

# Nebraska

## Research Outline

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

### RECORDS OF THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

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The Family History Library has few of the records listed in this outline. The major holdings include published local histories, church and cemetery transcripts, census records, and agency records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The library has purchased some records on microfilm from the National Archives and the Nebraska State Historical Society.

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

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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 RECORDS  
**NEBRASKA** - BIOGRAPHY  
**NEBRASKA, DOUGLAS** - CEMETERIES  
**NEBRASKA, DOUGLAS, OMAHA** - DIRECTORIES

- The *record type* you want to search, such as:

UNITED STATES - **CENSUS RECORDS**  
NEBRASKA - **BIOGRAPHY**  
NEBRASKA, DOUGLAS - **CEMETERIES**  
NEBRASKA, DOUGLAS, OMAHA - **DIRECTORIES**

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

## **ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES**

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

- Nebraska State Historical Society

Department of Reference Services  
1500 “R” Street  
Lincoln, NE 68501  
Telephone: 402-471-4751  
Fax: 402-471-3100  
*Mailing Address*  
P.O. Box 82554  
Lincoln, NE 68501  
Internet address: [www.nebraskahistory.org](http://www.nebraskahistory.org)

The Department of Reference Services includes two divisions of particular interest to genealogists—the Library Division and the State Archives. The Library Division houses printed materials, whereas the State Archives maintains Nebraska government records, newspapers, and other historical documents.

The state of Nebraska is actively microfilming records. Most of the state and many of the county records described in this outline are available on microfilm at the Nebraska State Historical Society. They cannot be borrowed by interlibrary loan, but most are available for purchase.

A useful guide to records at the State Archives is *A Guide to the Manuscript Division of the State Archives, Nebraska State Historical Society* (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1974; FHL book 978.2 A3n No. 5; includes a 1983 supplement).

The Nebraska State Historical Society has also published a series of helpful leaflets describing genealogical sources in Nebraska. You can write to the society for copies.

- National Archives—Central Plains Region

(Kansas City)

2312 East Bannister Road

Kansas City, MO 64131

Telephone: 816-926-6934

Fax: 816-926-6982

Internet address: <http://www.archives.gov/central-plains/kansas-city/index.html>

- Nebraska State Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 5608

Lincoln, NE 68505

Telephone: 402-266-8881

Internet address: [www.nesgs.org](http://www.nesgs.org)

- American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

631 “D” Street

Lincoln, NE 68502-1199

Telephone: 402-474-3363

Fax: 402-474-7229

Internet address: [www.ahsgr.org](http://www.ahsgr.org)

To learn more about the history and record-keeping systems of Nebraska counties, use the seven inventories of county archives published by the Historical Records Survey around 1940. The Family History Library has copies of these.

## **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 Nebraska 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://www.usgenweb.com/>

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.com/roots-l/usa/>

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 FamilySearch™. 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**

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The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) collection contains some Bible records (see the "Genealogy" section of this outline). This collection is partially indexed by E. Kay Kirkham, *An Index to Some of the Bibles and Family Records of the United States*, vol. II (Logan, Utah: Everton Publishers, 1984; FHL book 973 D22kk v.2; fiche 6089184).

## **BIOGRAPHY**

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The Nebraska State Historical Society has the best collection of published biographies. There is no statewide biographical index or major manuscript collection. State, regional, and county histories often have biographical sections. Some representative biographical encyclopedias are:

*Compendium of History, Reminiscence and Biography of Nebraska*. Chicago: Alden Publishing Co., 1912. (FHL film 1000179; similar volumes are on FHL film 1000180.)  
Baldwin, Sara Mullin and Robert Morton Mullin. *Nebraskana: Biographical Sketches of Nebraska Men and Women of Achievement*. Hebron, Neb.: Baldwin Co., 1932. (FHL book 978.2 D3ba; film 1036245 item 4.)

Sheldon, Addison Erwin. *Nebraska: The Land and the People*. 3 vols. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1931. (FHL book 978.2 H2s; film 1000180.) Volumes 2 and 3 are biographical.

Morton, Julius Sterling et al. *Illustrated History of Nebraska*. 3 vols. Lincoln: Jacob North and Co., 1905-13. (FHL book 978.2 H2m; film 1036256.) The Nebraska Historical Society has an every-name card index to these volumes on microfilm.

## CEMETERIES

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The Nebraska State Historical Society and the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Library in Washington, D.C. have 19 volumes of cemetery transcripts. These list over 110,000 names from 150 cemeteries collected from 1975 to 1979 by Clarabelle Mares and Kathrine Petersen. Additional cemetery records are found in the DAR collection described in the “Genealogy” section of this outline.

## CENSUS

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### Federal

Many 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 these records.

The Family History Library has the U.S. federal censuses of Nebraska from 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, and 1920. The 1890 census was destroyed, but the schedule of Union veterans is on microfilm at the Family History Library. The library also has a published index.

The federal government took a special census of Nebraska in 1885, which is on 56 microfilms at the Family History Library and at the Nebraska State Historical Society. The society also has the *State Gazetteer and Business Directory* for 1886 and a card index made from the directory that provides a partial index to the census. The Family History Library does not have the directory or the card index.

Published transcripts of the 1860 census and for 35 of the 48 counties in the 1870 census are available. Published indexes are available for the 1860 and 1870 censuses. Soundex (phonetic) indexes are on microfilm for part of the 1880 and all of the 1900 and 1920 censuses. The Nebraska State Historical Society also has a complete head-of-household index for the 1880 census. A street index for Omaha that can help you use the 1910 census is on FHL fiche 6331481.

**Mortality schedules for 1860, 1870, 1880**, and 1885 are at the Nebraska State Historical Society. The National Archives and the Family History Library have copies on microfilm. The library also has copies of published indexes for the 1860, 1870, 1880, and 1885 schedules.

## Territorial and State

Territorial and state censuses exist for parts of Nebraska for 1854, 1855, 1856, 1860, 1865, and 1869.

The county enumerations of several eastern Nebraska counties, taken during 1854, 1855, 1856, 1865, and 1869, were published in the *Nebraska and Midwest Genealogical Record*, vols. 13-22, 1932-44 (FHL film 162018). (See the “Periodicals” section of this outline.) The existing records are at the Nebraska State Historical Society.

