

Introduction to Ohio Genealogy Research

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VITAL RECORDS IN OHIO

- Birth – Statewide registration began in 1908
 - Some of the earliest records can date back to 1867
 - Ohio Birth Index is available on Ancestry (1908-1998)
 - Ohio Birth Index is available on MyHeritage (1959-1998)
 - Ohio, Church and Civil Births and Baptisms available on FamilySearch (1765-1947)
 - Ohio, County Births, available on FamilySearch (1841-2003)
 - For births after 1908, you can order birth records from the county of birth or from the health department
 - Adoptions: Effective March 2015 adult adoptees or their adult lineal descendants can apply to the Ohio Department of Health for their adoption file. More information here: <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/vital-statistics/adoption-file-information>

- Marriage – Statewide registration began in 1949
 - Earliest – Begin around the time of county formation
 - Ancestry, Ohio County Marriages 1774-1993 (index and images)
 - FindMyPast US Marriages 1724-2015 (index and images)
 - MyHeritage, Ohio Marriages, 1970-2003 (index and images)
 - FamilySearch Marriages, 1800-1958 (index)
 - Check with county probate court if you cannot find them online

- Death – Statewide registration began in 1908
 - Some of the earliest records can date back to 1867
 - Ohio, Deaths and Burials, 1854-1997 (FamilySearch; index only)
 - Ohio, County Death Records, 1840-2001 (FamilySearch; Name index and images)
 - Ohio, Deaths, 1908-1953 (FamilySearch; Name index and images)
 - Ohio History Connection - order death certificates - 1913-1944 and 1954-1970

- Divorce –
 - Before 1949 - Divorces may be recorded in the County Clerk of Courts Office where the divorce was granted
 - After 1949 - Court of Common Pleas

- Vital Records - Other Sources
 - Many cities kept their own vital records before it was mandated by the state - check in the city/town where you are researching to see if there may be other sources of vital records.
 - Example: Cincinnati Birth and Death Records, 1865-1912 (University of Cincinnati Archives and Rare Books Library):
https://digital.libraries.uc.edu/collections/birthdeath/?_gl=1*1s8zybs*_ga*MjA3OTg4MjgyNy4xNjc0NTEyNjE1*_ga_7H1FCKXZ4Y*MTY3OTMoNjEwNS4yLjE1uMTY3OTMoNjEyMS40NC4wLjA.
 - Example: Collection of Cuyahoga County Birth Returns, 1877-1908 at Fold3

WILLS & PROBATE RECORDS

- Before 1852 - Court of Common Pleas
- After 1852 - Separate Probate Court
- Keep in mind...courthouse fires - check FamilySearch Wiki page for county you are researching as there may be information about courthouse fires and previous record loss
- Ohio Probate Records (1789-1996) - FamilySearch & Ancestry
- Check within FamilySearch catalog for wills and probate records and county probate court website for possible records or indexes

CHURCH RECORDS

- Before contacting a church or office for religious archives, check in the FamilySearch catalog to see if church records might be online:
<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog>
 - *Make sure you are logged in, otherwise you won't be able to view the records.
- Methodist
 - Methodist Ministers Card Index for all Ohio Conferences, 1797-1981 (FamilySearch)
 - United Methodist Historical Society of Ohio at Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, OH
- Lutheran
 - 1781-1969 - U.S., Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Church Records, 1781-1969, index and images, incomplete. (Ancestry)
- Presbyterian
 - U.S., Presbyterian Church Records, 1701-1970 (Ancestry)
 - Inventory of the Church Archives of Ohio Presbyterian Churches (FamilySearch)
- Episcopal
 - Episcopal Diocese of Ohio (northern part of state)
 - Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio
- Catholic
 - Archdiocese of Cincinnati (images and indexes of records available on FindMyPast). Link to AOC archives:
<https://resources.catholicaoc.org/offices/archives>
 - Diocese of Cleveland:

<https://www.dioceseofcleveland.org/offices/chancellor/archives/overview>

- Diocese of Columbus: <https://columbuscatholic.org/catholic-record-society/research-records>
- Diocese of Steubenville: <https://diosteub.org/archives-and-records>
- Diocese of Toledo: Images of records on FindMyPast, not indexed. <https://toledodiocese.org/sacramental-records-archive>
- Diocese of Youngstown: Records are housed at Kent State University's Department of Special Collections and Archives. See here for information about obtaining records: <https://www.library.kent.edu/special-collections-and-archives/catholic-diocese-youngstown-ohio-records>

NEWSPAPERS

- NewspaperArchive & Newspapers.com (both available on-site at the Genealogy Center)
- Chronicling America: <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>
- Ohio Memory Project: <https://www.ohiomemory.org/digital/search/searchterm/newspapers/field/all/mode/all/conn/and/page/3>
- Ohio Online Historical Newspapers: <https://sites.google.com/site/onlinenewspapersite/Home/united-states-online-historical-newspapers/ohio-online-historical-newspapers?pli=1>
- Ohio History Connection has the largest individual collection of Ohio newspapers on microfilm. Search their catalog here: <https://ohiohistory.on.worldcat.org/discovery>
- Check your local library and historical society for access to additional local publications!

NATURALIZATION & CITIZENSHIP

- Prior to 1906
 - No centralized naturalization records prior to this date
 - Records created in Court of Common Pleas and then Probate courts (after 1851)
 - County courthouses may hold naturalizations up to about 1920
- 1906
 - Federal government began regulating the naturalization process
 - Back to the Court of Common Pleas before the U.S. District Courts fully took over.
- Where to find them?

- What was the timeframe that your ancestor naturalized? This will help you pinpoint which court, where you might find the records
- Start with FamilySearch...the wiki page on Ohio Citizenship and Naturalization is helpful:
https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Ohio_Naturalization_and_Citizenship
- This collection has Ohio Naturalizations that span from 1800-1977:
<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1987615>
- On FamilySearch, there are indexes for various divisions – southern, western, eastern, northern.
- In the FamilySearch catalog, search the county where your ancestor lived to see if citizenship records are available for that county.
- National Archives at Chicago - they hold some of the Ohio naturalizations for the northern and southern district courts, so that is another repository that you can contact.

CEMETERY RECORDS

- Find-A-Grave (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial>) and BillionGraves (<https://billiongraves.com/search>)
- FamilySearch Catalog (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog>)
- Cemetery Office/Association
- Ohio Genealogical Society - Cemetery Research Tools -
https://www.ogs.org/resource_type/cemetery-research-tools/

OTHER:

- Ohio History Connection: <https://www.ohiohistory.org/>
 - Link to Ohio Death Index: <https://resources.ohiohistory.org/death/>
 - Link to Research Guides: <https://ohiohistory.libguides.com/home/guides>
 - Link to Incarceration Index: <https://resources.ohiohistory.org/incarceration/>

RESOURCES AT THE GENEALOGY CENTER!

- Link to our Ohio Pathfinder (a selective list of books in our collection related to Ohio research: https://acpl.lib.in.us/images/Documents/Gendocs/States/Ohio_SG-2022.pdf)
- Search our catalog to find thousands of additional titles:
<https://acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy>
- PERSI (Periodical Source Index) Over 3 million citations to local history and genealogy periodicals! PERSI includes publications such as the Ohio Genealogical Society Quarterly and hundreds of others! <https://www.genealogycenter.info/persi/>