



# Forebears<sup>©</sup>

A software product of  
Opsisoft Limited, UK  
[www.opsisoft.com](http://www.opsisoft.com)

# Forebears

by Opsisoft Limited

Family history at your fingertips. The unique genealogical App designed conveniently for hand-held use on iPhone and iPad – bringing genealogy back into the real world.

Now, with the latest version 3-0, Forebears is also available on the Mac.

Forebears is an advanced genealogy App that exploits the strengths of Apple technology. It's the perfect tool for the professional genealogist or the amateur hobbyist.

The '**Wonder Wheel**' (invented by Opsisoft Ltd) gives the App unique strengths in displaying and navigating massive family groups (15,000 plus).

The familiar '**Ancestral Wheel**' is implemented in a stylish way making full use of on-screen graphics.

The **import and export** of GEDCOM files allows sharing of databases between people and their devices.

The highly efficient **data-entry screens** make it realistic to build family histories from scratch and 'on the go'.

With Forebears you can quickly enter new family history information and photos directly into the app 'on the go'. *Come into the real world!*

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#### A7. Family group maintenance (information, settings, export)

#### A8. App settings (themes, colors, sub-groups, etc)

### Forebears iPad App (refer to A1-A8 above for common details)

#### B1. Two core screens with additional orientation-specific features

### Appendix: Forebears Versions – Revision History

# “With great power comes great responsibility.”

*Uncle Ben’s advice to Peter Parker (Spiderman)*

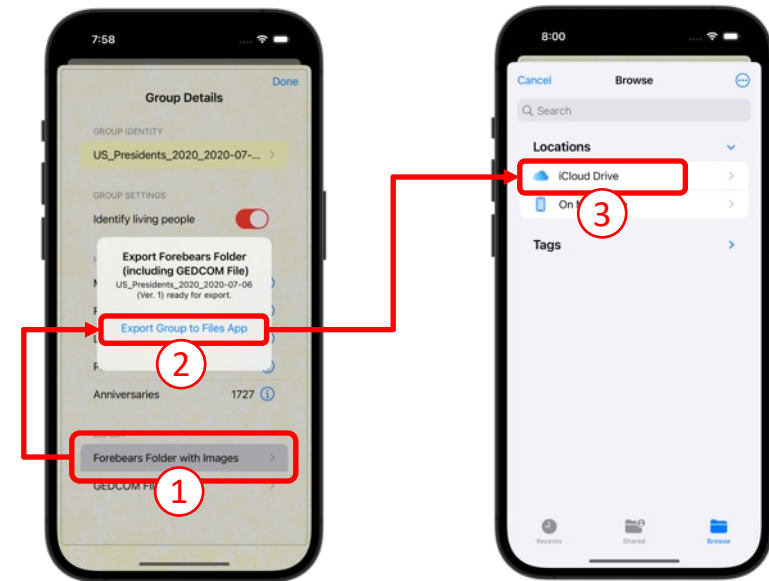
## Protecting your data

One of the great attractions of the Forebears App, and one that our customers most value in a modern world, is that the family history databases you create are yours only – entirely private to you. We at Opsisoft Limited have absolutely no visibility of this information.

Which is great. Until you lose your device. Or it breaks. Or you mess up your family database and want to revert to some earlier version...

So this is what you need to know and more importantly, what you need to do.

1. If you lose your device or it breaks then Apple’s standard iCloud backup allows you to restore everything on your phone – including Forebears and all its data – onto your replacement device. That’s great but it’s not sufficient.
2. You should **get into the habit of using the Forebears <<Export facility>>** to save a folder with all your data and stored images onto your personal iCloud account. Practice doing this early on and then make a regular practice of this to keep your precious data safe.



Got it? Good! Now let’s get started showing you how to use our great little app.

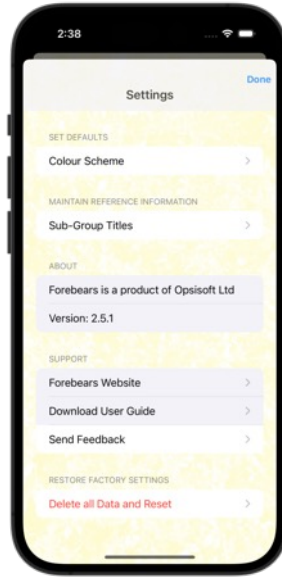
## A. App Settings

The colors-scheme can be personalized to your taste.

Sub-groups let you hold the lineage of notable families.

Useful Links are provided for help.

You can remove all data to start afresh.

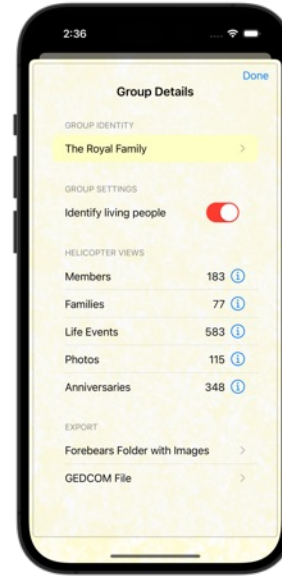


## B. Group Details

You can rename the Group and disguise living people.

'Helicopter Views' give you an overview of the Group to see better what it contains.

And here is where you to Export full details of your group for upload to other systems.



## C. Library

The British Royal Family is pre-loaded to get you started.

Tap the 'Add' button to either begin a 'GEDCOM import' or create a Group within Forebears using the speedy editing features.

Tap different rows of the table to change focus to that Group.

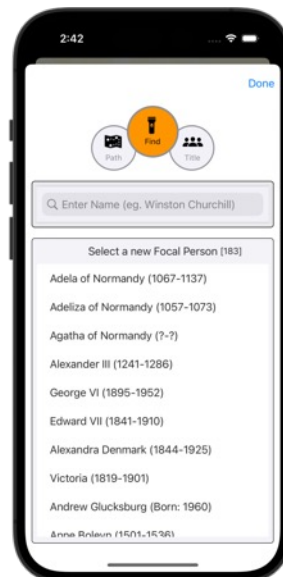


## D. Select Person

Search for a particular person in the Group and refocus the Home Screen on this person.

Or choose one of the sub-groups to identify a person by their Title.

Select a distant person and let Forebears show you the shortest path to that person.



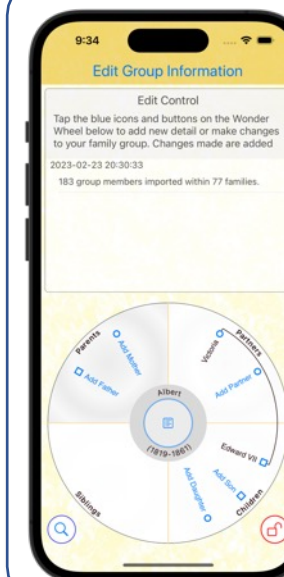
The Home Screen itself is explained on the next page.

## E. Editing

Tapping the 'Edit' button (the lock) lets you make changes to the Group.

You can add and remove people, change how they are related, and update all their life-events.

Forebears keeps a log of the changes you make so you can see how the Group was built over time.





**Tab-1 'Life Story'**

Displays a chronological summary of the events in the selected person's life in the top of the Home Screen.



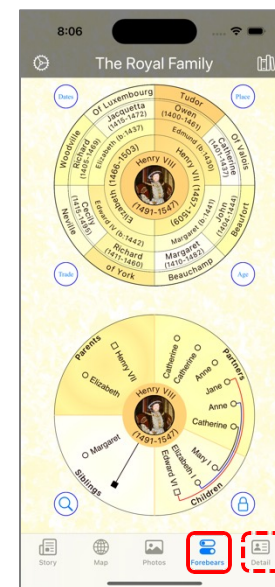
**Tab-2 'Map'**

Displays a Map showing where events in the life of the person occurred.



