Wyoming

Research Outline

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This outline describes major sources of information about families from Wyoming. As you read this outline, study the *United States Research Outline*, (30972) which will help you understand terminology and the contents and uses of genealogical records.

RECORDS OF THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

The Family History Library has few of the records listed in this outline. The major holdings include histories, biographies, census records, and land records.

Some of the sources described in this outline list the Family History Library's book, microfilm, and microfiche numbers. These are preceded by *FHL*, the abbreviation for *Family History Library*. These numbers may be used to locate materials in the library and to order microfilm and microfiche at Family History Centers.

FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY CATALOG

The library's records are listed in the Family History Library Catalog found at the library and at each Family History Center. To find a record, look in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog for:

• The *place* where your ancestor lived, such as:

UNITED STATES - CENSUS
WYOMING - HISTORY
WYOMING, LARAMIE - LAND AND PROPERTY
WYOMING, LARAMIE, CHEYENNE - CEMETERIES

• The record type you want to search, such as:

UNITED STATES - *CENSUS*WYOMING - *HISTORY*WYOMING, LARAMIE - *LAND AND PROPERTY*WYOMING, LARAMIE, CHEYENNE - *CEMETERIES*

The section headings in this outline match the names of record types used in the Family History Library Catalog.

ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

The archives, libraries, and societies listed below have major collections or services helpful to genealogical researchers.

• Department of Commerce

Division of Cultural Resources Telephone: 307-777-7016 Fax: 307-777-7044 1997 Address: 6101 Yellowstone Rd. LL Cheyenne, WY 82002 1998 Address: Barrett Building 2301 Central Cheyenne, WY 82002

• National Archives—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver)

Denver Federal Center Building 48

Denver, CO 80225

Telephone: 303-236-0817

Fax: 303-236-9354

• Wyoming State Library

Supreme Court and Library Building 2301 Capitol Ave. Cheyenne, WY 82002-0006 Telephone: 307-777-7281

Fax: 307-777-6289

• Laramie County Library

Cheyenne Genealogical Society 2800 Central Avenue Cheyenne, WY 82001 Telephone: 307-634-3561

Fax: 307-634-2082

• University of Wyoming Library

P.O. Box 3334 University Station Laramie, WY 82071-3334 Telephone: 307-766-3279

Fax: 307-766-3062

To learn more about the history and record-keeping systems of Wyoming counties, use the six inventories of the county archives published by the Historical Records Survey around 1940. Copies of these inventories are available at the Family History Library.

Computer Networks and Bulletin Boards

Computers with modems can be useful tools for obtaining information from selected archives and libraries. In a way, computer networks themselves serve as a library. The Internet, certain computer bulletin boards, and commercial on-line services help family history researchers:

- Locate other researchers
- Post queries
- Send and receive e-mail
- Search large databases
- Search computer libraries
- Join in computer chat and lecture sessions

You can find computerized research tips and information about ancestors from Wyoming in a variety of sources at local, state, national, and international levels. The list of sources is growing rapidly. Most of the information is available at no cost.

Addresses on the Internet change frequently. As of April 1997, the following sites are important gateways linking you to many more network and bulletin board sites:

USGenWeb

http://usgenweb.org/

A cooperative effort by many volunteers to list genealogical databases, libraries, bulletin boards, and other resources available on the Internet for each county, state, and country.

Roots-L

http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/roots-l/

A useful list of sites and resources. Includes a large, regularly-updated research coordination list.

For further details about using computer networks, bulletin boards, and news groups for family history research, see the *United States Research Outline* (30972), 2nd ed., "Archives and Libraries" section.

FamilySearch™

The Family History Library and some Family History Centers have computers with FamilySearchTM. FamilySearch is a collection of computer files containing several million names. FamilySearch is a good place to begin your research. Some of the records come from compiled sources; some have been automated from original sources.

BIBLE RECORDS

The Daughters of the American Revolution have compiled some Bible records from Wyoming. These are available on microfilm at the Family History Library (FHL film 848633). They are indexed by E. Kay Kirkham, *An Index to Some of the Bibles and Family Records of the United States*, Vol. 2 (Logan, Utah: Everton Publishers, 1984; FHL book 973 D22kk v.2; fiche 6089184).

BIOGRAPHY

The best collection of published biographies in Wyoming is at the Wyoming State Archives. The American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming also collects biographical works.

The Family History Library has a good collection of biographical materials on subjects such as women, cowboys, and prominent pioneers. Some examples of helpful biographical collections are:

Bartlett, Ichabod S. *History of Wyoming.* 3 vols. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1918. (FHL book 978.7 H2b; film 1000826 items 2-4.) Volumes 2-3 are biographical. Beach, Cora May Brown. *Women of Wyoming.* 2 vols. Casper, Wyo.: S. E. Boyer, 1927. (FHL book 978.7 D3b.)

Beard, Frances B. *Wyoming from Territorial Days to the Present.* 3 vols. Chicago: American Historical Society, 1933. (FHL book 978.7 H2be; film 1000827.) Volumes 2-3 are biographical.

Progressive Men of the State of Wyoming. Chicago: A. W. Bowen, 1903. (FHL film 1000827 item 4.)

CEMETERIES

The Family History Library has some cemetery and sexton records for Cheyenne. Tombstone inscriptions may have been published in periodicals (see the "Periodicals" section of this outline). Other suggestions for locating cemetery records are found in the *United States Research Outline*.

CENSUS

Federal

Most of the federal census records are found at the Family History Library, the National Archives, and other federal and state archives. The *United States Research Outline* provides more detailed information about the federal records.

The Family History Library has copies of the 1870 and 1880 federal census reports for Wyoming Territory. For Uintah County in 1850 and 1860, see the census reports for Salt Lake County, Utah. For eastern Wyoming in 1860, see "unorganized land" in the Nebraska census reports.

The library has the U.S. federal censuses 1900, 1910, and 1920 for the state of Wyoming. The 1890 census has been destroyed. The 1890 veterans schedule and index are available at the Family History Library and at the National Archives.

There are indexes to the 1860, 1870, 1880, and 1910 censuses in book and microfiche format. A soundex (phonetic) index is also available on microfilm for part of the 1880 and all of the 1900 and 1920 censuses.

Mortality schedules (lists of deaths during the year preceding the census) exist for the 1870 and 1880 censuses. The schedules for these years are indexed in book format. The schedules and indexes are available at the Family History Library and at the Wyoming State Archives.

Territorial and State

In addition to the federal censuses, a state census exists for 1905, which includes information on the entire household. It is available at the Wyoming State Archives. State censuses taken in 1915 and 1925 are missing.

CHURCH RECORDS

Before 1900 the largest religious groups in Wyoming were the Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist Episcopal churches.

Most records are kept with the local congregation, although some may have been transferred to other repositories, such as a church archives, a local genealogical or historical society, or a college library.

For help in locating church records see:

A Directory of Church and Religious Organizations in the State of Wyoming. Cheyenne: Historical Records Survey, 1939. (FHL book 978.7 K22h; film 908039 item 5.) Guide to Vital Statistics Records in Wyoming: Church Archives. Cheyenne: Historical Records Survey, 1942. (FHL book 978.7 K23g.)

