

# Clues in the Census

Since 1790, the U.S. government has conducted a census of all the residents of the U.S. A census lists all the people in the place where they live. The government hires workers to go from door to door to list the people in each home. The lists are then sent to Washington, D.C. Many states also had censuses of the residents of the state.

By looking at the censuses over a period of time, these censuses tell a family history detective important information about a family. Here are the censuses for Laura Ingalls Wilder, the author of the "Little House" books. Look at the information and see what you can learn about her family.

1870 U.S. Census,  
Montgomery County, Kansas

Ingalls C.P.	34	M	N.Y.
Caroline	30	F	Wisconsin
Mary	5	F	Wis
Laura	3	F	Wis

Here's what the handwriting says:

Name	Age	Sex	Birthplace
Ingalls, C.P.	34	M	New York
Ingalls, Caroline	30	F	Wisconsin
Ingalls, Mary	5	F	Wisconsin
Ingalls, Laura	3	F	Wisconsin

1875 Minnesota state census,  
Redwood County, Minnesota

C.P. Ingalls	39	M	N.Y.
Caroline Ingalls	35	F	Wis.
Mary C.P. Ingalls	10	F	"
Laura C. Ingalls	8	F	"
Carrie C. Ingalls	5	F	Kan.

Here's what the handwriting says:

Name	Age	Sex	Birthplace
C.P. Ingalls	39	M	New York
Caroline Ingalls	35	F	Wisconsin
Mary A. Ingalls	10	F	Wisconsin
Laura E. Ingalls	8	F	Wisconsin
Carrie C. Ingalls	5	F	Kansas

1880 U.S. Census,  
Kingsbury County, Dakota Territory

Ingalls Charles P	44	M	New York
Caroline L	40	F	Wisconsin
Mary A	15	F	Wisconsin
Laura E	13	F	Wisconsin
Caroline C	9	F	Kansas
Grace L	3	F	Iowa

Here's what the handwriting says:

Name	Age	Sex	Birthplace
Ingalls, Charles P.	44	M	New York
Ingalls, Caroline L.	40	F	Wisconsin
Ingalls, Mary A.	15	F	Wisconsin
Ingalls, Laura E.	13	F	Wisconsin
Ingalls, Caroline C.	9	F	Kansas
Ingalls, Grace L.	3	F	Iowa

## Answer the following questions about these census.

List the states and territory for these censuses.

\_\_\_\_\_

Where were Laura and Mary born?

\_\_\_\_\_

Where was Grace born?

\_\_\_\_\_

What do these censuses tell you about the Ingalls family?

- A. These aren't about the same family because they are in different places.
- B. The family moved a great deal.
- C. The family was on vacation.
- D. The Ingalls family had a lot of money.