



Arkansas Genealogical Society

AGS Ezine

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JOIN US!

If you are not a member,
this is your official
invitation to join AGS.

[AGS Membership Application](#)

If you are a member,
look at the back of your
Arkansas Family Historian.
Your membership expires
on the date printed under
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It may be time to renew
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Tidbits — Stories Told in Stone

The following is republished from the Ancestry.com blog, <https://blogs.ancestry.com/ancestry/2017/10/23/stories-told-in-stone/>.

Posted by Gaylord Cooper on October 23, 2017 in Guest Bloggers.

This article originally appeared in Ancestry Magazine, Sept-Oct 2009.

Tombstones are another great source of posthumous information. The carvings on gravestones, called icons, were and still are used as a type of shorthand for stone carvers. Each icon conveys a greater idea, thereby saving time and expense (and space). Tombstone icons can give information about an ancestor's religion, family relationships, military service, society membership, occupation or trade, and even accidents or illness that may have killed them.

Tidbits— Stories Told in Stone (*continued*)

Here are a few of the most common ones and their meanings.

Anchor – hope (“the anchor of the soul”)

Angel – messenger between God and humankind

Angel (flying) – guide from earth to afterlife

Angel (trumpeting) – calling forth the resurrection

Angel (weeping) – grief

Arrows or darts – mortality, the dart of death

Birds – the soul

Clock or hourglass – the passage of time

Coffin – mortality

Column (broken) – sorrow or life cut short

Cross – salvation

Dove – Holy Ghost

Father Time – mortality

Flame (burning) – life

Flower – the frailty of life

Flower (broken) – death

Garland – victory in death

Hand pointing upward – ascension to heaven

Handshake – farewell to earthly existence

Heart – the abode of the soul

Ivy – memory, fidelity

Lamb – Christ, meekness, sacrifice, or innocence

Lamp – truth, knowledge

Laurel – victory

Lily – resurrection, purity

Palls/drapery – mortality

Palm – victory over death

Picks and shovel – mortality

Pomegranate – immortality

Poppy – sleep

Portals – passageways to an eternal journey

Rose – sorrow

Scythe – time or time cut short

Skeletons – mortality

Skull (winged) – flight of the soul from the mortal body

Skulls and crossbones – death

Sun (rising) – renewed life

Sword – martyrdom or courage

Urn – mortality

Wheat – time or divine harvest; often used to denote old age

Willow – grief

Coming Events

January 22, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *Preserving Family Heirlooms*, by Andy Zawacki, Historic Arkansas Museum, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Jan. 23, 2018

Arkansas State Archives, *Pen to Podium: Arkansas Historical Writers' Lecture Series: Sundays with TJ: 100 Years of Memories on Varner Road*, by Janis Kearney, 6:30 p.m. at the Department of Arkansas Heritage Diamond Room, located at 1100 North Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Feb. 3, 2018 -

Arkansas State Archives, *African Americans in Arkansas's Rural History*, Speakers include Chelsea McNutt, Dr. Simon Hosken, Dr. Cherisse Branch-Jones, and Carmen Williams, 10 a.m. at Mosaic Templars, 501 W. 9th Street Little Rock, Arkansas.

February 26, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *Faithful to Our Tasks: Arkansas' Women & the Great War*, by Elizabeth Hill, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Coming Events (continued)

March 26, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *An Introduction to Genetic Genealogy*, by Mike Engles, Genetic Genealogist, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

April 17, 2018

Arkansas State Archives, *Pen to Podium: Arkansas Historical Writers' Lecture Series, African-American Athletes in Arkansas: Muhammad Ali's Tour, Black Razorbacks & Other Forgotten Stories*, by Evin Demirel, 6:30 p.m. at the Department of Arkansas Heritage Diamond Room, located at 1100 North Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.

April 23, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *The Story Beneath the Stone*, by Jan Davenport, Oakland & Fraternal Cemeteries, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

May 2-5, 2018

The NGS 2018 Family History Conference will be in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The announcement was in the *NGS Monthly* from May 2016. Call for proposals opened January 3, 2017.

May 21, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *An Armchair Tour of Mount Holly Cemetery*, by Kay Tatum, Registrar Mt. Holly Cemetery, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Coming Events (*continued*)

June 2–7, 2018

[The Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research](#) (IGHR) will be at the Georgia Center's UGA and Hotel Conference Center.