The Family History Library has very few original Wyoming church records. Many denominations have collected their records into central repositories. You can write to the following to learn where their records are located:

Congregational

Congregational Library 14 Beacon Street Boston, MA 02108 Telephone: 617-523-0470

Fax: 617-523-0470

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)

LDS Church Archives Historical Department 50 East North Temple Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3400 Telephone: 801-240-2272

Fax: 801-240-1845

Methodist Episcopal

United Methodist Archives Center Drew University Library P.O. Box 127 Madison, NJ 07940

Telephone: 201-408-3189

Fax: 201-408-3909

Presbyterian

Presbyterian Historical Society United Presbyterian Church in the U.S. 425 Lombard Street Philadelphia, PA 19147

The Family History Library has microfilmed many of the records in the archives of the Presbyterian Historical Society. Others are described in *Inventory of the Church Archives of Wyoming Presbyterian Churches: 1968 Arrangement with Indexes* (N.p.: Historical Records Survey, N.d.; FHL film 906119).

Roman Catholic

Diocese of Cheyenne Box 426 Cheyenne, WY 82003 Telephone: 307-638-1530

Fax: 307-637-7936

COURT RECORDS

Major Wyoming courts that kept records of genealogical value were established as follows:

District courts are countywide courts with jurisdiction over civil cases, including divorces, criminal cases, probate matters, and some appeals. To obtain copies of these records, contact the clerk of the district court in each county.

The Family History Library has copies of a few probate records from these courts, such as the "attachment of real estate" certificates from Natrona County (1921 to 1969) and Crook County (1923 to 1950). From Crook County the library also has a few adoption records (1889 to 1910).

Justice of the peace courts are countywide courts with jurisdiction over minor civil actions and misdemeanors.

The Supreme Court is the statewide appellate court.

DIRECTORIES

Directories of heads of households have been published for major cities in Wyoming. For example, the Family History Library has directories for:

• Cheyenne

1915, 1917, 1920, 1922, 1924, 1926, FHL book 978.719/C1 E4p 1930, 1932, etc

• Sheridan

1910, 1915, 1933, 1935, 1937, 1940, FHL book 978.732 E4ps 1959, 1960, etc

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Until 1811, when fur traders first opened a trail through the area, Wyoming was the domain of the American Indians. Between 1825 and 1840, about 200 mountain men bartered with the Indians at rendezvous in the region.

In the 1840s and 1850s, many thousands of emigrants traveling the Oregon Trail to California, Utah, and other western states passed through the North Platte and Sweetwater valleys and South Pass in central Wyoming. In the 1860s, as Indian troubles increased in the north, many emigrants preferred the more southerly Overland Trail through Bridger Pass. Until the railroad came, very few emigrants stayed in Wyoming.

The discovery of gold in 1867 at South Pass brought many immigrants to western Wyoming. A greater stimulus to settlement was the building of the transcontinental railroad in the late 1860s. Many Irish and Mexican laborers and Civil War veterans helped build the railway. Settlers from the Midwest followed the railroad into Wyoming, and built Cheyenne, Laramie, and other towns along the route. In the 1870s and 1880s, cattlemen from Texas drove herds into northern Wyoming.

Many Idaho Mormons came into Star Valley in the 1870s and 1880s. There were Mormon colonists in the Big Horn Basin by 1895, but the main body of Mormon settlers came there as an organized group from Utah and Idaho in 1900. A helpful source of information on these settlers in the Big Horn Basin is Charles A. Welch, *History of the Big Horn Basin* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1940; FHL book 978.7 H2w; fiche 6110628).

A sizable number of Finns came to work the mines in Uinta and Sweetwater counties in the late 1880s. In 1895, a group of about 600 settlers came from Iowa and Illinois to homestead reclaimed land at a place now called Emblem, located near the Mormon colonies of the Big Horn Basin.

Today, most Wyoming residents are of northern European descent. There are small numbers of Italians in Rock Springs, Hispanic groups around Rock Springs and Cheyenne, and 2,000-3,000 Blacks, primarily in Cheyenne. Many Arapahoe, Cheyenne, and Shoshoni Indians live on the Wind River Reservation of west-central Wyoming (see the "Native Races" section of this outline).

There was no single port of entry common to overseas immigrants to Wyoming. The Family History Library and the National Archives have passenger lists or indexes for east-coast ports from about 1820 to 1940. More detailed information on immigration sources is in the *United States Research Outline*, (30972) and the *Tracing Immigrant Origins Research Outline* (34111).

GAZETTEERS

Some helpful gazetteers of Wyoming have been published, including:

Urbanek, Mae. Wyoming Place Names. 1974. Reprint, Missoula, Mont.: Mountain Press Publishing Co., 1988. (FHL book 978.7 E2u 1988.)

Wyoming, Named Localities, Railroad Sidings, Discontinued Post Offices. N.p.: 1962. (FHL film 874300 item 10.)

GENEALOGY

Most archives, historical societies, and genealogical societies have special collections and indexes of genealogical value. These must usually be searched in person. The Family History Library has very few such collections for Wyoming. For Latter-day Saint families see the *LDS Research Outline* (34080) published by the Family History Library. Some family histories of Wyoming families are listed in the surname section of the Family History Library Catalog.

HISTORY

The following events affected political boundaries, record keeping, and family movements.

1834	Fort Laramie was established as a supply depot on the Oregon Trail fur trade route. It became an army post in 1849, and remained in use until 1890.
1840s-1850s	Emigrants went west over the Oregon Trail through what is now central Wyoming. In 1850, more than 40,000 emigrants passed through Fort Laramie.
1843	Fort Bridger was established.
1861-1868	The Dakota Territory was established. It included all of present-day North and South Dakota and most of Montana and Wyoming. In 1867 all of the Wyoming portion was included in Laramie County, which was divided early in 1868 by the creation of Carter County (later renamed Sweetwater County).
1867-1869	The transcontinental Union Pacific Railway was built through southern Wyoming. The towns of Cheyenne, Laramie, Rawlins, Rock Springs, Green River, and Evanston sprang up along its route.
1868	Wyoming Territory was created, primarily from Dakota Territory. It included small portions from Utah and Idaho territories.
1876-1880s	The Arapaho and Cheyenne Indians were moved to the Wind River Reservation. With the defeat of the Sioux soon afterward, northern Wyoming was opened to cattle grazing. The cattle boom reached its height in the 1880s.
1890	Wyoming became a state.
1895-1910	The Carey Act of 1894 provided for the reclamation and homesteading of desert land, and stimulated new settlements in northern Wyoming. Mormons established towns in the Big Horn Basin.

A helpful source for studying the history of Wyoming is Taft Alfred Larson, *History of Wyoming* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965; FHL book 978.7 H2Lt, 1978).

LAND AND PROPERTY

Federal Land Records

When the United States acquired Wyoming, most of the land that comprises the present state became part of the public domain. The federal government surveyed available land and began transferring much of it to private ownership through local land offices in a process called "land entry." The first land office was established at Cheyenne in 1870.

Land entry in Wyoming was either based on cash payment for the land (cash entries), or on conditions of settlement (homesteads). Anyone who was twenty-one years old, or who was a head of household (including widows), could purchase land. Free homesteads could be obtained after 1862 by those who settled and cultivated the land for at least five years. A homestead applicant either had to be a U.S. citizen or must have filed his intention to become a citizen.