**Tab-3 'Photos'**

Images held in Forebears relating to the Person are displayed in the top area of the Home Screen.



**Tab-4 'Forebears/Family'**

The Ancestral Wheel (which shows the person's Ancestors) is displayed in the top area of the Home Screen



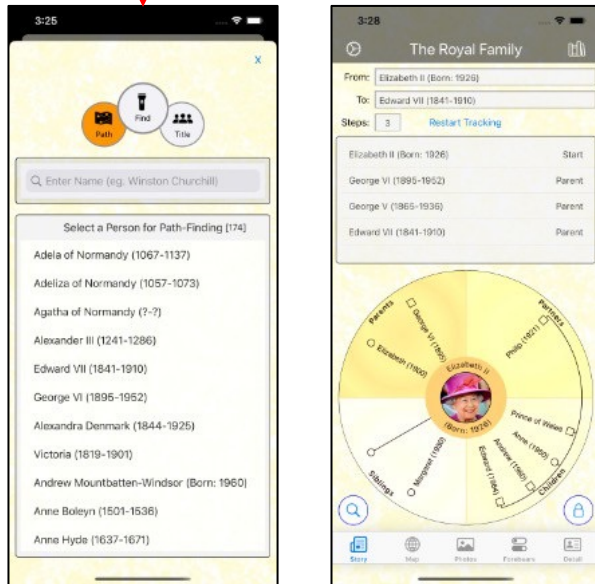
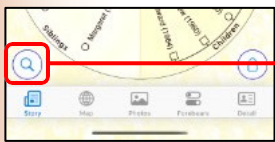
**Tab-5 'Details'**

This view-only screen allows you to see the full detail of the person's life-events. It expands on the information in the Life Story (tab-1).

### Notes

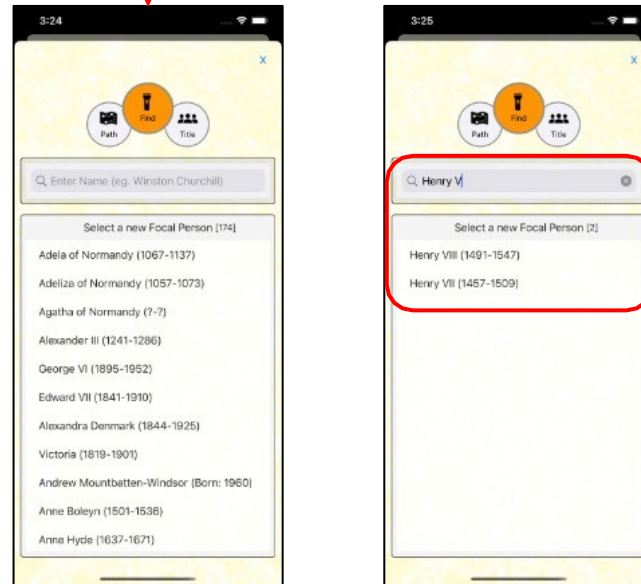
- 1. Top display:** By default, the person at the centre of the Wonder Wheel has their details displayed in the top half of the screen. However, tapping any of the surrounding icons on the Wonder Wheel switches the top display to one of these immediate relations.
- 2. Address Mapping:** Imported Addresses (unless from another Forebears user) will not show on the Map until the place has been confirmed using the Location Mapping screen in Edit Mode (see A5e).

# A3. Select Person Operations



## Find a Path from the Focal Person

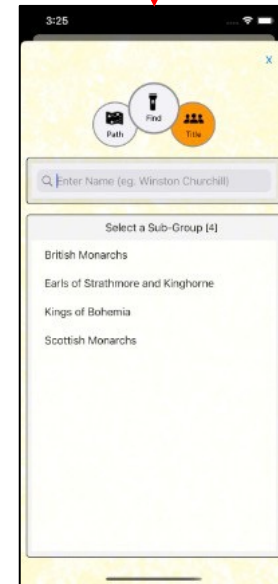
With the left-hand button selected, instead of changing the person in focus, the selected person becomes the target for Forebears to find the shortest path from the focal person to the selected person. The path is displayed at the top of the Home Screen.



## Select a Focal Person

The central button is pre-selected so that tapping any member of the Group returns to the Home Screen with the tapped-person as the new focus.

The search bar allows part or full name to filter the list and display only individuals that match the search pattern.



## Select the Focal Person from a Sub-Group

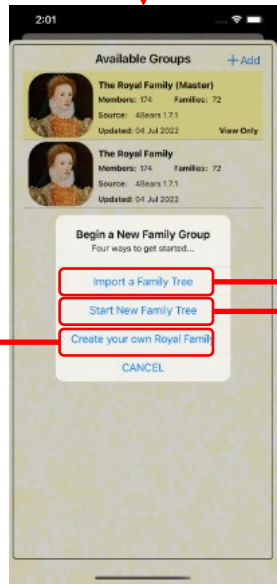
With the right-hand button, an intermediate screen is displayed listing available sub-groups so that selecting one of these shows only the members of that sub-group (as in the central button screen). New sub-groups can be created by the user (see A8 Settings)



Tapping the Library ('row of books') button opens the Library screen.

This is where you can switch between different Family Groups.

This is also where you begin adding your own Group so you'll want to do this early on to build up your own Family Tree.



### 3. Create your own Royal Family

The 3<sup>rd</sup> option to create your own copy of the Royal family is a great way for you to play with Forebears and get familiar with all its facilities.

It takes just a few seconds on tapping this button for Forebears to build an exact replica of the pre-loaded Family Group which you can then add to and change to your hearts delight!

### 1. Import a Family Tree

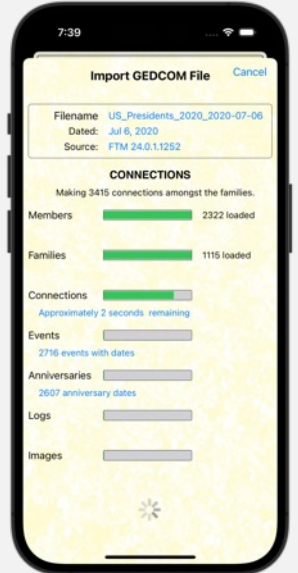


If you've already built a family tree in some other genealogy application then your best option will often be to export a GEDCOM file out of that application, save it on your iCloud Drive and then import it from there into Forebears. That's the basic 'Import a GEDCOM file' option.

However, the very best idea is to import a Family Group from another Forebears user because this also brings in photographs and map locations. That's the 'Import a Forebears folder' option.

A small Group (e.g. 200 people) may take 20 seconds to import. Massive Groups (e.g. 15,000 people) will take anything up to 30 minutes or more. You can monitor progress (Progress screen).

When the Import has ended you are offered the chance to Map Addresses (see page A5e).



*Progress Screen*

### 2. Start a New Family Tree

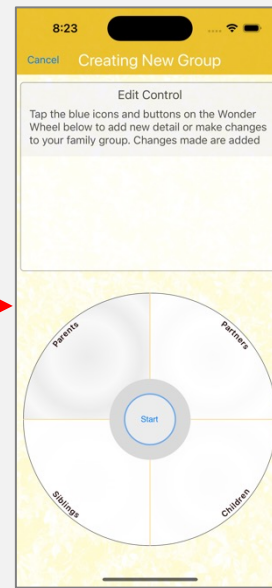
Beginning a new Family Tree is as easy as adding the name of just one person. Simply tap 'Start'. It couldn't be easier!

This person's name automatically becomes the name of the new Group.

At any time, you can change the Group Name on the Group Details screen (tapping the Group Name at the top of the Home Screen).

But of course, if you have details of the person's life history then go ahead and add dates and places and other details for this person.

