

OURTIMELINES.COM: SHOWING LIVES IN CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT: A timeline is a chronological list of events with their dates so you see what happened in context. The OurTimeLines.com website is a free website that generates timelines of major world events between the years you enter. The colored bars on the charts indicate the length of the specify. The website allows you to enter up to 10 additional events, usually personal events. The charts it generates can be saved for genealogy or other uses, including presentations. Since you see the person's life in context of world events, you may find types of records to look for, e.g. military records, natural disasters, and inventions. The notes for this class and related articles, all with active internet links, are on Don's website <https://uvtagg.org/classes/dons/dons-classes.html> .

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

1. Instructor is Donald R. Snow (snowd@math.byu.edu) of Provo and St. George, Utah.
2. These notes, with active internet links and other related articles, are on Don's website <https://uvtagg.org/classes/dons/dons-classes.html> .
3. Tips: (1) Easy to put an icon on your desktop for these notes or any other webpage; just drag the icon from in front of the address in your browser to your desktop. (2) To open a link from here in another tab, but keep your place in these notes, hold down the Control key while clicking the link.
4. The problem for today: Discuss the free website <http://ourtimelines.com/index.shtml> showing what it is and how to generate timelines of a person's life.
5. More information about this topic is in other articles and notes on my website -- <http://uvtagg.org/classes/dons/dons-classes.html> .

THE OURTIMELINES.COM WEBSITE

6. Website -- <http://ourtimelines.com/index.shtml> -- free website to generate a timeline of the period you specify -- click on **TIMELINE** (upper left side)

7. You enter the name and birth and death years and click **Generate Timeline**.
8. It forms a brightly-colored bar chart timeline of world events during that period that shows
 - A. Events from birth year to ending year
 - B. Colored bars show the length of time that event lasted
 - C. Colors represent different types of events (See color codes by scrolling down before you generate the timeline)
 - D. Underlined events are links for further information about that event.
 - E. Person's age when the even started is at end of event line.
9. Earliest year you can enter is 1000 AD; latest year is current year

ENTERING PERSONAL EVENTS

10. Can enter up to 10 additional events; usually these would be personal events, but can be other historical events
11. When adding events, put a check for the type of event it is (end of the line), so they are in the right colors; Personal Event bars are in yellow.
12. For personal events such as births and marriages, for me it helps to enter both a starting and ending year (usually a death), so the bar has the length of that event, not just a slim bar at the starting year
13. If you know enough about html programing, you can enter more than 10 personal events and you could even include links to more information, as are in some of the world events
14. To get around the 10-personal-event limit you can also use a series of timelines for different time periods of the person's life and have 10 personal events in each

SAVING THE CHART

15. The box labeled **Printable** in front of **Generate Timeline** makes a black and white bar chart which prints in B/W, but the colored charts look so much better
16. Neither the **Microsoft Print to PDF** nor **Save as PDF** will save the beautiful colored bars, for some reason
17. The colored charts can be saved to pdf by using a scrolling window screen capture program like **FASTSTONE CAPTURE**, but the underlined links probably won't work in such pdfs; this shareware program is discussed in other notes and article on my website
18. The colored charts can also be saved by saving the html; do this by right-clicking anywhere other than a link on the chart and selecting **Save As...** and tell it where to save the file and what to call it; this gives an html file that opens in a browser and looks just like the original, but is not on the internet and, of course, is not a pdf; however, all the links will work, if you are connected to the

internet.

19. My file-naming system for such files is
SnowEldonStafford(1891-1954)-TIMELINE-HISTORY-GeneratedByOurTimelinesCom--2020-12-11.pdf
- A. If this had been a file about a particular event, I would have entered the date of the event as YYYY-MM-DD (International Date Format) before the keywords **TIMELINE**, etc.
 - B. For files such as timelines that pertain to the enter life, I enter the keywords after the name and birth and death years without an event date
 - C. This system makes files sort together for the person and chronologically for events, but with timelines, histories, etc., together at the end of the list
 - D. The program **EVERYTHING**, discussed in articles and notes on my website, brings all these files together wherever they are on my computer.

COMMENTS AND USES OF THESE TIMELINES

- 20. Be sure to give the OurTimelines.com website credit anywhere you use one of these timelines.
- 21. The pdf of a timeline can be uploaded and attached to people in FamilySearch Family Tree or other data websites.
- 22. Timelines with world events give you an overview of a person's life in context of what was happening then and may lead you to other records about the person, e.g. military records, if a war was going on.
- 23. For people born near the end of the year, you may need to enter their birth year as the next year so the ages when events occurred are correct. Example: Joseph Smith, born 23 Dec 1805; if you enter his birth year as 1805, the generated timeline says the First Vision in 1820 was when he was 15, not 14; entering his birth year as 1806 gives the correct ages for his life events. The problem seems to be the day in the year that Ourtimelines.com uses to compute the person's age.
- 24. Other items on the website
 - A. Peers and Contemporaries -- see who was born in the same year; this helps put your ancestor in perspective
 - B. Birthdays -- see who else has a birthday on that month and day
 - C. FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions -- lots of helpful information about the website here

CONCLUSIONS

- 25. This website is easy and fun to use and helpful in family history. The autors and sponsors are to be thanked for such a free website.
- 26. Experiment with it and you will probably find it helpful.

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