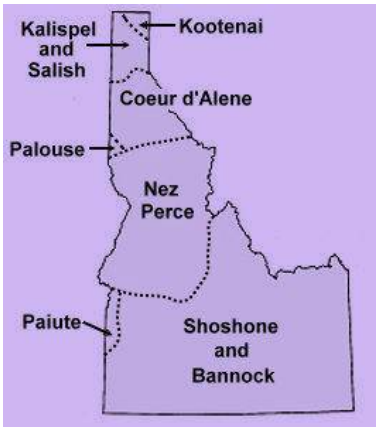
Genealogy Research in Idaho



Native American History:
Tribes who lived in what became the state of Idaho:
Bannock; Blackfeet; Coeur d' Alene; Kootenai; Nez Perce; Northern Paiute; Palouse; Kalispel and Spokane Salish; Shoshone

1855: The Treaty of Hell's Gate resulted in the Salish and Kootenai Tribes ceding their land to the U.S. Government.

Between 1860 and the 1880's, conflicts between the U. S. government and the Nez Perce and Bannock tribes resulted in those tribes ceding their land to the U.S. government.

European History:
1803: The area that became the state of Idaho was part of the Louisiana Purchase.
1805: Lewis and Clark passed through the area.
1809: The first fur trading post was built by David Thompson.
1820: Fort Boise was established.
1834: Fort Hall trading post was built on the Snake River near the site of present- day Pocatello. It was a major way station for travelers on the Oregon Trail heading to Oregon, Washington, and California.
1848: Idaho became part of the Oregon Territory.
1859: The counties in the panhandle became part of the Washington Territory.
1860: Mormons established the first permanent white settlement at Franklin in the Cache Valley.
Early 1860s: gold and silver were discovered. This led to the establishment of Idaho Territory in 1863. The territory encompassed most of what became Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming.
After the Civil War, many settlers from the East came to Idaho to mine or to establish farms along the river valleys.
1880's: The completion of the railroad brought another wave of European settlers.
3 July 1890: Idaho became the 43rd state admitted to the Union.
Early 1900's: Reclamation (irrigation) projects in former desert lands brought in more settlers.

Idaho Birth Records

Online indexes of Idaho birth records:
FamilySearch.org:

- Idaho births and christenings from 1856 – 1965
- Idaho birth index 1861 - 1911

Ancestry.com:

- Idaho, Birth Index, 1861-1911, Stillbirth Index, 1905-1962

Births in Idaho before 1911
Beginning in 1907 the state of Idaho required that professional midwives and physicians record births and send the records to the county recorder. Some delayed birth records also were created.
Obtain a copy of an early Idaho birth record from the 1907 – 1911 birth registers at the Idaho State Historical Society.

Idaho births after 1911 - After 1911 all births were registered directly with the state.
Copies of post 1911 Idaho birth certificates can be obtained from the Vital Statistics Unit, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare.

Restrictions for obtaining Idaho birth records of persons born within the last 100 years:
A person requesting a birth record of someone born less than 100 years ago must be:

- The person on the certificate
- The parent, grandparent, child, sibling, spouse or legal guardian of the person on the certificate
- Anyone who has legal interest in the certificate

Idaho Marriage Records

Online indexes of Idaho marriage records:

- *FamilySearch.org* - indexes or images of some Idaho marriages from 1864 – 1950.
- *Ancestry.com* - indexes of some Idaho marriages from 1842 – 1996.
- *Western States Marriage Index* – indexes of pre-1900 Idaho marriages, some records extending into the 1900's - http://abish.byui.edu/specialCollections/westernStates/search.cfm.

Marriages before 1911
The counties kept a few marriage records before 1911.
Obtain a record of an Idaho marriage before 1911 from the County Recorder in the county where the marriage occurred.

Marriages from 1911 to the present
Order a copy of a marriage record after 1911 from the Idaho Bureau of Vital Statistics.
The marriage must have occurred *50 or more* years ago.
Get instructions for ordering marriage records at:
http://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Health/VitalRecordsandHealthStatistics/Birth,Death,Marriage,DivorceCertificates/tabid/82/Default.aspx.

