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New York State Family History Conference

The biennial New York State Family History Conference will be 10–12 September 2020, with the in-person conference taking place in Albany, New York. More details on the program and options will be coming soon.

Publications (found at nygbs.org/store or the links below)

Biebel, Frank. *Marriage Notices from New York City Newspapers of the Early 1830s*. New York: New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 2019.

Buiter, Anne Siebert. *Tracings Immigrants through the Port of New York: Early National Period to 1924*. New York: New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 2020. [PDF](#) and [print](#) versions available.

Goodwin, Aaron. *New York City Municipal Archives: An Authorized Guide for Family Historians*. New York: New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 2016. [PDF](#) and [print](#) versions available.

New York Guide to Birth, Marriage, and Death Records. New York: New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 2017. Extracted from the *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*, revised edition 2017. [PDF](#) and [print](#) versions available.

New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer, revised edition 2017. New York: New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 2017. [PDF](#) and [print](#) versions available.

County Guide Series, extracted from *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*, revised edition 2017. [Available in print](#).

Unlock the Mysteries of the Nonpopulation Census

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Though census takers didn't always count everyone, their lists from 1790 on are a magic timeline to trace ancestors backward through time, revealing how amazingly mobile folks were back then!

....Vera M. McDowell (1992)

Census records are a mainstay of genealogical research. Ask any genealogist, and they can intelligently discuss various census records. However, few are aware of or use all of the census data available to their fullest advantage.

Population and Special Schedules

- Population Schedules – 1790 and every 10 years thereafter
- Agricultural Schedules (1850 – 1885)
- Defective and Delinquent Classes Schedules (1880)
- U.S. Special Census on Deaf Family Marriages and Hearing Relatives, 1888 - 1895
- Enumeration District (ED) maps (1880 to present)
- Industry or Manufacturing Schedules (1810, 1820, 1850 – 1885)
- Mortality Schedules (1850 – 1885)
- Slave Schedules (1850 – 1860)
- Social Statistics (1850 – 1870)
- Special Census of Indians
- Veterans' and Widows' Schedules (1890)
- State Census

The Census Taker Cometh

In 1790, Congress authorized a "census day" for collecting information for every household in America. This was continued every ten years to today. The table identifies the census day for each enumeration district. This is the date for which statistics were collected. It is not the day the census taker knocked on the door.

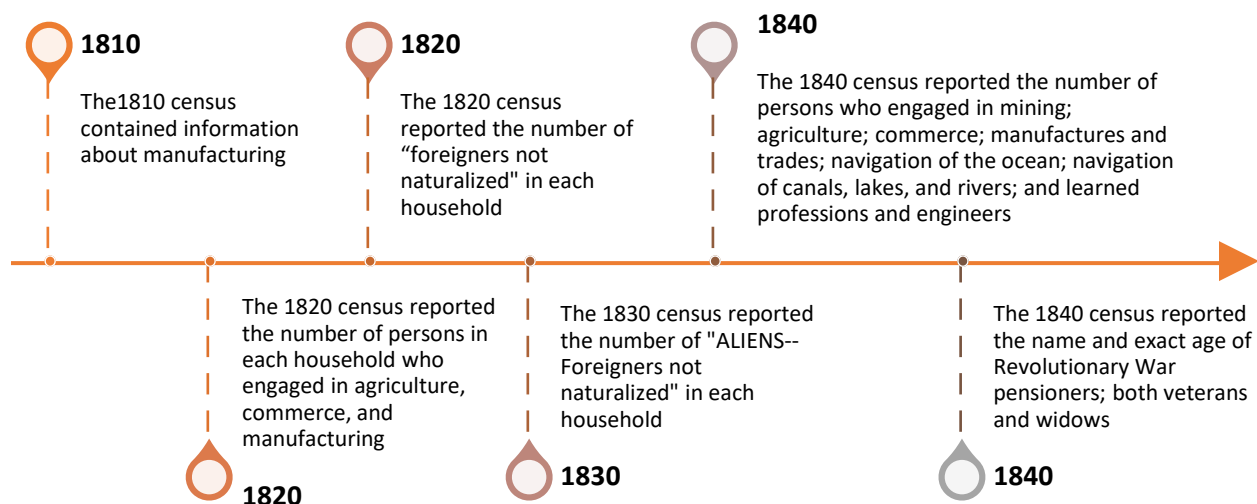
What Questions Did They Ask?