The Nebraska territorial censuses of 1854 to 1856 have been transcribed, indexed, and published in Eunice Evelyn Cox, *1854, 1855, 1856 Nebraska Territory Censuses* (Ellensburg, Wash.: Cox, 1977; FHL book 978.2 X2p 1854-1856; film 1036024 item 2; fiche 6051283). The State Archives at the Nebraska State Historical Society has a card index for the 1865 and 1869 censuses.

A detailed census of German immigrants from Russia living in Lincoln was taken from 1913 through 1914. The information is similar to that found in the 1900 census, but the town or colony of birth is also given. It is arranged by street and is listed in the Family History Library Catalog under NEBRASKA, LANCASTER, LINCOLN—CENSUS (FHL film 833157).

## CHURCH RECORDS

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

The Nebraska State Historical Library has an extensive collection of Protestant church records. These are listed in the *Guide to the Manuscript Division of the State Archives* (see the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline). For a fee, the staff will check the records if you provide the exact name and location of the church and the date and nature of the information desired.

The Family History Library has very few church records from Nebraska. The library has microfilms of some Presbyterian records, such as session minutes, baptisms, and membership rolls. The library also has DAR transcripts of some other denominations' records.

You can also write to the following addresses to learn where their records are located:

### Lutheran

Archives of the Nebraska Synod  
4980 South 118 Street, Suite D  
Omaha, NE 68137  
Telephone: 402-896-5311  
Fax: 402-896-5354

Internet address: [www.nebraskasynod.org](http://www.nebraskasynod.org)

Early congregations and pioneers are described in Charles F. Sandahl, *The Nebraska Conference of the Augustana Synod*. (n.p.: Nebraska Conference, 1931; FHL film 1036240 item 3).

### **Methodist**

Nebraska Wesleyan University  
Historical Archives United Methodist Church  
5000 St. Paul Avenue  
Lincoln, NE 68504  
Telephone: 402-465-2400  
Fax: 402-465-2189

United Methodist Historical Center  
Nebraska Conference  
P.O. Box 4553  
Lincoln, NE 68504-0553  
Telephone: 402-465-2175  
Internet address: [www.umcneb.org/history](http://www.umcneb.org/history)

### **Presbyterian**

Presbyterian Historical Society  
United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.  
425 Lombard Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19147  
Telephone: 215-627-1852  
Fax: 215-627-0509  
Internet address: [www.history.pcusa.org](http://www.history.pcusa.org)

### **Roman Catholic**

Chancery Office  
Archdiocese of Omaha  
100 North 62 Street  
Omaha, NE 68132-2795  
Telephone: 402-558-3100  
Fax: 402-558-3026  
Internet address: [www.archomaha.com](http://www.archomaha.com)  
For a helpful history see Henry Weber Casper, *History of the Catholic Church in Nebraska*, 3 vols. (Milwaukee: Catholic Life Pub., 1960-66; FHL book 978.2 K2c).

## **COURT RECORDS**

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

**County courts** are countywide courts with jurisdiction over minor civil and criminal actions, including probate and juvenile actions.

**District courts** have concurrent jurisdiction with county courts over civil and criminal matters, including juvenile matters.

**Supreme Court** serves as a statewide appellate court.

The Family History Library does not have copies of state and county court records. They are available at the clerk's office in the various county courthouses.

Records of U.S. circuit and district courts from 1855 to 1961 are at the National Archives—Central Plains Region (Kansas City, Missouri). For more information about these records, see Fred W. Hons and Delbert A. Bishop, *Preliminary Inventory Records of the United States District Court for the District of Nebraska* (Kansas City: Federal Records Center, 1967; FHL book 978.2 A1 no. 18; film 982229 item 5).

## DIRECTORIES

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Statewide directories were published periodically from 1882 to 1917. The 1886 directory was the first to list farmers in addition to businesses. It was compiled from the agricultural schedule of the 1885 census, and thus it is a partial index to that census (see the “Census” section of this outline). The directories have been microfilmed and are available for purchase from the Nebraska State Historical Society.

The Family History Library has a copy of the 1878 business directory of cities, towns, and forts along the railroads of Nebraska, Colorado, and Utah (FHL film 1004514 item 3).

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

- Omaha

1866-1935            FHL film 1377220—  
1941, 1959, etc    FHL book 978.225/o1 E4p

- Lincoln

1923                FHL film 1035751 item 10  
1940, 1960, etc.   FHL book 978.2293/L1 E4p;  
                          film 1320578 item 2 (1940)

## EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

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### People

Permanent white settlement began at Bellevue in the region south of present-day Omaha. The Indian Intercourse Act of 1834 reserved the rest of Nebraska as part of Indian Territory. Mormon pioneers were permitted temporary settlement at Winter Quarters from 1846 to 1847, but Nebraska was not officially opened for white settlement until passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill in 1854.



Between 1834 and 1854, an estimated 350,000 pioneers passed through the Platte Valley along the Oregon, California, and Mormon trails. Most continued westward rather than settling in Nebraska.

After the Civil War, many Union veterans and other settlers arrived from the eastern United States to claim lands available under the Homestead Act of 1862. These settlers generally were from Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, and Missouri.

Immigrants from Europe also arrived in search of land. The largest overseas groups came from Germany, Sweden, the British Isles, Bohemia, Canada, and Denmark. In addition, many Germans immigrated from Russia. Small groups of Polish and Italian settlers settled in Omaha in 1885.

Blacks were in Nebraska before the Civil War, but many more arrived in the late nineteenth century, especially in the Omaha area. American Indians had largely been dispossessed of their Nebraska lands and removed to present-day Oklahoma by 1880, but Santee Sioux, Omaha, and Winnebago Indians still live on two small reservations in the state.

New settlement virtually ceased in the 1890s, although a large section of northwest Nebraska was not completely homesteaded until after World War I.

From the 1860s through the early 1900s, many New York City orphans came by train and were adopted by Nebraska families. Information on the orphans' trains is being collected for the Nebraska State Historical Society by Eloise Thomsen, 5843 Grant Street, Omaha, NE 68104.

## **Records**

In the 1850s a major port of entry to Nebraska was New Orleans. Steamboats transported settlers and goods up the Mississippi-Missouri river system to Council Bluffs and Winter Quarters (Florence).

The Civil War and the coming of the railroad in the 1860s put an end to the steamboat business. After that time, overseas immigrants landed at the port of New York and other east coast ports, and then traveled overland to Nebraska.

The Family History Library and the National Archives have passenger lists or indexes for American ports for 1820-1943. More detailed information on these sources is in the *United States Research Outline*.