Aug. 21, 2018

Arkansas State Archives, *Pen to Podium: Arkansas Historical Writers' Lecture Series, Rock Island Railroad in Arkansas*, by Michael Hibblen, 6:30 p.m. at the Department of Arkansas Heritage Diamond Room, located at 1100 North Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.

August 22-25, 2018

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

August 27, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *The Rise & Fall of Napoleon, Arkansas*, by Sheila Moore-Mithell, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

October 13, 2018

Arkansas State Archives, *Tracing Your Arkansas Roots: Genealogy 101*, speakers include Thea Baker and Diana Gilpin, 9 a.m. at Historic Washington State Park.

Coming Events *(continued)*

October 19-20, 2018

The Arkansas Genealogical Society 2018 Fall Conference will be at the Benton Event and Convention Center in Benton, Arkansas. Cee Cee Moore, Professional Genetic Genealogist is scheduled to present.

November 13, 2018

Arkansas State Archives, *Pen to Podium: Arkansas Historical Writers' Lecture Series, Hidden History of Fort Smith*, by Ben Boulden, 6:30 p.m. at the Department of Arkansas Heritage Diamond Room, located at 1100 North Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.

August 21-24, 2019

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Washington, D. C.

September 2-5, 2020

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Kansas City, Missouri.

Broke, But Not Out of Luck: Using Bankruptcy Records for Genealogical Research

The following is republished from the National Archives website, <https://www.archives.gov/files/publications/prologue/2014/fall/bankruptcy.pdf> . The article written by Jake Erland, originally appeared in the Fall 2014 Prologue,

The post-World War I business boom that swept the United States made its way to all parts of the nation, including the heartland—Kansas City, Missouri. In this city that had been a jumping-off place for westbound explorers was a start-up in the entertainment industry, specializing in the fairly new medium of animated cartoons. Founded in May 1922, Laugh-O-Gram Films, Inc., had an initial capitalization of \$15,000. Despite producing several short films, advertisements, and an information piece for a local dentist, Laugh-O-Gram Films struggled financially. Production costs proved higher than had been anticipated, and new revenues came in only upon completion of projects.

As a result, the company was perpetually behind in meeting its payroll and paying its bills. Salaries for employees were paid only partially, and later than agreed upon. Utility bills at times were completely ignored, and needed supplies were acquired on steadily eroding credit. Things were bad enough at one point that the company's founder and president could not meet with a potential client because he did not have a decent pair of shoes to wear.

By August 1923, the company folded, and its president left Kansas City to start fresh in California. Bankruptcy proceedings began before the end of 1923. But the founder of Laugh-O-Gram Films, Inc., Walt Disney, who had grown up in the rural Missouri town of Marceline, was already well on his way to bouncing back.

Broke, But Not Out of Luck: Using Bankruptcy Records for Genealogical Research (continued)

Bankruptcy Records Often Overlooked

A certain negative connotation is generally associated with bankruptcy and the implied failure that accompanies the term. Genealogists are not normally excited to see such information associated with their ancestors. Often family stories allude to past financial difficulties, but rarely is it known whether bankruptcy proceedings occurred. As a result, genealogists often overlook opportunities to use bankruptcy records.

Since 1790, the country has weathered as many as 47 separate recessions or depressions, depending on the economic historian you ask. Reasons for economic downturns include wars, natural disasters, financial bubbles, or faulty foreign or domestic policy. The victims of financial crashes come from all walks of life—rich or poor, highly educated or illiterate, industrious entrepreneur or deadbeat. The federal government has responded to these downturns in many different ways, including the passage of bankruptcy laws, provided for under Article I, section 8, clause 4 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the power to legislate for “uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies.” By 1900, Congress had passed four separate bankruptcy laws—the Bankruptcy Acts of 1800, 1841, 1867, and 1898.

