Danish Census Records: Extracting Genealogical Information

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Family History Library

The Tool Box

There are four important tools of reference that you need in your tool box in order to interpret the Danish census records well:

1. **Danish to English Key Word List**
   When beginning to interpret Danish census records, it is helpful to have a key word list with you. This is a list of words commonly used in the records. After a while, you may not need the word list anymore, but until then, it is helpful to keep one at your side. A basic key word list is provided at the end of this handout; however, for a more thorough list go to the FamilySearch Wiki (Denmark page) found at the following web address: http://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Danish_Word_List.

2. **Websites**
   Due to modern technology, nearly all of the Danish national censuses are both digitized and indexed. For your toolbox, get to know the following two websites extremely well: Arkivalieronline (www.sa.dk/ao) and Danish Demographical Database (http://www.ddd.dda.dk).

3. **Knowledge of Important Census Years**
   In order to properly research a Danish family, it is important to know four census years and why they are important:
   - 1787 – First national census. This is the only census taken in August. Due to the season the census was taken in, many men were away, for fishing, labor, etc., and do not appear in the census. All other censuses after this date were taken in February.
   - 1845 – First census year to include birth place of every individual and their religious affiliation.
   - 1901 – More information added to the censuses this year, including: Birth date, Year moved to parish, and marriage year.
   - 1921 – First census taken after World War I. Southern Denmark rejoined the kingdom after years of German rule.

4. **Census Headings**
   For most of us, we cannot read the Danish headings on the census tables. Thankfully, we do not have to struggle over each word with a dictionary anymore! A translation of each census heading for every year is available on the FamilySearch Wiki: https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Denmark_Census.

The Basic Information

All of the Danish national censuses have a basic set of information. This basic information is included in the indexed information. All other information was not indexed and can only be found on the original record. The following is the basic information:
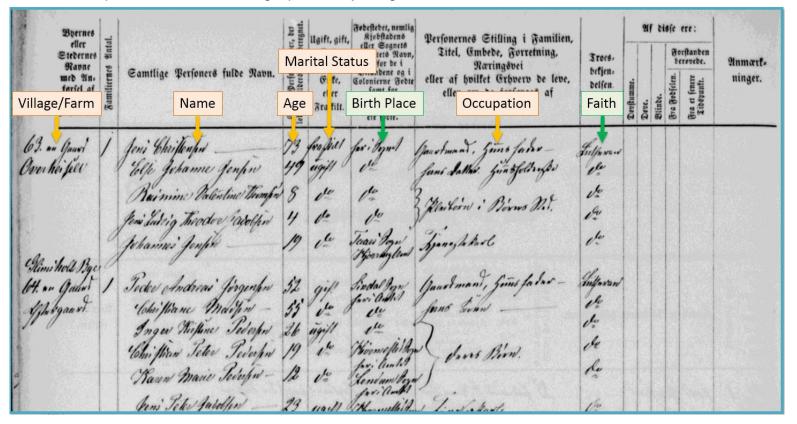
1787-1840

- Name
- Age
- Marital Status
- Occupation

Added after 1845

- Place in Household
- Birth place

An Example: 1860 Census of Ugilt parish, Hjørring, Denmark

Basic Word List

Danish	English	Danish	English
Alder	Age	Husstand	Household
Alle	All	Navn	Name
Amt	County	Køn	Gender
Avanceret	Advanced	Omfatter	Contains
Begge	Both	Områdeforslag	Area suggestion
Bopælsoplysninger	Residence information	Personoplysninger	Personal information
Civilstand	Marital status	Simpel	Simple
Efter	After	Skriv	Write
Eller	Or	Sogn	Parish
Erhverv	Occupation	Sorter	Sort
Folketællinger	Census	Stednavn	Place name
Forside	Home page	Stilling	Place
Fortryd	Clear fields	Søg/Søgning	Search
Fødested	Birth place	Vælg	Choose
Herred	Court district	År	Year