

Genealogy and Family History Session 2 – Census Research

Federal Census

Researcher's most important primary source

Taken every 10 years starting in 1790 to present

Only 1790 to 1940 available to the public (privacy act restrictions)

1890 Census destroyed in 1921 fire – a few fragments remain

Available at:

National Archives

Fort Worth Public Library (books, microfilm, online)

Online thru Ancestry.com (subscription service) & FamilySearch.org

Finding Aids

Published indexes for 1790 through 1870 censuses available at many libraries

Soundex Cards

Index created by surname sound rather than alphabetical letters

Available for 1880 to 1930

1880 – only families with children 10 years old or younger

1900 and 1920 complete; 1910 and 1930 partial (21 and 12 states)

Organized by state

Record the state, enumeration district (E.D.), sheet, and line number

Using the Federal Censuses

Start with what you know

Start with the most recent census and work backwards

People tended to marry neighbors so pay attention to people listed near-by

Families lived near other family members; search several pages before & after

County lines and sometimes state lines changed

Map Guide to the US Federal Censuses, 1790-1920

There are mistakes, omissions, misspellings, illegible handwriting, poor copies

1850-1940 lists every name in household

1790-1840 lists head of household with tabular data for other members

Interpret and Analyze

Special Censuses

Federal Mortality Schedules

1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900

List people who died within the last 12 months

Slave Schedules

Enumeration of slaves in 1850 and 1860 only – separate censuses

Lists slaves by age, sex, and color (not by name) under owner's name

1890 Schedule of Union Veterans From the Civil War
Census of Union veterans and widows of veterans
Available for states in alphabetical order from Louisiana to Wyoming

State and Territorial Censuses

Some taken during Colonial Period

Available at state archives

Some indexed and published

Maryland 1776, Rhode Island 1774, New York 1663-1772

Territorial censuses taken just prior to application for statehood

Kansas 1855; statehood in 1861

Illinois 1810; statehood in 1818

State censuses taken between federal censuses

New York 1855, 1865, 1875, 1892, 1905

Agricultural Schedules

1850-1880

Manufacturing Schedules

1820, 1850-1880

Indian Records – complete listing at: <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/census/index.htm>

National Archives, 2600 West 7th Street, Suite 162, Fort Worth, TX

Information available at www.archives.gov/southwest/

Census available at home via Heritage Quest using Fort Worth Library card

Go to: Fort Worth Public Library: www.fortworthgov.org/library

On right: Browse, select Genealogy, Archives & Local History

Scroll down to: HeritageQuest Online , select Use at Home

Select Fort Worth Public Library

Enter your Fort Worth Library card number and click on Login

Select Search Census

Census available on your laptop in the Fort Worth Library via www.ancestry.com

All branches have wireless internet connections

From the Fort Worth Library home page, on right: Browse, select Genealogy, Archives & Local History

Scroll down to: Ancestry.com, select Use in Library

Free access to census records at Family History Centers online via www.ancestry.com

Fort Worth - 5001 Alta Mesa (817) 292-8393

Arlington - 3809 Curt Drive (817) 446-7088

Hurst - 4401 E Loop 820 N (817) 284-4472