

MAJOR GENEALOGICAL RECORD SOURCES
IN ICELAND

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In identifying ancestors, genealogical researchers need the answers to four key questions regarding record sources:

1. What types of records exist that will aid in the identification of ancestors?
2. What periods of time do the existing records cover?
3. What genealogical information appears in the existing records?
4. What is the availability of existing records for searching?

The chart and table that follow contain answers to the above questions for the major genealogical record sources of Iceland. The major sources are listed, together with type of record, period covered, type of information given, and source availability.

Table A shows at a glance the record sources available for a research problem in a particular century.

Table B provides more detailed information about the major records available. For example, if a pedigree problem is in the 17th century, a quick indication can be obtained from Table A of the sources available for that period. Reference to Table B will then provide more complete information.

AID TO GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH IN ICELAND

TABLE A

MAJOR SOURCE AVAILABILITY BY CENTURY

[illegible]

AID TO GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH IN ICELAND

TABLE B

MAJOR SOURCES CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED

TYPE OF RECORD	PERIOD COVERED	TYPE OF INFORMATION GIVEN	AVAILABILITY
1. REGISTER OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (<i>Althingismannatal</i>)	1845-1945	Names of members, dates and places of birth, education, appointments, occupations, residence, dates of marriage and names of spouses; names of parents and their dates of death	National Archives, Reykjavik; on film (GS)
2. LUTHERAN CONFIRMATION RECORDS (<i>Fermingarskyrslur</i>)	1831 to present	Names of persons confirmed, ages, residence, date of confirmation; in later years, date of birth	1831-1958, National Archives; 1958 to present, local parish custody; 1831-1951, on film (GS)
3. ORPHAN'S COURT RECORDS (<i>Yfirfjarrada-bækur</i>)	1808 to present	Names of orphans and guardians, sometimes names of parents; ages or dates of birth for orphans, residence, relationships	1808-approx 1937, National Archives; 1937 to present, local court custody; 1808-1916 on film (GS)
4. MORTGAGE RECORDS (<i>Vedmála-bækur</i>)	1790 to present	Information regarding real estate conveyances, mortgages, agreements, contracts, etc., which sometimes contain such genealogical data as names of persons, residences, and relationships	1790-approx 1900, National Archives; 1900-present, local sheriff's offices; 1790-1907, on film (GS)
5. LUTHERAN CHURCH CENSUS (<i>Salnaregistur</i> or <i>Soknar-mannatöl</i>)	Earliest 1748; generally from approx 1800 to present	Names of parishioners listed in family units, also names of lodgers and domestic servants; relationships, ages, occupations, religious knowledge, personal circumstances	National Archives and local parish custody; 1748-1948 on film (GS)

Continued

TYPE OF RECORD	PERIOD COVERED	TYPE OF INFORMATION GIVEN	AVAILABILITY
6. PROBATE RECORDS (<i>Skiptabækur</i>)	1717 to present	Names of the deceased, heirs, guardians, ages, relationships, places of residence; inventory, valuation, and division of real estate and property	1717-approx 1937, National Archives; 1937-present, local court custody; 1717-1918, on film (GS)
7. CIVIL CENSUS RECORDS (<i>Mannatal</i>)	1703 1729	Names of all inhabitants of Iceland, ages, relationship (if any) to head of household, residences, occupations NOTE. 1729 census for 3 counties only, i.e., Arnessysla, Hnappadalssysla, and Rangarval-lasysla	On film and in print (GS); National Archives Indexed by name of each person
	1762	Names of heads of household only, ages, occupations, residences; wife and children, servants, lodgers, hired help, etc., indicated in various columns by number only	On film (GS); National Archives
	1801 1835 1840	Names of all inhabitants of Iceland, ages relationships, residences, occupations, marital status	On film (GS); National Archives 1801 census indexed by names of married persons, widows and widowers
	1845	Same as above, except place of birth is shown and information is requested about each person's physical and mental condition	On film (GS); National Archives
	1850 1855	Same as above, except beginning with 1855 a more detailed account is requested about each person's physical and mental condition, such as blind, deaf and dumb, etc.	On film (GS); National Archives
	1860 1870 1880 1890	Same as above, except beginning with 1860 each person's religion is shown; beginning with 1880 their sex is given	On film (GS); National Archives
	1901	Same as the preceding, with additional information, i.e., year of marriage, number of children born (whether living or dead including stillbirths), if previously married and year of death of former spouse; year of arrival to parish and former place of residence NOTE. Persons absent at time census was taken are enumerated in special section with same information given as shown above, which includes present place of residence	On film (GS); National Archives
	1910, 1920, 1930, 1940, 1950	Similar to previous censuses with more detailed information	National Archives
	1960	Similar to previous censuses with more detailed information	Statistical Bureau of Iceland, Reykjavik
		NOTE. There are miscellaneous censuses that were taken from 1649 on a parish basis by individual ministers	
8. SHERIFF'S TAX REGISTER (<i>Mannatals-bækur</i>)	1696-1805	Names of persons paying taxes, residences, amount of tax paid	National Archives; on film (GS)
9. LUTHERAN PARISH REGISTERS (<i>Ministerial-bækur</i>)	Earliest 1664; generally from about 1780 to present	<i>Births:</i> names of persons born and christened, dates of birth and christening, names of parents, father's occupation and residence; names of witnesses at christening and their residence <i>Marriages:</i> names of candidates, their ages and places of residence, date of marriage; names of parents or sponsors <i>Deaths:</i> names of deceased, their dates of death and burial, ages, places of residence at time of death, occupations, conditions, cause of death	National Archives and local parish custody; 1664-1935 on film (GS)

TYPE OF RECORD	PERIOD COVERED	TYPE OF INFORMATION GIVEN	AVAILABILITY
9. LUTHERAN PARISH REGISTERS (Cont)	Earliest 1664; generally from about 1780 to present	<i>Arrivals:</i> names of persons moving into the parish, ages, relationships when accompanied by other family members, occupations, places of former residence and new residence <i>Removals:</i> same as above with destination given	National Archives and local parish custody; 1664-1935 on film (GS)
10. COURT RECORDS (<i>Thingbaekur</i>)	1619 to present	Civil and criminal action containing names of persons involved, relationships, if any, to other persons mentioned, places of residence, dates; personal, legal and moral circumstances	National Archives and local court custody; 1619-1919 on film (GS)
11. LIVES OF LEARNED MEN (<i>Aefir Laerdra Manna</i>)	1400-1800	Biographical sketches of men of prominence, their names, dates and places of birth, occupations, residences, parentage and sometimes ancestry for several generations; marriage-dates, spouse, children; dates of death	National Archives; on film (GS)
12. BIOGRAPHIES AND GENEALOGIES OF SHERIFFS (<i>Syslumanna-aefir</i>)	1262-1915	Names of sheriffs, sometimes their dates of birth; parentage; spouse, names of children, their spouse and offspring; residences, occupations, dates of death	National Archives; on film (GS)
13. BIOGRAPHIES OF PASTORS (<i>Prestaaefir</i>)	1000-1930	Names of pastors, dates and places of birth, marriage and death, parentage; names of spouses and children, sometimes their dates of birth, marriage and death, schooling, appointments	National Archives; on film (GS)
14. DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY (<i>Islenzkar Aeviskrar</i>)	9th C to 1940	Names of prominent persons, their dates and places of birth, marriage and death, occupations, parentage; names of spouses and children	National Archives; on film (GS)
15. PEDIGREES AND GENEALOGIES OF SKAGA-FJARDAR CO. (<i>Aettir Skagafirdinga</i>)	9th C to 1910	Names of persons, dates of birth, marriage, and death, occupations; names of spouses, and their dates of birth; residences; pedigrees listing several generations of ancestry with dates of birth, marriage, and death	National Archives; on film (GS)
16. SPECIAL GENEALOGICAL COLLECTIONS <i>Jon Espolin</i> <i>Steingrímur Jonsson</i> <i>Olafur Snoksdalín</i> <i>Einar Jonsson</i>	 874-1836 874-1844 874-1843 1400-1930	Names of persons, their dates and places of birth and death, parentage, names of spouse and children, residence, occupations; general biographical information	National Archives; on film (GS)
17. DIPLOMATARIUM ISLANDICUM	834-1570	Old documents and correspondence, appointments, names of persons and places of residence	National Archives; on film (GS)
18. ICELANDIC SAGAS	3rd C to 17th C	Stories and histories of the early Viking period and Middle Ages; names of persons, genealogies of families, relationships, residences	National Archives; on film (GS)

Icelandic

This list contains Icelandic words with their English translations. The words included here are those that you are likely to find in genealogical sources. If the word you are looking for (or some form of it) is not on this list, please consult an Icelandic-English dictionary. (See the “Additional Resources” section below.)

Icelandic is a Germanic language like Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish. It is the purest form of the “Old Norse” language that exists today. It was brought to the country by the Norsemen, who settled Iceland. Icelandic has been a written language for more than 900 years and has remained relatively unchanged.

Iceland was under Danish rule until 1918. Records written before the mid 1800s may include Danish and some Latin words. Note that in the 1801 census, Danish and to some extent Latin, rather than Icelandic, are used throughout the text. See the *Danish Genealogical Word List* (31029) and the *Latin Genealogical Word List* (34077).

LANGUAGE CHARACTERISTICS

Variant Forms of Words

In Icelandic, as in English, the forms of some words vary according to how they are used in a sentence. *Who—whose—whom* and *marry—marries—married* are examples of words in English with variant forms. The endings of a word in a document may differ from those in this list. For example:

<i>gift</i>	marry	<i>gifting</i>	marriage
<i>gifta</i>	to marry	<i>giftur</i>	married

Alphabetical Order

Written Icelandic uses the following letters not found in the English alphabet: *á, ð, é, í, ó, ú, ý, þ, æ, ö*. The letters *þ, æ, and ö* are alphabetized after *z*. This word list, like most Icelandic dictionaries and indexes, uses the following alphabetical order:

a á b c d ð e é f g h i í j k l m n o ó p q r s t u ú v w x y
ý z þ æ ö

If you do not find a word in the alphabetical order listed above, search forward and backward in the dictionary, index, or word list until you locate the word.

Spelling

Spelling rules were not standardized in earlier centuries. Words were written as they sounded. Because Iceland was under Danish rule so long, and because many officials were Danish or had been educated in Denmark, Danish influence was prominent in vocabulary and style until the late eighteenth century.

In the 1703, 1801, and 1816 censuses and in the oldest church registers, the following phonetic or spelling variations are common:

<i>b</i> used for <i>p</i>	<i>i</i> used for <i>j</i>
<i>c</i> used for <i>k</i>	<i>k</i> used for <i>q</i>
<i>d</i> used for <i>t</i>	<i>v</i> and <i>w</i> used interchangeably
<i>f</i> used for <i>v</i>	

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This word list includes only words most commonly found in genealogical sources. For more help, use an Icelandic-English dictionary. Several are available at the Family History Library in the International collection. The call numbers begin with 439.6321.

Some helpful dictionaries include:

Cleasby, Richard, et al. *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957. (FHL book Scand 439.6321 C558li; not available on film or fiche.)

Bogason, Sigurður Örn. *Ensk-Íslensk Orðabók* (English-Icelandic Dictionary). Reykjavik:

Ísafoldarprentsmiðja H.F., 1976. (FHL book Scand 439.6321 B633e; film 0407215.)

The following English-Icelandic dictionary is available through most bookstores that carry Icelandic books:

Sören Sörenson: *Ensk-íslensk orðabók með alfræðilegu ívafi*. Reykjavík: Örn og Örlygur, 1984.

Additional dictionaries are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under ICELAND—LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGES—DICTIONARIES.

KEY WORDS

In order to find specific types of information in Icelandic records, you will need to know some key words in Icelandic. This section lists key genealogical terms in English and the Icelandic words that convey the concept.

For example, in the first column you find the word *marriage*. In the second column you find Icelandic words with meanings such as *married*, *married couple*, *bridal pair*, and other words used in Icelandic records to indicate marriage.

English	Icelandic
birth	fæddur, fædd, fæddir, fæðingar
bride	brúður
bridegroom	brúðgumi
burials	greftun, begrafning, jarðarför, útför
census	fólkstal, fólksfjöldatal, manntal, sálmaregistur
child	barn
children	börn
christenings	skírður, skírn (nefndur [given a name], kallaður [given a name at christening])
civil district	hreppur
confirmands	fermdir, fermingarbörn
confirmation	ferming
day	dagur
deaths	dáin, dánir, dauðir
engagement	trúlofun
father	faðir
illegitimate	launbarn, óskilgetinn, óegta

English	Icelandic
marriage	hjónaband, gifting, giftur, hjón, brúðhjón
minister	prestur, séra, síra
mother	móðir
move in	innkomnir
move out	burtfluttur, burtviknir, brottflutt
named	nefndur (given a name), kallaður (given a name at christening)
parents	foreldrar
parish	sókn
stillborn	andvana fædd
wife	kona, eiginkona
witnesses	vitni, skírnarvottur
year	ár

GENERAL WORD LIST

This general word list includes words commonly seen in genealogical sources, including words for occupations, illnesses, and causes of death. Numbers, months, and days of the week are listed both here and in separate sections that follow this list. Words in parentheses in the English column clarify the definition.

Icelandic	English
A	
aðkominn, aðkomnir	arrivals, guests
af	by
afi	grandfather
aflausn	public remission of sins
akur	field
aldur	age
amma	grandmother
andaður, andaðir (plural)	deceased (male), dead
andarteppa	croup
andast	die
andlega vanheill	mentally deficient, weak-minded
andvana fæddur	stillborn child
annar	second
aphotækar	pharmacist
apótekari	pharmacy
apríl	April
asmi	asthma
auglýsing	proclamation
austur	east

Icelandic	English
Á	
á	on, at
á morgun	tomorrow
áar	ancestors
ágúst	August
ái	ancestor
ár	year
átján	eighteen
átjándi	eighteenth
átta	eight
áttatíu	eighty
áttugasti	eightieth
áttundi	eighth
B	
bakari	baker
barkahósti	croup
barn	child
barna	make pregnant
barnlaus	childless
barnsæng	childbed
bátsmaður	boatman
bátur	boat
beður	bed
begrafn	buried
beiningamaður	beggar
berklaveiki	tuberculosis
beykir	cooper
blaðsíða	page
blikksmiður	tinsmith
blindur	blind
blóðsótt	dysentery
borg	city
borgari	citizen
bókari	accountant
bókbindari	book binder
bókhaldari	bookkeeper
bóksali	bookseller
bóla	smallpox
bólga	inflammation
bólusetja	vaccinate
bóndi	farmer
brenna	burn
brenndur	burned, burning
bréf	letter, deed
brjóstsjúkdómur	chest disease
brjóstþyngsli	shortness of breath
bróðir	brother

bróðursonur nephew (brother's son)

Icelandic	English
brúðgumi	bridegroom
brúðhjón	bridal pair
brúður	bride
bræður	brothers
burtfluttir	move out
búa	live, reside
búandi	resident
búsetumaður	cottager, resident
búskapur	farming
bústaður	place of residence
bústýra	housekeeper
bæjarnafn	name of farm
bær	farm, town
börn	children

C

confirmeraður confirmed, confirmand

D

daglaunamaður	day laborer
dagsetja	date
dagur	day
dalur	valley
dauði	death
dauður	dead, died
dáinn	dead, died
dánir	dead, died
dáti	soldier
desember, 10ber	December
deyja	die
diarrhe	diarrhea
dó	died
dóttir	daughter
dótturdóttir	grandchild (daughter's daughter)
dóttursonur	grandson (daughter's son)
dráp	murder, killing
drengur	boy
druknaði	drowned

E

eftirlifendur	survivors, heirs
eftirmiddagur	afternoon
egta barn	legitimate child

eiga, eiginn	own
einn	single, one
eitur	poison
Icelandic	English
ekkill	widower
ekkja	widow
ekkjumaður	widower
eldri	older, elder
eldur	fire
ellefti	eleventh
ellefu	eleven
elli	old age
erfðaskrá	probate record,
	testament
erfingi	heir, survivor

F

fader (Danish)	father
faðir	father
fangelsi	prison
far	father
fara	go away, move
fátækur	poor
febrúar	February
ferðast	traveling through
ferma	confirm
fermdur	confirmed
ferming	confirmation
fertugasti	fortieth
fimm	five
fimmtán	fifteen
fimmtándi	fifteenth
fimmti	fifth
fimmtíu	fifty
fimmtudagur	Thursday
fimmtugasti	fiftieth
fiskimaður	fisherman
fjall	mountain
fjórði	fourth
fjórir	four
fjórtán	fourteen
fjórtdandi	fourteenth
fjörutíu	forty
flogaveiki	epilepsy
flogaverkur	spasmodic pain
fluttur	moved (from parish)
flytja	move
flytja af landi burt	emigrate
flytja inn	move in
foreldrar	parents
fógeti	sheriff

fólksfjöldatal	census
fólkstal	census
fóstra	foster mother
fóstri	foster father

Icelandic	English
fósturbarn	foster child
fósturforeldrar	foster parents
fótgönguliðsmaður	infantryman
frá	from
Frú	Madame, Mrs.
frændsemispell	incest
fyrstur	first
fæða	give birth to
fæddur	born
föstudagur	Friday

G

gamall	old
garður	garden, yard
garðyrkjumaður	gardener
gata	street
geðveikur	insane
geit	goat
giftast	get married
gifting	marriage
giftur	married
gigt	rheumatism, gout
gjalda	pay
glófagjörðarmaður	glove maker
grafinn	buried
greftun	burial
griðkona	servant (female)
griðmaður	laborer, servant
guðfaðir	godfather
guðfeðgin	godparents
guðmóðir	godmother
gula	jaundice
gullsmiður	goldsmith
gær	yesterday
gömul	old

H

hafnsögumaður	harbor pilot
handsprengjumaður	grenadier
hattamakari	hatmaker
haust	autumn, fall
hádeggi	noon, midday
háls	throat

hálsbólga	sore throat
heilablóðfall	stroke
heima nefndur	named (christened) at home
heimili	house
hengdi	hanged, hung
hengja	hang

Icelandic English

hermaður	rural (land) soldier
hestur	horse, pony
hjarta	heart
hjartasjúkdómur	heart disease
hjá	by
hjálparmaður	assistant
hjólasmíður	wheelwright
hjón	married couple
hjónaband	marriage
hljóðfæraleikari	musician
hór	adultery
hreppstjóri	local sheriff, overseer in a poor-law district
hreppur	civil district, poor-law district
hundrað	hundred
hundraðasti	hundredth
hús	house
húsamálari	house painter
húsameistari	builder, master builder
húsbóndi	head of family
húsfaðir	head of family
húsgagnasmíður	cabinet maker
húsmóðir	housewife, mistress of the house
hvaðan	where from, place of birth
hvítasunna	Pentecost
hæð	hill
höfuðsvimi	dizziness
höfuðverkur	headache

I

iðnaðarmaður	journeyman
iðnnemi	apprentice
innfluttir	move in
innkomnir	moved into parish
innri	inner
innvortis meinsemd	internal disease

Í

í	in
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J

janúar	January
jarða	bury
jarðaður	buried

Icelandic English

járnsmiður	blacksmith
jól	Christmas
júlí	July
júní	June
jörð	farm, land
jörðuð	buried

K

kallaður	named (christened)
kambskapari	comb maker
karl	male
karlkyns	males
kaupmaður	trader, merchant
kaupmáli	deed
kirkja	church
kirkjubækur	church registers
kirkjusókn	church parish
kíghósti	whooping cough
klæðskeri	tailor
kona	woman, wife
konfirmera	confirm
kotbóndi	cottager
krabbamein	cancer
kraftur	strength (lack of)
kreppa	cramp
kreppusótt	scorbutic disease
kvenmaður	woman, female
kvöld	evening
kýr	cow
kölluð	named (christened)

L

land	farm, land
landbúnaður	agriculture, farming
landfarsótt	epidemic
laugardagur	Saturday
launbarn	illegitimate child
lausn	public remission of sins
leigjandi	leaseholder, lodger
leiguliði	leaseholder
lind	water source (spring)

lífsýki	diarrhea
lítill	little, small, young
ljósmóðir	midwife
lungnabólga	pneumonia
lungnasótt	lung disease
lægri	lower
lækur	stream, brook

