

Census Facts

- The first federal census was taken in 1790, following our independence.
- The U.S. conducts an enumeration of the nation every 10 years.
- State and local governments conduct censuses every 5 years.
- The purpose of the census is to collect statistical information on individuals and establishments.
- The rule to keep all replies confidential for **72 years** was implemented in 1952.
- The Census Bureau became a permanent institution in 1902 by an act of Congress and is under the U. S. Department of Commerce.
- 1790-1870 Census originals remain in the National Archives in Washington D.C.
- 1900-1920 Censuses were destroyed after being microfilmed in the 1940's.
- The 1880 Census was transferred to local state archives, state & university libraries, historical societies, DAR and other repositories.
- The WPA (Works Progress Administration) created a name index for several of the decennial censuses.

Census Year Details

1790-There were 14 States & 2 territories from the Mississippi West was claimed by Spain.

1800-There were 16 states & 2 territories

1810-There were 17 states & 6 territories (census losses)

1820-There were 23 states (census losses)

1830-There were 24 states (some county losses)

1840-There were 26 states (no losses)

Prior to 1850, the head of household is the only name listed on the census. From 1850-1930, all members of the household are listed.

1850-There were 31 states and 4 new territories

1860-There were 33 states and 3 new territories

1870-There were 37 states and 6 new territories and Indian Territory was not enumerated. No relationships shown for listed individuals.

1880-There were 38 states and 8 territories

1890-There were 44 states, 3 territories. Almost all of the census lists were destroyed in a fire in 1921. **Only a few schedules exist on 3 rolls of microfilm!**

1900-There were 45 states & 5 territories

1910-There were 46 states & 4 territories, District of Columbia and Puerto Rico

1920-There were 48 states & 2 territories; Alaska & Hawaii, American Samoa, Consular Service, D.C., Guam, Military & Naval Sources, Panama Canal Zone, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands.

1930-It was the same as in 1920

The website listed below has maps of the states and territories during each census year, including the specific information provided on the census, the actual census day and US population totals for each census year.

www.us-census.org/research/index.html

I know they lived in Chicago about 1920...!



Unlocking the Secrets in the US Census!

Summer 2004

▶ Algonquin Area Public Library
2600 Harnish Drive
Algonquin, IL 60102
847-458-6060

Compiled by: Virginia Hanes Freyre

▶ What kinds of Federal Census records are available?

1790-1930 Federal Population Census

Most of the 1890 census was destroyed by fire in 1921

Mortality Schedules 1850-1880

Deaths 12 months prior to the census June 1 - May 31

Veteran's Schedules 1840

Revolutionary War pensioners recorded on verso page

Civil War Union Veterans & Widows 1890

Most 1890 veteran's schedules were destroyed in 1921 fire

Slave Schedules 1850-1860

Listed as 1st, 2nd and 3rd with age sex and color. Some names, but owners recorded.

Agriculture

Little known and rarely used by genealogists

Manufactures and Industrial Schedule

Manufacturing, mining and fisheries, no index

Social Statistics, 1850-1880

Includes cemetery information, trade societies, clubs and lists of churches and their histories.

Dependent, Defective, Delinquent 1880

Insane, idiots, deaf mutes, blind, homeless children and prisoners. Geographical with no name index.

Native Americans—1880 Special Census

Indians living near military installations in Washington, Dakota Territories and California.

Where do I find them?

Census microfilms and CD's are still available in local libraries, archives, genealogical/historical societies, Family History Centers. Libraries can rent microfilms for a fee from the National Archives.

The last few years has seen a shift from using microfilm, to using the online genealogical database products available through **Ancestry** and **Heritage Quest**. Many libraries now subscribe to one or more of these databases!

What is the Soundex/ Miracode?

A phonetic coding method used to index surnames in the census records. It was developed to find a surname under various spellings. The Soundex was created using handwritten index cards. The Miracode was only used on the 1910 census and was created using data entry by computer. In fact, the Soundex code it is still used to code your Illinois driver's license number!

There are two major indexers of census records, AISI (Accelerated Indexing System International) and Index Publishers.

No index is 100% accurate, though both index companies admit to a 3-5% error rate. Some errors are still searchable.

In 1880 only households that included children under the age of 10 were indexed. The Family History Center has now created an every name index and is available to search at their web site www.familysearch.org

In 1900 all states were indexed by head of household.

In 1910 only 21 states were indexed.

In 1920 all states were indexed by head of household.

In 1930 all states were indexed by every person in the household.



PRINT INDEXES
are published by
YEAR and STATE

Types of Mistakes

Mistakes are made by indexers, census enumerators, and even the person who gave the original information! When searching census records be aware of several different types of errors: Spelling, transposition, data-entry, interpretation, original records and others, i.e. 18th and 19th century handwriting, missed entry, dashes, question marks. The lack of quality control in original microfilming created generally poor census copies for the 1860, 1870 and the 1900 census! If you are sure your ancestor was in the area, always check the original record!



The library has a subscription to Ancestry Plus and Heritage Quest!

