

Beginning Census Tracking

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U.S. Census History

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~census/help/history.html>

- 1780s** US Constitution requires a census every 10 years for apportioning representatives. States may have additional ones as needed.
- 1790** First census taken, over a period of 18 months. Records of six states destroyed during War of 1812, but reconstructed from tax records.
- 1800-1820** First Monday in August designated as Census Day.
- 1830-1900** June 1st designated as Census Day. All but 6160 names in the 1890 census (in AL,DC,GA,IL,MN,NJ,NY,NC,OH,SD,TX) destroyed in 1921 fire
- 1910-1930** Other specific dates designed as Census Day

Census enumerators

- ~ Information was to be recorded as of the official census day, not the day the enumerator came. However, the info might have been given as of any time in that range. This can result in the same people being enumerated in different locations.
- ~ It wasn't unheard of to get the information from a neighbor or sometimes the only person at home would be one of the kids who "thinks maybe he was born in...".
- ~ Another thing to watch for is what was known as "padding the census". Enumerators were usually paid by the number of households (sometimes per person) they visited. If it was a very rural area they were paid a little more per household as the dwellings were much fewer. E.g., see Ira and Fleming Twp's at:
 - o <ftp://ftp.us-census.org/pub/usgenweb/census/ny/cayuga/1860/notes.txt>

Why do Census Tracking?

- Find new places to search for records that will lead to information about other family members.
- Discover unknown family relationships by tracking neighbors who may be related.
- Tracking parent's birthplace helps to determine correct family.
- Relationships listed in some census helps to identify the relationship in previous census that do not list relationship.

For more information check out Census Resources at www.TheMagiKey.com

Why is MagiCensus better than creating your own tracker?

- Easier to validate, change, create to-do notes, and to see false assumptions than by hand
- Individual information that is already in your database does not have to be retyped
- All information is included in Timeline and Event Place Reports
- MagiCensus automates many census tracking steps; you don't have create your own system

Census Tracking Steps

1. Start with known information	MagiCensus uses any previous database information
2. Find and Preserve Census records	MagiCensus tells you age and name of individual for any census year. Lets you record online URL or link to a picture.
3. Extract information	MagiCensus has easy to use preset extraction forms
4. Enter Events into Database	MagiCensus automatically adds events from extraction form into database.
5. Create Spreadsheet	MagiCensus automatically creates the Census Tracker for you.
6. Analyze information and use Timelines	Color codes and comparisons helps you to analyze census information.

Tips for census research

- ~ Remember Occam's razor: "the simplest explanation is the most likely one". Explanations with fewer assumptions are better.
- ~ Estimate about 2 years between each child.
- ~ Remember that not everyone in the household is necessarily a family member.
- ~ Check county boundaries: http://www.familyhistory101.com/map_census.html
- ~ Check town/township boundaries: usgenweb.org, davidrumsey.com
- ~ Look for wife as head of household in case of death of husband.
- ~ Look for children as heads of household to find elderly widows/widowers.
- ~ "Wife's" age change across years may indicate a death and remarriage.