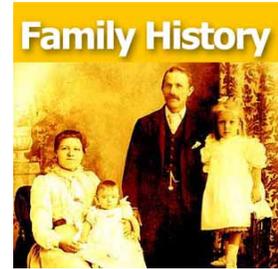


# Family History: Genealogy Made Easy

with Lisa Louise Cooke

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Welcome to this step-by-step series for beginning genealogists—and more experienced ones who want to brush up or learn something new. I first ran this series in 2008-09. So many people have asked about it, I'm bringing it back in weekly segments.

## Episode 38: How to Start a Genealogy Blog, Part 1

Have you ever thought about starting your own genealogy blog? Or, if you have, have you wished you could get some expert tips on making it better? In these next few episodes, we're going to talk about sharing your research and/or your thoughts on the research process by blogging. But even if you don't plan on starting a blog anytime soon, I know you will enjoy the Footnote Maven's passion for genealogy, sense of humor, and words of wisdom.

I've invited a seasoned genealogy blogger to start us off. I caught up with the Footnote Maven at the Southern California Genealogy Jamboree. She has been blogging for quite some time now and has much to share on the subject. Her two very popular blogs, [FootnoteMaven](http://www.footnotemaven.com) ([www.footnotemaven.com](http://www.footnotemaven.com)) and [Shades of the Departed](http://www.shadesofthedeparted.com) ([www.shadesofthedeparted.com](http://www.shadesofthedeparted.com)), are widely read by genealogists everywhere. In this episode, she shares specific tips for getting started, how she prepares her blog posts, what she would have done differently if she could start all over again, and 9 tips for getting readers to leave comments.

But first, a Mailbox moment:



A reader writes in to comment on Episode #36 and questions regarding Family Tree Maker and Ancestry.com. He sends this link, <http://ftmuser.blogspot.com/2008/10/census-search-for-females.html>, which shows how to use both websites to search for a female who has married. As you suggested, entering the Birth Name in the database, but how to locate that person using Family Tree Maker's Web Search feature at Ancestry.com. This specific example is for a census record, but other records can also be found using this same technique.

## Family History Blogging with the Footnote Maven

According to her website, a footnote maven is someone who is dazzlingly skilled at inserting a citation denoting a source, a note of reference, or a comment at the foot of a scholarly writing.

Footnote Maven's thoughts on getting started with your own genealogy blog: Go look at several genealogy blogs. What do you like? What do not like? Design wise and content wise. Ask yourself what kind of blog you want to write. Who is your audience? What will you offer them?

Biggest piece of advice: You don't want to be someone else – be yourself! Everybody else is already taken! “There is something wonderful in all of us – we just have to determine what that is and showcase it.” Pick your niche and stay there. And love doing it, because you'll never get rich at it! She says, “It is the breath I take...It's the reason I get up in the morning.”

What She Would Do Differently If She Could Have:

- 25 posts in draft ready to go allowing more editing time
- I would tinker more with the look of my blog until it was the way I wanted
- Invite a few friends to test drive it

And she'll tell you what was even harder for her than starting her first blog!

Now that the genealogy blogging community is established, people don't comment as frequently. Footnote Maven shares these for getting comments on your blog:

1. Thank people for the comments they leave on your blog
2. Go to their blog and read it
3. Tell the blogger the positive points in what they are doing
4. Host a “Carnival” on your blog
5. Post “off the wall” stuff once in a while
6. Have good, creative titles for your posts – something that's going to spark the interest
7. Use a word in your title that folks haven't heard before to catch attention
8. Tag your posts and images
9. Include “keywords” such as “genealogy.”