



MARRIAGE RECORDS | RESEARCH GUIDE

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Marriages of Tribal Citizens

Prior to statehood in 1907, if a bride or groom was a citizen of an American Indian tribe their marriage records may be included in the **Five Civilized Tribes National Records** or the **Agency Records for the Plains and Woodland Tribes**. These records vary according to the tribes, districts, and counties.

OHS Agency Records Holdings

- Cherokee National Records
- Chickasaw National Records
- Choctaw National Records
- Creek National Records
- Seminole National Records
- Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency Records
- Kiowa Agency Records
- Osage Agency Records
- Pawnee Agency Records
- Quapaw Agency Records
- Sac and Fox Agency Records

Other American Indian Resources

- Cherokee Intermarriages 1865-1887
- Cherokee Goingsnake District Marriages 1860-1910
- Cherokee Guion Miller Roll 1800s-1909
- Choctaw Marriages Skullyville 1876-1902
- Creek Marriages 1903-1907
- Osage Marriages 1820-1886

Non-Citizens in Indian Territory

Prior to 1907, Indian Territory was officially open to only American Indians, but there were some non-Indians living in the territory.

Depending on a couple's circumstances and the time frame, they may have traveled to a neighboring state or back home to marry. Those who married in Indian Territory had multiple options. Ranking officers at nearby forts and ministers at early Christian missions were licensed to perform marriages. There were multiple non-Indian towns in Indian Territory and many had a church. In these instances the license was given to the couple and it was up to them to take it a courthouse outside of Indian Territory to be recorded.

Prior to 1890 there was no place within Indian Territory to record marriages. From about 1890 until statehood, marriages of white and black citizens in Indian Territory were recorded in the various Recording Districts of the United States Federal Courts.

In 1890 three Judicial Districts were established in Indian Territory. Non-Indians needed to travel to one of these districts to record a marriage.

- **First District** included the Cherokee and Creek Nations. Court Seat: Muskogee.
- **Second District** covered the Choctaw Nation. Court Seat: South McAlester.
- **Third District** included Seminole and Chickasaw Nations. Court Seat: Ardmore.

In 1895 the Judicial Districts were divided further. Marriages in Kansas, Arkansas and Missouri may have also utilized these courts.

- **Northern District** included the area of Creek, Seminole, and Cherokee Nations. Court Seats: Vinita, Miami, Tahlequah and Muskogee.
- **Central District** included Choctaw Nation. Court Seats: South McAlester, Atoka, Antlers, and Cameron (moved to Poteau.)
- **Southern District** included Chickasaw Nation. Court Seats: Ardmore, Purcell, Paul's Valley, Ryan and Chickasha.

Oklahoma Territory & Marriages After Statehood

Prior to statehood (1907), Oklahoma was divided into two territories. Oklahoma Territory included seven counties: Logan, Oklahoma, Cleveland, Canadian, Kingfisher, Payne and Beaver. After the land runs, marriages performed in Oklahoma Territory were recorded in the county clerk's office of the respective counties.

OHS County Marriage Books

- Cherokee Co. Marriages - from statehood
- Cotton Co. Marriages 1912-1933
- Oklahoma Co. Marriages 1890-1949
- Pottawatomie Co. Marriages 1892-1898

District Court Marriage Holdings

- U.S. District Court, South McAlester, Choctaw Nation, Pittsburg Co. 1890-1907 (Choctaw Nation)
- U.S. District Court, Ardmore, Chickasaw Nation, Carter Co. 1895-1907 (Chickasaw Nation)
- U.S. District Court, Ardmore, Chickasaw Nation, Purcell-McClain Co. 1895-1908
- U.S. District Court, Vinita, Cherokee Nation, Craig Co. 1902-1907

Quick Tips for Marriage Records

► Original Marriage Records

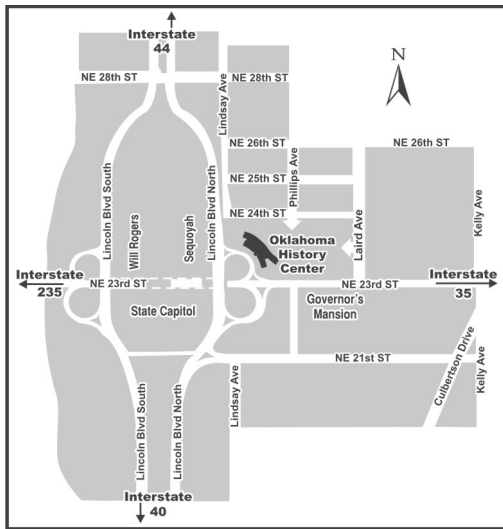
To obtain original marriage documents, contact the county clerk's office of the county in which the marriage took place.

► Other Sources for Marriage Information

- Newspaper Announcements
- County/Family Histories
- Military Records
- Federal Census Records
- Dawes Census Card & Application Packet (Five Civilized Tribes only)

► Search the Online Catalog

to locate marriage information for a specific county or town.
www.okhistory.org/research



Oklahoma Historical Society

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Research Center

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Research Center Hours

Monday - Saturday
10:00am to 4:45pm

First Monday of the month
10:00am to 7:45pm

Closed Sundays & state holidays.