Search for eloping couples in the *Gretna Green* for that area. Gretna Greens are locations which have/had less restrictive requirements for marriage than the place your ancestors lived. A list of some U. S. Gretna Green locations can be found on the *FamilySearch* Wiki

Idaho Death Records

Counties were not required to record deaths until 1907. Prior to that time, some deaths were recorded by churches, mortuaries, or physicians.

Online indexes/ images of Idaho death records:
FamilySearch.org:

- Images of Death Certificates recorded by some Idaho counties 1907 - 1920
- Name index and images of Idaho Death Certificates from 1911 to 1937
- Name index and extracted data from Idaho death records 1911 to 1956

Ancestry.com:

- Indexes of some Idaho deaths 1890 – 1962
- Name index and extracted data from Idaho death records 1911 to 1956

Deaths in 1911 or earlier
Some counties recorded deaths before 1907. In 1907, the state of Idaho required professionals to record the deaths of individuals. The registration of deaths was the responsibility of any clergyman, coroner, physician, or undertaker who had cared for the deceased during the last sickness or made arrangements for the burial. This information was reported to the County Recorder.

Obtain a copy of a death record dated before 1911 from the County Recorder's office in the county where the death occurred.

Idaho Deaths after 1911
After 1911 all deaths in Idaho were registered directly with the state.

Idaho Death certificates dated after 1911 can be obtained by contacting:
Vital Statistics Unit, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

Restrictions for Obtaining Death Records of those who died within the last 50 years
The person requesting a death record less than 50 years old must be:

- The parent or grandparent of the person on the certificate
- The spouse of the person on the certificate
- The child or grandchild of the person on the certificate
- The sibling of the person on the certificate
- Anyone who can provide documentation showing it is needed for their property right
- Legal representative of the above

Other Records that may contain Birth, Marriage, and Death information:

- Church records
- Censuses
- Newspaper articles
- Military Records
- Funeral Home/Cemetery Records
- Wills/Probate records
- Family Bibles

Idaho Archives and Repositories

Brigham Young University – Idaho Library in Rexburg – original research material on Utah and Eastern Idaho settlers, comprehensive for materials relating to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) – http://library.byui.edu/
Idaho Genealogical Society – http://www.idahogenealogy.org/#
Idaho State Archives – newspapers, photographs, and manuscripts relating to Idaho – http://history.idaho.gov/idaho-state-archives
Idaho State Historical Society – www.history.idaho.gov/searchable-indexes
Mountain West Digital Library – central search portal for digital genealogical and historical collections about the Mountain West region, including Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Arizona, Montana, Hawaii, and other parts of the U.S. West – http://mwdl.org/
University of Idaho Library in Moscow – http://www.lib.uidaho.edu/

Idaho Church History

Before 1900 the largest religious groups in Idaho were The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Roman Catholic, Methodist Episcopal, and the Presbyterian churches.

Idaho Church Record Repositories

The Idaho State Archives has a significant collection of Episcopal Church records and an index of Catholic Church records

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints:
The Family History Library and the LDS Church History Library in Salt Lake City, UT

Methodist:
United Methodist Archives Center; Drew University Library; Madison, NJ

Presbyterian:
Presbyterian Historical Society; United Presbyterian Church in U.S.; Philadelphia, PA

