

# Diving Between the Decades, Part 1

## The Genealogical Value of U.S. Territorial and State Census Records

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### History and Background

The United States Federal Census is the foundational record for U.S. research. They assist you in tracking your ancestors every 10 years of their life, helping establish vital information and relationships. Many Territories and States in the U.S. have additional census records that can help better provide evidence for your ancestors you might not find anywhere else.

### What is the Territorial and State Census?

A census is a count or survey of the population of a certain area. While they might be in the same years as Federal Census records, Territorial and State Censuses are usually in non-federal census years. The difference between Territorial and State Censuses is whether it was gathered when the geographical area was a U.S. Territory or a U.S. State.

The Territorial or State Census records might have been constructed from tax or land records and are not unique. They also might not cover the entire population but might be only for large cities, certain counties, heads of households, or white males.

### Why Have a Territorial and State Census?

There are various reasons why there are Territorial and State Census Records. First, a territory must petition for statehood, providing evidence that its population was large enough to become a state; therefore, the Territorial Census could assist this. A State might also want to count the population for representation in the government, taxation, or statistics.

### Years of Census

#### No Territorial and State Census Records

- Connecticut
- Idaho
- Kentucky
- Montana
- New Hampshire
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- Vermont
- West Virginia

#### Territorial and State Census Records

There are 41 states, including Washington D.C., that have at least one territory or state census.

In the table on the next page, the year next to the state name is the year of statehood. Years that are not bolded (i.e. 1915) are territorial censuses. Years that are bolded (i.e. **1915**) are state censuses. Years that are bolded and underlined (i.e. **1915**) are the year of statehood and could be a territorial or state census building, depending on the month it was gathered.

<b>Alabama 1819</b>	1818, <b>1820-21, 1823, 1850, 1855, 1866, 1907</b>	<b>Mississippi 1817</b>	1801, 1805, 1808, 1810, 1816, <b>1818, 1820, 1822-25, 1830, 1833, 1837, 1840-1, 1845, 1850, 1853, 1860, 1866</b>
<b>Alaska 1959</b>	1870, 1878-9, 1881, 1885, 1887, 1890-95, 1904-07, 1914, 1917		
<b>Arizona 1912</b>	1866, 1867, 1869, 1872, 1874, 1876, 1880, 1882	<b>Missouri 1821</b>	1797, 1803, 1817, 1819, <b>1840, 1844, 1852, 1856, 1860, 1864, 1876, 1880</b>
<b>Arkansas 1836</b>	1823, 1829, <b>1865, 1911</b>	<b>Nebraska 1867</b>	1854-56, 1865, <b>1869, 1885</b>
<b>California 1836</b>	1788, 1790, 1796, 1797-98, 1816, 1836, 1844, <b>1852</b>	<b>Nevada 1864</b>	1860-63, <b>1875</b>
<b>Colorado 1876</b>	1861, 1866, <b>1885</b>	<b>New Jersey 1787</b>	<b>1855, 1865, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905, 1915</b>
<b>Delaware 1787</b>	1782	<b>New Mexico 1912</b>	1790, 1823, 1845, 1885
<b>D.C.</b>	1803, 1867, 1878	<b>New York 1788</b>	<b>1790, 1825, 1835, 1845, 1855, 1865, 1875, 1892, 1905, 1915, 1925</b>
<b>Florida 1845</b>	1825, <b>1855, 1866-68, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1935, 1945</b>		
<b>Georgia 1845</b>	<b>1798, 1800, 1810, 1827, 1834, 1838, 1845, 1852-53, 1859, 1865, 1879</b>	<b>N. Carolina 1789</b>	1784-1787
		<b>N. Dakota 1889</b>	1885, <b>1915, 1925</b>
<b>Hawaii 1845</b>	1878, 1890, 1896	<b>Oklahoma 1907</b>	1890, <b><u>1907</u></b>
<b>Illinois 1845</b>	1810, <b><u>1818</u>, 1820, 1825, 1830, 1835, 1840, 1845, 1855, 1865</b>	<b>Oregon 1859</b>	1842-43, 1845, 1849-50, 1853- <b><u>59</u></b> , <b>1865, 1870, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905</b>
<b>Indiana 1816</b>	1807, <b>1853, 1857, 1871, 1877, 1883, 1889, 1901, 1913, 1919, 1931</b>	<b>Rhode Island 1790</b>	1774, 1777, 1782, <b>1865, 1875, 1885, 1905, 1915, 1925, 1935</b>
		<b>S. Carolina 1788</b>	<b>1825, 1839, 1869, 1875</b>
<b>Iowa 1846</b>	1836, 1838, 1844, <b>1846-47, 1849, 1851, 1852, 1854, 1856, 1885, 1895, 1905, 1915, 1925</b>	<b>S. Dakota 1888</b>	1885, <b>1895, 1905, 1915, 1925, 1935, 1945</b>
<b>Kansas 1861</b>	1855, <b>1865, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905, 1915, 1925</b>	<b>Tennessee 1796</b>	<b>1891</b>
<b>Louisiana 1812</b>	<b>1853, 1858</b>	<b>Texas 1845</b>	1829-1836
<b>Maine 1820</b>	<b>1837</b>	<b>Utah 1896</b>	1856
<b>Maryland 1788</b>	1776, <b><u>1778</u></b>	<b>Virginia 1788</b>	1782-1786
<b>Massachusetts 1788</b>	<b>1855, 1865</b>	<b>Washington 1889</b>	1856-58, 1860, 1871, 1874, 1877-81, 1883, 1885, 1887, <b><u>1889</u>, 1891-92, 1898</b>
<b>Michigan 1837</b>	<b><u>1837</u>, 1845, 1854, 1864, 1874, 1884, 1888, 1894, 1904</b>	<b>Wisconsin 1848</b>	1836, 1838, 1842, 1846-47, <b>1855, 1865, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905</b>
<b>Minnesota 1858</b>	1849, 1853, 1855, 1857, <b>1865, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905</b>	<b>Wyoming 1890</b>	1875, 1878