Icelandic

English

lærður	journeyman (literal meaning: learned)
lögmaður	lawyer

M

maður	man, husband
magaverkur	stomachache
maí	May
malari	millar
mannanöfn	names
manntal	census
mágkona	sister-in-law
mágur	brother-in-law
málari	painter
mánudagur	Monday
mánuður	month
mars	March
marz	March
með	with
meinsemd	disease
mey barn	female child
meyjar	maidens, girls
miðvikudagur	Wednesday
misferli	accident, offense
mislingar	measles
mínúta	minute
morð	murder
morgunn	morning
móðir	mother
móðurafi	grandfather (mother's father)
móðuramma	grandmother (mother's mother)
múrari	mason

N

nafn	name
námumaður	miner
nefna	name, named
nefndur	named (christened)

nemi	apprentice, student
nervefeber (Danish)	nerve fever (possibly typhoid)
niðurgangur	diarrhea
niðursetningur	pauper
nítján	nineteen
nítjándi	nineteenth
nítugasti	ninetieth
níu	nine

Icelandic

English

níundi	ninth
níutíu	ninety
norður	north
nón	midafternoon
nótt	night
nóvember, 9ber	November
nýrnasjúkdómur	kidney disease
nærkona	midwife
nöfn	names

O

og	and
október, 8ber	October
orgelleikari	organist

Ó

óegta barn	illegitimate child
óekta barn	illegitimate child
ógift	unmarried, single (woman)
ógiftur	unmarried, single (man)
ókvæntur	unmarried, single (man)
ómagi	pauper
ónefndur	unchristened
óskilgetinn	illegitimate
óþekktur	unknown

P

páskar	Easter
pige (Danish)	girl
piltar	farmhands
piltur	boy, boys
prentari	printer
prestur	clergyman, pastor, priest

R

refsað	punished
riddaraliðsmaður	cavalryman
riddari	dragoon
ræningi	robber, thief

S

samanvígð hjón married couple

Icelandic

English

sauðfé	sheep
saurlifi	fornication, adultery
sautján	seventeen
sautjándi	seventeenth
sálnaregistur	soul register
september, 7ber	September
sex	six
sextán	sixteen
sextándi	sixteenth
sextíu	sixty
sextugasti	sixtieth
séra (Sra)	Reverend
silfursmiður	silversmith, goldsmith
síðdegi	afternoon
síra (Sra)	Reverend
sjálf	own
sjálfseignabóndi	freeholder
sjálfsmorð	suicide
sjómaður	sailor, fisherman
sjúkur	sick
sjö	seven
sjötíu	seventy
sjötti	sixth
sjötugasti	seventieth
sjöundi	seventh
skarlagen feber	scarlet fever
skildu	separated, divorced
skilgetinn	legitimate (child)
skip	ship
skipstjóri	captain of a ship
skíra	baptize, christen
skírdagur	Maundy Thursday
skírður	baptized
skírn	baptism
skírnarvottur	christening witnesses
skírteini	certificate
skóari	shoemaker
skógarvörður	forester

skógur	forest
skólakennari	teacher
skósmiður	shoemaker
skraddari	tailor
skriflegt	in writing
skyrbjúgur	scurvy
skyttu	rifle soldier
slag	stroke
slagaveiki	apoplexy
slátrari	butcher
slys	accident
smali	shepherd
smábær	village
smiður	smith

Icelandic

English

snikkari	cabinetmaker
soldat	soldier
sonarsonur	grandson (son's son)
sonur	son
sókn	church parish
sóknarkirkja	parish church
sóknarmannatal	parish register
sóknarprestur	parish minister
Sra	Reverend
staður	place
steinhöggvari	mason
steinsmiður	stone mason
stjórnari	manager
stjúpbarn	stepchild
stjúpfaðir	stepfather
stjúpi	stepfather
stjúp móðir	stepmother
stríð	war
stúlka	girl
stúlkur	girls
stýrimaður	pilot, mate, navigator
stöðuvatn	lake
suður	south
sukkersyge	diabetes

sumar	summer
sunnudagur	Sunday
sútari	tanner
sveinbarn	boy
sveinn	boy, apprentice
sveitamaður	farmer
sveitarlimur	pauper
svin	pig
synir	sons
systir	sister
systur	sisters
systkin	siblings
systkinabarn	first cousins
sýsla	county
sýslumaður	county sheriff
söðlari	saddler
söðlasmiður	harness maker
sögunarmilla	sawmill

T

taugaveiki	typhoid
telpa	young girl
tengdadóttir	daughter-in-law
tengdafaðir	father-in-law
tengdamóðir	mother-in-law
tengdasonur	son-in-law

Icelandic	English
til	to, at
tilfelli	accident, case
timburmaður	carpenter
timbursmiður	carpenter
tinsmiður	tinsmith
tími	hour, time
tíu	ten
tíundi	tenth
tólf	twelve
tólfti	twelfth
trésmiður	carpenter
trúlofast	get engaged
tugtmeistari	warden
tuttugasti	twentieth
tuttugasti og annar	twenty-second
tuttugasti og áttundi	twenty-eighth
tuttugasti og fimmti	twenty-fifth
tuttugasti og fjórði	twenty-fourth
tuttugasti og fyrsti	twenty-first
tuttugasti og níundi	twenty-ninth
tuttugasti og sjötti	twenty-sixth

tuttugasti og sjöundi	twenty-seventh
tuttugasti og þriðji	twenty-third
tuttugu	twenty
tuttugu og átta	twenty-eight
tuttugu og einn	twenty-one
tuttugu og fimm	twenty-five
tuttugu og fjórir	twenty-four
tuttugu og níu	twenty-nine
tuttugu og sex	twenty-six
tuttugu og sjö	twenty-seven
tuttugu og tveir	twenty-two
tuttugu og þrir	twenty-three
tún	field
tveir	two
tvíburar	twins
tærandi sýki	consumption
tökubarn	foster child

U

um	on, about
umboðsmaður	agent
ung	young

ungbarn	infant, young child
ungfrú	Miss
unglingur	youth, adolescent
ungur	young
uppráttur	wasting sickness

Icelandic English

Ú

úr	of, from
útflytjandi	emigrant

V

varðmaður	watchman
vatn	lake, water
vatnssýki	dropsy
vefari	weaver
vegur	road
veikleiki ellinnar	old age weakness
veitingamaður	landlord, innkeeper
verkamaður	workman, laborer
verkastúlka	woman worker
verkur	pain
vestur	west
vetur	winter
við	on, at, in
vika	week
vinnuhjú	workers, farmhands, servants
vinnukona	maidservant
vinnumaður	laborer, farmhand (male)
vitni	witness
vor	spring
vottorð	certificate
vottur	witness

Y

yfirsetukona	midwife
yingismaður	young man
yingisstúlka	young woman, girl
yngr	younger
ytri	outer

Þ

þjófur	thief
þjóna	serve

þjónn	servant
þorp	village
þrettán	thirteen
þrettándi	thirteenth
þriðjudagur	Tuesday
þriðji	third
þrír	three
þrjátíu	thirty
Icelandic	English

þrjátíu og einn	thirty-one
þrítugasti	thirtieth
þrítugasti og fyrsti	thirty-first
þúsund	thousand
þúsundasti	thousandth

Æ

æði	panic
æðislegur	in panic
ægtabarn	legitimate child
ægtaviigðer	married, marriages
æsing	inflammation, agitation
ættfaðir	ancestor

Ö

öld	century
ölmusumaður	living from charity
önduð	deceased, dead (female)
öreiga	destitute

NUMBERS

In Icelandic genealogical records, numbers are occasionally spelled out. This is especially true of dates. The following list gives the cardinal (1, 2, 3) and the ordinal (1st, 2nd, 3rd) versions of each number. In actual usage, days of the month are written in ordinal form.

Cardinal		Ordinal	
1	einn	1st	fyrstur
2	tveir	2nd	annar
3	þrír	3rd	þriðji
4	fjórir	4th	fjórði
5	fimm	5th	fimmti
6	sex	6th	sjötti
7	sjö	7th	sjöundi

8	átta	8th	áttundi
9	níu	9th	níundi
10	tíu	10th	tíundi
11	ellefu	11th	ellefti
12	tólf	12th	tólfti
13	þrettán	13th	þrettándi
14	fjórtán	14th	fjórtándi
15	fimmtán	15th	fimmtándi
16	sextán	16th	sextándi

Cardinal Ordinal

17	sautján	17th	sautjándi
18	átján	18th	átjándi
19	nítján	19th	nítjándi
20	tuttugu	20th	tuttugasti
21	tuttugu	21st	tuttugasti
	og einn		og fyrsti
22	tuttugu	22nd	tuttugasti
	og tveir		og annar
23	tuttugu	23rd	tuttugasti
	og þrír		og þriðji
24	tuttugu	24th	tuttugasti
	og fjórir		og fjórði
25	tuttugu	25th	tuttugasti
	og fimm		og fimmti
26	tuttugu	26th	tuttugasti
	og sex		og sjötti
27	tuttugu	27th	tuttugasti
	og sjö		og sjöundi
28	tuttugu	28th	tuttugasti
	og átta		og áttundi
29	tuttugu	29th	tuttugasti
	og níu		og níundi
30	þrjátíu	30th	þrítugasti
31	þrjátíu	31st	þrítugasti
	og einn		og fyrsti
40	fjörutíu	40th	fertugasti
50	fimmtíu	50th	fimmtugasti
60	sextíu	60th	sextugasti
70	sjötíu	70th	sjötugasti
80	áttatíu	80th	áttugasti
90	níutíu	90th	nítugasti
100	hundrað	100th	hundraðasti
1000	þúsund	1000th	þúsundasti

DATES AND TIME

Use the terms in this section and the “Numbers” section to interpret dates.

Months of the Year

Icelandic English

janúar	January
febrúar	February
marz, mars	March
apríl	April
maí	May
júní	June
júlí	July
ágúst	August

Icelandic English

september, 7ber	September
október, 8ber	October
nóvember, 9ber	November
desember, 10ber	December

Days of the Week

Icelandic English

sunnudagur	Sunday
mánudagur	Monday
þriðjudagur	Tuesday
miðvikudagur	Wednesday
fimmtudagur	Thursday
föstudagur	Friday
laugardagur	Saturday

Seasons of the Year

Icelandic English

haust	autumn, fall
vor	spring
sumar	summer
vetur	winter

Times of the Day

Icelandic English

nón, síðdegi	midafternoon, afternoon
hádegi	noon, midday

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WORLD CONFERENCE ON RECORDS AND GENEALOGICAL SEMINAR

Salt Lake City, Utah, U.S.A.
5-8 August 1969

ALONG THE SCANDINAVIAN EMIGRANT TRAIL

Part IV

Iceland

By

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ALONG THE SCANDINAVIAN EMIGRANT TRAIL

Part IV

Iceland

By

Bjarni Vilhjalmsón

Even though Icelanders sometimes pride themselves on having been the first white men to set foot on the continent of America as early as the year 1000 after Christ, as well as having discovered and settled Greenland approximately 15 years earlier, they were among the last European peoples to emigrate to America after the great emigrations of Europeans into that part of the world had started in recent centuries.

During the eighteenth century, which was one of the most critical periods in the economic history of Iceland, there is no evidence that it ever occurred to the Icelanders to emigrate to America. On the other hand it did occur to the Danish authorities about 1730 to persuade Icelanders to move to Greenland. The plan of that settlement fell through though, since the Icelanders wouldn't have been better off there than in their own native country, in spite of the undeniably difficult problems they had to cope with in Iceland at that particular time.

Emigration to America as a rule has economical and even political causes, and this is true of the Icelandic emigration to the Western Hemisphere during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. The Icelanders were very poor as a nation and their economical life was particularly simple during the nineteenth century. Towns were practically nonexistent. The majority of the people were engaged in farming with fishing as a sideline. Government officials went in for farming along with their official duties. There was great demand for farmland but the farmworkers lived under reduced circumstances.

The first emigration from Iceland to America during the nineteenth century does not have direct economical causes, however, but religious ones. Its origin can be traced to the fact that Icelandic apprentices in various trades in Copenhagen became acquainted with Mormons, who about 1850 were carrying on a fairly successful mission there. The first accounts we have of the work of these men in Iceland date from 1851. In the beginning they were particularly successful in Westman-Islands and in the rural district of Rangarvallasysla where these young apprentices originally came from. They settled down in Westman-Islands after having finished their apprenticeships in Copenhagen. The Mormon missionaries in Iceland had soon to face various problems. The Icelandic Lutheran church, for example, was strongly opposed to their

missionary work. It was probably on account of the hostile attitude of the Icelandic Lutheran church that the Icelandic Mormons soon got the idea of joining their religious brethren in Utah. The first ones set off on their way west in the summer of 1854, and arrived in Utah in 1855. The leader of their group was Samuel Bjarnason who had been ordained a Mormon minister in Westman-Islands some time before their departure. He can justly be considered the first Icelandic settler in the Western World. Gudmundur Gudmundsson, who had been the head of the Mormon congregation in Westman-Islands was a member of the group along with a number of other people. In the year 1855 Thordur Didriksson also came to Utah from a family in Laneyjar in Rangarvallasysla. He has left a written account of his trip from Iceland to Utah which describes how great the hardships were that accompanied such long travels in those years, both on sea and land.

In the year 1857 several people left Westman-Islands for Utah under the leadership of Loftur Jonsson from Thorlaugargerdi, a fairly well-known personality in his days who later became a bishop in Utah. After that, emigration from Iceland to Utah came to a stand-still for approximately 15 years. In the year 1872 Loftur Jonsson went back to Iceland as a missionary and in the following years a number of people moved from Iceland to Utah. This emigration lasted until 1890 or even longer. Some of these people were Mormons but others were Lutherans. Just as before many of those who were bound for Utah came from Westman-Islands and the rural district of Rangarvallasysla, but later on from other parts of the country as well, such as Reykjavik and the rural district of Hunavatnssysla. By the time this second phase of emigration to Utah had started, Icelanders had already started trying settling in other places in North America, particularly in Canada as I will describe presently. The place in Utah to which most Icelanders went was Spanish Fork. It has been estimated that over one hundred people left Iceland for Utah. I suppose that all the available information about the emigration, and the people who took part in it, has been compiled here in Utah. Not much has been written about this subject in Iceland. The most thorough treatment is found in *History of the Westman-Islands*, vol. I pp.121-128, Reykjavik 1946, as well as in those works that generally deal with emigration from Iceland to America. These will be discussed presently, but the one which deserves special attention is volume number 2 of *History of the Icelanders in the Western World* by Thorsteinn Th. Thorsteinsson, Winnipeg 1943, pp. 1-66.

The next place that the Icelanders set out for in the Western Hemisphere was Brazil. The winter of 1858-1859 was extremely severe in the north of Iceland. Then the idea of leaving the country in order to look for better living conditions elsewhere struck some people as a reasonably good one. Strange as it may seem, Greenland appeared to arouse particular enthusiasm among them. One of the leaders of the Northerners at that time, Einar Asmundsson at Nesi, succeeded nevertheless in pointing out to them that emigrating from Iceland to Greenland would be a very rash undertaking indeed. It might even be a change for the worse to move to colder regions, and he advised them instead to look for lands with a warmer climate than Iceland's, and thus it came about that they picked Brazil. It wasn't until 1863, however, that emigration to Brazil got under way. The first group to set off wasn't a very numerous one, only four people. One of them was to make preparations for further emigration from Iceland. All of them were from Bardardal in the rural district of Southern-Thingeyjarsysla in the north of Iceland. The first Icelandic who is known to have

settled in Brazil didn't come directly from Iceland, though, but from Denmark, where he had lived for several years. His name was Kristjan Gudmundsson Isfeld and he was of the same Northern stock as the others. He arrived in Brazil a few months earlier than the four people who were mentioned here above. The emigration of Icelanders to Brazil soon discontinued because the Brazilian government failed to provide the free passage to the travellers which it had promised, but for quite a while Icelanders seemed to be deeply interested in Brazil. A small party of people did leave for Brazil in the year 1873, probably the last year that Icelandic emigrants headed for that remote country. One of them was Kristjan Gudmundsson Isfeld's father and some of his brothers and sisters, but Kristjan never saw these close relatives of his, because he died at just about this time. This group of 1873 totaled 34 people altogether, but it isn't certain whether any Icelanders settled in Brazil between 1863 and 1873. The small number of Icelanders who went there settled down in a place called Curityba which was then a small village. It is a fairly long way south of Rio de Janeiro, situated at a high altitude above sea-level. Most of the Icelanders who headed for Brazil came from the north of Iceland, but there was still one family from Vopnafjord in the east. From records in the church register of Lundarbrekku parish concerning individual departures we know that a few people left for Brazil in both 1863 and 1873. Much information about the immigration of Icelanders into Brazil and incidents relating to it is available in the documents left by Jakob Halfdanarson, who was at one time a very prominent leader of the Northerners in the latter half of the nineteenth century, especially in the commercial field and who for a while took a great interest in these travels to Brazil. For a long time these people who went to Brazil carried on a correspondence with relatives and friends in Iceland, a fact which can be clearly seen in the book entitled *The Adventurous Voyage from Iceland to Brazil* by Thorsteinn Th. Thorsteinsson, Reykjavik 1937-1938. One can also consult *The History of the Icelanders in the Western World* by the same author, volume No 2, pp. 67-107. It is surprising indeed how much we do actually know about these Icelandic emigrants to Brazil, but I am afraid that the descendants of these people have been completely lost track of by now and that consequently we have been out of touch with these people from Iceland for a considerable length of time.

Icelandic people were already beginning to emigrate to North America, particularly to Canada, but to the United States as well, by the time the last Icelandic settlers set off for Brazil. This is in fact the only emigration worth mentioning because of the large numbers who took part in it.

Iceland always was and still is a very thinly populated country. The population is now exactly 200,000 and has never before reached that figure. About a half of the whole population lives in Reykjavik and its immediate vicinity, whereas the other half lives in small towns or in scattered rural areas all over the island. There are no dwelling places very far from the coast, since the centre of the country is an uninhabitable plateau with towering glaciers or nearly barren lava-fields which support only a bit of moss here and there. One could say that until this century there were no cities in Iceland. Icelanders were more or less farmers pure and simple. They were engaged in fishing to a certain extent, but that was considered one of the ordinary chores of the farmer, and fishermen did not form an independent class by themselves until the present century. It must be borne in mind when I give figures such as 10-20 thousand people in connection with emigration from Iceland before 1900 that a considerable part of the

nation is concerned since the population of the whole country was never more than approximately seventy-five thousand during the nineteenth century. Fifteen thousand constitute, therefore, roughly one fifth of the nation. The emigration of Icelanders to Utah and Brazil was extremely insignificant. It was only a prelude to something bigger, as the great exodus took place somewhat later than the movement to these places. This emigration didn't really begin until about 1870, at first on a very small scale, then gradually increasing till it reached its peak during the years 1873-1890, but lasting to a certain degree until the beginning of the twentieth century.

These travels from Iceland to the northern parts of America dating from the year 1865 are due to the initiative of a Dane by the name of William Wickmann, who had worked as a shop-assistant in Iceland for some time. In the year 1865 he emigrated to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Immediately he wrote to Iceland sending one of his letters to his former employer, Gudmundur Thorgrimsen, a shopkeeper in Eyrarbakki. He not only praised the new land very highly, but he also used encouraging words to persuade Icelanders to go west. This bit of propaganda didn't show any results until 1870 when a few Icelanders began leaving for America, only four people, all of them from the south of Iceland, going west the first year. They settled down on Washington Island in Lake Michigan, not far north of Milwaukee where Wickmann lived. It wasn't until 1873 that a relatively large group, about two hundred people, set off on their way to the Western World. They came for the most part from the north of Iceland. Then the emigration gradually increased, a natural result of the hard times people were having in Iceland at that period, until, as it has been estimated, roughly 1,400 people left Iceland for America in the year 1876.

