Vital Records at the Utah State Archives

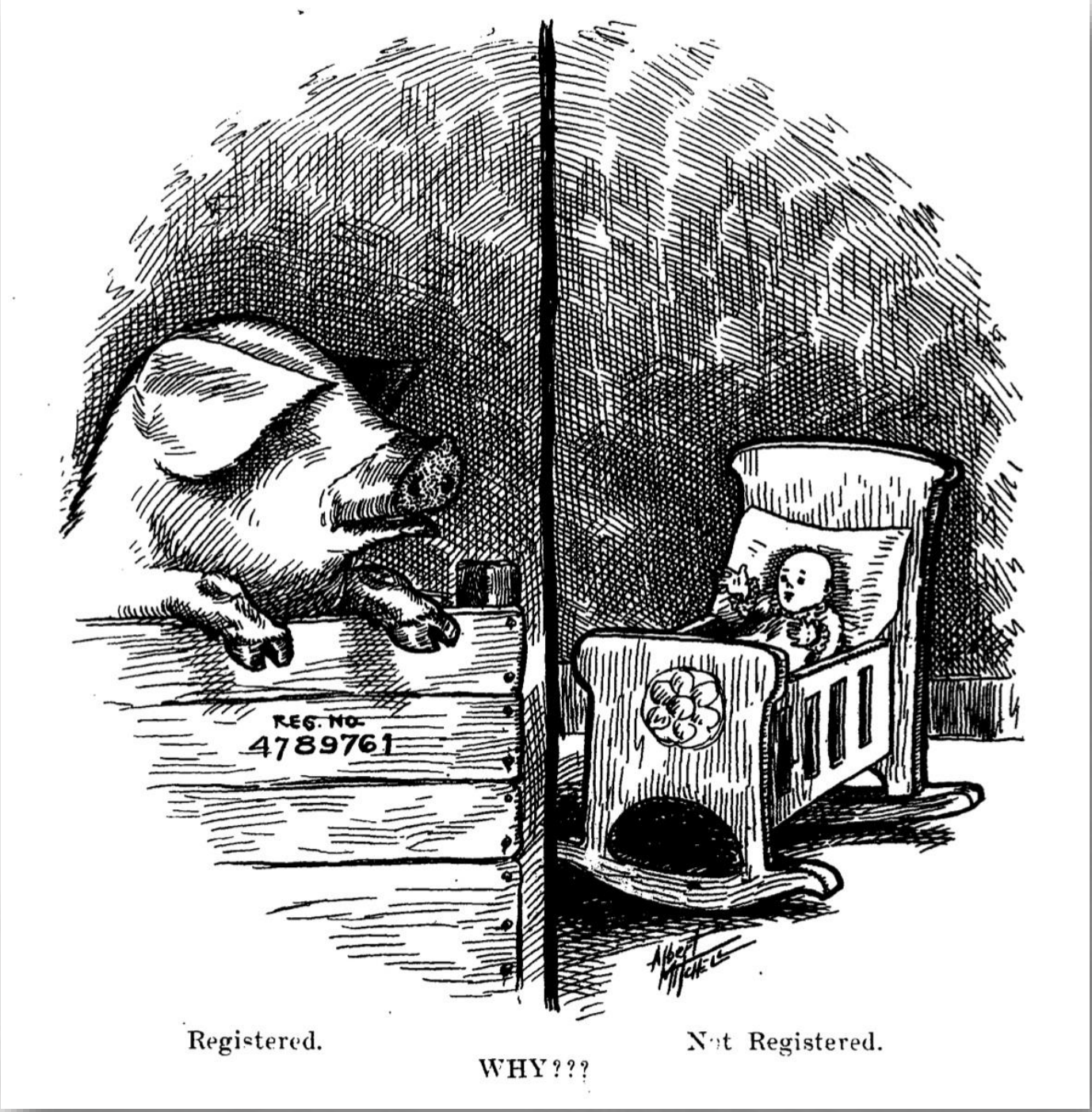
Family History Workshop 2018

Gina Strack, CA MLIS

DAS | Utah Division of Archives and Records Service

History of Vital Records

Utah Division of Archives and Records Service



Source: Albert Mitchell, "Why?" [cartoon of pig and baby], Bulletin of the Texas State Board of Health 8, no. 4-6 (April-June 1914) 9. from http://cliotropic.org/sources/items/show/155

Documenting Life

"Between the end of the Civil War and the **last decades of the 20th century**, American governments, at every level of the federal system, developed a new reliance on official records about individuals. In 1868, the **14th Amendment** established birthright citizenship as the law of the land, declaring that 'All persons born or naturalized in the United States…are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside'.…Governments experimented with **new record-keeping technologies** in order to record the existence of citizens, to pinpoint individuals by name, and to calculate useful statistics for governing the population. Initially, governments did so in **fragmentary, incomplete, and partial ways**, but over time these **registration systems became more complete**."

-Shane Landrum, *The State's Big Family Bible*

Documenting Death

"…'Why do we die?' is one of the fundamental questions of epidemiology, and we have a developed a vast and macabre bureaucracy to answer it.

The atomic unit of that bureaucracy is the **death certificate**. Of all the ways we have ever devised to grapple with our mortality, it is the strangest, least elegiac, and by far the most ambitious. It emerged by an accident of history and evolved to serve two different masters. In part, it is a **public-health measure**…In part, it is a form of **personal identification**: the saddest of diplomas, the most mysterious of passports."

-Kathryn Schulz, "Final Forms," *The New Yorker*

What are vital records?

Utah Code 26-2-2

(21) **"Vital records"** means:

(a) registered certificates or reports of birth, death, fetal death, marriage, divorce, dissolution of marriage, or annulment;

(b) amendments to any of the registered certificates or reports described in Subsection (21)(a);

(c) an adoption document; and

(d) other similar documents.

Source: https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title26/Chapter2/26-2-S2.html?v=C26-2-S2_2018050820180508

DAS

From Local to State Record

County Clerks began registering birth and death events after a new law in 1898.

Many people were missed.

