



Genealogical Research With Courthouse Records

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Thousands of courthouses exist across the United States, and most, if not all, have some records that are valuable to genealogists searching for information on their family. Researchers may discover property records, land transfers, probates and estate records, guardianships, tax records, civil and criminal proceedings including coroner's records, naturalizations, divorces, paternity, and even information indicating if your ancestors were paupers, insane or felons.

Since official vital records did not exist in most states prior to the 20th century, researchers should consider court documents in their family history research. For example, wills and estate records typically list family members, and land title transfers can provide important clues to an ancestor's death or relocation. Civil and criminal records can reveal names and relationships of family members, while naturalization records can show when our ancestors immigrated to the United States, from where, and in some cases, the exact place of birth.

This publication is a sample of courthouse resources available at the Library of Michigan. Titles may be located by searching ANSWER, the Library's online catalog, which can be found at: <http://answercat.org>. The easiest way to locate courthouse resources in ANSWER is with a keyword search using the term **court**, followed by the type of information you are looking for. Here are some additional suggestions to help maximize your search results:

- **court records michigan**
- **north carolina wills**
- **eaton county probate**
- **bedford county court**
- **michigan landowners**
- **new york naturalization**
- **michigan naturalization**
- **illinois marriages**

Adding a geographic location will allow you to narrow your search. For example, **new york** and **monroe county** will retrieve genealogical resources that focus on Monroe County, New York. When searching by keyword, it is not necessary to capitalize proper nouns.

GENERAL RESOURCES

Franklin, Charles M. *Keys to the Courthouse*. 3 vols. Indianapolis, IN : Heritage House, 1985-1986.
Genealogy CS 49 .F73 1985

Rose, Christine. *Courthouse Research for Family Historians: Your Guide to Genealogical Treasures*. San Jose, CA : CR Publications, 2004.
Genealogy CS 49 .R66 2004

Sourcebook to Public Record Information: The Comprehensive Guide to County, State, and Federal Public Records Sources. Edited by Peter J. Weber and Michael Sankey. Tempe, AZ : BRB Publications, 2005.
Reference JK 468 .P76 S69 2005

United States. National Archives and Records Administration. *Federal Court Records: A Select Catalog of National Microfilm Publications*. Washington, DC : National Archives Trust Fund Board, National Archives and Records Administration, 1987.
Genealogy KF 4 .U556 1987

MICHIGAN COUNTIES

Deeds Copied from the First Book of Deeds on Record in the Court House Records of Kalamazoo County, Michigan. Kalamazoo, MI: Mrs. J.P. Everett, 1935.
Michigan F 572 .K2 D44 1935

Index Cards to Naturalization Petitions for the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, Detroit, 1907-1995. 280 reels. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2004.
Microfilm F 566 .V2 2004

Index to Justice of the Peace, 1878-1904: Baldwin Township and Village of East Tawas, Iosco County, Michigan. Oscoda, MI: Huron Shores Genealogical Society, 2003.
Michigan F 572 .I63 I57 2003
There are other volumes covering Tawas Township.

Index to Special Sessions of the Michigan Supreme Court, 1857-2003: As Recorded in the Michigan Reports. Lansing, MI : Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society, 2004.
Law KFM 4245 .A332

Kent County Circuit Court Surname Index. Lansing, MI : State Archives of Michigan, 1990.
Michigan Documents F 572 .K3 K36 1990

Michigan. Court of Chancery (Allegan County District). *Chancery Calendar, Allegan County*. 2 reels. Salt Lake City, UT : Genealogical Society, 1983.
Microfilm F 572 .A3 M5 1983

Michigan Territorial Court. *Records of the Territorial Court of Michigan, 1815-1836*. 9 reels. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1980.
Microfilm KFM 4245 .A35 1980
The records consist of case files and a bound volume written in the style of a journal.