After tapping 'Save' you're returned to the home screen to add more relations and all their details.



# A5. Edit Mode: Making Changes



After tapping the 'Lock' button to enter Edit Mode there are two ways that you can add or change information to a Group. These are described here following paths 1 or 2.

**Note:** The packaged Royal Family cannot be changed but a copy can be created (select Library button). Imported Groups are also protected from change until the User accepts the choice to sever connections to the source file.

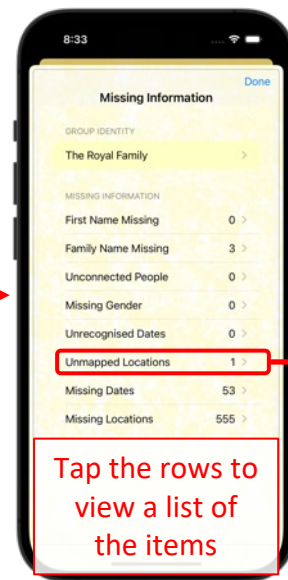


Forebears continually studies a family group from the moment it's created and maintains an internal log of any information that appears to be missing under eight headings.

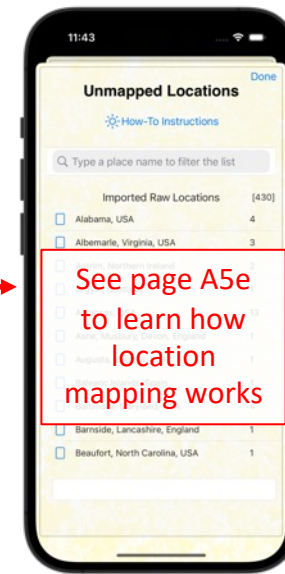
These 'missing information' totals change through the Group's life as information is added and deleted.



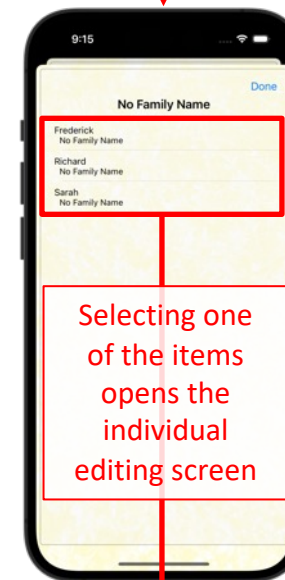
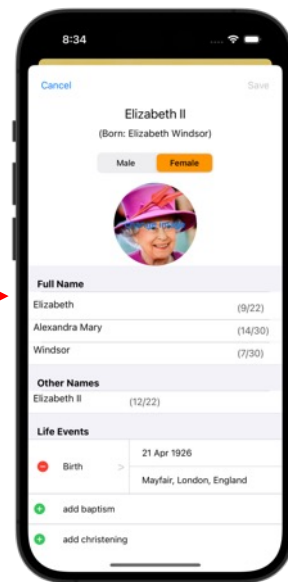
Tap the 'Edit Group Information' button to open the 'Missing Information' screen.



Tap the rows to view a list of the items



See page A5e to learn how location mapping works



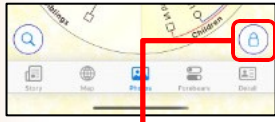
Selecting one of the items opens the individual editing screen

The Wonder Wheel (2) is where most actions are initiated to add or change a family group.

- There are buttons with specific titles to add family members (parents, partners and children).
- There is a central button to open the individual editing screen for the focal person.
- Tapping the icons for existing parents, partners or children will give the user choices to change their relationship to the focal person or edit their data.



# A5a. Add people to the Group



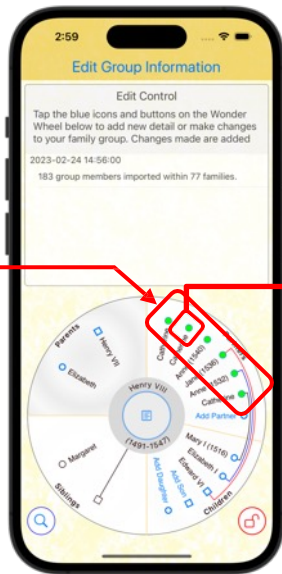
1. Tap 'Closed Lock' to enter edit-mode.



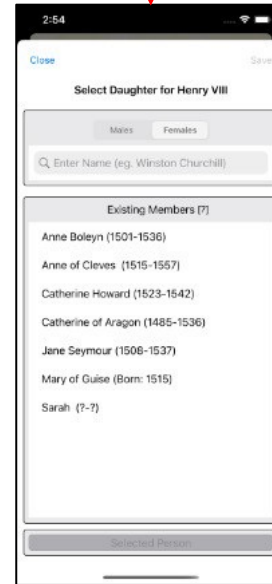
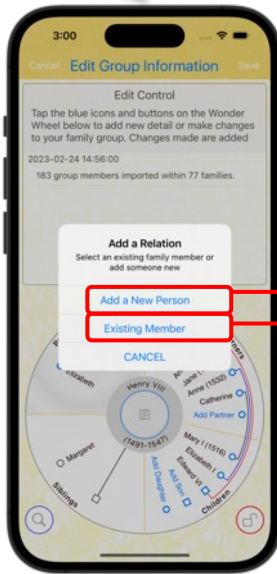
2. To add a new relation (parent, partner or child) tap the relevant 'Add' button.

**Note:** Add Son or Daughter illustrated here but the process is similar for parents and partners.

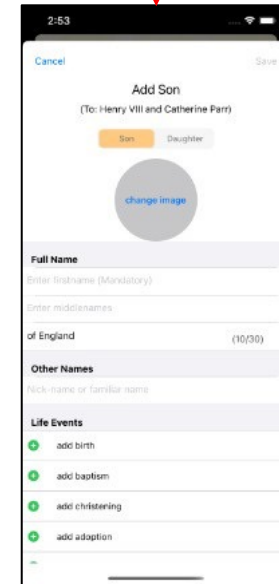
4. Whenever a new relation is added for the focal person the choice is given to either describe an entirely new member of the group or to form the relationship to someone already in the group.



3. When adding a child, if there are existing Partners then their icons will display 'green' to indicate that tapping one of them will make them the 'non-focal parent' for the child. If none of the partners is the non-focal-parent then tap the 'Add' button again so no parental relationship is made.



5. If selecting an existing group member, Forebears identifies only those individuals who logically could form this relationship (based on dates and existing relationships).



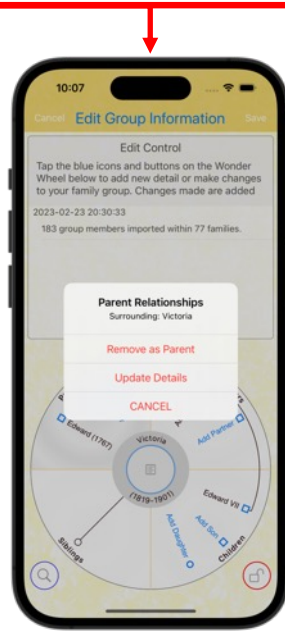
6. Adding a new person to the group can be as simple as identifying their First Name (this is the absolute minimum information required) or it can involve describing their whole life from birth to burial with dates, places and photographs. **Note:** Specific screens to add all these details are described on the next page.

# A5b. Add Detail, Change Relationships

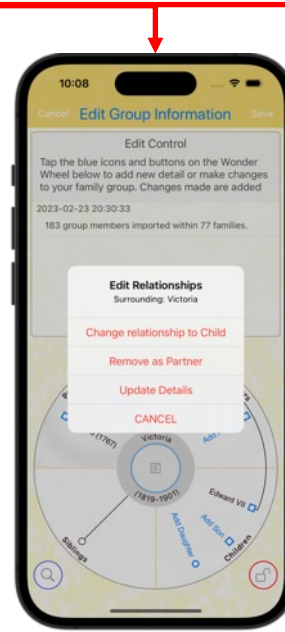
1. Tap 'Closed Lock' to enter edit-mode.



