

Census Basics

By Marilyn Thomsen (Jan 2012)

CENSUS EXTRACTION FORMS

Attach these to your photo copy, (plus the page before and after) to analyze information.

FREE:

- Ancestry.com: www.ancestry.com/charts/census.aspx
- Family Tree magazine: Digital
www.familytreemagazine.com/freeforms

USEFUL FORM for tracking your family

- www.pricegen.com/downloads.htm
- Digital Templates for copying records.

Cost \$

- <http://censustools.com/> excel spreadsheets
- *The Magic Key Census Tracker*
<http://www.themagikey.com/census-tracker-view>

MAPS ONLINE and COMPUTER

- <http://www.maps.n2genealogy.com/#county>
- U. S. state maps with yearly boundary changes
- **AniMap Plus** <http://www.goldbug.com/AniMap.html>
- A computer program that plots county boundaries and places on maps. *Available at Family History Centers*
- **Library of Congress Map Collections: 1500-1999**
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/gmdhome.html>

BOOKS THAT HELP

Your Guide to the Federal Census for Genealogist, Researcher, and Family Historians, Kathleen W. Hinckley, 2002, Betterway Books, available from Ancestry.com. Orem Library call number 317.3 H582

The Census Book: A Genealogist's Guide to Federal Census Facts, Schedules and Indexes, by William Dollarhide, James A. Derheim, available at Heritage Quest > Census> Help > Learn more about the census.

Available online at:

http://persi.heritagequestonline.com/hqoweb/library/help/census_book.html

MAPS showing county boundary changes

Guide to the U.S. Federal Censuses 1790-1920 by William Thorndale and William Dollarhide Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc. ISBN/ISSN 0806311886
Outlines of counties by census year and state

Tool Kit for Unlocking Census

- Family data (family group sheet or data base)
- Chart listing each census for an individual'
- Extraction forms for every year, to chart Information
- Maps of jurisdictional boundaries
- Research log (Do it once!) (List of possible surnames)
- Money for copy machines (at Library or Fam. Hist. Center)
- Black pen (to record citation on photocopy)
- Red pen (to mark location of family on copied census)
- Resource Sheets: Information in each Census Sheet and list of Census Web sites

Where and What is Online?

ONLINE CENSUSES

https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/United_States_Census

Ancestry.com. Almost everything, including some states, mortality, and British Census. USE FAMILY TREES first. Free at Orem Library and Family History Centers.

HINT: Use Family Trees to see if someone else already linked to the census.

Heritage Quest: Go to lib.orem.org. Click on Resources, Online resources, Genealogy, HeritageQuest, Enter your library card and pin number.

FamilySearch.org – Historical Records

United States Federal Census Records 1850 thru 1920, and 1930 and some STATE Census, British Wales 1841, 1851, 1861, 188, 1891 some Argentinean, Canadian, German, Norwegian, and Mexican. Ghana.

USGenWeb.org - many transcribed census indexes and substitute census records.

WorldVitalRecords – access through Orem library card

Cyndislist.com - a guide to census records online as well as other census resources.

stevemorse.org search enumeration districts...this will help find people in 1940 until index is complete

INSTRUCTIONS TO CENSUS TAKERS.

<http://www.censusfinder.com>

INDEXING SYSTEMS BASED ON SOUND

Google: Soundex Converter.

Online calculators: Jewish Soundex code found at www.jewishgen.org/jos/

NICK NAMES

[wiki.familysearch.org/ Traditional_Nicknames_in_Old_Documents](http://wiki.familysearch.org/Traditional_Nicknames_in_Old_Documents)

HOW TO BEGIN:

- Try to find your ancestors in every census taken in their lifetime.
- Begin with the most recent census available. If they died in 1904, start in 1900
- For US Census, start with online indexes. If one doesn't work try another
- Indexes vary by year and state
- Search for first name only, initials and children.
- Check 5 pages before and 5 pages after for family—especially married children.

HELPS FOR INDEXES

1. Locate all indexes for the census year and locality and check all of them.
2. Study the introduction and key to the index. FamilySearch & Ancestry.com search engines allow wildcards, (* & ?) and first name + age + district.
3. Search for all spelling variation of the surname and given name.
4. Examine all possible entries
5. Do not give up **until** you have searched the originals. Even if your person is not in the index, he may be in the census.
6. They may have moved. Check tax lists for when.