During the first years of the emigration from Iceland to America, the Icelandic emigrants had hoped that they might be able to form an independent colony which would be entirely settled by Icelanders and where they might moreover preserve their culture, their customs and their native language. That hope was nearly fulfilled in the year 1875 when the Canadian government decided to allot to the Icelanders a special area of land which they called New Iceland. It was to the north of the Province of Manitoba on the western shore of Lake Winnipeg. An Icelandic colony was established there with a special constitution but dependent upon the government of the Province of Manitoba. This constitution was valid for eleven years, from 1877-1887, at which time the laws of the Province of Manitoba came into force. As soon as the Icelanders became acclimatized and more familiar with new ways of earning their living in the Western World, their clannish or "colonial" ardour dwindled little by little and they began to pick new lands elsewhere, adjusting themselves as well as they could to the living conditions of each place. They had besides had many great initial problems to deal with during their pioneer-years in New Iceland. People of Icelandic origin are scattered all over Canada and the United States, but in varying degrees according to the states. There are, for example, few people of Icelandic descent in the south of the United States and in the French-speaking parts of Canada. Winnipeg in the Province of Manitoba has more people of Icelandic extraction than any other town in North America, and there is still a relatively larger number of Icelanders living in New Iceland. The principal town there has the Old-Icelandic mythological name Gimli, which is borrowed from the poem *Voluspá* where it is used to designate a kind of Elysium inhabited by virtuous people in a new and better world.

Regular emigration from Iceland stopped about 1890, even though it sometimes happened after the turn of the century that individuals or a family or two emigrated to America simply because close relatives of theirs had settled down on the other side of the Atlantic. About 1890 there were again better times in Iceland and the financial situation of the Icelanders had improved considerably. The Icelanders had gained a certain autonomy in financial affairs in 1874. The closer the turn of the century came, the greater was the effort to bolster progress until little by little people began to lose interest in emigration to America. At the beginning of the twentieth century the Icelanders began to modernize their fishing fleet by buying small motor vessels and trawlers, and the seat of their government was moved from Denmark to Iceland by creating a ministerial post in Reykjavik. The towns either grew in size or new ones sprang up and consequently it was only the urban population that increased. This development has continued up to the present. With the mechanization of farm work over the last decades there has been a steady decline in the rural population, whereas the urban population has increased at the same rate, especially in Reykjavik and its neighbouring towns. This is a familiar development throughout the whole world.

In our times an emigration from Iceland to America has started anew, differing somewhat from the former one. It is probably commonly known that Iceland was occupied by American troops during the Second World War from 1941 until after the end of the hostilities, and there are still some American troops stationed in the country in accordance with a special agreement with the Icelandic authorities. During the war and also during the postwar-years Icelandic women married American soldiers and emigrated to America. At the same time Icelandic students began to go to the United States and also to Canada to continue their studies there. Some of these students have settled down in America after graduation, physicians for example, after receiving degrees in their special fields of study, and engineers, too. This brain-drain still continues, and people cannot be blamed for looking upon this emigration of professionals with some disapproval. On the other hand, considerably fewer Icelandic women have married Americans in recent years than they did when the troops in Iceland were more numerous than they are nowadays. I shan't say anything further about this emigration from Iceland to America during these last decades.

It has been estimated that during the years 1870-1890 ten to twelve thousand people emigrated from Iceland to America, not such a small number considering that the remaining population was only about seventy thousand. After having examined the emigration records in the National Archives of Iceland I am inclined to believe that the number of emigrants has been underestimated. I wouldn't be surprised if it turned out to be somewhere between fifteen and twenty thousand on a more accurate count.

In the National Archives of Iceland there are many good sources of information about the emigration of Icelanders to America. The chief among these are the columns in the church-registers concerning individual departures. But unfortunately this is the part of the church registers which is most frequently left incomplete by the ministers. It can be proved with absolute certainty that occasionally no mention has been made of individual departures, in addition to which the places with the largest population such as Reykjavik, for example, keep no records of this kind in their church registers. In the offices of two district magistrates,

namely the town magistrates office in Reykjavik and the district magistrate's office of Nordur-Mulasysla, there are to be found records and agreements about emigration to America. There are, moreover, very comprehensive records in the governors' archives relating to emigration from every part of the country, and governors, *landshofdingi* held office in Iceland from 1873-1904, that is, during the period in which emigration to America was at its peak. I believe that these records, which haven't been examined to any extent yet, contain the most authoritative information available. The main disadvantage is that the former addresses of the people in Iceland are very often insufficiently recorded, and it would probably be quite a task to find the precise genealogical link between these people and the corresponding records in the church registers. I suppose, though, that in most cases it would be possible through comparison and by taking considerable pains, since quite a number of these people are familiar to us from genealogies and various biographical works.

The church has always played an active role in the life of the American Icelanders. I do not know how church registers are kept in American congregations, but I take it for granted that the church registers of these congregations preserve the basic knowledge about the descendents of the Icelandic settlers in the Western World.

Pretty much has been written about the emigration of the Icelanders and the descendants of the Icelandic settlers in America. Newspapers and periodicals have been published by the Icelanders on this side of the Atlantic from the very beginning, at first solely in Icelandic but later on either in part or even entirely in English. First of all should be mentioned the weeklies, *Logberg* and *Heimskringla*, both founded in the year 1888 but which were merged into one only a few years ago. Another publication that is worth mentioning is the periodical *Thodraknisfelag Vestur Islending*, published by The Icelandic Patriotic Society in the Western World. It first appeared in 1919. Then there is *The Icelandic Canadian* which has been published since 1942. These periodicals both give much note-worthy information about Icelanders in the Western World.

So far, however, I haven't mentioned the publication which probably contains the most thorough information about the Icelanders in America, both about the settlers themselves and their immediate descendants. I am referring to the Olafur Thorgeirsson's *Almanac* which was published from 1895-1954. This publication is an invaluable historical source concerning the Icelanders in America. There are articles about both the history of settlement and many different subjects which touch upon the interests of the Icelandic Americans. There often appear fairly comprehensive lists of deceased persons, occasionally accompanied by various details about them. This work constitutes an indispensable historical source for anyone who wishes to write about the history of the Icelanders in the Western World and it has in fact proved to be a useful book of reference for those who have already dealt with that subject.

From 1919-1923 Thorleif Jackson wrote three books about the settlement of the Icelanders in New Iceland, and his daughter, Thorstina Jackson, published the *History of the Icelanders in North Dakota* in the year 1926.

About the Icelandic community Lundar in Manitoba there appeared in the year 1947 a commemorative volume entitled *Lundar Diamond Jubilee 1887-1947*.

Walter (Valdimar) Jackson Lindal wrote a book about the Icelanders in Saskatchewan which was published in Winnipeg in the year 1955.

At the present there is a great publication under way in Iceland, *A Dictionary of Icelandic-American Biography*, which appeared for the first time in the year 1961. Its author is Rev. Benjamin Kristjansson. This work has been executed in collaboration with the Icelanders in America, but it is being prepared wholly in Iceland. Three volumes have already been published and there is at least one more to come, and perhaps more.

About the most instructive things which have been written in general about the history of the Icelanders in the Western World are the following works: In that particular field Thorsteinn Th. Thorsteinsson has been by far the most prolific author. He gave a lecture over the State-Radio in Iceland in the winter of 1934-35 about the emigration from Iceland and published the book: *The Westmen*; a series of lectures dealing with the same subject, in Reykjavik in 1935. About the emigration from Iceland to Brazil he wrote *The Adventurous Voyage from Iceland to Brazil* which appeared in Reykjavik in 1937-1938. It is amazing indeed how much information has been compiled there about so few settlers concerned.

In the year 1940 the first volume of an important work was published under the general title of *The History of the Icelanders in the Western World*. By now there are five of them altogether. Thorsteinn Th. Thorsteinsson was responsible for three of them whereas professor Tryggvi Olesen has edited two of them. This work contains extremely much information about the Icelandic settlers in the Western World. The chief defect of this otherwise important work is the lack of an index of names, and for that reason it is unfortunately of less value than it might have been.

It is also worth mentioning that in the great *History of Iceland* published under the auspices of the Cultural Fund and The Patriotic Society, the first volume of which appeared in the year 1942 with more volumes forthcoming, there is to be found an authoritative outline of the emigration of the Icelanders to America and their settlement there by the late professor Magnus Jonsson.

Rev. Jon Gudnason, a former archivist, has compiled extensive genealogies of two rural districts in the west of Iceland, namely Strandasysla and Dalasysla. In both of them there is a special chapter devoted to people who emigrated from these parts of the country to America. They are "Strandamenn in America," in the genealogical work: *Strandamenn*, Reykjavik 1955, and "Dalamenn in America," in the work: *Dalamenn*, Volume No III, Reykjavik, 1966.

Various Icelandic genealogies often mention the fact that people have emigrated to America even though there are no special chapters about emigrants to America (e.g. *Pedigrees and Genealogies of the East of Iceland*, Reykjavik 1953-1968, *The Genealogical Table of Fremri-Hals*, Reykjavik 1966-1968, *A Genealogy* by Rev. Bjarni Thorsteinsson, Reykjavik 1930).

It can be gathered from what I have already said that a great deal has been written about the Icelanders who emigrated to America in the latter half of the nineteenth century as well as

their descendents. I believe that by availing oneself of the data and documents which are kept in the National Archives of Iceland, even though it takes some doing to locate some of them, it is possible to trace every person who has emigrated to America and give an account of his or her origin. It would undoubtedly be no easy task to trace these people and their descendants in America. There is, however, much material available for anyone who desires to undertake such a task.

FINDING RECORDS OF YOUR ANCESTORS, PART A

ICELAND

1835 TO 1900



Beginning Icelandic researchers will also need: *Genealogical Word List: Icelandic* (36346) and *Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029), since early Icelandic censuses and church records have some Danish words in them.

If your ancestor lived in Iceland between 1835 and 1900, follow the steps in this booklet to find the records of his or her family. These instructions will show you which records to search, what to look for, and what tools to use. One piece of information will lead to another until you have identified each family member and filled out a family group record.

1

Find your ancestor's birth record in church records.

2

Find your ancestor's parents and brothers and sisters in the census records.

3

Find the birth records of your ancestor's brothers and sisters in church records.

4

Find the marriage record of your ancestor's parents in church records.

Latter-day Saints: Now see additional instructions for submitting names for temple ordinances.



The steps and tools you will need are described inside. ►

HOW TO BEGIN—PREPARATION

You should have already gathered as much information as possible from your home and family and filled out family group records and a pedigree chart. You may have checked FamilySearch™ or other computer files to see if others have researched your Icelandic family.

To begin:

A. From your pedigree chart, choose an ancestor who was born in Iceland between 1835 and 1900. You must know the birth date and birthplace (parish) in order to find your ancestor's family. It is helpful to know the county where the birth parish is located.

B. Write your ancestor's name in the children's section of a new family group record. Read through the instructions in this booklet. Then follow the steps below to find your ancestor's family.

Tips

If you don't know your ancestor's birth date:

- Start with a more recent generation. You will learn how to do research, and you will probably discover something you didn't know about your family.
- Find the records for this family in the example given. This will teach you basic research skills before you search for your own family. This is a good class activity.

If you don't know the parish where your ancestor was born, see "Tips" on page 6.

Pedigree Chart

Chart no. _____

No. 1 on this chart is the same as no. _____ on chart no. _____

Mark boxes when ordinances are completed.

<input type="checkbox"/> Baptized
<input type="checkbox"/> Endowed
<input type="checkbox"/> Sealed to parents
<input type="checkbox"/> Sealed to spouse
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Group Record exists for this couple
<input type="checkbox"/> Children's ordinances completed

Thorkel THORKESSON

(Father of no. 2) [] [] [] [] []

When born _____

Where _____

When married **17 May 1895**

Where _____

When died _____

Where _____

Bjarni THORKESSON

(Son of no. 2) [] [] [] [] []

When born **10 Dec 1899**

Where **Reykjavik, Gullbringur, Iceland**

When married **17 Oct 1922**

Where **Reykjavik, Gull, Iceland**

When died **6 Apr 1985**

Where **Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada**

Sigríður GRÍMS DR.

(Mother of no. 5) [] [] [] [] []

When born **8 Feb 1872**

Where **Stokkseyri, Arness, Iceland**

When died _____

Where _____

Jon BJARNASSON

(Father) [] [] [] [] []

When born _____

Where _____

When married _____

Where _____

When died _____

Where _____

Astrid JONSDOTTIR

(Mother) [] [] [] [] []

When born _____

Where _____

When died _____

Where _____

Jon BJARNASSON

(Father) [] [] [] [] []

When born _____

Where _____

When married _____

Where _____

When died _____

Where _____

Jon BJARNASSON

(Father) [] [] [] [] []

When born _____

Where _____

When married _____

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When died _____

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Jon BJARNASSON

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Jon BJARNASSON

(Father) [] [] [] [] []

When born _____

Where _____

When married _____

Where _____

When died _____

Where _____

Jon BJARNASSON

(Father) [] [] [] [] []

When born _____

A. Jon's pedigree chart

Web site: www.familysearch.org, www.familysearch.org, www.familysearch.org
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Family Group Record

If typing, set spacing at 1 1/2. Page of

Husband (Given name(s))		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
(Born (day month year))		Place		LDS ordinance dates	
Christened		Place		Baptized	
Died		Place		Endowed	
Buried		Place		Sealed to parents	
Married		Place		Sealed to spouse	
Husband's father (Given name(s))		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Husband's mother (Given name(s))		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Wife (Given name(s))		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
(Born (day month year))		Place		LDS ordinance dates	
Christened		Place		Baptized	
Died		Place		Endowed	
Buried		Place		Sealed to parents	
Wife's father (Given name(s))		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Wife's mother (Given name(s))		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Children		Last child (whether living or dead) in order of birth		LDS ordinance dates	
(Given name(s))		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
(Born (day month year))		Place		Baptized	
Christened		Place		Endowed	
Buried		Place		Sealed to parents	
(Spouse Given name(s))		Last name		Sealed to spouse	
Married		Place		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
(Born (day month year))		Place		Baptized	
Christened		Place		Endowed	
Died		Place		Sealed to parents	
(Spouse Given name(s))		Last name		Sealed to spouse	
Married		Place		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
(Born (day month year))		Place		Baptized	
Christened		Place		Endowed	
Died		Place		Sealed to parents	
(Spouse Given name(s))		Last name		Sealed to spouse	
Married		Place		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
(Born (day month year))		Place		Baptized	
Christened		Place		Endowed	
Died		Place		Sealed to parents	
(Spouse Given name(s))		Last name		Sealed to spouse	
Married		Place		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	

Select **only one** of the following options. The option you select applies to all names in this form.

☐ **Option 1—Family File** Send all names to my family file at the _____ Temple.

☐ **Option 2—Temple File** Send all names to any temple, and assign profiles for all approved ordinances.

☐ **Option 3—Ancestral File** Send all research purposes only, not for ordinances. I am including the required pedigree chart.

Your name _____

 Address _____

 Phone () _____

 Date prepared _____

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B. Jon begins a family group record with Sigríður Grímsdóttir listed as a child.

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The following pages walk you through the research process. In the case study, Jon is looking for the family of Sigríður Grímsdóttir. He takes his family group records and pedigree chart to a family history center. Here he

looks in the Family History Library Catalog for the records he wants and orders the microfilms he needs. He makes several visits to the center. Follow these same steps to find your family.

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Case study: Sigríður Grímsdóttir was born in 1872 in Stokkseyri Parish, Stokkseyrarhr., Árnes County, Iceland.

Your ancestor: _____, _____, in _____, _____, _____, Iceland.
name birth date parish clerical district county

1 FIND YOUR ANCESTOR'S BIRTH (CHRISTENING) RECORD IN CHURCH RECORDS. (See "Church Records: Birth," on page 9.)

A. At the family history center, Jon searches in the Family History Library Catalog for the parish in Iceland where his ancestor was born (Stokkseyri Parish). Then he looks for church records. (See "Using the Family History Library Catalog," on page 8.)

B. He finds the film number 0073715 and orders it. He finds Sigríður's birth record on the film. Her surname (family name) is listed as Grímsdóttir.

(See "Naming Customs" on page 13.) He photocopies the record for his files.

C. On the family group record, Jon writes:
(1) Sigríður's birth information on the front, and
(2) source information on the back (such as parish name, film number, volume and years covered, and page number).

Number	Name of Child	Birth Date	Christening Date	Parents	Christening Witnesses
1	Sigríður Grímsdóttir	1872	1872	Grímur Grímsdóttir og Elín, dóttir Bjarni Grímsdóttir og Elín	Þorvaldur Grímsdóttir, Páll Grímsdóttir, Páll Grímsdóttir, Páll Grímsdóttir

2 FIND YOUR ANCESTOR'S FAMILY IN CENSUS RECORDS. (See "National Census Records," on page 10.)

A. Jon now looks for the first census after Sigríður's birth. Icelandic censuses are listed at the country level. Jon looks in the Family History Library Catalog for Iceland, then the topic "Census-1880."

B. Jon finds this census on FHL film 0073381.

C. On the film he finds the county of Árnes, then the parish of Stokkseyri, where Sigríður's family was living when she was born. The census lists the entire family.

D. Jon estimates the birth year for each family member from the ages given in the census by subtracting the age of the person from the year of the census. (These birth years will be approximate.)

E. On the family group record, Jon writes:
(1) information about all family members on the front, and
(2) source information on the back.

F. In the same way, Jon searches earlier and later censuses to see if there are any more children in this family.

Residence Name	Family's Enumeration	Person's Enumeration	Full Name	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Creed	Birthplace	Status in Family
Stokkseyri	1	1	Sigríður Grímsdóttir	F	10	Single	Catholic	Iceland	Daughter
Stokkseyri	2	2	Grímur Grímsdóttir	M	39	Married	Catholic	Iceland	Head of Household
Stokkseyri	3	3	Elín Grímsdóttir	F	11	Single	Catholic	Iceland	Daughter
Stokkseyri	4	4	Bjarni Grímsdóttir	M	10	Single	Catholic	Iceland	Son
Stokkseyri	5	5	Sigríður Grímsdóttir	F	9	Single	Catholic	Iceland	Daughter
Stokkseyri	6	6	Þorvaldur Grímsdóttir	M	6	Single	Catholic	Iceland	Son
Stokkseyri	7	7	Guðmundur Grímsdóttir	M	3	Single	Catholic	Iceland	Son
Stokkseyri	8	8	Páll Grímsdóttir	M	1	Single	Catholic	Iceland	Son

2

2

2

2

1

Write date as: 4 Oct. 1866

Write places as: Tynon, Polk, North Carolina, USA or
St. Marins, Birmingham, Warwick, Eng.

Family Group Record

If typing, set spacing at 1 1/2. Page of

Husband Given name(s) <i>Grímur</i>		Last name <i>GÍSLASÓN</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year)	Place	LDS ordinance dates	Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized		
Died	Place	Endowed		
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents		
Married <i>27 Oct 1868</i>	Place <i>Stokkseyri, Árnessýsla, Iceland</i>	Sealed to spouse		
Husband's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased
Husband's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased
Wife Given name(s) <i>Elín</i>		Maiden name <i>BJARNADÓTTIR</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year)	Place	LDS ordinance dates	Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized		
Died	Place	Endowed		
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents		
Wife's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased
Wife's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased
Children List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.				LDS ordinance dates Temple
1	Sex <i>M</i>	Given name(s) <i>Páll</i>	Last name <i>GRÍMSSON</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
Christened	Place	Endowed		
Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
Spouse Given name(s)		Last name		
Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
2	Sex <i>M</i>	Given name(s) <i>Bjarni</i>	Last name <i>GRÍMSSON</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
Christened	Place	Endowed		
Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
Spouse Given name(s)		Last name		
Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
3	Sex <i>F</i>	Given name(s) <i>Sigríður</i>	Last name <i>GRÍMSDÓTTIR</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
Christened	Place	Endowed		
Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
Spouse Given name(s) <i>Thorkell</i>		Last name <i>THORKESSON</i>		
Married <i>17 May 1895</i>	Place <i>Stokkseyri, Árnes, Iceland</i>	Sealed to spouse		
Select only one of the following options. The option you select applies to all names on this form.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 1—Family File Send all names to my family file at the _____ Temple.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 2—Temple File Send all names to any temple, and assign proxies for all approved ordinances.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 3—Ancestral File Send all names to the computerized Ancestral File for research purposes only, not for ordinances. I am including the required pedigree chart.				
Your name		Address		
Phone ()		Date prepared		

4

3

3

Front of family group record

1

2

3

4

Sources of information Add further information on attached sheets as necessary.	
<i>Stokkseyri Parish Records</i>	<i>FHL Film # 0073715 pp. 54, 59, 60, 65, 67, 68, 70, 74, 128</i>
<i>1880 Census of Stokkseyri Parish</i>	<i>FHL Film #0073381</i>

Note: Please take every reasonable step to see that the information on this form is as accurate and complete as practical. This will help maintain the integrity of Church family history files and reduce duplication of temple ordinance work.