Various Bankruptcy Acts: Responded to a Crisis

To understand the potential genealogical use of bankruptcy records, it is helpful to understand what each bankruptcy act covered. The Bankruptcy Act of 1800 resulted from the Panic of 1797, which was caused by the naval quasi-war with France, deflation from the Bank of England, and a land speculation bubble. This first bankruptcy act covered only merchants and involuntary bankruptcy. The system was rife with corruption and favoritism and was repealed in 1803. As a result, there are not many records of genealogical use from this bankruptcy act. The Bankruptcy Act of 1841 was a result of the Panic of 1837, which was caused by massive bank failures and a collapse of the cotton market. This act allowed for voluntary bankruptcy, which provided for a discharge of debt. Any individual could file for

Broke, But Not Out of Luck: Using Bankruptcy Records for Genealogical Research (continued)

bankruptcy as well. Creditors felt that the law was too lenient on debtors, allowing them to discharge too many debts, and the act was repealed in 1843. Though containing more records of genealogical value than the Bankruptcy Act of 1800, there still is not a huge wealth of information available from this bankruptcy act. The Bankruptcy Act of 1867 was a response to the economic depression caused by the devastation of the Civil War. This act provided for involuntary filings for any individual and created bankruptcy registers to help district court judges handle the large caseloads. Creditors once again thought that debtors were allowed to discharge too many debts, and the act was repealed in 1878. The number of cases generated in the courts greatly increased from the two previous acts, and genealogists have a much higher probability of locating bankruptcy records from this critical period of change and transition in American history. The Bankruptcy Act of 1898 came about because of the Panic of 1893, which was caused by the failure of the Reading Railroad and a withdrawal of European investment from American markets. Individuals could file for voluntary bankruptcy, and anyone owing at least \$1,000 could be adjudged an involuntary bankruptcy. This bankruptcy act remained in place, with a few amendments and adjustments, until 1978. Most cases that genealogists will use are from this bankruptcy act.

Much Information Awaits In Bankruptcy Records

Bankruptcy cases can contain an enormous amount of information. Much of the paperwork consists of standard court orders, setting out dates and actions to be taken. Filings can include the petition for bankruptcy, schedule(s) of debts, lists of names and addresses of creditors, records of amounts due, inventories of real and personal property, notices to creditors, orders of bankruptcy, and final discharges. These records, which make up the bulk of the case file, can contain details that a genealogist cannot find anywhere else. One potential gold mine of information is the list of creditors.

Broke, But Not Out of Luck: Using Bankruptcy Records for Genealogical Research (continued)

This document lays out the debts of the individual filing for bankruptcy. The identities of those to whom an individual owes money can be very revealing.

For example, a list of creditors from a 1932 bankruptcy case file from Wichita, Kansas, shows that the debtor had racked up a \$150 grocery bill at Peerless Grocery in Arkansas City, owed \$170 on mortgaged furniture, was indebted to the Ernest Thompson Shell Station for \$10 worth of gasoline, and even owed a neighbor for \$1.98 worth of kerosene. Perhaps more revealing are the five separate doctor and dental bills owed. It is possible that physical ailments may have contributed to hard times, both in debts owed, as well as possibly limiting earning abilities. Another interesting note in the file is the debt both for the purchase of, and parts for, a radio. Reviewing this one document reveals much about the individual, providing details on their neighbors, where they shopped, which doctors provided care, and how they spent time at leisure. Equally telling are lists of property. The Dust Bowl era brought many farmers to financial ruin as drought conditions and poor farming circumstances led to impossible economic situations. A look at a farm bankruptcy from western Kansas can reveal a wealth of information on what farm life in the Dust Bowl looked like. All of a farmer's property is listed, including the amount of seed owned, acres of producing farmland, farm equipment, and farm animals. One list even noted the names of the horses that worked the fields for the family, which included a 7-year-old mare named "Blackie," a 10-year-old mare named "Avis," and a 5-year-old mare named "Sis." It is doubtful there are many other sources for genealogists that provide the names of family animals. Additionally, analysis of equipment owned sheds light on how technologically up to date a farmer was. Information in the case file can also lead researchers to new paths of research, such as the legal description of where property was located.

Statements of All Debts Provides Complete Picture of Business

Case files of businesses that filed for bankruptcy often contain "statements of all debts

Broke, But Not Out of Luck: Using Bankruptcy Records for Genealogical Research (continued)

of bankrupt.” Most businesses that went under were small in nature, often operated by an individual or family. The bankruptcy and subsequent loss of such businesses could alter the course of a family’s life, causing people to uproot and move to look for new opportunities.

