

What's Special about U.S. Special Census Schedules?



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In addition to the U.S. census population schedules we frequently use for genealogy, many past censuses included additional "special schedules" packed with genealogical information. Many schedules survive, and an increasing number are now online. This syllabus offers a condensed summary guide to lecture content. Lecture attendees will also see samples of special census forms, a demonstration of common finding techniques and suggestions for using them in your research.

Summary of Surviving U.S. Special Censuses by Decade

Not all schedules survived for every state or county.

Year	Schedule(s) taken
1810-1820	Industry/Manufacturer
1850	Agricultural, Industry/Manufacturer, Mortality, Slave, Social Statistics
1860	Agricultural, Industry/Manufacturer, Mortality, Slave, Social Statistics
1870	Agricultural, Industry/Manufacturer, Mortality, Social Statistics
1880	Agricultural, DDD, Indian, Industry/Manufacturer, Mortality, Social Statistics
1885*	Agricultural, Industry/Manufacturer, Mortality, Social Statistics
1890	Indian**, Veterans
1900-1910	Indian

*A federally-funded 1885 census was taken of a few territories and new states.

**Most of this schedule was lost, but not all.

4 Tips for Finding Special Census Schedules:

1. Use the databases listed below. To find individual databases at Ancestry.com, use the category filters in the main search area (Census and Voter Lists > U.S. Federal Census Collection, scroll to select from list of databases) or select Card Catalog under the Search menu and search for the database title. Within individual databases, select the locale to see a drop-down menu of available schedules.
2. Consult *The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy*, edited by Loretto Dennis Szucs and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking (see Resources) for tables showing the location, by state, of mortality and other special schedules.
3. 1885 territorial census: Some data are on Ancestry.com. Under Search > Card Catalog, search for state census databases and the database "U.S. Federal Census Mortality Schedules, 1850-1885." Find surviving original and microfilmed 1885 censuses at the National Archives, or consult *State Census Records* by Ann S. Lainhart (see Resources).
4. Conduct a web search for the year, schedule name, state and even the county. Look for holdings at state archives and libraries, state historical societies and even state university libraries. Contact these organizations if you can't find the schedule online to see whether and where it exists.

Agricultural schedules (1850-1880)

Who was included: In 1850 and 1860, farmers and plantation owners who produced >\$100 in farm goods annually. In 1870 and 1880, those who farmed at least 3 acres and/or produced \$500 or more in farm goods.

What was included: In 1850, 1860 and 1870, the owner/manager/agent's name; acreage (improved and unimproved); value of property and equipment; amount, value and description of livestock and produce. In 1880, landowners, tenant farmers and sharecroppers were distinguished (especially valuable for Southern farmers), and paid labor costs are included.

Where to find online: HeritageQuest Online, Ancestry.com in "Selected U.S. Federal Census Non-Population Schedules, 1850-1880."

Where to look for offline records: State archives, university libraries, National Archives microfilm.

Tip: Agricultural censuses continue today, but results are reported as statistics. Find statistical reports since 1840 at the US Department of Agriculture: <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications>.

Defective, Dependent and Delinquent Schedule (1880)

Who was included: the physically and mentally disabled, mentally ill, blind, deaf, incarcerated, those living in poorhouses or otherwise being maintained at public expense.

What was included: Varied by schedule.

- Schedule 1, for the insane: nature and duration of illness, history of institutionalization, whether restrained, whether epileptic or a danger to themselves or others.
- Schedule 2, for those with severe mental deficiency since childhood: data similar to Schedule 1, plus cause of condition, if known.
- Schedule 3, for deaf-mutes: data similar to Schedule 2.
- Schedule 4, for the blind: data similar to Schedule 3.
- Schedule 5, for homeless children in institutions: whether parents living, guardianship status, "respectability" of parents (including whether married), child's criminal history and whether blind, deaf-mute or idiot.
- Schedule 6, for the incarcerated: reason and expected length of incarceration, whether awaiting trial or serving out a fine, nature of any hard labor sentence.
- Schedule 7, for those living in poorhouses/county homes: who was paying for care; other family members living with them; details about health, sobriety and criminal history.

Where to find online: 21 states are represented in the Ancestry.com database, "U.S. Federal Census – 1880 Schedules of Defective, Dependent and Delinquent Classes."

Where to look for offline records: Find a table showing location of original records, by state, at www.familytreemagazine.com/upload/images/PDF/DDDschedules.pdf.

Tip: Data for these schedules was not always provided by the persons named or even their relatives. Community members, overseers of the poor and wardens also provided information.

Indian Censuses (1880-1910)

What was included and where to find: Varies by year.

- 1880: Indians living on reservations, in unsettled areas of CA, and in Washington and Dakota Territories. Listings for every household member include Indian and English names, age, gender, marital status, family relationships, tribe and tribal status, reservation, language(s) spoken and details about work, health, literacy and property. Search on Ancestry.com in "U.S., Schedules of Special Census of Indians, 1880."
- 1890: Indians are on regular population schedules, most of which are lost. The Indian Territory/Cherokee Nation population schedule is searchable on Ancestry.com in "Oklahoma

and Indian Territory, Indian Censuses and Rolls, 1851-1959.” (Browse just the 1890 Cherokee Census by choosing it from the drop-down menu under Browse this collection.) It is also published in *The 1890 Cherokee Nation Census, Indian Territory (Oklahoma)* by Barbara L. Benge (see Resources).

