Making the Most of the US Federal Census

Class 2: Using the Early Census: 1790–1840

June 2022

THE BRUE FAMILY LEARNING CENTER

American Ancestors
by New England Historic Genealogical Society

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Meet today's presenter

Lindsay Fulton

VP of Research and Library Services

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OVERVIEW

- **Presentation** (60 mins.)
  - Questions asked from 1790 to 1840
  - How to use the 1790-1840 U.S. Federal Censuses
    - Finding parents
    - Tracing a family
    - Reconstructing a record
- **Q&A** (30 mins.)

3

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Key Census Years

- 1820 and 1830- foreigners not naturalized
- 1840- Revolutionary War pensioners
- 1850- 1st to name all household members
  - Place of birth, age, sex, race, and occupation
- 1880- 1st to identify relationship to head of household
- 1880-1930- name parent's place of birth
- 1900 and 1910- number of children born/living
- 1900-1930- immigration and naturalization status
- 1940- identified person who supplied information

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Why do we avoid the 1790-1840 censuses?

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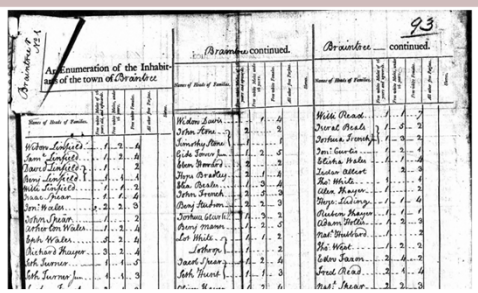
1790



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1800-1810

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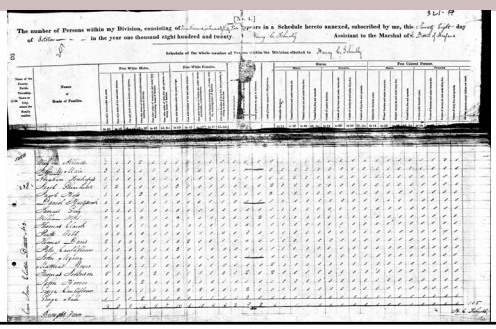
1820



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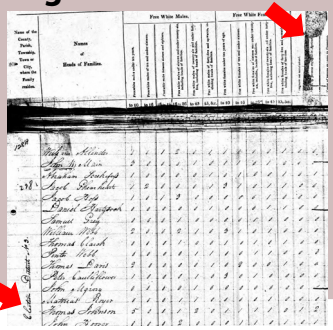
1820

- Gender and age information first included for free colored and enslaved persons
- White males between 16-18 years
- Children born between 1 June 1820 and 7 August 1820
- Foreigners not naturalized

10

Foreigners Not Naturalized



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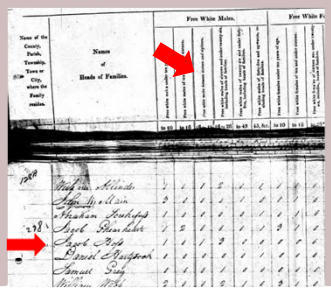
Military Aged Men



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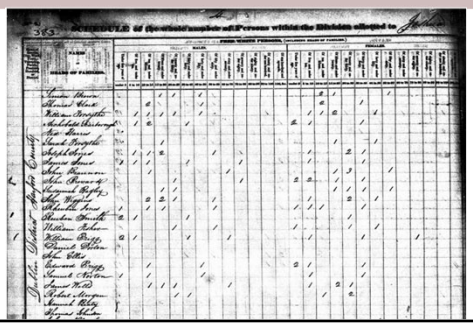
1830