The local offices recorded each transaction in a section of land in tract books. They also created township plats, which are maps of land entries within each township.

After a settler completed the requirements for land entry, his case file was sent to the General Land Office in Washington, D.C., where a patent (first-title deed) was issued. To locate the land entry or homestead case file for your ancestor, you will need to know either the patent number or the legal description (range, township, section) of the land. The county recorder of deeds may be able to tell you the legal description of the land from county land records. You may also be able to pinpoint the exact location of a tract by searching the entries in the tract book covering the approximate area concerned.

For copies of the tract books, township plats, and patent records, contact:

Wyoming State Office of the Bureau of Land Management 2515 Warren Avenue P.O. Box 1828

Cheyenne, WY 82003 Telephone: 307-775-6001

Fax: 307-775-6082

The National Archives also has the original tract books, plats, homestead entry files, and cash entry files. The Family History Library has copies of the tract books on microfilm. The National Archives—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver) also has some of the land office records.

A guide to the land office records at the Denver branch and a history of the federal land system in Wyoming is Eileen Bolger, *Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming* (Denver: Federal Archives and Records Center, 1983; FHL book 978.7 R2b).

County Land Records

After land was transferred from the federal government by sale or grant to private ownership, it could be sold again, inherited, lost by foreclosure of a mortgage, or distributed through a divorce. These transactions are recorded by the district courts in the form of deeds and mortgages. You can obtain copies of the records by contacting the appropriate clerk's office in each county.

Most of the county land records begin after 1869. The Family History Library has microfilm copies of important land records from about half of the counties in the state.

From Laramie County, for example, the library has 75 microfilms of deeds, mortgages, indexes, railroad deeds, corporation records, bills of sale, and mining deeds. These records date from as early as 1867 to as late as 1961.

MAPS

The University of Wyoming in Laramie has a fine collection of maps and atlases. The Wyoming State Engineer's Office at Cheyenne has a large library of technical maps.

The Family History Library has a few maps of Wyoming. These show trails, roads, forts, migration routes, and other features. Atlases that describe Wyoming's progression from Indian lands through various territorial designations are on FHL film 002083.

MILITARY RECORDS

The *U.S. Military Records Research Outline* (34118) provides more information on federal military records and search strategies.

Many of the federal military records you'll want to use are found at the Family History Library, the National Archives, and other federal and state archives. The *United States Research Outline* provides more information about the federal records. For Wyoming the following sources are also very helpful.

Civil War (1861-1865)

The Family History Library and the National Archives have an index to some soldiers from Nebraska Territory (FHL films 821905-6). A special census was taken in 1890 of Union veterans of the Civil War (FHL film 338276). An index to the returns for Wyoming has been published (FHL book 978.7 X22j 1890).

Indian Wars

Enlistment registers are available for soldiers who served in the regular army from 1798 to 1914. Many of these soldiers served in the western states, including Wyoming, during the Indian wars. The enlistment registers provide the soldiers' rank, unit, commanders, physical description, occupation, and birthplace. The records are arranged by year and by the first letter of the surname (FHL films 350307—).

An index is available for soldiers who applied for pensions between 1892-1926, as a result of service in the Indian Wars which were fought between 1817 and 1898 (FHL films 821610-21). The pension records are only available at the National Archives.

Historical accounts of the forts and posts in Wyoming are in Robert A. Murray, *Military Posts of Wyoming* (Ft. Collins: Old Army Press, 1974; FHL book 978.7 H2m).

Spanish-American War (1898)

A published roster of soldiers is in volume one of Ichabod S. Bartlett, ed., *History of Wyoming*, 3 vols. (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1918; FHL book 978.7 H2b; film 1000826 items 2-4).

World War I (1917-1918)

A published roster of Wyoming soldiers is in volume three of W.M. Haulsee, et al., *Soldiers of the Great War*, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Soldiers Record Publishing Association, 1920; FHL book 973 M23s; fiche 6051244). The Wyoming State Archives has files for men killed during the war.

World War I draft registration cards for men age 18 to 45 may list address, birth date, birthplace, race, nationality, citizenship, and next of kin. Not all registrants served in the war. For registration cards for Wyoming, see:

United States. Selective Service System. *Wyoming, World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918.* National Archives Microfilm Publications, M1509. Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1987-1988. (On FHL films beginning with 1993029).

To find an individual's draft card, it helps to know his name and residence at the time of registration. The cards are arranged alphabetically by county, within the county by draft board, and then alphabetically by surname within each draft board.

Most counties had only one board; large cities had several. A map showing the boundaries of individual draft boards is available for most large cities. Finding an ancestor's street address in a city directory will help you in using the draft board map. There is an alphabetical list of cities that are on the map. For a copy of this map see:

United States. Selective Service System. *List of World War One Draft Board Maps*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives. (FHL film 1498803.)

Additional Military Records

Modern discharge records are kept by each county. The Family History Library has copies of these records from a few counties. The records include the individual's date and place of birth, induction and discharge dates, and address after discharge.

The Wyoming State Archives has records of the Wyoming National Guard.

NATIVE RACES

The library has copies of the Wind River Agency files for the years 1881 to 1953. These are detailed records kept by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The original records are at the National Archives—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver). Other American Indian records are listed in the subject section of the Family History Library Catalog under the names of the tribes, such as SHOSHONI INDIANS.

NATURALIZATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Naturalization records have generally been filed with the clerk of the district court in each county courthouse. You can obtain copies of declarations, petitions, oaths, and orders by contacting the clerk's office. The Family History Library does not have copies of these records for Wyoming.

For naturalization records after September 1906, contact the National Archives—Rocky Mountain Region (Devner) or the local office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

NEWSPAPERS

The Family History Library has not acquired copies of Wyoming newspapers. The library has copies of a few publications that contain abstracts of vital information printed in newspapers. Genealogical and historical periodicals also publish some obituaries and other extracts from early newspapers.

The Wyoming State Archives, the Wyoming State Library, and other major libraries in Wyoming have helpful collections of newspapers. The following guides can help you locate Wyoming newspapers:

"Guide to Wyoming Frontier Newspapers," *Annals of Wyoming*, Vols. 33-35 (1961-1963). Cheyenne: Wyoming State Archives, 1923-. (FHL book 978.7 B2aw vols. 33-35.) Homsher, Lola. *Guide to Wyoming Newspapers, 1867-1967*, Cheyenne: Wyoming State Library, 1971. (FHL book 978.7 B3h; film 873822 item 2.)

PERIODICALS

Genealogical and historical periodicals helpful for Wyoming research are:

Fremont County Nostalgia News. 1980-. Published by the Fremont County Genealogical Society, c/o Riverton Branch Library, 1330 West Park, Riverton, WY 82501. (FHL book 978.763 D25k; fiche 6075734-38, Vols. 1-10.)

Annals of Wyoming, 1923-. Published by the Wyoming State Archives. *Bits and Pieces*, 1965-. Published by M. E. Brown, Newcastle, WY.

PROBATE

Before statehood, probate records were kept by the territorial probate court. After 1890, these records were transferred to the clerk of the district court in each county where copies can be obtained by contacting the clerk. The Family History Library has very few copies of Wyoming probate records.

Wyoming probate records include wills, inheritance tax records, oaths and bonds, petitions, letters testamentaries, letters of administration, final accounts, inventories, bills of sale, probate journals, claims against estates, and guardianship annual reports.

