

# Making the Most of the US Federal Census

## *Class 5: Finding and Utilizing Census Substitutes*

Lindsay Fulton, VP of Research and Library Services, [lindsay.fulton@nehgs.org](mailto:lindsay.fulton@nehgs.org)

### Land Records

#### *General Guides*

Patricia Law Hatcher, *Locating Your Roots: Discover Your Ancestors Using Land Records* (Cincinnati, Betterway Books, 2003).

E. Wade Hone, *Land & Property Research in the United States* (Salt Lake City: Ancestry Inc., 1997).

Donald A. Wilson, *Interpreting Land Records* (Hoboken, Wiley, 2006).

Carol Mehr Schiffman, “Geographic Tools: Maps, Atlases, and Gazetteers” and Wendy B. Elliott and Karen Clifford, “Printed Land Records,” in *Printed Sources: A Guide to Published Genealogical Records* (Salt Lake City: Ancestry Inc., c1998), 95–144, 388–435.

E. Kay Kirkham, *The Land Records of America and Their Genealogical Value* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., c1964).

James C. Barsi, *The Basic Researcher’s Guide to Homesteads & Other Federal Land Records* (Colorado Springs: Nuthatch Grove Press, c1994).

Malcolm J. Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business: The Settlement and Administration of American Public Lands, 1789-1837* (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1968).

#### *Localized Resources*

Carrie Eldridge, *An Atlas of Settlement Between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi-Missouri Valleys, 1760-1880* (Chesapeake, Ohio: Eldridge, c2006).

Jeremy Dupertuis Bangs, *Indian Deeds: Land Transactions in Plymouth Colony, 1620-1691* (Boston, MA: NEHGS, 2002).

Roy Hidemichi Akagi, *The Town Proprietors of the New England Colonies: A Study of their Development, Organization, Activities and Controversies, 1620-1770* (Peter Smith Publishers, 1963).

David F. Stoddard, “Land System of the New England Colonial Colonies,” *Connecticut Nutmegger* 11 (1979):556-564.

*Genealogist’s Handbook for New England Research*, 6th ed. (Boston: NEHGS, 2021).

New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer* (N.Y.: New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 2014).

Donna Munger, *Pennsylvania Land Records: A History and Guide for Research* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1991).

### Websites

FamilySearch [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

Ancestry [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

Bureau of Land Management <https://gloreCORDS.blm.gov/search/default.aspx>

## Tax Records

- **Poll Tax** - Tax levied as a prerequisite to voting
  - Massachusetts was the first to enact the poll tax in 1646, followed by New Haven in 1649
  - Re-introduced in the South after the Civil War to disenfranchise African Americans from voting
  - "Grandfather clause" for poor white Americans
  - Abolished in 1964 when 24th Amendment was passed
- **Taxes on Real and Personal Estates** - Tax rolls may detail the type of structures they have on estate (house, farm, mill, etc.)
  - **City of Boston Tax Records**
    - Digitized by the Boston Public Library and available on Internet Archive [https://www.bpl.org/archival\\_post/city-of-boston-tax-records-1780-1821](https://www.bpl.org/archival_post/city-of-boston-tax-records-1780-1821)
    - The Boston Taking Books for the year 1800 have been indexed and are available at <https://www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/528/boston-ma-taking-records-1800>
  - **IRS Tax Assessment Lists**
    - 1 Jul 1862 – Bureau of Internal Revenue was created (later renamed to Internal Revenue Service)
    - The United States was divided into collection districts
    - Two lists created
      - A list of names of individuals subject to taxation who lived in the division
      - A list of names of individuals who lived outside the division but were owners of property in the division

## Military

BIRTH YEARS	BATTLE YEARS	WAR
1726-1767	1775-1783	REV WAR
1762-1799	1812-1815	WAR 1812
1796-1831	1846-1848	MEX WAR
1811-1848	1861-1865	CIVIL WAR
1848-1881	1898	SPANISH/AMERICAN
1849-1885	1899-1902	PHILIPPINE
1872-1900	1917-1918	WWI
1877-1925	1941-1945	WWII
1900-1936	1950-1953	KOREA
1914-1955	1964-1972	VIETNAM