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Tip

Be sure you are looking at the whole record

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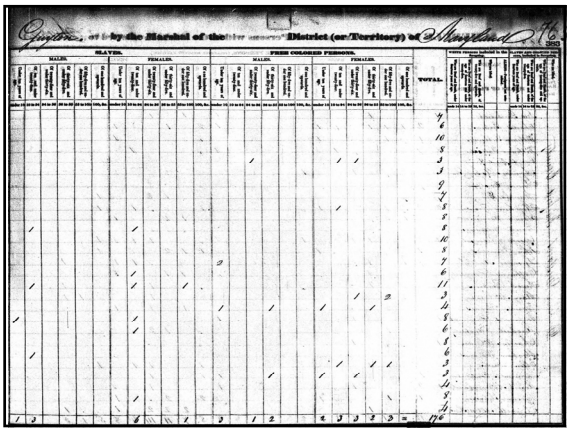

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1830

- Foreigners not naturalized
- White persons who are deaf/ dumb (age range, no gender)
- White persons who are blind (no age or gender)
- Enslaved and free colored persons who are deaf/dumb (age range, no gender)
- Enslaved and free colored persons who are blind (no age or gender)

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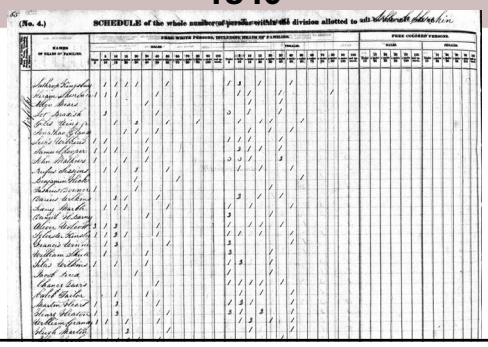
1840



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1840

- Pensioners!
- White persons who are deaf/ dumb (age range, no gender)
- White persons who are blind or insane (no age or gender)
- Enslaved persons who are deaf/dumb (age range, no gender)
- Colored persons who are deaf/dumb (age range, no gender)
- Enslaved persons who are blind or insane (no age or gender)
- Colored persons who are blind or insane (no age or gender)

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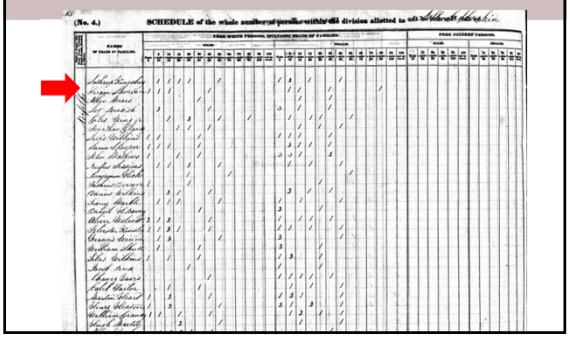
1840



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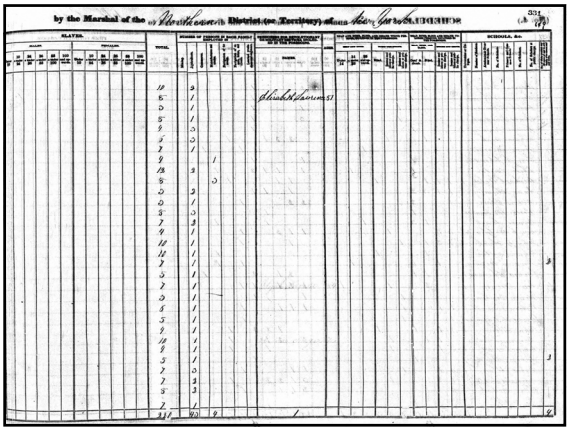

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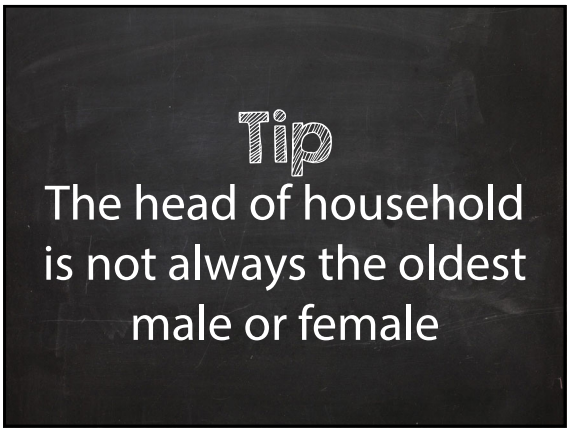

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How Does This Help Us Research?