Statements of debt include debts incurred in general operation of the business, from supplies purchased to the furnishings. The statements can also open the door to new avenues of research, such as when money is owed for advertisements purchased in local newspapers. If digital or microfilm copies of the newspapers exist, a researcher can use information found on the statement of debt to locate and view the advertisements produced for an ancestor’s company or business. Exhibits filed in bankruptcy cases add depth and understanding to the environment in which a person lived and conducted business. Often creditor companies would submit inventories on colorful letterhead listing goods purchased on credit. Promissory notes and receipts for goods purchased further document the accumulation of debt and the financial decisions that contributed to the bankruptcy. Walt Disney’s Laugh-O-Gram bankruptcy included exhibits of each of these types, as well as employee salary schedules, noting what was due on a regular basis, and what was actually paid. Disney tried to get through financially thin periods by paying employees a percentage of a salary, with the balance to be paid once revenue came in. Unfortunately for Disney, the expected revenue to cover back pay never came in, and employees left the business rather than continue to work for greatly reduced, and uncertain, wages. Such details provide a look into an individual’s decision making and how they tried to weather tough financial times. Despite the unique information found within the hundreds of thousands of files in the National Archives’ holdings, bankruptcy case files are grossly underused by genealogists. Those looking for new angles to research their family histories should strongly consider bankruptcy case files.

Broke, But Not Out of Luck: Using Bankruptcy Records for Genealogical Research (continued)

Recently a researcher visited the National Archives at Kansas City to look at an ancestor's criminal case file. A background discussion revealed that the family had become involved in bootlegging to try to get by financially. A search through the bankruptcy indexes revealed two separate bankruptcy cases for the researcher's ancestors. The researcher found a wealth of information in the case files, from the legal description of the family's property, to lists of household possessions, to lists of creditors that happened to include other family members. Researching the bankruptcy case file added an entirely new chapter to the family's known past.

Federal Records on Bankruptcies In Facilities Around the Country

The federal government has had jurisdiction over every bankruptcy case since 1898, with proceedings held in United States district courts, bankruptcy courts, and territorial courts. To locate a bankruptcy case file, you need to know in which state or territory the proceedings occurred. The National Archives facility maintaining the federal records for a particular state will have the bankruptcy records from the courts in that location. Archival coverage greatly varies by court. Generally, indexes are the first source to consult to locate a specific case. Bankruptcy indexes are not always available, and researchers may need to search through bankruptcy dockets or journal books for cases in a specific date range. Locating a bankruptcy case can be time consuming, but the potential rewards are well worth the effort. Consultation with an archivist to discuss the available resources is often the best course of action, though searches on the Online Public Access catalog on Archives.gov can reveal bankruptcy series for individual courts.

Generally, genealogy research shows paths of lineage, with names and dates of ancestors. Researching records like bankruptcy files allows for a deeper understanding of one's ancestors: who they were, what they did day to day, what they owned, and even how they entertained themselves. By showing everything an individual owned, and to whom they owed money, bankruptcy files open the

Broke, But Not Out of Luck: Using Bankruptcy Records for Genealogical Research (continued)

door into the homes of our ancestors. The details revealed in the case files allows the researcher to understand so much more than what a name and a date alone provide. They help a researcher understand why a path guided an ancestor in a particular direction. Researchers should not let the negative stigma associated with bankruptcy deter them. Failures, both past and present, occur for myriad reasons. Often, individuals fail due to outside circumstances, with little fault of their own.

Even a failure that does rest solely with a person's poor choices and actions may not indicate that the bankrupt could not have bounced back to bigger and better things. Walt Disney's failure in his attempt to start a film company in Kansas City served as a learning experience, which he used to guide him during an incredibly bright career. In fact, Disney's most famous creation, Mickey Mouse, was a product of this trying time in his life. Disney claimed to have developed the idea of Mickey from a mouse that lived at his studio at Laugh-O-Gram Films. The bankruptcy of Laugh-O-Gram Films was not a black mark for Disney, but rather one chapter that describes who he was and where he came from. The same is true for any other bankruptcy case file, waiting for a genealogist to open it up and peer into a family's past.

Maps of the Civil War

The following is republished from the The Legal Genealogist website, <http://www.legalgenealogist.com/2017/12/01/maps-civil-war/>. The article written by Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL, was posted December 1, 2017.

New collection online from NARA

One each from Maryland and Oklahoma.

Two each from Kentucky and Texas.

Four from Alabama.

