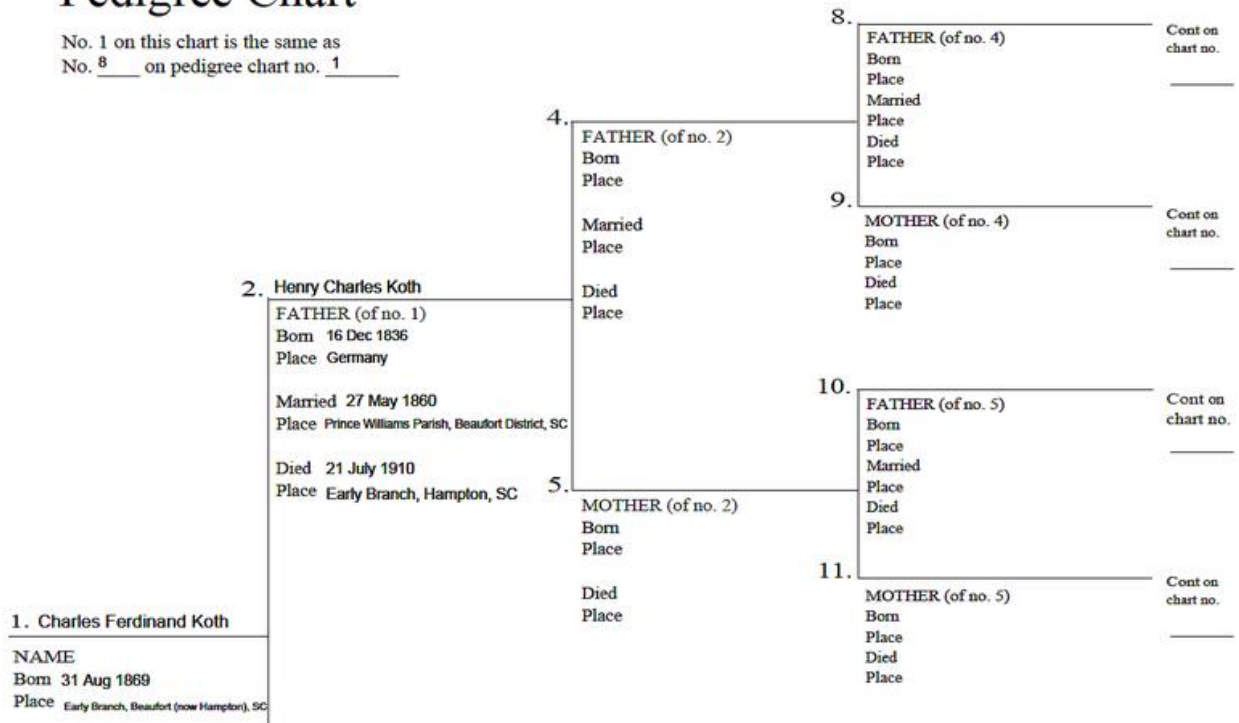


How to Build Your Family Tree Using the Pedigree Chart

Pedigree Chart

No. 1 on this chart is the same as
No. 8 on pedigree chart no. 1

Chart no. 2



A pedigree chart holds the "skeleton" information of a family tree—the names, places and vital events for direct line ancestors.

The two most basic forms used by genealogists to record ancestral information are the **pedigree chart** and the **family group sheet**. They help you keep track of what you find on your family in a standard, easy-to-read format - recognized by genealogists around the world. Even if you use your computer to enter information, almost all genealogy software programs will print out or display the information in these standard formats.

Pedigree Chart

The chart most people begin with is a *pedigree chart*. This chart begins with you and branches back in time, displaying the line of your direct ancestors. Most pedigree charts cover four generations, including space to include names plus dates and places of birth, marriage and death for each individual. Larger pedigree charts, sometimes referred to as ancestral charts, are also available with room for more generations, but these are used less often as they generally are larger than the standard 8 1/2 x 11" format.

The standard pedigree chart always begins with you, or the individual whose ancestry you are tracing, on the first line - number 1 on the chart. Information on your father (or ancestor #1's father) is entered as number 2 on the chart, while your mother is number 3. The male line follows the upper track, while the female line follows the bottom track. As in an *ahnentafel chart*, men are assigned even numbers, and the numbers for women are odd.

After you've traced your family tree back more than 4 generations, you will need to create additional pedigree charts for each of the individuals included in the fourth generation on your first chart. Each individual will become ancestor #1 on a new chart, with a reference to their number on the original chart so you can easily follow the family through the generations.

Each new chart you create will also be given its own individual number (chart #2, chart #3, etc.).

For example, your father's father's father (great grandfather) will be ancestor #8 on the original chart. As you follow his particular family line further back in history, you will need to create a new chart (chart #2), listing him in the #1 position. To make it easy to follow the family from chart to chart you record the numbers of the continuation charts next to each individual in the fourth generation on your original chart. On each new chart you will also include a note referring back to the original chart (Person #1 on this chart is the same as Person # ___ on Chart # ___).

Written by Kimberly Powell, Updated March 03, 2017