individuals in considerable detail in printed reports (paper or microfiche), compact discs, DVDs, and online through the Census Bureau’s data dissemination and inquiry system, American FactFinder®, which can be accessed from the agency’s Internet site www.census.gov. PDFs of the latest publications can be downloaded from the Census Bureau Web site or the publications can be purchased directly from the agency. They are described in the Census Bureau’s annual Catalog and Guide; a separate catalog available in many libraries lists reports covering the period 1790 to 1970. There are over 1,500 federal and Census Bureau depository libraries in the United States that have reference collections of these materials. The Census Bureau’s regional offices and state data centers and the International Trade Administration’s district offices maintain census data available in a variety of formats.

Questions about these and other Census Bureau products may be directed to:

Customer Services Center
Customer Liaison and Marketing Services Office
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, DC 20233
1-800-923-8220 or 1-301-760-3463
Fax: 1-301-763-4636

For more information, CFF-4, “History and Organization,” another Factfinder in this series, explains the history of the Census Bureau and its programs. A PDF file of the publication can be obtained from the following page on the Census Bureau Web site www.census.gov/ (and www.archives.gov)

Questions, comments, or suggestions about any of the Census Bureau’s activities are welcomed and may be addressed to:

Director, U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, DC 20233

Helping You Make Informed Decisions

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION HEADQUARTERS AND REGIONAL BRANCHES

(Office hours: 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m., M–F.) Contact each office to find out about extended hours.

Washington, DC Headquarters
800 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20408
202-357-5400 or 1-866-325-7208
www.archives.gov
E-mail: inquire@nara.gov

Reference Branch
202-357-5400
Customer Services Center
800-234-8861
Fax: 1-301-837-0483

NARA—College Park, MD
8601 Adelphi Rd.
College Park, MD 20740
1-866-272-6727
www.archives.gov
E-mail: inquire@nara.gov

Regional Archives
NARA—Pacific Alaska Region (Seattle)
NARA—Northeast Region (Pittsfield)
E-mail: sanbruno.archives@nara.gov
Serves northern and central CA, NV (except Clark County), HI, American Samoa, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

NARA—Rocky Mountain Region
Denver Federal Center, Building 48
20th Ave. at Kipling St.
P.O. Box 23107
Denver, CO 80225-0307
303-407-5740
www.archives.gov/rocky-mountain
E-mail: denver.archives@nara.gov
Serves CO, MT, ND, NM, SD, UT, WY

NARA—Southeast Region
5780 Jonesboro Rd.
Hapeville, GA 30354-3806
770-968-2110
www.archives.gov/southeast/ (and www.archives.gov/atlanta)
E-mail: atlanta.archives@nara.gov
Serves AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN

NARA—Central Plains Region (Kansas City)
2312 East 33rd St.
Kansas City, MO 64110-3101
816-268-8012
www.archives.gov/central-plains
E-mail: kansas.archives@nara.gov
Serves AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN

NARA—Pacific Region (Laguna Niguel)
24000 Alicia Parkway
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677-3497
949-445-2000
www.archives.gov/pacific/ln
E-mail: laguna.archives@nara.gov
Serves AZ, Southern CA, and Clark County, NV

NARA—San Francisco Region
10000 Corddonado Dr.
San Bruno, CA 94066-2350
650-218-3500
www.archives.gov/pacific/san-francisco

NARA—Northeast Region (Boston)
380 Trapelo Rd.
Watertown, MA 02422-6399
866-406-2379
www.archives.gov/northeast/watertown/E-mail: watertown.archives@nara.gov
Serves CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT

NARA—Northeast Region (Pittsfield)
10 Conte Ctr.
Pittsfield, MA 01201-8230
413-236-3600
www.archives.gov/northeast/pittsfield/E-mail: pittsfield.archives@nara.gov (Microfilm only)

NARA—Northeast Region (New York City)
201 Varick St., 12th Floor
New York, NY 10014-4811
866-840-1752
www.archives.gov/northeast/nyc
E-mail: newyork.archives@nara.gov
Serves NY, NJ, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands

NARA—Mid Atlantic Region (Center City Philadelphia)
900 Market St.
Philadelphia, PA 19107-4292
215-606-0100
www.archives.gov/midatlantic/E-mail: philadelphia.archives@nara.gov
Serves DE, MD, PA, VA, WV

NARA—Southwest Region
501 West Felix St.
Phoenix, AZ 85041-1815
602-272-6727
www.archives.gov/southwest/E-mail: phoenix.archives@nara.gov
Serves AZ, NM, TX

NARA—Great Lakes Region
7318 South Pulaski Rd.
Chicago, IL 60629-1889
773-939-5801
www.archives.gov/great-lakes/chicago
E-mail: chicago.archives@nara.gov
Serves IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI

NARA—Northwest Region (Seattle)
6125 Sand Point Way, N.
Seattle, WA 98115-7999
206-984-4155
www.archives.gov/pacific/seattle/E-mail: seattle.archives@nara.gov
Serves ID, OR, WA

Available census records about individuals

Introduction

The United States population census records contain a wealth of information about people. They are useful in learning about one’s family and local social and economic conditions at various times in history. For more recent years especially, they are official documents for persons who need to prove their age (in a birth certificate, marriage certificate, or voter registration form), for examples. The United States population censuses for each year are described in the Census Bureau’s activities (see below) and www.archives.gov/ (and www.archives.gov)

There are Soundex (that is, by the sound of the surname rather than its spelling) indexes on microfilm for the 1880, 1900, and 1920 censuses for each state, and for 1910 for 21 states, principally in the South. Ten southern states, plus a few counties in West Virginia and Kentucky were soundexed for 1930. All soundex indexes to the 1870–1960 and most of the 1870–1930 censuses are available in the National Archives and Records Administration libraries. Most states began keeping a more accurate birth registration in the early 1920s.

Researchers may find two Census Bureau publications useful; most major libraries have copies. Heads of Families in the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790 (12 vols., Washington, DC, 1907–1908, reprinted 1965-75), contains specific names. A Century of Population Growth—1790–1900 (Washington, DC, 1909, reprinted 1965-75) includes the surname in 1870 and a variety of summary tables from colonial censuses from 1790 to 1900.

A number of state and territorial censuses were taken in the intradead years, particularly in the 19th century (See Henry). Dubester, An Annotated Bibliography of Censuses Taken After the Year 1790, by States and Territories of the United States (Washington, DC, 1948, reprinted 1965-75) and The Census Records, Ann S. Lainhart (Balti

The National Archives also rents and sells the microfilm rolls (see below). The Reference Branch at National Archives headquarters (see listing on page 4) will accept photocopy orders by mail or through online orders, given exact page numbers; it will not do research.

Some 19th century industrial, agricultural, and mortality censuses have survived, mainly in state archives, although the National Archives has film for some states. These nonpopulation schedules generally are available on microfilm. These records frequently can be related to individual listings in the population censuses.

Microfilm Rental and Sales

Rental. The National Archives rents microfilm copies of historical records to libraries and individuals. These cop-
ies are of federal population censuses 1790–1930; Soundex indexes, 1880–1930; Revolutionaries War–compensation military service records; and pension and bounty-land-warrant application files, and Freedman’s Bureau records. For details, contact the National Archives Microfilm Rental Program, P.O. Box 30, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701-0030, 301-604-3699.

Sales. Microfilmed copies of census schedules, 1790–1930, and Soundex indexes, 1880–1930, can be purchased from the Customer Service Center (NWCD), College Park, MD 20740; 1-800-234-8861 or 1-301-837-2000 or 1-866-272-6727. The office has catalogs, prices, and ordering information.