New law in 1905:

"An act providing for the registration of all births and deaths within the State, and defining the duties of the State Board of Health, and of the Secretary thereof, in relation thereto, providing for the division of the State into registration districts and the appointment of local registrars, defining their duties and fixing their compensation, and providing the issuance of birth and death certificates, and burial permits, making an appropriation to carry the provisions of this act into effect, and providing penalties for violation thereof, and relealing sections 2020, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, and 2036 of the Revised Statutes of Utah, 1898, and sections 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23 of Chapter 45, Laws of Utah, 1899",

Source: 1905 Session: Senate Bill 102 http://images.archives.utah.gov/cdm/ref/collection/428/id/5384

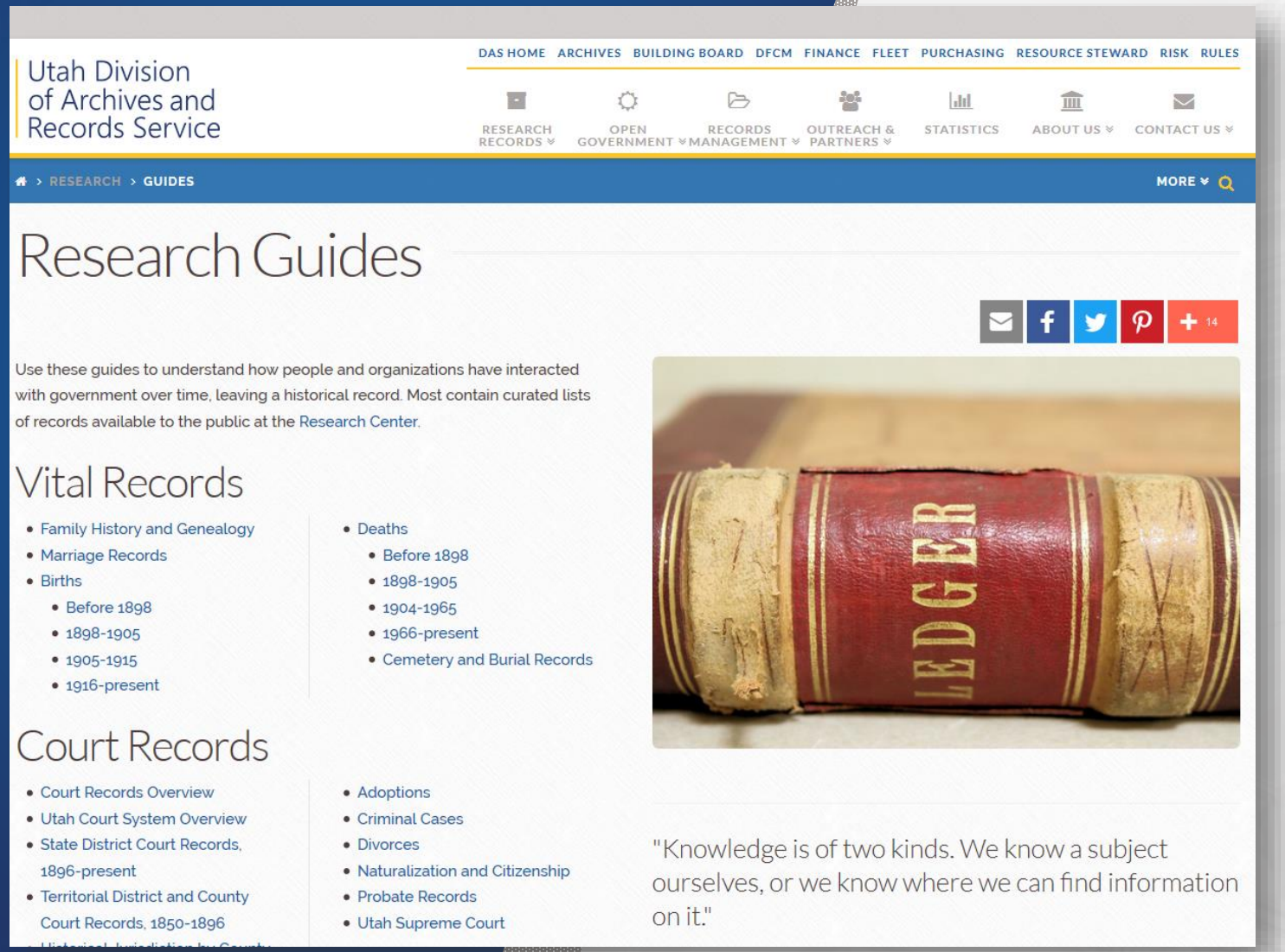
Using State Archives Records

Utah Division of Archives and Records Service

What is the State Archives?

The purpose of the State Archives is to assist Utah government agencies in the **efficient management** of their records, to **preserve** those records of enduring value, and to provide quality **access** to public information.

