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Types of Records

- Census
- Newspapers
- Vital records
- Voter registrations
- Church records
- Military
- Probate
- Cemetery/burial records
- Manumission documents Taxation
- Land and property
- Bible records
- City directories
- ...and more!

Federal Census

- Purpose: To make an accurate count of the U.S. population for representative purposes
- Began in 1790 and taken every 10 years
- 1790-1950 available for research
 - Exception: 1890
 - Online sources: American Ancestors, FamilySearch, Ancestry
- 1850 census was the first to name all members in a household

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What can you find in a census?

- Name
- Age
- Race
- 11400
- Place of birth
- Parent's place of birth
- Relationships
- Marital status

- Occupation
- Veteran status
- Education level
- Income level
- Value of real estate
- Immigration and naturalization status



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1870 Brick Wall

- 1870 marks the first Federal census post-Emancipation
- First census to include the names of people who were previously enslaved
- Only free people of color noted in previous censuses

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Slave Schedules

- Enslaved individuals recorded separately in 1850 and 1860
- Organized by enslaver's name
- Personal names of enslaved not included; described by age, gender, and color
- Additional columns:
 - Fugitive from the state
 - Number manumitted
 - Deaf, blind, etc.

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State Census

- Not every state completed a census on the state level
- Often conducted during years in between the federal census
 - Ex: Massachusetts completed a state census in 1855 and 1865
- Information similar to the federal census, but varies depending on state and year

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Keep in mind...

- Names may be spelled differently (initials, nicknames, etc.)
- · Boundary changes
- Misremembering information
 - Age, place of birth, relationships may not be consistent
- Different surnames from 1870 to 1880

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Vital Records

- Birth, marriage, and death records
- Often provide the names of an individual's parents and/or spouse
- Can be found at the town/city, county, or state level, depending on location and time period
- Less available in southern states before the 20^{th} century

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Church Records

- · Provide similar information as vital records
 - Additional: baptisms, burials, confirmations
 - Enslaver's name likely included if before emancipation
- · Identify ancestor's religion before searching
- Online sources: American Ancestors, FamilySearch, Ancestry

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July 30, 1820, James Gorton of Voluntown, and Ruhamah Thompson of Westerly.

Aug. 17, 1829, Cato Caffe and Flora Palmer (people of color). Dec. 13, 1829, Elisha Faxon, Jr., and Mary D. Smith.
Feb. 6, 1821, John W. Hull and Nancy York.
April 30, 1821, George W. Moss and Caroline E. Hyde.
May 14, 1821, Noyes Ladd of Franklin, and Harriet Z. Williams.
May 20, 1821, Thomas S. Breed and Rebecca Potter.
June 3, 1821, Thomas S. Breed and Rebecca Potter.
June 10, 1821, Jonathan Pendleton and Caroline Pendleton.
July 8, 1821, Charles E. Coles of New York, and Mary Ash.
Oct. 4, 1821, Daniel C. Hammond and Elizabeth S. Blevin of Westerly.
Nov. 1, 1821, Joseph W. Stanton and Grace N. Palmer.
Nov. 5, 1821, Hamplon Stuart of New York, and Sarah Wilcox.
Nov. 182, 1821, Jedediah Leeds of New Orleans, and Mary R. Stanton.
Nov. 29, 1821, dedediah Leeds of New Orleans, and Mary R. Stanton.
Nov. 29, 1821, Octon Haley and Rebecca Brown.
March 24, 1822, Cyrus Wheeler and Lucy S. Browning of North Stonington.
May 19, 1822, Petre McLaughlin of New York, and Sarah Tinker.
July 8, 1822, William R. Palmer and Nancy B. Babcock.
Oct. 22, 1822, Luke Barker of New York, and Abigail Cobb.
Nov. 21, 1822, Samuel Breed and Eliza P. Williams.
March 20, 1823, George Green and Mary Noyes.
Sept. 2, 1823, Juba C. Hamilton and Lilly Ross (people of color).
Sept. 2, 1823, Juba G. Clark of South Kingston, and Almira D. Page.
Nov. 2, 1823, Juba G. George Green and Mary Noyes.