Records of major ethnic groups, including Blacks, Czechs, Germans, and Germans from Russia, are listed in the Family History Library Catalog under NEBRASKA -

MINORITIES. Records of American Indians are listed in the Family History Library Catalog under NEBRASKA - NATIVE RACES.

Examples of published sources for ethnic groups are:

Rife, Janet Warkentin. *Germans and German-Russians in Nebraska: A Research Guide to Nebraska Ethnic Studies*. Lincoln: Center for Great Plains Studies, 1980. (FHL book 978.2 F23r.)

Rosicky, Rose. *A History of Czechs (Bohemians) in Nebraska*. 1929. Reprint. Evansville, Ind.: Unigraphic, 1977. (FHL book 978.2 F2r 1977; film 1036170.)

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## GAZETTEERS

Two of the most helpful guides to places in Nebraska are:

Fitzpatrick, Lillian Linder. *Nebraska Place Names*. . . . New ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1960. (FHL book 978.2 E5f.)

Perkey, Elton A. *Perkey's Nebraska Place Names*. Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1982. (FHL book 978.2 E2p; film 1035665; fiche 6051307.)

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## GENEALOGY

Most archives, historical societies, and genealogical societies have special collections and indexes of genealogical value. These must usually be searched in person.

A major collection available at the Family History Library is the *Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)* Genealogical Collection (FHL films 870048; 913003 and others). This collection contains church records, cemetery tombstone transcriptions, county marriage abstracts, newspaper obituaries, and family Bible records. The main collection consists of 16 films. Six films are listed in the Family History Library Catalog under NEBRASKA, LANCASTER—VITAL RECORDS.

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## HISTORY

The following important events in the history of Nebraska affected political boundaries, record keeping, and family movements.

1803	Nebraska was part of the Louisiana Territory when it was purchased by the United States from France.
1804-1824	United States government explorers visited the region and described it as a vast wasteland. The resulting myth of the Great American Desert delayed significant white settlement in Nebraska.
1813-1827	Trading posts and forts were established near present-day Omaha.
1830-1854	Nebraska was part of an area designated as Indian Territory.

	Between 1833 and 1876, Indian tribes ceded all Nebraska claims to the United States government.
1840s-1860s	Pioneer wagons heading west passed through the Platte Valley over the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails.
1854	The Kansas-Nebraska Act established the Nebraska Territory. The creation of the Colorado and Dakota territories in 1861 and the Idaho Territory in 1863 reduced Nebraska to nearly its present size. Lands in Boyd and Thurston counties were received from South Dakota in 1890.
1863	The first claim under the Homestead Act was staked near Beatrice.
1865	The first railroad to the Pacific Coast was begun at Omaha. It was completed in 1869.
1867	Nebraska became a state.
1870-1890	Nebraska's greatest population growth occurred in the post-Civil War boom as settlers arrived from the eastern United States and northern Europe.
1904	The Kinkaid Homestead Act opened the last rangeland in northwestern Nebraska to settlement.

The Nebraska State Historical Society has a major collection of state and local histories. The Family History Library also collects histories. An especially helpful source is James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska*, 2d ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966; FHL book 978.2 H2o).

## LAND AND PROPERTY

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Nebraska is a public domain state, in which land is surveyed and transferred to private ownership through federal land offices. (See the *United States Research Outline* for more information.) Settlers could either purchase the land or, after the passage of the National Homestead Act in 1862, receive homesteads.

The first land office in Nebraska was established at Omaha in 1855. The Family History Library has research handbooks for many counties describing the evolution of the land office districts.

Each local land office kept tract books and township plats. Records of the land offices and microfilm copies of all tracts are at the Nebraska State Historical Society. The society has a card index to the tract books of about ten counties. You can write to the society for a reference leaflet on Nebraska land laws and records.

Homestead applications and other land office records are available from:

Textual Reference Branch  
National Archives and Records Administration  
7th and Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20408  
Telephone: 202-501-5395  
Fax: 202-219-6273

The *United States Research Outline* (30972) has instructions for ordering copies. Patents and copies of tract books and township plats are at the:

Bureau of Land Management  
2515 Warren Avenue  
Cheyenne, WY 82003  
Telephone: 307-775-6256  
Fax: 307-775-6129

*Mailing Address*

PO Box 1828  
Cheyenne, WY 82003  
Internet address: [www.blm.gov/wy/st/en.html](http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en.html)

You will need a legal description of the land to search these files effectively.

A large section of land was granted to the Union Pacific Railroad, which then sold it to settlers through its own land offices. Many of the records of these transactions were destroyed in a fire. The Burlington Railroad also sold land. Microfilm copies of these records are at the Nebraska State Historical Society.

After land has been transferred to private ownership, subsequent transactions are recorded at county offices. The Family History Library does not have copies of the county land records. You can obtain copies of deeds and mortgages from the recorder in each county.

## MAPS

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The following books include maps and historical information:

*The Official State Atlas of Nebraska*. 1885. Reprint. Evansville, Ind.: Unigraphic, 1976. (FHL book Q 978.2 E3e 1976; film 1036154 item 12.)

Nimmo, Sylvia. *Maps Showing County Boundaries of Nebraska, 1854-1925*. Papillion, Neb.: [S.n.], 1978. (FHL book 978.2 E7m.)

The best collection of maps helpful for genealogical research is at the Nebraska State Historical Society. Map collections are available on interlibrary loan through the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and at Omaha. Kearny State College also has a good map collection.

## MILITARY RECORDS

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

Many military records are found at the Family History Library, the National Archives, and other federal and state archives. The *United States Research Outline* (30972) provides more information about the federal records. For Nebraska the following sources are also very helpful.

### **Civil War (1861 to 1865)**

Indexes to service and pension records for about 3,000 soldiers are at the Family History Library. The service and pension records have not been filmed and are only at the National Archives. Published rosters usually give the soldier's name, rank, regiment, age, and residence. These include:

Dudley, Edgar S. *Roster of Nebraska Volunteers from 1861 to 1869*. Hasting, Neb.: Wigton & Evans, 1888. (FHL film 370881.)

*Roster of Nebraska Soldiers*. Omaha: Klopp, Bartlett & Co., 1888. (FHL film 164034.)

Burial records of Civil War veterans of the Department of Nebraska, Grand Army of the Republic, are also available in alphabetical order (FHL films 833155-156). The records provide the veteran's military unit, date and place of death, cemetery, and sometimes date and place of birth.