Access to Closed Records

The Census Bureau can release details from recent files in the form of official transcripts, but only to the named persons, their heirs, or legal representatives. There is a congressionally mandated fee for this service. Since by law, this census information is confidential and collected only for statistical purposes, it is exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act. This means that no one in gain access to confidential census records or avoid the search fees through these acts. Transcript application forms

U.S. Census Bureau

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

200 CFF-2

Census Bureau for the Nation

A Century of Population Growth—1790–1900

The Decennial Censuses From 1790 to 2000, Washington, DC, 2002 provides an overview of the series, explains the history of the Census Bureau and its programs. A PDF file of the publication can be obtained from the following page on the Census Bureau Web site www.census.gov/ (and www.archives.gov/).
Some of the major types of information not found in census records, and their sources, are the following:

Birth, death, marriage, and divorce records, U.S. and outlying areas

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

"Where to Write for Vital Records"  
1-800-232-3498  
www.cdc.gov/nchs/

Passport Services—Vital Records Section  
1111 19th Street, NW, Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20522-1705

Birth and death records, Americans overseas

American Passport Services—Vital Records Section  
1111 19th Street, NW, Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20522-1705

Irrigation or naturalization records, 1900 to present (earlier records are held by local courts)

Birth records of aliens, children adopted by U.S. citizens

Death records of members of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, or Coast Guard

Military records from World War I and later (those prior to World War I are in the National Archives)

Selective Service records

Selective Service System  
Arlington, VA 22209-2425  
1-800-065-3850  
www.sss.gov/records.htm

Selective Service System National Headquarters  
111 Winnebago Street  
St. Louis, MO 63132-0989

Selective Service System Central Civilian Personnel Center

Civilian Personnel Center  
111 Winnebago Street  
St. Louis, MO 63132-0989

National Personnel Records Center (Military papers)

9700 Page Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63122-5100  
314-801-0800 Fax 314-801-9195  
www.archives.gov/veterans

National Personnel Records Center (Military papers)

9700 Page Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63122-5100  
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Selective Service System National Headquarters  
111 Winnebago Street  
St. Louis, MO 63132-0989

National Archives and Records Administration  
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20537-4000  
1-866-352-7288  
www.archives.gov

Detailed information on Archives' holdings of the above and other useful materials about individu- als can be found in "Using Civilian Records for Genealogical Research in the National Archives" Reference Library  1-800-229-4788  
www.archives.gov/service-center/roads/  
(see page 4).

Besides these federal sources, persons interested in researching their families or communities also should consider some of the following: local and state historical societies, local and state libraries, and the American Indian tribal census rolls.

Other Sources

• National Archives and regional branches (see page 4)

• Many social security and post offices have blank forms

Transcripts ordinarily show age (not birth date) at the time of the census, general relationship to the householder, and—which where requested—race. If obtained in the current decennial, age is determined by the year of birth (but not place), citizenship, or occupation can be listed as well. A "full schedule" showing all of the information collected for one individual in a given census (see above for questions) can be ordered at extra cost. The records are organized geograph- ically, rather than by name, so except for those censuses that have indexes (see page 1), addresses are necessary to find them. Most of the genealogy files' names cannot be used to locate missing persons; certain address series are listed by law in any case, or even discover how many people have the same surname. The Census Bureau publication,

Air Search Information (Washington, DC, 2000), details about this service and also discusses other possible sources of data about individuals. You can download this publication at www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/gen-ref.html.

Factfinder for the Nation

Inquiries about census data.

The Census Bureau publishes data summaries, maps, charts, and other information on a wide variety of topics. Some of these data may be of particular use to researchers (as distinguished from information about

Birth, death, marriage, and divorce records, U.S. and outlying areas

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

"Where to Write for Vital Records"  
1-800-232-3498  
www.cdc.gov/nchs/

Passport Services—Vital Records Section  
1111 19th Street, NW, Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20522-1705

Birth and death records, Americans overseas

American Passport Services—Vital Records Section  
1111 19th Street, NW, Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20522-1705

Irrigation or naturalization records, 1900 to present (earlier records are held by local courts)

