Census Records

P. J. Smith
What is a census?

- Regularly occurring and official count of a particular population
- Apportioning Congressional representatives
- Apportioning taxes
- Provides statistics for planning
- Based on person’s usual residence
- Census lists are called “schedules”
First Federal Census in U.S.

- 1790
- Monday, August 2nd
- Name of head of household
- Tabulations of persons in household by gender and age (no names)
- Population counted 3,929,314 in 13 states and districts of Maine, Vermont, Kentucky, Tennessee
Federal Census

- 1800 – 1840 Population Schedules
- Name of head of household
- Tabulations of persons in household by gender and age (no names)
- 1820 & 1830 “foreigners not naturalized”
- # of states grew to 26
- Population grew to 17,063,353
Federal Census

• 1850  First “every name” census
• Includes ages, occupations, birthplaces (country or state), value of real estate
• New states: Florida, Texas, Iowa, Wisconsin, California
• New territories: Oregon, Minnesota, Utah, New Mexico
• Separate slave schedule
Federal Census

• Questions vary on each census
• Generally include name, gender, race, age, marital status, birthplace, occupation.
• Separate schedules for agriculture, veterans, slaves.
Federal Census

• 1860
• Name, age, sex, color, occupation, value of real estate, value of personal estate, place of birth, married within the year, attended school within the year, cannot read or write,
• Deaf, dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict
• Supplemental schedule for slaves
Federal Census

• 1870
• Whether parents were foreign born
• Does not name country where parents born
• Male citizens 21 & over, number denied the right to vote for other than rebellion
• First federal census after the Civil War
Federal Census

• 1880
• Adds birth places (country or state only) of person and each person’s parents
• Identifies relationship to head of house
• Added whether single or married
• Number months employed
• Temporary disability
Federal Census

• 1890
• Destroyed by fire & water damage except 6,160 names
• Can be found on familysearch.org or on Ancestry.com
• Supplemental schedule for Union Civil War veterans or their widows
Federal Census

• 1885
• Taken in Colorado, Florida, Nebraska, Dakota and New Mexico territories
Federal Census

• 1900
• Month and year of birth
• How long married
• Number of children born, number now living
• If foreign born, year of immigration, whether naturalized
• Whether on farm
• Home owned or rented; mortgage
Federal Census

- 1910
- Month and year of birth
- Mother tongue of person and parents
- Year of immigration, whether naturalized
- Number of years of present marriage (women)
- Whether survivor of Union or Confederate army or navy
Federal Census

• 1920
• Year of immigration
• Whether naturalized, year of naturalization
• Literacy
• Mother tongue
Federal Census

• 1930
• Age at first marriage
• If foreign born, language spoken in home before coming to U.S.
• Year of immigration, whether naturalized
• Whether at work previous day
• Indians – whether full or mixed blood; tribe
Federal Census

• 1940
• Educational attainment
• Citizenship of foreign born
• Location of residence 5 years ago
• Employment status – private or in public emergency work (WPA, CCC, NYA, etc.)
• Duration of unemployment
Privacy of Census

• Details kept from the public for 72 years
• Can obtain individual record for legal purposes before that time; fee is charged
Other Federal Schedules

- Mortality – persons who died during 12 months prior to census
- Veterans – veterans and widows in 1840 & 1890
- Slaves – slave owners & number of slaves owned 1850 & 1860
- Indians – 1900 & 1910
- Military & Naval Forces – 1900 - 1930
Other Federal Schedules

• Agricultural – data on farms & names of farmers, 1850-1880
• Manufacturing – data on businesses & industries, 1820, 1850-1880
• Defective, Dependent, Delinquent – 1880
• Institutions – jail, hospital, poor house, asylum
• Social Statistics – real estate, taxes, cemeteries, schools, libraries, newspapers, churches
Other Federal Schedules

- Merchant seamen – on vessels in 1930
- Military & Naval Forces – forts, bases, and navy ships
How to Find Your Family

• Use a family group sheet
• Compare names and ages of children from one census to another
• Check adjoining page if family at bottom or top of page
• Look at neighbors. Are they relatives?
State Census

• May have been taken between federal censuses, such as 1905
• Information on which states and which years may be found at
• http://www.census.gov/history/www/genealogy/other_resources/state_censuses.html
States with No State Census

- Connecticut  Idaho
- Kentucky  Montana
- New Hampshire  Ohio
- Pennsylvania  Vermont
- West Virginia
How to Find Census Records

• If you have a library card for Billings Public Library:
  • Services
  • Genealogy Room
  • Heritage Quest Online
How to Find Census Records

• Barcode - Type library card number
• Click on Search Census
• Type Surname, Given Name
• Can select year and state
How to Find Census Records

• Other websites:
  • https://familysearch.org/
  • http://www.usgwcensus.org/
http://www.census.gov

- History - Through the Decades
- Index of Questions
Census Records

• P. J. Smith
• President
• Yellowstone Genealogy Forum
• http://www.yellowstonegenealogy.org/