person with personal knowledge of the facts.
- Records created for the first time such as vital records, wills, and certificates.
- Public records: Censuses, military, pensions, passport applications, passenger lists, original grants and naturalization.
- Institutional records: Church records, cemetery records and educational records

### Secondary Records or Compiled Records

- A record created some time after the event.
- Compiled from other sources .
- Written from memory long after the event occurred.
- Lack of knowledge of person providing the information.
- Falsification of information for some reason.
- Some examples of secondary records are: Family histories, collected genealogies, abstracts and transcriptions of records, directories, local and state histories.

## Nature of Evidence

What is found on the record.

### Direct Evidence

- Speaks directly to the point in question.
- When and where was the record made?
- Who made it?
- For what purpose was it made?
- Example: Birth certificate is direct evidence of date of birth, place of birth and name of parents.

## Indirect Evidence

- Is circumstantial evidence.
- Provides facts from a conclusion that can be inferred.
- Example: Approximate year of birth can be inferred from age on a census record.

## Evaluating Evidence

- The best form of evidence is the original document.
- When a original document is not available, a legible scanned copy or photocopy of the original document should be obtained.

## Research Log

- Use a research log for each family group.
- Keep track of the sources you searched.
- Record where and when the document was found.
- Record the information found on the document.
- Record if the document was of no value so you don't search it again.
- Record information as soon as you find so you don't forget.

## Time Line

- Create a time line for each family group.
- List events and facts chronologically that are drawn from various sources.
- Time lines help you analyze what you already know and what you need to know.
- Verify that appropriate intervals exist between milestones such births and marriages.
- Provide an outline of historical information in order to write an interesting biography or family history.

The more we learn about our ancestors the more we love them.  
As you search record any miracles or guidance you receive.