### **1812 Original Service and Pension Records:**

Index to War of 1812 Service Records (Familysearch.org) - <https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1916219>

Naval Records Collection (NARA RG 45) Table of contents - [www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/045.html](http://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/045.html)

Logbooks of the U.S. Navy at the National Archives - [www.archives.gov/research/military/logbooks/navy.html](http://www.archives.gov/research/military/logbooks/navy.html)

New York War of 1812 Claims holdings: [www.archives.nysed.gov/1812\\_claims.shtml](http://www.archives.nysed.gov/1812_claims.shtml)

U.S. Army War College Library catalog - [http://usawc.libguides.com/graduates\\_others](http://usawc.libguides.com/graduates_others)

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships - [www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs.html](http://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs.html)

War of 1812 Pensions Online (FREE) - [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com)

General Society of the War of 1812 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General\\_Society\\_of\\_the\\_War\\_of\\_1812](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Society_of_the_War_of_1812)

United States Daughters of the War of 1812 - <http://www.usdaughters1812.org/>

### **Civil War (Union) Originals:**

National Archives, Requesting copies: [Inquire@arch2.nara.gov](mailto:Inquire@arch2.nara.gov); NATF-85 order form <https://eservices.archives.gov/orderonline/start.swe>

Order Union Pension records (NARA) <https://eservices.archives.gov/orderonline/start.swe>

### **Civil War (Confederate) Originals:**

Original records are not located at the National Archives; State repositories maintain the original records.

[www.FamilySearch.org](http://www.FamilySearch.org) - Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Tennessee

## **Civil War Compiled Sources:**

*The Roster of Union Soldiers, 1861-1865: New York* by Janet Hewett, (Wilmington: Broadfoot Pub. Co., 1998)

*New York in the War of the Rebellion, 1861 to 1865*, 5 vols. and index by Frederick Phisterer, (Albany: J.B. Lyon Co., 1912)

## **Military Pension and Bounty Land Records**

- **Revolutionary War Pension History**

- 24 August 1780 – Congress passed an act to offer pensions to widows and orphans of Revolutionary War soldiers
- 1818 – Congress passed a resolution granting pensions to veterans who were not disabled but were having financial difficulties – lifetime pension
- 1832 – Full pay for life to officers and enlisted men who served 2+ years; partial pay for 6 months to 2 years
- Original files are kept at the National Archives, Washington D.C. (digitized and available on Fold3.com)

- **Pension Roll of 1835**

- In 1834/1835, the U.S. Senate passed a series of resolutions requiring a list be compiled of pensioners who were drawing pensions for service in the Revolutionary War
- Some War of 1812 veterans may be listed
  - Most appear in later pension rolls

- **Military Bounty Land**

- Federal government provided bounty land for those that served in the following wars:
- Revolutionary War
- War of 1812
- Mexican War
- Indian Wars (1775-1885)
- Claimed by veterans or their heirs
- Applications recorded the veteran's age and residence at the time of application

- **War of 1812 Pension History**

- 1871 Act – provided pensions to veterans who served at least 60 days or to their widows if they married before 1815
- 1878 Act – provided pensions to veterans or their widows, who served at least 14 days

- **Civil War Pensions**
  - Federal pensions were granted to Union veterans and their surviving family (spouse, children, parents, dependents)
  - Original files are kept at the National Archives, Washington D.C. (widow's pensions being digitized and added to Fold3)
  - Confederate pensions were granted by the individual states;  
<https://www.archives.gov/research/military/civil-war/confederate/pension>