Research Guides

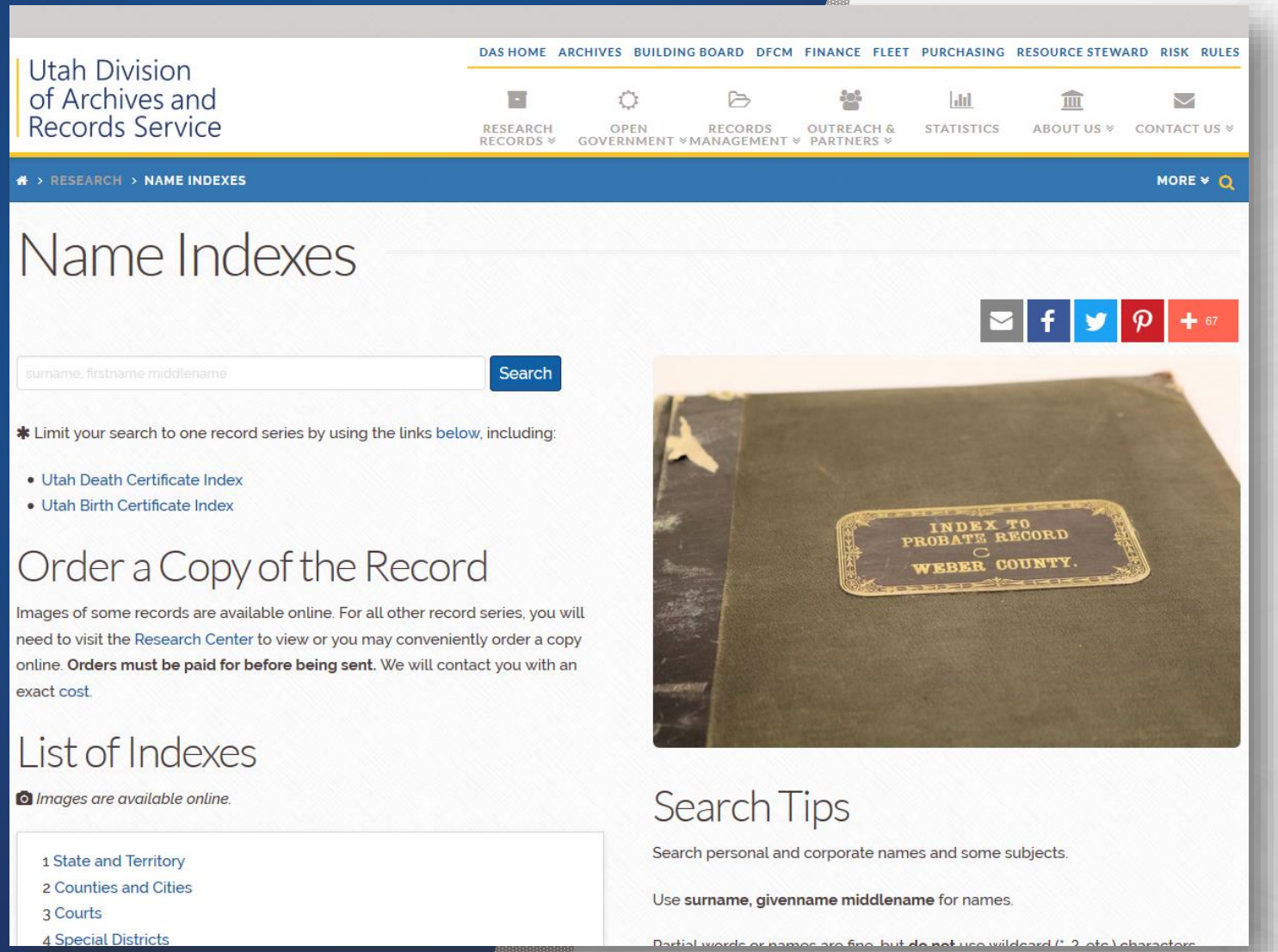


Start here!

Overview and background of commonly used records

May include curated list of specific record series

Name Indexes & Inventories



Most government records do not have searchable indexes

Name Indexes online

Series Inventories have detail on contents and link to related records and online collections

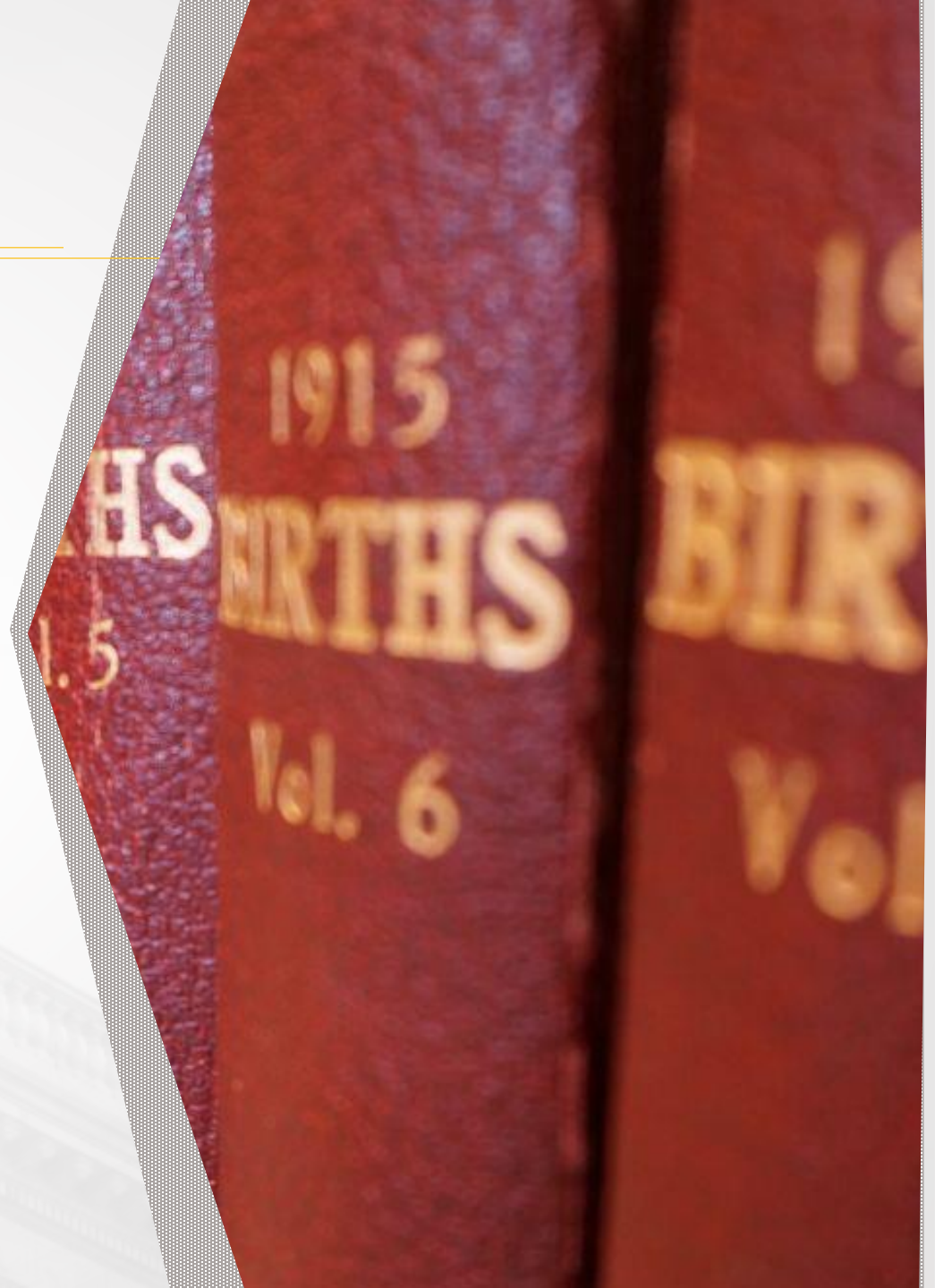
Vital Records: Birth

No government records prior to 1898.

County clerks began keeping registers in 1898.

In 1905, the Utah Department of Health assumed responsibility for creating birth certificates.

Public after 100 years.



