

Quick Tips for Marriage Records

Original Marriage Records

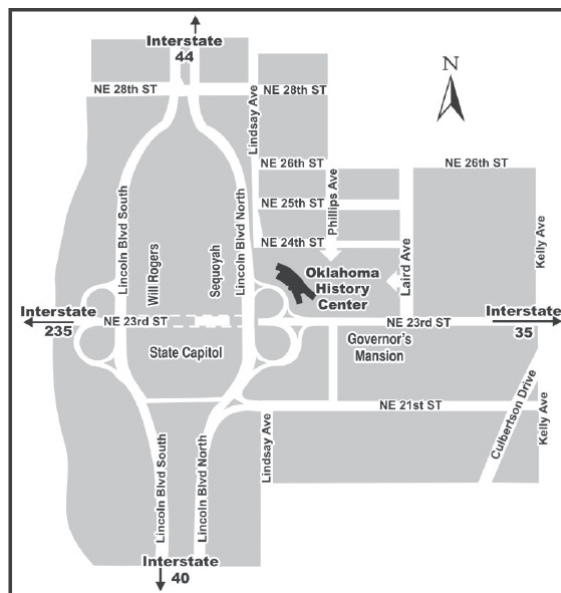
To obtain original marriage documents, contact the county clerk's office of the county in which the marriage took place.

Other Sources for Marriage Information

- Newspaper announcements
- County and family histories
- Military records
- Federal census records
- Dawes Roll census card and application packet (Five Tribes only)

Search the Online Catalog

Search the Oklahoma Historical Society's online catalog to locate marriage information for a specific county or town. Visit us online at okhistory.org/research.



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Contact the Research Center

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**An Introduction to Researching Marriages
in the Oklahoma Historical Society
Research Center**

Marriage 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 located in Indian Territory and many had a church. In all of 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 African American 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. The court seat was Muskogee.
- **Second District** covered the Choctaw Nation. The court seat was South McAlester.
- **Third District** included Seminole and Chickasaw Nations. The court seat was 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. The court seats were Vinita, Miami, Tahlequah, and Muskogee.
- **Central District** included Choctaw Nation. The court seats were South McAlester, Atoka, Antlers, and Cameron (moved to Poteau).
- **Southern District** included Chickasaw

Nation. The court seats were Ardmore, Purcell, Pauls Valley, Ryan, and Chickasha.

Marriages in Oklahoma Territory and After Statehood

Prior to statehood, 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.

County Marriage Books in the Research Center

- Cherokee County marriages, from statehood
- Cotton County marriages, 1912–1933
- Oklahoma County marriages, 1890–1949
- Pottawatomie County marriages, 1892–1898

District Court Marriage Holdings

- US District Court - South McAlester
Choctaw Nation, Pittsburg County, 1890–1907
- US District Court - Ardmore
Chickasaw Nation, Carter County, 1895–1907
- US District Court - Ardmore
Chickasaw Nation, Purcell–McClain County, 1895–1908
- US District Court - Vinita
Cherokee Nation, Craig County, 1902–1907