

Genealogy Rocks!

Tips for Writing Better Genealogy Letters

Although many beginner genealogists think everything is readily available online to trace their ancestors, it really isn't. Every family historian will find that he/she needs to write letters to courthouses, local genealogical/historical societies, libraries and other researchers. Since the advent of the Internet, many of these letters will be sent via email rather than the U.S. Post Office. Either way, the better the chance for a positive response.

First, remember that the person who receives your query has other things to do besides read your letter. He/she may receive multiple research requests each day; this means you need to keep your letters short and to the point! All they care about is the name of the record you are requesting and the



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names and dates of the parties involved. It's also best to request only one or at most two records at a time. If you have a lot of family in a particular area, you can always write again after you have received the first information.

Next, use complete sentences; don't write "i" for "I", and do punctuate and paragraph your letters appropriately. Take a few minutes to proofread your letter. Finally, be sure to thank the researcher for any help and offer to pay as requested. With snail mail, it's a good idea to include a SASE envelope.

❖ *Carol Stetser is the society researcher for Larimer County Genealogical Society and a regional speaker. Be sure to watch the popular NBC-TV genealogy program, *Who Do You Think You Are?* on Friday nights. Our next society program is *DNA and Your Genealogy* on March 17 at 6:30 pm in the Harmony Library community room in Fort Collins. For more events, please visit our society website at www.lcgsc.org or our Facebook page at www.Facebook.com/lcgsc.*