### **World War I (1917 to 1918)**

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 Nebraska, see:

United States. Selective Service System. *Nebraska 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 1684016.)

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.)

## Veterans Lists

The Nebraska State Historical Society has microfilmed indexes of Spanish-American War service cards and World War I Selective service cards. Several rosters of veterans living in the state have been published. These usually give the veteran's name, rank, military unit, and address. Examples are:

Nebraska. Secretary of State. *Roster of Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines of the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the War of the Rebellion Residing in Nebraska, June 1st, 1891.*

Lincoln: State Journal Co., 1892. (FHL book 978.2 M2n; film 844966 item 4; fiche 6010064.)

Nebraska. Secretary of State. *Roster of Veterans of the Mexican, Civil, and Spanish-American Wars Residing in Nebraska, 1915.* Lincoln: Secretary of State, [1915]. (Not at Family History Library)

Nebraska. Secretary of State. *Roster of Soldiers-Sailors and Marines Who Served in the War of the Rebellion, Spanish-American War and World War* Omaha: Waters-Barnhart Printing Co., 1925. (FHL fiche 6075974.)

## Additional Military Records

County clerks have records of discharges, militia lists, military censuses, and rosters of ex-servicemen. Militia lists of all males, ages 18 to 45 and subject to military duty, were taken irregularly from 1903 to 1928.

## NATURALIZATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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You can obtain Nebraska naturalization papers by writing to the clerk of the district court for the county in which your ancestor was naturalized. In some cases, the county has retained microfilm copies and sent the originals to the Nebraska State Historical Society.

The Omaha office of the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service has a Works Projects Administration (WPA) index to pre-1906 naturalizations for all Nebraska counties and 63 Iowa counties. This index is on microfilm at the Nebraska State Historical Society. They also have a WPA index to district court naturalizations of Lincoln, Otoe, York, and Platte counties from the time of county formation to about 1940. The Family History Library does not have copies of these indexes. The Family History Library has some naturalization records from counties and from United States District Courts.

Naturalization information can also be found in the land entry file of an immigrant who purchased or homesteaded land. These records give the name of the immigrant, the court, the date of naturalization or declaration of intention, and the country of previous allegiance.

If you need naturalization records after September 1906, contact the National Archives—Central Plains Region (Kansas City) or the local office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

## NEWSPAPERS

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The Nebraska State Historical Society has over 20,000 microfilms of Nebraska newspapers. You can purchase copies of most of these microfilms from the society. Many of the newspapers have been indexed in the *Newspaper and Information Index* available at the society. You can get a list of the indexed newspapers by writing to the society and asking for Reference Leaflet No. 4, *Newspaper Indexes*. Other helpful statewide indexes to birth, marriage, and death notices are:

*Nebraska Newspaper Abstracts: A Computer Index to Names and Events Abstracted from Selected Nebraska Newspapers*. Alliance, Neb.: Nebraska State Genealogical Society, 1983—. (FHL book 978.2 B32n.) This series now has birth, marriage and other information through 1919.

Sittler, Melvin. *Sittler Index of Surnames for Which Information Has Been Abstracted from the [Lincoln] Nebraska State Journal, May 1873-December 31, 1899*. 5 vols. Lincoln: The Lincoln-Lancaster County Genealogical Society, 1983-84. (FHL book 978.2293 D22si; vols. 1-4 on fiche 6093604-7, vol. 5 on fiche 6117319.) Vol. 5 has abstracts for 1900.

A guide to help you locate Nebraska newspapers is Anne P. Diffendal, *A Guide to the Newspaper Collection of the State Archives, Nebraska State Historical Society* (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1977; FHL book 978.2 B33n no. 4, 1977; film 1036134 item 7).

The Family History Library collects indexes and transcripts of newspaper records and obituaries but does not have copies of Nebraska newspapers.

## PERIODICALS

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The major genealogical periodicals and magazines helpful for Nebraska research are:

*Nebraska Ancestry*. 1978—. Published by the: Nebraska State Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 5608, Lincoln, Nebraska 68505, Telephone: 402-266-8881 (FHL book 978.2 D25n.)

*The Nebraska and Midwest Genealogical Record*. 1923-44. Published by the Nebraska Genealogical Society, Lincoln, NE. (FHL book 978.2 D25nm; vols. 1-6 on film 014887; vols. 7-10 on film 162017; vols. 11-22 on film 162018.)

*Roots and Leaves*. 1978—. Published by the Eastern Nebraska Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 541, Fremont, NE 68026-0541. (FHL book 978.2 D25r; vols. 1-10 on fiche 6048616-25.)

*The Wagoner*. 1978—. Published by the Northwest Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 6, Alliance, NE 69301. (FHL book 978.29 D25n.)

## PROBATE RECORDS

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In most counties in Nebraska, probate records have been kept by the county judge. They

include wills, fee books, claim registers, legacy records, inheritance records, probate ticklers, and dockets. They are available at the county courthouses. The Family History Library has microfilms of many county probate records.

## **VITAL RECORDS**

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### **Local Records of Births and Deaths**

The earliest civil vital records were kept by a few city health departments. Omaha has death records dating from 1870 and birth records from 1873. Lincoln has birth and death files from 1889.

A few Nebraska counties also began recording births and deaths before statewide registration. Contact the county clerk to obtain copies of the records. Copies of the incomplete county records before 1905 (except Douglas County) are also available at the Bureau of Vital Statistics (see below). For Douglas County records write to:

Douglas County Health Department  
1819 Farnam Street Room 402  
Omaha, NE 68183-0401  
Telephone: 402-444-7205  
Fax: 402-444-6267  
Internet address: [www.douglascountyhealth.com/living/birth\\_death.php](http://www.douglascountyhealth.com/living/birth_death.php)

### **State Records of Births and Deaths**

Statewide registration of births and deaths began in 1905 and was generally completed by 1920. Delayed registrations are also available from 1917 for births that occurred before that time. To obtain copies of the records, write to:

Nebraska Health and Human Services System  
Bureau of Vital Statistics  
1033 "O" Street, Suite 130  
Gold's Galleria, 1st floor (11th & N Streets)  
Lincoln, NE 68509-5065  
Telephone: 402-471-2871  
*Mailing Address:*  
P.O. Box 95065  
Lincoln, NE 68509-5065  
Internet address: [www.hhs.state.ne.us/vitalrecords](http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/vitalrecords)

State your relationship to the individual and the reason you want the information. Requests for records of persons born or married within the last 50 years are only available to a member of the immediate family.