Six each from Arkansas and Missouri.

Ten from South Carolina.

Seventeen from Mississippi, and another 17 from Tennessee.

Twenty from Georgia.

Twenty-two from Virginia.

And 11 that are identified simply as United States – because they cross state lines.

More than 100 in total... and they are pure genealogical gold.

Because there's almost nothing better for genealogical research than historical maps.

Free. Digitized. Online to peruse at 3 a.m.

Maps of the Civil War (continued)

And this collection – of Confederate War Maps digitized and put online by the National Archives – is about as good as it gets.

The maps are part of Record Group 109, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, 1825 - 1927, and as explained by Brandi Oswald, archivist in NARA's Cartographic Branch: Maps played a very important role during the Civil War. They were instrumental to leaders and generals for planning battles, campaigns, and marches. As a result, thousands of maps relating to the Civil War were created, many of which are held by the Cartographic Branch at the National Archives in a variety of record groups. These maps can include rough sketches created quickly before or during a battle, but can also include maps that were drawn to accompany official reports or even post-war publications. Many are highly detailed and colorized. Civil War maps frequently show topography, ground cover, roads, railroads, homes, the names of residents, towns, and waterways. They can be very helpful to better understand what the land looked like and how it was used during the Civil War era. Maps showing the names of residents can also be helpful to genealogists.¹

The digitized maps were captured by or surrendered to the United States at the conclusion of the Civil War, or were later donated by former Confederate leaders, and show well known – and lesser-known – battlefields, fortifications, fort plans and more.

Maps of the Civil War (continued)

Check out the link [Confederate Maps](#), or – for the state-by-state maps – check out this list of [RG 109 maps by state](#).

For more background on Civil War maps and cartographic resources as part of family history, check out Trevor Plante’s Prologue article, “[Enhancing Your Family Tree with Civil War Maps](#).”²

And, of course, remember that NARA isn’t the only source for Civil War maps – not by a long shot. One of the most comprehensive collections of Civil War maps is at the Library of Congress, where more than 2,300 items have been digitized and put online in its [Civil War Maps collection](#).

Other options for Civil War maps include:

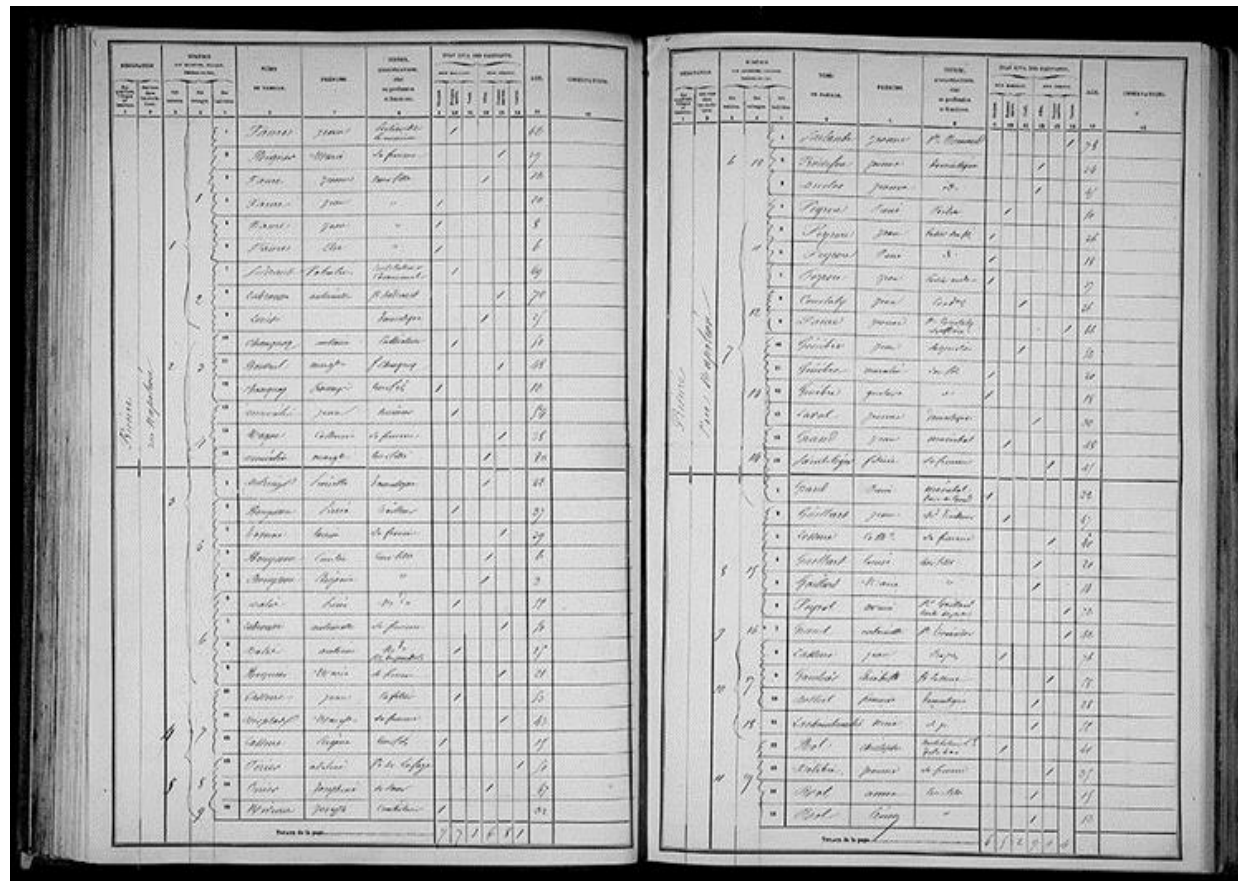
- [Images from US Civil War](#) and [Civil War Maps](#), the David Rumsey Map Collection.
- [The American Civil War collection](#), United States Military Academy at West Point, and its [Civil War Maps](#) in Special Collections.
- [Gilmer Civil War Maps Collection](#), Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

