

# **Green Temple Hunting—Consequences, Frequency, and Recommendations**

By Mark M. Shepherd

## **Summary**

Finding green temples in FamilySearch Family Tree (sometimes called “green temple hunting”) is frequently advocated as an easy way to get Church members involved in submitting temple names. However, many who encourage or employ this method fail to verify information or relationships.

In this paper, green temple hunting is defined as submitting green temple names without validating information or relationships. This often results in members submitting names of those to whom they are not related, or performing duplicate ordinances. These problems are frequently compounded by the use of automated tools that “crawl” Family Tree and return long lists of green temple names for members to submit for temple work.

This paper reports findings from a study which examined the impact of green temple hunting for 200 persons in Family Tree who either displayed green temples (140 persons) or whose ordinances had already been printed or shared (60 persons). In 80% of the connections to Family Tree “ancestors” with green temples born from 1650 to 1799 there was at least one likely error that suggested an incorrect relationship, and there were no related persons who actually needed temple work. For those born from 1800 to 1905, 30% had suggested relationship errors and only 51.4% probably needed ordinances.

The frequency of green temple hunting was also examined, based on whether users had made any contributions to the person’s record for whom they requested ordinances. For the 60 records with already printed or shared ordinances, 90% of users made no contribution, suggesting that they simply found and reserved someone with a green temple.

Based on study results, this paper also provides recommendations for involving members in family history without the problems of green temple hunting.

## ***Introduction***

FamilySearch has done (and continues to do) a magnificent job of making family history easier. With billions of easily searchable records at FamilySearch and partner websites, verifying information and relationships is exponentially easier than in years past. Multiple sources can frequently be found and attached in order to validate Family Tree information and relationships. What once may have taken months can now often be accomplished in minutes. FamilySearch has also made it easy to take names to the temple. All Church members are encouraged to Find an ancestor, Take them to the temple, and Teach others to do the same. Such encouragement helps dispel the myth that family history is too hard.

In a well-meaning attempt to involve members, some are encouraging them to find and reserve green temples in Family Tree with little or no verification. However, it is my experience and the experience of many other knowledgeable consultants that if one simply finds supposed distant relatives with green temples and takes those persons to the temple, mistakes are the rule instead of the exception. This is largely due to the data in Family Tree, which varies widely in quality and has not been validated by the Church, as many suppose.

Errors are compounded when those who have been taught simply to find green temples for distant relatives teach others to do the same, especially if automated applications are used. The extent of the problem does not seem to be understood in most cases.

Green temple hunting seems to be in contrast with several teachings of the prophets:

- “It is the disposition of many of the people to hurry their work along in an unorganized fashion because of their zeal for temple work. Patience, accompanied by prayer and thorough research, will prove best in the end.”—Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, p. 209.
- “Because of the sacred nature of this work, members should be diligent in assuring the accuracy of all information submitted.”—[First Presidency, 1995](#)
- “Our preeminent obligation is to seek out and identify our own ancestors. Those whose names are submitted for proxy temple ordinances should be related to the submitter.”—[First Presidency, 2012](#)
- “The Lord expects you and me to perform our family history work well. ...We are going to make mistakes, but none of us can become an expert ... without first being a novice. Therefore, we must plunge into this work, and we must prepare for some uphill climbing. This is not an easy task.”—[Thomas S. Monson, First Presidency message, June 2014](#)
- In “[Creating the Family History Center of Tomorrow](#),” then FamilySearch CEO Dennis Brimhall said “The most important requirement for temple name submission, as set forth by the First Presidency, is that we have to be related.”

This study determined the frequency of submitting unrelated persons when green temple hunting, the frequency of performing unnecessary ordinances when green temple hunting techniques are employed, and the frequency of green temple hunting for reserved names on pioneer lines.

### **Background**

The following experiences highlight the importance and feasibility of verifying information versus simple green temple hunting.

1. In late 2015, my daughter received an invitation from FamilySearch to request ordinances for a supposed distant relative (5th cousin 5 times removed—17 generations removed). I spent several hours researching this “cousin” and found relationship errors within a few generations. My mother has since received two similar invitations to request temple work for unrelated persons. Some of my ward members have had the same experience. In my review of several such invitations, only one person has received an invitation for a truly related person (a fairly close relative) who actually needed temple ordinances.

Clearly the Brethren consider relationship paramount when performing vicarious ordinances. However, suggesting that members simply need to request ordinances for such distant relatives without verifying their relationship either reinforces the incorrect notion that Family Tree information has already been validated or that being related isn’t really that important. Also, asking a beginner to submit a supposed relative numerous generations removed may not be the ideal place to start.

2. A cousin who understands and practices verification reported that her high priest group leader actively advocated the method shown in a YouTube Video entitled “[LDS Family History, 30 names in 30 Minutes.](#)” This video encourages logging into Puzzilla.org, going back 10 generations, randomly selecting an ancestor, then changing to the Puzzilla Descendancy View, going forward up to 4 generations and randomly selecting a descendant. The video then encourages using Find-A-Record (Find-A-Record is an app that searches Family Tree for many different types of research opportunities, including those who may need ordinances), turning off all search parameters except temple ordinances, expanding another 4 generations, and reserving those with green temples—in essence, automated green temple hunting for those who are up to 18 generations removed from the submitter. Even if 90% of all Family Tree relationships were correct, the probability of being related to someone 18 generations removed would only be 15%.