Roman Catholic:
Diocese of Boise; Boise, ID

Idaho Land Records

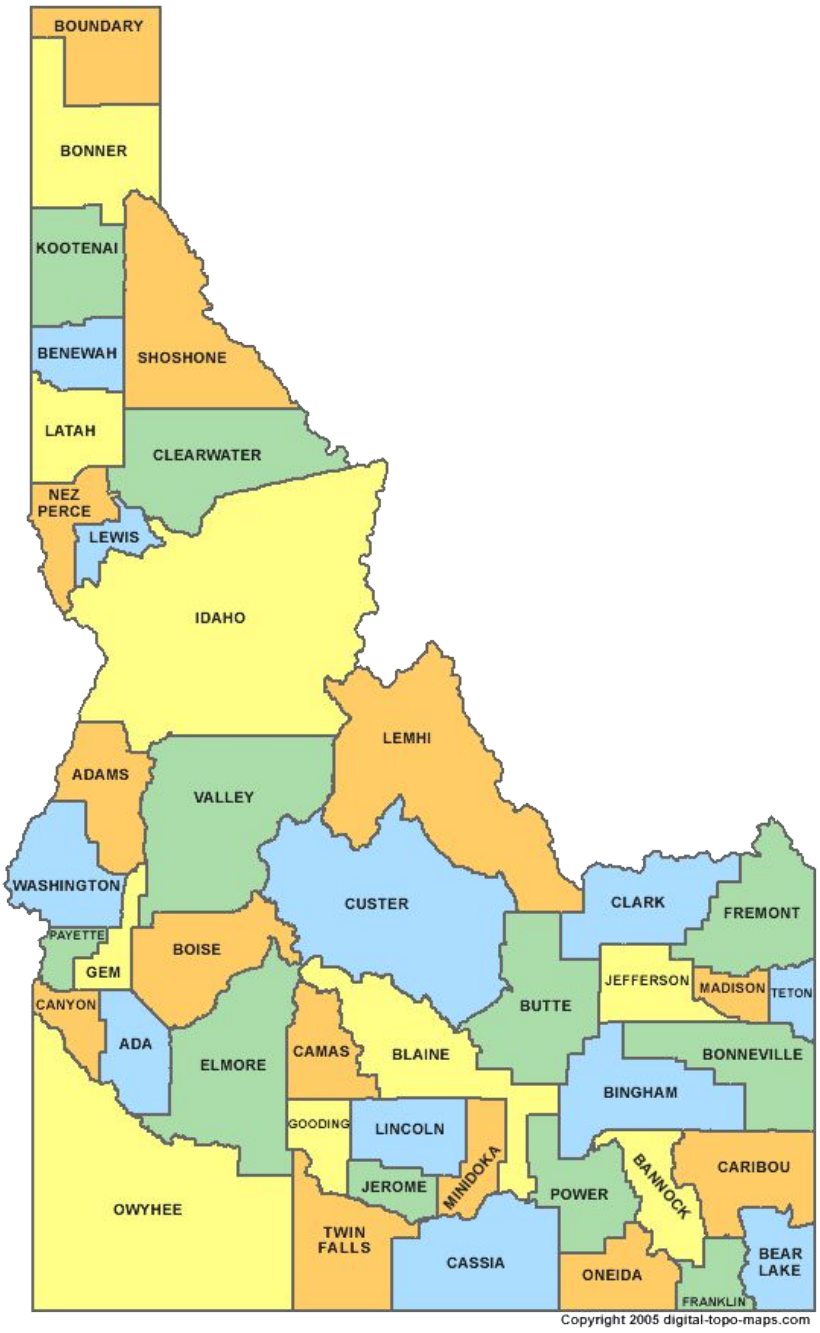
When Idaho was first settled, the federal government administered most of the land through local land offices. Available land was surveyed and could then be transferred to private ownership in a process known as land entry.
After a settler completed the requirements for homesteading or purchasing land, the local land office sent his case file to the General Land Office in Washington, DC, where a patent or first title deed was issued, transferring the land to private ownership.
The Bureau of Land Management has an online index to land patents in Idaho (most are after 1908) on the *BLM GLO website*. The patent search may also provide a digital image of the original patent.
To locate the land entry or homestead case file for your ancestor, you will need to know either the patent number or the legal description (range, township, section of the land).
The county recorder of deeds may be able to provide the legal description from county land records, or you may be able to pinpoint the exact location of the tract by searching the entries in the tract book covering the approximate area.
The patents and copies of the tract books and township plats are at the **Idaho State Office of the Bureau of Land Management**

