

Finding/Adding People in Family Tree

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I found someone who is missing! Now what do I do?

When you find someone who is missing from the tree it is important to know that they might be in the tree and just not attached to the family members you are looking at. Before you add someone to the tree, be sure to search the tree carefully for that person. (Note: searching the tree is not the same as searching records.)

A good search will take a few steps. Search the tree using these different combinations of info:

1. Full name, birth year, birth place, father's name, mother's name, spouse's name.
2. Full name, birth year, birth place.
3. Full name, father's name, mother's name.
4. Full name, spouse's name.
5. Nickname, spouse's name or nickname.
6. Full name as spelled on marriage record, spouse's name as spelled on marriage record.
7. Full name as spelled on birth record, father's name, mother's name (that's right, as spelled on that record).
8. Full name as spelled on death record.
9. Take each record you find for the person and search the tree based on each record separately. Use the spellings, dates, places and people on each record.

Some people will be in the tree MANY times – alone, with their spouse, with their spouse and a child, with their parents, and some will have multiple entries in some of these variations. These multiple records should be carefully compared and if they are the same person they should be merged together until there is only one instance of that person in the tree. It is important to note that sometimes a person who is in the tree many times may still be missing ordinance work. Once you find a person in the tree, you can attach them to their family in a few steps.

It is also important to note that people exist in the tree for basically two reasons. 1 – Someone created them based on information from a record or set of records. 2 – FamilySearch created them based on an extracted record – one record with limited information. Each of these two instances can generate duplicates of the same person.

For the first circumstance, one researcher may find only one census record with limited information. They use that census to put a family into the tree. That record may have misspellings and the birth dates and places are likely close but not perfect. This researcher may find no other records and stops there. Another researcher may research the exact same family, identify many records and enter the entire family into the tree with more specific details. Details that are different enough that the two records don't show up in possible duplicates.

In the second instance, FamilySearch may extract an entire set of parish records. One family may have five children born in that parish. Each child is put into the tree by FS with their parents. These entries are independent of each other. This means the parents each have five separate records with only one child attached to each instance of themselves.

Now take both of these examples and mix them together and you can potentially find one person in the tree **MANY** times. Frequently, possible duplicates does not find them for you. It takes just a few minutes of detective work on your part to find them and clean them up.

I have searched the tree carefully and my person really isn't there. What do I need to know to add a person to the tree?

In order to add a person to the tree you need to know **their name, gender, one date, and one place.**

Ideally you will continue researching that person until you know:

1. Full name
2. Birth date and place
3. Death date and place
4. Parent's names
5. Spouse
6. Marriage date and place
7. Children
8. Siblings

Always check a person's possible duplicates before printing an ordinance request form.

Remember – green arrows should be treated as caution signs not green lights. Go ahead and reserve the ordinance work for that person. Then research the person more fully and search the tree carefully for duplicates. Resolve duplicates, source the person. Once you are satisfied that the ordinances are needed, print them and go to the Temple. A little bit of time preparing will ensure that you are completing needed ordinances and that you have a more personal connection to the person. You can't help but get to know them when you spend a little time researching them!

If you need help with these steps, talk to a Family History Consultant.