3. My High Priest group leader asked me to help him find a name to take to the temple. He had spent time reviewing his extensive pioneer lines trying to find a name without success. He mentioned this to his granddaughter, who then showed him how to go back to 1700, select an ancestor, and use Descendancy view to find a green temple, but without verifying his relationship to the person or any of the information.

He told me that he didn't think it was appropriate to submit a name in that manner so we scheduled a meeting. Prior to our meeting, I spent a few hours previewing his tree on Puzzilla.org. I found a 5th great aunt with two husbands, five children and no further descendants. It looked like an ideal opportunity to find additional descendants needing temple work. However, when we met, we went through each generation to verify the connection. It wasn't long before we discovered errors, as the two husbands and five children listed in Family Tree were not really related to this 5th great aunt. The next week we had a similar experience on a different line.

We finally found some names to take to the temple. In this case it took several hours of my individual research on his lines besides multiple sessions of meeting together before we were able to find names of those who were related to him and who really needed temple work.

4. A Family Tree user kept entering incorrect parents for an ancestor born in 1757. I sent her a message asking her why she kept doing this despite my detailed discussion entry explaining why these parents weren't correct. (The incorrect parents apparently came from multiple user trees on Ancestry.) For a time she didn't respond, but kept undoing my corrections. When she finally responded, she told me she was inspired that she was attaching the correct parents, despite my sharing proof with her that they were not.

I know that members are frequently inspired as they seek out their ancestors, but unfortunately, those who don't understand the need for verification may interpret whims as inspiration. I have seen such situations over and over. I believe this could be prevented for the most part if members were taught the "whys" and "hows" of verification—not the Genealogical Proof Standard, just basic common sense. This [cartoon](#) and [poem](#) reflect what members basically need to know.

5. As I have taught members over the past few years, I've found that those who are willing to sacrifice a little time are able to learn to verify information and relationships before taking names to the temple. Verification is easier than ever, but learning the basics of why and how to do this cannot be taught in 15-30 minutes. Setting the expectation that finding a name should always be quick and easy and that verification is not necessary often sets members up with unrealistic expectations and predisposes them to frequent mistakes, especially when searching for distant relatives.

If beginners are not taught verification, they see no need for it. They often assume that since Family Tree was created by the Church the information in it is correct. They also assume that automated applications that search for green temples display only display valid names. Some who ascribe to this philosophy are offended when a need for verification is suggested. Those who encourage verification have been told they are old-fashioned, pharisaical, and roadblocks to doing family history.

As I have contemplated the above experiences, it has been impossible for me to reconcile green temple hunting ([often recommended by FamilySearch](#) and often taught in wards and stakes) with the teaching that being related is the most important requirement for temple name submission, and that members should strive for accuracy. These concerns led to the study described below.

### ***Study Methods***

The study consisted of two phases. In both phases, persons with missing BIC ordinances due to incorrect membership records or duplicates uploaded by LDS Membership in May 2016 were *not* included. Data was collected from April 2016 through June 2016.

1. **Available green temples.** I used Find-A-Record to search for green temples up to 10 generations back on my own lines. I also used Family Tree descendancy view to review available green temples for

up to 5 generations of descendants of a non-LDS ancestor on a pioneer line who was born in 1757. I reviewed 70 persons born from 1650 to 1799, and 70 persons born from 1800 to 1905.

Each relationship between me and each person with a green temple was checked to see whether there was at least one source that verified the relationship. I then checked for each of the following:

- a. Indications that would raise serious doubt as to the correctness of a relationship, i.e., serious data errors such as a birth after a parent's death (I didn't include non-standardized place errors), multiple biological parents, highly improbable place connections, etc.
- b. How many with probable relationship errors were blocked from submission.
- c. Whether or not any sources were attached to the record being submitted.

Relationships were not considered verified unless all connections in the line were verified. A probable error was reported if any connection in a line showed a problem. I also checked to see whether or not the available ordinances were necessary and whether or not unnecessary ordinances were blocked by duplicate impedance.

There was an average of 9 generations between me and persons with green temples going back, and an average of 4.3 generations going forward from the ancestor born in 1757. Since my entire first 5 Family Tree generations going back and the first generation coming forward from the ancestor born in 1757 have been previously verified, one can conclude that all potential errors were between generations 5-10 going back and between generations 2-5 coming forward. This indicates that on direct ancestral lines there was an average of 4 previously unverified generations in which probable errors occurred, and an average of 3.3 previously unverified generations coming forward in which errors would have occurred.

I calculated a relationship error rate for one generation for each group (pre-1800 and post-1800) based on the average number of generations and the number of errors. I used the observed overall error rates in both groups to calculate an overall relationship error rate when doing descendency research for two different scenarios. The first consisted of 9 generations back and 4 generations forward, where all but the first 5 generations were born before 1800. The second consisted of 5 generations back and 3.3 generations coming forward, where all were born after 1800. In both cases, the first 5 generations going back were assumed to be verified.

**2. Green temple hunting prevalence.** I used the Family Tree descendency view for the same ancestor born in 1757 and looked at descendants who were already reserved for temple work. All were born after 1800. I included only those with printed cards or those that had been shared with the temple. I excluded those that were requested but not printed or shared, as they could be reserved but not printed or shared due to IOUS duplicates, pending verification, or other reasons.