## Current Territory Census Records

- **American Samoa**
  - U.S. – 1900-01, 1903, 1908-09, 1912, 1916, 1920, 1922-23, 1926, 1945
- **Guam**
  - Spain – 20 censuses from 1710-1897
- **Northern Mariana Islands**
  - Philippine – 1889, 1891-1892
- **Puerto Rico**
  - Spain – 1801-1822, 1836-1839, 1841-1850, 1858-1859
  - U.S. – 1899, 1935, 1936
- **Virgin Islands**
  - Denmark – 1688-1911

## Caution

Be aware that not every census has survived, and not all are complete censuses. Some of the census records have no images and are only indexes. Others rely on substitute collections that were compiled to replace the census, such as tax lists or land records. They are only as accurate as the informant, so there could be incorrect information on the record; therefore, evaluate the evidence by comparing it with other known information about your ancestors.

## Genealogical Value

These census records are similar to the Federal Census records, with the early census records not as informational as the later census records. Remember, not every census covers all persons in the state: it might be limited to a smaller geographical area or group of people.

## Early Territorial and State Census Records

The early census records typically only list the head of household. Each person in the household is marked in gender and age columns, similar to the 1790-1840 Federal Census Records. Some of these census records do not have the original image available, so only the index is accessible, meaning that it might have human error.

Even with less information, they can be beneficial for your research. First, you can identify the residences of your ancestors, which can help you find other records in that same locality. Second, you can help track their migration if there is a gap in your knowledge of your ancestors between the federal censuses. Finally, you can identify the FAN club of your family, which is the family, friends, associates, and neighbors of your ancestors. By researching those individuals in close relationships with your ancestors, you might help break your brick walls.

## Late Territorial and State Census Records

The late census records typically include all persons in the household and the following:

- |                  |                      |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| • Address        | • Birthplace         | • Military Service   |
| • Name           | • House value        | • Occupation         |
| • Relationship   | • Education          | • Employment         |
| • Gender         | • Literacy           | • Church affiliation |
| • Age            | • Parents name       | • Immigration year   |
| • Marital status | • Parents birthplace | • Naturalization     |
| • Birth date     | • Parents' marriage  | • Language           |