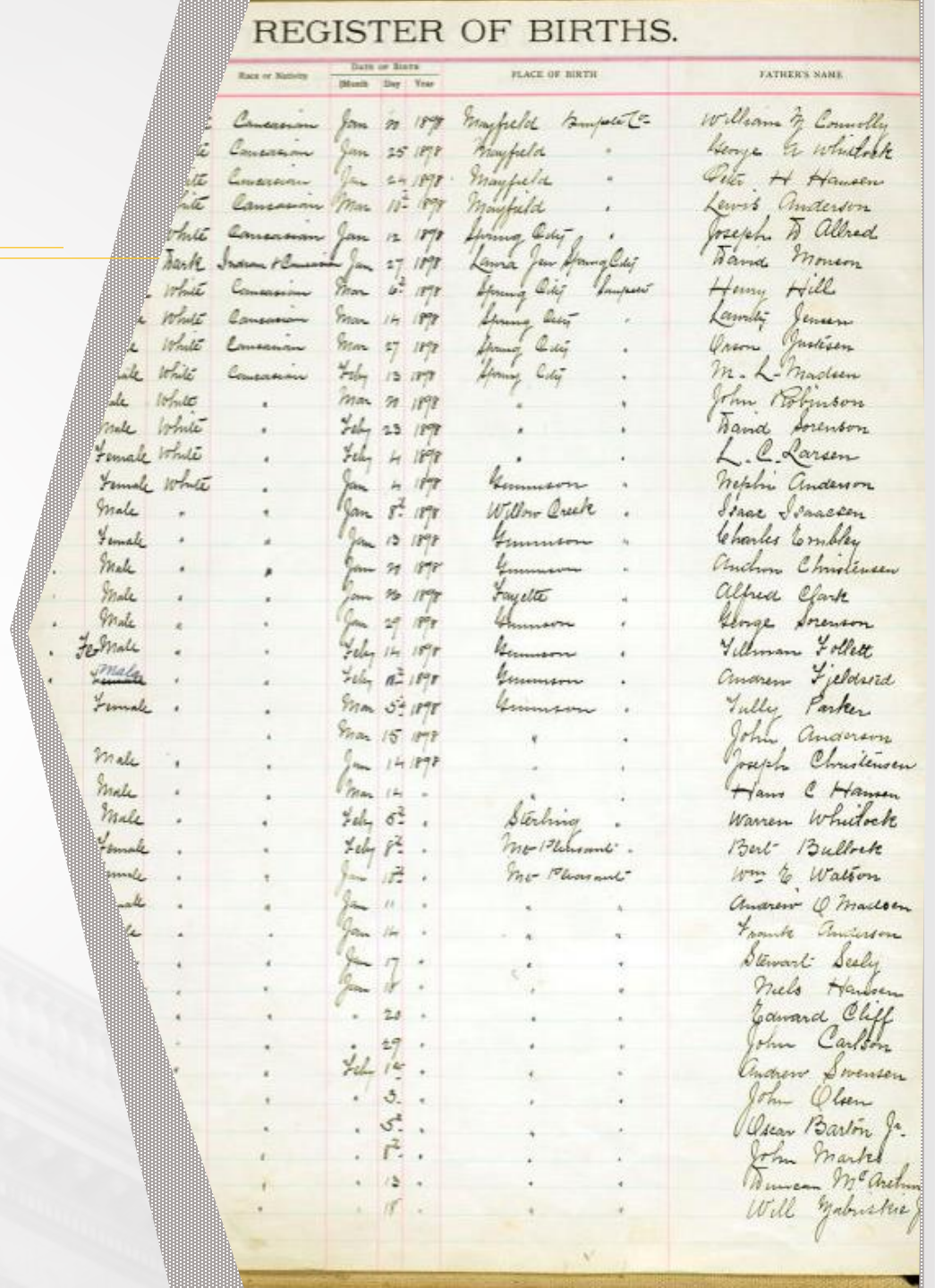
Birth Registers

1898-1905

Online and indexed at most genealogy sites

Also may be in digital archives (full color for select counties)

No access restrictions.


REGISTER OF BIRTHS.

Race or Nativity	Date of Birth (Month Day Year)	Place of Birth	Father's Name
Caucasian	Jan 30 1898	Mayfield Sampete Co	William F Connolly
Caucasian	Jan 25 1898	Mayfield "	George A Whitlock
Caucasian	Jan 24 1898	Mayfield "	Peter H Hansen
Caucasian	Mar 18 1898	Mayfield "	Lewis Anderson
White Caucasian	Jan 12 1898	Spring City "	Joseph F Allred
Dark Indian & Caucasian	Jan 27 1898	Laura Jen Spring City	David Monson
White Caucasian	Mar 6 1898	Spring City Sampete	Henry Hill
White Caucasian	Mar 14 1898	Spring City "	Lawrey Jensen
White Caucasian	Mar 27 1898	Spring City "	Orson Justesen
White Caucasian	Feby 13 1898	Spring City "	M. L. Madsen
White "	Mar 30 1898	" "	John Robinson
White "	Feby 23 1898	" "	David Sorenson
White "	Feby 4 1898	" "	L. C. Larsen
White "	Jan 4 1898	Gunnison "	Nephi Anderson
" "	Jan 8 1898	Willow Creek "	Isaac Isaacsen
" "	Jan 13 1898	Gunnison "	Charles Embley
" "	Jan 30 1898	Gunnison "	Andrew Christensen
" "	Jan 26 1898	Fayette "	Alfred Clark
" "	Jan 29 1898	Gunnison "	George Sorenson
Male "	Feby 14 1898	Gunnison "	Tillman Follett
Male "	Feby 12 1898	Gunnison "	Andrew Fjeldsted
Female "	Mar 5 1898	Gunnison "	Tully Parker
"	Mar 15 1898	" "	John Anderson
Male "	Jan 14 1898	" "	Joseph Christensen
Male "	Mar 14 "	" "	Hans C Hansen
Male "	Feby 5 "	Sterling "	Warren Whitlock
Female "	Feby 8 "	Mt Pleasant "	Bert Bullock
"	Jan 18 "	Mt Pleasant "	Wm E Watson
"	Jan 11 "	" "	Andrew O Madsen
"	Jan 14 "	" "	Frank Anderson
"	Jan 17 "	" "	Stewart Seely
"	Jan 18 "	" "	Niels Hansen
"	" 20 "	" "	Edward Cliff
"	" 29 "	" "	John Carlson
"	Feby 14 "	" "	Andrew Swensen
"	" 3 "	" "	John Olsen
"	" 5 "	" "	Oscar Barton Jr.
"	" 8 "	" "	John Marks
"	" 13 "	" "	Duncan McArthur
"	" 18 "	" "	Will Zabriskie Jr