Back of family group record

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

3

FIND BIRTH (CHRISTENING) RECORDS FOR YOUR ANCESTOR'S BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHURCH RECORDS.

(See "Church Records: Birth" on page 9.)

A. Now that he has estimated birth years, Jon looks for the birth records of Sigríður's siblings who were listed in the 1880 Census: Páll, age 11; Bjarni, age 10; Valgerdur, age 6; Guðmundur, age 3; and "young" Bjarni, age 1. In the Family History Library Catalog, Jon finds FHL film 0073715, which covers the time period for their births. He finds the film and the birth records.

B. On the family group record, Jon writes: (1) information from the birth record on the front, and (2) source information on the back.

C. Jon browses the parish registers again to see if there are any other brothers and sisters. He does this because children who were born and died between censuses would not be in a census record.

Number	Name of Child	Birth Date	Christening Date	Parents	Christening Witnesses
Skriftbörn fædd 1869					
Nº	Nafn barnsins	Skim. dagur	Foreldrar	Skimmarvottar	
3	Páll Guðmundsson	18. 19.	Grimur Guðlaugsson og Elin Bjarnadóttir hjón a. Ceypranessi	Gfr. Bjarni Hlaugsson og M. Þórtell Jónsson bandur a. Þeyrarnesi og Sigríður Guðmundsdóttir a. Sigríðsdóttur.	
6	Þórunn Sveinsdóttir	5. 5.			
7	Guðrún	Septbr			

4

FIND THE MARRIAGE RECORD OF YOUR ANCESTOR'S PARENTS. (See "Church Records: Marriage," on page 11.)

A. Jon looks in the catalog for records of marriages performed where the oldest known child was born. In the church records for Stokkseyri parish, the marriage records are on the same film as the birth records (FHL film 0073715), but in another section.

B. Jon starts with the date of the first child's birth and searches earlier records until he finds the marriage. If he couldn't find it, then he would search later records.

(If he couldn't find the marriage in this parish, he would try the parish where the parents were born, as shown in the census, then neighboring parishes.)

C. On the family group record, Jon writes: (1) the marriage information on the front, and (2) source information on the back.

D. Jon has the information he needs for this family.

Number	Bridal Pair	Age	Engagement and Marriage Dates	Bondsmen	Remarks
Gift hjóse 1867-68					
Nº	Nafn og stítt brúðgöma	Alm. Giftingardagur	Garamennur	Alm. Giftingardagur	
4	Grimur Guðlaugsson	28	Þórunn Sveinsdóttir	Gfr. Bjarni Hlaugsson og M. Þórtell Jónsson bandur a. Þeyrarnesi og Sigríður Guðmundsdóttir a. Sigríðsdóttur.	
1	Þórunn Sveinsdóttir	26			

Latter-day Saints now have the minimal information required for this family's temple submission. See additional instructions for submitting names for temple ordinances.

NOW YOU CAN REPEAT STEPS 1 THROUGH 4 TO FIND ANOTHER FAMILY.

Look for the families of each of your ancestor's parents. Start with a new family group record, and look first for a birth record.

HELPS FOR FINDING RECORDS

Finding Places

To find records in the Family History Library Catalog and to search Icelandic church and census records, you will need to know the parish, clerical district, and county in Iceland where your ancestor lived.

Place Levels (Jurisdictions)

Places are usually written from smallest to largest on family group records. Civil or court districts (found at the county level in Iceland) are not usually listed. However, it is a good idea to list the clerical district.

Ósyrarnes, (Village)	Stokkseyri, (Parish)	Árnes, (County)	Iceland (Country)
Stokkseyri, (Parish)	Stokkseyrarhr., (Clerical District)	Árnes, (County)	Iceland (Country)

You may also have a situation where a village within the parish has the same name as the parish: Laugardælir is a village in Laugardælir parish in Árnes County. This place-name would be recorded twice on the family group record for proper jurisdictional identification.

Parish (*Sókn*)

To find births, marriages, or deaths in church records, you need to know the parish where your ancestor lived.

A parish is the area (jurisdiction) where a Lutheran minister served and kept records (similar to a Latter-day Saint ward). The parish is usually named for the largest town in the area.

Clerical District (*Hrepp* or *Hreppur*)

Each Icelandic parish belongs to a larger ecclesiastical jurisdiction called a *hrepp* (clerical district). A clerical district consists of two or more parishes served by the same minister.

To find the clerical district, type the name of the parish in “Locality Browse” on the FamilySearch™ system at a family history center. You can also look for the clerical district in Eric Jonasson’s book. (See “Tips” at the top of the next column.)

County (*Sysla* or *Syslu*)

To find census records, you need to know the county. It is also helpful to know the village, parish, and clerical district.

Tips

To find your ancestor’s parish (*sókn*), see the following:

- If you know the county, see an alphabetical list of Icelandic parishes, clerical districts, and counties in the Icelandic Reference binder in the Family History Library. A nonalphabetical listing of parishes and counties and a map can also be found in Eric Jonasson’s *Tracing Your Icelandic Family Tree* (FHL book 949.12 D27j).
- If you know the village or farm, see *Index of Farms and Villages in Iceland, 1847–1848* (FHL fiche 6054058). This lists the parish, clerical district (*hrepp*), and county (*sysla*) to which that village or farm belongs.

When using Icelandic census records, look at the listings for the country.

To find your ancestor’s parish in the census records:

- Find the county name (*sysla*) on the film, and then look for the parish. Because Iceland has a small population, it may take only a few pages to list the entire population of the parish at the time the census was taken.

On family group records by genealogists:

- If four places are listed, the second place is usually the parish.
- If only three places are listed, the first place is usually the parish.

If you do not know where in Iceland your ancestor was born and your ancestor immigrated to the United States, see *Tracing Immigrant Origins Research Outline* (34111). (See “Where to Order Publications” on page 13.)

HELPS FOR FINDING RECORDS

Map of Iceland, Counties

Iceland



The counties of Iceland



Árnes County with clerical districts

HELPS FOR FINDING RECORDS

Using the Family History Library Catalog • Using Microfilm

USING THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY CATALOG

Use the Family History Library Catalog to find any record available from the Family History Library. In the catalog, you can find the call numbers that you need to find and order records. The catalog is available at www.familysearch.org and at family history centers.

To find the information you need in the catalog, click **Library**, and then click **Family History Library Catalog**.

1. Click **Place Search**.

You will see:

Place

Part of (optional)

2. For the "Place," type: **the name of the parish**

3. For "Part of," type: **Iceland**

4. Then find a topic, such as **Church Records**.

5. Click on the title you want.

6. Click on **View Film Notes**.

7. Look for the kind of record you want—such as *Fæddir* (Birth)—for the years you want. Write down the FHL (Family History Library) film number.

For more help, see *Using the Family History Library Catalog* (30966).

Tips

Use the place search to find Icelandic church and census records.

To find Icelandic church records, look in the parish.

To find Icelandic census records, look in the country.

If no records are listed when you type in the place:

- Look for spelling variations of the place-name.
- Make sure you type the name of the parish, not the village.

When you find a description of a record you need, copy the catalog page. This page usually lists the order of the places and record types you will find in the record (film).

When typing a place-name in the catalog, ignore diacritics (accent marks). For example, *Árnessýsla* (Icelandic for Arnes County) could be listed only as Arnes.

USING MICROFILM

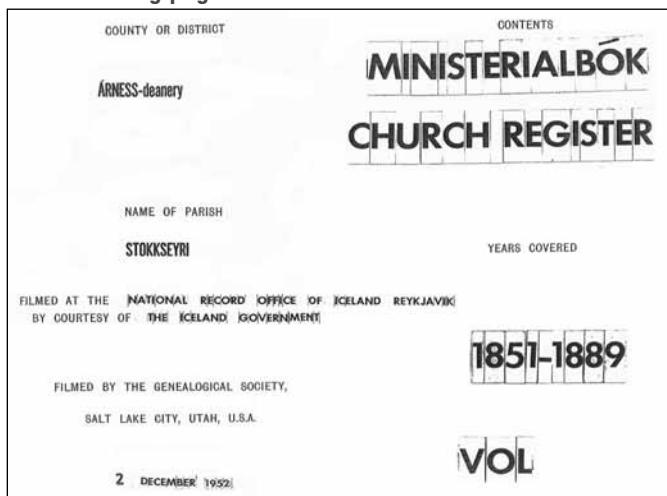
At this time, most of the Family History Library's records are on microfilm. When you have found and ordered the microfilm you need, the family history center staff can help you find a microfilm reader and thread the film into the machine.

Tips

When using the microfilm:

- Ask one of the family history staff members to help you if you are having problems with the microfilm reel.
- Make sure the years and topics on the title page are the years and topics you need. Three, four, or more separate books may be on a single microfilm. If the first title page doesn't cover the years and topics you want, turn through the film to the next black space. Then look for the next title page and the years and topics covered.
- If the image will not come into focus, make sure the film goes between the two glass plates, not under them.
- Learn how to turn the handle to move the film backward and forward. Be careful not to roll the film off the reel.

Most items or books on an Icelandic film have a title page and an ending page.



Title page, Stokkseyri Parish, church records (FHL film 0073715).

END

This page on a microfilm indicates the end of this book of church records for Stokkseyri Parish.

Late 1600s to Early 1900s

- Find birth information for virtually every person who lived in Iceland.
- Verify the birthplace of an ancestor.
- Establish a time and place of a family's residence.

Birth and christening information is found in the same record from about 1814 forward. The Icelandic word *fæddir* means “born.” The infant baptism or christening date (*skínardagur*) is also listed in this record.

About 1883–1887	Many of the church record headings began to be printed, rather than handwritten.
------------------------	--

- Child's name
- Parents' names, sometimes occupation, and residence (which is also the child's birthplace)
- Godparents' or witnesses' names
- Birth date
- Christening (baptism) date

- Write down the names of the godparents and witnesses at the christening. These may be relatives, friends, or important members of the community whose names may lead you to other relatives.

- Other church records give confirmation, death or burial, arrival or removal, and ecclesiastical census information.
- For help reading the records, see *Genealogical Word List: Icelandic* (36346) and *Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029), because some of the earlier Icelandic church records and census records use Danish words and column headings. (See “Where to Order Publications” on page 13.) Look for English translations of the record headings.

- Your ancestor's name.
- The parish and county of birth or residence.
- The approximate birth date.

- Family History Library and family history centers
- Iceland National and Regional Archives

Part of	Iceland
---------	---------

1. Gender for birth (*fæddir*) records. Males (*Karlkjns, Piltar, Piltbörn, Sveinbörn, or Sveinar*) are listed on the left side of double pages. Females (*Qvennkjns, Meybörn, Stúllkur, Stúllkubörn, or Meyjar*) are listed on the right side.
2. Date (year, month, day), from earliest to most recent.
3. Name.

1869 Birth Record for Páll Grímsson (FHL film 0073715)

NATIONAL CENSUS RECORDS (MANNTÖL)

1703 to 1901

Use Census Records To:

- Find family members and members of the household.
- Learn the names, ages, and birthplaces of brothers, sisters, parents, grandparents, and so on.

If you do not find your family in a census, look in nearby parishes.

The census does not list children who were born and died between censuses.

Content

- Names
- Ages
- Relationships
- Birthplaces (beginning with the 1845 census)
- Occupations

Icelandic national censuses are available for these years:
1703, 1762, 1801, 1816, 1835, 1840, 1845,
1850, 1855, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1901

Additionally, Icelandic ministerial or ecclesiastical censuses, known as *salnaregistur*, were taken at the parish level yearly. These censuses list the name, age, and sometimes the birthplace of each person living in the household. They are found with the listings for church records. They begin in the 1700s and could extend into the 1900s.

Tips

- Reading the ages is usually easier than reading the names. Figure out how old your ancestor would be; then scan the age column for persons that age (give or take a year). Then try to read the names.

- Later censuses have more columns and information than earlier censuses.
- For help reading the records, see *Genealogical Word List: Icelandic* (36346) and *Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029), because some of the earlier Icelandic church records and census records use Danish words and column headings. (See "Where to Order Publications" on page 13.) Look for English translations of the record headings.

Searching Census Records

Before searching, you must know:

- Your ancestor's name.
- The parish or clerical district, county, and approximate time he or she lived there.

Located at:

- Family History Library and family history centers
- Iceland National and Regional Archives

Family History Library Catalog:

Place search:

Place

Iceland

Topics to choose: **Census**

Search for:

1. The year of the census.
2. The county and then the parish.
3. The age and then the name of a family member.

Main Census of the population in Stokkseyrar Parish, Arnes County, South District (taken) 1 October 1880														
Residence Name	The Family's Enumeration	The Person's Enumeration	Every Person's Full Name	Sex Male or Female	Age	Marital Status	Creed	Birthplace	Status in Family					
Adalkeyrsla														
um fólktal m. fl. í Stokkseyrar sókn, Arnes sýslu, 1. október 1880. Súður amt,														
Boja öfn og hús	Númer	Full nafn allra heimamanna á hverjum hús eða í hverju húsi. Öskið hús tilfærast á þann hátt, að sagt sje til kyns barnsins (skrifður drengur eða óskil stífa).	Kyn karlkyll (K.) eða kvenkyll (Kv.)	Aldur hvers eins; að eins full aldurs á skulu meðtaln. Börn, sem eru á fyrsta árinu tilfærast sem „ógið árs-gjafi“.	Gift (G.) ógift (Ó) skilið, skila (S) eða skilið frá hjólaðandi (S).	Trúarbrögð	Fæðingarstaða (afn og amt, að land, ef fæddur er utan Íslands).	Staða á heimilinu, húsbóndi, húsmóðir, börn, atvika, hja., menn til húsa á heimilinu, nafnbót, embætti, starf, atvinnuvegur, eða á hverju þeir lifa, eða hvert þeir eru á sviði.	Af þessum voru:					Atvikaemdir.
									maki og kvenna húsfr.	hvarfandi ógift og óskilað húsfr.	húsfr. tilfærast á yngri kyni.	húsfr. tilfærast á yngri kyni.	húsfr.	
Örgætt 2	1	Grímur Gíslason	K.	41	G	Lútheran	Arnes	Bóndi						
	2	Elín Bjarnadóttir	Kv	39	G		Arnes	Hinn húsfr.						
	3	Páll Grímsson	K	11	O		Arnes	hinn						
	4	Bjarni Grímsson	K	10	O		Arnes	hinn						
	5	Sigríður Grímsdóttir	Kv.	9	O		Arnes	hinn						
	6	Valgerður Grímsdóttir	Kv	6	O		Arnes	hinn						
	7	Gudmundur Grímsson	K	3	O		Arnes	hinn						
	8	Bjarni Grímsson	K	1	O		Arnes	hinn						
Öseyrarnes 2	1	Grímur Gíslason	M	41	Md	Lutheran	Here in the parish	Farmer						
	2	Elín Bjarnadóttir	F	39	Md	"	likewise	His Wife						
	3	Páll Grímsson	M	11	Unmd	"	likewise	Their						
	4	Bjarni Grímsson	M	10	Unmd	"	likewise	Children						
	5	Sigríður Grímsdóttir	F	9	Unmd	"	likewise							
	6	Valgerður Grímsdóttir	F	6	Unmd	"	likewise							
	7	Gudmundur Grímsson	M	3	Unmd	"	likewise							
	8	Bjarni Grímsson	M	1	Unmd	"	likewise							

1880 Census Record for the Grímur Gíslason family (FHL film 0073381)

CHURCH RECORDS: MARRIAGE (GIFT HJÓN)

Late 1600s to Early 1900s

Use Marriage Records To:

- Find a couple's marriage date and place and their ages.
- Find bondsmen, who may be family members.

If you don't find a marriage record, search nearby parishes. In large cities, marriage records may be in a separate book. In other places, marriages are in the same book as the baptism, confirmation, death and burial, and moving records. Records are usually in this order: births, confirmations, marriages, and then burials.

Content

- Groom's name, age, occupation, residence
- Bride's name, age, occupation, residence
- Bondsmen
- Marriage date

Two bondsmen are listed in these records. Bondsmen are similar to a best man in a wedding party. Bondsmen knew the bride and groom and attested that they were legally able to get married.

Tips

- To find a marriage record, look first in the parish where the first known child was born. Then look in parishes where the parents were born (as listed in census records), and then nearby parishes.
- For help reading the records, see *Genealogical Word List: Icelandic* (36346) and *Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029), because some of the earlier Icelandic church

records and census records use Danish words and column headings. (See "Where to Order Publications" on page 13.) Look for English translations of the record headings.

Searching Marriage Records

Before searching, you must know:

- The names of the bride and groom.
- The approximate birth date of the first child.
- The parish of residence.

Located at:

- Family History Library and family history centers
- Iceland National and Regional Archives

Family History Library Catalog:

Place search:

Place

Part of

Topics to choose: **Church Records**

Search for:

1. The parish.
2. The date (year, month, day), from earliest to most recent.
3. The couple's names.

Marriages 1867-68						
	Number	Names and Status of the Bridal Pair	Age	Engagement and Marriage Dates	Bondsmen	Remarks
<i>Gift hjón 1867-68</i>						
<i>Nr. Nöfn og stjött brúðhjóna. Aldur. Stofningardagur. Stofningssamningur. Mörðugleikar.</i>						
#4	Grímur Gíslason	28	Banns first read on 12 Oct. (1868), married 27 Oct. (1868)	Director Gísli Gíslason at Stórahrauni and Bjarni Hannesson at Óseyrarnesi	The amount of the morning gift (dowry), 200 national dollars	
	Elín Bjarnadóttir	26				
<i>1. Stúlaugue Jónsdóttir 21 ára. Þórunn búið á Bláskarshöfði, sum of Anna Þúsladóttir 33 ára. en gift aðstúlað hana á sama bá, yngisfyll. 1870</i>						

1868 Marriage Record of Grímur Gíslason and Elín Bjarnadóttir (FHL film 0073715)

ADDITIONAL HELPS

Reading Gothic Script • Summary

READING GOTHIC SCRIPT

Reading the old-style Icelandic script may be more difficult than the Icelandic language. It may seem overwhelming at first, but you will find that although each scribe used a variation of the old-style script, they were all quite consistent in their writing.

You will also find that after learning the most common given names and a few common terms, you will be able to read most of the documents you encounter.

Tips

- For help reading Icelandic and understanding handwriting, see *Genealogical Word List: Icelandic* (36346) and *Genealogical Word List: Danish* (31029), because some of the earlier Icelandic church records and census records use Danish words and column headings. (See “Where to Order Publications” on page 13.)
- For help reading Gothic script, see *Danish-Norwegian Paleography* (FHL fiche 6030017), or similar books.
- Practice writing the names of your ancestors in the handwriting style shown in the above publications. This will help you learn to read old Icelandic records much faster.
- Learn to recognize Icelandic names. About a dozen male and female names and their variations are used repeatedly.

The Icelandic alphabet has upper and lower case letters not found in English.

a á b c d ð e é f g h i í j k l m n o ó p q r s t u ú v w x y ý z þ(th) æ ö

Look for these letters at the end of the alphabet:

þ, æ, ö

The letters æ and ö are considered separate letters and not just inflections of an *a* or *o*.

The Danish letter Å could be written as *Aa*. The letters Å and *Aa* are interchangeable. If a word or a place-name begins with Å, it will be at the end of the alphabet. If it begins with *Aa*, it will be at the beginning of the alphabet.

SUMMARY: FINDING AN ICELANDIC FAMILY FROM 1835 TO 1900

For detailed steps, see the case study on pages 3–5.