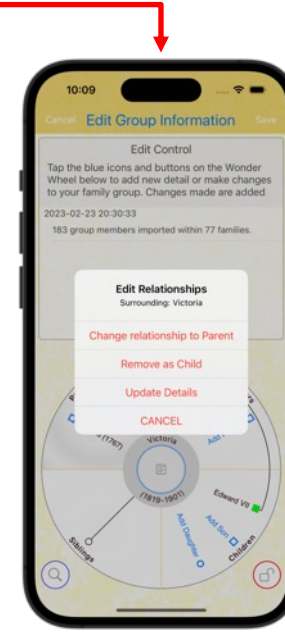
2a. Tap a Parent icon to remove them.



2b. Tap a Partner icon to change their relationship to a child or the focal person.

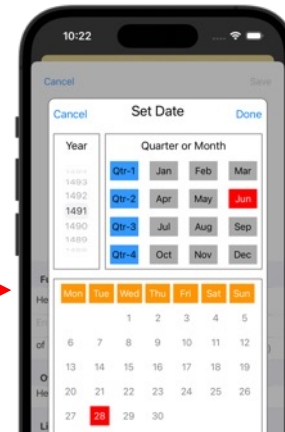
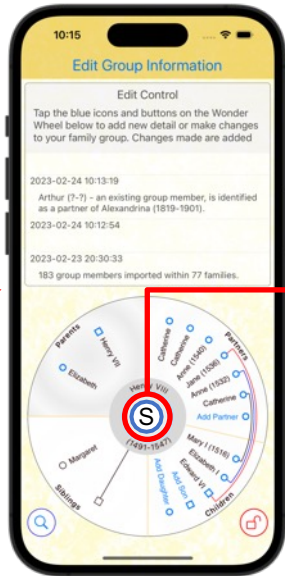


2c. Tap a Child icon to change their relationship to a Partner or the focal parent

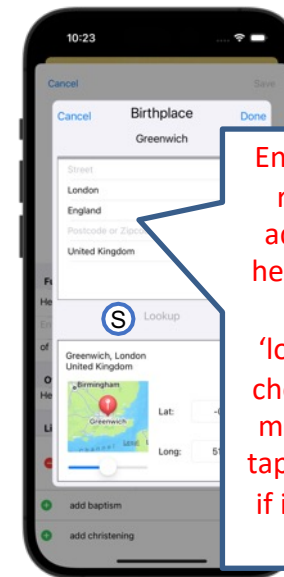


**Tip:** The Edit Relationships pop-up also lets you update details for the relative without first having to bring them to the centre of the circle. A useful time-saver.

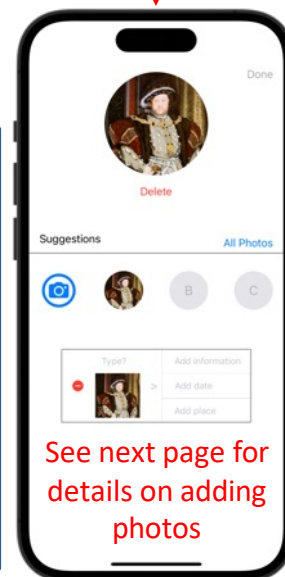
3. Tap the centre of the Wheel to add and change details about the Focal Person



Always select a year. Then optionally a Quarter or Month, then Day.



Enter the rough address here then tap 'lookup', check the map and tap 'Done' if it looks right



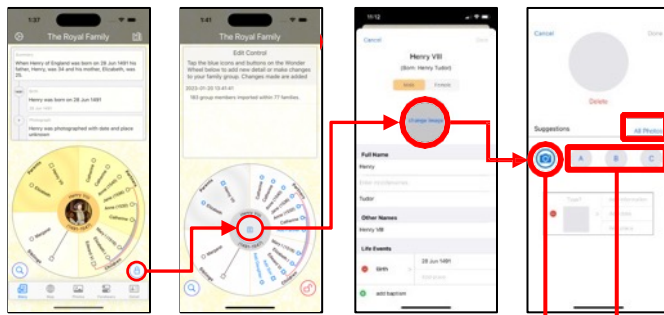
See next page for details on adding photos

### Key

- L Long-press
- S Single Tap
- D Double Tap

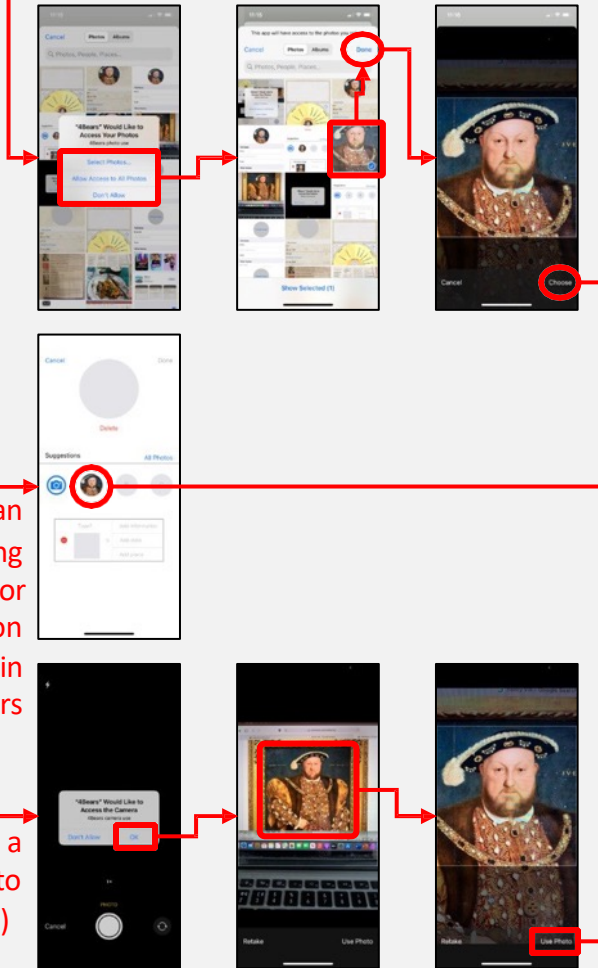
**Tip:** A double-tap on any of the icons around the Wheel brings that person to the centre for editing.

# A5c. Image Capture



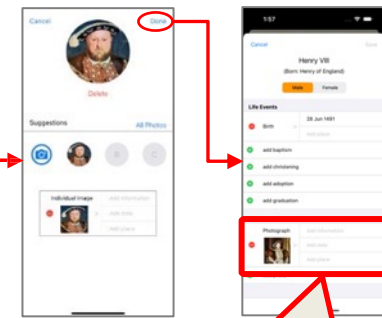
1. Access device's photo library

Three ways to capture an image for an individual



2. Select an existing image for the person in Forebears

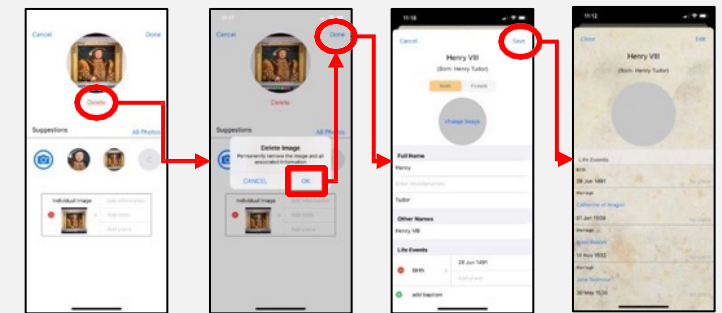
3. Use device's camera to take a photo (eg. of a person or of a photo or displayed on a computer screen)



The photo becomes an event just like any other (Birth, Occupation, etc.)