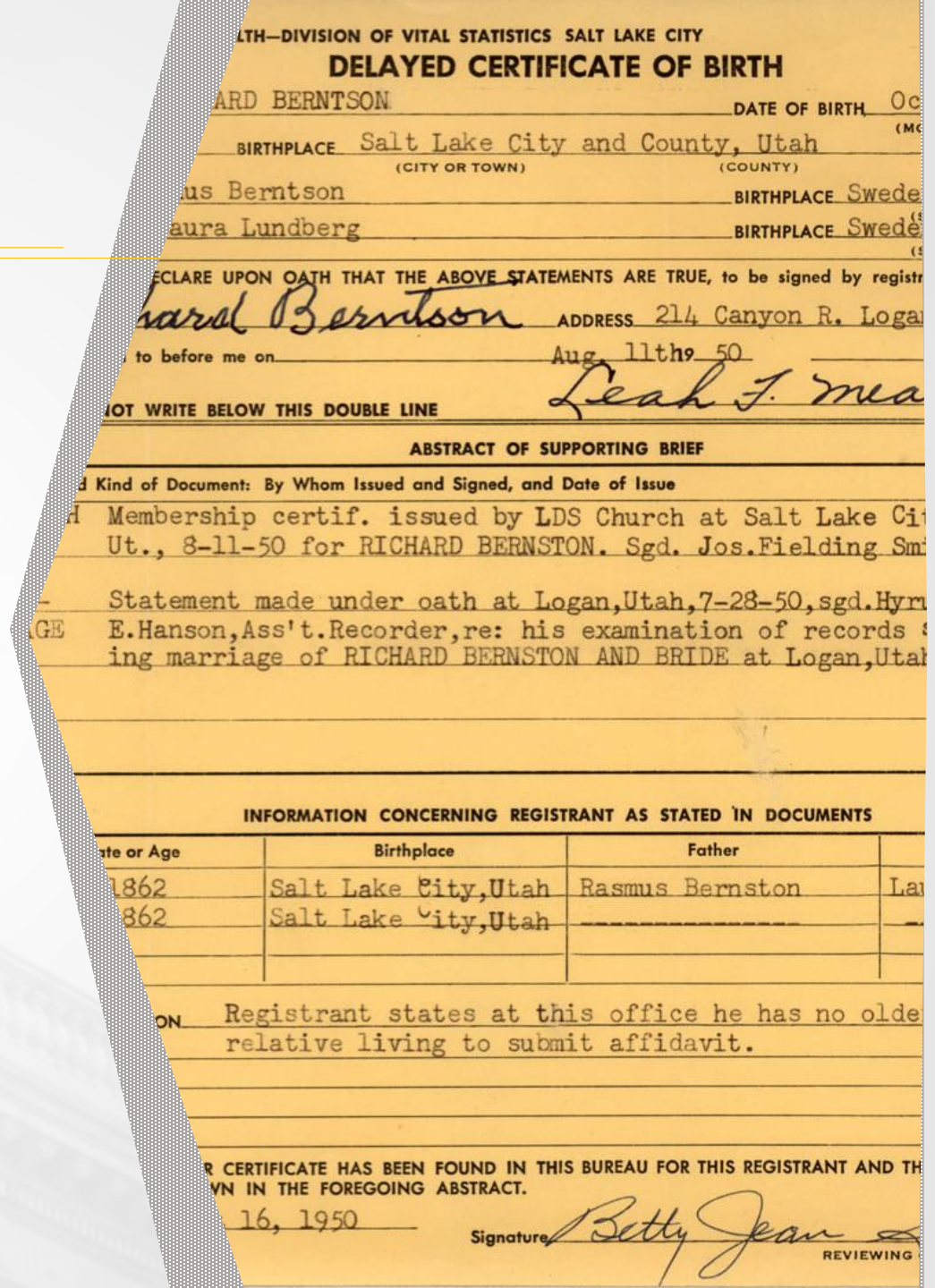
Delayed Births

Any birth registration more than 1 year after the date of birth.

Informal process about 1916, new forms and process in 1941.

Often issued for adoptions.

Public after 100 years.



LTH—DIVISION OF VITAL STATISTICS SALT LAKE CITY

DELAYED CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH

ARD BERNTSON DATE OF BIRTH Oc

BIRTHPLACE Salt Lake City and County, Utah
(CITY OR TOWN) (COUNTY)

us Berntson BIRTHPLACE Swede

aura Lundberg BIRTHPLACE Swede

ECLARE UPON OATH THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENTS ARE TRUE, to be signed by registr

hard Berntson ADDRESS 214 Canyon R. Loga

to before me on Aug. 11th, 50

OT WRITE BELOW THIS DOUBLE LINE Leah F. Mea

ABSTRACT OF SUPPORTING BRIEF

d Kind of Document: By Whom Issued and Signed, and Date of Issue

d Membership certif. issued by LDS Church at Salt Lake Ci
Ut., 8-11-50 for RICHARD BERNSTON. Sgd. Jos.Fielding Sm

Statement made under oath at Logan,Utah,7-28-50,sgd.Hyr
GE E.Hanson,Ass't.Recorder,re: his examination of records
ing marriage of RICHARD BERNSTON AND BRIDE at Logan,Utah

INFORMATION CONCERNING REGISTRANT AS STATED IN DOCUMENTS

te or Age	Birthplace	Father	
1862	Salt Lake City,Utah	Rasmus Bernston	La
862	Salt Lake City,Utah		

ON Registrant states at this office he has no olde
relative living to submit affidavit.

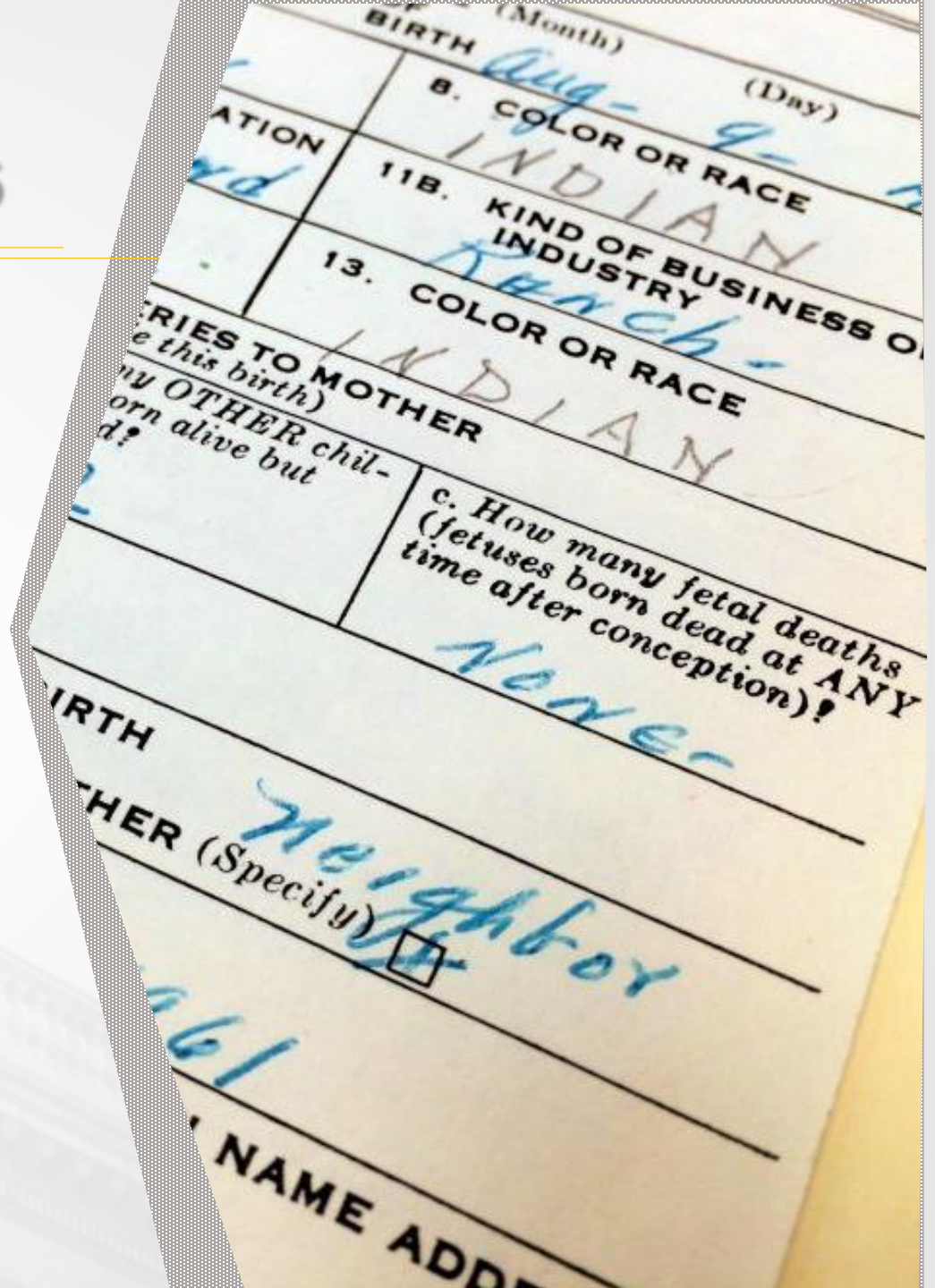
R CERTIFICATE HAS BEEN FOUND IN THIS BUREAU FOR THIS REGISTRANT AND TH
VN IN THE FOREGOING ABSTRACT.