Birth records of aliens, children adopted by U.S. citizens

Death records of members of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, or Coast Guard

Military records from World War I and later (those prior to World War I are in the National Archives)

Selective Service records

Selective Service System National Headquarters  
111 Winnebago Street  
St. Louis, MO 63132-0989

Selective Service System Central Civilian Personnel Center

Civilian Personnel Center  
111 Winnebago Street  
St. Louis, MO 63132-0989

National Personnel Records Center (Military papers)

9700 Page Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63122-5100  
314-801-0800 Fax 314-801-9195  
www.archives.gov/veterans

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9700 Page Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63122-5100  
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St. Louis, MO 63132-0989

Selective Service System National Headquarters  
111 Winnebago Street  
St. Louis, MO 63132-0989

National Archives and Records Administration  
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20537-4000  
1-866-352-7288  
www.archives.gov

Detailed information on Archives' holdings of the above and other useful materials about individu- als can be found in "Using Civilian Records for Genealogical Research in the National Archives" Reference Library  1-800-229-4788  
www.archives.gov/service-center/roads/  
(see page 4).

Besides these federal sources, persons interested in researching their families or communities also should consider some of the following: local and state historical societies, local and state libraries, and the American Indian tribal census rolls.

Other Sources

• National Archives and regional branches (see page 4)

• Many social security and post offices have blank forms

Transcripts ordinarily show age (not birth date) at the time of the census, general relationship to the householder, and—which where requested—race. If obtained in the current decennial, age is determined by the year of birth (but not place), citizenship, or occupation can be listed as well. A "full schedule" showing all of the information collected for one individual in a given census (see above for questions) can be ordered at extra cost. The records are organized geograph- ically, rather than by name, so except for those censuses that have indexes (see page 1), addresses are necessary to find them. Most of the genealogy files' names cannot be used to locate missing persons; certain address series are listed by law in any case, or even discover how many people have the same surname. The Census Bureau publication,

Air Search Information (Washington, DC, 2000), details about this service and also discusses other possible sources of data about individuals. You can download this publication at www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/gen-ref.html.
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- Birth, death, marriage, and divorce records, U.S. and outlying areas
- Birth and death records, Americas overseas
- Birth, death, marriage, and divorce records, foreign

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

"Where to Write for Vital Records"  
1-800-232-3498  
www.cdc.gov/nchs/

Passport Services—Vital Records Section  
111 19th Street, N.W., Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20522-1705

U.S. Postal Service

Passport Services—Vital Records Section  
111 19th Street, N.W., Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20522-1705

National Archives

Always the latest consular office of the country in question

Department of Homeland Security

Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services

1-800-382-1220  
www.dhs.gov/cis

Immigration or naturalization records, 1906 to present (earlier records are held by local courts)

Birth records of aliens, children adopted by U.S. citizens

Death records of members of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, or Coast Guard

Military records from World War I and later (those prior to World War I are in the National Archives)

Selective Service records for men born on or after Jan 1, 1960

Selective Service Records

Man born pre-1960

U.S. government civilian personnel whose service ended after 1909

National Personnel Records Center (Military personnel)  
9700 Page Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63120-5100  
314-801-0800 Fax 314-801-9195  
www.archives.gov/veterans

National Archives

Military Records Division  
9700 Page Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63120-5100  
314-801-0800 Fax 314-801-9195

Selective Service System National headquarters

Arlington, VA 22209-2425  
202-347-8100  
www.sss.gov/records.htm

NARA—Archival Programs P.O. Box 28989  
St. Louis, MO 63104-0898  
1-800-272-0229  
www.archives.gov/st-louis/civilian-personnel/  
index.htm

Library of Congress

Congressional Research Service  
101 Independence Ave., S.E.  
Washington, DC 20510-2090  
202-707-6161  
www.loc.gov/crs

National Archives & Records Administration  
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20408-6000  
1-866-275-7088  
www.archives.gov

Detailed information on Archives' holdings of the above and other useful materials about individuals can be found in "Using Civilian Records for Genealogical Research in the National Archives," Reference Information Paper 110; "Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives" (Third Edition; for sale), and other NARA family history research tools available from Archives Customer Services Center (see page 4).