## Newspapers

- **GenealogyBank.com**- \$\$ U.S. historic newspaper archives from 1690-2017, over 2 billion old newspapers- <http://www.genealogybank.com/>
- **Newspapers.com**- \$\$ Millions of U.S. and British Isles newspaper archives from 1700's-2000's – <https://www.newspapers.com/>
- **Newspaper Archive**- \$\$ U.S. historic newspaper archives from 1736-2017 in 2.21 billion old newspapers at <https://newspaperarchive.com/us/>
- **19<sup>th</sup> Century Newspapers-NEHGS subscription (available off-site with NEHGS membership)**  
The [19th Century U.S. Newspapers](#) database provides access to approximately 1.7 million pages of primary-source newspaper content from throughout the 1800s. It features full text and images from hundreds of papers from every region in the U.S., and it contains a wealth of genealogical content, including birth, death, and marriage notices.
- **Early American Newspapers, Series I, 1690–1876-NEHGS subscription (on-site only)** Over one million pages of fully-searchable early newspapers, such as the Boston Gazette, New-York Evening Post, and many more. Includes marriage, death, and court records.
- **Chronicling America (Library of Congress)**- FREE 11.9 million pages from coast to coast, a [Library of Congress](#) project that digitizes US newspapers from 1789 to 1924, as well as information to find unavailable digitized newspapers in libraries.

## Church Records

Types of church records that may contain vital and residential information:

- Baptisms
- Marriages
- Communion/Eucharist
- Reconciliation
- Holy Orders
- Confirmation
- Anointing of the Sick
- Burial Records
- Circumcision Records (Bris)

Some to religious denominations were:

- Baptists
- Catholic
- Congregational
- Eastern Rite Catholic and Eastern Orthodox
- Episcopal
- Jewish
- Lutheran
- Methodist
- Mormon (LDS)
- Presbyterian
- Quaker (Society of Friends)
- Reformer (Dutch, German, and French or Huguenot)

## State Censuses

State	State Census Years
Alabama	1818, 1820, 1821, 1823, 1850, 1855, 1866, 1907
Alaska	1870, 1878, 1879, 1881, 1885, 1887, 1890-95, 1904-07, 1914, 1917
Arizona	1866, 1867, 1869, 1872, 1874, 1876, 1880, 1882
Arkansas	1823, 1829, 1865, 1911
California	1788, 1790, 1796, 1797-98, 1816, 1836, 1844, 1852
Colorado	1861, 1866, 1885
Connecticut	No state census known to exist
Delaware	1782
District of Columbia	1803, 1867, 1878
Florida	1825, 1855, 1866, 1867, 1868, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1935, 1945
Georgia	1798, 1800, 1810, 1827, 1834, 1838, 1845, 1852, 1853, 1859, 1865, 1879
Hawaii	1878, 1890, 1896
Idaho	No state census known to exist
Illinois	1810, 1818, 1820, 1825, 1830, 1835, 1840, 1845, 1855, 1865
Indiana	1807, 1853, 1857, 1871, 1877, 1883, 1889, 1901, 1913, 1919, 1931

State	State Census Years
Iowa	1836, 1838, 1844, 1846, 1847, 1849, 1851, 1852, 1854, 1856, 1885, 1895, 1905, 1915, 1925
Kansas	1855, 1865, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905, 1915, 1925
Kentucky	No state census known to exist
Louisiana	1853, 1858
Maine	1837
Maryland	1776, 1778
Massachusetts	1855, 1865
Michigan	1837, 1845, 1854, 1864, 1874, 1884, 1888, 1894, 1904
Minnesota	1849, 1853, 1855, 1857, 1865, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905
Mississippi	1801, 1805, 1808, 1810, 1816, 1818, 1820, 1822, 1823, 1824, 1825, 1830, 1833, 1837, 1840, 1841, 1845, 1850, 1853, 1860, 1866
Missouri	1797, 1803, 1817, 1819, 1840, 1844, 1852, 1856, 1860, 1864, 1876, 1880
Montana	No state census known to exist
Nebraska	1854, 1855, 1856, 1865, 1869, 1885
Nevada	1862, 1863, 1875