- Household makeup
- Origins
- Migration and immigration
- Snapshot of the town or county
- Identify other potential family members
- Reconstruct records
- Laser focus!

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Identifying Potential Family Members

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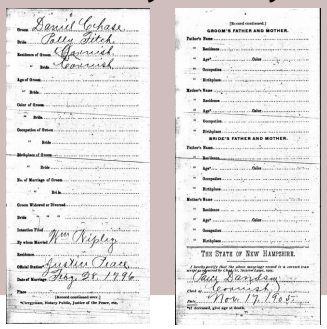
The Ancestry of Polly Fitch



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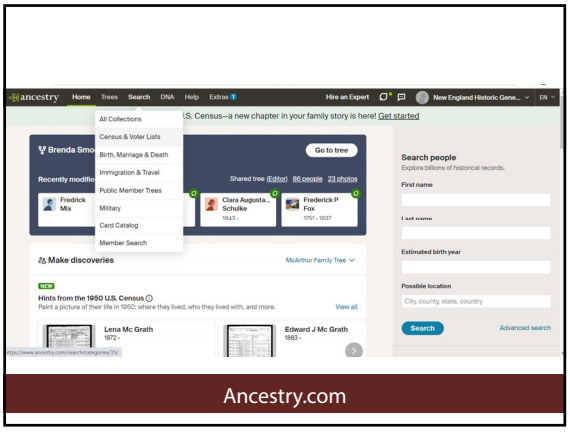

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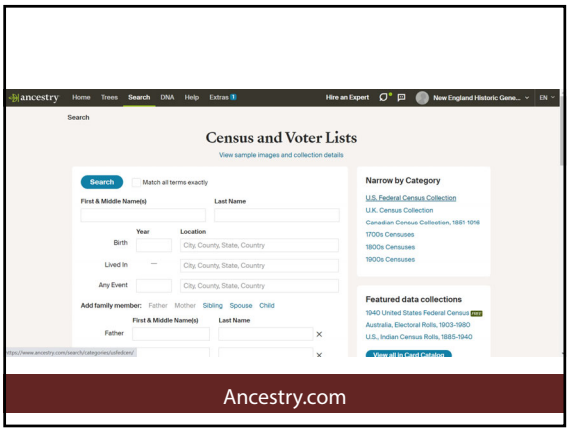

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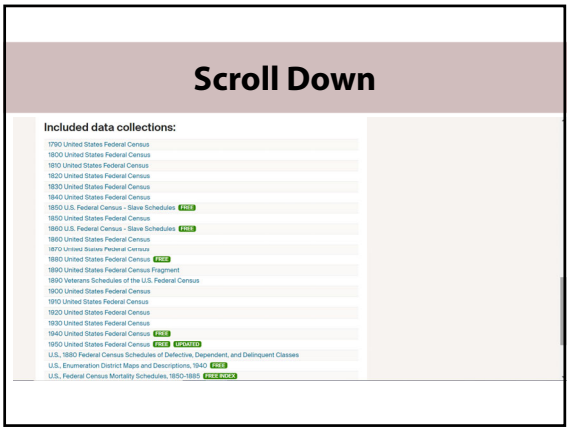