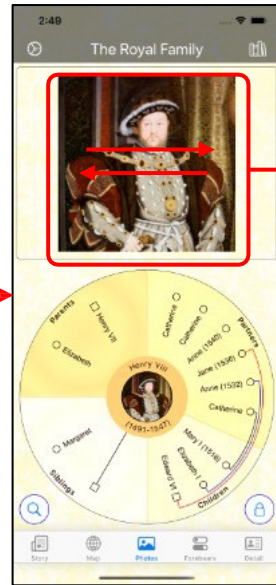
Tapping on the areas of this 'event box' allows you to add information about the image (a title as well as date and place where it was taken). This information will then display on the Individual Details screen.

Deleting an Image

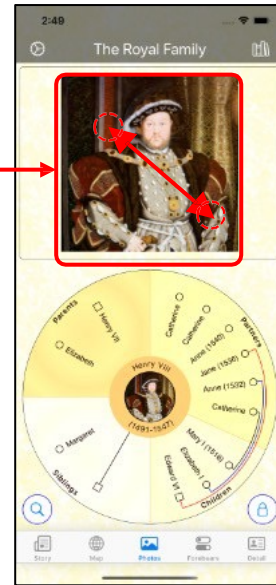




2. Tap the middle tab to display the Image.



3. If there is more than one photo, swipe left or right to display the next one.



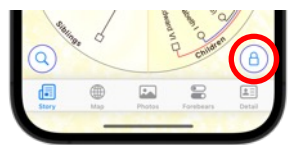
4. To zoom in closer use two fingers to stretch the image.

The **Forebears Photos Album**. Unlike many other Family History Apps, Forebears gives you complete control of the photos that you bring into the App. Copies of your original photos are created in Forebears. However, the originals remain in your Photos App on your device or in your iCloud photos library at their original definition.

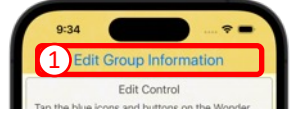
Whenever a copy is created in Forebears, the original is added into a special “Forebears Photos” album in your Photos App on your device (or iCloud Photo Library). This makes it straightforward to locate all your family history images.

## Two Ways to Access the Bulk Location Mapping Screens

### A. Edit Mode Access



A1. Tap 'Closed Lock' to enter edit-mode.

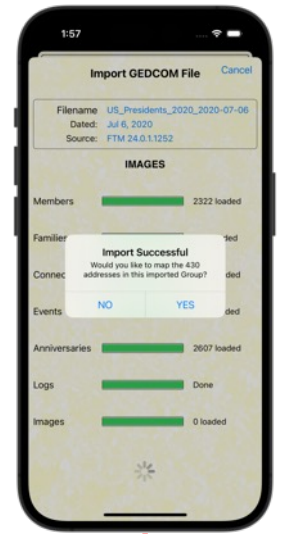


A2. Tap 'Edit Group Information' to open Missing Information screen

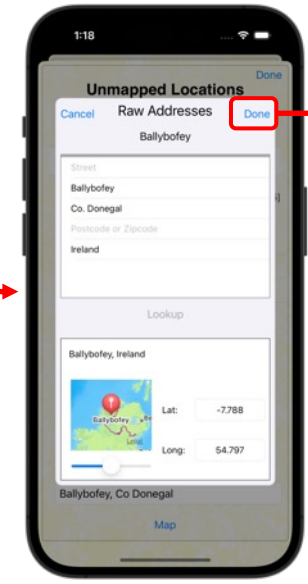
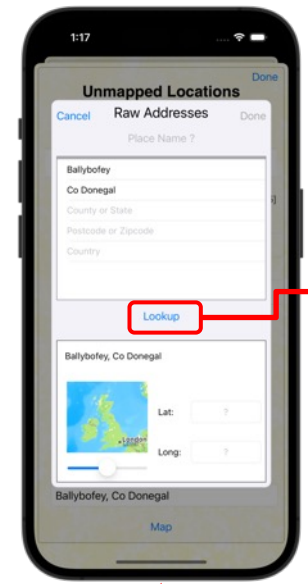


A3. Select 'Unmapped Locations' from the Missing Information screen.

### B. Import Access

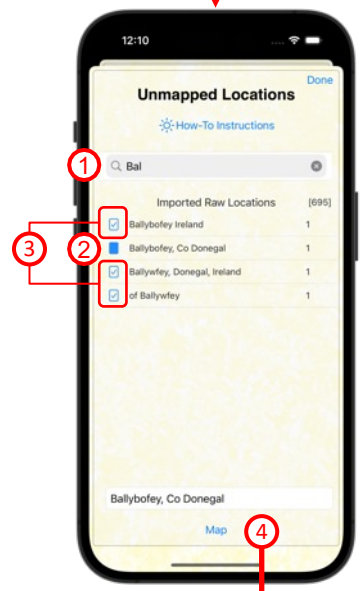


**Step 5:** Tap the 'Lookup' button to instruct Forebears to search for the grid reference and locate the address on a map. *(Note: If the address cannot be found, check the spelling of the raw address and make changes before trying again. Remember that not all historic locations have an exact match on today's maps so you may need to be flexible!)*

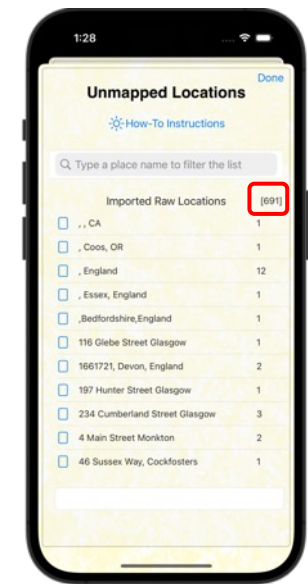


**Step 6:** Tapping 'Done' completes this package of mapping.

The 'Unmapped Locations' screen lets you quickly map addresses that have been imported into Forebears as text.



- Step 1:** It is often best to enter a rough location (e.g. London or Ohio) into the search-bar to filter on addresses that may be the same.
- Step 2:** Then tap an address row that most closely matches the location. The first address you select from the table is highlighted with solid blue box and will be used to drive the mapping process. Tapping the row again clears all selections.
- Step 3:** After tapping the prime address, you can select further addresses that you'd like to share this mapped location because they are the same place but described differently. Tapping the row again cancels the row.
- Step 4:** Tap the 'Map' button to open the Address Mapping Screen.



Finally: Notice that the total in this example has reduced from 695 to 691 unmapped locations  
Still some way to go so don't stop now!

## Wonder Wheel

Displays a person's immediate family in one picture (parents, siblings, partners and children)

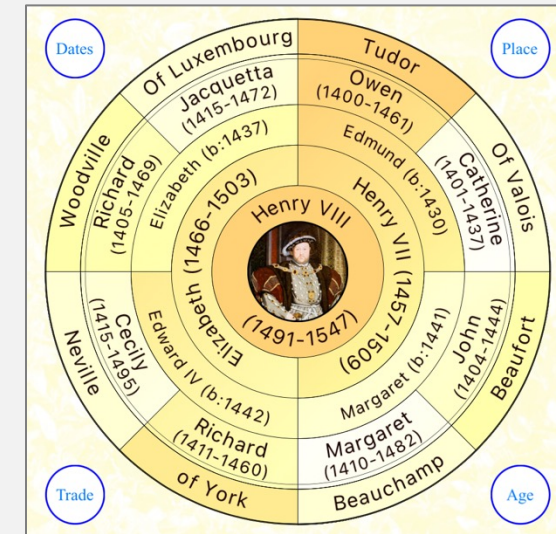


The Wonder Wheel allows large families with many children and multiple partners to be clearly represented across three generations, showing how they all are related.

