

If You Get Stuck Going Backward – Go Forward: Tracing Descendants of Your Ancestors

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Are you stuck in your march back through time identifying ancestors? Turn around. Revitalize your research. Rekindle your desire to continue with some success. Descendancy research utilizes much of the same methodology as ancestral research but can lead to a whole new way of looking at your genealogy. Often it can lead to discovery of cousins who have missing pieces of the puzzle needed to complete your picture of common ancestors.

Discussion will center on tools available for conducting this type of research and methodology used to analyze records found. We will also discuss successful methods for contacting living relatives.

Some Steps in the Process:

1. FOCUS! Choose an ancestral couple for whom you would like to track descendants.
2. Verify and document all information you have about this couple and their children.
3. Do further research on each successive generation using standard genealogy methodology.
 - a. Recognize that you will be working the opposite direction – from the known to the unknown in this case goes forward in time instead of backwards in time.
 - b. When doing ancestry research you always keep looking because everyone has parents. Not everyone has children. Know when to stop looking and how to make note of this fact.
 - c. What do you do after you hit the 1930 Census wall? Can you find living people? What about privacy laws? Tips and tricks for using readily available records and resources from the following sources to find living people.

<http://www.Ancestry.com>

<http://www.GenealogyBank.com>

<http://www.Whitepages.com>

<http://www.Google.com>

<http://www.Facebook.com>

4. Now what?
 - a. There are right ways and wrong ways to contact living family members who likely won't know how they are related to you.
 - b. Make yourself findable. Post on message boards. Create a website or start a family organization.
 - c. There are some exciting new ways to engage a younger generation in learning about their ancestors.