

## **American Indian Genealogy Research Using FamilySearch**

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The vast resources of FamilySearch have expanded recently to include digital images of original records that are available for viewing at [familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org). But for decades the Family History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City has increased its holdings to over 2.5 million rolls of microfilm of original records and compiled records for viewing on site or through loan at any of the 4,500 FamilySearch Centers throughout the world.

The holdings of the Family History Library and the new online images at FamilySearch encompass a large collection of American Indian records, acquired from several different sources.

### **About FamilySearch, the website**

FamilySearch ([www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) )

#### Search

- Records - Online digital collections – some searchable, some browsable
- Trees – lineage linked genealogies from patron submissions
- Catalog - describing print and microfilm collections
- Books – digitized books from family history libraries

Learn – Research Wiki

FamilySearch Centers

Indexing

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[Click to start a new search.](#)

### **For American Indian Genealogy Research**

Family traditions, passed down faithfully through generations or mentioned in passing, can direct our research to a particular tribe or a particular ancestor as the source of our Indian ancestry. Whether specific details are known or the connection is vague, we may find help in records made available through FamilySearch.

We have many different sources for some of the most helpful and popular record groups for tracing American Indian genealogy, but trying to understand the terminology can be problematic. Because titles and authors are difficult to distinguish when identifiers for different records are so similar, simply identifying the records that we want to use can be a challenge.

### **Censuses**

Knowing when and where your Indian ancestors lived is critical when trying to identify whether they could have been affiliated with an Indian tribe. We could use federal censuses, Indian censuses, territorial censuses, or tribal censuses.

The U.S. Federal Census can help to put our ancestors in their time and place. Indexes to the nationwide census schedules are available on FamilySearch. Locate your ancestor in every available census that was taken during his or her lifetime (as late as 1940). See American Indians in the Federal Decennial Census, 1790-1930, available online:

<http://www.archives.gov/research/census/native-americans/1790-1930.html>

Path to digital images: Records / United States / Census & Lists / United States – United States

1930 Population Schedule

1900 & 1910 Special Indian Population Schedules

1860 Lands West of Arkansas – Slave Schedules

#### Indian Census Rolls

M595 Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940. 692 rolls. [Descriptive Pamphlet](#).

See FamilySearch Research Wiki entry: [https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/](https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/American_Indian_Census_Rolls)

[American Indian Census Rolls](#)

#### **Enrollment. Agency, Annuity Payrolls, Claims, Vital, School, and Other Records**

*Guide to Federal Records in the National Archives of the United States* (Record Group 75 – Bureau of Indian Affairs for most records of American Indians) <http://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/075.html>

To pursue a microfilm record number found in this description of Record Group 75, search the Research Wiki.

#### FamilySearch Catalog

Subject:

United States – Native Races

United States – Indians

North America – Native Races

North America – Indians

[name of tribe] Indians

Author:

United States. Bureau of Indian Affairs

Oklahoma Historical Society. Indian Archives

Results from a search of the Catalog for “Caddo Indians” at FamilySearch.org.

#### Final Rolls of the Citizens and Freedmen of the Five Civilized

Tribes in Indian Territory, or “Dawes Rolls” – Cherokee, Muscogee (Creek), Choctaw, Chickasaw, Seminole

This series of records was created in conjunction with the enrollment conducted by the Dawes Commission (the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes) in the late 1890’s until 1914, with most enrollments completed by 1906. The process resulted in several genealogically valuable records created for both those who were approved and those who were rejected. Some of these records have been microfilmed, some have been digitized, and some have been published as originals or secondary sources.

Your first goal in using these records will be to find the same person you know to be your ancestor. You will find name, age, gender, and probably relationships with other family members. Make a note of the category (such as “Creek by Blood”), the enrollment number and the census card number. Study the census card, enrollment application, and allotment application, following all clues they provide.