- Four flexibly-sized shaded quadrants surround the focal person showing Parents, Siblings, Partners and Children
- The shape of icons by each person's name identifies their gender using standard genealogical convention (square=male / circle=female / rhombus=unknown)
- Arcs connect children of the focal person to their other parent. Step-children with other partners have different arcs.
- A double-tap gesture on any of the icons brings that person to the centre and redraws the Wonder Wheel around them
- A single-tap gesture on the focal-person opens a screen with their full details showing all the recorded events in their life.

## Ancestral Wheel

Displays a person's 'pedigree' – the earlier generations of parents that produced them (their gene-pool)



Each concentric ring (moving out from centre) identifies the parents of those in the ring immediately within. There are:

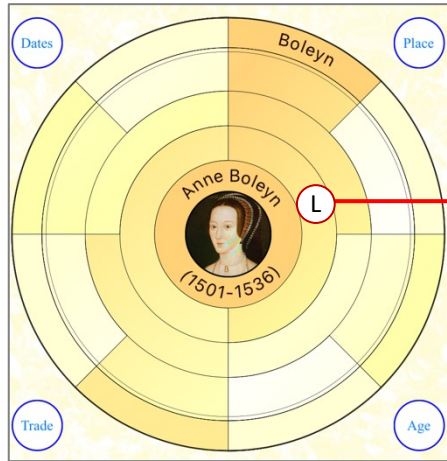
- Two people in the first ring out from the centre (the focal person's mother and father)
- Four grandparents in the next ring out
- Eight great-grandparents in the ring beyond that.
- The outermost ring has the family name of the set of descendants who share that name.

The subtle colour shading of the Ancestral Wheel shows clearly the people that are in the same 'paternal lineage' and share the same family name.

# A6b. Add parents to the Ancestral Wheel

**Key**

- L** Long-press
- S** Single Tap
- D** Double Tap

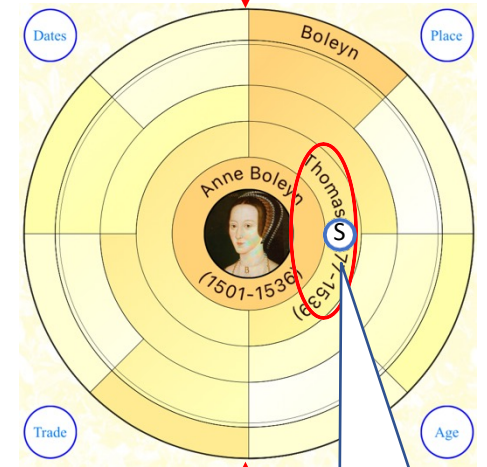


Quickly build back the family Ancestral through earlier generations by 'long-pressing' the empty space around an existing person to add their father or mother.

You can keep the same focal person and add more and more forebears.

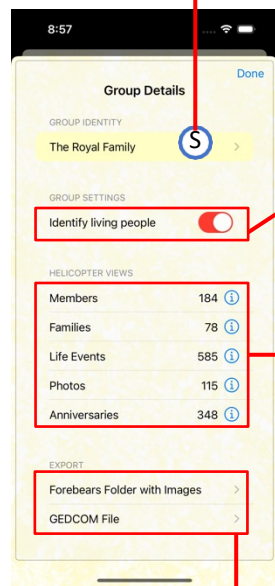
A 'single-tap' on a person in any of the outer rings brings them to the centre so you can continue adding more forebears.

**Generic 'Add Person' Screens**



Note: A single tap brings a displayed ancestor to the centre of the Ancestral Wheel and correctly displays their forebears around them.

# A7. Family Group Maintenance



**'Identify Living People'**. Imported Groups by default have anyone with a birth-date but no death-date anonymized with only their initials displayed (with a \*\*\*\* suffix). In this display mode, "Export Gedcom" also anonymizes these living people in the Gedcom file. Toggle this switch to remove anonymized names.

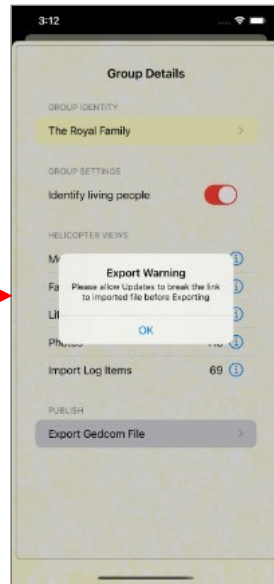


This is where the Group Name can be changed. Often imported Groups can have obscure names so here's where to rename them.

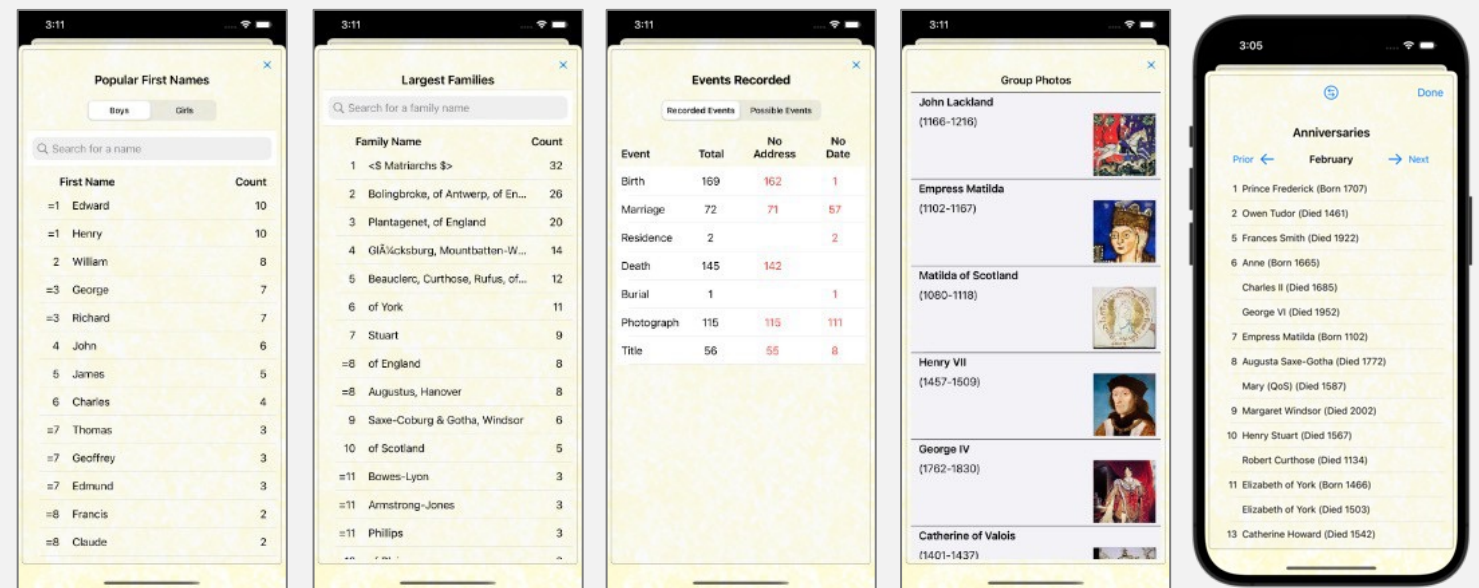
Also, here is where the Group Photo can be changed by either selecting one from the device's photo library or by taking a photo with the camera.

Often an easier way to change the Group Photo is to use an existing group-member's image. Simply 'tap' on any image in the helicopter view below and you will be offered the choice to make this image the Group Image.

