

HOW TO BEGIN YOUR GENEALOGY

It is an interesting and fascinating experience to search out your ancestors and see in their lives the heritage and reflections of your past. Working out a family history through eight to twelve generations offers the best review of American history one may undertake. The correct way to gather your genealogy is to begin with yourself and your family.

There is an accepted genealogical style for writing your names and dates on charts. Surnames are written in capitals, followed by the first name, then the middle name. Example: JONES, Robert Lewis. Enclose nicknames in parenthesis. Always use the female's maiden name, never her married name. You will avoid a lot of confusion if you adhere strictly to this rule. Dates are recorded with the day first followed by the month, then the year in full. Example: 3 Mar 1969. Never use numbers to indicate months.

The primary tools for organizing and recording your data are the PEDIGREE CHART and the FAMILY RECORD SHEET. The pedigree chart will show your lineal or direct ancestry only. The family record sheets are for recording the members of the families; husband, wife, children and their biographical material along with references. Genealogy software programs will complete these forms for you as you enter the information into the software database.

However, if you decided to do the work by hand, start with the pedigree chart. Record your full name, date and place of birth, date and place of marriage and to whom. Make sure each item is as complete as possible. Give the city or township as well as the county and state. (Remember that many states have counties and townships with the same names so be sure to record the state!)

There, the first generation is entered. Now, fill out the second generation, recording in the same way all the dates and locations for your parents. With each generation, you will be adding new surnames. Continue with your grandparents, and when you can go no farther from the information on hand, turn to the family record sheets.

Fill out one family record sheet for each family represented on your lineage chart. List all the children in the order of their birth. Give your reference or "proof". Add whatever biographical material you can. You can use the back of the sheet also for facts, family traditions, anecdotes and stories. These will add color and make interesting reading in your family history for future generations. The family record sheet should also be used for aunts, uncles and all those families you have information on but are not in your direct lineage. You may prefer to follow or search an adoptive line with reference made to that fact.

When you can go no farther from the information you have at hand, contact the older members of your family, by personal interview if possible. If you are unable to visit, write. Take notes on everything you are told. You can verify the correctness of it later from the clues they have given you. Three important questions are: 1) Is there another relative searching your family? 2) What family member or friend would have more information than the one you are writing or talking to? 3) Does any branch of the family have a family Bible, newspaper clippings, journals, diaries, scrapbooks or pictures you may want to have reproduced?

Don't neglect these contacts because time is of the essence and those older living kinfolk may give you information that you can not find elsewhere. Be prompt in recording your new data. Keep your notes for clues and reference. When family information seems to run dry, then begin exploring official county records, library collections, archives, historical or genealogical societies and consult one or more of the many good books on genealogy. Throughout your search, don't give up on finding the information, for it is the experience of most genealogists that records do exist somewhere.

Directions for Pedigree Charts

Sometimes called a lineage, ancestral or generation chart, the chart will show one's lineal descent only. For recording members of the family, use a Family Record Sheets, which includes the head of the family, wife, and children of the marriage.

Your first lineage chart is to be numbered 1 at the top. Your name and genealogical data is filled in on the line number 1, and that is your number. Your father is number 2, your mother is number 3. Your father's father is number 4, your father's mother is number 5. Your mother's father is number 6, your mother's mother is number 7, etc. This keeps all of your father's ancestry above the middle of the chart, and your mother's ancestry below the middle.

NOTE: One's own number is always 1. Every father's number is double that of his child, and every wife's number is her husband's number plus 1. All men's names carry even numbers (except when they are number 1), and all women's names carry odd numbers. A woman's married name should NEVER be used on a lineage chart. Always use her maiden name or leave the space open.

To extend beyond the limits of Chart 1, use unnumbered pedigree charts as continuation sheets. Each person in the fourth generation (numbers 8 through 15) will need a sheet on which to continue his or her lineage. Place his/her number on the top as Chart No. __, then place the same number on the line to the farthest left, where number 1 was located on your first chart. Proceed with his/her data, that of the father and mother, etc.

NOTE: Again, every father's number is double that of his child, and every wife's number is that of her husband plus one..

Once you have completed the Pedigree and/or Family Charts, if you have found an ancestor who resided in the Richmond Area and qualifies you for a Certificate, please check out our Ancestral Certificate link for an application.

Richmond Area Historical and Genealogical Society encourages all persons, members and non-members, to submit pedigree charts to us to be placed in our file. All researchers may use the attached Pedigree Chart. Additional or more complete charts may be sent in at any time.

All material submitted will become the property of the Richmond Area Historical and Genealogical Society and may be used in future publications by the Society – both printed and electronic. This does not prohibit you from publishing your own data if you should desire.