Besides these federal sources, persons interested in researching their families or communities also should consider some of the following: local and state historical societies, local and state libraries, the American Association for State and Local History in Nashville, TN (www.aaslh.org), and various other associations, bookstores, and publishers.

• National Archives and regional branches (see page 4)
• Many social security and post offices have blank forms

Transcripts ordinarily show age (not birth date) at the time of the census, general relationship to the householder, and—which where required—race. If obtained in the National Archives, supplemental schedules for slaves, and persons who died during the year.

Address search information (Washington, DC, 2000), has details about this service and also discusses other possible sources of data about individuals. You can download this publication at <www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/gen-ref.htm>.

Factfinder for the Nation

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(archival and historical).

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Director U.S. Census Bureau Washington, DC 20233

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION HEADQUARTERS AND REGIONAL BRANCHES

(2002-2004)

San Bruno, CA 94066-2350

Laguna Niguel, CA 92677-3497

E-mail: alaska.archives@nara.gov

www.archives.gov/pacific-alaska

907-261-7800

Anchorage, AK 99501-2145

NARA—Pacific Alaska Region

www.archives.gov

College Park, MD 20740

Fax: 301-837-0483

Customer Services Center

www.archives.gov/pacific

202-357-5400 or 1-866-325-7208

800 & Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Washington, DC Headquarters

Census Bureau depository libraries in the

lists reports covering the period 1790 to

be downloaded from the Census Bureau

Finder®, which can be accessed from the

Census Bureau's data dissemination

printed reports (paper or microfiche),

individuals) in considerable detail in

Introduction

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people who need to prove their age (in the absence of a birth certificate), rela-
tionship, citizenship, residence, and oth-
er facts in order to qualify for pensions; get
debts, naturalization papers, pass-
ports, or insurance policies; establish

an inheritance; or trace ancestry. There
was a population census taken in 1790 and
every tenth year after that. (Page 3 lists the items covered in the existing
census for each year.) The U.S. Census

Bureau publication, Measuring America:

The Decennial Census: From 1790 to

2000 (Washington, DC, 2002) provides

a history of each census and reproduces

the questionnaires and instructions given
to enumerators for taking each census. You
can download this publication at www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/ma.html.

This Factfinder explains what census

materials are available and how to obtain

them and also lists the sources for some

other useful records about individuals.

Census Schedules Available to the Public

Individual records from the federal popu-

lations censuses are available, particularly in the 19th century, by law (Title 44, U.S. Code).

Thus, April 2012 is the scheduled date for

the National Archives to open the 1940

census records to public use.

Microfilm copies of the original popula-
tion schedules, from 1790 through 1930

(virtually all of the 1890 records were
destroyed as a result of a 1921 fire), are

available at the National Archives in Washington

(DC) (www.archives.gov) and its 13 regional archives (see page 4), and

many libraries in various parts of the United States. Most have facilities for making

paper copies from the microfilm. The National Archives also rents and sells the

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contains specific names. A Centennial

of Population Growth—1790–1970 (Wash-

ington, DC, 1909, reprinted 1965–70)

includes the incidence of surnames in

1790, and a variety of summary tables from
colonial censuses from 1790 to 1900.

A number of state and territorial cen-
suses were taken in the intradeclarative years, particularly in the 17th century (see Henry). Dubester, An Annotated Bibliography of Censuses Taken After the Year 1790, by States and Territories of the United States (Washington, DC, 1948, reprinted 1965–73), contains state and territorial censuses, and the Census Records, Ann S. Lainhart ( Balti-
more, MD, 1992). An appendix to the Dubester book tells how to access these records (some including names) were

located; copies of many can be obtained commercially on microfilm.

Some 19th century industrial, agricul-
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of records to public use.