1. Find your ancestor's birth record in the church records.
 - This verifies what you know.
 - Write down what you find, and record your source information.
2. Find your ancestor's family in Icelandic census records.
 - Look for the first census following your ancestor's birth. Check the census taken in your ancestor's birthplace.
 - Look in earlier and later censuses to see if there are other children.
 - Write down what you find (names, ages, birthplaces, and so on).
 - Estimate birth years from the ages.
 - Write down your source information.
3. Find birth records for your ancestor's brothers and sisters in church records.
 - Using places and estimated birth years from the census, look for birth records.
 - Write the information you find and your source information.
4. Find marriage records of your ancestor's parents.
 - Look for records of marriages in the parish where the oldest known child was born.
 - Start with the date of the first child's birth, and search backward and forward until you find the marriage.
 - Write down what you find, and record your source information.

Then follow the same steps to find a parent's family.

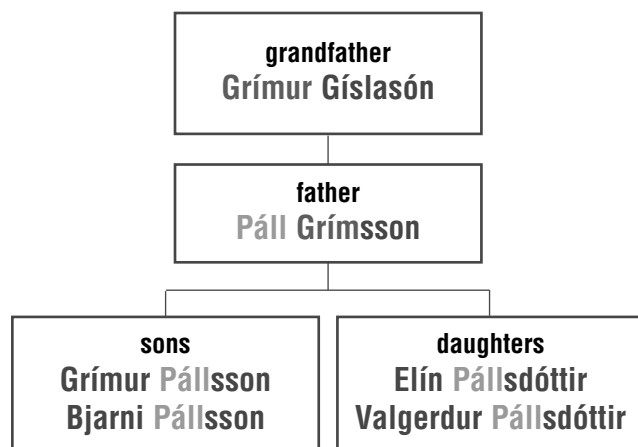
ADDITIONAL HELPS

Naming Customs, Time Line, and More Resources

Naming Customs in Iceland

Patronymics are still in use today.

- A boy's surname (family name) is his father's given name and the suffix *son* or *sson*.
- A girl's surname (family name) is her father's given name and the suffix *dóttir*.
- The woman's name doesn't change when she marries.
- Sometimes a person used an occupation, town name, or other nickname in addition to his or her patronymic surname, though that occurred more in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden than in Iceland.



Time Line

- 1703 First complete national Icelandic census. This census has an every-name index.
- 1762 Next national Icelandic census. This census has a head-of-household index.
- 1801 Census format and column headings were the same as the Danish census in this and all subsequent censuses.
- 1814 Church records throughout Iceland began using standard terms—the same column headings as the Danish, though they were mostly handwritten rather than printed.
- 1816 Census. This year's census has an every-name index.
- 1845 Icelandic censuses began listing birthplaces.
- 1885 Church record headings began to be printed rather than handwritten.

More about Icelandic Research:

- Eric Jonasson, *Tracing Your Icelandic Family Tree*. 1975. (FHL book 949.12 D27j).
- Genealogical Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Major Genealogical Record Sources in Iceland*. 1967 (Revised 1977). Research Papers Series D, #2.

Archives and Libraries

Family History Centers

www.familysearch.org

Tel. 800-346-6044 Inside U.S. and Canada

801-240-1000 Outside U.S. and Canada

Family History Library

35 North West Temple Street

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3400 USA

Tel. 801-240-2331

Icelandic National Archives

(Þjóðskjalasafn Íslands)

Laugavegur 162

105 Reykjavík

ICELAND

www.archives.is

E-mail: info@archives.is

Where to Order Publications:

- Distribution Services:
Tel. 801-240-3800 (Salt Lake City area)
Toll free 800-537-5971
- www.familysearch.org

All Family History Library publications are described in: *Family History Materials List* (34083).

Family Group Record

If typing, set spacing at 1 1/2. Page of

Write date as: 4 Oct. 1896

Write place as: Tryon, Polk, North Carolina, USA or
St. Martins, Birmingham, Warwick, Eng.

Husband Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year)	Place	LDS ordinance dates		Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized			
Died	Place	Endowed			
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents			
Married	Place	Sealed to spouse			
Husband's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Husband's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Wife Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year)	Place	LDS ordinance dates		Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized			
Died	Place	Endowed			
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents			
Wife's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Wife's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Children List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.				LDS ordinance dates	Temple
1	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
	Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
	Christened	Place	Endowed		
	Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
	Spouse Given name(s)		Last name		
	Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
2	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
	Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
	Christened	Place	Endowed		
	Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
	Spouse Given name(s)		Last name		
	Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
3	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
	Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
	Christened	Place	Endowed		
	Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
	Spouse Given name(s)		Last name		
	Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
Select only one of the following options. The option you select applies to all names on this form.			Your name		
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 1—Family File Send all names to my family file at the _____ Temple.			Address		
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 2—Temple File Send all names to any temple, and assign proxies for all approved ordinances.					
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 3—Ancestral File Send all names to the computerized Ancestral File for research purposes only, not for ordinances. I am including the required pedigree chart.					
			Phone ()		Date prepared

Husband Given name(s)			Last name	
Wife Given name(s)			Maiden name	
Children List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.			LDS ordinance dates	Temple
4	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
		Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized
		Christened	Place	Endowed
		Died	Place	Sealed to parents
		Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse
5	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
		Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized
		Christened	Place	Endowed
		Died	Place	Sealed to parents
		Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse
6	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
		Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized
		Christened	Place	Endowed
		Died	Place	Sealed to parents
		Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse
7	Sex	Given name(s)	Last name <input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
		Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized
		Christened	Place	Endowed
		Died	Place	Sealed to parents
		Spouse Given name(s)	Last name	
		Married	Place	Sealed to spouse
Other marriages List other marriages and sealings of the husband, wife, and children on this form. List any necessary explanations.				
Sources of information Add further information on attached sheets as necessary.				

Note: Please take every reasonable step to see that the information on this form is as accurate and complete as practical. This will help maintain the integrity of Church family history files and reduce duplication of temple ordinance work.

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Other publications you will need:

Genealogical Word List: Danish (31029)
Genealogical Word List: Icelandic (36346)
Using the Family History Library Catalog (30966)

For Latter-day Saints:
 Instructions for submitting names for temple
 ordinances.

Please send suggestions to:

Publications Coordination
 Family History Library
 35 North West Temple Street
 Salt Lake City, UT 84150 USA
 Fax: 801-240-5551

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ENGLISH



4 02366 93000 5

36693

ICELAND COLLECTION

AVAILABLE AT THE

UTAH VALLEY FAMILY HISTORY CENTER

AND

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

HAROLD B. LEE LIBRARY

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ICELAND

Utah Valley Regional Family History Centers' Collection of Family History Records for Iceland

Almanacs

Kongelig Dansk Hof- og Statskalender

Directories of danish state government officials and employees
including important data on royalty

1898

564364

Atlases, Gazetteers and Maps

Books

Gazetteer to AMS first edition 1:50,000 & 1:250,000 maps of Iceland. 1953.

United States. Army Map Service.

G 103 .U67x no. 1

Iceland, official standard names approved by the United States Board

on Geographic Names / prepared in the Office of Geography, Department


of the Interior. United States Board on Geographic Names. G 105 .U53x no.57

The cartography of Iceland / by Halldór Hermannsson.

PT 7103 .I7 vol 21 1966

Maps

Iceland. United States. Central Intelligence Agency.

 EX 3.10/4:IC 2/3

Island / kortagerð Hans H. Hansen = Iceland = Island = Islande /

cartography Hans

G 6930 1999 .M3x NW

Island uppdráttur ferðafélags Íslands ; Ísland, vegir og vegalengdir = roads and
distances / Landmælingar Íslands.

G 6930 1976 .L36x

Ísland. Geodætisk institut (Denmark)

G 6930 1945 .D4

The cartography of Iceland / by Halldór Hermannsson.

PT 7103 .I7 vol 21 1966

See BYLINE under the following headings for additional BYU holdings:

ICELAND ROAD MAPS [4]

Biography

AEfir laerdra manna

Biographies of learned men in Iceland from the years 1400 to 1800. They are arranged in alphabetical order by given name then surname. These records are handwritten manuscripts which have been bound into 66 volumes.

B. 40 Jon porsteinsson - Rudolf Lassen b. 41 Laurentius Armgrimmsson - Magnus Gisslasson b. 42 Magnus Grimsson - Magnus Olafsson	73246
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b. 63 porgeir Guomundsson - porlakur Loftsson	

Alpingismannatal 1845-1945: konungsfulltrua, landshofingia, raoherra o.fl.

Biographies of the members of the Icelandic legislative assembly from 1840 to 1945 83349

Minningarrit islenzkra hermanna, 1914-1918

Contains short biographies of the soldiers and nurses from Manitoba, North Dakota and Iceland and a few from other parts of the U.S. and Canada who served in the war. 105397

Prestaaefir a Islandi

Biographies of the priests in Iceland from the years 1000 to 1930. Volume 17 is a register of the names of the priests and the years they served. These records are handwritten manuscripts that have been bound into 22 volumes.

B. 2 Skaftafells profastsdaemi b. 3 Rangarvalla profastsdaemi	73262
b. 4 Arnes profastsdaemi	73263
b. 8 Snaefellsnes profastsdaemi	73267

Vitae S. S. misterii candidatorum intra dicecesen ordinatorum Biographies of men ordained to the ministry in Iceland from 1746 to 1869.	73350
---	-------

Books

Aldamótamenn : þættir úr hetjusögu / Jónas Jónsson.	CT 1280 .J78x v. 1
---	--------------------

Bóndi er bústólpi / Guðmundur Jónsson sá um útgáfuna.	CT 1280 .B66 vol. 7
---	---------------------

Bútar úr ættasögu Íslendinga frá fyrri öldum : rannsóknir eldri og yngri ætta. I-III / Steinn Dofri.	CS 939 .K74 T46x 1952x
--	------------------------

Dauðir koma til dyra : sögur og þættir / Benjamín Sigvaldason.	CT 1280 .B46 D2x 1963
--	-----------------------

Feðraspor og fjörusprek / Magnús Björnsson á Syðra-Hóli.	CT 1282 .M184 A3 1966
--	-----------------------

Heimdragi : íslenzkur fróðleikur gamall og nýr / [Kristmundur Bjarnason annaðist ritstjórn]. Valdimar Jóhannsson, 1915-	DL 326 .H46 v. 1
--	------------------

Hið guðdómlega sjónarspil : endurminningar / Hannes Jónsson.	CT 1282 .H24 A3x 1970
--	-----------------------

Hver er maðurinn : íslendingaaevir / Brynleifur Tobiasson hefir skrásett.	DL335 .B79x v.1
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Lögréttumannatal / Einar Bjarnason ; Sögufélag gaf út.	JN 7387 .E45x 1952 v.1
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Mannlíf í móttun : æviminningar Sæmundar G. Jóhannessonar frá Sjónarhæð.
CT 1282 .S23 A35 vol. 1

Mannlífsmyndir / eftir Guðm. Árnason.
AC 50 .I73x no. 135

Mannlífsmyndir / Sverrir Kristjánsson og Tómas Guðmundsson.
CT 1280 .S9

Merkir Íslendingar : nýr flokkur / [Jón Guðnason bjó til prentunar].
CT 1280 .M56x 1962 v. 4

Nye samling af danske- norske- og islandske- jubel-lærere, med hosføyede
slægt-registere og stam-tavler, samled og i trykken udgived af Christopher Giessing,
Roeskilde domkirkes og skoles cantor. B-67 (In Process)

Nye samling af danske- norske- og islandske- jubel-lærere : med hosføyede
slægt-registere og stam-tavler / samled og i trykken udgived af Christopher Giessing,
Roeskilde domkirkes og skoles cantor. CT 1251 .G54 1779

Staðarfellsætt : ásamt ágripi af Hrappseyjarætt / tekið hefur saman Jón Pjetursson frá
Kálfafellsstað ; viðaukar, Æviágrip Boga Benediktssonar á Staðarfelli eftir Hannes
Þorsteinsson og Feðgaævir eftir Boga Benediktsson á Staðarfelli. CS 939 .A2 J66x 1966

Stiftamtmand og amtmænd i kongeriget Danmark og Island 1660-1848 / Af J. Bloch.
Udg. af Rigsarkivet. DL 184 .B6 1895

Svipir og sagnir : þættir úr Húnavatnshringi.
DL 396 .A934 S95x 1948 vol.5

Vestur-íslenskar æviskrár. Benjamín Kristjánsson bjó undir prentun.
E 184 .I3 B46 vol. 1-3

Census

Index to Icelandic census 1703 537435 - 537436

Manntol, 1801

This census includes persons name, status in the family,
age, marital status, residence, and occupation.

NORDUR- OG AUSTURAMTI Húnavatnssýslur (Austur og

Vestur) Skagafjaroarsysla Eyjafjaroarsysla pingeyjarsyslur
(Suour og Norour) Mulasyslur

73359

Manntol, 1835

This census includes the persons name, status in the family, age, marital status, residence, and occupation.

NORDUR - OG AUSTURAMTI Hunavatnssyslur
(Austur og Vestur) Skagafjaroarsysla eyjafjaroarsysla
pingeyjarsyslu (Suour og Norour) Mulasyslur
(Norour og Suour)

73367

Manntol, 1840

This census includes the persons name, status in the family, age, marital status, residence, and occupation.

SUDURAMTI b. 1 Skaftafellssyslur (Austur og Vestur)
Vestmannaeyjarsysla Rangaravallasysla Arnessysla
Gullbringusysla Kjosarsysla Borgarfjaroarsysla

73368

VESTURAMTI b. 3 Myrasysla Snaefellsnes - og
Hnappadalssyslur Dalasysla Baroastrandarsyslur
(Austur og Vestur) Isafjaroarsyslur (Norour og Vestur)
Strandasysla

73369

NORDUR-OG AUSTURAMTI b.3 Hunavatnssyslur
(Austur og Vestur) Skagafjaroarsysla Eyjafjaroarsysla
pingeyjarsyslur (Suour og Norour) Mulasyslur
(Norour og Suour)

73369

Manntol, 1845

This census includes the persons name, status in the family, age, marital status, occupation, and other miscellaneous information.

SUDURAMTI b. 1 Skaftafellssyslur (Austur og Vestur)
Vestmannaeyjarsysla Rangaravallasysla b.2 Arnessysla
Gullbringusysla Kjosarsysla Borgarfjaroarsysla

73370

VESTURAMTI b. 3 Myrasysla Snaefellsnes - og
Hnappadalssyslur Dalasysla Baroastrandarsyslur
(Austur og Vestur) Lsajfjaroarsyslur (Norour og Vestur)
Strandasysla

73370

Manntol, 1850

This census contains persons name, status in family, age, marital status, occupation, and other miscellaneous information.

SUDURAMTI b. 1 Skaftafellssýslur (Austur og Vestur)
Rangarvallasýsla Vestmannaeyjarsýsla Arnessýsla
Gullbringusýsla Kjósarsýsla Borgarfjarosýsla 73372

VESTURAMTI b. 2 Myrasýsla Snaefellsnes - og
Hnappadalssýslur Dalasýsla Baroastrandarsýslur
(Austur og Vestur) Isafjarosýslur (Norður og Vestur)
Strandasýsla 73373

NORDUR- OG AUSTURAMTI b. 3 Hunavatnssýslur
Austur og Vestur) Skagafjarosýsla Eyjafjarosýsla
Þingeyjarsýslur (Suður og Norður) Múlasýslur
(Norður og Suður) 73373

Manntol, 1855

This census contains the persons name, status in the family, age, marital status, and occupation.

SUDURAMTRI b. 1 Skaftafellssýslur (Austur og Vestur)
Vestmannaeyjarsýsla, Rangarvallasýsla Arnessýsla
Gullbringusýsla Kjósarsýsla Borgarfjarosýsla 73374

VESTURAMTI b. 2 Myrasýsla Snaefellsnes - og
Hnappadalssýslur Dalasýsla Baroastrandarsýslur
(Austur og Vestur) Isafjarosýslur (Norður og Vestur)
Strandasýsla 73374

Manntol, 1860

This census contains persons name, age, marital status, religion, and occupation.

SUDURAMTRI b. 1 Skaftafellssýslur (Austur og Vestur)
Rangarvallasýsla Vestmannaeyjarsýsla, b. 2 Arnessýsla
Gullbringusýsla Kjósarsýsla Borgarfjarosýsla 73376

VESTURAMTI b. 3 Myrasysla Snaefellsnes - og
Hnappadalssyslur Dalasysla Baroastrandarsyslur
(Austur og Vestur) Isafjaroarsyslur (Norour og Vestur)
Strandasysla 73376

NORDUR-OG AUSTURAMTI b.4 Hunavatnssyslur
(Austur og Vestur) Skagafjaroarsysla Eyjafjaroarsysla
b.5 pingeyjarsyslur (Suour og Norour) Mulasyslur
(Norour og Suour) 73377

Manntol, 1870

This census contains the farm name, persons name, sex, age,
marital status, religion, birth place, occupation, and other
miscellaneous information. This census for Eyjafjarðarsýsla,
Þingeyjarsýslur (Suður og Norður) and Múlasýslur
(Norður og Suður) no longer exists.

SUDURAMTRI b. 1 Skaftafellssyslur (Austur og Vestur)
Rangarvallasysla Vestmannaeyjarsysla, b. 2 Arnessysla
Gullbringusysla Kjosarsysla Borgarfjaroarsysla 73378

VESTURAMTI b. 3 Myrasysla Snaefellsnes - og
Hnappadalssyslur Dalasysla Baroastrandarsyslur
(Austur og Vestur) Isafjaroarsyslur (Norour og Vestur)
Strandasysla 73379

NORDUR-OG AUSTURAMTI b.4 Hunavatnssyslur
(Austur og Vestur) Skagafjaroarsysla 73379

Manntol, 1880

This census contains the farm name, persons name, sex, age,
marital status, religion, birth place, occupation, and other
miscellaneous information.

SUDURAMTI b. 3 Arnessysla b. 4 Gullbringusysla Kjosarsysla 73381

SUDURAMTI b. 7 Borgarfjaroarsysla 73383

VESTURAMTI b. 7 Myrasysla Snaefellsnes - og
Hnappadalssyslur Dalasysla 73383

NORDUR- OG AUSTURAMTI b. 10 Eyjafjaroarsysla
pingeyjarsyslur (Suour og Norour) 73386

Manntol, 1890

This census contains the farm name, persons name, sex, age, marital status, religion, birth place, occupation, and other miscellaneous information.

SUDURAMTI b. 1 Skaftafellssyslur (Austur og Vestur) Rangarvallasysla Vestmannaeyjarsysla b. 2 Arnessysla	73388
NORDUG- OG AUSTURAMTI b. 8 Hunavatnssyslur (Austur og Vestur) Skagafjaroarsysla	73392
NORDUR- OG AUSTURAMTI b. 9 Eyjafjaroarsysla pingeyjarsyslur (suour og Morour)	73393
NORDUR- OG AUSTURAMTI b. 10 Mulasyslur Norour og Suoar)	73394

Manntol, 1901

This census includes the name of the farm, persons full name, sex, age, marital status, religion, birth place, year of arrival to this parish, former residences, status in the family, occupation, year of marriage, number of children living and dead, previous marriage & date previous spouse died, and other miscellaneous information.