VITAL RECORDS

State Records of Births and Deaths

Statewide registration of births and deaths in Wyoming began in July 1909, and was generally complied with by 1922. Individuals who were born prior to 1909, or who for some reason did not have a birth certificate, could apply for a delayed birth certificate. The Wyoming Vital Records Services began keeping delayed birth certificates in the 1920s.

For copies of state birth and death records write to:

Vital Records Services Hathaway Building Cheyenne, WY 82002 Telephone: 307-777-7591 Fax: 307-635-4103

The current fees for obtaining copies of the state's records are listed in *Where to Write for Vital Records: Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Divorces* (Hyattsville, Md.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, March 1993; FHL book 973 V24wv). Copies of this booklet are at the Family History Library and at many Family History Centers. You can also write to the Vital Records Services for current information.

Copies of the birth records can only be released to those named on the certificate unless you can provide proof of the person's death. You will also need to state your relationship to the individual and your purpose for obtaining the record.

The Family History Library has not acquired copies of the state birth and death records.

County Records of Births and Deaths

A few Wyoming counties kept records of births and deaths a few years prior to state registration. For information about pre-1909 birth and death records, write to the local county clerk. The records in the county courthouses are open to the public, but the Family History Library has not acquired copies of these records. The library has a few records, such as birth registers and coroner's reports, that have been transcribed and published. The county clerk does not usually keep copies of birth and death records filed after July 1909.

State Records of Marriages

Statewide registration of marriages began in May 1941. For information about marriage records kept after that date, write to the Vital Records Services. Copies of the records can be released only to the individuals named on the certificate, unless you provide proof of death. The Family History Library does not have copies of these records.

County Records of Marriages

Many counties began recording marriages soon after the county was organized. Some county records begin as early as the 1860s, such as the Albany County marriage records that begin in 1869. The office of the county clerk for each county maintains the county marriage records from the earliest dates to the present. Most counties have indexed their marriage records, and the files are open to the public. Beginning in 1941, county clerks have sent duplicate copies of marriage records to the Vital Records Services.

The Family History Library has acquired copies of the marriage records for about half of the Wyoming counties from the Wyoming State Archives. These copies generally date from the earliest entries to about 1930. For example, the library has Sheridan County marriage records (1888 to 1925) and marriage licenses (1888 to 1916).

The Miscellaneous Marriage Records Index (FHL films 820155 item 2 to 820173) is an index of marriage records for several Utah and Idaho counties, and includes names from Lincoln County, Wyoming. This incomplete but helpful index generally includes information on marriages that took place as late as the 1940s.

Divorce Records

Wyoming counties often began recording divorces soon after the county was organized. Divorce proceedings are usually kept by the local clerk of the district court. This office has divorce records from the earliest entries to the present. Although the divorce records are interfiled with other civil court records, most counties have indexes to their divorce records.

Statewide registration of divorces began in May 1941. After that date, the clerk of the district court sent duplicates or abstracts of the local divorce records to the Vital Records Services.

The Family History Library has not acquired copies of Wyoming divorce records from the state office or from the local district courts.

FOR FURTHER READING

For a brief description of the history and records of Wyoming see:

Joyce V. H. Spiros. *Genealogical Guide to Wyoming*. Gallup, N. Mex.: Verlene Pub., 1982. (FHL book 978.7 D27sp; film 1421885 item 13; fiche 6051442.) Eichholz, Alice, ed. *Ancestry's Red Book: American State, County, and Town Sources*. Rev. ed. Salt Lake City: Ancestry, 1992. (FHL book 973 D27rb 1992; computer number 594021.) Contains bibliographies and background information on history and ethnic groups. Also contains maps and tables showing when each county was created.

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

The Family History Library welcomes additions and corrections that will improve future editions of this outline. Please send your suggestions to:

Publications Coordination Family History Library 35 N. West Temple Salt Lake City, Utah 84150-3400 USA

We appreciate the archivists, librarians, and others who have reviewed this outline and shared helpful information.

Paper Publication: Second edition August 1997. English approval 8/97.



Family History Library • 35 North West Temple Street • Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3400 USA

Wyoming Historical Background

the war.

1930s

History

Effective family research requires some understanding of the historical events that may have affected your family and the records about them. Learning about wars, governments, laws, migrations, and religious trends may help you understand political boundaries, family movements, and settlement patterns. These events may have led to the creation of records that your family was listed in, such as land and military documents.

The following events affected political boundaries, record keeping, and family movements.

9	, 1 3,
1834	Fort Laramie was established as a supply depot on the Oregon Trail fur trade route. It became an army post in 1849 and remained in use until 1890.
1840s-1850s	Emigrants went west over the Oregon Trail through what is now central Wyoming. In 1850, more than 40,000 emigrants passed through Fort Laramie.
1843	Fort Bridger was established.
1861-1868	The Dakota Territory was established. It included all of present- day North and South Dakota and most of Montana and Wyoming. In 1867 all of the Wyoming portion was included in Laramie County, which was divided early in 1868 by the creation of Carter County (later renamed Sweetwater County).
1867-1869	The transcontinental Union Pacific Railway was built through southern Wyoming. The towns of Cheyenne, Laramie, Rawlins, Rock Springs, Green River, and Evanston sprang up along its route.
1868	Wyoming Territory was created, primarily from Dakota Territory. It included small portions from Utah and Idaho territories.
1876-1880s	The Arapaho and Cheyenne Indians were moved to the Wind River Reservation. With the defeat of the Sioux soon afterward, northern Wyoming was opened to cattle grazing. The cattle boom reached its height in the 1880s.
1890	Wyoming became a state.
1895-1910	The Carey Act of 1894 provided for the reclamation and homesteading of desert land and stimulated new settlements in northern Wyoming. Mormons established towns in the Big Horn Basin.
1898	Over 300,000 men were involved in the Spanish-American War, which was fought mainly in Cuba and the Philippines.
1917–1918	More than 26 million men from the United States ages 18

through 45 registered with the Selective Service for World War I, and over 4.7 million American men and women served during

The Great Depression closed many factories and mills. Many small farms were abandoned, and many families moved to cities.

1940–1945	Over 50.6 million men ages 18 to 65 registered with the Selective Service. Over 16.3 million American men and women served in the armed forces during World War II.
1950–1953	Over 5.7 million American men and women served in the Korean War.
1950s-1960s	The building of interstate highways made it easier for people to move long distances.
1964–1972	Over 8.7 million American men and women served in the Vietnam War.

Your ancestors will become more interesting to you if you also use histories to learn about the events that were of interest to them or that they may have been involved in. For example, by using a history you might learn about the events that occurred in the year your great-grandparents were married.

Historical Sources

You may find state or local histories in the Family History Catalog under Wyoming or the county or the town. For descriptions of records available through Family History Centers or the Family History Library, click on Family History Library Catalog in the window to the left. The descriptions give book or film numbers, which you need to find or to order the records.

Local Histories

Some of the most valuable sources for family history research are local histories. Published histories of towns, counties, and states usually contain accounts of families. They describe the settlement of the area and the founding of churches, schools, and businesses. You can also find lists of pioneers, soldiers, and civil officials. Even if your ancestor is not listed, information on other relatives may be included that will provide important clues for locating your ancestor. A local history may also suggest other records to search.