ANALYZE CENSUS CLUES

- Analyze **birthplaces** for migration years, additional wives of the husband or children from a prior marriage.
- **Elderly person** with the same surname as the household head might indicate a parent, aunt or uncle. Elderly people with a different surname might be a mother or father in law. Watch out! Newly found grandma may have remarried. Be cautious about concluding that this is the wife's maiden name.

GET THE MOST OUT OF THE ORIGINALS

Census takers listed Head, wife, their children related to head of household first, then related to wife. Important to know for 1850 relationships.

Note families housing one person of your surname of interest. The data you transcribe will reap rewards in family connections later down the line.

Note families nearby (census takers usually took the houses in order that they were situated). Could be relatives or old friends.

Note birthplaces of other families in the area with the same origins, whether it be the same state or the same country. People moved in groups or invited friends and relatives from their former home to join them. Neighbors can lead you to family homelands.

IMMIGRATION in the 1900 through 1930 reported immigrants' arrival year and citizenship status. Naturalization year was only in 1920

Al for alien

Pa for first papers (Declaration of Intention)

Na for naturalized.

MILITARY

1840- listed living pensioners of the Revolutionary War or other military service—2nd page.

1890 asked whether Union or Confederate and had supplemental material for a few states.

1910 lists whether an individual was a "survivor" of the Union Army, Union Navy, Confederate Army, or Confederate Navy.

1930 asked in which war did Vets served

CENSUS DON'TS:

- Do not assume census indexes are correct or complete. Try looking at originals in an area.
- Do not assume spellings remain the same.
- Do not assume relationships are exactly as stated
- Do not assume a wife is the mother of all or any of the listed children
- Do not assume ages listed are correct
- Do not believe all census data to be true and correct

CENSUS DOS:

- Do copy down all information from all columns and the top of page also
- Do note the date the census was taken
- Do use family occupation, wealth and children to track down your family and eliminate others
- Do believe that all census records are important -- even the earlier ones
- Do use the state census records
- Do study the enumerator's handwriting so you can make comparisons
- Do watch for families split onto two pages with the surname not repeated at the top of the next page
- Do check family histories and other sources for neighbors from the same region to locate your ancestor's town of origin
- Do remember that when searching page by page, town enumeration may be split and not be kept together on the film or online--- cities are often listed separately from the town they are connected with and online images are not always filed in order.

“Census Day”

Enumerators instructions were to calculate ages and residents in the house on “Census Day.”

Year	Day	Time Allowed
1790	2 August	9 months
1800	4 August	9 months
1810	6 August	10 months
1820	7 August	13 months
1830	1 June	12 months
1840	1 June	18 months
1850	1 June	5 months
1860	1 June	5 months
1870	1 June	5 months
1880	1 June	1 month
1890	1 June	1 month
1900	1 June	1 month
1910	15 April	1 month
1920	1 January	1 month
1930	1 April	1 month
1940	1 April	1 month

Record two dates when copying information from the censuses, 1) the census day and 2) the enumeration date.

Summary of Statewide Census Losses, 1790-1820

State/Territory	1790	1800	1810	1820
Alabama	—	—	—	lost
Arkansas	—	—	—	lost
Connecticut	extant	extant	extant	extant
District of Columbia	—	—	lost	extant
Delaware	lost	extant	extant	extant
Georgia (1)	lost	lost	lost	extant
Illinois	—	lost	(2)	extant
Indiana (3)	—	lost	lost	extant
Kentucky	lost	lost	extant	extant
Louisiana	—	—	extant	extant
Maine	extant	extant	extant	extant
Maryland (4)	extant	extant	extant	extant
Massachusetts	extant	extant	extant	extant
Michigan	—	—	lost	extant
Mississippi	—	lost	lost	extant
Missouri	—	—	lost	lost
New Hampshire (5)	extant	extant	extant	extant
New York	extant	extant	extant	extant
New Jersey	lost	lost	lost	lost
North Carolina (6)	extant	extant	extant	extant
Northwest Territory	—	(7)	—	—
Ohio	—	—	lost	extant
Pennsylvania	extant	extant	extant	extant
Rhode Island	extant	extant	extant	extant
South Carolina	extant	extant	extant	extant
Tennessee	—	lost	lost	(8)
Vermont	extant	extant	extant	extant
Virginia (9)	lost	lost	extant	extant

1940 census images will come online April 2, 2012.

