

CLASS 2 HANDOUT - Timelines

Additional Timeline info excerpted from:

<https://familyhistorydaily.com/genealogy-help-and-how-to-/ancestor-timeline/> by Amanda Sullivan; accessed July 12, 2021

Timelines are a uniquely important research tool. When done correctly, they can aid us in sorting out the “where,” “when,” and “why,” of our ancestor’s lives – shedding new light on the important events of those who came before us. They can help us identify holes and inconsistencies, making new possibilities for research visible for the first time.

Often, when we research, we stumble around adding new facts and records as we find them. We get so caught up in the details that we often forget to look at the big picture. But a timeline allows us to step back and see our work with new eyes.

If you’ve been struggling to piece together an ancestor’s life, or are facing an unsolved mystery in your tree, creating a timeline should be next on your list of things to do. Even if you’re not, timelines will almost always help you build a deeper understanding of any person or branch in your research.

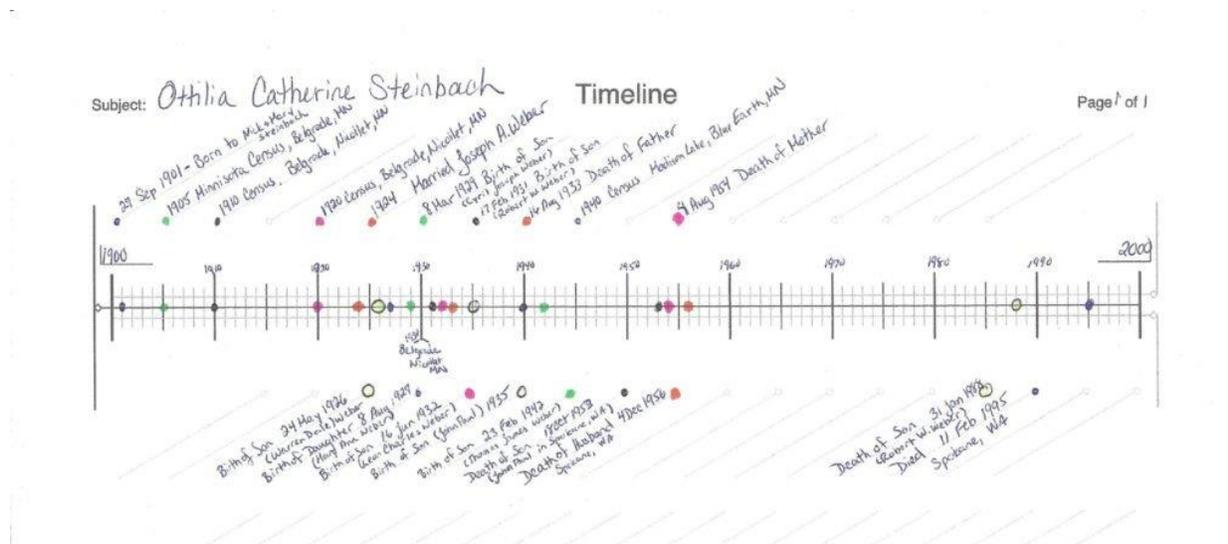
What’s the best kind of timeline to make for your ancestor? It’s up to you, let’s look at some options.

There are two types of handwritten timelines – the first is a list of events from beginning to end and the second is literally a line with the years evenly spaced across it. For the second variety, each event is then placed on the line when it happened. You can find templates for each kind on the internet or you can do it by hand.

Blank Time Line for My Ancestor

MY ANCESTOR Time Line for My Ancestor:	
Othilia Catherine Steinbach (name)	
Date	Information About My Ancestor
27 Sep 1901	Born to Nicholas & Mary Steinbach in Belgrade Twp, MN. (Twin)
June 1905	Minnesota census Belgrade, Nicollet, MN w/parents & 6 sibs
1910	US Federal Census Belgrade, Nicollet, MN w/parents & 7 sibs
9 Jan 1920	US Federal Census Belgrade, Nicollet, MN w/parents & 5 sibs
1924	Marriage to Joseph Alfred Weber
24 May 1926	Birth of son Warren Dale Weber
8 Aug 1927	Birth of daughter Mary Ann Weber
8 Mar 1929	Birth of son Cyril Joseph "Cy" Weber
5 April 1930	US Federal Census Belgrade, Nicollet, MN w/ husband & 3 kids
17 Feb 1931	Birth of son Robert W. Weber
16 Jun 1932	Birth of son Leon Charles Weber
16 Aug 1933	Death of father Nicholas J. Steinbach
c. 1934	Birth of son John Paul "Jack" Weber
24 Dec 1935	Birth of son Joseph Thomas Weber
17 Dec 1938	Birth & Death of newborn son
2 Apr 1940	US Federal Census St Peter State Hospital, MN Registered Nurse
8 Apr 1940	US Federal Census Madison Lake, Blue Earth, MN w/ husband & 2 kids
33 Feb 1942	Birth of son Thomas James Weber
18 Oct 1953	Death of son John Paul "Jack" Weber, Spokane, WA
4 Aug 1954	Death of Mother Mary (Heil) Steinbach
4 Dec 1956	Death of husband Joseph Alfred Weber, Spokane, WA
31 Jan 1988	Death of son Robert W. Weber
11 Feb 1995	Died, Spokane, WA

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You could also consider using a spreadsheet for creating your timeline, which can be very helpful with its many rows and columns. I suggest starting your spreadsheet with three columns, one for each of: the date, what happened, the source of information.

Date	Event	Source(s)	notes
c. 15 May 1884	Born to Joseph and Bridget McGrane	Charlotte Darragh death certificate	notes
1892	New York State Census	Long Island City, 02, 02	
1905	New York State Census	Manhattan, A.D. 22, E.D. 03	
c. 1905	Marriage to John Peter Darragh		
11-Nov-05	Birth of daughter	Edna Mae Darragh birth certificate	
23-Mar-07	Birth and death of son	Thomas Joseph Darragh death certificate, Thomas Joseph Darragh birth certificate	
21-May-08	Birth of son	John Peter Darragh birth certificate	John Peter is the father. Names got reversed.

Once your timeline(s) is in place ask yourself these 10 questions:

1. What facts am I missing?
2. What details (dates, locations etc) are missing from specific facts?
3. Are any facts missing sources, or are the sources weak? Can I add new records?
4. Are there inconsistencies?
5. Is there more information on the sources I do have than I have recorded in my tree? Should I add them?
6. Are there big gaps in my ancestor's life? What records might fill them?
7. Were there big external events that influenced his/her life that may have produced records?
8. How do the timelines of his/her relations fit in?
9. Did my ancestor always live in the same location? If not, where did they move to? Can I [create a date-based map of their travels](#) to help me find new records?
10. What can I [learn about the locations](#) in each event?

For even more help with timelines for genealogy take the online [Genealogy Research Course](#) from Family History Daily. It includes in-depth help for using timelines to solve family mysteries.