- [Index to the Final Rolls](#) by name; provides roll number
- [The Final Rolls](#) by roll number; provides card number
- [Census or Enrollment Cards](#) by card number; parentage and family details
- [Applications for Enrollment](#) by card number; enrollment details
- [Applications for Allotment](#) by roll number; land allotment details

#### Index to the Final Rolls and Final Rolls –

Path for searching an index to the Dawes Roll applicants\* (from Fold3.com), locate the database by following this path: Records / United States / Oklahoma / “Oklahoma, Applications for Allotment, Five Civilized Tribes, 1899-1907,” or use this [shortcut](#).

Path to records created in connection with the Dawes Rolls: Catalog; search for the Title, “Final Rolls,” or the Author, “Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes.”

\*Note that this index appears to include only the applicant, and not the other family members.

#### Census or Enrollment Cards –

M1186, [Enrollment Cards for the Five Civilized Tribes, 1898-1914](#). 93 rolls. DP

Note that “case number” is the census card number.

#### Applications for Enrollment –

M1301 [Applications for Enrollment of the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes, 1898-1914](#), is a group of 882,272 records searchable at FamilySearch, but actually displayed through links to Fold3. This index appears to include only one applicant per enrollment card, excluding, for example the related wife and children. The microfilm series includes 468 rolls. Search the [index](#) to digital images at Fold3.

Links to the index at accessgenealogy.com appear in several related catalog records: <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/finalindex.php>

#### Applications for Allotment –

[Oklahoma, Applications for Allotment, Five Civilized Tribes, 1899-1907](#)

This record set was digitized directly from the originals, so it is not available on microfilm and has no microfilm series number. These digital images of the land allotment files in Ft. Worth are currently available on FamilySearch for browsing until they have been indexed. You would use the category (such as “Creek New Born”) and then the enrollment, or roll, number to locate the file.

Browse by categories Applications for Allotment of the Five Civilized Tribes, 1899-1907 at FamilySearch.org.

Additional searchable indexes of the Dawes Rolls (Index to the Final Rolls, with results displayed as an extract of the census card) are available, but the original should be consulted in case of problems that are inherent in derivative sources.

OHS (Oklahoma Historical Society) website <http://www.okhistory.org/research/dawes>  
Rootsweb <http://userdb.rootsweb.com/nativeamerican/>  
accessgenealogy.com <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/finalindex.php>  
Note that the “census card” on this website includes names of parents of the applicants, and that this index is linked to the digital images of the census cards at Fold3.com.

### **Resources:**

Kent Carter. *Wantables and Outalucks: Searching for Indian Ancestors in Federal Records* <http://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/ancestor-search.html>. Accessed 20 Mar 2012.

Hill, E. E. *Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs*. No. 163. 2 vol. Washington, 1965. To access digital copies, search the Catalog by Title, or use this [shortcut](#).

Lennon, Rachal Mills. *Tracing Ancestors Among the Five Civilized Tribes. Southeastern Indians Prior to Removal*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2002.

National Archives Trust Fund Board. *American Indians: A Select Catalog of National Archives Microfilm Publications*. Washington, D.C., 1998. (Available at the [National Archives' web site](#).)

Oklahoma Historical Society. *Catalog of American Indian Microfilm Records*, <http://okhistory.org/research/forms/microfilmarchives.pdf> Accessed 21 Mar 2012.

Oklahoma Historical Society. *Finding Your American Indian Ancestors Research Guide* (aiancestor.pdf) available online at [www.okhistory.org/research/genealogy?full](http://www.okhistory.org/research/genealogy?full).

Witcher, Curt and George J. Nixon, “Native American Research,” Sandra Luebking and Loretto Szucs, eds. In *The Source. A Guidebook to American Genealogy*. Provo, Utah: Ancestry, 2006.

### **Selected Research Wiki Articles:**

[American Indian Genealogy](#)

[Area Offices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs](#)

[Dawes Commission Enrollment Records for Five U.S. Indian Tribes](#)

[Indians of the United States and Their Records](#)

[Superintendencies of Indian Affairs](#)