Saint Joseph County, Michigan Justice of the Peace Records. Salt Lake City, UT: Genealogical Society, 1981.
Microfilm F 574 .M674 M6 1981

Serrell, Alice D., comp. *Abstracts of Probate Files in the Probate Court, Oakland County, Michigan*. Pontiac, MI : General Richardson Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, 1996.
Michigan F 572 .O2 S47 1996

Stevens, Carol A. Bowen. *Indexes to Naturalizations, Lenawee County, Michigan*. Tipton, MI : C.A. Stevens, 1999.
Michigan F 572 .L5 S74 1999

Szucs, Loretto D. *Naturalizations, Declarations of Intent and Final Oaths: Circuit Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Detroit*. Midlothian, IL: L.D. Szucs, 1977.
Michigan F 574 .D4 U6 1977

OTHER STATES

Austin, Jeannette Holland. *Georgia Intestate Records*. Baltimore, MD : Genealogical Publishing Company, 1986.
Genealogy F 285 .A8895 1986

Brown, Virginia Alleman. *Abstracts of Partitions and Divisions of Morris County Estates Filed at Morristown, New Jersey, 1785-1900*. Baltimore, MD : Clearfield Co., 1992.
Genealogy F 142 .M8 B76 1992

Craft, Kenneth Fischer, Jr. *Ohio County (WV) Index: Index to County Court Order Books, 1777-1881*. 4 Vols. Bowie, MD. : Heritage Books, 1997-1999.
Genealogy F 240 .C73 1997

Dexter, Darrel, comp. *Union County Illinois Probate Records, 1818-1855*. Carterville, IL : Genealogy Society of Southern Illinois, 1996.
Genealogy F 547 .U5 D4966 1996
Another volume covers 1856 to 1868.

Graver, William H. *Index to Selected Hamilton County, Ohio, Recorder's Books, 1801-1820*. Milford, OH : Little Miami Publishing Company, 2000.
Genealogy F 497 .H2 G66 2000 Index

Grove, Helen E. *Clinton County, Indiana, First Guardianship Book: 1836-1866, Books 1 & 2*. Kokomo, IN : Selby Pub., 1995.
Genealogy F 532 .C65 G764 1995

Hester, Gwendolyn Lynette. *Sumter County, Alabama, Wills: 1828-1872; Mortality Schedules: 1850-1880*. Hester. Dallas, TX : Southern Roots, 1998.
Genealogy F 277 .S8 H47 1998

Index (Soundex) to Naturalization Petitions, 1792-1906. 293 reels. North Salt Lake, UT : HeritageQuest, 2000.
Microfilm F 118 .I642 2000z
Naturalization petitions filed with the federal, state, and local courts of New York City.

Mackey, Howard, and Marlene A. Groves, eds. *Northampton County Virginia Record Book: Orders, Deeds, Wills &c.* 6 vols. Rockport, ME: Picton Press, 1999-2003.
Genealogy F 232 .N85 M32 1999

Parker, Mattie E., ed. *North Carolina Higher-Court Records*. 5 vols. Raleigh, NC: State Department of Archives and History, 1968.
Genealogy KFN 7919 .A4 A7 1670

Sanders, Carol L. *First Order Book, Court Orders of Russell County, Kentucky*. Blue Ash, OH : C.L. Sanders, 1991.
Genealogy F 457 .R8 S34 1991

Sherman, Ruth Ann Wilder. *An Index to Plymouth County, Massachusetts Warnings Out from the Plymouth Court Records, 1686-1859*. Plymouth, MA: General Society of Mayflower Descendants, 2003.
Genealogy F 72 .P7 S54 2003

INTERNET RESOURCES

Archives of Michigan

<http://michigan.gov/archivesofmi>

The Archives houses many records from Michigan county courthouses, including naturalization records and indexes.

The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints Family History Centers

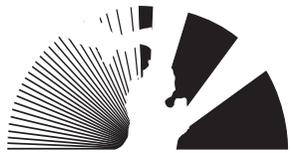
<http://familysearch.org>

Microfilmed courthouse records can be requested from the Family History Library through your local Family History Centers.

United States GenWeb Project

<http://www.usgenweb.com/>

This web site has links to courthouse records.



Library of Michigan

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