The instructions given to all the U.S. Marshals are:

All the questions refer to the day when the enumeration is to commence, the first Monday in August next. Your assistants will thereby understand that they are to insert in their returns all the persons belonging to the family on the first Monday in August, even those who may be deceased at the time when they take the account; and, on the other hand, that they will not include in it infants born after that day.

| Census Year | Census Day | Time Allowed |
|-------------|------------|--------------|
| 1790 | 2 August | 9 months |
| 1800 | 4 August | 9 months |
| 1810 | 6 August | 10 months |
| 1820 | 7 August | 13 months |
| 1830 | 1 June | 12 months |
| 1840 | 1 June | 18 months |
| 1850 | 1 June | 5 months |
| 1860 | 1 June | 5 months |
| 1870 | 1 June | 5 months |
| 1880 | 1 June | 1 month |
| 1890 | 1 June | 1 month |
| 1900 | 1 June | 1 month |
| 1910 | 15 April | 1 month |
| 1920 | 1 January | 1 month |
| 1930 | 1 April | 1 month |

1810 – 1840 Census



Check the Census For

Each census year asked varying questions about family, employment, citizenship, and military service. This information is invaluable in discovering information on your ancestors and their relationships.

| Census Data | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Immigration | Country of Origin |
| Language | Race |
| Household relationships | Neighbors |
| Voting status | Citizenship |
| Home value | Property value |
| Personal property value | Rent or own |
| Family | Radio |
| Name of road; house number | Number of children a woman had |
| Number of children now living | Age at first marriage |
| Number of years married | Marital status |
| Number of times married | Literacy |
| Children attending school | Sickness, blindness, deafness, insanity, death, a pauper |

Clues for Future Research

Each piece of information on a census is a clue for learning more about each individual listed. Several examples are listed below:

| Census Data | Check |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Immigration \ Language \ Citizenship | Ship and naturalization records |
| Own Home \ Property | Land, deeds, real estate tax records |
| Occupation \ Farm | Agricultural and \ or Manufacturing census |
| Number of Children | Birth, death, obituaries |
| Marriage | Marriage \ Divorce \ Death records |

Agricultural Schedules

If your ancestor was a farmer, the Agricultural Schedules of 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 contain information relating to individual farms and list data pertaining to farmland, farm animals, crops, and other miscellaneous agricultural information. Additional details are documented in the 1880 schedules such as the number of acreage used for each kind of crop, the number of poultry, and the number of eggs produced.

Defective and Delinquent Classes Schedules (1880)

In 1880, if a person was identified as deaf, dumb, blind, or criminal, they were enumerated on the 1880 Defective and Delinquent Schedule. Each entry refers to the respective 1880 population schedule by page and line number.

U.S. Special Census on Deaf Family Marriages and Hearing Relatives, 1888 – 1895

This database contains the questionnaires issued by Dr. Fay to deaf couples. The questionnaires were completed during the years 1889-1894.

Enumeration District (ED) maps (1880 to present)

When a name isn't located in the Soundex or on-line search indexes, enumeration district (ED) descriptions and maps can be useful in identifying the locality or county where your ancestor may be located.

Each census-taker is assigned an area identified as an enumeration district (ED) for the purpose of counting persons living within that identified locale.

Industry or Manufacturing Schedules (1810, 1820, 1850 – 1885)

Manufacturing schedules were conducted in 1820, 1850, and 1860. Information on these schedules contain the name of the manufacturer; the type of business or product; the amount of capital invested; the quantities, kinds, and value of raw materials used; the quantities, kinds, and value of products produced annually; the kind of power or machinery used; the number of men and women employed; and the average monthly cost of male and female labor.

Mortality Schedule

When a person died during the 12 months prior to the enumeration date of the census years 1850 to 1880 (Minnesota 1900), their names were recorded on a Mortality Schedule. For each person, the following information is listed: name, age, sex, marital status if married or widowed, state or country of birth, month of death, occupation, cause of death, and the length of the final illness. This may be the only death record available for some individuals.

SCCHEDULE 2.—Persons who Died during the Year ending 1st June, 1870, in
County of Columbia, State of Georgia, enumerated by Wm. A. B. ...

| Line No. | Name | Sex | Age | Mar. Stat. | State or Country of Birth | Month of Death | Occupation | Cause of Death | Length of Final Illness |
|----------|---------------|-----|-----|------------|---------------------------|----------------|------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Infant | M | 12 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 2 | Ann Brown | F | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 3 | Annally Smith | F | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 4 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 5 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 6 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 7 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 8 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 9 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 10 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 11 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 12 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 13 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 14 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 15 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 16 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 17 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 18 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 19 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |
| 20 | John Brown | M | 18 | | Georgia | May | | Small Pox | |

Slave Schedules

In 1850 and 1860, southern states, New Jersey and the District of Columbia, slaves were enumerated separately. Typically, they were only recorded by age, sex, color, and the names of their owners. However, three counties, Scott County, Tennessee, Bowie County, Texas, and Utah County, Utah, listed slaves by name. In 1860, five counties listed slaves by name, Boyd County, Kentucky, City of St. Louis, Missouri, Camden County, North Carolina, Washington County, Tennessee, and Hampshire County, Virginia.