SUDUR-PINGEY JARSYSLA Svalbaro i Eyjafiroi Laufas Grenivik ponglabakka (ponglabakki) brettingsstaoa Hals Illugastaoir Draflastaoir b. 20 b Ljosvatn poroddstaoar (Poroddsstaour) Lundarbrekka	73422
SUDUR-PINGEY JARSYSLA b. 20b. Einarssstaoa (Einarssstaoir)	73422
SUDUR-PINGEY JARSYSLVA b. 20c Grenjaoarstaour Nes i Aoaldal pverar (pvera) Reykjahllo Skutustaoa (Skutustaoir) b. 20d Husavik	73423
NORDUR-MULASYSLA b. 22a Skeggjastaoir Hof i Vopnafiroi Vopnafjaroar b. 22b Kirkjubaer Bruar (Bru) Moorudal Hofteigur Valpjofsstaour	73425
NIRDUR-MULASYSLA b. 22c As i Fellum Hjaltastaour Desjarmirar (Desjarmyri) Klippstade (Klyppstaoir) Husavik Njarovik	73425

Books

Complete index to 1816 census of Rangarvalla Sysla, Iceland /
compiled by John Y. Bearnson. CS 938 .R36 C66x 1970

Complete Index to 1816 census of Arnes Syssla, Iceland /
compiled by John Y Bearnson. CS 938 .A7 C66x 1974

CS 931 .I63x 1968 vol.1

Index to Icelandic census 1703 / compiled by: Springville Stake under
the direction of John Bearnson. CS 931 .I63x 1968 vol. 1

Church history


And some fell into good soil : a history of Christianity in Iceland /
Michael Fell. BR 992 .F45 1999

Biskupa sögur.
Guðni Jónsson. PT 7271 .A2 J 6 vol 3

Church and social change : a study of the secularization process in Iceland,
1830-1930 / Pétur Pétursson. BR 1050 .I2 P47

Icelandic church saga / by John C.F. Hood, D.D. BR 992 .H6

Islands Besiedlung und älteste Geschichte / Neuausg. mit Nachwort von Rolf Heller.
Baetke, Walter, 1884-1978. PT 7272 .A1 B24 1967

Sagas of Icelandic bishops : fragments of eight manuscripts /
edited by Stefán Karlsson.  261 .E37 vol. 7

The Christianization of Iceland : priests, power, and social change,
1000-1300 / Orri Vésteinsson. BR 994 .V47 2000

The saints in Iceland : their veneration from the Conversion to 1400 / by Margaret
Cormack ; preface by Peter Foote. BX 2333 .C67 1994

Church records

Record of members, 1873-1914

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

1873-1914

73584

1873-1914 (partial filming of the same material)

73231

Scandinavian jubilee Album

1059490 Item 4

Scandinavian LDS Mission Index

Name

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A - Andersen, Hans	Fiches 1-10
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Sorensen Weibel, Elise Rebekka - Stuve, Vihelmikne Mariane	Fiches 311-320
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Westlund, Gosta Arvid Oskar - Zvick, Calle Johan Ferdinand	Fiches 341-344

Court records

The court records of Iceland

897215 Item 17

Books

The court records of Iceland.
Bjarni Vilhjálmsson.

XX(2308631.4)-LEE

Description and travel

See BYLINE under the following headings for BYU holdings:

ICELAND DESCRIPTION AND TRAVEL [53]

ICELAND DESCRIPTION AND TRAVEL EARLY WORKS TO 1800 [1]

ICELAND DESCRIPTION AND TRAVEL JUVENILE LITERATURE [4]

ICELAND DESCRIPTION AND TRAVEL PERIODICALS [1]

ICELAND DESCRIPTION AND TRAVEL PICTORIAL WORKS [2]

ICELAND DESCRIPTION AND TRAVEL VIEWS [2]

Directories

An Icelandic-English dictionary / initiated by Richard Cleasby ;
subsequently revised and enlarged and completed
by Gudbrand Vigfusson.

PD 2379 .C5 1957

- Ensk-íslensk orðabók = English-Icelandic Dictionary /
Sigurður Örn Bogason. PD 2437 .S5 1952
- Íslensk-ensk orðabók / Sverrir Hólmarsson, Christopher Sanders,
John Tucker ; ráðgjöf, Svavar Sigmundsson. PD 2437 .S87 1989
- Íslensk orðabók, handa skólum og almenningi. Ritstjóri:
Árni Böðvarsson. PD 2437 .I83
- Íslensk-ensk orðabók / Arngrímur Sigurðsson. PD 2437 .A74x 1983
- Orðabók um slangur : slettur, bannorð og annað utangarðsmál /
Mörður Árnason, Svavar Sigmundsson, Örnólfur Thorsson ;
myndirnar teiknuðu Grétar Reynisson og Guðmundur Thoroddsen. PD 2437 .M83 1982
- Stafsetningarorðabók með skýringum / Halldór Halldórsson. PD 2437 .H34 1980

Emigration and immigration

- Along the Scandinavian emigrant trail: Iceland 897215 Item 3
- Ninety hears of Icelandic settlement in Western Canada 928212 Item 6
- Saga Íslendinga í Vesturheimi
A history of the immigration of Icelanders to America, especially
to the United States, Canada, and Brazil 1350
- Books
- Along the Scandinavian emigrant trail. Part IV, Iceland.
Bjarni Vilhjálmsson. CS 2 .W669x 1969 vol 5
- Index to persons emigrating from Vestmannaeyjar, Iceland to Copenhagen,
Utah, Hafnarfjörður, Reykjavík, Seyðisfjörður, and America, from 1823 to
1913 : extracted from Vestmannaeyjar Parish Registers (GS #12712,
pts 1 and 2, #12594, pts 1 and 2) for the Genealogical Society, by
John Y. Bearnson. CS 931 .I633x 1970
- The settlement of Iceland, a critical approach : Granastaðir and the
ecological heritage / Bjarni F. Einarsson. DL 321 .B53 1995

Folklore

Icelandic-Canadian oral narratives / Magnús Einarsson.

GR 113.7 .I2 E35x 1991

Genealogy

Aettir Austiroinga

Genealogies of the people of East Iceland for the years
1400-1930

73287-73288

Aettartolurbaekur Jons Espolins sysslumanns

Genealogies of people in Iceland from 874 to 1836

73257-73260

History of John Young Bearnson

1224732 Items 2-5

Icelandic sagas and early compiled genealogies: their
evaluation and reliability as a genealogical sources

897215 Item 18

Nye samling of danske, norske og islandske jubel-laerare, med
hosfoeyede slaegt-register og stam-tavler

New collection of Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic Jubille-
teachers with family registers and pedigrees.

Bd. 1 og bd 2 del 1

599695

bd. 2 del 2 og bd. 3 del 1

599696

Temple record book, 765-1900

Consists of genealogical data, 765-1900, with most
temple ordinances, 1894-1929, for ancestry of John Johannesson
(b.1862), a Mormon convert who immigrated from Iceland to
Salt Lake City, Utah and married Johanne Marie (Jensen)
Johanneson (b.1863), a Mormon immigrant from Denmark. Ancestors
lived chiefly in Óspaksstaðir, Vestur-Húnavatns County, in
Reykjanesi, Gullbringer County, and in Reykjahlid, Iceland.

673300 Items 17-18

Books

Aettir austfirdinga / eftir Einar Jónsson.

CS 932 .J66x v. 1

Ættir : Kristjáns A. Kristjánssonar og konu hans Sigríðar H. Jóhannesdóttur /
Þorvaldur Kolbeins tók saman.

CS 939 .K74 T46x 1952

Bergsætt : niðjatal Bergs hreppstjóra Sturlaugssonar í Brattsholti /

samið hefir Guðni Jónsson.

CS 939 .B47x 1966 bd. 1

Bútar úr ættasögu Íslendinga frá fyrri öldum : rannsóknir eldri og yngri ætta. I-III /
Steinn Dofri.

CS 939 .K74 T46x 1952x

Fremra-Hálsætt : niðjatal Jóns Árnasonar bónda að Fremra-Hálsi í Kjós
1733-1751 /safnað hefir og skráð Jóhann Eiríksson.

CS 939 .A2 J65x 1966 bd 1

Icelandic sagas and early compiled genealogies : their evaluation and reliability
as a genealogical source. Einar Bjarnason.

XX(2308632 .4)

Íslensk ættfræði : skrá um rit í ættfræði og skyldum greinum /
tekið hefur saman Kristín H. Pétursdóttir = Icelandic genealogy :
a list of publications in genealogy and related fields

CS 932 .K75x 1994

Katalog over det Kongelige Biblioteks Haandskrifter ; vedrørende Dansk
Personalhistorie : /cudgivet af det Kongelige Bibliotek ; ved C. Behrend.

CS 902 .X1 C66 vol. 1

Jónssonar prests í Bólstaðarhlíð / útgefandi: Th. Krabbe.

CS 938 .N53K72x 1913

Niðjatal Þorvalds Böðvarssonar prests á Holti undir Eyjafjöllum og Björns

Niðjatal séra Jóns Benediktssonar og Guðrúnar Kortsdóttur, konu hans;
ættartölur og niðjatal ásamt ævisögubrotum. Þóra Marta Stefánsdóttir
safnaði og skráði.

CS939 .B45 1971

Niðjatal : Sveins Jónssonar bónda á hesti í Öndarfirði og guðrúnar Jónsdóttur konu
hans / Eyjólfur Jónsson tók saman og gaf út.

CS 939 .J66 J66x


Nokkrar Árnesingaættir : ættaskrár og niðjatal / tekið saman og skrásett af
Sigurði E. Hlíðar.

CS 938 .A74 S55x 1956

Staðarfellsætt : ásamt ágripi af Hrappseyjarætt / tekið hefur saman Jón Pjetursson frá
Kálfafellsstað ; viðaukar, Æviágrip Boga Benediktssonar á Staðarfelli eftir Hannes
Þorsteinsson og Feðgaævir eftir Boga Benediktsson á Staðarfelli.

CS 939 .A2 J66x 1966

Story of my life. Johnson, Ingeborg Sigiedur, 1850-1941.

 8608 .A1a no. 7141

The first permanent settlement of Icclander's in America.

 8608 .A1 no. 6986

Icelandanders Utah (The following are under this title in BYLINE)

Eiríkur á Brúnum : Ferðasögur - Sagnathaettir - Mornónarit, Eiríks
Ólafssonar Bónða á Brúnum / Vilhjalmur Th. Gislason sá um útgafuna.

8670.1 Ei77e 1946

Hjer er onnur litil fer*oa saga / Eiríks Ólafssonar er var á Brúnum í Rangárvallasýslu, nú í
Ameríku, Utah í Spanishfork, ari*o 1881-82. Bókinn segir frá, um fer*oina Íslandi til Utah í
Ameríku og um ymislegt er hann sá og heyr*oi á þeirri lei*o, og um mart veraldlegt hjá
Mormónum og þeirra trúarbrügó.

8670.1 Ei77h 1882

Umhverfis jörðina : ferðaðættir úr öllum álfum heims /
eftir Vigfús Guðmundsson.

G 440 .G83x 1955

Historical geography

Lýsing Íslands / eftir Thorvald Thoroddsen ; gefin út af Hínu íslenzka
bókmöntafélagi.

AC 50 .I73x no. 19 v. 3

Lýsing Íslands : ágríp / eftir Þorvald Thoroddsen.

AC 50 .I73x no. 77 v. 1

History

Codex Wormianus (The Younger Edda): Ms. No. 242 fol. In
Arna-Magnaean collection in the University of Copenhagen

Innihalda: Snorra-Edda -- The four Grammatical Treatises --
Snorri's Háttatal -- Rígsthula -- Fragments of an enlarged
redaction of the section on Ókænd heiti in Snorra-Edda.

73582 Item 3

Frissbok: Codex Frisianus (Sagas of the Kings of Norway), ms. No. 45
fol. In the Arna-Magnaean collection in the University Library of
Copenhagen

The contents of the codex are divided into two parts. The first
part is the sagas of the Kings of Norway by Snorri Sturluson
(known as Heimskringla) but without the central portion, the
saga of St. Olaf. The second part is the saga of King Hákon
Hákonsson, the old, by Sturla Thordsson. This history is
somewhat abridged with an introduction in English.

73582 Item 2

Mooruvallabok: (Codex Mooruvallensis): Ms. No. .132 fol. In the
 Arna-Magnaean collection in the University Library of Copenhagen
 Innihalda: Njáls saga -- Egils saga Skalla-Grimssonar -- Finnboga saga --
 Bandamanna saga -- Kormáks saga -- Víga-Glúms saga --
 Droplaugarsonar saga -- Ölkofra þáttur -- Hallfreðar saga --
 Laxdæla saga -- Föstbræðra saga. 73582 Item 4

Saga Isledinga Norour-Dakota
 A history of the Icelandic colonies in North Dakota.
 Includes biographies of the people. 20155

Books

Saga Íslendinga í Vesturheimi / Þorsteinn Þ. Þorsteinsson.
 Subject term: Icelanders in Canada and United States F 1035 .I2 T52x 1940 v.1-3

The founding of the Icelandic settlement in Pembina County : an article /
 dictated by the Reverend Þall Þorláksson, February 11, 1882 ;
 [Edited and translated by Richard Beck]. Fiche F645.I3 T56x

The origin of the Icelanders. Translated with an introd. and notes
 by Lee M. Hollander. DL 331 .G813

See BYLINE under the following headings for additional BYU holdings:

ICELAND HISTORY [49]

ICELAND HISTORY 1918-1945 [1]

ICELAND HISTORY CHRONOLOGY [1]

ICELAND HISTORY DICTIONARIES [1]

ICELAND HISTORY FICTION [1]

ICELAND HISTORY JUVENILE LITERATURE [1]

ICELAND HISTORY LOCAL [1]

ICELAND HISTORY PERIODICALS [1]

ICELAND HISTORY SOURCES [13]

ICELAND HISTORY SOURCES BIBLIOGRAPHY CATALOGS [1]

ICELAND HISTORY TO 1262 [6]

ICELAND HISTORY TO 1262 CONGRESSES [1]

Language

Books

See BYLINE under the following headings for BYU holdings:

ICELANDIC LANGUAGE [2]

ICELANDIC LANGUAGE DICTIONARIES [4]

Law and Legislation

Staoarholsbok: the ancient lawbooks gragas and Jarndioa: Ms. No. 334 fol in the Arna-Magnaean collection in the University Library of Copenhagen

Contains the written commonwealth laws, ecclesiastical laws and secular laws with an introduction in English.

73582 Item 1

Officials and employees

Diverse estats-, adels- og rangfortegnelser, bestillinger samt praestekalkd for Dnmark, Norge, Island og Faergoerne 1536-1848

Registers of Civil Services, nobility and rand and various secular and priestly offices for Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

Adskillige bestillinger 1730-1848

559504

Adskillige bestillinger (Norske) 1730-1830 Praestekaldsbog for Sjallandsog Fyns stifter 1660-1790 Praestekaldsbog for Jylland 1660-1790 Praestekaldsbog for Lolland og Falster 1694-1749 Praestekaldsbog for Danmark, Norge, Island og Faeroerne 1699-1819

559506

Register til praestekaldsbog for Danmark, Norge, Island og Faerorne 1699-1819 Praestekaldsbog for Norge, Island og Faeroerne 1660-1848 Praestekaldsbog for Norge med Gronland og Nordiandene 1686-1804 Norske stifters praester 1804-1813 Verdslige bestillinger i Danmark og 1660-1833

559507

Periodicals

The Icelandic Canadian.

F 1035 .I2 I2x

Politics and government

Books

See BYLINE under the following headings for additional BYU holdings:

ICELAND POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT [7]

ICELAND POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT HANDBOOKS MANUALS ETC [1]

Probate records

Testamenter konfirmerede gennem overovrigheden, 1800-1848

Contains wills approved through the Chancery Office of Denmark
Iceland and the West Indies

I Halvar med register 1810 394888

II Halvar med register 1810 394889

Register 1845-1848 Kun for Island og Vestinien 1846

Kun for Vestindien 1847-1848 394951

Public records

Afregninger vedrorende lensmaend, leje af skibe, Island,

Norge og diverse, 1644-1679

Accounts from Denmark, Norway and Iceland

Norge 1660-1679 - diverse 1660-1679

Blanketregnskaber 1800-1847

These records contain applications and permissions for civil
authorities to handle special matters such as, burials, probates,
marriages and divorce decrees, etc. The books 1-8 are the
index to the records.

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RIBE AMT; ANSOGNINGSBILAG OG REGNSKABER	382351
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Religion

Blót í norrænum sið : rýnt í forn trúarbrögð með þjóðfræðilegri aðferð /
Jón Hnefill Aðalsteinsson. PT 7162 .S33 J66 1997

The saints in Iceland : their veneration from the Conversion to 1400 /
by Margaret Cormack ; preface by Peter Foote. BX 2333 .C67 1994

Under the cloak : [the acceptance of Christianity in Iceland with particular
reference to the religious attitudes prevailing at the time] /
Jón Hnefill Aðalsteinsson. BR 994 .J6613

Social life and customs

Books

See BYLINE under the following headings for additional BYU holdings:

ICELAND RURAL CONDITIONS CASE STUDIES [1]

ICELAND SOCIAL CONDITIONS [7]

ICELAND SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS [13]

ICELAND SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS ART [1]

ICELAND SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS CONGRESSES [1]

ICELAND SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS JUVENILE LITERATURE [1]

Statistics

Hagskinna : sögulegar hagtölur um Ísland = Icelandic historical statistics /
ritstjórar, Guðmundur Jónsson, Magnús S. Magnússon. HA 1495 .H34 1997

Yearbooks

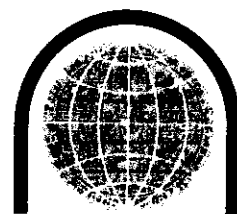
Atlantica & Iceland review. DL 301 .I25

Frjettir frá Íslandi / út gefnar af Hinu Íslenska bókmenntafjelagi.
Íslenska bókmenntafélag. AC 50 .I73x no. 96

Iceland handbook. DL 301 .I34 x

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VERT FILE
ICELAND



*"Record Protection in
an Uncertain World"*

WORLD CONFERENCE ON RECORDS AND GENEALOGICAL SEMINAR

Salt Lake City, Utah, U.S.A.
5-8 August 1969

xTHE COURT RECORDS OF ICELAND

By

Bjarni Vilhjalmsón

Utah Valley Regional
Genealogical Library
4386 HBLL, BYU
Provo, Utah 84602
801/378-6200

THE COURT RECORDS OF ICELAND

By

Bjarni Vilhjalmsón

The most reliable and comprehensive genealogical sources available in Iceland are beyond all doubt church registers and censuses, both general censuses and the Lutheran Church censuses. It goes without saying that these works are not faultless, no more so than other manifestations of human endeavour, nor are they any less so either. But generally speaking it is safe to affirm that there are relatively few errors and gaps in these remarkable primary sources as far as they go. That may undoubtedly be ascribed to a certain extent to the small population of the parishes and also to the stability of the Icelandic agrarian society. The vast majority of the people lived nearly always at the same places all their lives. These fine records cover unfortunately a relatively short period. Church registers are very scarce before 1780, but from then on they increase considerably in number. In some places, though, they were not begun until 1816, but that year marks a turning point in the history of Icelandic church registers, because at that date a system was adopted which for the most part has remained unchanged up to the present. The church registers dating from 1816 or the following years are also exemplary because at the beginning of them there are church census records which are especially valuable because besides giving the age of persons, together with other details, they also indicate their places of birth. It was not until 1845 that this procedure was generally adopted in the keeping of civil census records.

Church registers and parish registers have unfortunately been destroyed in fires in some places in Iceland both before 1816 and after. In addition to this, it is known that during the eighteenth century, at least, there were many church registers kept that are lost by now. For a long time such registers were regarded as belonging personally to the ministers but not to the church. But besides this, the poor housing, and particularly the unpermanent quality of the building material that the farmsteads were made of, has caused much to be lost which otherwise might have been preserved. This applies of course to all Icelandic official registers, not least of all to the district magistrates' registers that I shall discuss later. The district magistrates had no fixed official residences as did the ministers in most cases. We mustn't forget either that there are church registers from two places in Iceland which date from the latter half of the seventeenth century. The oldest Icelandic church register is from Reykholt in the southwest of Iceland, the home of the famous historian, Snorri Sturluson. That church register reaches as far back as to the year 1664. The other place is Mödruvellir in the north of Iceland where the oldest register dates from 1694.

It is also worth mentioning that we have in Iceland a priceless civil census from the year 1703 in which every person's name, age and position in the home has been recorded. The only thing to be regretted is that the place of birth has been omitted. As might be expected, it is

often very difficult on account of insufficient records to link generations that lived about 1703 together with those generations that came on the scene later when it became common practice to keep church registers and make comprehensive civil censuses, either late in the eighteenth century or even not until the nineteenth century.

