



Researching State Records
Kate McCarthy

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- State census records are usually taken between federal state counts, so are helpful of for tracking ancestor migrations.
- Some states have lots of enumerations and some have little. Check the FamilySearch Wiki page on state censuses which describes them in detail.
- There are special schedules which list farms and farm products, manufacturer schedules enumerating companies and mortality schedules listing people who died within the previous 12 months. States also used censuses to count children to predict school and teacher needs, tally men eligible for military service, and apportion tax revenues.
- The federal government took separate censuses on territories to determine if the population was large enough to petition for statehood; however sometimes fraud was committed in the 1857 census for Minnesota. Seven counties were complete forgeries done by land speculators so research the history on the census before you add them to your records.



Take note of the years statewide vital-record-keeping officially began in each US state—that’s when counties started to collect birth, marriage and death information and report it to state offices. Some counties or towns kept stats earlier, and some were slow to comply with state laws, so check with your ancestors’ local government for record availability.

	BIRTH RECORDS	MARRIAGE RECORDS	DEATH RECORDS		BIRTH RECORDS	MARRIAGE RECORDS	DEATH RECORDS
Alabama	1908	1936	1908	Montana	1907	1943	1907
Alaska	1913	1913	1913	Nebraska	1905	1909	1905
Arizona	1909	1909	1909	Nevada	1911	1968	1911
Arkansas	1914	1917	1914	New Hampshire	1901	1901	1901
California	1905	1905	1905	New Jersey	1848	1848	1848
Colorado	1907	1907	1907	New Mexico	1920	1920	1920
Connecticut	1897	1897	1897	New York	1880	1880	1880
Delaware*	1861	1847	1881	North Carolina	1913	1962	1913
District of Columbia	1874	1811	1874	North Dakota	1907	1925	1907
Florida	1899	1927	1899	Ohio	1908	1949	1908
Georgia	1919	1952	1919	Oklahoma	1908	1908	1908
Hawaii	1842	1842	1859	Oregon	1903	1906	1903
Idaho	1911	1947	1911	Pennsylvania	1906	1885	1906
Illinois	1916	1962	1916	Rhode Island	1853	1853	1853
Indiana	1907	1958	1899	South Carolina	1915	1950	1915
Iowa	1880	1880	1880	South Dakota	1905	1905	1905
Kansas	1911	1913	1911	Tennessee*	1908	1945	1908
Kentucky	1911	1958	1911	Texas	1903	1966	1903
Louisiana*	1914	none	1914	Utah	1905	1887	1905
Maine	1892	1892	1892	Vermont	1955	1955	1955
Maryland	1898	1950	1898	Virginia	1912	1912	1912
Massachusetts	1841	1841	1841	Washington	1907	1968	1907
Michigan	1867	1867	1867	West Virginia	1917	1964	1917
Minnesota	1900	1958	1908	Wisconsin	1907	1907	1907
Mississippi	1912	1926	1912	Wyoming	1909	1941	1909
Missouri	1910	1881	1910				

*Delaware’s statewide birth and death records stop in 1863 and resume in 1881. All Louisiana birth records are kept in parish clerk offices. Tennessee has no statewide birth or death records for 1913.

Researching Online

- Family Search: It has indexes and images for federal censuses from 1850 to 1950; however state census access is spottier. Use the Advanced Search or use the Library Catalog.
- Ancestry.com: In addition to all US federal census records from 1790 to 1950 plus 20 states from 1792 to 1945. Try search individual state census records, one at a time.



Other Websites

- Look at Cyndi's List under the category Census Records Online: Indexes, Extractions and Transcriptions. <https://www.cyndislist.com/categories/>
- Census-Online.com click on the state to see records by year or county.



Offline Census Records

- The Family History Library's most complete collection are state census for Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Wisconsin, and partial records on other states are available. https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/State_Census_Records
- Look for historical societies who maintain microfiche records to research ancestors who lived in that area.



Even if your ancestor's WWI records were lost in the fire at the National Personnel Records Center, you may be able to learn more about his service by researching at the state level for the place where he enlisted or was drafted.