<b>New Hampshire</b>	No state census known to exist
<b>New Jersey</b>	1855, 1865, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905, 1915
<b>New Mexico</b>	1790, 1823, 1845, 1885
<b>New York</b>	1790, 1825, 1835, 1845, 1855, 1865, 1875, 1892, 1905, 1915, 1925
<b>North Carolina</b>	1786
<b>North Dakota</b>	1885, 1915, 1925
<b>Ohio</b>	No state census known to exist
<b>Oklahoma</b>	1890, 1907
<b>Oregon</b>	1842, 1843, 1845, 1849, 1850, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856, 1857, 1858, 1859, 1865, 1870, 1875, 1885, 1895 1905
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	No state census known to exist
<b>Rhode Island</b>	1774, 1777, 1782, 1865, 1875, 1885, 1905, 1915, 1925, 1935

<b>South Carolina</b>	1825, 1839, 1869, 1875
<b>South Dakota</b>	1885, 1895, 1905, 1915, 1925, 1935, 1945
<b>Tennessee</b>	1891
<b>Texas</b>	1829–1836
<b>Utah</b>	1856
<b>Vermont</b>	No state census known to exist
<b>Virginia</b>	1782, 1783, 1784, 1785, 1786
<b>Washington</b>	1856, 1857, 1858, 1860, 1871, 1874, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1883, 1885, 1887, 1889, 1891, 1892, 1898
<b>West Virginia</b>	No state census known to exist
<b>Wisconsin</b>	1836, 1838, 1842, 1846, 1847, 1855, 1865, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905
<b>Wyoming</b>	1875, 1878

For information on where to find these records, please consult:

- *State Census Records* by Ann S. Lainhart (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1992)
- *Census Substitutes & State Census Records, Volume 1 – Eastern States* by William Dollarhide (Bountiful, Utah: Family Roots Publishing Company, 2008)
- *Census Substitutes & State Census Records, Volume 2 – Western States* by William Dollarhide (Bountiful, Utah: Family Roots Publishing Company, 2008)

## Voter Registrations

- **By 1856:** Universal white male suffrage
- **1870:** The 15th Amendment is passed and prohibits restricting suffrage based on race
- **Early 1890s:** Jim Crow Laws passed to revoke African Americans right to vote
- **1920:** Women are given the right to vote
- **1965:** The Voting Rights Act passes; African Americans are given back the right to vote

## City Directories

### Online Resources:

- [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com) -
- [www.Buffaloresearch.com](http://www.Buffaloresearch.com) - links to Buffalo, NY and Erie County, NY city directories
- [www.Fold3.com](http://www.Fold3.com)
- Digital Library and archives at AmericanAncestors.org

### Repositories:

- [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)- Library of Congress- Microform
- [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org) - New York Public Library- microform for entire State of New York in the Milstein Division of U.S. History, Local History and Genealogy
- [www.nysl.nysed.gov](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov)- New York State Library- microform for many places in State of New York

## Local Histories/Mug Books

### County History and Mug Book Bibliographies:

*A Bibliography of American County Histories* by William P. Filby (Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1985)

*Consolidated Bibliography of County Histories in Fifty States in 1961, Consolidated* by Clarence Stewart Peterson (Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1963)

*Bibliography of Counties of the 3111 Counties in the 48 States* by Clarence Stewart Peterson (Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1946)

### Mug Book Historical Examinations:

*Constructing American Lives: Biography and Culture in Nineteenth Century America* by Scott E. Casper (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999)

“Every Man His Own Biographer” by Archibald Hanna, Jr., *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 80 (October 1970), 291-298

“Vanity Sketches: Mugbook Sources and Truths” by Joshua D. Taylor, *FGS Forum*, 18:2 (Summer 2006), 13-15.

### Free Digitized Books:

Several free sites have digitized older, published county atlases, county histories, and biographical albums:

- <https://www.hathitrust.org/>
- <https://books.google.com/>
- <https://archive.org/index.php>
- <https://openlibrary.org/>
- <https://books.familysearch.org>
- <http://library.si.edu/digital-library>