16, 1950 Signature Betty Jean
REVIEWING

Native American Births

Native Americans living on or sometimes near reservations had birth certificates maintained separately during the early 20th century.

Public after 100 years.



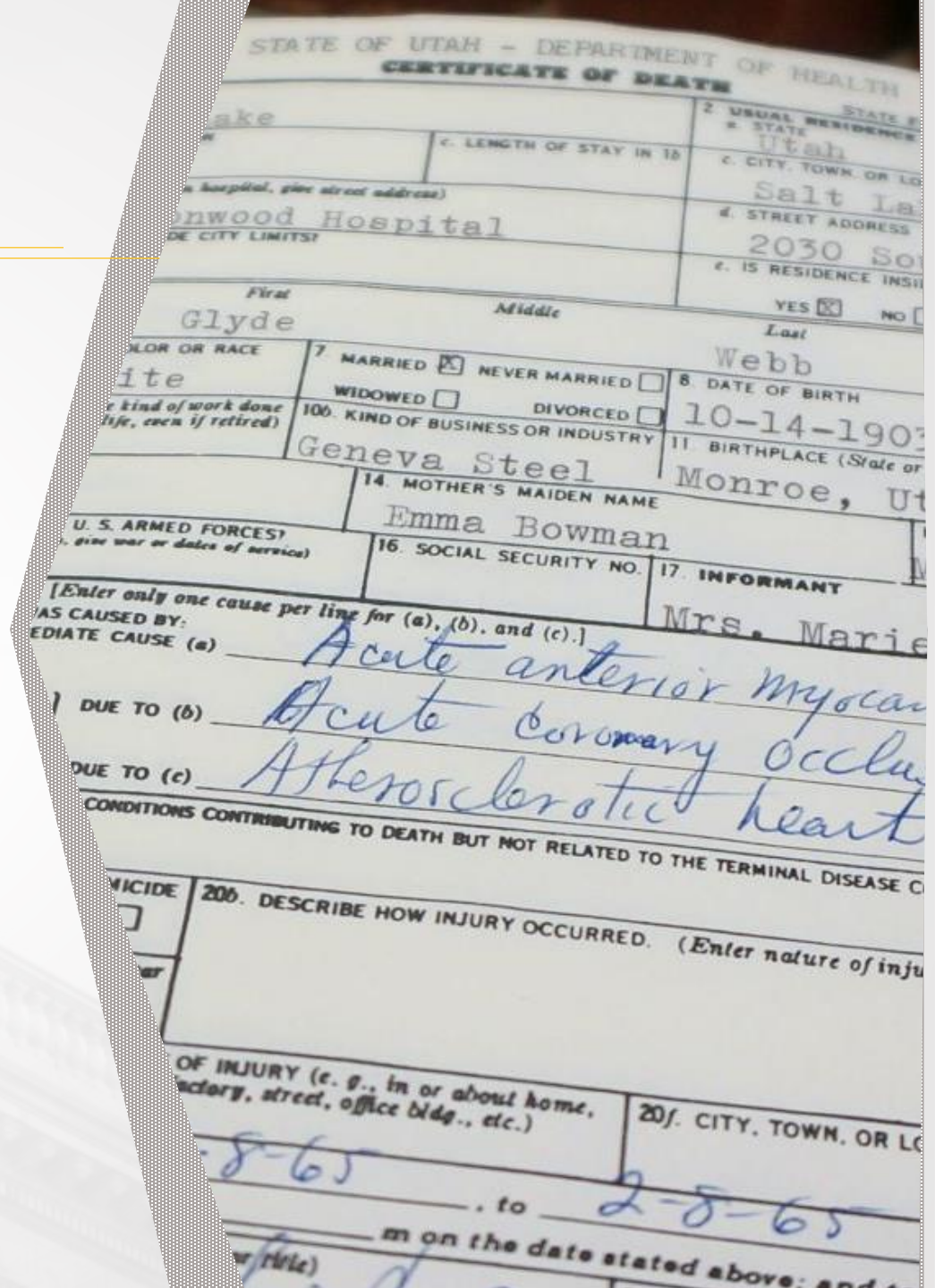
Vital Records: Death

No government records prior to 1898.

County clerks began keeping registers in 1898.

In 1905, the Utah Department of Health assumed responsibility for creating death certificates.

Public after 50 years.



Death Registers

1898-1905

Online and indexed at most genealogy sites

Also may be in digital archives (full color for select counties)

