

## Exploring New York's State Census Records

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the censuses taken and what they contain
2. Learn why you should use New York's state censuses
3. Learn how to access and search the New York state censuses
4. Explore the harder to find early New York state censuses

### WHAT NEW YORK STATE CENSUS WERE TAKEN AND ARE AVAILABLE?

#### Federal and New York State Censuses

United States (federal) censuses are taken every ten years on the 0 years. Images and indexes are widely available.

1777 New York State was formed by its constitution.

1825 The first surviving New York state census enumerated the heads of households by name, along with counts of others in the household.

State censuses occurred mostly every ten years on the 5 years.

1855 The first New York state census to include every name in the household, and it also noted the relationship to the head of household.

1880 First U.S. census to note the relationship to the head of household, 25 years later than the New York state censuses.

1892 New York's state census can often fill in for the loss of most of the 1890 U.S. census.

1925 New York's final state census.

### When were New York State Censuses Conducted?

Enumerated by head of household

1825

1835

1845

Enumerated with every name

1855

1905

1865

1915

1875

1925

1892

### WHY YOU SHOULD USE NEW YORK STATE CENSUSES

#### New York State Census Timing

New York's state censuses were usually taken mid-way through the 10-year period between the federal census. Therefore, they provide information during that gap.

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### New York State Census Questions

New York's state censuses note relationship information earlier than federal censuses. The questions asked on each census vary by year and are often different from those asked on federal censuses. The *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*, chapter 3, table 2 provides a listing of the state census questions from 1855 to 1925.

An example of the 1855 New York census shows the household of Daniel D Benedict, 66, Saratoga County, Saratoga Springs, Election District 1, fam. 1, with his wife, Phebe, 66, and two domestics, age 37 and 5.

An example of the 1865 New York census shows the household of Alexander Schemerhorne, 47, noted to be Black, Cattaraugus County, Salamanca, fam. 135, with his wife, Anis, 21, and two children.

### HOW TO ACCESS AND SEARCH THE NEW YORK STATE CENSUSES

#### What exists today?

State copies of the New York censuses were kept at the New York State Library housed in the Captiol building. A devastating 1911 fire destroyed all the state copies through that date. Of the state censuses from 1825 to 1905, the surviving copies are the county copies.

The 1915 and 1925 state copies of those censuses are held by the New York State Archives (NYSA). Digitized images of these census from NYSA are found on Ancestry and FamilySearch.

#### 1925 New York State Census

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2704/>

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1937489>

#### 1915 New York State Census

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2703/>

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1937454>

#### 1905 New York State Census

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1463113>

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7364/>

#### 1892 New York State Census

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1529100>

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/3212/>

#### 1875 New York State Census

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1918735>

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7250/>

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1865 New York State Census

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1491284>

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7218/>

1855 New York State Census

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1937366>

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7181/>

### 1855–1905 County Copies of the New York State Census

Use the *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer* (NYFHRGG), chapter 3, table 1 to determine the surviving records for each county.

Search the name indexes to find the person or family of interest. If needed, the collection may be browsed by county, and then by town or city.

### EXPLORE THE HARDER TO FIND EARLY NEW YORK STATE CENSUSES

#### 1855 New York County Census

The county original 1855 New York County, census for Ward 17 was not microfilmed with other 1855 New York county census records due to their fragility. The NYG&B received permission to digitize the original pages—they are online in the NYG&B Online Collections.

<https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/online-records/collection/new-york-county-ward-17-state-census-1855>

Some pages are heavily damaged, therefore, not all lines and names are indexed. The four volumes may also be browsed by book from the collection page (link above).

Ward 17 on the Lower East Side was densely populated. For more in depth look at Ward 17 in 1855, see “A New Look at the Demographics of a 19th Century Lower East Side Neighborhood,”

<https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/blog/new-look-demographics-19th-century-lower-east-side-neighborhood>

### 1825–1845 New York State Censuses

1825 noted the name of the head of household, number of males, number of females, and 33 other questions.

1835 noted the name of the head of household, number of males, number of females, and 21 other questions.

1845 noted the name of the head of household, number of males, number of females, 29 other questions, plus agricultural and horticultural questions.

### 1825–1845 New York State Censuses Access

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Use the *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer* (NYFHRGG), chapter 3, table 1 to determine the surviving records for each county. If CG is noted in the table, check the county guide withing NYHFRGG to determine what records survive.

Use FamilySearch's Wiki by county and use the links under state census to the catalog record. By scrolling down the page to the Film/Digital Notes and check listings for the details, clicking the camera icon to access the images.