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ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS FOUND IN GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

PRESENTED BY AMY URMAN

There are numerous types of abbreviations and symbols found when researching. The type of abbreviations and symbols that we encounter may differ depending on the document type, time period, or context of writing.

Census Records:

U.S. Census Abbreviations

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Census_Abbreviations

Old Handwriting Records:

BYU Script Tutorial

<https://script.byu.edu/Pages/home.aspx>

Abbreviations in Genealogy

<http://sites.rootsweb.com/~ri/genweb/abbrev.html>

Abbreviations in Quaker Records

<http://www.combs-families.org/combs/quaker/abb.htm>

Types of records that often contain abbreviations and symbols:

- Historical Documents – Church records, archival collections, etc.
- Census
- Military
- Old Handwritten Records
- Legal, Tax, and Land Records

Archival Research

- Read the collection description thoroughly to understand how it is cataloged and if any abbreviations or symbols are used.
- Ask if the archives have a list of abbreviations that they use in their collection descriptions.

Census Records

- New abbreviations added in different census years and types. Review the instructions for each census year for the most accurate information. Instructions can be located at [CENSUS INSTRUCTIONS](#)
- State census abbreviations may differ. Search state census instructions for abbreviations or the in the archive descriptions for information.

Military Records

- Department of War abbreviations

<https://collections.nlm.nih.gov/bookviewer?PID=nlm:nlmuid-1308032R-bk#page/1/mode/2up>

Land Records

Illinois Land Tract Sales
Abbreviations

https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/databases/data_lanabbr.html

Missouri Abbreviations in
legal descriptions

<https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/31123/Abbreviations-For-Legals?bidId=>

BLM

abbreviations in land
status records

<https://www.blm.gov/or/gis/geoscience/files/MTPabbreviations.pdf>

Miscellaneous

Resources

Abbreviations and
Shorthand symbols

<https://ncarchives.wordpress.com/2017/08/18/what-does-that-say-series-pt-i/>

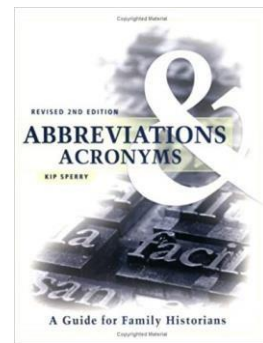
National

Cemetery Admin.

Headstone & Marker
Abbreviations

<https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/hmm/abbreviations.asp>

Revised 2nd Ed. Abbreviations & Acronyms by Kip Sperry



Old Handwritten Records

▪ Become familiar English abbreviations such as:

- y^e [the] or y^t [that]
- & [and] c [et cetera]
- apptnces [appurtenances]
- pish [parish]
- S^r [Sir]
- f [long s] or β [German S]
- Abbreviations for English given names - see [Names](#)

Legal, Tax, and Land Records

- π or P = Plaintiff
- Δ or D = Defendant
- § section
- §§ sections
- Abbreviations of Latin Words and Names in English Historical Manuscripts and records
- <https://books.google.com/books?id=Pqp388ZPFsgC&printsec=frontcover&dq=abbreviations+historical&hl=en&sa=X&ved=oahUKewimmPLBjvngAhVOR6wKHQemCJ44ChDoAQgtMAE#v=onepage&q=abbreviations%20historical&f=false>
- Real Estate and Property record abbreviations <https://www.ustitlerecords.com/property-record-acronyms-abbreviation-descriptions/>

Additional records that utilize abbreviations:

Government records, city, county, and state: birth, marriage, death registers

Religious Records: Baptisms, marriages, deaths