1860 CENSUS PAPER INSTRUCTIONS
HISTORY 231

One of the principal activities of historians is to interpret the past from evidence that can be examined today. In American history, one of the richest sources of information about the past is the federal census, taken every ten years. The first census was taken in 1790 and 2010 will be the next. The data from the census gives insight into families and communities that could not be gathered through any other source. Every census from 1790 through 1930 is now available on-line and can be accessed through the library's databases located on its web page <http://www.wcu.edu/1602.asp>. Your task in this paper is to be a good detective and make sense out of a limited amount of information.

Go into the database section and select "HeritageQuest Online." From there, select the "Search Census" option (Illustration #1). Next, select "Browse" (Illustration #2) on the Census Page, then year 1860, then state, county, and finally location (#3). You can pick any place in the United States, perhaps one where you had family or a location that just interests you. Print out ten full and consecutive pages of the census material. These ten pages must be attached to the paper that you submit. From these ten pages, write a paper of five to eight pages in length (text) in which you describe what the census material tells us about one small segment of American society. You will need to put on your thinking and analytical cap for this. You can write about families, occupations, literacy, wealth, and any number of subjects. Before writing, I will need to see every student and their ten census pages.

Students often make several common stylistic errors that you must avoid. The two most important parts of a paper are its introduction and conclusion. Work hard on both. Limit usage of the first person. A paper full of "I's" reads more like a letter than a serious essay. Avoid the passive voice as much as possible. The active voice is almost always shorter and better. Give some thought to an attractive title and place it on a separate title page. A paper's title must inform but also interest the reader. Dull titles are not a requirement for history papers. Always ask someone to read over your paper before turning it in. Finally, be extremely careful to avoid **plagiarism**. Use your own words, not someone else's!

⊙ **Search Census** Find ancestors in the complete set of U.S. Federal Census images from 1790-1930, including name indexes for many years.

⊙ **Search Books** Find information on people and places described in over 20,000 family and local histories.

⊙ **Search PERSI** Find information about people and places from this index of over 1.9 million genealogy and local history articles.

⊙ **Search Revolutionary War** Search selected records from the Revolutionary War Era Pension & Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files.

⊙ **Search Freedman's Bank** Search for individuals in Freedman's Bank (1865-1874), which was founded to serve African Americans.

HERITAGE QUEST ONLINE

CENSUS   **BOOKS**   **PERSI**   **FREED**

Search :: Browse

Census Data Currently Searchable

1790
1800
1810
1820
1860
1870
1880
1890
1900
1910
1920
1930 (partial)

Search Census

BASIC SEARCH   ADVANCED SEARCH   FIND BY PAGE NUMBER

Surname _____
Given Name _____

SEARCH ▶
CLEAR SEARCH

Census Year [All ▾]

State [All ▾]

HERITAGE QUEST ONLINE

CENSUS   **BOOKS**   **PERSI**   **FREEDMAN**

Search :: Browse

? **Help with the Federal Census**

States included in 1860 US Census

What you should know about the 1860 Census.

Browse the Census by selecting options:

① SELECT CENSUS YEAR: [1860 ▾]

② SELECT STATE: [North Carolina ▾] ⊙ View State Map

③ SELECT COUNTY: [BUNCOMBE ▾]

④ SELECT LOCATION: [Select Location ▾]