The current fees for this service 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 contact the Bureau of Vital Statistics for current information.



The Family History Library has not acquired copies of Nebraska birth or death records from state, county, or city offices. Some vital records have been transcribed and published in genealogical periodicals.

## **Marriage Records**

Marriages have been recorded by individual counties since the date each county was organized. Marriage documents since 1867 often list the names of parents of the bride and groom. Copies can be obtained by writing to the office of the probate judge in the county. Some of the earliest marriage records are now in the custody of the Nebraska State Historical Society. The Family History Library has microfilms of marriage records for many counties.

Statewide registration of marriages began in 1909. Since that time, each county clerk has been required to submit a copy of all marriage records to the Bureau of Vital Statistics. You can write to the Bureau (address above) for information. The Bureau of Vital Statistics will release records of marriages within the last 50 years only to a member of the immediate family.

## **Divorce Records**

Divorce proceedings since the 1850s have been kept by the clerk of the district court for each county. Divorce records since 1909 are also at the Bureau of Vital Statistics.

## **Inventory of Vital Records**

A description of the history and availability of existing records is in *The Guide to Public Vital Statistics Records In Nebraska* (Lincoln: Historical Records Survey, 1941; FHL book 978.2 V23h, [film 874077 item 3](#); [fiche 6046710](#)).

## **FOR FURTHER READING**

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The following will give you more information about research and records of Nebraska:

*Nebraska, A Guide to Genealogical Research*. Lincoln: Nebraska State Genealogical Society, 1984. (FHL book 978.2 D27n.)

Nimmo, Sylvia, and Mary Cutler. *Nebraska Local History and Genealogy Reference Guide: A Bibliography of County Research Materials*. Papillion, Neb.: Sylvia Nimmo, 1987. (FHL book 978.2 D23n.)

*A Research Guide to Genealogical Data in Nebraska*. Alliance, Neb.: Nebraska State Genealogical Society, c. 1980–. This is a series of 93 detailed county guides for every county. They are particularly useful for locating church records. The Family History

Library has copies for some counties, for example: FHL 978.2 D27ns (Red Willow, Frontier, Hayes, Hitchcock, Dundy and Chase counties).  
Eichholz, Alice, ed. *Ancestrys' 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**

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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.



# FAMILYSEARCH™

## G U I D E

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## Nebraska Historical Background

### 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 important events in the history of Nebraska affected political boundaries, record keeping, and family movements.

1803	Nebraska was part of the Louisiana Territory when it was purchased by the United States from France.
1804-1824	United States government explorers visited the region and described it as a vast wasteland. The resulting myth of the Great American Desert delayed significant white settlement in Nebraska.
1813-1827	Trading posts and forts were established near present-day Omaha.
1830-1854	Nebraska was part of an area designated as Indian Territory. Between 1833 and 1876, Indian tribes ceded all Nebraska claims to the United States government.
1840s-1860s	Pioneer wagons heading west passed through the Platte Valley over the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails.
1854	The Kansas-Nebraska Act established the Nebraska Territory. The creation of the Colorado and Dakota territories in 1861 and the Idaho Territory in 1863 reduced Nebraska to nearly its present size. Lands in Boyd and Thurston counties were received from South Dakota in 1890.
1863	The first claim under the Homestead Act was staked near Beatrice.
1865	The first railroad to the Pacific Coast was begun at Omaha. It was completed in 1869.
1867	Nebraska became a state.
1870-1890	Nebraska's greatest population growth occurred in the post-Civil War boom as settlers arrived from the eastern United States and northern Europe.
1898	Over 300,000 men were involved in the Spanish-American War, which was fought mainly in Cuba and the Philippines.
1904	The Kinkaid Homestead Act opened the last rangeland in northwestern Nebraska to settlement.
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 war.

1930s	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.

The Nebraska State Historical Society has a major collection of state and local histories. The Family History Library also collects histories.

## Historical Sources

You may find state or local histories in the Family History Library Catalog under Nebraska 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.

For descriptions of bibliographies for Nebraska available through Family History Centers or the Family History Library, click on Family History Library Catalog in the window to the left. Look under BIBLIOGRAPHY or 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

An especially helpful source is James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska*, 2d ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966; FHL book 978.2 H2o).

## 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.

## Nebraska Statewide Indexes and Collections

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### Guide

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#### 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

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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 | <i>Ancestral File</i><br><i>International Genealogical Index</i><br><i>Family History Library Catalog - Surname Search</i><br>To see these files, <a href="#">click here</a> . |
| 1580–1983  | <i>Ancestor Charts (Nebraska State Genealogical Society)</i> . (FHL book 978.2 D2a.) Has charts of members.  |

- 1620–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.)
- 1620–1995 *Nebraska Ancestry*. (FHL book 978.2 D25n.) A periodical. See annual indexes. Continues the periodical listed below.
- 1620–1910 *The Nebraska and Midwest Genealogical Record*. (FHL book 978.2 D25nm; films 14887, 162017, and 162018.) A periodical, 1923–1944; see annual indexes.
- 1620–1995 *Roots and Leaves*. (FHL book 978.2 D25r; fiche 6048616–625.) A periodical; see annual indexes.
- 1620–1995 *The Wagoner*. (FHL book 978.29 D25n.) A periodical; see annual indexes.
- 1620–1905 *Heroes of 1812, Written by the Members of the Nebraska Society War of 1812*. (FHL book 973 D2ho.)
- 1700–1979 White, John Browning. *Index-Guide to the Contents of the Publications 1885–1956 and the Magazine 1918–1958 of the Nebraska State Historical Society*. (FHL book 978.2 H25n index; film 1033935 item 1.)
- 1700–1979 Loudon, Betty L. *Index-Guide, Nebraska History Magazine 1959–1979, (Vols. 40–60)*. (FHL book 978.2 H25n index 1959–1979.)
- 1700–1995 *Publications of the Nebraska State Historical Society*. (FHL book 978.2 H25na; films 1033934 item 10–11, 1033935 item 1.) Began in 1918. See indexes above.
- 1700–1978 Lareau, Paul J. *The French-Canadian Families of the North Central States: a Genealogical Dictionary*. (FHL book 973 D2La, vols. 1–8; fiche 6010503–511.)
- 1700–1970 Kirkham, E. Kay. *An Index to Some of the Bibles and Family Records of the United States: 45,500 References as Taken From the Microfilm at the Genealogical society of Utah*. (FHL book 973 D22kk, vol. 2; fiche 6089184.) Indexes item just below.
- 1700–1970 Daughters of the American Revolution. *Genealogical Collection*. (FHL films beginning with 870048 item 1.) A surname index is contained in Kirkham's source listed above.
- 1740–1930s *Roster of Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines of the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the War of the Rebellion . . . Residing in Nebraska, June 1, 1891*. (FHL book 978.2 M2n; film 844966 item 4; fiche 6010064.)
- 1780–1920 *Census indexes, 1860–1880, 1900, and 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.
- 1780–1860 Jackson, Ronald Vern, et. al. *Nebraska 1860 Mortality Schedule*. (FHL book 978.2 X22j 1860.)
- 1780–1995 Index to cemetery records, being compiled by the Nebraska State Genealogical Society. (Not at FHL.)
- 1790–1916 *Nebraska Territorial Pioneers Association (Lincoln). Reminiscences and Proceedings*. (FHL film 1181578 item 3, vols. 1–2.)