SOURCES

1. Brandi Oswald, “[RG 109 Confederate Maps Series Now Digitized and Available Online!](#),” *The National Archives Unwritten Record Blog*, posted 17 Oct 2017 (<https://unwrittenrecord.blogs.archives.gov/> : accessed 30 Nov 2017). ↵
2. Trevor K. Plante, “[Enhancing Your Family Tree with Civil War Maps](#),” *Prologue* (Summer 2003), html version, *National Archives* (<https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/> : accessed 30 Nov 2017). ↵

New French Census Records Aid Family History Research

The following is republished from the FamilySearch Blog, <https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/french-census-records-aid-family-history-research/>. The article written by FamilySearch, originally appeared on April 27, 2017.



New French Census Records Aid Family History Research (continued)

If you have French heritage, you may be interested in six new census collections that were recently added to FamilySearch.

[France, Hérault, Census, 1906](#)

[France, Hérault, Census, 1876](#)

[France, Hérault, Census, 1891](#)

[France, Nord, Census, 1906](#)

[France, Côtes-d'Armor, Census, 1876](#)

[France, Côtes-d'Armor, Census, 1906](#)

Valuable Census Information

How can these records help you if you have French ancestry? These census records are valuable because they provide a snapshot of families at a specific time—in this case, 1876, 1891, and 1906. As you find your family in multiple census records, you will see a more complete picture of that family over the years.

During these years, censuses were taken by department, or region, every 5 years. In the census records you will find:

- names of the people in a household
- each person's age at the time the census was taken
- birth years for each person
- birthplaces for each person
- head of household
- additional members of the household

New French Census Records Aid Family History Research (continued)

Find More Family in French Census Records

Even though the census doesn't give relationships between the people in a household, you can use the information in the census records to find other records that do prove relationships, such as christening or marriage records.

You might be trying to connect immigrant ancestors with their place of origin in France. Census records can help with that too. If you aren't sure where some of your French ancestors originated, you can search the census by surname and potentially find your family.

These six collections bring the number of French census collections in FamilySearch to 13, including census records for the city of Toulouse and the departments of Dordogne and Saône-et-Loire. To see all collections for France, [visit the France Research Page](#). And if you'd like to see more French records, why not help by [participating in French indexing](#)?

Collections are being indexed and published regularly, so please keep checking back for new or updated publications.

Administrative Stuff

Contributions: If you have news for the Ezine, send it! To agscontributions@gmail.com – Thanks!

AGS: To learn more about [Arkansas Genealogical Society](http://www.agsgenealogy.org), visit our website at <http://www.agsgenealogy.org>

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