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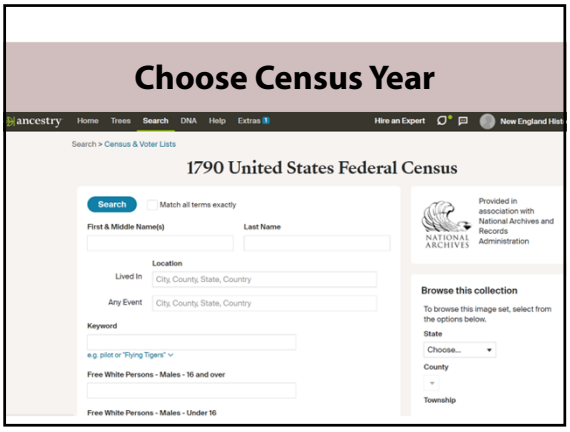

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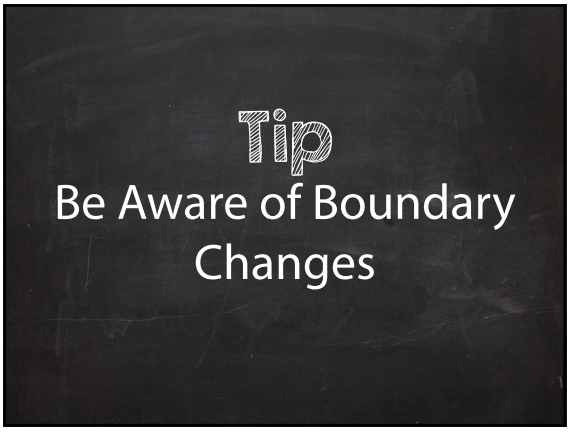

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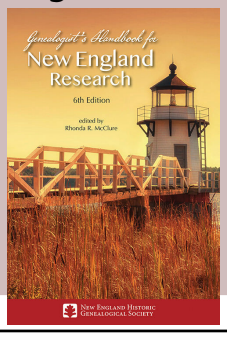
New England Handbook



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Cornish, NH

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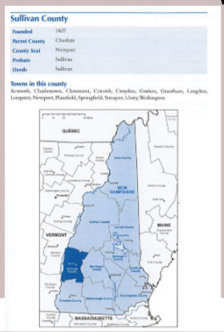
Sullivan County



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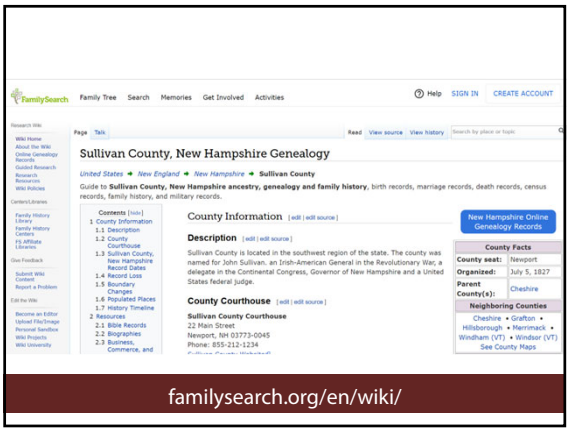

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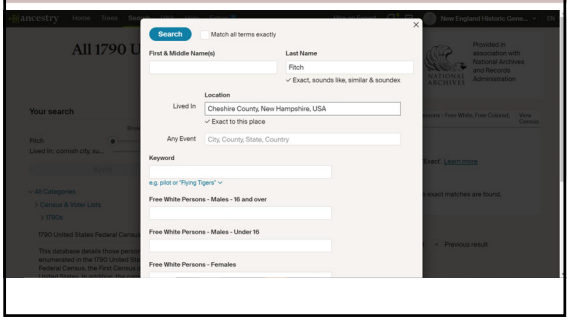
Return to Search



