



Genealogy 101

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Definition of Genealogy

- Study of Families and tracing their lineages and history
- Genealogists use oral traditions, historical records, genetic analysis, etc
- Results are often displayed in charts or written as narratives



Differentiation

- Genealogy – account of kinship
- Family History – added details about lives



Two Levels of Genealogists

- Hobbyist
- Professional



Motivations

- Desire to organize family relationships
- Sense of responsibility to preserve past
- Honor ancestors
- Self-satisfaction, curiosity
- Achieve accuracy in storytelling



Question of the Day

*What do I wish I had learned
back in kindergarten?*

- Where to start
- Norwegian naming systems
- Recording data issues
- Tools of the trade
- Sources of information
- Documentation



WHERE TO START

- Start in the USA
- Focus on older living relatives first
- Then go across to Norway



NORWEGIAN NAMING SYSTEM

- First name
- Patronymic name
- Geographic name
- Surname



Norwegian Naming System

First Name

- First name = baptized name = legal name
- Ancestral lists are sorted by first name
- First names are often named after grandparents
 - Paternal
 - Maternal
- Names of deceased aunts/uncles also popular
- If child dies, next born of same gender given same name



Norwegian Naming System

Patronymic Name

- Name of father followed by "sen" or "datter"
 - Ericson, Helgeson, Helleckson, Johnson, etc
 - Ericsdatter, Johnsdatter, Olsdatter, etc
- "sen" vs "son"
 - "sen" most popular in Norway, Denmark
 - "son" mostly in Finland, Sweden, Iceland
- Often altered later (Americanized)



Norwegian Naming System

Geographic Name

- To distinguish between two Ole Larsons in the same church, they would enter a geographic name after a name in the register, like
 - Ole Larson fra Bergerud
 - Ole Larson fra Eidal
- Geographic name could be farm or place name
- Note that if you moved to a different place, your geographic address name would change



Norwegian Naming System

Surnames

- Immigrants had to register with a surname or last name when they arrived in America
- Surnames often used were:
 - Patronymic name
 - Place name, like farm name
- Sometimes ancestor "borrowed" name
 - Place that a person had worked or associated with
 - Place with a name ancestor simply liked or added prestige
 - Place that added stature to the ancestor
- Farmers moving to city often avoided farm name



Norwegian Naming System

More on Surnames

- In Norway, government didn't start to promote surnames until the late 1800's
- Women were asked to use "son" rather than "datter"
- In 1923, surnames became compulsory in Norway
- In Iceland, the first name still rules



Norwegian Naming System Spellings

- Could easily change over time
- In Norway, there were no pension or assistance programs in jeopardy if you change your name
- Spelling often changed to just to become more American
- People would change spelling if someone "higher" up or more educated spelled it different
- Spelling (or even names) could change to differentiated oneself from relatives they have disagreements with



Norwegian Naming System Examples

- Helge vs Henry
- Gunderson vs Lillemoen
- Lillemoen vs Lillemon
- Hellickson vs Helleckson
- Evavold vs Thamnes
- Snersrud



RECORDING DATA ISSUES

- Places
- Sorting of Names
- Date System
- Norwegian Alphabet



Recording Data Issues Places

- List in order of small to large
 - Farm, parish, county, country
 - City, county, state, country
 - Same for twp, hospital, church cemetery, etc
- Doing so can eliminate need to enter words like city, county, state, parish, etc.
- Refrain from using abbreviations
 - North Dakota, not ND



Recording Data Issues

Sorting of Names

- Software allows for sorting on first name or last name
- If you want to be able to sort on patronymic name, use backslash (\)
 - Ole \Helgeson Brevig\ = Helgeson Brevig, Ole
- Otherwise, if "place name" is not a surname, enter "place name" in "place" box
- Some enter surnames in ALL CAPS



Recording Data Issues

Date Systems

- Day-month-year 07 Jan 11
- Year-month-day (1925/07/27)
- Three letter month (Jan, Feb, Mar)
- Two digit vs four digit year
- Using abt, bef, aft, btw



Recording Data Issues

Norwegian Alphabet

- Norwegian has special letters
 - å, ø, æ
 - Use them for persons before they immigrated
 - On computer, toggle to Norwegian keyboard
 - Still used today
- Note that Internet based on 26 letters
 - å becomes aa



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

- Back of napkins
- Handwritten Notes & Sketches
- Preprinted forms
- Computer
 - Word processing
 - Genealogy software
- Audio tape recorders
- Still camera
- Video camera
- Portable Scanner
- Internet
 - Email
 - Web Sites



SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Face to face interviews
- Family reunions
- Library
- Family Bibles
- Old Photos
- Join a Lag
- Lag books
- Bydeboks
- Genealogy done by others
- Passenger lists
- Church Records
- Obituaries
- Cemeteries
- Death notices
- Social Security Records
- Military records
- Organizations
- Museums
- Internet
- Hiring professional help



Sources of Information

Old Photos



Scan both front and back

If you carry along your own scanner, you can scan and return original to owner immediately





Sources of Information

Accuracy of Data

- Birth/baptism records better than obituary/tombstones for birth dates
- Marriage certificates better than obituaries
- Accuracy, hi to low
 - Civil or government records
 - Church records
 - Family records
 - Family knowledge
 - State or fed census
 - Court records



Sources of Information

Interviewing Issues

- Need to be sensitive and understanding
- Some things they will tell you; other things they will not tell you
- Some things they will be honest about; other things they will bend truth on or even lie about
- Some things they assume you know already so you really have to be inquisitive



Sources of Information Translations

- If an internet site is in Norwegian, copy and paste the link (internet site address)
- Go to www.google.com
- Click on *more*, then *translate*
- Enter From: *Norwegian*, To: *English*
- Paste in your copied internet site
- Click on *Translate*
- It may not be perfect , but it will help



DOCUMENTATION

- Record source of all information
- Backup your data on CD's or flash drives
- Hard copy material? - Duplicate it
- Share, share, share



SUMMARY

- Norwegian naming system is really not that difficult, in fact, when it was consistently applied, it helps you
- In recording data, be consistent
- Assume your work will be passed down over time, so be complete
- Research everything
- Have Fun!



Best Kept Secret in Norwegian Genealogy...

<http://digitalarkivet.uib.no>

*Note: Links to other great Internet sites
are on the Lag Web Sites*



Thanks for your attention

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