- 1790–1995 Nebraska State Genealogical Society. *Early Pioneers of Nebraska With: Allied Lines as Taken From Family Recognition [sic] Records*. (FHL book 978.2 D2e.)
- 1790–1995 *First Family, Pioneer Family, and Century Family Applications*. (Not at FHL.) At Nebraska State Historical Society. First 500 are indexed by the source above.
- 1790–1860 Jackson, Ronald Vern, et al. *Nebraska 1870*. (FHL book 978.2 X22j 1870.)
- 1800–1860 Jackson, Ronald Vern. *Nebraska 1880 Mortality Schedule*. (FHL book 978.2 X22j 1880.)
- 1800–1885 *1885 Nebraska Mortality Schedule*. (FHL book 978.22 X2n 1885.)
- 1800–1890 Jackson, Ronald Vern. *Nebraska 1890 Special Census of Veterans*. (FHL book 978.2 X2ja.)
- 1800–1904 *A Biographical and Genealogical History of Southeastern Nebraska Embellished With Portraits of Many Well Known People of This Section of the Great West Who Have Been and are Prominent in its History and Development*. (FHL film 1000181 items 1–2.)
- 1800–1972 Daughters of the American Revolution. *Miscellaneous Records: 1856–1972*. (FHL film 913003.)
- 1800–1987 Sones, Georgene Morris. *History of Nebraska Centennial Farms*. (FHL book 978.2 H25s.) Has the history of the families that owned farms established at least 100 years ago.
- 1800–1912 Morton, Julius Sterling. *Illustrated History of Nebraska: A History of Nebraska From the Earliest Explorations of the Trans-Mississippi Region With Steel Engravings, Photogravures, Copper Plates, Maps and Tables*. (FHL book 978.2 H2m; film 1036256 items 1–3.) There is an index at Nebraska Historical Society.
- 1800–1960s Olson, James C. *History of Nebraska*. (FHL book 978.2 H2o.)
- 1800–1960 Andrean, A. T. *History of the State of Nebraska*. (Not at FHL.) At the Nebraska State Historical Society.)
- 1800–1886 *1886 Nebraska State Gazetteer and Business Directory Index*. (Not at FHL.) At the Nebraska State Historical Society. Compiled from data taken with the 1885 census.
- 1800–1890 *Nebraska Gazetteer and Business Directory*. (Not at FHL.) At the Nebraska State Historical Society. 1890 has names of farmers also.
- 1800–1930s Grand Army of the Republic (Nebraska). *Civil War Veterans Buried in Nebraska*. (FHL films 833155–156.)
- 1800–1911 Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Nebraska. *Roster and Indexes of Soldiers, 1911*. (FHL films 1705170–171.) Civil War veterans.
- 1800–1900 *Roster of Veterans of the Mexican, Civil, and Spanish-American Wars Residing in Nebraska*. (Not at FHL.) At Nebraska State Historical Society.)
- 1800–1918 *Roster of Soldiers-Sailors and Marines Who Served . . . War of the Rebellion, Spanish-American War and World War* (Not at FHL.) At Nebraska State Historical Society.
- 1800–1906 *Index to Pre–1906 Naturalization Records*. (Not at FHL.) At the Omaha Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service. This index was prepared by the WPA.



- 1800–1909 *Nebraska Newspaper Abstracts: a Computer Index to Names and Events Abstracted From Selected Nebraska Newspapers.* (FHL book 978.2 B32n, 1870, vols. 1–4.)
- 1800–present *Index to Newspapers, Births, Marriages, Pensions, Deaths, etc.* (Not at FHL.) At the Nebraska State Historical Society.
- 1800–present *Photograph Collection with Index.* (Not at FHL.) At the Nebraska State Historical Society.
- 1800–1899 Sittler, Melvin E. *Sittler Index of Surnames: For Which Information has been Abstracted from the [Lincoln] Nebraska State Journal.* (FHL book 978.2293 D22si, vols. 1–4; fiche 6093604–607.)
- 1800–1865 United States Adjutant General's Office. *Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who served in Organizations from the State of Nebraska.* (FHL films 821905–06.)
- 1800–1934 United States. Veterans Administration. *General Index to Pension Files, 1861–1934.* (On 544 FHL films beginning with 540757.) This is a card index to pension applications of Civil War and Spanish-American War veterans. Copies of the original files may be ordered from the National Archives.
- 1800–1869 Dudley, Edgar S. *Roster of Nebraska Soldiers from 1861 to 1869: Compiled From Books, Records and Documents on File in Office of Adjutant General of State.* (FHL film 164034 item 2.) Civil War soldiers.
- 1800–1856 Cox, Evelyn E. *1854, 1855, 1856 Nebraska Territory Censuses.* (FHL book 978.2 X2p 1854–1856; film 1036024 item 2; fiche 6051283.)
- 1800–1988 Matteson, Jean M. *Blossoms of the Prairie: The History of the Danish Lutheran Churches in Nebraska.* (FHL book 978.2 K2mj.)
- 1800–1970s *A Guide to Manuscript Division of the State Archives, Nebraska State Historical Society.* Lists family manuscripts, diaries etc. (Not at FHL.)
- 1800–1970s Rosicky, Rose. *A History of Czechs (Bohemians) in Nebraska.* (FHL book 978.2 F2r 1977; film 1036170.)
- 1800–1900 Ledoux, Albert H. *The French-Canadian Families of the Plains and Upper Mountain States: Abstracts From The Federal Census of 1900.* (FHL book 973 X28Le.)
- 1800–1867 Lass, William E. *From the Missouri to the Great Salt Lake: an Account of Overland Freighting.* (FHL book 978.2 U3L.) Has biographies of freighters.
- 1820–present *Statewide Index to Deaths, 1904.* (Not at FHL.) Bureau of Vital Statistics.
- 1832–1912 *Compendium of History, Reminiscence and Biography of Nebraska.* (FHL film 1000179.) Published in 1912.
- 1832–1909 *Compendium of History, Reminiscence and Biography of Western Nebraska Containing a History of the State of Nebraska. . . Also a Compendium of Western Nebraska Containing Biographical Sketches of Hundreds of Prominent Old Settlers and Representative Citizens.* (FHL book 978.2 H2c; film 1000181 item 3.) Published in 1909.
- 1840–1970 Cline, Martha Jane Adamson. *Golden Weddings of Nebraskans.* (FHL book 978.2 V2c, 2 vols.; film 1421791 items 6–7.) Has newspaper golden wedding announcements.
- 1840–1914 William, Hattie Plum, et. al. *Census of German-Russian Population of Lincoln, Nebraska, 1913–1914.* (FHL films 833157 or 590437.)