Most county and town histories include separate sections or volumes containing biographical information. These may include information on 50 percent or more of the families in the locality.

In addition, local histories should be studied and enjoyed for the background information they can provide about your family's lifestyle and the community and environment in which your family lived.

About 5,000 county histories have been published for over 80 percent of the counties in the United States. For many counties there is more than one history. In addition, tens of thousands of histories have been written about local towns and communities. Bibliographies that list these histories are available for nearly every state. These are listed in the Place Search of the Family History Library Catalog under [STATE] - BIBLIOGRAPHY or [STATE] - HISTORY - BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Local histories are extensively collected by the Family History Library, public and university libraries, and state and local historical societies. Two useful guides are:

Filby, P. William. *A Bibliography of American County Histories*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1985. (FHL book 973 H23bi.)

Kaminkow, Marion J. *United States Local Histories in the Library of Congress.* 5 vols. Baltimore: Magna Charta Book, 1975-76. (FHL book 973 A3ka.)

State History

A helpful source for studying the history of Wyoming is Taft Alfred Larson, *History of Wyoming* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965; FHL book 978.7 H2Lt, 1978).

United States History

The following are only a few of the many sources that are available at most large libraries:

- Schlesinger, Jr., Arthur M. *The Almanac of American History*. Greenwich, Conn.: Bison Books, 1983. (FHL book 973 H2alm.) This provides brief historical essays and chronological descriptions of thousands of key events in United States history.
- Webster's Guide to American History: A Chronological, Geographical, and Biographical Survey and Compendium. Springfield, Mass.: G&C Merriam, 1971. (FHL book 973 H2v.) This includes a history, some maps, tables, and other historical information.
- *Dictionary of American History*, Revised ed., 8 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976. (FHL book 973 H2ad.) This includes historical sketches on various topics in U.S. history, such as wars, people, laws, and organizations.



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Wyoming Statewide Indexes and Collections

Guide

Introduction

In the United States, information about your ancestors is often found in town and county records. If you know which state but not the town or county your ancestor lived in, check the following statewide indexes to find the town or county. Then search records for that town or county.

The indexes and collections listed below index various sources of information, such as histories, vital records, biographies, tax lists, immigration records, etc. You may find additional information about your ancestor other than the town or county of residence. The listings may contain:

- The author and title of the source.
- The Family History Library (FHL) book, film, fiche, or compact disc number. If the words beginning with appear before the film number, check the Family History Library Catalog for additional films.
- The name of the repository where the source can be found if the source is not available at the Family History Library.

What You Are Looking For

- Your ancestor's name in an index or collection.
- · Where the ancestor was living.

Steps

These 2 steps will help you find information about your ancestor in statewide indexes or collections.

Step 1. Find your ancestor's name in statewide indexes or collections.

On the list below, if your ancestor lived between the years shown on the left, he or she may be listed in the source on the right.

1580–1900s Ancestral File

International Genealogical Index

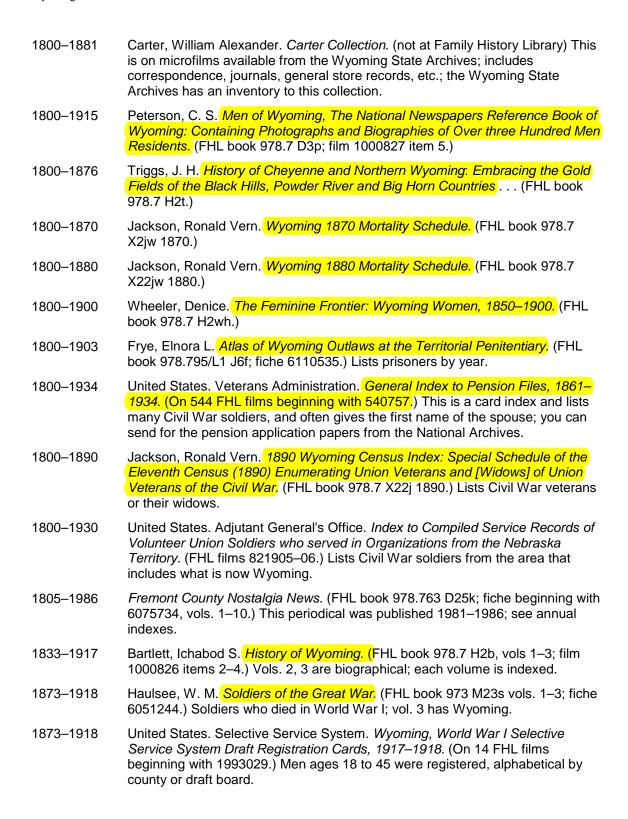
Family History Library Catalog - Surname Search

1600s–1900 Bowen, A. W. Progressive Men of the State of Wyoming. (FHL film 1000827 item

4.)

1600s-present Wyoming State Archives. Card Catalog. (Not at the Family History Library.) Their catalog includes cards which index many biographical and historical works. 1600s-1992 Annals of Wyoming. (FHL book 978.7 B2aw.) This periodical, published from about 1923 through 1992/93, contains much biographical and historical information; see annual indexes; a master index is for sale on diskette through the Wyoming State Archives; the index will be updated periodically. 1600s-present Periodical Source Index (PERSI) lists records (by place or surname) that were published in genealogical magazines or periodicals. This resource should not be overlooked. It is available on the Internet through Ancestry.com. (FHL book 973 D25 per, various combined indexes and, annual supplements; fiche 6016863, 6016864; compact disc no. 61.) 1600s-1926 Welch, Charles Arthur. History of the Big Horn Basin; With Stories of Early Days, Sketches of Pioneers and Writings of the Author. (FHL book 978.7 H2w; fiche 6110628.) 1700-1860 White, Virgil D. Genealogical Abstracts of Revolutionary War Pension Files. (FHL) book 973 M28g vols. 1-4.) The index is in vol. 4.; lists soldiers, and (often) spouse and children. About 431,700 names. Kirkham, E. Kay. *An Index to Some of the Bibles and Family Records of the* 1700-1970 United States: 45,500 References as Taken from the Microfilm at the Genealogical Society of Utah. (FHL book 973 D22kk, vol. 2, pp. 94-104; fiche 6089184.) 1720-1936 Larson, Taft Alfred. *History of Wyoming*. (FHL book 978.7 H2Lt.) White, Virgil D. Index to War of 1812 Pension Files. (FHL book 973 M22i, vols. 1740-1900 1–3.) Alphabetical; for entire U.S.A.; the spouse is often listed. You can write to the National Archives for copies of the pension files. Beard, Frances Birkhead. Wyoming from Territorial Days to the Present. (FHL 1749-1931 book 978.7 H2be, vols. 1-3; film 1000827 items 1-3.) Index is at the beginning of vol. 1; vols. 2 and 3 are biographical. White, Virgil D. Index to Volunteer Soldiers in Indian Wars and Disturbances, 1770-1858 1815–1858. (FHL book 973 M22wiv, vols. 1–2.) For entire U.S.A.. White, Virgil D. *Index to Indian Wars Pension Files*, 1892–1926. (FHL book 973) 1770-1933 M22whi, vols. 1–2.) For entire U.S.A.; often contains widow's first name and death date (to 1933), soldier's death date, and state of service. 1773-1925 Beach, Cora May Brown. Women of Wyoming: Including a Short Story of Some of the Early Activities of Women of Your State, Together With Biographies of Those Women Who Were Our Early Pioneers as Well as of Women Who Have Been Prominent in Public Affairs and in Civil Organizations and Service Work. (FHL book 978.7 D3b, vols. 1-2.) The index is at end of vol. 2. 1800-1970s Hendrickson, Gordon Olaf, ed. *Peopling the High Plains: Wyoming's European* Heritage. (FHL book 978.7 H6p.) Has information about British, German, Italian, Basque, Eastern European, and Greek immigrants. White, Virgil D. *Index to Mexican War Pension Files.* (FHL book 973 M22mw.) 1800-1926 For entire U.S.A., This war was from 1846–1848. Chamblin, Thomas F., ed. *The Historical Encyclopedia of Wyoming*. (FHL book 1800-1970 978.7 D3h vols. 1-2.) Indexed at end of vol. 2. Woods, Lawrence M. Wyoming Biographies. (FHL book 978.7 D3w.) 1800-1943