Most states kept their own records about those who served. Consult the [FamilySearch guide](#) for your ancestor's state to learn what records are available and how to access them. Many states have made some of their WWI records searchable online, augmented by volunteer efforts. Here are some of the most data-rich of these state sites:

- **Alabama:** This in-progress WWI Gold Star database lists those who died during the war or were awarded distinguished service recognition.
- **Alaska:** View a listing of Alaskans who served.
- **Arkansas:** Search an index to 36,000 discharge records cards.
- **Colorado:** View draft registration cards, Denver casualties and soldier burials in Europe.
- **Connecticut:** Search for veteran questionnaires.
- **Florida:** Search a service cards database.
- **Hawaii:** Access Army and Navy service records.
- **Illinois:** A 1929 Roll of Honor database of 72,000 veterans' burial locations includes some from World War I.
- **Indiana:** Search a list of 1,420 Indianans who died in the war.
- **Kansas:** Access a bounty claims index and Kansas soldiers data, plus see a [casualty index](#).
- **Mississippi:** Browse statement of service cards and indexes.
- **Missouri:** This database includes more than 156,000 service cards. See also [St. Louis city and county WWI deaths](#).
- **Nebraska:** Search a draft registration cards database.
- **New Jersey:** Scroll down to search photos and descriptive cards of those who died.
- **New Mexico:** View a deaths listing.
- **Oregon:** See [Army](#) and [Navy](#) death listings, plus a [draft registration index](#).
- **Pennsylvania:** Browse a deaths listing and search the [Service Medal Application Cards Index](#).
- **Tennessee:** Browse service records by county.
- **Virginia:** This site has a database of 14,900 veteran questionnaires. See also the ongoing [Virginia Military Dead Database](#).
- **Washington:** Search this service summary cards database.
- **West Virginia:** This site has a deaths database of 20th century wars.
- **Nationwide:** In 1920, W.M. Haulsee, F.G. Howe and A.C. Doyle compiled a three-volume listing of US soldiers who died in World War I called *Soldiers of the Great War*. Genealogy websites such as [RootsWeb](#) include various partial transcriptions of names from these volumes. You can partly view a digitized version at [Google Books](#), or view it on the [Internet Archive](#).

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Details in Vital Records

A close reading of vital records can often reveal other essential facts—ranging from the expected (such as parents' names on a birth certificate) to surprising clues to family mysteries. Beyond the basics of when and where, vital record details include other family members, missing maiden names, an ancestor's religion or military service, and even name changes and alternative spellings.

- California: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/pages/vital-records.aspx>

STATE OF OHIO
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
DIVISION OF VITAL STATISTICS
CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH **11273**

County of Franklin
Township of Marion
or
Village of _____
or
City of _____

Registration District No. 392 File No. _____
Primary Registration District No. 4596 Registered No. 999
No. 85 Main Ave. St. _____ Ward _____
(If birth occurred in a hospital or institution, give NAME instead of street and number)

FULL NAME OF CHILD William Steele [If child is not yet named, make supplemental report, as directed]

Sex of Child Male Twin, triplet or other? - Number in order of birth - Legitimate? yes Date of birth Feb 2 - 1931
(To be answered only in event of plural births) (Month) (Day) (Year)

FATHER		MOTHER	
FULL NAME <u>Homer Steele</u>	FULL MAIDEN NAME <u>Emma Scheibel</u>		
RESIDENCE Including P. O. Address <u>85 Main Ave.</u>	RESIDENCE Including P. O. Address <u>85 Main Ave.</u>		
COLOR or RACE <u>White</u> AGE AT LAST BIRTHDAY <u>37 yr.</u>	COLOR or RACE <u>White</u> AGE AT LAST BIRTHDAY <u>36 yr.</u>		
Birthplace (city or place) <u>Cheshire,</u>	Birthplace (city or place) <u>Columbus,</u>		
(State or country) <u>Ohio</u>	(State or country) <u>Ohio</u>		
OCCUPATION a. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as spinner, sawyer, bookkeeper, etc. <u>Shipping</u>	OCCUPATION d. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as housekeeper, typist, nurse, clerk, etc. <u>Housewife</u>		
b. Industry or business in which work was done, as silk mill, sawmill, bank, etc. <u>clerk, National Island Co.</u>	e. Industry or business in which work was done, as own home, lawyer's office, silk mill, etc. _____		
c. Date (month and year) last engaged in this work <u>Feb 2, 1931</u>	f. Date (month and year) last engaged in this work <u>Feb 2, 1931</u>		
g. Total time (years) spent in this work <u>14 yr.</u>	h. Total time (years) spent in this work <u>15 yr.</u>		

