

# Evidence

by Terry Mason

**Goal:** Each family will assure the accuracy of information for their direct line ancestors and their descendants in the Family Search - Family Tree database using at least one adequate source document.

The 128th section of the Doctrine & Covenants indicates we are preparing "a record of our dead, which shall be worthy of all acceptance." On June 16, 1995 the First Presidency wrote a letter to all members of the Church stating, "members should be diligent in assuring the accuracy of all information submitted."

Family History Centers are research facilities designed to help Church members to adequately document their family history records with at least one good documentation source.

It is not enough that members register in the Family Search - Family Tree program. Nor is it enough to encourage members to limit their efforts to combining and cleaning up the duplicate entries in the Family Tree database.

Efforts need to focus on **VALIDATING** the data in the Family Tree database. Besides the very effective way that the Family Tree program clears names for temple work, **COLLABORATION** of researched information will be one of the strongest features of Family Tree.

Most of the data in Family Tree is junk genealogy, so called because there is no documentation. It is not acceptable to just cite "personal family records". Looking at most of the source information in the Family Tree database, it would seem there is no reliable documentation for anything other than the temple ordinances. Even references in the FamilySearch Extraction data do not list the title of the source from which information was extracted.

If we have "good" source documentation in our personal records, then we will be prepared to synchronize our records with the Family Tree database when the department is ready for that information. Soon all the notes and sources will make the records worthy of acceptance.

What is the difference between family folklore and fact? Evidence! Documentation!

When this principle has been successfully taught, members and patrons will understand the purpose for Family History centers. The Family Tree database provides a place to post the results of good research.