Research Guidance 2



Research Guidance 3

SOME SOURCES THAT MAY HELP IN RESEARCHING LATTER-DAY SAINT FAMILIES ARE LISTED BELOW.

1600s-1970s Early Church Information File (ECIF) (On 75 FHL films 1750655–729.) Alphabetical by name of individual; indexes over 400 sources which may mention individuals. Compiled by the Family History Library. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Family Group Records 1600s-1969 Collection; Archives Section. 1942–1969. (FHL films beginning with 1273501) Alphabetical. 1600s-1940 Watson, Eldon J. Index to The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine. (FHL book 979.2 H25ua.) Index to Patriarchal Blessings: 1833–1963. (FHL films 392631–696.) The index 1750-1963 card give the person's birth date and place, parents' names, the date of the blessing, patriarch's name, and number reference; copies can be ordered for \$3.00 from the Church Historical Department, 50 East South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT, 84150. From 1840–1860 indexed in Early Church Information File. 1770-1973 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Historical Department. Index to Journal History. (on FHL films 1233503–) This indexes the Journal History (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints). (FHL films beginning with 1233503.) Alphabetical. Records events in Church history from 1830-1973. Not included in Early Church Information File. 1770-1984 Wiggins, Marvin E. Mormons and Their Neighbors: An Index to over 75,000 Biographical Sketches from 1820 to the Present. (FHL book 978 D32w, vols. 1-2.) An index to 75,734 biographical sketches from 194 published sources from several states. Indexed in the Early Church Information File above. Utah Immigration Card Index, 1847–1868. (FHL films 298440–442.) Not included 1770-1868 in Early Church Information File. Also known as the "Crossing the Ocean Index". Obituary Index File to the Salt Lake Tribune and Deseret News as of the 31 1770-1970 December 1970. (FHL films 821636–699) Not included in Early Church Information File. Jenson, Andrew. Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia: A Compilation of 1770-1956 Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Women in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. (FHL book 920.0792 J453L, vols. 1-4; films 410869-872, vols. 1–4.) Indexed in Early Church Information File. Each volume has an index. Census indexes, 1850–1860 (as part of Utah Territory), 1870–1880 and 1900– 1790-1920 1920. In the window to the left click on Family History Library Catalog. Then select CENSUS or CENSUS - INDEXES from the topics that are listed. 1791–1912 Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah Index. (On 24 FHL films 1206309–332.) Published by Frank Esshom. Not included in the Early Church Information File. 1800-1977 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Genealogical Society. *Family* Group Records Collection; Patrons Section, 1962–1977. (FHL films beginning with 1558711.) Alphabetical, from Aager to Kelsey only. Only filmed to Kelsey; see the two items below for the full alphabet.

Research Guidance

4

1800–1979	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Family Group Records Collection; Patrons Section, 1962–1979. Alphabetical; available in binders on the fourth floor of the Joseph Smith Memorial Building, in Salt Lake City, Utah. These are four-generation forms, but many go back five or more generations; for the microfilm numbers see item above and item below.
1800–1979	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Genealogical Society. <i>Family Group Records Collection; Patrons Section, 1962–1979.</i> (FHL films beginning with 428056.) These are four-generation sheets though many go back five or more generations; filmed in fourteen series with one or two years each.
1800–1940	Miscellaneous Marriage Records Index. (On 19 FHL films beginning with 820155 item 2.) Indexes marriage records, 1860–1940 compiled from civil records; has marriage records from Utah, Idaho, and Lincoln County, Wyoming. Not included in Early Church Information File.
1830–1960	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. <i>Church Census Records</i> , 1914–1960. Taken 1914, 1920, 1925, 1930, 1935, 1940, 1950, 1955, and 1960; there are combined indexes for 1914–1935, and 1950–1960. Not indexed in <i>Early Church Information File</i> .
1860–1977	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Membership Department. <i>Deceased Membership Records, 1941 to 1977.</i> Information about deceased L.D.S. church members; four alphabetical series: to 1974; 1974–75; 1975; 1975–77. Not indexed in <i>Early Church Information File</i> .

For ideas on ways your ancestor's name might be spelled by indexers or in collections, see Name Variations.

Step 2. Copy and document the information.

The best method of copying information is to:

- Make a photocopy of the page(s) that include your ancestor's name.
- Document where the information came from by writing the title, call number, and page number of the index or collection on the photocopy. Also write the name of the library or archive.

Where to Find It

Family History Centers and the Family History Library

You can use the Family History Library book collection only at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, but many of our books have been microfilmed. Most of our films can be requested and used at our Family History Centers. To locate the address for the nearest Family History Center, click here.

For information about contacting or visiting the library or a center, see Family History Library and Family History Centers.

Research Guidance 5

Libraries and Archives

You may be able to find the books at public or college libraries. If these libraries do not have a copy of the book you need, you may be able to order it from another library on interlibrary loan.

To use interlibrary loan:

- Go to a public or college library.
- Ask a librarian to order a book or microfilm for you through interlibrary loan from another library. You will need the title of the item and the name of the author.
- The library staff will direct you in their procedures. Sometimes this is free; sometimes there is a small fee.

You can find addresses and phone numbers for most libraries and archives in the *American Library Directory*, published by the American Library Association. The *American Library Directory* is available at most public and college libraries.

Research Guidance 6

MapsComputer Resources

MapQuest Maps

Summary: Must know address, city, state, and zip code; more recent maps

Animap

BYU FHL – on computer

Summary: Has each state with maps. Shows county boundary changes and allows marking of cities and finds distances.

Google Maps

Summary: Has address finder, allows keyword searching, and allows street, satellite, or terrain views

Geology.com Maps

Summary: Has Relief, Elevation, Drainage, Political and Road Maps for each state.

Wyoming Maps Bibliography

Andriot, Jay. *Township Atlas of the U.S.* McLean, Virginia, 1991. *Mic/Gen* Ref – G 1201.F7 AS 1991

<u>Summary:</u> Shows "minor county subdivisions" maps start after 1930 and are provided by the Bureau of the Census. Census county subdivisions or minor civil divisions. Does not include Hawaii or Alaska.