Number of children of this mother (At time of this birth and including this child) 4 (a) Born alive and now living 5 (b) Born alive but now dead 0 (c) Stillborn 0 Is child congenitally deformed? no
Was Prophylactic against Ophthalmia Neonatorum used? yes

If stillborn, period of gestation _____ months or weeks Cause of stillbirth _____ Before labor _____ During labor _____

CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDING PHYSICIAN OR MIDWIFE

I hereby certify that I attended the birth of this child, who was alive at 2:48 P. m. on the date above stated.
(Born Alive or Stillborn)

(Signed) Andrew Rogers M. D.
or Theresa M. P. H. Midwife
Address 187 E. 1st St.
F. W. Kreeper
REGISTRAR

Filed Feb 3 1931 REGISTRAR

**MISSOURI STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
CERTIFICATE OF DEATH**

28901

1. PLACE OF DEATH
 County Lehaston Registration District No. 175 File No. _____
 Township _____ Primary Registration District No. 4104 Registered No. 46
 City Salisbury (No. _____) St. _____ Ward _____

2. FULL NAME John Wunch
 (a) Residence No. _____ St. _____ Ward _____
 (Usual place of abode) (If nonresident give city or town and State)
 Length of residence in city or town where death occurred yrs. mos. da. How long in U.S., if of foreign birth? yrs. mos. da.

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

3. SEX male 4. COLOR OR RACE white 5. SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED (write the word) married

5A. IF MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED HUSBAND OF (OR) WIFE OF Rachel

6. DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH, DAY AND YEAR) 12-1-1844

7. AGE YEARS MONTHS DAYS If LESS than 1 day, hrs. or min.
75 | 9 | 15 | _____

8. OCCUPATION OF DECEASED
 (a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work Retired
 (b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer) _____
 (c) Name of employer _____

9. BIRTHPLACE (CITY OR TOWN) _____ (STATE OR COUNTRY) Germany

10. NAME OF FATHER Joe Wunch

11. BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (CITY OR TOWN) _____ (STATE OR COUNTRY) Germany

12. MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Unknown

13. BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (CITY OR TOWN) _____ (STATE OR COUNTRY) Germany

14. INFORMANT Joe Wunch Jr
 (Address) Salisbury

15. FILED 9/18 1920 Winkelmeyer REGISTRAR

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

16. DATE OF DEATH (MONTH, DAY AND YEAR) Sept 16 1920

17. I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from Jan 1919 to Sept 16 1920 that I last saw him alive on Sept 16 1920, and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at 10 A.m.

THE CAUSE OF DEATH* WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Paralysis the result of apoplexy

(duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ da.

CONTRIBUTORY (SECONDARY) 64
 (duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ da.

18. WHERE WAS DISEASE CONTRACTED
 IF NOT AT PLACE OF DEATH: _____

DID AN OPERATION PRECEDE DEATH? no DATE OF _____

WAS THERE AN AUTOPSY? no

WHAT TEST CONFIRMED DIAGNOSIS?

(Signed) Frank H. Ketch, M. D.

9/16, 1920 (Address) Salisbury Mo.

*State the DISEASE CAUSING DEATH, or in deaths from VIOLENT CAUSES, state (1) MEANS AND NATURE OF INJURY, and (2) whether ACCIDENTAL, SUICIDAL, or HOMICIDAL. (See reverse side for additional space.)

19. PLACE OF BURIAL, CREMATION, OR REMOVAL DATE OF BURIAL

Salisbury 9/18 1920

20. UNDERTAKER ADDRESS

Winkelmeyer Bros Salisbury

WRITE PLAINLY, WITH UNFADING INK---THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD

N. B.—Every item of information should be carefully supplied. AGE should be stated EXACTLY. PHYSICIANS should state CAUSE OF DEATH in plain terms, so that it may be properly classified. Exact statement of OCCUPATION is very important.

California Websites

- **California Genealogy:** <https://californiagenealogy.org/>
- **California Genealogy Web:** <https://cagenweb.org/>
- **Calisphere:** <https://calisphere.org/>
- **Cyndi's List-California:** <https://www.cyndislist.com/us/ca>
- **Family Search Research Wiki: California:** <https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/California, United States Genealogy>
- **Linkpendium- California:** <https://linkpendium.com/ca-genealogy>
- **Online Archive of California:** <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/>
- **San Francisco Genealogy (In process):** <https://www.sfgenealogy.org/sf/sfdata.htm>

