



How to Search the Dawes Commission Roll

- To apply for a CDIB (Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood) and tribal membership with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, you must be a direct descendant of someone listed as Choctaw – by blood or Mississippi Choctaw – by blood on the Final Rolls of Citizens and Freedmen of the Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory (commonly called the Dawes Commission Roll). That ancestor must have been living in Indian Territory during the 1898 to 1906 enrollment period and must have been able to prove their Choctaw heritage thus enrolling as Choctaw.
- To find your ancestor it would be helpful to know their approximate year of birth and the names of their parents, spouse(s), children, etc.
- Start with the Final Roll index to determine your ancestor's roll number. Many state and local historical and genealogical societies, large city libraries, and the Fort Worth, Texas, Branch of the National Archives have copies of the Final Roll and index. You can access the index on-line using the National Archives website (<http://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/dawes/intro.html>). Once you have found your ancestor's name, their roll number will be located on the same line. Record the name and roll number. There are several different categories of enrollment: "by blood", "newborn", "minor", "by marriage", and "freedmen". The "by blood" category were those individuals enrolled with Indian blood. "Newborn" and "minor" categories included young children of Indian and freedmen parents. "By marriage" were individuals with no Indian blood married to Indians. "Freedmen" were former slaves of the Indians. Those individuals noted as "Freedmen" did not have Indian blood, but were enrolled by the Dawes Commission because they had been adopted into the tribe. Using the roll book, locate the Choctaw tribe and category. The names will be listed in numerical order by the roll number. The listings will include the name, age, sex, blood degree, the category ("by blood", "minor", etc.), and census card number. Add this information to the name and roll number you recorded earlier.
- Also you can search the Dawes Commission Roll through the Oklahoma Historical Society's website (<http://www.okhistory.org/research/dawes/index.php>).
- Another way to locate ancestors on the roll would be to send email to genealogy@choctawnation.com. Include as much information as possible, such as full name (including maiden name for females), birth dates, etc.
- If your goal is to apply for your CDIB card and membership and you have found verification that your ancestor was enrolled on the Dawes Commission Roll, then you have the information that you need to apply with the Choctaw Nation. You will also need to provide an original state certified full image birth certificate or death certificate for each person in your lineage back to the enrollee. If you have access to the internet, you can download the CDIB and membership applications from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

website (<http://www.choctawnation.com>) or contact the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma CDIB/Membership Department at 1-800-522-6170 and applications will be mailed to you.

- If you are also interested in finding out more about your ancestors, you can obtain copies of the census cards and application packets for your ancestor. The census cards will give information about other family members who might have been enrolled and the names of the enrollee's parents. The application packets may contain transcripts of any testimony taken by the Dawes Commission, birth and death affidavits, marriage licenses (sometimes), and correspondence between the Commission and the applicant, their attorney, and tribal officials. You can obtain copies of census cards and application packets by sending email to genealogy@choctawnation.com. Include your mailing address and the census card number and ancestor's name for each card and application packet you would like to order. There is no fee. You can also order copies for a fee from a regional branch of the National Archives (the Fort Worth, Texas, branch is the main repository) or the Oklahoma Historical Society. Fold3.com (<http://www.fold3.com>) now has the Dawes Commission census cards and application packets available online. It is a subscription website, but many libraries and archives have subscriptions which you can use using their computers.