

## **GENEALOGY RESEARCH HINTS**

Courtesy of the Canadian Society of Mayflower Descendants

### ***Research Tips***

#### **1. CITE AND COPY YOUR SOURCES!!!!**

Whenever you find that elusive piece of data, whether you open a book, look up a record in a record office, or look at a reel of microfilm - PHOTO-COPY IT!! [When copying data from a book or microfilm, always include the title page.] How many of us have just hand copied data onto a piece of paper - without noting the source - years later wondering where the information came from? How many of us - years later - have suddenly decided how nice it would be to have a copy of the full record - just to find out the records have since been sealed, or the town hall burned down destroying all record of our ancestors? Do not transcribe the census record by hand - PHOTO-COPY IT!! Not only will you pat yourself on the back years later, but these copies of original records can be used to help document your Mayflower line - handwritten transcripts cannot.

#### **2. LONG FORM NOT SHORT FORM!!!!**

Vital record offices charge an arm and a leg for birth, marriage & death certificates. Before you spend your hard earned money make sure you know which kind of form you are paying for. Case in point: Great-Grandma died in Sydney, N.S. 10 June 1958. You send your \$25 to obtain a death certificate - praying that her parents will be named because you can't find her birth record. Your \$25 gets you a piece of paper with: "Great-Grandma died in Sydney, N.S., 10 June 1958". If you had specified that you required a long form death record, you might have received a record which also named her parents. Always ask for the long form for genealogical purposes - you never know what extra "goodies" will be on it!

#### **3. DATA IS ONLY AS GOOD AS ITS SOURCE**

Don't believe everything you read. Consider where the data came from. If Aunt Mary sends you ten generations of your family tree, with no documentation or sources, don't smile smugly and assume your family tree is now complete. Set out to find the sources yourself so that you will know for sure that each branch does indeed belong on your tree. The same applies to the "information highway" - the internet. Sites on family research are springing up at an amazing pace, but don't assume just because it has been printed on the net that the information is infallible. Undocumented data can be a great starting point - but don't invite it into your family until you've proved it.