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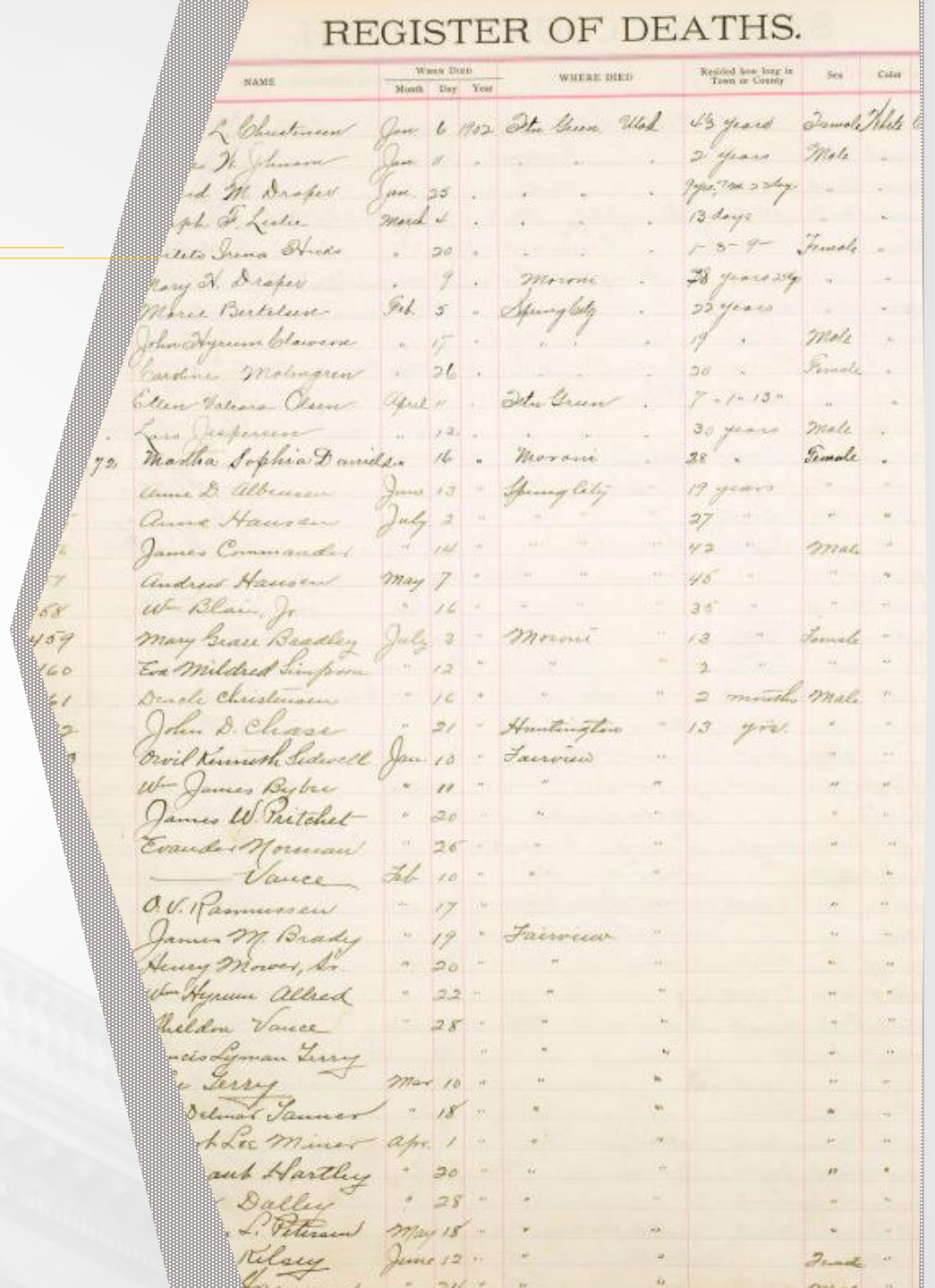
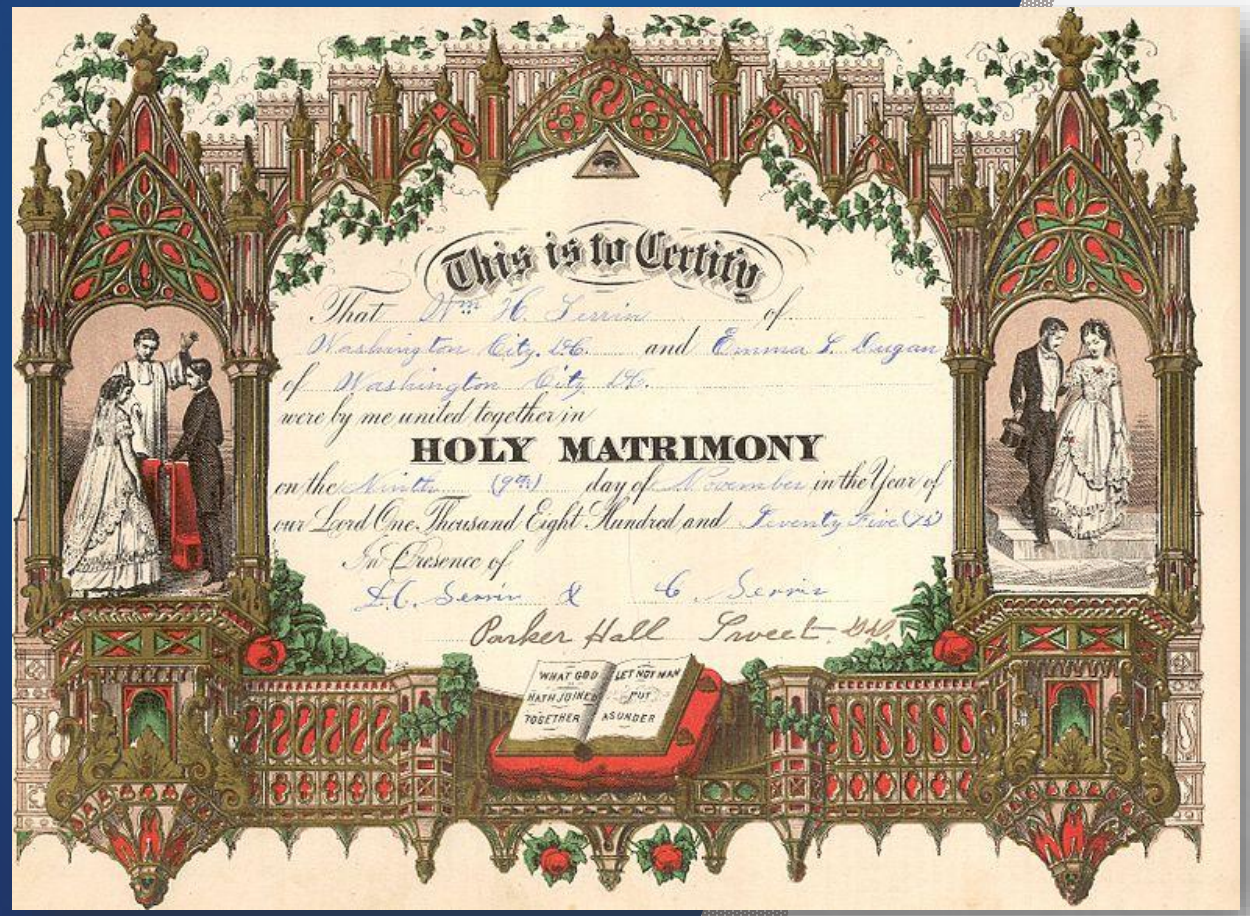


Marriage and Divorce



- Marriage Records
  - Licenses and applications at County Clerk
  - Registration with Vital Records
- Divorce Records
  - Civil Case files with court records
  - Registration with Vital Records

Thank You

Gina Strack
gmstrack@utah.gov

Visit https://archives.utah.gov/research
Visit the Research Center
300 South Rio Grande St
Salt Lake City, UT
Monday-Friday 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
(801) 245-7227

Finding Family in the Vital Records

Mike Wynder
Archivist, Records Office- UDOH

July 28, 2018

Vital Records

- The Office of Vital Records and Statistics maintains records for births, stillbirths, deaths, marriages and divorces that occurred in the State of Utah.
- Requests for records can be made online, in person or through the mail.

