

Using the Final Rolls of the Five Civilized Tribes

The Final Rolls of the Five Civilized Tribes or "Dawes Rolls" was taken between the years of 1898 and 1906 for individuals who were eligible for enrollment among the Five Civilized Tribes. The Five Civilized Tribes consisted of the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Seminole. Enrollment was done for people living in Indian Territory within the tribal nations. Early tribal rolls were used to help determine who was eligible for enrollment. The earlier rolls were used to help document age, family relationships, etc. since no birth certificates were available.

Starting Your Research

Before using the rolls, it will be helpful if you know the following information.

1. The name of the person who was living with the tribe in Indian Territory and who was alive during the time of enrollment. (1898-1906)
2. Place where the person lived in Indian Territory.
3. Approximate age of the person.
4. Names of parents, children, spouse, etc.

Arrangement of the Rolls

The rolls consist of three parts; the index, the census cards and the applications. Categories for enrollment were "by blood", "new born", "minor", "by marriage", and "freedmen". The "by blood" category will include those who had Indian blood. "Newborn" and "minor" will include young children of Indian or freedman parents. "By marriage" will be people married to Indians who were usually white. The abbreviation, "IW" may be used to refer to this group of enrollees. "IW" stands for intermarried whites. "Freedmen" enrollees will be the former slaves of the Indians who were adopted into the tribes. These individuals will not have Indian blood, but were allowed to enroll because they had been adopted into the tribe.

Using the Index

Start with the index to determine the individual's roll number. To use the index, go to www.okhistory.org/research/dawes/index.php. Enter the name and tribe of the individual. If you know their roll number you can also include that.

Click on the "search" button. The results will list the individual's name, age, Census Card number, and enrollment or roll number. Click on the Census Card number to pull up the names of everyone who was enrolled on that Census Card. You will also notice that the ages and degree of Indian blood for each individual is listed.

Using the Census Cards

At this point, you will need to consult the census cards which are online at www.footnote.com (Note: Footnote.com is a subscription site. However, the Census Cards have been microfilmed and are available at Family History Centers, the National Archives Branch in Ft. Worth, TX, the Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK and the Tulsa City County Library Genealogy Center, Tulsa, OK.) The information found on the census cards was taken from the individual's actual application for enrollment. To locate the Census Cards on Footnote.com, choose "Emerging America" and scroll down to the "Dawes Enrollment Cards". Choose the tribe and enrollment category and Census Card number you are looking for. To locate the census card on microfilm, find the microfilm roll that contains the correct tribe, category and census card number for your individual. Roll the microfilm to the census card number. The cards will have a number in the top right hand corner of the card.

For blood citizens, "minors", "newborns" and "by marriage" enrollees, the census card will give parents' names, place of residence, age, family members, etc. For persons listed on "freedmen" cards, two cards exist for each enrollee. Along with the above information, the names of former slave owners will be found on the second card.

Other information included on the census cards deals with the enrollment process. This may include earlier rolls the person was listed on, marriage dates, birth dates, and possibly a death date if someone died before the enrollment was finalized. Reference will be made to "newborn" cards if a child was born during the enrollment process. Other census card numbers may be listed that refer to other family members.

If individuals applied for enrollment who were not qualified for enrollment, they will have a "R" in front of their card number. Example: R358. This means that their application was "rejected" and they were not allowed to enroll.

If an individual made application and other evidence or documentation was required for full enrollment, their cards may have a "D" in front of the number. Example: D358. These applications were considered "doubtful" pending further proof. These doubtful applications were sometimes changed to rejected cards or

if sufficient proof was made, the applications were approved for full enrollment. Notes on the "R" and "D" cards will lead you to other cards if the applications were approved or rejected.

Using the Applications

Once you have checked the Census Cards and have verified that this is the family you are looking for, your next step will be to look at the full application. The applications correspond to the person's Census Card number, tribe and category. The full application will give personal and family information for all applicants. These applications are on microfilm and online on www.footnote.com.

A majority of the applications for the Creek tribe are lost. Copies of the census cards may be the only documents that survive for some Creek families.

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