I am not going to spend any more time discussing the genealogical source material which the civil censuses or the church registers provide, rather, I should like to consider instead the most likely means of improving your genealogical knowledge, when these records fail to provide the information we seek. Perhaps it would be right to say a few words about genealogical works of a particular kind, that is to say special genealogical collections. We know that there has been much interest in genealogy in Iceland from the very start. In one record, which is not more recent than the latter half of the twelfth century, it is stated that few things have been committed to writing in Icelandic except the laws in the first place and genealogy in the second place. We know that the laws were first written down in the winter of 1117-1118. Previously the laws had been committed to memory, as must undoubtedly have been the case with a great deal of genealogical information. The ancient literature of Iceland contains much genealogy which won't be dealt with on this occasion, though I might in passing refer to a lecture by my fellow countryman, Professor Einar Bjarnason on this subject. The more recent genealogical works seem to date from the seventeenth century. They were rather brief in the beginning, somewhat aristocratic works dealing for the most part with the pedigrees and genealogies of bishops and other government officials. But they grew steadily more voluminous as time passed, and cover more and more people from all the different social levels. But unfortunately it seems to be the experience of genealogists that a number of errors and naturally many omissions do appear, especially when it is possible to check these works against other records such as church registers when they came into use. Besides, the chronology of the genealogical collections is often so deficient that it is positively essential to be able to compare them with other records when they are available - in order to ascertain when the persons concerned have lived.

In spite of some obvious defects that I have pointed out, the special genealogical collections are, nevertheless, a very valuable genealogical source. We must keep in mind that their authors have had direct or indirect access to church registers that are now lost. But genealogical collections and many excellent dictionaries have one thing in common, that is to say, they cannot be used indiscriminately, nor are they likely to tell us the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

But let's get back to the primary sources which contain genealogical information. The next thing that we come across are the official registers of the district magistrates. The office of the district magistrate has quite a long history since it was created in the latter half of the thirteenth century, shortly after the Icelanders had submitted to the rule of the King of Norway and acknowledged his right to levy taxes on them. Unfortunately, there are no district magistrates' official registers that old, even though we do have quite a number of separate sentences and judgments passed by district magistrates and preserved in special Law Reports that are quite old extending at least back to the fourteenth century. The judgments and

sentences that are older than the existing official registers of the district magistrates won't be discussed here, though I may in passing point out that many of them have been published in *Diplomatarium Islandicum*, which appeared in 16 volumes and covers a period up to 1580. The duties of a district magistrate have been from the beginning, and still are for the most part, twofold. On the one hand he is to enforce the law and administer justice in cases that are tried in his district, and on the other hand he is responsible for collecting taxes and other revenues due to the king in former times, just as he is to collect taxes owed to the State nowadays. Ordinary courts of first instance have been presided over by the district magistrates from the beginning. But the number of courts have varied from one period to another in the judicial history of Iceland. Now there are only two of them, i.e. courts of first and second instance. From 1801 to 1920 there were three of them, but in earlier times there were occasionally four.

Soon after the Icelanders had sworn allegiance to the King of Norway during the years 1262-1264, it became clear that the ancient laws of the country which made provisions for neither the power of a ruler nor any common executive power, were becoming obsolete and didn't suit the new order. Soon the Norwegian crown proceeded, therefore, to have a new form of legislation adopted in place of the ancient laws, and managed to carry through its plan with the approval of the Icelanders. According to these new laws, the country was to be divided into twelve districts, which were called *things* (assemblies) and were modelled to a certain extent on the ancient system of the *godord* (the name of a chieftain's authority). It was clearly the original plan that a royal representative, the so-called *valdsmadur*, to whom the judicial power as well as the collection of annual taxes was to be entrusted, should preside over each assembly or *thing*. But in practice the number of the *valdsmenn* or royal officials didn't by any means correspond to that of the *things*. Sometimes a *valdsmadur* was to preside over more than one assembly or *thing*, and in that case he might have other subordinates represent him in a part of his district, but in general it was more common for the district assembly or *thing* to be divided among two or more *valdsmenn*. Thus the Westfjords constituted originally one *thing*, called The Thorskaftjardar-thing, but was soon divided among three representatives, which is how three administrative areas came into being—each one being called a rural district or *sýsla*, i.e. Bardastrandasýsla, Ísafjardarsýsla and Strandasýsla, and the royal official was called a *sýslumadur* or district magistrate. Some of the ancient *things* have remained unchanged as rural districts up to the present, e.g. Hegrasthíng (Skagafjardarsýsla), Vöðlathíng (Eyjafjardarsýsla), Árnesthíng (Árnessýsla) and Rangárhíng (Rangárvallarsýsla). During these last centuries the rural districts of Iceland have numbered close to twenty. Also several towns have in recent years been severed from the rural districts, and the towns in question have been given a special jurisdiction presided over by a town magistrate.

As has already been stated, there were special courts of appeal superior to the lower courts presided over by the magistrates, but as far as the collection of taxes and administrative functions were concerned, the magistrates were responsible to the king's governor, who at first was called *hirdstjóri*, a term actually signifying "chieftain of the king's men". During the sixteenth century this official was called *höfudsmadur* which is in fact a translation of the word "captain." But with the establishment of an absolute rule by the Danish king in Iceland

during the seventeenth century there appeared the titles *stiftbefalingsmadur* or *stiftamtmadur*. The holder of this office was also some kind of a governor-general, even though he did not always reside in Iceland but merely had his representatives there. About the same time as the governor-general there comes on the scene another official, the so-called treasurer, who was responsible for financial affairs and the collection of taxes in the country. Then there was also established the office of *amtmadur*, who acted as a kind of sub-governor. Until 1770 there was only one sub-governor for the whole country, but soon after that two more offices were added, and the governor-general himself, who by this time did reside in the country, acted also as a sub-governor in one of the administrative areas, the so-called "South Amt" covering the south of Iceland.

Turning now to the official registers of the district magistrates, there is not much that can be said about them during the first centuries, because they have not been preserved; but it is inconceivable that magistrates did not keep records of those who paid their taxes to the king nor record, or have recorded, judgments they had passed themselves. During recent centuries district magistrates in Iceland have kept records of different kinds, and now we shall discuss the ones that may be considered the most valuable for genealogical research.

Mortgage records are remarkable sources of information regarding real estate and the economical situation of individuals, for they sometimes happen to explain relationships of persons and supply us incidentally with genealogical details. Unfortunately, they are relatively recent, the oldest ones dating from 1800 or shortly before, at least the ones that are kept in the National Archives. But there may be in the offices of some district magistrates still older mortgage records than the ones in the National Archives because magistrates often have to consult old records relating to real property.

It ought to be mentioned here that there do exist older mortgage records than the ones kept by the magistrates. I am referring to the mortgage records of the ancient *Althing* or Parliament which was abolished in 1800. It was later reestablished on a completely different basis in 1845.

The district magistrates' *probate records* also constitute excellent sources of genealogical information in which there are listed the heirs of the deceased with specification of their relationships and residences. These records date from different periods, the oldest one from the early eighteenth century, and those from many parts of the country are even older than the oldest church registers. There is no doubt that the probate records are among the best sources of genealogical information available.

Then there are the magistrates' *tax registers*. They contain the names of the tax-payers and their places of residence. The oldest tax registers that have been preserved go back to about 1700. In quite a number of rural districts they begin in the latter half of the eighteenth century, but in some places not until the nineteenth century. In many places where church registers begin late, the tax registers may prove to be very useful to genealogists. In addition to their genealogical value, they give reliable information about the economic status of the farmers.

Finally, we get to the most important subject of this lecture, the *thing* (assembly) records and court records. To begin with, it is worth noting that *thing* records and court records are not one and the same. In this context the term *thing* is an abbreviation of *manntalsting* which was applied to the annual local *things* (assemblies) presided over by the magistrates at the so-called places of assembly, which were generally fixed meeting places for each county (or *hreppur* in Icelandic), the *hreppur* being the smallest administrative unit that has ever existed in the country. The chief purpose of these minor *things* was to collect taxes payable to the king, such as the royal tithe and the so-called *gjaftoll* (a certain kind of extra tax). In addition they made inquiries about shipwrecks, driftwood and whales that had been washed ashore, in all of which the crown owned a share, and also about farmworkers and migratory workers, who were as a rule kept under strict surveillance. Then investigations were made as to whether anybody had committed such an offence that his or her property should in part or in its entirety go to the king. They inquired about fines that were payable to the king in connection with cases of seduction; but the magistrates did, however, usually receive reports about such cases from the ministers of each parish. It sometimes appears that farmers brought their weights and scales to have them adjusted and stamped. People could also bring their lawsuits to these local *things*. At these meetings disputes about the maintenance of orphans were frequently settled as the following examples will show. Punishments were occasionally carried out at these *things*. On the 28th of April 1724 a certain woman was for example flogged at a local *thing* in Skagafjörður because she was unable to pay a fine - imposed for having an illegitimate child - nor get anyone to stand surety. I have not taken the trouble to find out whether there are any sources of information which might give one a genealogical lead in tracing this woman's family.

Many cases were of course tried by the magistrates in the period between the *things* and everything had to be recorded, for example trials, examinations and sentences in different criminal cases that could not possibly be postponed. In most rural districts they used the same record book for entering what took place at the local *things* as for entering criminal cases or other cases that were tried between the *things*. Such a record is then called a *thing record and court record* (*thing - og dómabók*). In some rural districts, particularly the more densely populated ones, they keep special *thing* records and also case records that cover cases that are dealt with between the fixed sessions of the *things*, the so-called supplementary *thing* records or case records. The same thing goes for the judgments or the findings. In the smaller districts they are entered into the *thing* records and court records, but in some of the magistrates' offices, especially in the more densely populated rural districts and towns, when they began to emerge, judgments, sentences and findings were all entered into a special volume called *court records*. It was therefore, the most common practice to enter everything into the same book; *thing* cases (save the register of taxes, which was entered in a special book, as has been mentioned earlier), magistrates' court cases and judgments and sentences, but in some districts, particularly in the ones with the largest population, three different kinds of records were kept i.e. *thing records*, *case records* and *court records*.

The oldest *thing* records and court records which are known to have been kept in Iceland, began in 1597, but they cover only the years to 1612. They date from a time when Gísli

Árnason held office as a magistrate in Rangárvallasýsla in the south of Iceland. Unfortunately, these records are not preserved in The National Archives but in the famous Arnarnaglean Collection in Copenhagen (AM 249 a, 4to). I cannot pride myself on having seen these records but according to a description in the collection catalogue they are well thumbed and fragmentary.

We have no other Icelandic court records from the sixteenth century. From the seventeenth century there are some court records from eight districts, but all these records cover short periods and are consequently both incomplete and fragmentary.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the number of preserved *thing* records and court records increased considerably so one can safely say that we have quite a handsome collection of court records by the time the eighteenth century drew to a close. From the nineteenth century we have *thing* records and court records from every district of the country.

I have already described the chief functions of the local *things*. Now it is right to emphasize the fact that district magistrates frequently made transcripts from their *thing* records and enclosed them with their settlement and statements of accounts to their superiors (in former times to the Governor (*hirdstjóri* or *höfudsmadur*) or to his representative, but after 1682 to the treasurer. These national accounts which were called *feudal accounts* before 1660 but later *farm register accounts* are preserved in The National Archives of Iceland. They go back to about 1588. They were kept for the greatest length of time in the State Archives of Denmark, but in 1928 they were returned to Iceland together with various kinds of documents relating to the supreme administration of Icelandic affairs. These accounts are quite voluminous, but so far no systematic research has been made even though genealogists have often made use of them in checking different details.

As an illustration I should like to mention one item that I have myself observed in these above mentioned farm register accounts that shows, though it may seem insignificant by itself, what use may be made of these accounts.

Skúli Magnússon (born 1711 and died 1794) became the treasurer for Iceland in 1749: the first Icelander to do so. Previously that post had been held by Danes only. Skúli was a strong personality and is the forefather of a good many prominent Icelanders. His wife, whose name was Steinunn, was the illegitimate daughter of a theologian, later a minister, by the name of Björn Thorlacius; Björn's former wife had died shortly before Steinunn was born in 1709. Björn came of a distinguished family. His grandfather was Bishop Thorlákur Skúlason at Hólar, the Episcopal See in the north of Iceland, and Björn must surely have felt that Steinunn's mother did not descend from a sufficiently dignified family to become his wife. During those years Björn was in charge of a leper hospital at Hörgsland in Skaftafellssýsla. We have no official records from ministers or district magistrates of that part of the country from that period. We cannot find any satisfactory description of Steinunn's mother in genealogical collections. We are only informed that she used to be a maid or housekeeper at the farm Hörgsland. Steinunn was not brought up by her mother, but by the minister at Bjarnanes, also

in Skaftafellssýsla, who was a friend of Björn Thorlacius.

Once it occurred to me that one might perhaps find the name of Steinunn's mother in the farm register accounts, since it was known that Björn Thorlacius had paid a fine for having had a child out of wedlock, but had also obtained a royal license to be ordained a minister in spite of his offense. My wish was fulfilled. A supplement to the farm register accounts does mention this particular offense and says that the name of the child's mother was Guðrún Björnsdóttir. Both the names, Guðrún and Björn are extremely common in Iceland. I began all the same to look for a likely Guðrún Björnsdóttir in the civil census returns from 1703. I immediately came across a girl by that name and that was in fact the end of my search. At the farm Hörgsdal, the nearest farm to Hörgsland, there used to live one Guðrún Björnsdóttir, a 23 year old unmarried woman with her mother, a widow, who had taken up farming after her husband's death. In a large area all around these two farms there is no other Guðrún Björnsdóttir who could possibly have been Steinunn Björnsdóttir Thorlacius' mother. An additional item corroborates, however, that Guðrún Björnsdóttir at Hörgsdal was Steinunn's mother; that is the fact that the mistress of the house at Hörgsdal, Guðrún's mother, was called Steinunn, her full name being Steinunn Runólfsdóttir. Now it was for a long time an old established tradition in Iceland that the first-born should be named after their grandfather or grandmother. Although I cannot prove it, I do all the same firmly believe that Guðrún Björnsdóttir from Hörgsdal was the mother of Steinunn Björnsdóttir, who was later to become the wife of the treasurer, Skúli Magnússon and that Steinunn Björnsdóttir bore the name of Steinunn Runólfsdóttir at Hörgsdal. So far I haven't found any means by which I could trace her family further back. Björn, her father, died before 1703, and I haven't met his name in existing genealogical tables, but one must bear in mind that many Icelandic genealogies are rather inaccessible, since they haven't been printed yet and the indexes of names that go with them are incomplete.

I have enlarged upon this matter concerning the real mother-in-law of Skúli Magnússon, a woman who has been so completely neglected genealogically speaking in order to show how instructive the supplementary documents which the magistrates presented to the treasurer together with their accounts of the royal revenue, can sometimes be, particularly, if we can lay our hands on some kind of corroborating data. Different kinds of cases which the magistrates handled, such as criminal cases and other public cases or civil cases, give much more accurate information about the personal history of individual people. It must constantly be borne in mind, however, that even though the court records are reliable sources of information as far as they go, they do give a completely distorted picture of the life of the nation as a whole, because they consist mainly of various kinds of offenses, wrong-doings and individual disputes. The court records are completely silent about those people who led blameless lives in peace and harmony with their neighbours. Under these circumstances the old rule holds true: "No news is good news".

Now I shall cite a few examples from the *thing* records which show that the information they contain can be useful to the genealogists.

At a local *thing* at Húsavík in Thingeyjarsýsla 6 May 1738 it was legally recorded that one Guðrún Brynjólfsdóttir had died childless. She was the wife of Thorkell Jónsson at the farm Búdir. Her closest living relatives were said to be Eiríkur Jónsson living in Trékyllisvík in Strandasýsla, referred to as her cousin on her father's side, and Sighvatur Thorgeirsson at the farm Flatir in Kelduhverfi in Thingeyjarsýsla, referred to as her cousin on her mother's side.

In the first half of the eighteenth century there are not very many sources of genealogical information that can be checked against each other. We do, none-the-less, have the superb civil census from 1703 and *The Farm Register* by Árni Magnússon and Páll Vídalín from 1704 - 1712. From about 1735 or even earlier times there are registers containing the names of farmers from every part of Iceland. Now let's see if we can find anything about the above-mentioned Guðrún Brynjólfsdóttir and her relations in these sources of information. It turns out that there was only one Guðrún Brynjólfsdóttir in Thingeyjarsýsla in 1703. She lived then at the farm Húsabakki in Helgastada county, 21 years old and therefore born about 1682, probably the daughter of the farming couple, Brynjólfur Jónsson and Halldóra Hallsdóttir. If we now turn to Trékyllisvík, we discover that at the farm Baer in that region there used to live a 31 year old person by the name of Eiríkur Jónsson, who was consequently born about 1672. He was probably newly married in 1703 because he and his wife had no children then, but by 1706, when the farm register was compiled there, they had two children. Eiríkur was still living there in 1735.

But now let's return to the north of Iceland. In 1735 Sighvatur Thorgeirsson lived at the farm Flatir in Kelduhverfi, and he is probably the very same Sighvatur Thorgeirsson, who had been registered in Kelduhverfi back in 1703 as a 18 year old vagrant with no means of support. One might suppose that his father was dead by then, since there was no Thorgeir Hallsson in Thingeyjarsýsla in 1703. There is, it is true, no absolute proof that Halldóra Hallsdóttir was the mother of Guðrún nor that Thorgeir, Sighvat's father, was the full brother of Guðrún's mother, whether she was Halldóra Hallsdóttir or some other woman. I have no further information about these people, but somewhere there are perhaps genealogies that might supply the missing link. And such hypothetical genealogies would also profit by getting chronological support and personal details from contemporary sources of information.

Now let's consider a little example in the *thing* records of Skagafjardarsýsla from 17 June 1728. At that time a certain Bjarni Gunnlaugsson lived at the farm Svidningur in Hóla county. He was still living there in 1735, but he was not included among farmers in the census of 1703 or when the farm register was compiled in 1709. This is probably the same Bjarni Gunnlaugsson who was listed among the residents of the Episcopal See at Hólar in the census of 1703 and referred to as a 20 year old shepherd at Hofstadaseli, which is not far from Hólar. There was a man by the name of Gottskálkur Gudmundsson living at the farm Saurbaer in Hóla county in 1728, but by 1735 the farm was run by Solveig Marteinsdóttir. It is very tempting to assume that Solveig was Gottskálf's widow. According to the census of 1703, Solveig Marteinsdóttir was living at the farm As in Hóla county with her parents, Martein Jónsson and Randveig Thórdardóttir. Solveig was ten years old by then, so she must have been born about 1693. It is probably the same Gottskálf Gudmundsson who was living at the farm

Nes in Fljótum in Skagafjörður 1709 and also the same Gottskálk Guðmundsson who, according to the census of 1703, was living at the farm Á in Höfðastranda county in Skagafjörður with his father, Guðmundar Ásgrímsson. Gottskálk was 23 years old by then, so he was, therefore, born about 1680. A man by the name of Jón Gunnarsson was living at the farm Vidnes in Hóla county in 1728. He also lived there back in 1709 and he was still living there in 1735 and 1742. Because of two by the same name and living in the same area, it is difficult to determine where Jón Gunnarsson was in 1703, but in my opinion the Jón Gunnarsson who was a farmworker at Kálfsstaðir in Hóla county - then 22 years old and therefore born about 1681 - is the most likely one. Thus by using court records one can often get more accurate details concerning places of residence than one could otherwise get by relying entirely on other data.

