

Archives of Michigan



Berrien County County Research Guide: No. 11

Berrien County was established by the legislature in 1831 and organized in 1835. The county coordinates are Range 17W–21W and Township 3S–8S. Adjacent counties include Van Buren (north/northeast), Cass (east), St. Joseph County, Indiana (southeast), LaPorte County, Indiana (south), and Porter County, Indiana (southwest).

Here is a listing of original source records available at the Archives for Berrien County, including the years of coverage and the Record Group number. Finding aids available in the Archives, arranged by RG, give a more itemized listing of each collection.

Several Archives of Michigan collections are housed at the Western Michigan University Archives & Regional History Collections in Kalamazoo, which are indicated below with a #. For assistance with those resources, please check with the staff there: wmich.edu/library/collections/archives.

Businesses

Record of chattel mortgages	1941	RG 67-109#
# Held at Western Michigan University Archives, Kalamazoo		

Cemeteries

Berrien County files	1968–1976	RG 83-53
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Census

Population schedules	1880	RG 67-24
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Court records

Chancery rule and order book	1847–1886	RG 67-24#
Circuit court common rule book	1843–1912	RG 67-24#
Circuit court proceedings	1839–1841	RG 67-109#
List of petit jury	1905–1940	RG 67-24#
Justice and circuit court decisions	1841–1864	RG 67-24#
Justice court journals	1832–1893	RG 67-24#
Justice court transcripts	1864–1929	RG 67-24#
Record of justices of the peace and notaries	1837–1888	RG 67-24#

Held at Western Michigan University Archives, Kalamazoo

Land

Township plats	1943–1945	RG 67-109#
Index to deeds	undated	RG 67-109#

Held at Western Michigan University Archives, Kalamazoo

Military

GAR post records	1876–1945	RG 63-19
* Berrien County GAR posts: 14 (Benton Harbor); 21 (St. Joseph); 22 (Buchanan); 30 (Coloma); 36 (Berrien Center); 39 (Berrien Springs); 64 (Niles); 85 (Three Oaks); 208 (Galien); 437 (New Troy)		
Record of soldiers discharged from service	1866–1899	RG 67-24#
Report of burial of indigent soldiers, sailors, and Marines	1885–1921	RG 67-24#

* See also Guide No. 4: War Records & Guide No. 7: Post-War Records

Held at Western Michigan University Archives, Kalamazoo

Occupations

Statements of medical practitioners	1898–1899	RG 67-24#
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Held at Western Michigan University Archives, Kalamazoo

Political records

Bonds and oaths of office	1915–1916	RG 67-24#
Election breakdown	1936–1948	
Election returns for village and township officers	1912–1954	RG 67-24#
List of county officers	1836–1839	RG 67-24#

Held at Western Michigan University Archives, Kalamazoo

Poor home/relief

Journal of board of superintendents of the poor	1847–1868	RG 67-109#
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Held at Western Michigan University Archives, Kalamazoo

Prison records

Reports of jail inspection	1897–1918	RG 67-24#
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Held at Western Michigan University Archives, Kalamazoo
* See Guide No. 3: Correctional Facilities Records

Probate

Proceedings of probate court	1832–1838	RG 67-109#
Vouchers and receipts within case files	1927–1937	RG 67-109#

Recreation

Record of docked horses	1901–1902	RG 67-24#
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Schools

Record of attendance in Trinity Lutheran School	1955–1959	RG 67-109#
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Tax records

Abstract of taxable inheritances	1902–1930	RG 67-109#
Assessment roll of Village of St. Joseph	1868	RG 67-24#
Record of tax receipts	1850–1879	RG 67-24#
Record of tax redemption notices	1898–1910	RG 67-24#
Register of delinquent tax receipts countersigned by county clerk	1882–1901	RG 67-24#

Held at Western Michigan University Archives, Kalamazoo

Vital records

Berrien Springs marriage record	1939–1968	RG 79-100
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* See also Guide No. 19: Vital Records