



# CLIENT REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

*This information sheet is intended to help you to provide us with the best quality of information to support your family history research.*

## GENERAL NOTES

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Family History Research is not an exact science and most families have stories and information about earlier generations that are fanciful or even wrong. We cut through the myths and use documentary evidence from a wide variety of sources to prove your lineage in so far as this is possible. This checklist will help you to decide what information will help us in our research.

Please be aware that documentary evidence often becomes sparser, more inaccurate and more illegible the further back in time we go. We are experienced in finding, transcribing and interpreting these documents but sometimes research will not provide a definitive answer. Occasionally we will make educated guesses and where we do, we will tell you so.

Not all our avenues of research are fruitful and we may spend considerable time eliminating possibilities as well as confirming them. Although we are based in the United Kingdom (UK), we will conduct research overseas using online resources and in partnership with local researchers with whom we have developed links.

## YOUR REQUIREMENTS

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If you haven't already realised, you have a lot of ancestors. For every generation you go back, the number of direct ancestors doubles. For this reason, it's best to conduct family history research in a focused and systematic manner. Start by selecting your maternal or paternal lineage and then decide which generation you wish to begin with. The choice is yours, however we will need sufficient information about this initial individual to identify them definitively.

In order to confirm the identity of your selected individual in the documentary archives, we will need some information from you as a minimum. If the surname is common, we may need more information in order to provide a definitive result. The most important and accurate documentary evidence is usually the birth, death and marriage certificates. We will usually begin by obtaining one or more of these certificates. To identify your selected individual in the documentary archives, we need some or all of the following information in priority order:

- Their full name including middle names and maiden name if applicable
- Their date or year of birth and their place of birth
- The full names of any or all spouses with marriage dates and places
- Their date and place of death if deceased
- Their occupation(s)
- The full name of their parents (and any other identifying information)
- The occupation of their father
- The full names of siblings if known (and any other identifying information)
- The full names of children (and any other identifying information)
- Any other relevant information

Please tell us if the family member you wish to begin with is alive. It is often a good idea to speak with older relatives or siblings to find out some of this information. If you are not sure of the accuracy of any or all of the information, please tell us. Equally if some of the information comes from existing certificates, please tell us. When you have gathered this information, email it to *The Time Detective* with a clear description of the research you'd like us to undertake.