Now let's go back to the year 1695 and direct our attention to Eyjafjörður in the north of Iceland, where a local *thing* was held at the place of assembly, Hrafnagil, on 17 April. On that occasion the district magistrate decided that the tax returns of four farmers in the county should be investigated and that they should also take an oath as to the truthfulness of their returns. The farmers were Grímur Eyjólfsson at Dvergstaðir, Jörundur Jónsson at Víðigerði, Árni Guðmundsson at Botni and Jón Ketilsson at Vaglir. When the names of these farmers are checked against other data, it turns out that Grímur Eyjólfsson was still living at Dvergstaðir in 1703, age 46 years, and therefore born about 1657. In the year 1712 when the farm register was compiled, he was the head of the household at the farm at Litlihóll in the same area. Jörundur Jónsson was living in 1703 at the nearest farm to Víðigerði - 54 years old and therefore born about 1649, but in 1712 he was no longer listed among farmers so he may have been dead by that date. The name of Árni Guðmundsson does not stand on the list of farmers in 1703 nor in 1712, but according to the census of 1703 there was a farmworker at Grund by the same name, a name so common, however, that it cannot give any conclusive evidence by itself. Jón Ketilsson was still a farmer at Vaglir in 1703 - 53 years old, but was not included among farmers in 1712. I am not aware that any genealogical collections give us any accounts of these farmers. In that case the court records together with the census of 1703 and the farm register of 1709, supply us with comparatively much information about the life history of each one except Árni Guðmundsson. Among other things, we can find out when each one of them was born and can, to a certain extent, trace his career as a farmer. In The National Archives there are records about the division of country into separate trading areas which were organized on the initiative of The Danish Trade Monopoly. These records were made in 1735 or just prior to then. They contain the name of every farmer, so they are very valuable genealogically speaking. The *thing* records constitute a fine source of information about commercial affairs. Individual debts to the monopoly were occasionally recorded legally and thus many personal details about the debtors do frequently emerge. In 1759 and 1760 witnesses were, for example, summoned regarding the debts of the farmers in Nordurmúlasýsla to the monopoly. During the previous years there had been hard times in Iceland, particularly in the northeast. The debts of the inhabitants had consequently accumulated. In the above mentioned *thing* records there is for that reason quite a long list of farmers who were in debt to the monopoly. The majority of these farmers can be found in the census of 1762 or in a register of farms and farmers dating from about 1753, and in the records from 1759 - 1760

there is much important information about the economic status of farmers which one cannot come by anywhere else. At a local *thing* held near the wooden bridge in Jökuldal on 25 July 1759 it was stated that a farmer by the name of Björn Árnason - living at the farm Rangá in Hróarstungu - owed three "hundred" plus 24 fish. (This calls for an explanation. "Hundrad" (or "hundred") is in this case a unit of value, originally 120 ells of *vadmál* or woollen cloth which in turn is equal to a *kúgildi* or the value of a cow or in other words the value of 240 fish. - 1 "hundrad" = 120 ells of woollen cloth = 1 cow = 6 sheep = 6240 fish -. The debt in question equalled, therefore, the value of three and one tenth cows). Then the *thing* records continue: "The debtor who has been summoned here acknowledges his debt, but he states that his livestock consists only of 3 male horses, 1 mare, 20 ewes, 23 one-year-old wethers and 5 two-year old ones, wherefore this debtor seems not to be able to discharge this summer more than 1 "hundrad", plus 30 fish without declaring himself bankrupt, considering that he is in addition to the aforesaid somewhat in debt to his fellow-countrymen and having seven people to provide for. He is, therefore, explicitly instructed by the district magistrate to pay immediately the aforesaid 1 "hundrad", plus 30 fish to the merchant in Reyðarfjörður. This Björn Árnason is in the census of 1762, then 41 years old and therefore born about 1721 and the family descending from him is traced in *Pedigrees and Genealogies of the Eastern Rural Districts* (see No. 4503). There is some uncertainty as to his origin and this piece of information does not fill that gap, but quite a lot is, nevertheless, gained by getting these details about the economic situation of the man from the *thing* records of 1759.

On 4 July 1760 a local *thing* was held at the farm Ásbrandsstadir in Vopnafjörður, both for the *thing* district of Ásbrandsstadir and that of Skeggjastadir on Langanessströnd. There were recorded the names of those debtors who were considered so hopelessly poor that it would be impossible to collect their debts. Some of them seem also to have been dead, since the debts in question went all the way back to 1743. Sometimes it is mentioned where a particular debtor lived when he first ran into debt and also where he is living "now" (i.e. 1760). Thus, five farmers in Vopnafjörður are associated with two different addresses in the *thing* records depending on the date. Four of these farmers are familiar to us from the genealogical work: *Pedigrees and Genealogies of the Eastern Districts*, but the *thing* records supply us with information relating to their respective places of residence which is not found in the genealogical work. These lists of debtors in the *thing* records are all very interesting, even though they don't give us any genealogical details about people.

In the district magistrate's *thing* records we frequently come across the so-called judgments about orphans or dependents i.e. magistrate's decisions as to the maintenance of those people who for some reason were unable to support themselves, for example the elderly or the disabled, but whose relatives were to some extent under an obligation to support them. When a case came to a magistrate for a decision it was usually the result of a disagreement as to who was responsible for the maintenance of an orphan or an elderly dependent. Now we shall quote a few examples of such judgments about orphans and dependents.

On 22 May 1758 a local *thing* was held at the farm Fossvellir in Jökuldal in Nordurmúlasýsla. On that occasion a judgment was passed as to the maintenance of a

dependent by the name of Gudmundur Thorsteinsson, whose address is not mentioned. His brother is said to be Jón Thorsteinsson at the farm Hákonarstadir, but he was considered to be too destitute to be able to provide for his brother. Three nieces of Gudmundur and Jón, Solveig, Kristín and Guðrún Thorkelsdaetur, were on the other hand considered sufficiently well off to support their uncle. The judgment tells us to whom these women were married and where they lived. Solveig was the wife of Einar Jónsson at Eiríksstadir in Jökuldal, Kristín the wife of Thorvardur Magnússon at Setberg in Fellum and Guðrún the wife of Björn Eiríksson at Ekra in Hjaltastadathinghá. All these people are thoroughly traced in *Pedigrees and Genealogies of the Eastern Districts* and it is also easy to find the names of the farmers in the existing censuses from the eighteenth century. According to the above-mentioned genealogical work a farmer by the name of Thorkell Thorsteinsson, the father of the three sisters, lived at Eiríksstadir in Jökuldal. In the directories of farmers he is listed for the last time in 1753 and he was undoubtedly dead in 1758 or even earlier, since his name is not mentioned in the judgment about the dependent. Jón Thorsteinsson at Hákonarstadir was not listed as a farmer there in 1753, so he had probably given up farming by that time. He is not mentioned in the census of 1762 either, so he might have been dead, for then the farm Hákonarstadir was run by his son, Thorsteinn Jónsson. It is right to point out though that it was the custom in this parish, as it was in most others, to list only the names of the heads of the household and nobody else's. Gudmundur Thorsteinsson lived at Bessastadir in Fljótsdal and it is thought that he had died at Eiríksstadir in Jökuldal, (cf. *Pedigrees and Genealogies of the Eastern Districts*, No. 1657) probably at his niece's, Solveig Thorkelsdóttir. Einar Jónsson, the husband of Solveig Thorkelsdóttir, was the head of the household at Eiríksstadir in 1762 - 36 years old, and his wife (whose name is not mentioned) was 34 years old and they had two boys and two girls. Thorvardur Magnússon, the husband of Kristín Thorkelsdóttir, was the head of the household at Setberg in Fellum 1753 and 1762, but in the census from the latter year he is recorded as being 42 years old, his wife (whose name is not mentioned) 31 years old and they had three boys and one girl. Björn Eiríksson lived at Ekra in 1753, but at Sandbrekka in Hjaltastadathinghá according to the census of 1762. He was 43 years old then, and his wife (whose name is not mentioned) was 33 years old and they had four boys and three daughters. All the information, which the court records contain correspond with the *Pedigrees and Genealogies of the Eastern Districts* except that Björn Eiríksson lived at Sandbrekka (in 1762) after having lived at Ekra (in 1752 and 1758), but the *Pedigrees and Genealogies of the Eastern Districts* state that he lived first at Sandbrekka, then at Ekra and finally at Ketilsstadir in Hjaltastadathinghá. I am not familiar with the sources of information that the author of the *Pedigrees and Genealogies of the Eastern Districts* based his work on. The *thing* records constitute all the same important sources of knowledge about Gudmundur Thorsteinsson and his relations, because they both confirm old genealogical data and supply us with reliable details about the economic status of the people concerned.

The judgments about the maintenance of orphans or elderly dependents are sometimes the only genealogical sources of information available about people. That was, for example, the case of Eiríkur Magnússon in Skriðdals county in the rural district of Sudur-Múlasýsla on whom such a judgment was passed on 24 October 1755. Jón Jónsson, the supervisor (*hreppstjóri*) of Skriðdals county, made a request in the name of the county that a judgment

should be passed as to the maintenance of an elderly dependent by the name of Eiríkur Magnússon, who had become incapacitated for work and destitute in Skriddal. The county supervisor explained that the closest relative of Eiríkur from whom some financial support might be expected was Sturla Jónsson at the farm Gvendarnes in Fáskrúðsfjörður (Stöðvarfjardar parish), who was Eiríkur Magnússon's cousin. Magnus Eiríksson, Eirík's father was the brother of Guðrún Eiríksdóttir, who was Sturla's mother. Sturla Jónsson was fairly well-to-do as a farmer and he and his wife were of well-known families, so this judgment makes it easy to trace Eiríkur Magnússon genealogically. Eiríkur, the father of Magnús and Guðrún, was the son of Gissur and the brother of Rev. Bjarni Gissurarson at Thingmúla in Skriddal, one of the most famous poets in the country in his day, and the wife of Gissur (Bjarni's and Eirík's father) was the daughter of the minister and poet Einar Sigurdsson at Eydalir in Breiddal in the district of Sudur-Múlasýsla, well-known as the forefather of many Icelanders. The witnesses testified that Eiríkur Magnússon and Sturla Jónsson were related in exactly the same way as the supervisor (*hreppstjóri*) had already stated. It also became apparent that Eiríkur had a sister in Skriddals county, by the name of Vilborg Magnúsdóttir, but she was without any means of livelihood and was consequently supported by her son, Thórólfur Bergsson, who used to be the head of the household at the farm Hryggstekkur in Skriddal, according to the directory of farmers of 1753. Then the whole assembly testified, too, and Thórólfur declared under an oath that his means did not allow him to provide for his uncle, Eiríkur Magnússon, in addition to his mother, Guðrún. Finally it was brought out at the *thing* meeting (court meeting) that Eiríkur Magnússon had two daughters, Guðrún and Thorbjörg. Guðrún was said to be married to the farmer Kolbeinn Sigurdsson at Steinnes in Mjóifjörður in Sudur-Múlasýsla, while Thorbjörg was married to a man by the name of Einar Ívarsson, who either worked on a farm or ran one in Nordfjörður the neighbouring area immediately south of Mjóifjörður. It seems as if it was taken for granted from the outset that these daughters were unable to support their father. The magistrate's decision was to the effect that Eiríkur Magnússon should abandon Skriddals county and be supported by one of his daughters or both of them on condition that it were within their means to provide for their father, but in the case of their being legally exempted from that obligation, then Eiríkur should be supported by Sturla Jónsson at the farm Gvendarnes, but in the case of his being legally exempted from that obligation in his turn, then the same procedure should be repeated until such a time that a more distant relative of sufficient means to support Eiríkur had been found. According to the directory of farmers from 1754 Kolbeinn Sigurdsson was the head of the household at the farm Steinnes, but in the census of 1762 he is at Fjörður in Mjóifjörður, said to be 54 years old, and his wife Guðrún was not with him then, so she may have been dead. I have not managed to locate Einar Ívarsson, the husband of Thorbjörg Eiríksdóttir, but in the directory of farmers from 1754, a year before the judgment relating to the maintenance of Eiríkur Magnússon was passed, it says that she ran a farm at Studlar in Nordfjörður, the same area that Einar Ívarsson was said to be living in. There are two alternatives: either Einar was dead then, even though the people of Skriddal had not learned about his death a year later or Thorbjörg and Einar were already separated in 1754. In 1754 Kolbeinn Sigurdsson at the farm Steinnes was so badly off that he did not pay any taxes, and the same thing is true of Thorbjörg Eiríksdóttir at the farm Studlar. The old man Eiríkur Magnússon, is, therefore, likely to have been supported by his cousin, Sturla Jónsson at the farm Gvendarnes. According to the

directory of farmers of 1754 Sturla was a man of such means that he had to pay quite high taxes.

Although Eiríkur Magnússon is referred to as "a very aged person" in the judgment relating to his maintenance from 1755, one can make absolutely sure that he was only 68 years old, because according to the census of 1703 he was with his mother and sister at the farm Bakkagerdi in Reyðarfjörður in Sudur-Múlasýsla- said to be 16 years old, while his sister, Vilborg Magnúsdóttir, who was provided for by her son at the farm Hryggstekkur in Skriddal in the autumn of 1755, was not more than about 64 years old, for she is said to be 12 years old in the census 1703.

I do not know of any families descending from Eiríkur Magnússon, and if it were not for this judgment relating to his maintenance from 1755, we would probably not know anything about his family background. His daughters' descendants, if any, may perhaps turn up some day.

Finally I am going to take two examples that my fellow countryman, professor Einar Bjarnason, has been kind enough to point out to me. They are both judgments relating to the maintenance of orphans and elderly dependents, which were entered into the court records of the district of Húnavatnssýsla in the seventeenth century. These judgments make it possible for us to trace the families of some well-known people because of the genealogical information on which the court based its findings.

The first judgment was passed at the farm Vindhaeli on Skagaströnd in the district of Húnavatnssýsla on 27 April 1635. It deals with the maintenance of an orphan by the name of Rannveig Magnúsdóttir, a four year old girl. The closest relatives of the girl who were sufficiently well off to provide for her were considered to be the children of the late Rev. Hjörleifur, one of whom, Einar, was mentioned by name while further reference was made only to his legitimate brothers and sisters. It was also stated that these people lived in the east of Iceland. Their genealogical table goes as follows:

Jón

Arngrímur
Rannveig
Guðrún
Rannveig Magnúsd.
(4 year old orphan)

Erlendur
Hjörleifur
Einar and his legitimate
brothers and
sisters

In case that the children of Hjörleifur gave a legal excuse not for providing for Rannveig then she was to be placed in the custody of "the sons of Hákon and Gísli Björnsson" just as briefly as that.

Rev. Hjörleifur Erlendsson was a well known man in his day. He was a minister at

Hallormsstadur in the east of Iceland. Einar Hjörleifsson was the best known of his children. He was for a long time *lögréttumadur* (a member of the public court of law) and had a farm at Flaga in Breiddal in the east of Iceland. Rev. Hjörleifur died about 1626. His family does not seem to be traced in old genealogies, but this maintenance judgment gives us important information about it, as will be demonstrated presently.

Hákon and Gísli Björnsson, who were referred to in the judgment as very well-known persons, were undoubtedly the district magistrate, Hákon Björnsson, residing at Nes near Seltjörn in the immediate vicinity of Reykjavík (dead about 1643) and his brother, a *lögréttumadur* (a member of the public court of law), Gísli Björnsson at Hrafnabjörg in Hördudal in the district of Dalasýsla (dead about or after 1637), the sons of Rev. Gísli Björnsson at Saurbaer in Eyjafjörður. Their mother was Málfríður Torfadóttir, who was the daughter of Rev. Torfi Jónsson at Saurbaer.

One can tell from old genealogies that the sons of Jón Finnbogason, who was the last Prior of the monastery at Mödruvellir in Hörgárdal in the district of Eyjafjardarsýsla, were among others a *lögréttumadur* by the name of Arngrímur, who lived for a long time in Eyjafjörður and in Húnavatnssýsla, and another *lögréttumadur* by the name of Erlendur residing at AEsustadir in the district of Húnavatnssýsla and finally the above mentioned Rev. Torfi at Saurbaer. Then the families of all the parties which the judgment mentions converge toward Prior Jón Finnbogason, who was descended from an eminent family. If we consider the three brothers: Arngrímur, Erlendur and Rev. Torfi, the following relationship can be established: Rannveig Magnúsdóttir, the four-year-old orphan girl, was the third generation from Arngrímur Jónsson. Einar Hjörleifsson and his brothers and sisters were the second generation from Erlendur Jónsson (Hjörleifur Erlendsson being the only one between them), but Hákon and Gísli Björnsson were the second generation from Rev. Torfi Jónsson (between them there was only their mother, Málfríður Torfadóttir). One can learn about the children of Prior Jón Finnbogason from old genealogies, but what the judgment brings to light is the fact that the father of Rev. Hjörleifur Erlendsson - who was a minister in the east of Iceland - was *lögréttumadurinn* Erlendur Jónsson at AEsustadir in the district of Húnavatnssýsla. Large families can be traced back to Rev. Hjörleifur. The above-mentioned judgment is the only source of information that establishes a genealogical link between Rev. Hjörleifur on the one hand and old and distinguished families on the other hand.

The other example is also a judgment in the Court Records of Húnavatnssýsla and it was also passed at the same farm as the former one, i.e. at Vindhaeli on Skagaströnd on 17 May 1636. The judgment deals with the maintenance of an orphan by the name of Sigríður Jónsdóttir, and it was the decision of the magistrate that she should be provided for by Hallgrímur Gudmundsson, who was said to have a farm "up north at Enni". The relationship between Hallgrímur and the orphan, Sigríður Jónsdóttir, was traced as follows:

Brandur

Tómas
Gudfinna
Hallgrímur Gudmundsson

Gudný
Sigríður
Sigríður Jónsdóttir
(the orphan)

From various old sources of information one can know for sure that Tómas and Gudný were the children of Brandur Pálsson, who was the head of the household at the farm Holt in Fljótum in Skagafjörður. Some prominent families can be traced back to Tómas. Hallgrímur Gudmundsson was a well-known person in his day. He was a *lögréttumadur* and an agent of the Episcopal See at Hólar, responsible for its holdings in the Fljóta- an area in Skagafjörður. He lived at Enni in Skagafjörður, but there are two farms in Skagafjörður by that name one on Hofdastrond and the other in the Vidurvíkur-area and it is not certain at which place Hallgrímur lived. Hallgrímur had a brother by the name of Pétur, who was a bell-ringer at the Episcopal See at Hólar. It is known that he was alive in 1657, then undoubtedly a very old man. His son was Hallgrímur Pétursson, a well-known minister and the most famous hymnist of Iceland - born in 1614, died in 1674. His hymns are still sung in every church in the country, and by now it has become an established custom on the Icelandic State Radio to have someone recite his Passion-Hymns during Lent, 50 hymns altogether, one hymn a day. In the maintenance judgment it appears that the mother of Hallgrímur Gudmundsson, and therefore also the grandmother of Hallgrímur Pétursson on his father's side, was Gudfinna Tómasdóttir, while Tómas, her father was the son of a farmer by the name of Brandur Pálsson, who has already been mentioned. But quite old genealogies say that Gudfinna - the grandmother of Hallgrímur Pétursson - was Magnúsdóttir. By means of the maintenance-judgment one can in other words correct an old genealogical error. The judgment also indicates how Hallgrímur Pétursson was related to another poet, well-known in his time, although he is hardly known to anybody nowadays except literary experts. His name was Hallur Magnússon, and he was engaged in farming at several places in the north of Iceland, for example at Holt in Fljótum. His mother's name was Helga Brandsdóttir, the daughter of Brandur Pálsson at Holt who has been mentioned earlier. Helga was, therefore, the sister of Tómas Brandsson and Gudný Brandsdóttir, who was the forebear of the orphan Sigríður Jónsdóttir. Gudfinna Tómasdóttir - the grandmother of Hallgrímur Pétursson - and the poet Hallur Magnússon were consequently cousins. It was possible to dig up this piece of information because the maintenance - judgment we have been discussing, gives such a full account of Gudfinna Tómasdóttir, the grandmother of Hallgrímur Pétursson.

Thus one might keep on citing examples from the court records where family-relationships are traced or other genealogical details are supplied. We have seen how genealogies and the information which the court records contain, can create together a comprehensive genealogical picture, but also how one can correct old genealogies by means of court records although many of them are rather difficult to work with. They are often extremely fragmentary, badly worn and hard to read. It is, therefore, hard work to obtain from them useful information as long as they remain unpublished and have no indexes of names.

I do hope that I have been able to give you some idea of what Icelandic court records are like, and I wish to conclude by expressing my gratitude to you for being so patient in listening to this lecture of mine.

Other Resources Iceland

Iceland Wikipedia Article

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iceland>

Iceland Timeline

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/1025288.stm>

Cyndi's List Iceland Links

<http://www.cyndislist.com/iceland.htm>

Rootsweb Iceland Genealogy

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~islwgg/>

Iceland Genealogy Forum

<http://genforum.genealogy.com/iceland/>

Kindred Trails - Iceland Genealogy

<http://www.kindredtrails.com/iceland.html>

Emigration from Iceland to North America

<http://www.halfdan.is/vestur/vestur.htm>

Icelandic Genealogic Society (in Icelandic)

<http://www.aett.is/>

National and University Library of Iceland

<http://www.bok.hi.is/id/1011633>

National Archives of Iceland

<http://www.archives.is/index.php?node=english>

Iceland Map

<http://geology.com/world/iceland-satellite-image.shtml>