Three companies have joined forces to index:

FamilvSearch. Archives and FindMvPast.

LOST and BURNED CENSUS

More than 99 percent of the original 1890 schedules were destroyed in a fire in the Commerce Building in Washington in January 1921.

In the chart: *Statewide Census Loses, 1790-1820* chart, a dash – are states that did exist that year. In 1830 the Federal Government required states to return prior census enumerations to Washington. Some states had failed to keep the originals and are considered lost. “Extant” in, means the manuscripts of the census returns survive, and microfilmed copies of them are available.

Notes:

1. Three counties are missing from the 1820 Georgia schedules.
2. Of Illinois Territory’s two counties in 1810, Randolph is extant and St. Clair is lost.
3. Missing from the Indiana 1820 schedules is Daviess County.
4. Three counties are missing from the Maryland 1790 schedules.
5. Missing from the 1790 New Hampshire schedules are thirteen towns in Rockingham County and eleven towns in Strafford County.
6. Missing from the North Carolina schedules are three counties in 1790, four counties in 1810, and six counties in 1820.
7. In 1800, about a fourth of the population of the Northwest Territory was in Washington County, whose census was discovered among the papers of the Ohio Company in Marietta, Ohio. All other counties were lost.
8. In 1820, two federal court districts were in place in Tennessee, one with a U.S. Courthouse in Nashville, the other in Knoxville. The original censuses returned to Washington according to the 1830 law were from the Nashville district only, representing the western two-thirds of the state. The twenty eastern counties enumerated within the 1820 Knoxville district were not received in Washington and are presumed lost.
9. The “Heads of Families” index to the 1790 census includes Virginia. However, these names were extracted and compiled from county tax lists of Virginia, 1785-1787.

U. S. Research Checklist

Name	Alternate Spellings
Location	Time Period
Son/Daughter Of:	

BACKGROUND CHECK

<input type="checkbox"/> New.FamilySearch/	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Histories	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Registry
<input type="checkbox"/> Ancestry.com Trees	<input type="checkbox"/> FHL <input type="checkbox"/> Heritage Quest <input type="checkbox"/> Google	<input type="checkbox"/> Local History
<input type="checkbox"/> Ancestral File/ PRF	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Members	<input type="checkbox"/> Local repositories
<input type="checkbox"/> Genealogical Societies:	<input type="checkbox"/> State Repositories	
Maps		

CENSUS

Federal				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1790	<input type="checkbox"/> 1800	<input type="checkbox"/> 1810	<input type="checkbox"/> 1820	<input type="checkbox"/> 1830
<input type="checkbox"/> 1840	<input type="checkbox"/> 1850	<input type="checkbox"/> 1860	<input type="checkbox"/> 1870	<input type="checkbox"/> 1880
<input type="checkbox"/> 1890	<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> 1910	<input type="checkbox"/> 1920	<input type="checkbox"/> 1930
<input type="checkbox"/> 1940				<input type="checkbox"/> 1940
<input type="checkbox"/> 1890 Veterans Schedule			<input type="checkbox"/> Mortality Schedule	
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Death Records			<input type="checkbox"/> Special Censuses	
<input type="checkbox"/> State Census:				

Records Searched

<input type="checkbox"/> Birth Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Wills	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Records
<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Administration Papers	<input type="checkbox"/> School Records
<input type="checkbox"/> Banns/Bonds	<input type="checkbox"/> Guardianships	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment
<input type="checkbox"/> Applications	<input type="checkbox"/> Tax Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers/Obituaries
<input type="checkbox"/> Licenses	<input type="checkbox"/> Immigration	<input type="checkbox"/> City Directory
<input type="checkbox"/> Death Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Passenger Lists	<input type="checkbox"/> Lineage Societies
<input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Naturalization Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Fraternal Organizations
<input type="checkbox"/> Tombstone	<input type="checkbox"/> Passport	<input type="checkbox"/> Civil Court
<input type="checkbox"/> Land Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Divorce Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Records
<input type="checkbox"/> Grantor/Grantee	<input type="checkbox"/> Military Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Deeds
Other Records:		

Certificates

	Name	Birth	Marriage	Death
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				