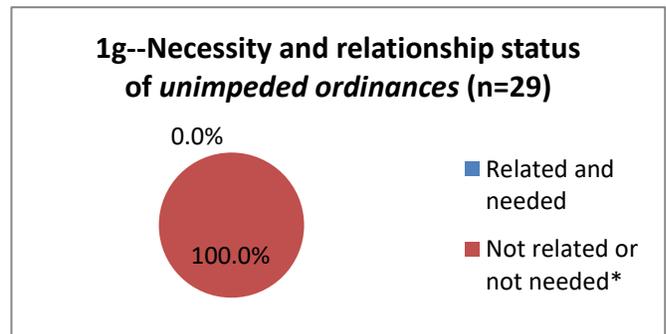
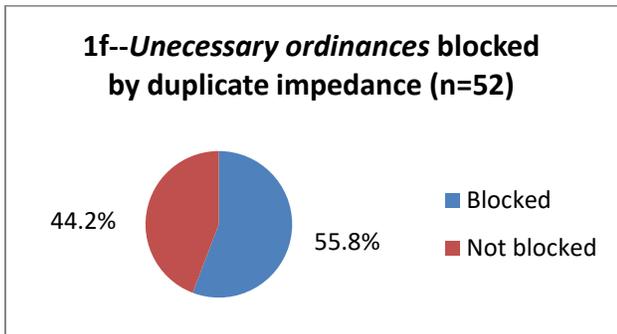
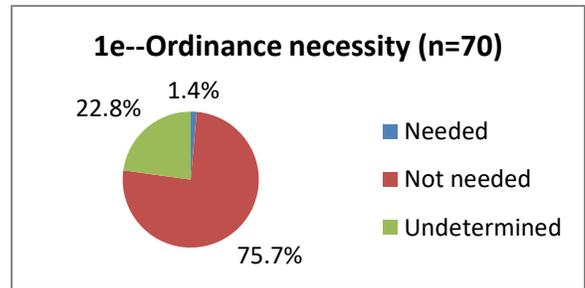
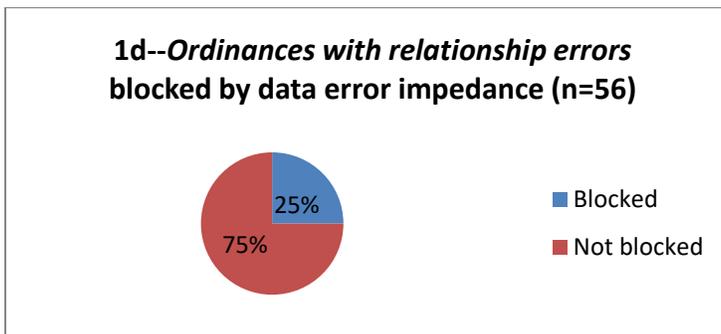
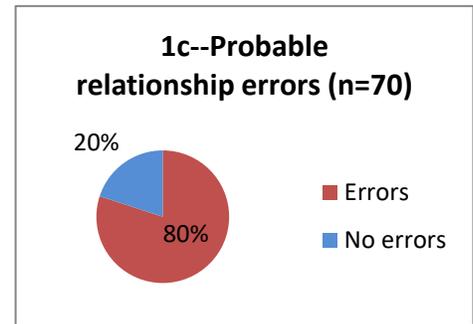
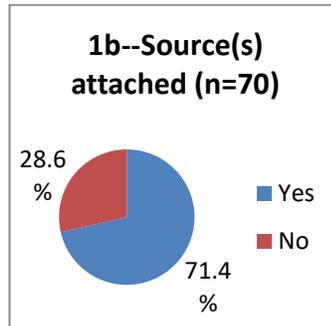
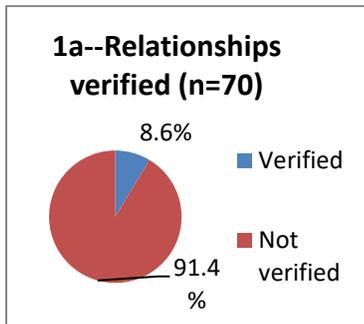
I evaluated 60 printed or shared ordinances. I then evaluated whether or not the person who had printed or shared ordinances had made any contribution to the person's Details page. A contribution was defined as having added any vital information or sources. No contribution would suggest the submitter was just hunting green temples. I also evaluated whether the submitter shared ordinances with the temple or printed cards, and whether or not the printed or shared ordinances were necessary.

In both phases, ordinance necessity could not be accurately determined for some persons without additional research. Detailed research may also prove that some ordinances that initially appear to be needed are not really needed. Therefore, ordinance necessity was categorized as a) probably needed, b) definitely not needed, and c) undetermined.

For statistical analysis of both phases, I used [John Pezzullo's web page for confidence intervals of a proportion](#) to calculate confidence intervals (all confidence interval range calculations are based on a 95% confidence level), and [Quirk's Marketing Research Media's two sample t-test between percents calculator](#) to calculate the differences between various groups.