- 1850–1931 Baldwin, Sarah Mullin. *Nebraskana, Biographical Sketches of Nebraska Men and Women of Achievement Who Have Been Awarded Life Membership in the Nebraskana Society*. (FHL film 1036245 item 4.)
- 1850–1930 Sheldon, Addison E. *Nebraska: The Land and the People*. (FHL book 978.2 H2s, 3 vols.; film 1000180.) Volumes two and three are biographical.
- 1850–1915 Nebraska Legislative Reference Bureau. *The Nebraska Blue Book: A Publication of the Nebraska Legislative Reference Bureau*. (FHL book 978.2 N2n; films 1697726 item 4; 1000182 item 6.)
- 1870–present *Statewide Index to Marriages, 1909*. (Not at FHL.). At Bureau of Vital Statistics.
- 1878–1918 United States Selective Service System. *Nebraska, World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards, 1917–1918*. (On 51 FHL films beginning with 1684016.) Men ages 18 to 45 are listed alphabetically by county or draft board.
- 1880–1900s *Alphabetical file of World War I soldiers*. (Not at FHL.). At Nebraska State Historical Society. You may wish to write for a search.
- 1900–1900s *Alphabetical File of World War II Soldiers*. (Not at FHL.) At Nebraska State Historical Society. You may wish to write for a search.
- 1905–present *Statewide index to births, 1904*. (Not at FHL.) Write to Bureau of Vital Statistics.

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.

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## Where to Find It

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### 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 the films can be requested and used at our Family History Centers. To locate the address for your 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](#).

## 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, they may be able to order it from another library on interlibrary loan.

To use interlibrary loan:

- Go to a public or college library.
- Ask the librarian to order a book or microfilm for you through interlibrary loan from another library. You 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.

# Maps

## Computer 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.

## Nebraska Maps Bibliography

Andriot, Jay. *Township Atlas of the US*. Virginia: Documents Index, 1991. Mic/Gen Ref - G **1201.F7 AS 1991**

Summary: Shows the townships in a particular county for each state except Hawaii and Alaska. Maps start after 1930.

Evaluation of Nebraska Maps: pp. 583-614. One page history of state, list of counties and counties with minor civil divisions. Maps of census county divisions.

Eichholz, Alice. *Ancestry's RedBook: American State, County & Town Sources*. Salt Lake City: Ancestry, 1992.

Mic/Gen Ref - **CS 49.A55 1992**. (3 copies in FHC)

Summary: The previous map was copied from page 458 of this book. On the next page is a listing of the counties, the date the county was formed and parent county, and the date of first recorded deeds and certificates. The section on Nebraska also includes a brief history and genealogical research information.

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

Mic/Gen Ref - **G1201.E6225.K5 1976**

Summary: Shows changes in boundaries in United States from Colonial days up to 1909. Civil war maps and information.

Evaluation of Nebraska maps: State historical information, p.23; 1861 map, 146; 878 map, 162, 163, 166, 167; 1883 map, 177; 1909 map, 225.

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

Mic/Gen Ref - **Quarto Shelves G 1200.M4 1996**.

Summary: Nebraska maps and information on pages 188-194. Includes maps comparing Nebraska to other states, cultural features, population density, agriculture, economic facts, etc. Also includes a brief state history.

Thorndale, William and William Dollarhide. *Map Guide to the US. Federal Censuses, 1790-1943*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co, 1987.

Mic/Gen Ref - G 1201.F7 T5 1987

Summary: History of Federal Censuses, records, and completeness. U.S. Maps from 1790 - 1920 showing U. S. boundary changes. Maps of each state for each census year beginning when the state was created up through 1920.

Evaluation of Nebraska maps: pp. 206-210.

**Map Collection on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the old section of HBLL library.** One map drawer for the state of Nebraska.

G4190-G4194 State maps from 1800s to 2000. Many of the maps show county boundaries and county seats, railroad lines, private land grants, population, etc. Some maps include information about what was happening that year.

To find more **maps**, search the byline for Nebraska **maps**, **atlases**, and **gazetteers**.

## Nebraska Federal Census Population Schedules, 1860 to 1920

### Guide

#### Introduction

Federal censuses are taken every 10 years. Nebraska residents are included in territorial or federal censuses from 1860 through 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 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 Nebraska with the census years. This will determine which censuses you will search.

Example of a time an ancestor was in Nebraska.  
in Nebraska from 1875 [-----] through 1915  
--]-----]-----]-----]-----]  
1860 1870 1880 1900 1910 1920  
Nebraska census years

This person would be included in Nebraska censuses from 1880 to 1910.  
(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:

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? (Birthplaces are shown in censuses for 1850 to 1920.)
- Where were they living—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](#).

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## Tips

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### 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 Nebraska to a different county or town.
- Movement of the family out of Nebraska if the family no longer appears in the census for Nebraska.

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.

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## Background

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### 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.

The 1890 census of Nebraska 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 Nebraska 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 1860, 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 1860, 1870, and 1880 censuses.
- **Manufacturing or industrial schedules** list data about businesses and industries for the 1860, 1870, and 1880 censuses.