Social Statistics (1850 – 1870)

Social Statistics schedules contain statistical data, not information about specific individuals. This data includes, for each political subdivision, the value of real estate; annual taxes; number of schools, teachers, and pupils; number and type of libraries and the number of volumes they have; name, type, and circulation of newspapers; the types of church denominations, the number of people each church can seat, and the value of their property; the number of native and foreign-born paupers and the cost of supporting them; the number of native and foreign-born criminals convicted and in prison; and the average wages paid to farm hands, day laborers, carpenters, and female domestics.

Note that these schedules provide only statistical data, not information about specific individuals.

Special Census of Indians

The 1857 Shawnee Census – As part of the Kansas Territorial Censuses, 1855-1859, this is a census of Shawnee Indians in Kansas Territory that was taken in conjunction with the treaty made with the tribe on May 10, 1854.

1880 Special Census of Indians – Section 8 of the Census Act of March 3, 1879 (20 Stat. 475) authorized the Bureau of the Census to enumerate all Indians not taxed; that is, those on reservations or in unsettled areas. In Washington Territory enumerations were done for the following reservations in Washington Territory, Tulalip, Port Madison, Swinomish, Muckleshoot, Lummi, and Yakima; and in Dakota Territory, Standing Rock; and in California, Round Valley.

1890 Census Report – The Report on Indians Taxed and Indians Not Taxed in the United States (Except Alaska) at the Eleventh Census, 1890 (1894) consists of statistical summaries followed by descriptions of each tribe. These descriptions are arranged by state and usually include the number of people on the reservation, the location of the reservation as well as a description of the schools, sources of income, health problems, and religion.

1907 Census of Seminole County, Oklahoma – This census was taken pursuant to a Presidential directive ordering a census of the population of Indian Territory and the Territory of Oklahoma prior to their admittance to the Union as the State of Oklahoma. Only the schedules for Seminole County, in what was then Indian Territory, survive.

1890 Census

Unfortunately, all of the schedules for the States, Alabama through Kansas and approximately half of those for Kentucky were destroyed by the fire of 1890.

Veterans' and Widows' Schedules (1890)

The Census Act of March 1, 1889, provided that the Superintendent of Census, Eleventh Census, should “*cause to be taken on a special schedule of inquiry, according to such form as he may prescribe, the names, organizations, and length of service of those who had served in the Army, Navy, or Marine Corps of the United States in the war of the rebellion, and who are survivors at the time of said inquiry, and the widows of soldiers, sailors, or marines.*”

The following information was collected: name of the veteran (or if he did not survive, the names of both the widow and her deceased husband); the veteran’s rank, company, regiment or vessel, date of enlistment, date of discharge, and length of service in years, months, and days; post office and address of each person listed; disability incurred by the veteran; and remarks necessary to a complete statement of his term of service.

| Special Schedule.—Surviving Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines, and Widows, etc. | | | | | | | | | | Page |
|--|---|---------|---------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|---------|---------|
| S. D.: 1 ; E. D.: 408 ; Minor Civil Division: 22 nd Ward | | | | | | | | | | 3 |
| 418 th | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | |
| Year | Name of Surviving Soldier, Sailor, and Marine, and Widow. | Rank | Company | Name of Regiment or Vessel | Date of Enlistment | Date of Discharge | Length of Service | Post Office | Address | Remarks |
| 1861 | Henry C. [unclear] | Private | B | 1 st Regt. [unclear] | 1861 | 1862 | 1 | | | |
| 1861 | William F. [unclear] | Private | | at [unclear] | 1861 | 1862 | 1 | | | |
| 1861 | Thomas [unclear] | Private | | at [unclear] | 1861 | 1862 | 1 | | | |
| 1861 | Nicholas A. [unclear] | Private | | at [unclear] | 1861 | 1862 | 1 | | | |
| 1861 | Henry [unclear] | Private | | at [unclear] | 1861 | 1862 | 1 | | | |
| 1861 | James [unclear] | Private | | at [unclear] | 1861 | 1862 | 1 | | | |

1930 Census of Merchant Seamen

The 1930 Census of Merchant Seamen began on 1 April 1930.

- Enumerated merchant seamen serving on U.S. flag merchant vessels on a special Merchant Seamen schedule
- All persons aboard ship, except officers who had regular or fixed places of abode ashore

State Census Records

37 states took their own censuses, normally every ten years, on the five-year interval (1855, 1865, etc.), to complement the US Federal census. Unfortunately, all of these records haven't survived. The ones that are still available can be located at the state level in archives or state libraries. Many of these state census records are also available on microfilm through a local Family History Center or online resources such as Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.com.

