

Find the Missing People in Your Family Tree

Use Descendancy Tools to Shake the Branches

Descendancy research is the process of identifying all of the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of an ancestral couple. Use descendancy research to expand the family, identify new names, and even connect with cousins.

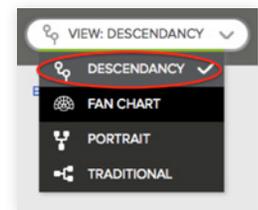
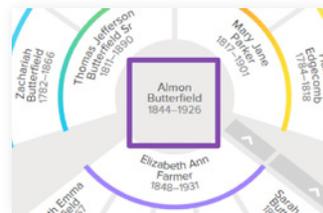
Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Start with your record on your family tree at FamilySearch.org. Go back at least four or five generations, and choose one of your great-great-grandparents.

- Find someone who was alive during the 1830–1880 time period.
- If possible, choose someone with an unusual name, such as Russell (instead of John) or McGraw (instead of Smith).
- Men are in more records than women, so first search for a man.



2. Move the ancestor's name to the home position on the tree by clicking their name, then TREE on the Person card. On the fan chart, when the cursor is in a name box, a little white fan chart will appear in a grey area. Click this to move the person into the home position.



3. Click the **down arrow** next to “View: Fan Chart,” and choose **Descendancy**.

4. Review at the descendants of your ancestor, looking for record hints on the right.



The blue icon means that the system has research suggestions for information about family members.



The green icon identifies missing temple ordinances.



The red icon warns of data problems.



The brown icon suggests that records may be available for a person.

5. Look for a brown icon and a blue icon together. These icons mean there are probably records for the person and possibly missing family members to add.

Tip: Review the spouses and their children, and identify one with:

- Few or no children.
- Large gaps between children (3 or more years).
- No spouse.
- Individuals with no death date.

Any of these may indicate that information is missing from your family tree.

6. Click the name of the person to see the person card, then click person at the bottom of the card to go to the person page.
7. On the right side of the person page, click **Search Records** to find the person in one or more records. (See information below on searching records.)
8. Use Find to search the Family Tree before adding new individuals.
9. Compare the information from the new record to the information already in Family Tree.
10. Before adding new individuals, use Find to see if they are already in the Family Tree.
11. If the information is accurate, attach the record, and add any missing family members to Family Tree. When prompted, explain why the record should be connected to this family.
12. Repeat these steps for each of the children in the family.
13. Reserve the ordinances for the newly added family members.

Using Search Records to Find Additional Records

1. Click the Search Records link on the right side of the person page.
2. Review the list of results, and locate the family you are researching in a record.
3. To review the summary, click the name (in blue) of your ancestor in the list of results.
4. Click View Image to see the scanned image of the record.
 - You can use the controls on the page to pan and zoom the image.
5. Return to steps 11-13 above.



Tip: Identify and verify new information using other sources, such as:

- Birth, marriage, and death records (also known as vital records).
- Church records.
- Cemetery or gravestone collections.