Migration Trails through Idaho

Lewis and Clark Trail - Nez Perce (NEE-ME-POO) Trail - Oregon Trail and Mormon Trail – California Trail – Old Spanish Trail – Santa Fe Trail – El Camino Real – Gila Trail – Butterfield Overland Mail
Find more information about migration through the Plains States at :
http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~tqpeiffer/Documents/Ancestral%20Migration%20Archives/Migration%20Webpage%20Folder/Central%20Plains%20States%20Routes.htm

The Atlas of Historical County Boundaries – Interactive maps and text covering the historical boundaries, names, organization, and attachments of every county, extinct county and unsuccessful county proposal from the creation of the first county through December 31, 2000. - http://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp/index.html

Idaho Counties



Idaho Genealogy Research Websites

Note: Check online for the *GenWeb* and *Genealogy Trails* of the county in which your ancestor lived.

Boise Public Library Obituary Index - Indexed dates of obituaries and death notices published in The Idaho Statesman, from 1959-present – order copy of article from the library for a fee - http://www.boisepubliclibrary.org/research/obituaries-local-history/obituary-index/

Brigham Young University – Idaho Library in Rexburg – original research material on Utah and Eastern Idaho settlers, comprehensive for materials relating to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) – http://library.byui.edu/

Digital Atlas of Idaho – current Idaho County maps, other information - http://imnh.isu.edu/digitalatlas/counties/counties.htm
Idaho Obituaries – links to websites with online obituaries or death records of Idaho residents - https://www.newspaperobituaries.net/idaho/
Idaho Digital Resources - photographs, newspaper clippings, government documents and sketches - http://idahodocs.contentdm.oclc.org/index.php
Idaho State Historical Society: Searchable Indexes – indexes of naturalizations, Civil War veterans, mothers' and old age pension records, the penitentiary inmate catalog, and the Idaho Biographical Index - http://history.idaho.gov/searchable-indexes
Mountain West Digital Library – central search portal for digital genealogical and historical collections about the Mountain West region, including Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Arizona, Montana, Hawaii, and other parts of the U.S. West – http://mwdl.org/
Online County Histories - http://www.learnwebskills.com/family/countyhistories1.htm#il
Western States Marriage Index at http://abish.byui.edu/specialcollections/westernstates/search.cfm

Idaho African American Research

Africa Map – track the slave trade with historical overlays and geographical data - http://worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap/
AfriGeneas – slave records, death and marriage records, censuses, surnames – chat or send messages to other researchers - http://afrigeneas.com/
International African American Museum - African American funeral programs, obituaries, marriage records, photos, historical documents and family histories – military records of the U.S. Colored Troops are currently being digitized - https://cfh.iaamuseum.org/records/
Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery - search thousands of "Information Wanted" advertisements taken out by former slaves in all states searching for family members lost by sale, flight, or enlistment – the collection currently includes newspapers from 1853 to 1911 - http://www.informationwanted.org/
Slave Voyages - the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* documents vessels along the Atlantic slave routes from 1514 to 1866; *Intra-American Slave Trade Database* documents vessels traveling between the Atlantic and Pacific ports ranging from the United States to Brazil; the *African Names Database* gives names, ages, possible origins of slaves liberated from captured slave ships between 1808 and 1862 - https://www.slavevoyages.org/

Idaho Military Research

Grand Army of the Republic Records Project – developing database - histories of posts, reports of officers and members if available, search by state - http://suvcw.org/garrecords/

Idaho Native American Research

Native Languages of the Americas: Native American Cultures: indigenous peoples living in what became the state of Idaho: http://www.native-languages.org/idaho.htm

Idaho Newspaper Research

Idaho Online Historical Newspapers - https://sites.google.com/site/onlinenewspapersite/Home/usa/id

Information on these pages compiled from information in:

- *FamilySearch.org* Wiki
- Family Tree Magazine
- *The Weekly Genealogist, NEHGS; Dick Eastman Genealogy Newsletter*
- *Genealogy Gems from the Allen County Public Library*