

# Census Silence

## Reconnecting Kindred from 1881-1899

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*Ancestors appear on the 1880 population schedule only to disappear during a 20-year census gap. Consider alternative records to bridge the census silence.*

*The loss of the 2 June 1890 census schedule begins the 20-year dilemma!*

The U.S. government's recording of families each decade has long been the foundation of genealogical projects. Census schedules offer an opportunity to glean data collected from many U.S. regions since 1790.

### Types of schedules available:

- Agricultural & Industry and Manufacturing
- Defective, Dependent, Delinquent
- Population\*
- Mortality & Social Statistics
- Veterans
- Slave (1850, 1860)

\* The 1890 population schedule was damaged by fire on 10 January 1921. The following states have select schedules that have survived: AL, DC, GA, IL, MN, NC, NJ, NY, OH, SD, and TX.



The Camden Chronicle (TN)

- ❖ United States Census Bureau. "Availability of 1890 Census." [https://www.census.gov/history/www/genealogy/decennial\\_census\\_records/availability\\_of\\_1890\\_census.html](https://www.census.gov/history/www/genealogy/decennial_census_records/availability_of_1890_census.html) : accessed 12 August 2023.
- ❖ "1890 Census Substitute." Ancestry. <https://search.ancestry.com/search/group/1890census> : accessed 12 August 2023.
- ❖ "United States Census, 1890." FamilySearch. <https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1610551> : accessed 12 August 2023.

### Common information that may be on a census schedule (population):

- |   |                                |                    |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Residence                             | • Date of Birth                | • Occupation       |
| • Name                                  | • Place of Birth               | • Disability       |
| • Relationship to the Head of Household | • Marriage                     | • Military Service |
| • Age                                   | • Place of Births for Parents' | • Education        |
| • Race                                  | • Citizenship                  | • Land Ownership   |

## Where do you start?

1. Review and determine the family information that is known and unknown.
2. Consider the use of a timeline assisted by a brainstorming map.
3. Realize there may be alternative records available for evaluation.