## Results

### 1. Born before 1800 (average birth year 1705)

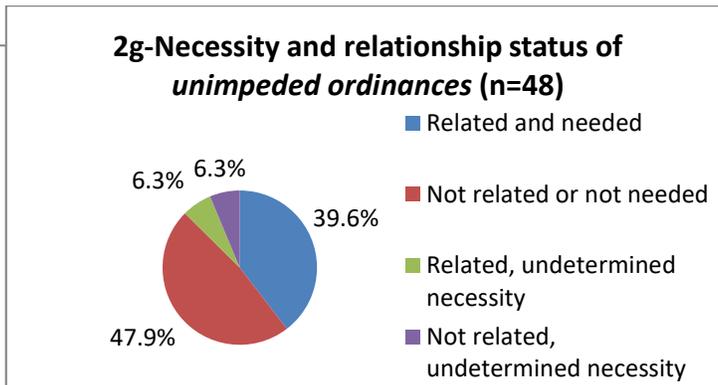
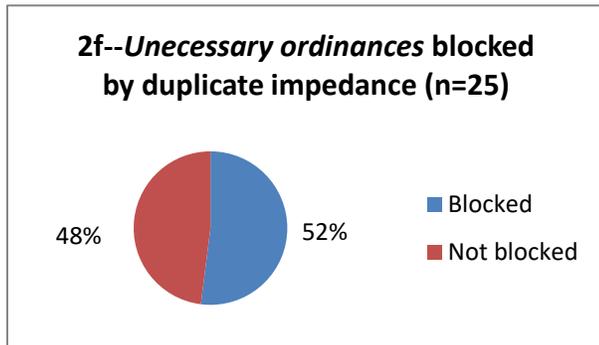
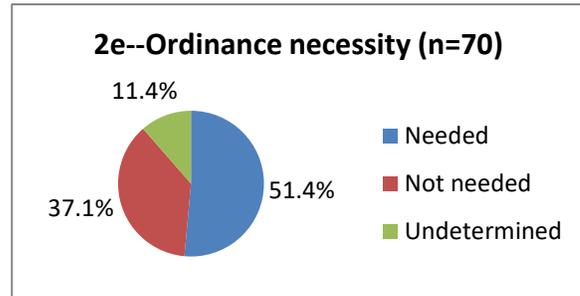
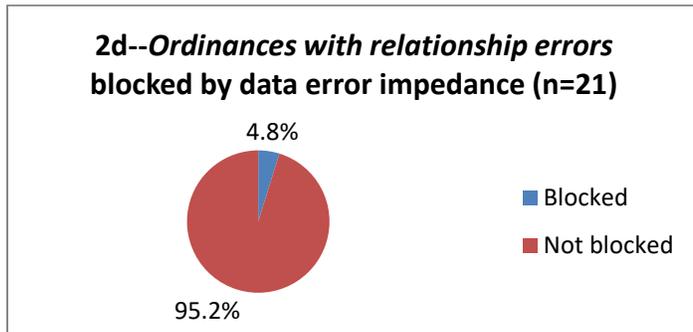
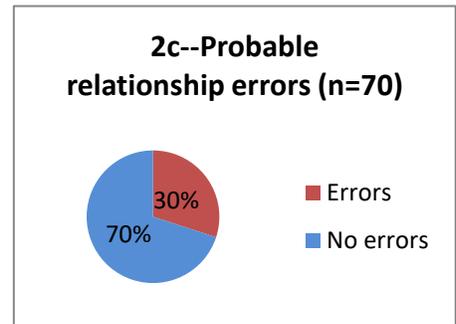
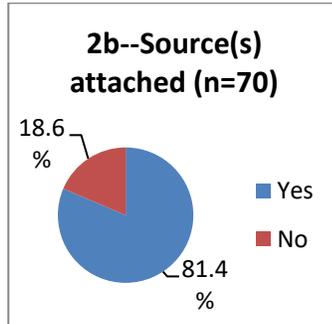
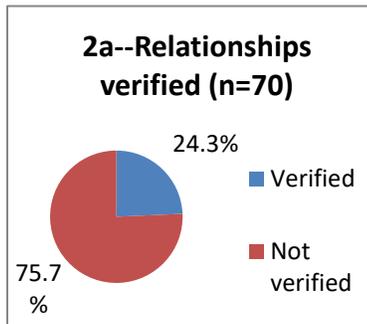


### Summary of pre-1800 data

Chart Number-Data type	Number	Percent (95% CI)
1a-At least one linking relationship not verified (n=70)	64	<b>91.4%</b> (82.3%-96.8%)
1b-Any source(s) attached to record eligible for submission (n=70)	50	<b>71.4%</b> (59.4%-81.6%)
1c-At least one probable relationship error (n=70)	56	<b>80.0%</b> (68.7%-88.6%)
1d-Ordinances with relationship errors blocked by data error impedance (n=56)	14	<b>25.0%</b> (14.4%-38.4%)
1e-Ordinances probably needed (n=70)	1	<b>1.4%</b> (0.04%-7.7%)
1e-Ordinances definitely not needed (n=70)	53	<b>75.7%</b> (64.0%-85.2%)
1e-Ordinance necessity status undetermined (n=70)	16	<b>22.8%</b> (13.7%-34.5%)
1f-Unnecessary ordinances blocked by duplicate impedance (n=52)	29	<b>55.8%</b> (41.3%-69.5%)
1g-Unimpeded ordinances—ordinances needed for related persons (n=29)*	0	<b>0.0%</b> (0.0%-11.9%)
1g-Unimpeded ordinances—not related or ordinances not needed (n=29)*	29	<b>100.0%</b> (88.1-100.0%)

\*Of the 29 records with unimpeded ordinances, all persons were either unrelated or ordinances were not needed. None of these ordinances were of undetermined necessity.

