Genealogy Research in Wisconsin

Native American tribes inhabiting Wisconsin prior to the arrival of Europeans included:

- Dakota Sioux tribe
- The Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) tribe
- The Menominee tribe
- The Ojibwe tribe (also known as Chippewa, Ojibway, or Ojibwa)
- The Potawatomi tribe
- The Fox and Sauk tribes

Tribes driven into Wisconsin after the arrival of Europeans included:

- The Cheyenne tribe
- The Huron tribe
- The Illini tribe
- The Munsee tribe
- The Stockbridge tribe
- The Oneida tribe

Through treaties and warfare culminating in the Black Hawk War, most native tribes lost their land and were forced onto reservations by the U. S. government.
In 1809, except for the Door County Peninsula, the area that is now Wisconsin became part of Illinois Territory.
In 1818, the area became part of the Michigan Territory.
In 1836 Wisconsin became a territory.

Between 1836 and 1850, Wisconsin's immigrant population increased from 11,000 to over 305,000.
In 1848, Wisconsin became a state.
By the mid 1800's, Indians had been induced to cede most of their lands to the federal government. Some were relocated west of the Mississippi River.
Of the more than 100,000 foreign-born Wisconsinites in 1850, only 48,000 could claim English as their native language. Nearly one-half of these English speakers were Irish. Non-English speaking immigrants included the Germans, Norwegians and Canadians of primarily French descent.
There was also considerable emigration from England, Scotland, Wales, and British North America.
Ethnic groups who left their mark on particular areas of Wisconsin included the Finns in Douglas County, the Danes in Racine County, and the Italians in Kenosha.

Wisconsin Birth Records

In 1852, Wisconsin law required counties to record births, but this was largely ignored.
In 1878, Wisconsin law again required counties to records births. More counties complied.
In 1907, Wisconsin Statewide birth registration began.
FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com both have indexes of Wisconsin births from the early 1800's to the early 1900's.
Obtain a copy of a Birth Record from the **County Register of Deeds Office** or from the **Wisconsin State Vital Records Office**.
If you don't know the exact year of birth, the Wisconsin State Bureau of Vital Statistics will search a five-year period for a fee.

Wisconsin Marriage Records

Some counties issued marriage applications as early as the 1820s, but most began recording marriages at the time the county was formed. Statewide registration began in 1907.
FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com have indexes of marriages from the mid 1800's to varied years in the 1900's.
Obtain a copy of a Marriage Record from the **County Register of Deeds Office** or from the **Wisconsin State Vital Records Office**.
Note: Marriage license applications contain more family information than Marriage Certificates.

Wisconsin Death Records

Before 1907, deaths were not recorded by the state; however, *some* counties recorded deaths.
Statewide registration of deaths was required 1907. By 1908, most counties were recording deaths.
FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com have indexes of Wisconsin Deaths for some years in the 1800's and the 1900's.
The LDS Family History Library has microfilms of some Wisconsin Death Certificates. Check availability of microfilm rental on the FamilySearch.org Catalog.
Obtain a copy of a Death Certificate from the **County Register of Deeds Office** or from the **Wisconsin State Vital Records Office**.

Other Sources of Birth/Death Information:

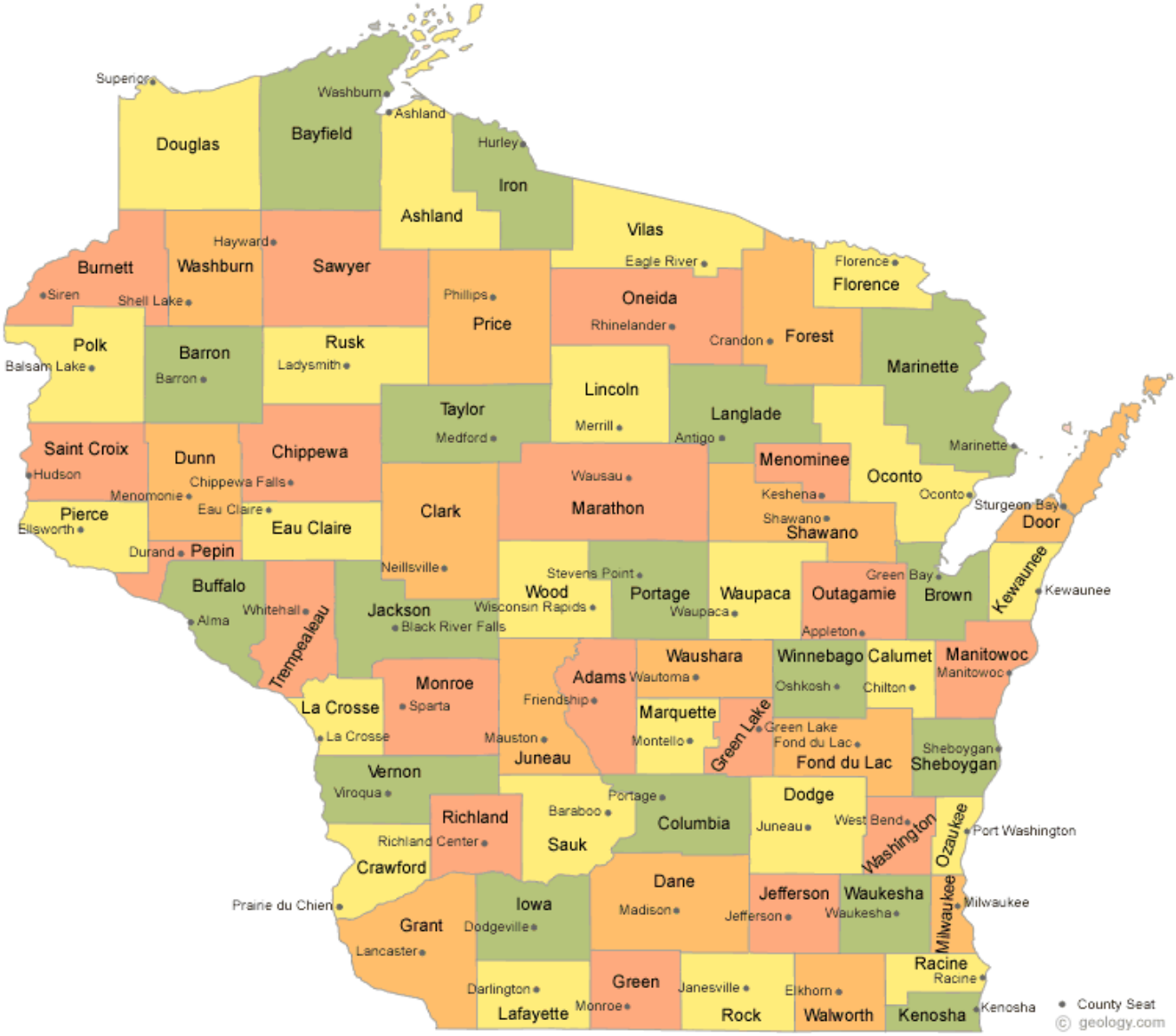
- Newspaper announcements
- Church records/Family Bible records
- Census records
- Military records
- Obituaries/Funeral Home/Cemetery records
- Death records/ Wills/Probate records