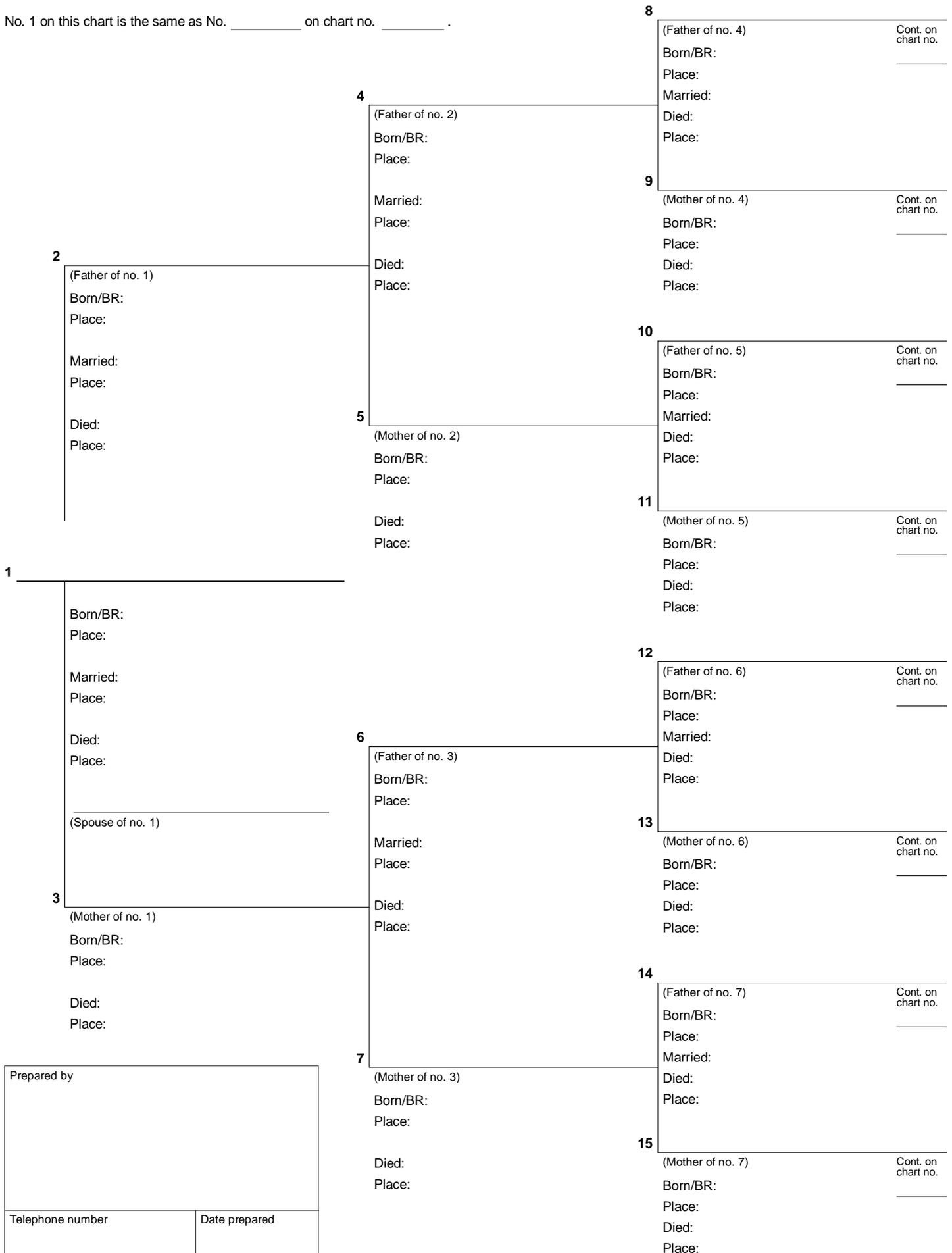
Please send your charts to:

Richmond Area Historical and Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 68
Richmond, Michigan 48062

Pedigree Chart

Chart no. _____

No. 1 on this chart is the same as No. _____ on chart no. _____.



Prepared by	
Telephone number	Date prepared

Family Group Record

Husband Given name(s)		Last name	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
Born	Place		
Christened	Place		
Died	Place		
Buried	Place		
Married	Place		
Husband's father Given name(s)		Last name	
Husband's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name	
Wife Given name(s)		Maiden name	
Born	Place		
Christened	Place		
Died	Place		
Buried	Place		
Wife's father Given name(s)		Last name	
Wife's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name	
Children List each child in order of birth.			
1	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
	Born	Place	
	Christened	Place	
	Died	Place	
	Spouse Given name(s)		Last name
	Married	Place	
2	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
	Born	Place	
	Christened	Place	
	Died	Place	
	Spouse Given name(s)		Last name
	Married	Place	
3	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
	Born	Place	
	Christened	Place	
	Died	Place	
	Spouse Given name(s)		Last name
	Married	Place	
Prepared by		Address	
Phone ()			
Date prepared			

Family Group Record

Husband Given name(s)		Last name	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
Wife Given name(s)		Maiden name	
Children List each child in order of birth.			
4	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
	Born	Place	
	Christened	Place	
	Died	Place	
	Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
	Married	Place	
5	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
	Born	Place	
	Christened	Place	
	Died	Place	
	Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
	Married	Place	
6	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
	Born	Place	
	Christened	Place	
	Died	Place	
	Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
	Married	Place	
7	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
	Born	Place	
	Christened	Place	
	Died	Place	
	Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
	Married	Place	
8	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
	Born	Place	
	Christened	Place	
	Died	Place	
	Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
	Married	Place	
9	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
	Born	Place	
	Christened	Place	
	Died	Place	
	Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
	Married	Place	

Family Group Record

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Husband Given name(s)	Last name	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other Marriages"
Wife Given name(s)	Maiden name	

Other marriages List other marriages and sealings of the husband, wife and children on this form. List any necessary explanations.

Notes and sources of information Add further information on attached sheets as necessary.