

## Census Tracking -

New technologies to make census research fun and easy!

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### U.S. Census History

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~census/help/history.html>

- 1780s** US Constitution requires a census every 10 years for apportioning representatives. States may have additional ones as needed.
- 1790** First census taken, over a period of 18 months. Records of six states destroyed during War of 1812, but reconstructed from tax records.
- 1800-1820** First Monday in August designated as Census Day.
- 1830-1900** June 1st designated as Census Day. All but 6160 names in the 1890 census (in AL,DC,GA,IL,MN,NJ,NY,NC,OH,SD,TX) destroyed in 1921 fire
- 1910-1930** Other specific dates designed as Census Day

### Census enumerators

- ~ Information was to be recorded as of the official census day, not the day the enumerator came. However, the info might have been given as of any time in that range. This can result in the same people being enumerated in different locations.
- ~ It wasn't unheard of to get the information from a neighbor or sometimes the only person at home would be one of the kids who "thinks maybe he was born in....".
- ~ Another thing to watch for is what was known as "padding the census". Enumerators were usually paid by the number of households (sometimes per person) they visited. If it was a very rural area they were paid a little more per household as the dwellings were much fewer. E.g., see Ira and Fleming Twp's at:
  - o <ftp://ftp.us-census.org/pub/usgenweb/census/ny/cayuga/1860/notes.txt>

### How to make a probable case from circumstantial evidence:

Start with the known, discover the probable, use other sources to prove.

- Step 1.** Start with the known - Use timelines and other research to find out what you know.
- Step 2.** Record known information on a census tracker
- Step 3.** Make assumptions based on census rules and logic
- Step 4.** Identify contradictions and make plausible explanations.  
Use Occam's Razor: for us that means "...simplest explanation is the most likely one". This means explanations with fewer assumptions are better.
- Step 5.** Record assumptions into the Census Tracker
- Step 6.** Compare assumptions to another possible census or other sources and repeat.

**Further steps in proving a probable case:**

1. Use tax records or land records to narrow down when a family moved
2. Use a personal timeline for each possibility when trying to track a person
3. Look for other sources in the localities found (wills, probates, military records, cemeteries, marriages of possible children, etc.)
4. Contact descendants of possible children

1830 United States Census

Date: 1 JUN 1830

Place: Hampshire, Virginia, United States

Source: 1830 United States Federal Census

Source Details: Roll 191; Page: 22. Quality: Questionable

Extracted household:

Name	Males												Females													
	0-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-70	70-80	80-90	90-100	100+	0-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-70	70-80	80-90	90-100	100+
Issac Fleek	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Associated household:

Go to	Link	Name	Sex	Age	Relationship
Isaac /Fleek/ (1807-1878)	Unlink	Isaac /Fleek/ (1807-1878)	M	"20-30" (22)	Head
Mary /Spencer/ (1810-1855)	Unlink	Mary /Spencer/ (1810-1855)	F	"20-30" (19-21)	wife
?	Link	(female)	F	0-5	

Unassociated family members:

Go to	Link	Name	Sex	Age	Relationship
Mary Katherine /Fleek/ (1829-Aft 1...	Link	Mary Katherine Fleek	F	1	daughter

Accept Changes and Close

**Tips for census research**

- Remember Occam’s razor: "the simplest explanation is the most likely one". Explanations with fewer assumptions are better.
- Estimate about 2 years between each child.
- Remember that not everyone in the household is necessarily a family member.
- Check county boundaries: [http://www.familyhistory101.com/map\\_census.html](http://www.familyhistory101.com/map_census.html)
- Check town/township boundaries: [usgenweb.org](http://usgenweb.org), [davidrumsey.com](http://davidrumsey.com)
- Look for wife as head of household in case of death of husband.
- Look for children as heads of household to find elderly widows/widowers.
- “Wife’s” age change across years may indicate a death and remarriage.

## MagiCensus can simplify some census tracking steps:

Known Information	Logic	MagiCensus
Number of years in an age range can vary from census to census.	Using overlapping ranges for multiple years can narrow down birthdates.	Automatically estimates and calculates an age range using all census data available and updates it in a spreadsheet.
Location of an individual at specific point of time	Looking at known locations for all family members for many years gives you possible places for additional research.	Displays census locations of all known family members in a spreadsheet automatically.
Quantity and gender of the household members for a given census, also known as a footprint of a household.	Comparing footprints for families with identical head of household names can help you identify which census household matches your family.	Includes year specific extraction forms then expands the extracted information to provide the family footprint. Allows you link the known information about family members to a person recorded only by age and gender in the census.
Age range and gender of a household member in a census.	Determining potential relationships using age and gender. (e.g. wife or daughter)	Suggests probable relationships when associating an individual with the extracted family footprint.
	Identifying possible recording errors of age or gender by comparing the household footprint over many years.	Automatically highlights age discrepancies between expected and extracted information and displays them in color-coded cells.

Double-click name to edit individual, birthdate to view timeline, or a cell for extraction data. Add/Remove Census Columns...

Name		United States					
		1 JUN 1830	1 JUN 1840	1 JUN 1850	1 JUN 1860	1 JUN 1870	1 JUN 1880
Mary /Victor/	1819 KY	10-12	"15-20" (20-22) Clinton Co., Missouri, United States	"30" (30-32) (Mann) Washington Twp., Buchanan Co., Missouri	"40" (40-42) (Fleek) Washington Twp.	"51" (50-52) Washington Twp., Doniphan Co., Kansas, United States	"56" (60-62) Washington Twp., Doniphan Co.
+ John B. /Mann/	21 SEP 1815 WV	"10-15" (14) Monroe, Virginia, United States	24	"35" (34) Washington Twp., Buchanan	****	****	****
1. William A. /Mann/	1 JUN 1845 MO	****	****	"6" (5) Washington Twp., Buchanan Co.	"16" (15) Washington Twp., Buchanan Co.	25 Troy, Doniphan Co.	35 Helena, Lewis And Clark, Montana, United
1+ Mary /Linton/	1845 OH	****	****	4-6	14-16	"25" (24-26) (Mann) Troy	"34" (34-36) Helena
2. Nancy /Mann/	17 MAR 1846 MO	****	****	4 Washington Twp., Buchanan	14 Washington Twp., Buchanan	24	****
3. Green Berry /Mann/	9 MAR 1849 MO	****	****	1 Washington Twp., Buchanan	"12" (11) Washington Twp., Buchanan	21	31 Washington Twp., Doniphan

Legend

Each cell contains one of the following:

- Linked to census record with matching age
  - matching age (new surname if changed), location in census
- Linked to census record with age discrepancy
  - "recorded age" (expected age) (new surname if changed), location in census
- No census record linked
  - expected age