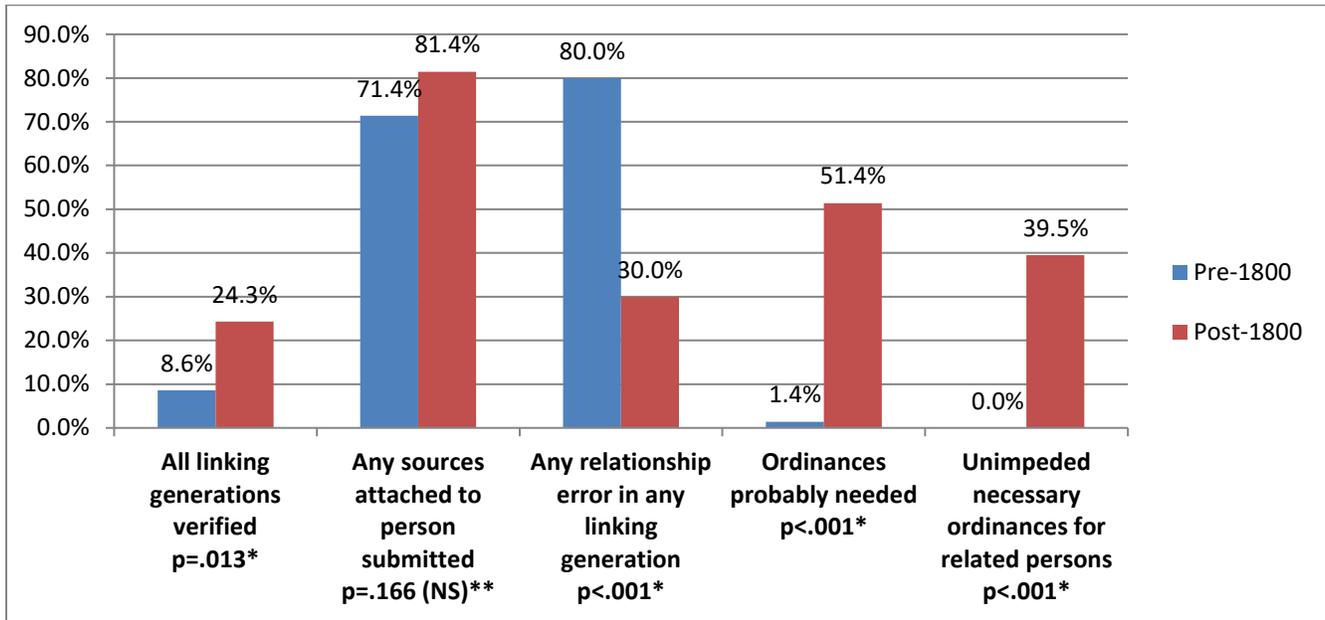
2. Born after 1800 (average birth year 1873)



Summary of post-1800 data

Chart Number-Data type	Number	Percent (95% CI)
2a-At least one linking relationship not verified (n=70)	53	75.7% (64.0%-85.2%)
2b-Any source(s) attached to record eligible for submission (n=70)	57	81.4% (70.3%-87.7%)
2c-At least one probable relationship error (n=70)	21	30.0% (19.6%-42.1%)
2d-Ordinances with relationship errors blocked by data error impedance (n=21)	1	4.8% (0.1%-23.8%)
2e-Ordinances probably needed (n=70)	36	51.4% (39.2%-63.6%)
2e-Ordinances definitely not needed (n=70)	26	37.1% (25.9%-49.5%)
2e-Ordinance necessity status undetermined (n=70)	8	11.4% (5.1%-21.3%)
2f-Unnecessary ordinances blocked by duplicate impedance (n=25)	13	52.0% (31.3%-72.2%)
2g-Unimpeded ordinances—ordinances needed for related persons (n=48)	19	39.6% (25.8%-54.7%)
2g-Unimpeded ordinances—not related or ordinances not needed (n=48)	23	47.9% (33.3%-62.8%)
2g-Unimpeded ordinances—related, ordinance status undetermined (n=48)	3	6.3% (1.3%-17.2%)
2g-Unimpeded ordinances—not related, ordinance status undetermined (n=48)	3	6.3% (1.3%-17.2%)

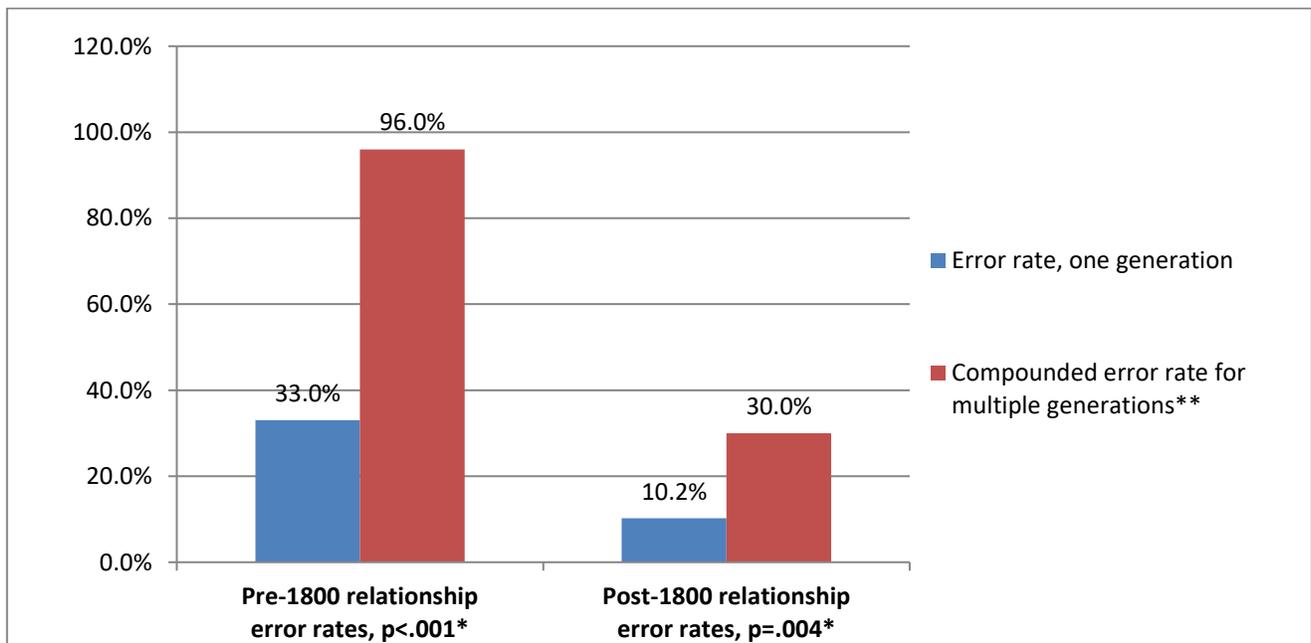
3. Comparison of pre-1800 and post 1800 groups.



