



Abbreviations and Acronyms Used in Genealogy

Many abbreviations and acronyms are used during genealogy research. Here are some of the more commonly used acronyms and abbreviations:

Abt About or Circa; a guessed date, e.g., "Abt 1745"

AF Ancestral File: Ancestral File is a collection of over 35 million names linked into family groups and pedigrees. The records include information voluntarily contributed to familysearch.org by patrons from 1978 to 1991.

Aft After. The date is known to be later than a specified date, e.g., "Aft 1900".

bap. Baptized

Bef Before. The date is known to be before the specified date, e.g. "Bef 1930".

BMD Births, Marriages, and Deaths; sometimes written BDM.

Cal Calculated. The date was calculated from a source. If you can only calculate, for example, a birth/marriage date based upon a census or the birth date based upon the death date, e.g. "Cal 1854."

CFI Computer File Index, later known as the International Genealogical Index (IGI).

chr Christened

c / ca Circa. Approximately (ex. "ca 1535" means "in about 1535")

CNBL Cannot Be Located

DAR Daughters of the American Revolution: Lineage society for female descendants of soldiers who fought in the Revolutionary War. The DAR Library in Washington, D.C. houses significant genealogical collections and is open to the public.

DOB / DOD Date of Birth / Date of Death

EKA Earliest known ancestor.

Est Estimated. The date was estimated based on family stories / traditions / standard genealogical estimations, e.g., "Est 1848". Standard genealogical standards include: man marrying at 25, woman marrying at 21, first child one year after marriage, and subsequent children every two years. For example, marriage in 1825, would give the

husband's birth "Est 1800", wife's birth "Est 1804", first child's birth "Est 1826", second child's birth "Est 1828", etc.

FGS Federation of Genealogical Societies

GEDCOM GENEalogical Data COMMunications (industry standard file format used by genealogy software programs to transfer data)

IAJGS International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies

ill. Illegitimate (often recorded on birth certificates and other birth records)

inst. Instant. Present or current month; e.g., "He departed this life on the 25th inst., after a long illness..."

IGI International Genealogical Index

JGS Jewish Genealogical Society (see IAJGS)

LOC Library of Congress; Research arm of the United States Congress. Digital collections include historic newspapers, photographs, family genealogies, biographies and other items of interest to family history researchers.

NARA National Archives Records Administration; repository of official US government records including census, military, immigration, and other documents of interest to family history researchers.

NEHGS New England Historic Genealogical Society

NGS National Genealogical Society; provides education and training in genealogical research methods and works to promote access to and preservation of genealogical records.

PERSI The PERiodical Source Index maintained by the Allen County Public Library of genealogical and local history periodicals, listed by source. PERSI's objective is to compile a complete subject index of all such periodicals, past and present, over time.

PAF Personal Ancestral File: freeware genealogy software previously provided by FamilySearch; discontinued July 15, 2013.

PRF Pedigree Resource File: lineage-linked family information submitted by patrons to FamilySearch.

PRO Public Records Office: The National Archives is the repository for official public records (birth, marriage, death, census, etc.) for the United Kingdom.

SSDI Social Security Death Index; master file of US death records reported to the Social Security Administration, available for free online through Social Security Death Index, ssdi.rootsweb.ancestry.com, genealogybank.com, and other websites.