- 1900: Indian schedule combines population schedule and extra questions. Requests tribal affiliation, parents’ tribal affiliation, degree of “white blood,” whether polygamous, whether receiving government rations, whether taxed, U.S. citizenship details; and whether living in a fixed or movable dwelling. In 1900 census databases online, browse at the end of each county or enumeration district. Look for others on the 1900 census National Archives microfilm.
- 1910: The same general content, arrangement and “where to find” as 1900. More detail on ethnicity, marriages, education, and any land allotment.

Tip: Many additional Indian censuses were taken by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and many are searchable online. The above only covers those taken as part of the U.S. census.

Industry and Manufacturing (1810, 1820, 1850-1885)

Who was included: All manufacturers were included in 1810-1820. In 1850-1885, businesses with greater than \$500 in industrial production were enumerated.

What was included: Names of business and owner; amount, kind and value of products; capital invested; nature of raw materials, facilities and machinery; average numbers of employees (male and female) and wages. The 1880 schedule expanded the list of industries included.

Where to find online: Fragments of 1810 survive and are with 1810 population schedules. Search 1850-1880 at Ancestry.com in “Selected U.S. Federal Census Non-Population Schedules, 1850-1880” or at HeritageQuest Online. See above for search tips for 1885 territorial censuses.

Where to look for offline records: Surviving 1810 schedules are listed in an appendix to *Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Bureau of the Census* (see Resources). For 1820, consult *Indexes to Manufacturers Census of 1820* (see Resources) and National Archives microfilm series M279.

Mortality Schedules (1850-1880)

Who was included: Those who died between June 1 – May 31 of the year preceding the census.

What was included: The deceased’s name, gender, age, race, widow(er) status, birthplace, death month, occupation, cause of death, length of illness before death.

Where to find online: HeritageQuest Online and the Ancestry.com database, “U.S. Federal Census Mortality Schedules, 1850-1885.” Indexes to 1850 are at FamilySearch.org and Findmypast.com. Look for county-level indexes at MortalitySchedules.com <www.mortalityschedules.com>.

Where to look for offline records: Look for originals in state repositories and at the DAR Library. Search the Family History Library catalog at FamilySearch.org by place (under Census or Vital Records categories) for microfilmed schedules and indexes.

Tip: Both freed and enslaved African-Americans may appear in the Mortality Schedules.

Slave Schedules (1850-1860)

Who was included: For Southern states, Washington DC and (in 1850) New Jersey, slaveholders and the enslaved (the latter were not mentioned by name).

What was included: For slaveholders: number and description of slaves and a tally of slaves manumitted or escaped (and not recaptured) the previous year. For the enslaved, who were not named: age, gender, color, and slaveholder name. Occasionally additional details appear.

Where to find online: HeritageQuest Online, Ancestry.com, “1850 [or 1860] U.S. Federal Census – Slave Schedules.” FamilySearch.org has the 1850 schedule.

Where to look for offline records: The National Archives.

Tip: In the population census, if an ancestor’s personal property amount is high, check Slave Schedules. African-American ancestors who doesn’t appear in the 1860 or 1850 censuses were likely enslaved.

Social Statistics (1850-1870, 1885)

Who was included: Community-level (not individual) data. Churches, cemeteries, lodges, clubs, newspapers, schools, libraries, fraternal organizations, libraries, etc.

What was included: Schools’ enrollment figures and financials; libraries and how many volumes each had; titles, circulation, publication frequency and nature of newspapers; names, numbers accommodated and property values of churches; and various characteristics of crops raised, poverty (pauperism), crime and wages. A revised form for 1870 collected slightly more information on the same topics.

Where to find online: Many are browsable in Ancestry.com’s database, “Selected U.S. Federal Census Non-Population Schedules, 1850-1880.” Under Browse this Collection, choose the state and see whether schedule type “Social Statistics” is an option.

Where to look for offline records: National Archives, state and regional archives.

Tip: Use the list for your ancestor’s town to direct your search for additional records created by those organizations or resources. Examples include names of newspapers, churches, and cemeteries.

Veterans Schedule (1890)

Who was included: Surviving Civil War soldiers, sailors, marines, widows. Only Union soldiers were meant to be included but some Confederate soldiers made the list. Lists survive for states alphabetically from Louisiana to Wyoming; Oklahoma and Indian Territories; Washington DC and half of Kentucky.

What was included: Name, rank, company, regiment/vessel, enlistment and discharge dates, length of service, post office address, disability incurred in service.

Where to find online: HeritageQuest Online, FamilySearch.org and on Ancestry in the “1890 Veterans Schedule” database.

Where to look for offline records: Microfilmed versions may also be available at libraries.

Tip: The list was compiled from the 1890 population census form (which was largely lost) AND from other military records and public outreach efforts to identify veterans and their families.

Resources

- Bengé, Barbara L. *The 1890 Cherokee Nation Census, Indian Territory (Oklahoma)*. Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 2002.
- Davidson, Katherine H and Charlotte M Ashby, comp. *Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Bureau of the Census (#161)*, 1964. National Archives publication; order at <http://www.archives.gov/publications/lists.html>.
- *Indexes to Manufacturers Census of 1820: An Edited Printing of the Original Indexes and Information Compiled by the National Archives from Microcopy 279 [RG 59]*. Knightstown, IN: Bookmark, 1977.
- Lainhart, Ann S. *State Census Records*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2004.
- Morton, Sunny. “Workbook: Special Censuses,” *Family Tree Magazine*, December 2015.
- Szucs, Loretto Dennis and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking, eds. *The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy*. 3rd edition. Provo, UT: Ancestry Publishing, 2006.