\*Statistically significant

\*\*NS= not statistically significant

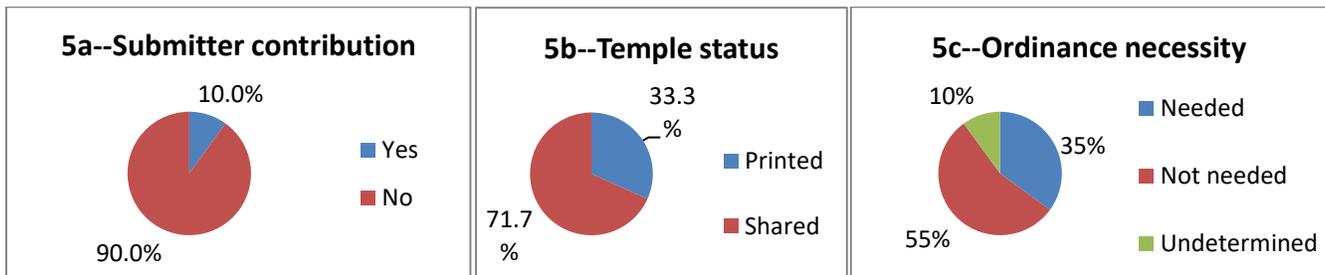
4. One generation error rates vs. compounded relationship error rates for multiple generations. (First 5 generations back are verified, additional generations back and all generations forward aren't verified)



\*Statistically significant

\*\*Pre-1800 compounded rate=9 generations back and 4 generations forward (first 5 generations post-1800, all others pre-1800); post-1800 compounded rate=5 generations back and 3.3 generations forward (all post-1800)

5. Printed or shared ordinances (all born after 1800, average birth year 1845, sample size=60)



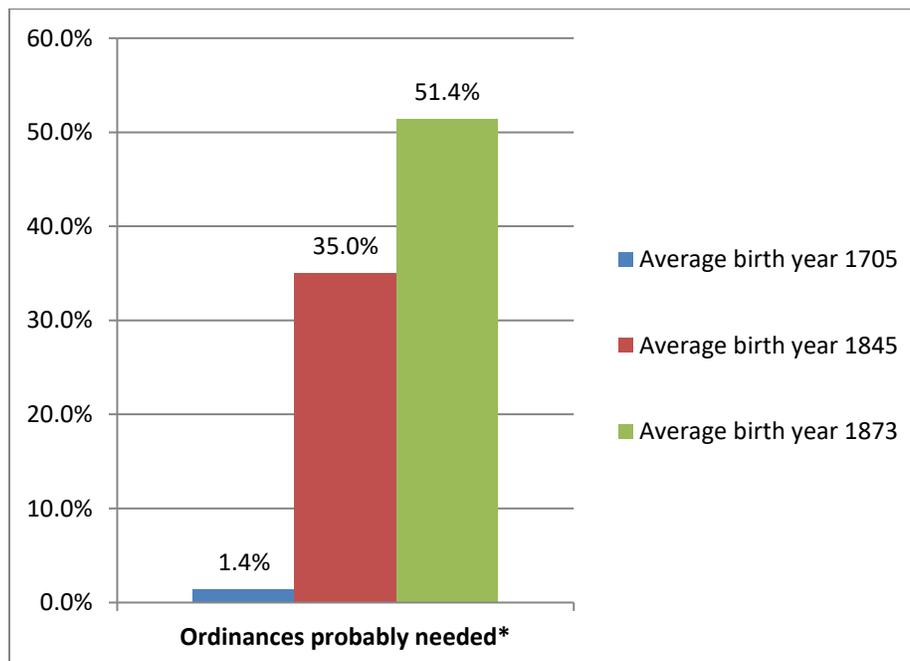
Summary of printed or shared ordinances

Chart Number-Data type (n=60 for all groups)	Number	Percent (95% CI range)
5a-Submitter made no contribution to the record of the person submitted	54	<b>90.0%</b> (79.5%-96.2%)
5b-Ordinances shared with the temple*	43	<b>71.7%</b> (58.6%-82.6%)
5b-Ordinance cards printed*	20	<b>33.3%</b> (21.7%-46.7%)
5c-Ordinances probably needed**	21	<b>35.0%</b> (23.1%-48.4%)
5c-Ordinances definitely not needed**	33	<b>55.0%</b> (41.6%-67.7%)
5c-Ordinance necessity status undetermined	6	<b>10.0%</b> (3.8%-20.5%)

\*Three persons had both shared and printed ordinances; this accounts for the total percentage exceeding 100%.