Wisconsin Genealogical/Historical Repositories

University of Wisconsin:
La Crosse Area Research Center
The Karrmann Library Southwest Wisconsin Room
Harold W. Anderson Library Area Research Center
River Falls Area Research Center
Stout Archives and Area Research Center
Parkside Archives and Area Research Center
Eau Claire Special Collections & Archives
Green Bay Area Research Center
Milwaukee – Archives Department
Oshkosh Archives and Area Research Center
Stevens Point Archives and Area Research Center
Wisconsin Historical Society
Wisconsin State Genealogical Society

Migration Routes in the Central Plains States -
http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~tqpeiffer/Documents/Ancestral%20Migration%20Archives/Migration%20Webpage%20Folder/Central%20Plains%20States%20Routes.htm

Wisconsin Counties



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

Wisconsin Genealogical Research Websites

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

Campbellsport Historical Society – *Fon Du Lac County, WI* -transcriptions, databases of village plats, family histories, obituaries, memorial cards, Roderick Reese Papers, news clipping scrapbooks, cemetery burials – click on Campbellsport Historical Society - http://www.campbellsport.govoffice.com/
Crandon Public Library Databases – *Forest County, WI: Local History Obituary Index* - selected years, click on link in Genealogy Resources section – *Crandon High School Yearbook Collection*, click on link in *Local History Holdings* section – http://www.crandonpl.org/

Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society – *WOOD COUNTY, WI* - indexes of marriages, early deaths, intentions to naturalize, and > 120 biographies - http://www.howgs.org/research.php**Online County Histories** - http://www.learnwebskills.com/family/countyhistories1.htm#il
Recollection Wisconsin – county histories, diaries, letters, local history, manuscripts, newspapers, oral histories, photographs, plat maps, yearbooks - http://recollectionwisconsin.org/
River Falls Area Research Center - historical materials, local government records, manuscripts, and collections from four northwestern Wisconsin counties: Burnett, Pierce, Polk, and Saint Croix - https://www.uwrf.edu/AreaResearchCenter/
Wisconsin Historical Society – indexes or transcriptions: Civil War records, county histories, vital records, biographies, newspaper clippings, property records - https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS15307

Wisconsin African American Research

AfricaMap – 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/

Wisconsin Cemetery Research

Fon Du Lac County, WI: **Campbellsport Historical Society** – databases of burials in 24 local cemeteries – click on Campbellsport Historical Society on the Home page - http://www.campbellsport.govoffice.com/
Milwaukee Catholic Cemeteries – search index of burials - http://www.cemeteries.org/Genealogy-Search.htm
WOOD COUNTY, WI: **Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society** – indexes of burials in > 70 cemeteries - http://www.howgs.org/research.php

Wisconsin 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/

Wisconsin Native American Research

Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center – student records, cemetery information, much related to one of the Sioux tribes - http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/
Native American Tribes of Wisconsin - http://www.native-languages.org/wisconsin.htm

Wisconsin Newspaper Research

Crandon Public Library Databases – *Forest County, WI:* **Local History Obituary Index** - selected years, click on link in Genealogy Resources section - http://www.crandonpl.org/

Door County Library Newspaper Archive – search or browse twelve newspapers – years of publication vary between 1862 and 1970 - http://www.doorcountynewspapers.org/
Wisconsin Historical Society – view transcriptions of newspaper articles – order copies of complete articles for a fee - http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/research.asp
Wisconsin Online Historical Newspapers – names of newspapers, publication dates, links to websites with images of newspaper pages - https://sites.google.com/site/onlinenewspapersite/Home/usa/wi

Information on these pages is compiled from information in:

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