

SUGGESTIONS AND ITEMS TO CONSIDER IN WRITING YOUR PERSONAL HISTORY

1. Your birth: when, where, parents, surrounding circumstances and conditions.
2. Your childhood: health, diseases, accidents, playmates, trips, associations with your brothers and sisters, unusual happenings, visitors in your home, visits to grandparents, relatives you remember, religion in your home, financial condition of parents.
3. Your brothers and sisters: names, date of birth, place of birth, accomplishments, names of spouses, date and place of marriage, their children.
4. Your school days: schools attended, teachers, courses studied, special activities, associates, achievements, socials, report cards, humorous situations, who or what influenced you to take certain courses or do things you might not otherwise have done.
5. Your activities before, after and between school sessions: vacations, jobs, attendance at church, other church functions, scouting, sports, tasks at home, fun and funny situations.
6. Your courtship and marriage: meeting your spouse, special dates, how the question was popped, marriage plans, the wedding, parties and receptions, gifts, honeymoon, meeting your in-laws, what influenced you most in your choice of spouse.
7. Settling down to married life: your new home, starting housekeeping, bride's biscuits, spats and adjustments, a growing love, making ends meet, joys and sorrows, your mother-in-law, other in-laws.
8. Your vocation: training for your job, promotions, companies you worked for, salaries, associates, achievements, your own business.
9. Your children: names, dates and places of birth, health of mother before and after, how father fared, characteristics, habits, smart sayings and doings, growing up, accomplishments, schooling, marriage, vocations, sicknesses, accidents, operations.
10. Your civic and political activities: positions held, services rendered, clubs, fraternities and lodges you have joined.
11. Your church activities: as a young person, through adolescence, churches attended, church positions, church associates, church certificates, answers to prayers, necessity and power of love.
12. Your avocations: sports, home hobbies, dramatic and musical activities, reading habits, genealogy, travels, favorite songs, movies, books, writers, poems, etc.
13. Special celebrations or holidays you remember: Easter, Christmas, national and local holidays, vacations.
14. Your plans and hopes for the future.
15. Your ancestors: your impressions of those you knew personally; a general sketch of those you did not know; father, mother, grandparents, great grandparents, other relatives.
16. Your encouragement and counsel to your descendants: carrying on family traditions and activities; their obligations to their country, church and family; your suggestions to your progeny and others on honesty, humility, health, diligence, perseverance, thrift, loyalty, kindness, reverence, the Bible and other religious and edifying books; service to fellow-men; your belief regarding God, etc.

Never underestimate the effect you may have on unborn generations in helping them through the trials and tribulations of life by the written word of advice you leave your children, grandchildren, etc. If you would like them to live upright, honest lives; give them the benefit of your experiences. Job, of the Old Testament, lamented the fact that his words were not written when he said, "Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever!" (Job, 19-23). But they were written, and he then gave his beautiful testimony of the Redeemer which has been used countless times as the text of sermons in both Jewish and the Christian worlds. Your communications to your descendants must be written. They will also appreciate your life story as a precious treasure, and bless you all their days for it.
17. Hints on writing your life story: tell your story plainly and with directness; write truthfully of uplifting, refined and honorable occurrences and experiences. Humor helps to make for easier reading. If you can give the whys of your decisions and changes in activities it may help others. Illustrate with as many pictures as possible. Make several copies, or better still, mimeograph or print and give one to each of your children and grandchildren. Place copies in local and national libraries and/or historical societies.