

- Track research done for the day and what to do next.

The Electronic Research Log

- Can be created in a table format in a word processing document.
- Using a spreadsheet format allows you to have multiple pages in a single spreadsheet for different generations or family members.
- With a spread sheet, each column can be sorted to view specific searches.
- Keep your research log in your computer files with each ancestor or family.
- The ability to cut and paste information from websites makes it simple to fill out
- Add links to online records to quickly access them again.

The Handwritten Research Log Form

- Download a template from *FamilySearch* or design your own.
- Print several copies to fill out by hand.
- Use in archives where only paper is allowed.
- Keep copies in binders or file folders.

The Online Database *Research Ties*

- Enter a source once, then reuse multiple times.
- Sort information by individual, location, record type.
- Syncs with *FamilySearch*.
- Saves document images.
- Helpful for extracting all surnames from a large database.
- Fee based subscription required.

All research begins with a question. Focus that question by formulating a research objective. Place this objective at the top of the research log to guide your searches.



Set an Objective for the Research Log

- Determine what the research question - identify an ancestor, prove a family relationship or discover ancestor actions.
- Create an objective by using key identifiers of name, birth, residence, marriage, death.

What Categories are used for a Research Log?

- **Date**
 - List the date the search was performed.
 - Some databases are updated periodically and need to be rechecked at a later date.
- **Repository**
 - Record the website, library, archive, or other physical location that holds the source.
 - The repository could be your own files if it is an inherited letter or document.
- **URL/Call#/Microfilm#**
 - In this column copy and paste the URL from the website.
 - Because some URL's can be long, use the [Bitly website](https://bitly.com) to create much shorter links for your research logs.(https://bitly.com)

- If researching at a library or archive, record the unique call number or microfilm number.
- **Searching for**
 - List the specific search – record type, name, date if applicable.
 - Sort the data by this column to organize the research log by record type.
- **Locality**
 - List the specific location: city, county, state, or country.
 - Sort the data by this column to organize the research log by locality.
- **Source Citation**
 - Create a source citation the first time the source is viewed. Use five questions add all of the details about the source.
 - *Who* created the source? This is often a government or religious entity.
 - *What* is the source? The 1830 census, a marriage record, etc.
 - *When* was the source created or when did the event occur?
 - *Where within* is the source located? Note the page number, image number or certificate number.
 - *Where in the world* is the source? Identify the publisher’s location, the URL or location of the document if unpublished.
 - If the search is negative, there won’t be any specifics of an event to list, so just name the database, where it is located and the date it was checked.
- **Results/Comments**
 - If nothing was found use NIL which is short for “not in location.”
 - Add comments about why it might not have been there.
 - If a record was located, detail all of the information.
 - Copy names exactly as they appear in the record.
 - Use the copy and paste function to add information from a website abstract.
 - For lengthy documents such as a will or deed, abstract the information or add a link to a full transcription on a Google doc.

Additional Resources

1. Elder, Diana and Nicole Dyer. *Research Like a Pro: A Genealogist’s Guide*. FamilyLocket Genealogists. 2018.
2. Elder, Diana and Nicole Dyer. “Research Like a Pro: A Genealogist’s Guide - Templates.” *FamilyLocket*. <http://familylocket.com/rlp/>
3. Elder, Diana. “Source Citations: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.” *Family Locket*. <http://familylocket.com/source-citations-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/>.
4. Elder, Diana. “Research Logs: The Key to Organizing Your Family History.” *Family Locket*. <http://familylocket.com/research-logs-the-key-to-organizing-your-family-history/>
5. “Research Logs.” *FamilySearch Wiki*. https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Research_Logs
6. *Research Ties*. <http://researchties.com/>

Sample Research Log

DATE	REPOSITORY URL, Call # Film #	SEARCHING FOR	LOCALITY	SOURCE CITATION	RESULTS
7 Jun 2017	<i>Ancestry</i> http://ancestry.me/2rVSNGJ	1820 Census George W. Dillard	Georgia, Greene County	1820 U.S. Census, Greene County, Georgia, Capt E Woodhams District, population schedule, p. 202, line 2, George W. Dillard household; digital image, Ancestry (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 7 June 2017); citing NARA microfilm publication M33, roll 8.	Free White Persons Males 0/10 2 Males 10/15 1 Males 16/25 1 Males 26/44 1 Females 0/10 1 Females 0/15 1 Females 26/ 44 1
11 Feb 2018	<i>General Land Office Records</i> http://bit.ly/2HhYW5R	Land Patents for George W. Dillard	Alabama, Chambers County	George W Dillard,(Chambers County, Alabama), 1837, cash entry patents no. 3733, 3768, 3770, 3771, "Land Patent Search," images, General Land Office Records (www.glorerecords.blm.gov : accessed 17 March 2018).	State Volume Patents, dated 10 April 1837, St Stephens Meridian, Section 29, Chambers County, Alabama: # 3733, 3768, 3770, 3771.
7 Jun 2017	<i>FamilySearch</i> https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GPP6-94XQ	Marriage record for George W Dillard and Margaret Armour	Georgia, Greene County	Greene County, Georgia, "Marriage Licenses 1786 To 1810," p. 9, Dallard-Armour marriage, 9 November 1801; "Georgia, County Marriages, 1785-1950," image 21 of 659, <i>FamilySearch</i> (https://familysearch.org : accessed 7 June 2017); citing "Marriage Records 1786-1849," FHL microfilm # 159,052.	Nov. 9th 1801 George W. Dallard to Peggy Armour; self & Nicholson [vouchers]
19 Jun 2017	Family History Library Salt Lake City, UT 978.8473/C1 B3k v.1	Newspaper mention of George W. Dillard	Georgia, Muscogee County	Elizabeth Evans Kilbourne, <i>Columbus, Georgia, Newspaper Clippings (Columbus Enquirer Volume I, 1832-1834)</i> , (Savannah, Georgia: E. Evans Kilbourne, 1997-2009), 4.	Saturday, March 26, 1831: "Candidates for Office: We are authorized to announce George W. Dillard as a candidate for Clerk of the superior Court of the county of Muscogee. . ."