\*\*8 were submitted before April 2015 (when duplicate and data error impedance was initiated). Of those 8, 5 needed ordinances and 3 did not. If these 8 were excluded, the percent of unnecessary ordinances would be slightly higher at 57.7%, and the percent of ordinances definitely needed would be 30.8%. Sample size is not large enough to determine differences due to the effects of duplicate and data error impedance.

6. Comparison of percentage of probably needed ordinances by average birth year



\*The difference between the pre-1800 group and both post-1800 groups is statistically significant at  $p < .001$ ; for 1845 vs. 1873,  $p = .063$ , which trends toward statistical significance.

## ***Discussion***

It should be mentioned that some probable relationship errors may be correct, and some unverified relationships that appear to be plausible could also be incorrect. Therefore, the actual relationship error rate couldn't be determined without detailed genealogical research. It is also acknowledged that the sample sizes in this study are relatively small and the results may not apply to all Church members. Nevertheless, several statistically significant findings were demonstrated. These findings raise some major concerns.

The reported error rate in this study for individual Family Tree relationships prior to 1800 is not good (33%), but the reported error rate for individual relationships of those born after 1800 isn't too bad (10.2%). However, when relationship errors for those born before 1800 are compounded across multiple unverified generations, the results seem unacceptable (96% for 4 generations before 1800 and coming forward 4 generations). Even if one went back 1 generation before 1800 and came forward 4 generations (1 pre-1800 and 3 post-1800) the potential relationship error rate would be 67.5%. If one-third of the relationship errors shown in this study were actually correct and only 5% of those that appeared to be plausible were incorrect, the compounded relationship error rate going back 4 generations before 1800 and coming forward 4 generations would still be 87%; for going back 1 generation pre-1800 and coming forward 4 generations, it would be 40.4%. These calculations assume the first 5 generations are 100% correct, which is not always the case.

As Church members, we have a sacred responsibility to submit those we are related to for temple work. We don't have a responsibility to submit the names of those to whom we are not related—in fact, we have been asked not to do so. We also have a sacred responsibility to do our best to assure the accuracy of the information regarding those we submit. While we all make mistakes, especially when first starting, we have a responsibility to improve our skills and learn to do our family history work well so that relationship errors can be minimized.

This study suggests that green temple hunting, when done for those born before 1800, or for descendants of a common ancestor born before 1800, usually results in submitting ordinances for those to whom the submitter is not related. This is contrary to Church policy and doctrine. However, based on study results, green temple hunting may be minimally acceptable (although not optimal) for beginners if limited to those born after 1800 (preferably those born after 1850), as long as they don't go back through an unverified common ancestor born before 1800.

Green temple hunting appears to be common among members with pioneer ancestry and also results in a high ordinance duplication rate. Duplication increases as one goes back in time and occurs primarily because of poor verification. While duplication isn't optimal, it may be acceptable for beginners who want to take their own names to the temple. However, it doesn't seem acceptable to share large numbers of duplicate names with the temple. While this study doesn't address the use of automated green temple finding applications, it follows that those using these tools would have the potential to share many more unverified duplicate names with the temple.

If members are submitting names of persons born before 1800, or doing descendency research through a common ancestor born before 1800, it makes sense that basic verification skills would be necessary to assure probable relationship to those submitted. While submitting names from this time period may not currently be relevant to the majority of Church members (i.e., those who have only a few or no ancestors recorded in Family Tree), there are still many members with extensive lines for whom this may be applicable. This would be especially pertinent in areas where the Church is well established (2 million members in Utah, over 4.5 million in the western U.S.). Over time it would become more relevant to other members as they extend their lines. As [Elder Henry B. Eyring](#) stated, "After you find the first few generations, the road will become more difficult."

Two years ago, a friend met with Elder Dennis Brimhall and expressed concerns about inaccuracies and duplication occurring frequently with green temple hunting. Elder Brimhall assured my friend that inaccuracies and duplication were at acceptable levels because FamilySearch had conducted detailed quality and duplication analyses. However, it is interesting to note that when knowledgeable consultants reviewed and analyzed various teaching materials produced by FamilySearch, they discovered that ordinances for many of the demonstrated submissions had already been completed.

Also, FamilySearch analyses are most likely Church-wide and may not accurately portray what happens when members with full trees hunt for green temples. My experience and the experience of many others suggest that

the findings of this study are fairly typical for many Church members with full trees. With today's technology, there is extensive opportunity for those with full trees to find family names needing temple work, but this can rarely be done with a reasonable level of accuracy by simply hunting for green temples, as many are led to believe.

In the above mentioned June 2014 First Presidency message, President Monson also stated that "The first thing we must do if we are to perform our work well is to have the Spirit of our Heavenly Father with us." We are counseled in D&C 9:7-8 that in order to receive the guidance of the Spirit, we must first "study it out in [our minds]." Former YW General President Ardeh Kapp ([Deseret News, March 31, 2006](#)) and former RS General President Bonnie Parkin ([Church News, November 27, 2004](#)) both used the phrase "good information makes for good inspiration." Can we really be effectively guided by the Spirit in our family history efforts if we don't take the time to find and review the easily available records about the persons we are submitting for temple ordinances?