## How 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 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.

## 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.

Nebraska has territorial censuses for 1854, 1855, 1856, 1860, and 1865.

Nebraska became a state in 1867. There are state censuses for 1869, 1885, and, 1913 through 1914 (taken for German immigrants from Russia). For more information on Nebraska census records, see the census section of the *Nebraska Research Outline*.

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.

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## Where to Find It

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### Internet

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

- Nebraska 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 *Nebraska Research Outline* lists Internet addresses for several Nebraska archives, libraries, and historical societies. These organizations may have microfilms and indexes of Nebraska census records, and the Internet sites may list what records they have.

### 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 populations 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 *Nebraska Research Outline* lists Internet and mailing addresses for several Nebraska archives, libraries, and historical societies. These organizations may have microfilms and indexes of Nebraska census records, 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

## 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*.

# U.S. State Censuses

## NEBRASKA

1854-56	Nebraska territory census : 1854, 1855, 1856.	<b>FHC Table 7 CS49.Z99 N2 1854</b>
1854, 1855, 1856, 1865, & 1869	Territory Census	<b>Microfiche</b>
<b>CS 43 .G46x GS no. 6</b> 1854	Territory Census	<b>0924555 item 22</b>
1855	Territory Census	<b>0924555 item 24</b>
1856	Territory Census	<b>0924555 item 23</b>
1885	Counties: Adams	<b>0499529</b>
	Counties: Antelope, Boone	<b>0499530</b>
	Counties: Brown	<b>0499531</b>
	Counties: Buffalo	<b>0499532</b>
	Counties: Burt	<b>0499533</b>
	Counties: Butler	<b>0499534</b>
	Counties: Cass	<b>0499535</b>
	Counties: Cedar, Cherry, Cheyenne	<b>0499536</b>
	Counties: Clay	<b>0499537</b>
	Counties: Colfax, Cuming	<b>0499538</b>
	Counties: Custer	<b>0499539</b>
	Counties: Dakota, Dawes, Dawson	<b>0499540</b>
	Counties: Dixon	<b>0499541</b>
	Counties: Dodge	<b>0499542</b>
	Counties: Douglas	<b>0499543</b>
	Counties: Douglas	<b>0499544</b>
	Counties: Douglas	<b>0499545</b>
	Counties: Dundy, Fillmore	<b>0499546</b>
	Counties: Franklin, Frontier	<b>0499547</b>
	Counties: Furnas	<b>0499548</b>
	Counties: Gage	<b>0499549</b>
	Counties: Gage	<b>0499550</b>
	Counties: Garfield, Gosper, Greeley	<b>0499551</b>
	Counties: Hall	<b>0499552</b>
	Counties: Hamilton	<b>0499553</b>
	Counties: Harlan, Hayes, Hitchcock	<b>0499554</b>
	Counties: Holt	<b>0499555</b>
	Counties: Howard	<b>0499556</b>
	Counties: Jefferson	<b>0499557</b>
	Counties: Johnson, Kearney	<b>0499558</b>
	Counties: Keith, Keya, Paha, Knox	<b>0499559</b>
	Counties: Lancaster	<b>0499560</b>
	Counties: Lancaster	<b>0499561</b>
	Counties: Lancaster	<b>0499562</b>
	Counties: Lincoln, Loup	<b>0499563</b>
	Counties: Loup, Madison	<b>0499564</b>
	Counties: Merrick, Nance	<b>0499565</b>
	Counties: Nemaha	<b>0499566</b>
	Counties: Nuckolls	<b>0499567</b>
	Counties: Otoe	<b>0499568</b>

# U.S. State Censuses

## NEBRASKA (cont.)

Counties:	Pawnee	0499569
Counties:	Phelps, Pierce	0499570
Counties:	Platte	0499571
Counties:	Polk, Red Willow	0499572
Counties:	Richardson	0499573
Counties:	Saline	0499574
Counties:	Saline	0499575
Counties:	Sarpy	0499576
Counties:	Saunders	0499577
Counties:	Saunders	0499578
Counties:	Seward	0499579
Counties:	Sheridan, Sherman, Sioux, Stanton	0499580
Counties:	Thayer, Valley	0499581
Counties:	Washington, Wayne	0499582
Counties:	Webster, Wheeler	0499583
Counties:	York	0499584

### 1885 (second filming)

### RG 29 M352 roll #

Counties:	Adams	1
Counties:	Antelope, Boone	2
Counties:	Brown	3
Counties:	Buffalo	4
Counties:	Burt	5
Counties:	Butler	6
Counties:	Cass	7
Counties:	Cedar, Cherry, Cheyenne	8
Counties:	Clay	9
Counties:	Colfax, Cuming	10
Counties:	Custer	11
Counties:	Dakota, Dawes, Dawson	12
Counties:	Dixon	13
Counties:	Dodge	14
Counties:	Douglas	15
Counties:	Douglas	16
Counties:	Douglas	17
Counties:	Dundy, Fillmore	18
Counties:	Franklin, Frontier	19
Counties:	Furnas	20
Counties:	Gage	21
Counties:	Gage	22
Counties:	Garfield, Gosper, Greeley	23
Counties:	Hall	24
Counties:	Hamilton	25
Counties:	Harlan, Hayes, Hitchcock	26
Counties:	Holt	27
Counties:	Howard	28
Counties:	Jefferson	29
Counties:	Johnson, Kearney	30
Counties:	Keith, Keya, Paha, Knox	31
Counties:	Lancaster	32
Counties:	Lancaster	33
Counties:	Lancaster	34
Counties:	Lincoln, Loup	35
Counties:	Loup, Madison	36
Counties:	Merrick, Nance	37
Counties:	Nemaha	38
Counties:	Nuckolls	39

## U.S. State Censuses

### NEBRASKA (cont.)

Counties:	Otoe	40
Counties:	Pawnee	41
Counties:	Phelps, Pierce	42
Counties:	Platte	43
Counties:	Polk, Red Willow	44
Counties:	Richardson	45
Counties:	Saline	46
Counties:	Saline	47
Counties:	Sarpy	48
Counties:	Saunders	49
Counties:	Saunders	50
Counties:	Seward	51
Counties:	Sheridan, Sherman, Sioux, Stanton	52
Counties:	Thayer, Valley	53
Counties:	Washington, Wayne	54
Counties:	Webster, Wheeler	55
Counties:	York	<b>56</b>

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