Stonington, CT First Congregational Church marriage records



Nov. 30, 1739, Samuel Thorn, and Rebecca Habes.
Dec. 6, 1739, Crump, negro servant of Stephen Richardson, and Deborah, indian servant of Jonathan Richardson.
Dec. 18, 1739, William Noyes, and Cybill Whiting.
Jan. 3, 1740, John Benjamin of Freston, and Margaret Jamison.
Feb. 18, 1740, Eilan Chesebrough Jun., and Eather Dennis.
Dec. 18, 1740, Eilan Chesebrough Jun., and Bather Dennis.
Dec. 19, 1741, Samuel Faria Jun., and Mary Stanton.
May 10, 1741, Lieut. John Randall, and Mary Palmer.
May, 27, 1741, Samuel Clark, and Mary Jamison.
July, 1741, Edward Hancox, and Lucy Chesebrough.
Aug. 20, 1741, David Dewe, and Deborah Tracy.
Dec. 20, 1741, Stephen Mason, and Joanna Newkachuse, Indians.
Feb. 11, 1742, Thomas Clark of Westerly, and Elizabeth Jamison.
March 17, 1742, Peter, negro servant of Stephen Richardson, and Mary Jones, an Indian negro mulatto.
March 31, 1742, Joseph Garret, and Katherine, Indians.
July 1, 1742, Unlima Brown, and Joanna Fellows.
July 1, 1742, Joseph Garret, and Katherine, Indians.
Nov. 11, 1742, Joseph Garret, and Sarah Eldredge both of Groton.
Sept. 9, 1742, Thomas Chester, and Sarah Eldredge both of Groton.
Sept. 9, 1742, Thomas Chester, and Sarah Eldredge both of Groton.
Sept. 17, 1743, Doseph Wandeag, and Rebecca Psishetows, Indians.
Nov. 11, 1742, Moses Tyler of Freston, and Joanna Denison.
Feb. 17, 1743, Daniel Fish of Preston, and Rebecca Psiner.
June 21, 1745, Nicholan Newkajous, and Sarah Feter, Indians.
July 1, 1743, Capt. John Denison, and Rebecca Psiner.
June 21, 1745, Capt. John Denison, and Ebecca Noyes.
Nov. 9, 1743, William Brumly of Stonington and Elizabeth Brown of Westerly.

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Freedmen's Bureau Records

- Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands established towards the end of the Civil War
- Aimed to help formerly enslaved people transition from enslavement to freedom and citizenship
- Some services included:
 - Providing food, housing, legal assistance, medical aid, banking services
 - Assisting in establishing schools (Howard University)
 - Overseeing labor and apprenticeship contracts
- Online sources: Ancestry, FamilySearch, Smithsonian

Examples of Freedmen's Bureau Documents

- · Local census lists
- · Labor contracts
- Marriage registers
- · Applications for rations
- · Medical records
- · Court records
- Records of back pay for soldiers in the U.S. Colored Troops
- · School records
- Narrative reports
- · Property records

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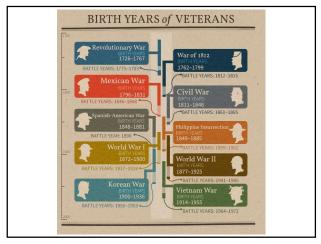
District of Columbia marriage register

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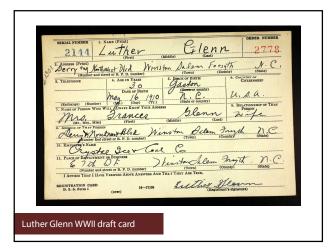
Military Records

- African Americans participated in military conflicts since the colonial era
- Helps identify individuals who served or were eligible for service
 - Pension records
 - Military rolls
 - Enlistment papers
 - Draft cards/records
 - Manuscripts (diaries or letters home)
- Fold3.com holds military records

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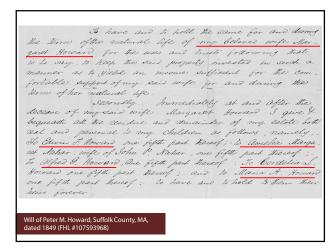
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Probate Records

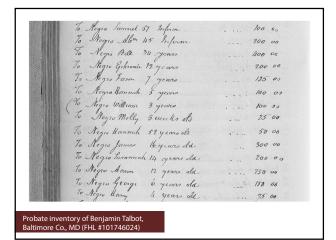
- Probate is the process of settling a person's property or estate upon their death
- Helps in identifying heirs (spouse, children, grandchildren, siblings, etc.)
- Generally held at the county level; some exceptions
- Testate (with a will) vs. intestate (no will)
- Types of probate documents:
 - Wills
 - Inventories
 - Petitions
 - Letters of administration (names the executor)
 - Other: adoption, guardianship, divorce



Probate Pre-Emancipation

- Enslaved people considered property and often named in probate
 - Bequeathed in wills
 - Listed as inventory
 - Emancipated by their enslaver
 - Sold to another enslaver
- Will need to know the name of your ancestor's enslaver

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Land and Property Records

- Use land and property records to:
 - Determine where your ancestor lived
 - Identify relationships
- Grantor (seller) vs. grantee (buyer)
- Maintained at the local level (town or county)
- FamilySearch is a great resource for all states

Enslaved People in Deeds

- Any transaction involving enslaved people could be recorded as a deed in property records
- Need to know enslaver's name
- Types of deeds:
 - Bills of sale
 - Enslaved people being hired out
 - Deeds of gift
 - Transactions related to probate
 - Manumissions (granted freedom)

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Manumissions

- Legal documents that granted emancipation
- Can be found in:
 - Probate
 - Land or property records
 - Court files
 - Personal papers/collections
- If not online, check:
 - State and county archives
 - Colleges and universities
 - Local libraries
 - Historical societies

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