

Sometimes a timeline might indicate that identities should be merged. For example, a subject might disappear from one location and appear in a new place around the same time. Or a subject might stop using one name and begin using another. Both cases may be solved by reviewing the subject's identity characteristics and creating a timeline to ensure the records fit together for one person rather than overlapping.

Table 5 shows the use of a timeline and identity characteristics to help merge identities. In this case, Mark Parmalee bought and sold properties in multiple locations. The timeline demonstrates that he was buying and selling property in only one location at a time.

There must always be a reason to connect two records together in support of a single identity. Levi Parmalee's civil birth record in Guilford names Mark as his father. Decades later in Litchfield, Mark gave his son Levi land for love and affection. Having a son named Levi is one of Mark's identity characteristics, consistent in both locations. Similarly, Mark sold Demetrius Crampton property in Litchfield and almost twenty years later sold him land in Clarendon.

Mark's son Timothy was baptized in Litchfield and Mark quitclaimed him land in Clarendon. Recognizing the same people as associates in multiple locations allows the researcher to connect the records. When Mark purchased land initially in Litchfield he was "of Guilford," further connecting the records.

All three timelines pertain to the same man, with no conflicts, and the identities can be merged.

Technique #3: Gather, connect, and sort identities

If the census comparison and timeline suggest multiple same-named people, distinguishing different identities might require a more complex method. The following technique can be applied to various same-named people or as part of a surname study to sort out families with the same surname. This process has two steps:

- 1. Gather as many records as possible that name the subject.
- 2. Connect and sort the records based on identity characteristics.

Gather records

Determine what records are available in the

TIMELINE THAT SUGGESTS MERGING IDENTITIES

Year	Mark Parmalee Guilford, CT	Mark Parmalee Litchfield, CT, and Washington, CT	Mark Parmalee Clarendon, VT
1721	Mark was born.		
1753	Son Levi was born.		
1742-1765	Bought and sold various properties, in last transaction selling the "house where I now live."	Mark "of Guilford" purchased property.	
1769		Son Timothy was baptized.	
1767-1772		Bought and sold various properties, including selling to Demetrius Crampton.	
1776		Sold land to son Levi for love and affection.	
1779		Washington, CT, carved from Litchfield and other towns.	
1784-1788		Sold various properties.	Bought property.
1790			Enumerated in 1790 census and sold property to Demetrius Crampton.
1792			Bought and sold property.
1795			Quitclaimed remaining property to son Timothy.

Table 5. Timelines for merging identities. Comparing the timelines for three Mark Parmalees in three different locations indicates that the identities can be merged. Besides each Mark being active in only one location at a time, named associates connect the men.