With currently available technology, verification is relatively easy. It should be the goal of all submissions, even for those born after 1800, as there are doctrinal reasons for doing so—"in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." (2 Corinthians 13:1). Is the assumption that the uninvolved 95% will find verification too hard based on current technology (i.e., record hints, indexed records, etc.) or is it based on older and more difficult methods? Do we undermine members' abilities and confidence when we assume they can't do simple verification? It does take some time to learn, but it is far easier than it has ever been. Most Church members want to climb the right tree and don't want to perform unnecessary ordinances.

I realize things need to be kept relatively simple for beginners. I also know that honest mistakes occur, and that occasional duplication and climbing the wrong tree are inevitable. However, I don't believe that means members should simply be taught to hunt green temples because validating information and relationships may be perceived as being too hard. That seems analogous to the Brethren and scriptures teaching 10% tithing, but some missionaries teaching prospective converts that 5% tithing is acceptable because tithing might be a stumbling block to them.

### ***Recommendations***

Many consultants and priesthood leaders suggest green temple hunting because they don't know any better. Since being related to those submitted is a key requirement, all members should understand the basics of validating information so they can minimize climbing the wrong tree. A number of approaches can be taken to help members find related persons who really need temple work without making verification difficult or unpleasant.

- All members could be encouraged to find the easily available records that pertain to those submitted.
- Encourage beginners to submit only those who lived after 1850 (including not going back through common ancestors born before 1800 for descendency research unless connections are verified).
- If automated green temple hunting tools are used, more advanced skills must also be taught.
- If members with full trees aren't ready to verify, have them start with photos, stories, or learning about their ancestors. They can also help friends and family do temple ordinances or help with indexing efforts.
- Block ordinance submissions if there are data errors (including multiple biological parents, which is not currently labeled as a data error) that would impede ordinance requests anywhere between the submitter and those being submitted. Users could then move on to other names that are more likely to be related.
- Contact users who share large numbers of names with the temple without adding information or sources. Kindly teach and encourage them to verify names before sharing them.
- When FamilySearch invites users to request ordinances for relatives, they should set limits on how distant the relatives can be. They should also encourage users to verify information about the person, review and confirm their relationship to the person, and to get assistance from a consultant or another knowledgeable person if needed.

- This [FamilySearch Blog](#) suggests that consultants screen member's trees prior to meeting to help them find and reserve a name in 30 minutes or less. The process suggested in this blog is a great idea! Finding a name to take to the temple can be a wonderful heart turning experience. However, consultants may need to spend a fair amount of preparation time to find valid names for temple work (especially for members with full trees). When consultants meet with members, they should help them find and attach multiple sources to verify the person's information. They should also help members understand the work they did ahead of time, such as checking for duplicates and verifying relationships. Then members won't have the false expectation that they should always be able to find a valid name in 30 minutes or less.
- Make users aware of resources such as the [Family History Guide](#), which assists members in developing the skills necessary to submit temple names with a reasonable degree of accuracy.
- Add more in-context prompts that encourage verification. For example:
  - When users request ordinances, they could be encouraged to review any unattached record hints. A banner could also be displayed that says something like "The First Presidency has encouraged members to 'be diligent in assuring the accuracy of all information submitted.' Click [here](#) for more information." (This link could point to a tutorial on sourcing.)
  - For all distant relatives, at least one attached source should be required before a name can be submitted. Users could also be prompted to review connecting generations for relationship errors.
- Develop a Family Tree user competence rating system that utilizes extensive prompts for beginners. Many prompts could be turned off for those who have demonstrated a certain level of competence.

[Taking an Ancestor or Cousin to the Temple](#) suggests a fairly simple approach that emphasizes verification. It also encourages beginners to limit their efforts to those who lived after 1850, and not to go back through common ancestors born before 1800 when doing descendency research. Additionally, it encourages beginners to do the uphill climbing that President Monson recommended after they have gotten their feet wet.

We used this approach for a stake youth temple challenge in 2014. At a stake bishopric training meeting, a youth consultant demonstrated how to use Hope Chest to find names. (Hope Chest is an app that finds green temples—it doesn't verify relationships or show how users are supposedly related to those they submit). After the meeting, a counselor in our Bishopric asked for help because he wasn't comfortable submitting names that way. I met with him and we were able to verify his relationship to and information about someone he had already found.

After discussing these issues in ward council, we encouraged youth to find a non-member ancestor born from 1800-1830 (they were encouraged not to go back before 1800 due to a higher chance of relationship errors) and then switch to descendency view to find someone needing ordinances. We advised them to skip all green temples with duplicate warnings. We also challenged youth to find 3 historical records for each person they submitted.

While finding and attaching additional historical records does take a little longer, only good things happen when we find multiple records about those we submit for temple work.

- We are less likely to climb the wrong tree and to submit duplicate ordinances.
- We get to know the person better. This enables us to feel more connected when doing their temple work.
- We are more likely to find additional family members needing temple ordinances.

For many in our ward, finding records has proved to be a heart turning experience in and of itself. Several youth were able to accomplish this and submit verified names. They were also able to learn more about those they submitted and feel a closer connection to them when doing their work. Several other ward members have had similar experiences. I believe such an approach can be successfully used with most Church members.

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