Vital Records

- Birth Certificates
- Death Certificates
- Marriage Records
- Divorce Records
- Adoption Records

Vital Records

How to obtain a record.

-ONLINE-

https://vitalrecords.utah.gov/

-IN PERSON-

Street Address:

Cannon Health Bldg

288 North 1460 West

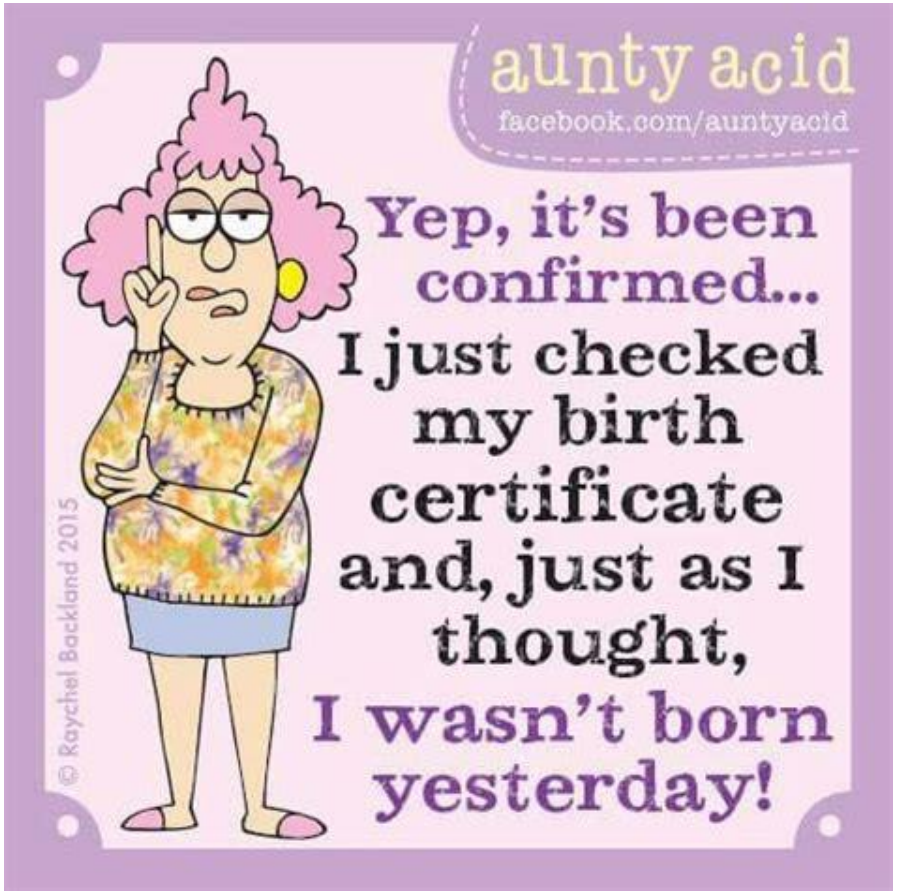
Salt Lake City UT 84116

-VIA MAIL-

PO Box 141012

Salt Lake City UT 84114-1012

Vital Records



Vital Records Timeline

Some vital records become public after a certain timeframe:

Birth Certificates- 100 years

Death Certificates- 50 years

Marriage, Divorce, Stillborn Certificates- 75 years

Utah Code 26-2-22 (4)

These records are released to the Utah State Archives who then makes them accessible.

Vital Records Timeline cont’

Who can request a vital records before it becomes public?

- the subject
- a member of the subject's immediate family
- the guardian of the subject
- a designated legal representative of the subject

  - “immediate family member" means a spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, or grandchild
  - a designated legal representative means an attorney, physician, funeral service director, **genealogist**, or other agent of the subject or the subject's immediate family who has been delegated the authority to access vital records;

Utah Code 26-2-22 (2,3b)

Adoption

The adoption registration team registers adoption, court order paternity, and legitimation requests.

- Two new parent/ Single parent
- Stepparent/ Family
- Foreign
- Paternity or Legitimation

adoptions@utah.gov or 801-538-6363

Adoption cont’

The Utah Adoption Registry is a voluntary, mutual consent registry that helps adult adoptees born in Utah and their birth parents and birth siblings reunite with one another.

- Use of original records
- Willingness to be found
- Accurate results

https://adoptionregistry.utah.gov/

Joining the registry is done electronically or via mail in form. A $25 fee applies.

Vital Records

Vital Records Rule

ADMIN RULE 436-13-1

When determining whether a genealogist under Subsection 26-2-22 (3)(b) has demonstrated a direct, legitimate, and tangible interest in a record, the custodian of vital records may consider various relevant factors including the following:

- the genealogist shares a common ancestor with the subject of the vital record, the subject is deceased, and the subject has no living immediate family;
- the genealogist's stated interest in the vital record;
- inability to find information sought in the vital record from other sources; or
- the genealogist can provide a written contract for professional genealogical services on behalf of the subject or the subject's immediate family members.

Fees for Records

- Birth Certificate- $20
- Death Certificate- $30
- Marriage/ Divorce- $18

Other fees may apply (expedited processing, affidavits, ect)

Processing time: In person at our desk= 15 mins
On line request= 7 to 10 business days
Mail= 3 weeks

Amendments

Most vital records may be amended. All amendments require an affidavit or a court order. Please be aware, two persons (witnesses) having knowledge of the facts must complete and sign the affidavit. Signatures of both witnesses must be notarized.

1. Birth records can only be amended if the certificate holder is alive. Any posthumous amendments require a court order. Any field that allows a change to be made with an affidavit can only be changed one time. All other changes require a court order. Amendments to a Delayed Birth certificate require a court order. An amendment history will become part of the record.
2. An affidavit is required for an amendment to a death certificate. Amendments to the medical items on the death record must be completed by the physician that certified the cause of death. Documentary evidence may be required at any time at the discretion of the Office of Vital Records and Statistics. If required documentation is unavailable or unacceptable, a court order may be required to make requested changes.

Amendments cont’

3. Stillbirth records can be amended up to one year after the date of delivery, any other changes would require a court order. A court order is required for any field that has already been amended.
4. Any changes to a marriage record must be filed with the county clerk where the license was issued. Any amendments to a divorce record must be filed with the district court where the decree was filed.

THANK YOU!

-Contact Us-

Sample Application documents available to review

Don't forget to stop by the Research center

Additional Questions?- vrequest@utah.gov or call 801-538-6105

https://vitalrecords.utah.gov/