Groups can be exported to the user's iCloud Drive. Choosing the Forebears option creates a GEDCOM file with all photos saved into a folder that can be shared and imported to Forebears on another device or by another user. Otherwise a simple GEDCOM file export can be chosen.



Five 'Helicopter Views' that analyze the contents of the Group database

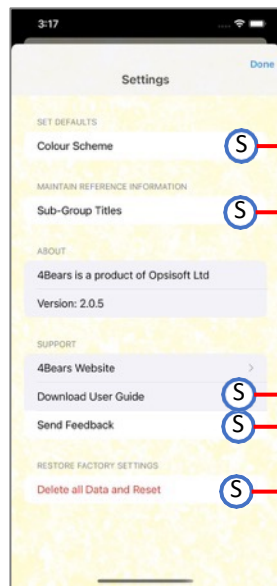


Note: As shown here, imported Groups must first be 'edit-enabled' (by tapping Lock button).

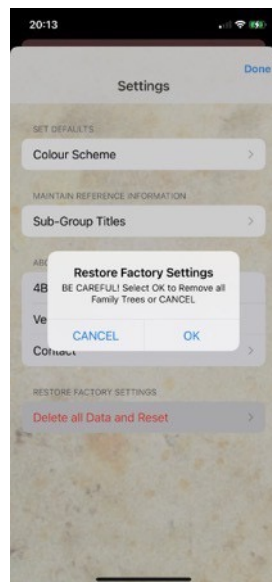


# A8. App Setup

**Key**  
S Single Tap

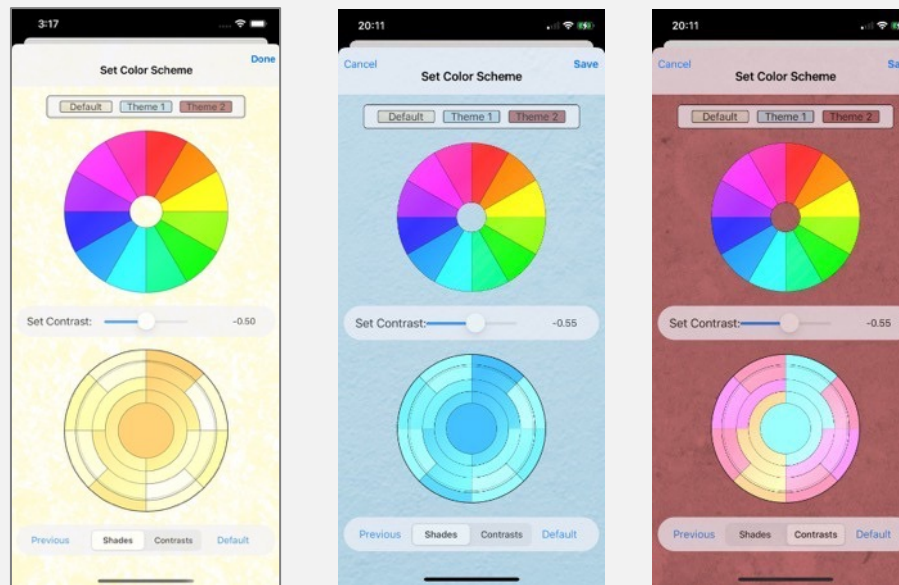


This User Guide  
Email us!



Perform a 'factory reset' to delete all data and restore the sample 'British Monarchy' database.

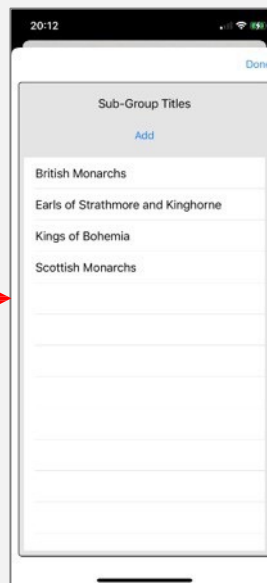
## Color Scheme



Considerable flexibility is provided to personalize the look of the App.

1. Tap one of the three 'Theme' buttons to choose a background
2. Tap a segment of the top color-wheel to begin to style Ancestral Wheel scheme.
3. Move the Contrast slider to adjust the colors of the wheel.
4. Choose 'contrasts' to see the contrasting colors.
5. At any point, 'Default' selects the Gold color-scheme or 'Previous' reverts to the last saved scheme.

## Sub-Group Titles



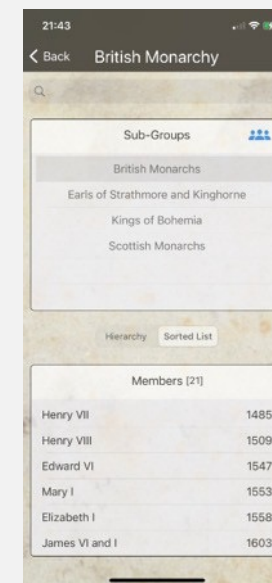
For Royal Families and other noble families, it is often desirable to identify in sequence the individual holders of the title.

Forebears is the ideal tool to describe an extended Royal family history showing all the children, parents and grandparents, cousins, uncles and aunts going back many generations.

But **unique amongst family-history Apps**, Forebears can also show the Royal Line (or any other Noble hereditary title). And if you want to know how many steps lie between Henry VII in 1485 and Elizabeth II in 2020 Forebears can tell you that too! (See A2, above).

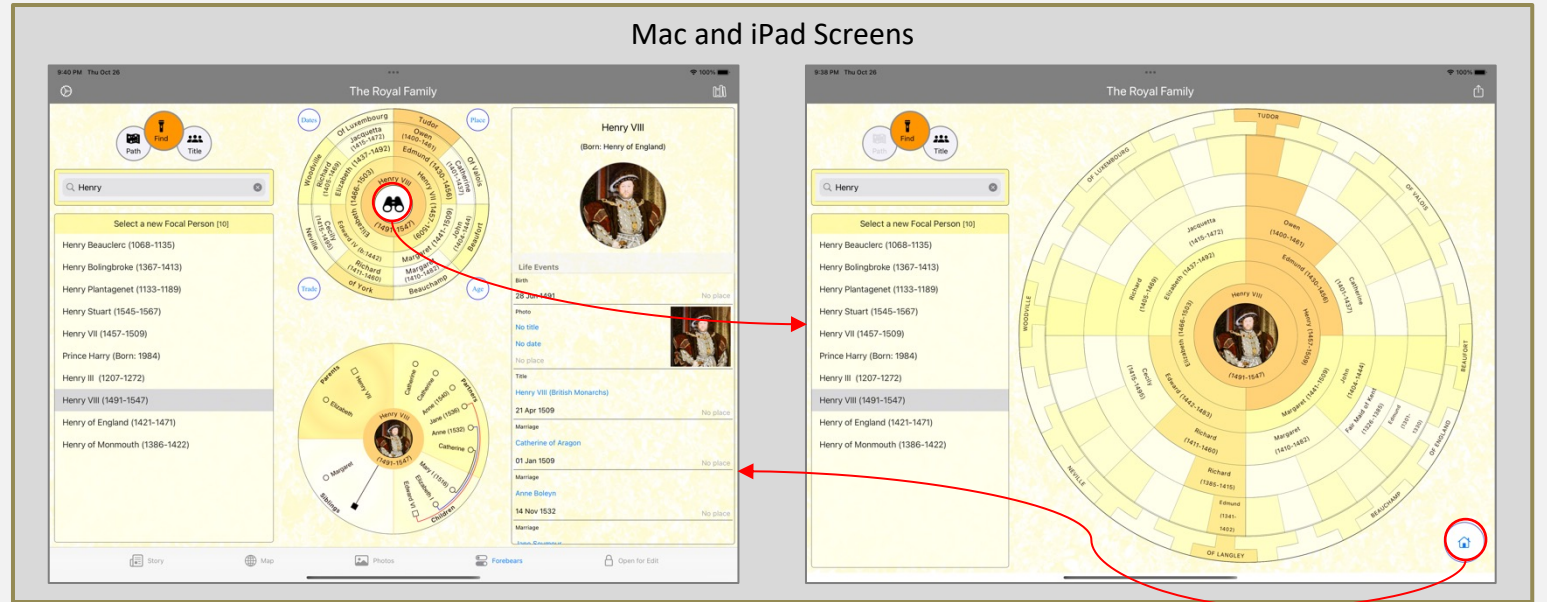
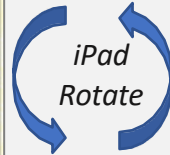
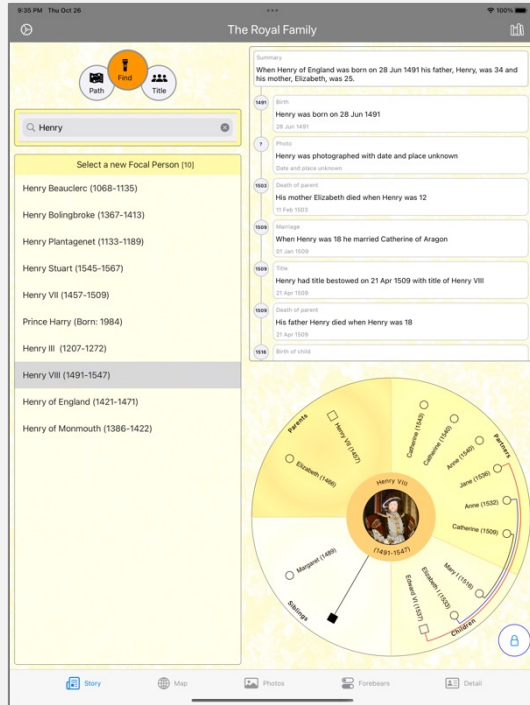
Indeed, if you want to identify all the farmers, or doctors, or clergymen, then Forebears sub-groups will support that too!