<u>Evaluation of Wyoming Maps:</u> pp. 1131-1142. General history of counties with precincts, census county divisions, public land surveys and townships.

Kirkham, E. Kay. *A Genealogical and Historical Atlas of the United States*. Utah: Everton Publishers, Inc. 1976.

Mic/Gen Ref- G1201.E622S.KS 1976.

Summary: Shows changes in boundaries in the United States.

Evaluation of Wyoming Maps: State historical information, p. 51. Maps: 1879, 162-163; 1883, 191; 1909,251.

Mattson, Mark T. *Macmillan Color atlas of the States*. Toronto: Simon Schuster Macmillan, 1996.

Micl Gen Ref - Quarto Shelves G 1200.M4 1996

Summary: General state information.

<u>Evaluation of Wyoming Maps:</u> pp.350-356. General state information includes; Maps with highways, climate & environment, history & important events, population & government, ethnicity & education, economy & resources.

Thorndale, William and William Dollarhide. Map Guide to the U.S. Federal Censuses, 1790-1947. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1987.

Mic/Gen Ref- G1201.F7 TS 1987

<u>Summary</u>: Outlines counties and changes in 10 year intervals. Gives brief history on census, its growth and accuracy. Sources for maps come from state/territorial laws. <u>Evaluation of Wyoming Maps</u>: pp.387-393. Shows modern boundaries and changes.

Map Collection on 2nd floor of the old section of HBLL

Map Collection - Map Cases G42S0-G42S4. Individual maps that illustrate things from military movement to censuses.

Web Sites/Computer Programs

www.topozone.com

Summary: Gives options, of place name searches, coordinate searches, UTM searches.

Evaluation: Excellent for finding what new town your old town (etc) may be in.

www.MapOuest.com

<u>Summary:</u> Must know address, city, state and zip code, more recent maps. <u>Evaluation:</u> Good, to find an existing relative if you have their address.

Animap

Mic/Gen Family Search room – on computer and C.D. version available

Summary: Each state is different, with maps. Shows boundary changes with now

boundaries.

Evaluation: Excellent to find older maps quick.

Wyoming Maps Bibliography

Wyoming, Washington D.C. (1883)

Maps Collection: G 4260 1883 .H6

Summary: Separated by county. Gives Indian Reservations, towns, counties, lakes,

rivers, and National Parks. Not indexed.

Evaluation: Easy to read counties. Earliest map available at library.

Rand, McNally & Company's Wyoming, Chicago, IL (1891)

Map Collection: G 4260 1891 .R3

Summary: Color format. Separated by county. Gives a brief history. Indexed by county,

creeks, lakes, mountains, rivers, towns, and miscellaneous.

Evaluation: Great map, gives lots of information.

Map of the State of Wyoming, Washington D.C. (1900)

Map Collection: G 4260 1900 .US

Summary: Color format. Separated by county. Gives counties, towns, Indian

reservations, military reservations, and rail roads. Not indexed.

Evaluation: good map.

State of Wyoming, Washington D.C. (1923)

Map Collection: **G 4260 1923 .US** (2 maps)

Summary: Color format. Separated by county. Gives counties, towns, Indian

reservations, military reservations, and rail roads. Not indexed.

Evaluation: good map, easy to read.



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Wyoming Federal Census Population Schedules, 1850 to 1920

Guide

Introduction

Federal censuses are taken every 10 years. Wyoming residents are included in territorial and federal censuses from 1850 to 1920.

 The 1850 census was the first federal census to give the names of all members of each household.

For more information about the U.S. Federal Censuses, see Background.

What you are be looking for

The information you find varies from record to record. These records may include:

- Names of family members.
- Ages of family members, which you can use to calculate birth or marriage years.
- The county and state where your ancestors lived.
- People living with (or gone from) the family.
- Relatives who may have lived nearby.

Steps

These 5 steps will help you use census records.

Step 1. Determine which censuses might include your ancestors.

Match the probable time your ancestor was in Wyoming with the census years. This will determine which censuses you will search.

This person would be included in Wyoming censuses from 1880 to 1900. (The 1890 census was mostly destroyed.)

Step 2. Determine a census to start with.

Start with the last census taken during the life of your ancestor.

The censuses from **1850 to 1920** give more information and include the name, age, and birthplace of every person in each household.

The censuses from **1790 to 1840** give the name of the head of each household and the number of males and females in age groups **without** their names.

The censuses for 1930 and later are available from the U.S. Census Bureau only. For ways the census can help you find your ancestor's parents, see Tip 1.

Step 3. Search the census.

For instructions on how to search a specific census, click on one of the following years:

1850 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920

For information about archives and libraries that have census records, see Where to Find It.

Step 4. Search another census.

Repeat steps 2 and 3 until you search all the censuses taken during the life span of your ancestor. Each census may contain additional information.

If you skip a census taken when your ancestor lived, you risk missing additional information, such as names of in-laws or other relatives who may have lived with or near the family. Those names and relationships may help you identify earlier generations.

For other information about how to search the census, see Tips.

Step 5. Analyze the information you obtain from the censuses.

To effectively use the information from the census, ask yourself these questions:

- Who was in the family?
- About when were they born?
- Where were they born?
- Where were they living? Which town or township, county, and state?
- Where were their parents born? (Birthplaces are shown in censuses for 1880 to 1920.)
- Do they have neighbors with the same last name? Could they be relatives?

For more about comparing information in several censuses, see Tip 3.

Research Guidance 2

Tips

Tip 1. How can the census help me find my ancestor's parents?

Searching the census taken closest to the time the ancestor married has the best possibility of finding your ancestor and spouse living close to their parents and other family members.

Tip 2. How can I understand the information better?

Sometimes knowing why the census taker asked a question can help you understand the answer. Detailed instructions given to census takers are in the book, *Twenty Censuses: Population and Housing Questions 1790–1980*, updated as 200 Years of U.S. Census Taking, both by the United States Census Bureau.

Tip 3. How can comparing information in more than one census help me?

Comparing censuses indicates:

- Changes in who was in the household, such as children leaving home or the death of grandparents or a child.
- Changes in neighbors. Remember, neighbors might be relatives or in-laws.
- Changes about each individual, such as age.
- Movement of the family within Wyoming to a different county or town.
- Movement of the family out of Wyoming if the family no longer appears in the census for Wyoming.

You will eventually want to know every country, state, county, township, and town where your ancestor was located. You can then check information in other records for those places. A careful check of all available federal census records can help you identify those places.

The age and estimated birth date of an individual may vary greatly from census to census. Often ages are listed more accurately for young children than for adults.

Background

Description

A census is a count and a description of the population of a country, colony, territory, state, county, or city. Census records are also called census schedules or population schedules. Early censuses are basically head counts. Later censuses give information about marriage, immigration, and literacy. United States censuses are useful because they begin early and cover a large portion of the population.

What U.S. Federal Censuses Are Available

Censuses have been taken by the United States government every 10 years since 1790. The 1920 census is the most recent federal census available to the public; the 1930 census will be released in 2002. In 1885 the federal government also helped 5 states or territories (Colorado, Florida, Nebraska, New Mexico, and Dakota Territory) conduct special censuses.