References

- Bill Dollarhide's "The Census Book. A Genealogist's, Guide to the Federal Census Facts, Schedules and Indexes
- Census Tools (blank electronic forms) <http://censustools.com/>
- <http://stevemorse.org/census/ocodes.htm>
- <http://www.census.gov/index.html>
- <https://www.ancestry.com/cs/census-forms>
- <https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/charts-forms>
- https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Census_Forms
- Lainhart, Ann S. "State Census Records." Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1992.
- *Marriages of the Deaf in America: An Inquiry Concerning the Results of Marriages of the Deaf in America* by Edward Allen Fay (Washington, D.C.: Gibson Bros., 1898) and from the Volta Library & Bureau section of the National Register of Historical Places Travel Itinerary website (<http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/wash/dc14.htm>).
- Measuring America: The Decennial Censuses From 1790 to 2000, US Department of Commerce, April 2002. (Contains questions asked each census year)
- *New York State Census Records, 1790—1925*, Bibliography Bulletin 88, compiled by Marilyn Douglas and Melinda Yates, University of the State of New York, 1981.
- Thorndale & Dollarhide's Map Guide to the US Fed Census

New York State Census

| Census Year | Title |
|-------------|--|
| 1807 | A General Account Of the Number Of Electors In the Several Counties Of This State (excerpt from the Senate Journal, 31st session, 1808) |
| 1814 | Census Of Electors and Other Inhabitants Of This State, Taken and Sent To This Office, Pursuant To an Act, Entitled "An Act For Taking a Census Of Electors and Other Inhabitants Of This State," Passed April 15th, 1814 (excerpt from the Senate Journal, 38th session, 1815) |
| 1821 | Communication from the Secretary of State, transmitting the census of this state [1821]. (Reported to the Assembly, Friday, March 15, 1822) |
| 1825 | Census Of the State Of New York, 1825 ; a True and Accurate Enumeration Of the Inhabitants Residing In the Several Counties In This State, Together With Other Particulars |

| Census Year | Title |
|-------------|--|
| | Required By the Act, Entitled "An Act To Provide For Taking Future Enumerations Of the Inhabitants Of This State, and For Procuring Useful Statistical Tables," Passed April 8, 1825 |
| 1835 | Census of the State of New York For 1835 : Containing an Enumeration of the Inhabitants Of the State, With Other Statistical Information, In Pursuance Of Chapter Third Of the First Part Of the Revised Statutes, and Of the Act Amending the Same, Passed On the 16th March, 1835 |
| 1845 | Census Of the State Of New York, For 1845 : Containing an Enumeration Of the Inhabitants Of the State, With Other Statistical Information, In Pursuance Of Chapter Third Of the First Part Of the Revised Statutes, and Of the Act Amending the Same, Passed On the 7th day Of May, 1845 |
| 1855 | Census of the state of New York, for 1855 ; taken in pursuance of article three of the constitution of the state, and of chapter sixty-four of the laws of 1855 |
| | Instructions For Taking the Census Of the State Of New York In the Year 1855 ; Issued By the Secretary of State, To the Officers Charged With the Duty Of taking It |
| 1865 | Census Of the State Of New York, For 1865 . Taken In Pursuance Of Article Third Of the Constitution Of the State, and Of Chapter Sixty-four Of the Laws Of 1885 |
| | Preliminary Report On the Census Of the State Of New York, For the Year 1865 |
| | Statistics of population of the city and county of New York as shown by the state census of 1865 , with the comparative results of this and previous enumerations and other statistics given by the state and federal census, from the earliest period |
| | Instructions For Taking the Census Of the State Of New York, In the Year 1865 ; Issued By the Secretary Of State, To the Officers Charged With the Duty Of Taking It |
| 1875 | Census Of the State Of New York For 1875 |
| | Preliminary census report as to population of the State of New York |
| | Instructions For Taking the Census Of the State Of New York: In the Year 1875 , Together With the Laws Relating Thereto |
| 1892 | Exhibits Showing the Enumeration Of the State By Counties, Cities, Towns and Election Districts For the Year 1892 |
| 1905 | Report Of the Enumeration Of the Inhabitants Of the State Of New York: June 1, 1905 |
| 1915 | Report Of the Secretary Of State Of the Enumeration Of the Inhabitants, 1915: Transmitted To the Legislature January 17, 1916 |
| 1925 | Enumeration Of Inhabitants, 1925: Report Presented To the Legislature, January 15, 1926 |
| | Population figures for the cities, incorporated villages, towns, and counties of New York State: according to the census of June 1, 1925 |
| | Supplementary report on the enumeration-tabulation of the inhabitants of the state as of June 1, 1925 : with advance information tables for Cattaraugus and Richmond counties and some state census centennial tables and charts |
| | Census Of 1925: Regulations and Instructions |