See on the right how the Kings and Queens of Great Britain have each been linked as members of the 'British Monarchs' sub-group to create the Royal Lineage.



# Forebears for iPad and Mac Platforms

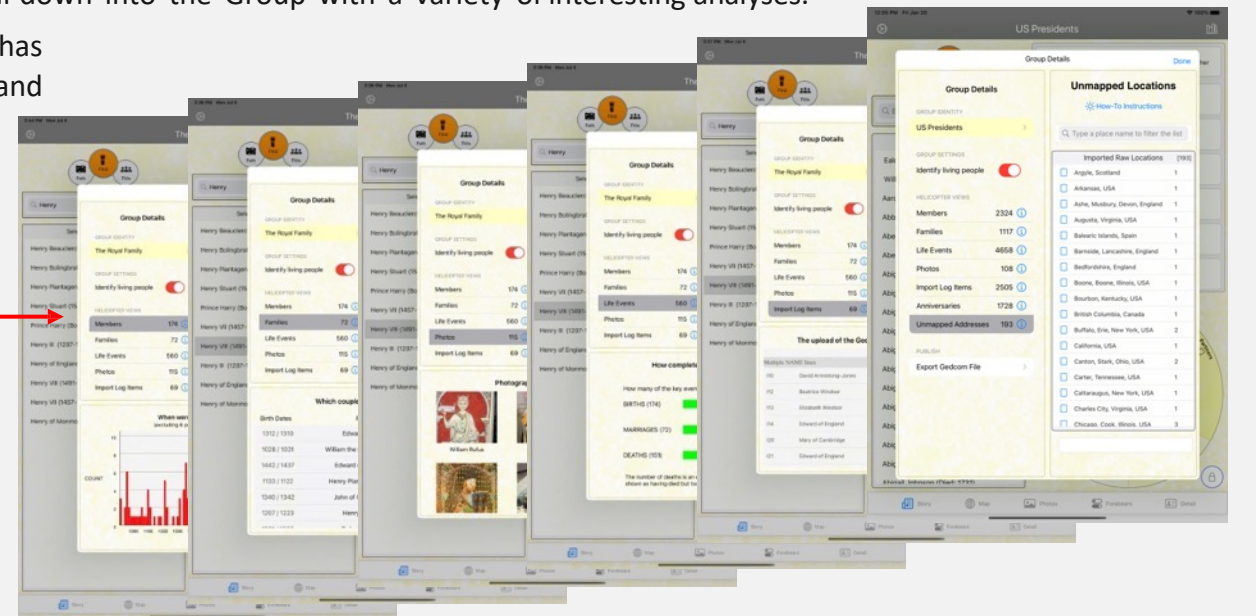
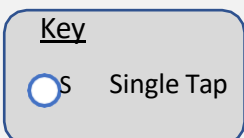
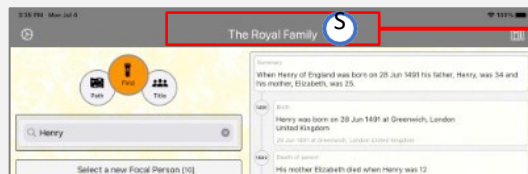
**1. The iPad Home Screen.** This contains everything you need to view and edit individuals (See the iPhone section of this document for details). Landscape orientation is ideal when using an attached keyboard and has the added option to view a large 6-generation Ancestral Wheel (tapping the 'Big Wheel' tab on the right of the screen).



Forebears lets you drill-down into the Group with a variety of interesting analyses.

The iPad version has twice as many charts and tables of information

As with the iPhone version, a 'single-tap' on the Group Name opens a Group Details screen.



# App Version History

Version	Launched	Changes
1.0	Jan 3, 2021	Launch.
1.1	Jan 5, 2021	Onboarding Screens
1.2	Jan 11, 2021	Enhanced onboarding, More accessible support (user guide, e-Mail feedback), 'tap image to enter group', middle-name display, larger close button on helicopter views
1.2.01	Jan 14, 2021	Imported GEDCOM files with persons of unknown sex are now displayed on circle with rhombus symbol.
1.5	Apr 29, 2021	New 'Life Story' display and 'Images' display above the Wonder Wheel. The Target-Setting screen now only displays when a target has been selected. Further enhancements to the Color-Setting with a choice of color-coordinated background themes.
2.1	July 6, 2022	Forebears (no longer 4Bears) has been entirely redesigned for greatly increased usability. Too many changes to detail in full. The App has basically been 'turned inside out' so that new Home Screens for iPhone and iPad take you straight into your Family Group. Also, a new 'edit' button (a lock icon) 'unlocks' the group for changes that are now all centered around the Wonder Wheel graphic.
2.2	Aug 9, 2022	New 'Anniversary' screens within the 'Helicopter Views' now display the set of Group Members whose births, marriages and deaths occur in each calendar month.
2.3	Nov 27, 2022	Entirely new user interface for iPad version. It is now possible to access all Forebears functionality whilst remaining in Landscape orientation and therefore iPad users can work with an attached keyboard and mouse if they prefer.
2.4	Jan 20, 2023	A new screen displays step-by-step progress of a GEDCOM Import so that Users can see – especially for huge files – how much longer the process will take and whether they should get themselves a coffee! Also, support for geo-coding textual addresses in imported GEDCOM files has been greatly enhanced and integrated with the Import process.
2.5	Feb 18, 2023	Group Information screen now separate from Group Editing screen, each displayed by tapping the top navigation bar when in either View or Edit mode (lock or unlock button). The Group Editing screen offers a number of ways to add missing information in bulk.