Research Guidance 3

The 1890 census of Wyoming was destroyed by fire. However, portions of a special schedule taken in 1890 of Union Civil War veterans and their widows have survived. The surviving 1890 veterans' schedules cover Washington D.C., half of Kentucky, and all of Louisiana through Wyoming (states are in alphabetical order from K through W). These schedules contain approximately 700,000 names.

Types of Census Schedules

The following census schedules are available for Wyoming and were created in various years by the federal government:

- **Population schedules** list a large portion of the population; most are well-indexed and are available at many repositories.
- Mortality schedules list those who died in the 12 months prior to the day the census was taken for the 1870 and 1880 censuses.
- 1890 veterans' schedules list Union veterans from the Civil War or their widows who were living in 1890.
- Agricultural schedules list data about farms and the names of the farmers for the 1870 and 1880 censuses. The 1870 schedule is at the Wyoming State Archives, and the 1880 schedule is at Duke University.
- Manufacturing or industrial schedules list data about businesses and industries for the 1880 census.

How the Censuses Were Taken

People called enumerators were hired by the United States government to take the census. The enumerators were given forms to fill out and were assigned to gather information about everyone living in a certain area or district. Enumerators could visit houses in any order, so families who are listed together in the census may or may not have been neighbors. The accuracy of the enumerators and the readability of their handwriting varies.

After the census was taken, usually one copy was sent to the state and another to the federal government. Sometimes copies were also kept by the counties. Few of the state and county copies survived.

When the Censuses Were Taken

Census takers were supposed to gather information about the people who were part of each household on the following dates:

1790 to 1820: First Monday in August 1830 to 1900: 1 June (2 June in 1890)

1910: 15 April 1920: 1 January 1930: 1 April

If your ancestor was born in the census year, your ancestor should be listed only if he or she was born before the census date.

If your ancestor died in the census year, your ancestor should be listed only if he or she died after the census date.

The census may have actually taken several months to complete and may reflect births and deaths after the census date.

Research Guidance 4

Censuses from 1930 to the Present

U.S. Federal Censuses from 1930 to the present are confidential. The 1930 census will be available in 2002. You may ask the U.S. Census Bureau to send information about:

- Yourself.
- Another living person, if you are that person's "authorized representative."
- Deceased individuals, if you are "their heirs or administrators."

You may request information for only one person at a time. There is a fee for each search. To request information, you must provide the person's name, address at the time of the census, and other details on Form BC-600, available from the U.S. Census Bureau.

For the address of the U.S. Census Bureau, see Where to Find It.

Territorial, State, and Local Censuses

Territorial, state, and local governments also took censuses. Nonfederal censuses generally contain information similar to and sometimes more than federal censuses of the same period. The Wyoming area was included in the following territorial censuses:

- 1850: Utah Territory
- 1860: Nebraska Territory
- 1870 and 1880: Wyoming Territory

An 1869 Wyoming territorial census, at the Wyoming State Archives, lists each family member. Wyoming became a state in 1890. A 1905 Wyoming state census is at the Wyoming State Archives.

Territorial, state, and local censuses may be available on the Internet, at Family History Centers, at the Family History Library, and in state and local archives and libraries.

Where to Find It

Internet

Many Internet sites include census records, census indexes, or information about censuses. You may find the following sites helpful:

- Wyoming GenWeb and USGenWeb have links to indexes and records and may have links to archives, libraries, and genealogical and historical societies.
- CensusLinks on the Net includes links to Internet sites that have United States and Canada censuses and indexes. It includes information about censuses and how to use them, a Soundex calculator, census forms you can print, an age calculator, and more.
- The Archives and Libraries section of the Wyoming Research Outline lists Internet addresses
 for several Wyoming archives, libraries, and historical societies. These organizations may
 have microfilms and indexes of Wyoming censuses, and the Internet sites may list what
 records they have.

Research Guidance 5

Family History Centers

Many Family History Centers keep copies of some census microfilms. Family History Centers can borrow microfilms of a U.S. Federal Census from the Family History Library. A small fee is charged to have a microfilm sent to a center.

You may request photocopies of U.S. Federal Censuses from the Family History Library. Staff at the Family History Center can show you how to request this service.

Family History Centers are located throughout the United States and other areas of the world. See Family History Centers for the address and phone number of the center nearest you.

Family History Library

The Family History Library has complete sets of the existing U.S. Federal Censuses from 1790 to 1920. No fee is charged for using census microfilms in person.

For a list of indexes and other census records, click on **Family History Library Catalog** in the window to the left. Select from the list of titles to see descriptions of the records with the film or book call numbers. Use that information to obtain the records at a family history center or at the Family History Library.

For information about contacting or visiting the library, see *Family History Library and Family History Centers*.

National Archives

Copies of the existing federal censuses from 1790 to 1920 are available in the Microfilm Research Room in the National Archives Building and at the 13 Regional National Archives. The National Archives has a microfilm rental program for census records. Call 301-604-3699 for rental information. For information on how to order photocopies of census records from the National Archives, click here.

College and Public Libraries

Many college libraries have copies of census microfilms, particularly for their own states. Many larger public libraries have copies of the census soundex and population schedules. Smaller public libraries may be able to obtain the records through interlibrary loan.

State Archives, Libraries, and Historical Societies

The Archives and Libraries section of the *Wyoming Research Outline* lists Internet and mailing addresses for several Wyoming archives, libraries, and historical societies. These organizations may have microfilms and indexes of Wyoming censuses, and the Internet sites may list what records they have.

U.S. Census Bureau

To request information from the 1930 census and later censuses, you must provide your relative's name, address, and other details on Form BC-600, available from:

The U.S. Census Bureau P.O. Box 1545 Jeffersonville, IN 47131 Telephone: 812-218-3300

Research Guidance 6

Genealogical Search Services

Many genealogical search services will search the census for a fee. These sources can help you find a genealogical search service:

- CyndisList lists many companies and individuals who do research and mentions publications about how to hire a professional genealogist.
- Advertisements in major genealogical journals may help you find a researcher.

For more information, see Hiring a Professional Genealogist.

Research Guidance 7

Version of Data: 03/06/01

Census problems? Maybe this is why we can't always find our ancestors...

1790 - Washington D.C. is with Montgomery & Prince George Co.'s in Maryland

1820 and 1830 - Wisconsin is with the Michigan Census

1836 - Iowa Territory Census includes Minnesota

1840 - Montana is with Clayton Co., Iowa

1860 - Colorado is with the Kansas Census

- Montana is found in the 1860 Nebraska Census under "unorganized territory," which also includes what is now NE ColoradO
- Oklahoma is with Arkansas, which was then Indian land
- Wyoming is included with Nebraska

Prior to 1880 IA did NOT mean Iowa, but Indiana

Virginia once covered many thousands of square miles more than it does now. A reference made to a person having been born in Virginia could mean that the person really was born in part of:

Illinois from 1781-1818 Ohio form 1728-1803

Indiana from 1787-1816 Pennsylvania from 1752-1786

Missouri from 1775-1792 Tennessee from 1760-1803

North Carolina from 1728-1803 West Virginia from 1769-1863

(Taken from Walla Walla Gen. Soc. Blue Ml. Heritage, Vol. 16, No.4)

RESEARCHER'S GUIDE TO CENSUS AVAILABILITY

WYOMING

Name Changes
Carter to Sweetwater 1869
Pease to Johnson 1879

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1905 Index by County
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1915 - 1925 both lost

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