

## SAMPLE GENEALOGICAL WILL

Dear child, relative, executor, or trustee,

date, place

As my collection of family history records and artifacts has grown over the years, I need to leave more detailed instructions about what to do with it when I am gone. I am pleased and grateful that you are willing to be my "genealogical executor". If you or any other family members wish to follow up on the work I've done, or keep the memorabilia I have inherited, he/she should have first choice. But, realistically, these family records should eventually go back to county and state, to relatives who remain in the area where so many ancestors lived. If the records of the ancestors become a burden to any recipient, they should be sent to the state historical society or genealogical library in city, so that later researchers can find them.

Attached to this "will" are four indexes of my family material with some specific bequests and the details of the material I have for each of the grandparents' families. I have itemized as best I can what I have: what the item is, where it is located, who should or might receive it, and other instructions. These indexes are a work in progress.

Let me give you an overview of what kinds of things I have collected, so you can envision both the whole and the parts.

1. **COMPUTER DATABASE.** Of most importance is the computer database of the genealogical application, which contains the names of all the ancestors I have located. The active file is on my current laptop computer with earlier versions elsewhere. Do not lose this database, as it would be impossible to recreate. The names, dates, and places can be transferred by GEDCOM to other applications, but the notes would not be included. The keeper of this database is to have my laptop computer with the up-to-date version of the database.
2. **COMPUTER FILES.** On both my computers are files relating to many families, indexed by family name. The most recent files should be grouped by related families and burned to CD and copies given to the appropriate relatives.
3. **BINDERS.** The binders are clearly marked with family names, pedigree chart covers, and color coding. By checking the family charts, you can tell which binders go with which families. Many genealogical repositories will accept binders if organized and indexed.
4. **FILE FOLDERS.** These are in a marked file drawer, identified by family name, and contain documents or photocopies too awkward to fit in binders.
5. **PHOTO ALBUMS AND LOOSE PHOTOS.** These, too, are marked with family names. Framed photos are also labeled, and should go with the other family materials. Scanned ancestor photos are in the Photos or Pictures section of the computers, labeled with name and date.
6. **MEMORABILIA.** Family heirlooms and memorabilia are in labeled banker boxes in the office closet. I've photographed heirlooms with labels showing their provenance. These may be kept or given away as you choose.
7. **BOOKS.** Books with references to our ancestors should stay with the appropriate binders. Unwanted general reference books should be donated to the Albuquerque Genealogical Society.
8. **CDs and DVDs.** Check the shoebox on the office bookshelf for those about family history.
9. **MY WRITINGS.** These are the most important documents I have to pass on. There is a master binder of my writings labeled FAMILY HISTORY on the office bookshelf. The computer files are on my desktop computer and on CDs, including manuscripts of my published work.

There are some other family history "investments" to tell you about. I have accounts with \_\_\_\_\_ DNA that will be on file forever at no further cost and can be accessed with number and password. Here are the accounts and passwords. My subscription to \_\_\_\_\_ (account & password) is automatically renewed and should be cancelled if you don't wish to use it. I also subscribe to these magazines and services \_\_\_\_\_.

As time goes by, I am discarding unneeded papers and labelling the "keepers" better. But things will never be in perfect order. Please forgive me for the extra work you will need to do. It is my hope that these records go to people who will share them with future generations. Thank you so much for taking care of this.

Gratefully,