



At the Big House & More

J. Mark Lowe, FUGA

marklowe@kytnresearch.com

© Copyright 2021, All Rights Reserved

Whether looking for someone who was living in the penitentiary, employed there, or just delivering the mail, there are a wealth of available resources for the persistent researcher. Develop a richer understanding of government records and develop a strategy for discovering the rich information contained in these oft unnoticed tools.

CRIMINAL COURTS

When laws are broken, criminal courts are called upon to determine the truth and bring justice. Finding court records for your family and neighbors can provide a wealth of information for your research. Understanding the arrangements of court records can help you find the right documents. Often within these records family relationships are proven and circumstances stated.

Style refers to the **Plaintiff** and **Defendants** of a case.

Civil Case Style
A.W Akers, Trustee vs Wm Jackson & Joseph W. Jackson

Criminal Case Style
State of Tennessee vs Wm Jackson & Joseph W. Jackson

Criminal cases involve the commission of acts that are prohibited by law and are punishable by probation, fines, imprisonment, or death. The attorney representing the state, county or municipal government that formally accuses an individual of committing a crime is the prosecutor. The party charged with the crime is the defendant.

Steps in a Criminal Case:

1. Arrest – Charge
2. Initial Appearance - Bonded
3. Preliminary Hearing
4. Grand Jury - Indictment
5. Arraignment in Preparation for Jury Trial
6. Trial - Opening Statements – Depositions – Witnesses – Jury Deliberations – Verdict.
7. Appeals – Courts of Appeal – Supreme Court (State & Federal)

Find Related Case Records

National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC)

<<http://www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc/>>

NUCMC is a program operated by the Library of Congress. The database includes holdings in museums, archives, historical societies, and research libraries. Although the structure is controlled, persistent and careful researchers can use this tool to their advantage. Be creative in your search techniques after reading the guidelines and FAQ's on the web site. This site does not include all of the entries contained in the printed volumes. (1960-1985)

General Search Engines

Using a general search engine (i.e. Google.com) can help locate references to manuscript collections that contain references to the location or family surname you are researching. It may also lead to journal articles or other periodicals that may contain footnotes that will lead to other collections.

One can also use this type of general search to find online manuscript catalogs, which will lead to additional resources.

RG21 Record Group 21 - District Courts of the United States

Established: As elements of the federal court system by the Judiciary Act of 1789 (1 Stat. 76), September 24, 1789, pursuant to Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, which granted to Congress power "To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court," and Article III, Section 1, which vested judicial power in the Supreme Court "and such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish." Individual district courts, minimally one for each state, established by specific legislation serve as the trial courts of general federal jurisdiction.

In addition to U.S. district courts, this record group includes the records of U.S. territorial courts, U.S. circuit courts, and Confederate States district courts. Jurisdiction includes criminal cases, tort suits by aliens, common law and equity suits involving the United States, suits involving an alien, and suits between citizens of different states. Appellate jurisdiction was transferred from circuit courts to courts of appeals by the Judiciary Act of 1891 (26 Stat. 826),

Select Bibliography

Black, Henry Campbell. *Black's Law Dictionary*. 6th ed. St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Co., 1990.

Eicholz, Alice, ed. *Ancestry's Red Book: American State, County and Town sources*. Revised Edition. Salt Lake City, Utah: Ancestry, 1992.

Greenwood, Val D., *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy*. 2nd Edition. Baltimore: GPC, 1990. (The 3rd Edition is now available.)

Leary, Helen F.M., *North Carolina Research: Genealogy and Local History*, 2nd Edition, Raleigh: North Carolina Genealogical Society, 1997,

Mills, Elizabeth Shown. *Evidence! Citation & Analysis for the Family Historian*. Baltimore, MD: GPC, 1997. This volume is essential for understanding the importance of adequate documentation of manuscript resources.

Szucs, Loretto Dennis and Sandra H. Luebking, editors. *The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy*. 3rd edition. Salt Lake City: Ancestry, 2006.

Web Resources

Bouvier's Law Dictionary, 1856: <<http://www.supremelaw.org/ref/dict/>>
<<http://www.constitution.org/boub/bouvier.htm>>

A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1776-1875 <<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html>>

Oklahoma State Courts Network
< <http://www.oscn.net>>

FamilySearch Wiki
<https://wiki.familysearch.org>

FamilySearch
<<http://familysearch.org>>

Cyndi's List – US Prison Records
<<http://www.cyndislist.com/prisons/us/>>

Federal Bureau of Prisoners Locator
<http://www.bop.gov/inmate_locator/index.jsp>

Tennessee State Prison Records 1831-1992

<https://sos.tn.gov/products/tsla/tennessee-state-prison-records-1831-1992>

Atlanta Federal Penitentiary Finding Aid

<https://www.archives.gov/atlanta/finding-aids/atlanta-penitentiary>

Atlanta Prisoner Index, 1880-1922

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1632/>

Dickerman's United States Treasury Counterfeit Detector and Bankers

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Dickerman's_United_States_Treasury_Count/x5cvAAAAYAAJ

<https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/100510983>

Discover a great resource filled with information about Federal Agents, Clerks and more Using the Register of Officers and Agents, Civil military, and Naval in the Service of the US and other records available to researchers today. This is a listing of persons employed by the Federal Government, organized by branch, department, agency and office. In addition to civilians, commissioned officers are also listed. Congress authorized a list of all Federal Employees to be published every two years. (1816)

Ancestry.com – Register of Civil, Military, and Naval Service, 1863-1859

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2525/>

HathiTrust: *Register of all Officers and Agents, Civil, Military, and Naval in the Service of the United States on the Thirtieth September, 1833...*

<https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/009014268>

HathiTrust: 1879-1905 <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008614161>

Google Books 1853: <https://books.google.com/books?id=C5EDAAAAYAAJ>

Portal to Editions of the Official Register of Officers and Agents (Texas Postal History Assn.)

(1816-1959) [http://www.texascovers.org/featured-](http://www.texascovers.org/featured-articles/pdfs/TPHS_USPOD_Portal%20Official%20Register.pdf)

[articles/pdfs/TPHS_USPOD Portals Official%20Register.pdf](http://www.texascovers.org/featured-articles/pdfs/TPHS_USPOD_Portal%20Official%20Register.pdf)

<https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2004/winter/genealogy-official-register.html>

<https://guides.library.harvard.edu/biography/government>

Navy Personnel: A Research Guide: <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/research-guides/navy-personnel-a-research-guide.html>

National Archives; Government Documents (ALIC)

<https://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/govt-docs.html>

U.S. Government Publications (This site replaces GPO Access.) <https://www.govinfo.gov/>

“The 1909 Checklist: Discovering Documents for Historical Research”, Carlos Dias, Community Insights, Federal Depository Library Program.

<https://www.fdlp.gov/all-newsletters/community-insights/1171-1909-checklist-discovering-docs>

Index: Checklist of United States Public Documents, 1789 – 1909

<http://1909checklist.askcarlos.com/>

HathiTrust: <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000205838>

<https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/102499857>

GoogleBooks: <https://books.google.com/books?id=9OtH6LR6A-oC>

Guide to Federal Records in the National Archives of the United States (Web Version)

<https://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records>