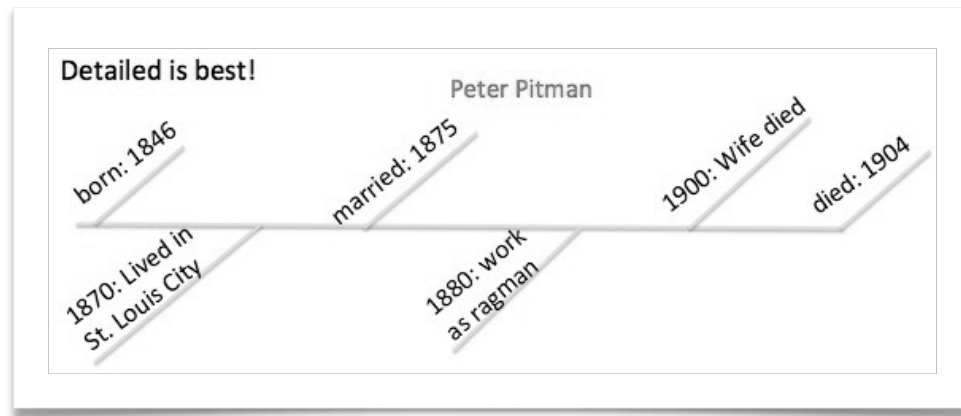


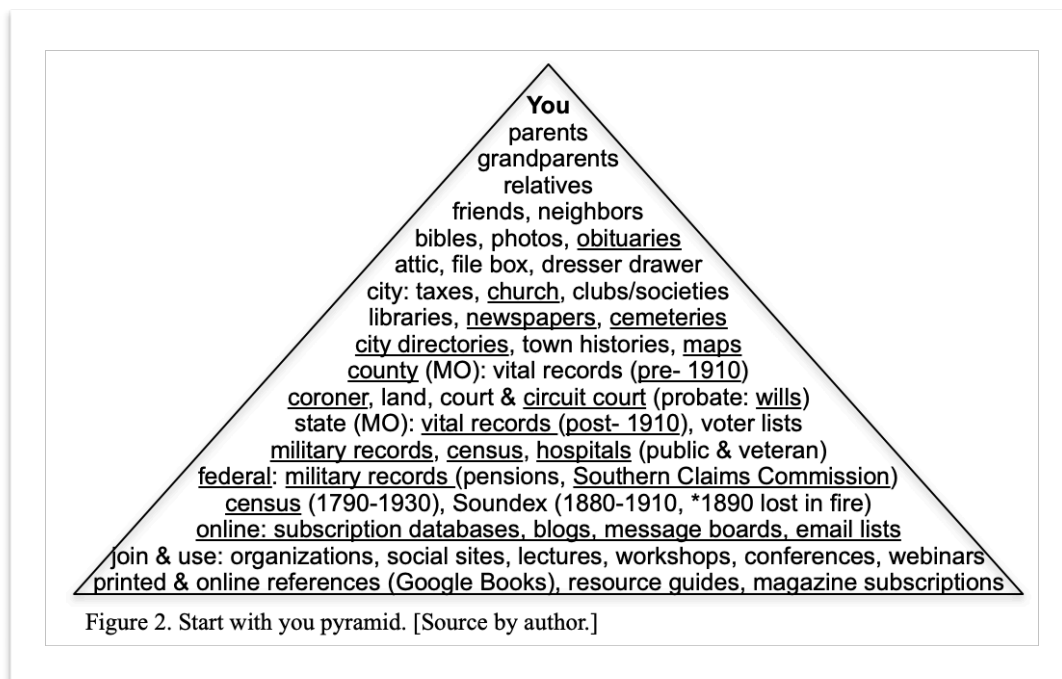
Figure 1. Example of detailed timeline. [Source by author.]

## Migration

*Does the family emerge in the 1900 census far from their 1880 place of origin?*

Consider sources which may note reasons for a family's departure from their previous location.

1. Occupation & Other Opportunities
2. Migration Waves
3. State Statutes (Laws)



## Verification of Residence(s)

*Is there a question of the family's whereabouts between the decades?*

The census may not be the only record of their existence within a community.

1. Citizenship & Social Records
2. Indigent Records
3. Residential Records

- ❖ *California State Library - Sacramento Co, Sacramento, California, Pioneer Index File (1906–1934); A–Z.* Sacramento, California: California State Library.
- ❖ “California, U.S., Voter Registers, 1866-1898.” Ancestry. <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2221/> : accessed 12 August 2023.

## Identifying Family Relationships

*Are the vital records that link generation to generation missing or no longer survive?*

Families left trails not easily locatable or digitized online.

1. Alternatives to vital records
2. Organizational Records
3. Name Changes and Alterations
4. Newspaper Chatter

## Additional Resources

Garner, LaDonna. “Resources.” Leafseeker Consulting. <https://leafseeker.com/resources> : revised 12 August 2023.

Hinckley, Kathleen W. *Your Guide to the Federal Census for genealogists, researchers, and family historian.* Cincinnati, Ohio: Better Way Books, 2002.

Quillen, W. Daniel. *Mastering Census & Military Records.* Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Press; 3rd ed. edition, 2014.

Sperry, Kip. *Reading Early American Handwriting.* 2nd ed. Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2001.

Szucs, Loretto Dennis. *Finding Answers in U.S. Census Records.* Orem, UT: Ancestry Publishing Co., 2002.

United States Census Bureau. “1890 Census Instructions to Enumerators.” Washington, D.C. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/technical-documentation/questionnaires/1890/1890-instructions.html> : accessed 12 August 2023.

United States Census Bureau. “Decennial Census by Decade: 1890.” Washington, D.C. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade.1890.html#list-tab-693908974> : last revised 4 August 2022.