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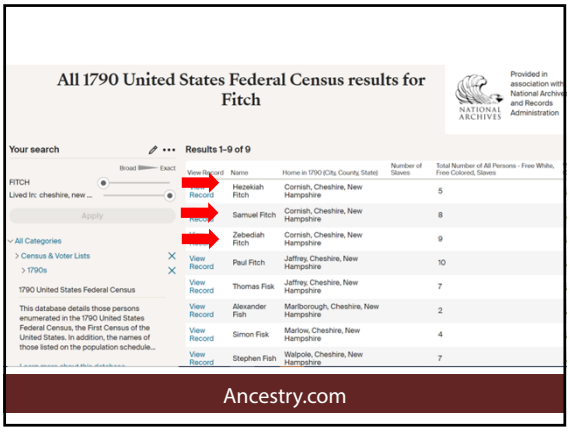

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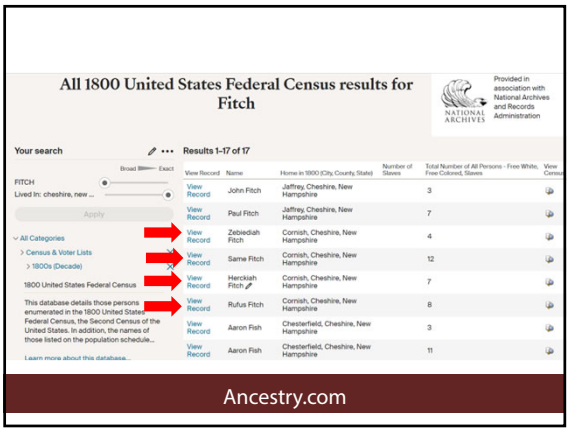

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Tip

Use the "exact" place feature with extreme caution

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Location Rules for Ancestry.com

- If the "place" did not exist at the time of the enumeration- the "exact" feature will fail
- If the "place" was known as something else for a particular year, it will be cataloged that way
  - Browse a specific census year
  - Educate yourself about the "place"

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Browse Census Collections

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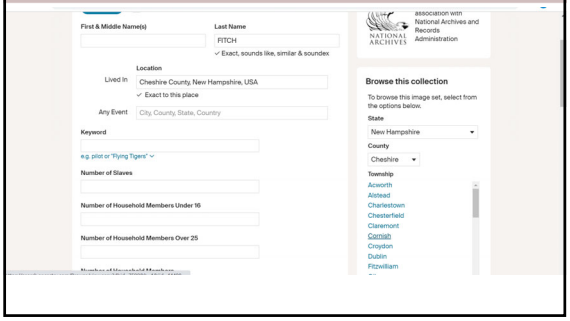
Browse Census Collections



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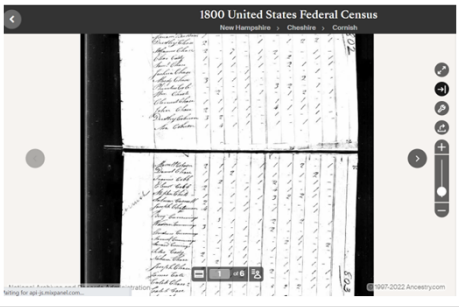
Cornish, NH



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Examine All Candidates

- Hezekiah Fitch (1790 & 1800)
- Samuel Fitch (1790 & 1800)
- Zebediah Fitch (1790 & 1800)
- Rufus Fitch (1800)

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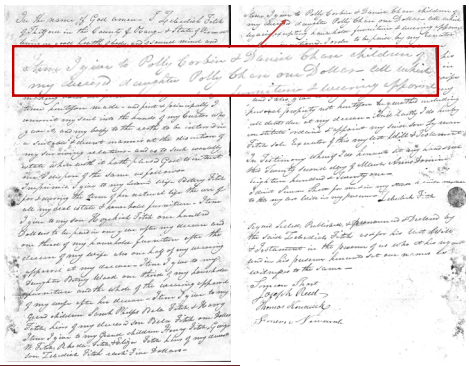

Will of Zebediah Fitch, Orange County, VT

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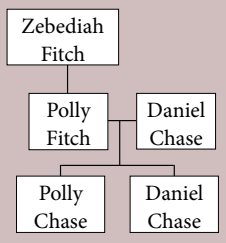
Family of Polly (Fitch) Chase



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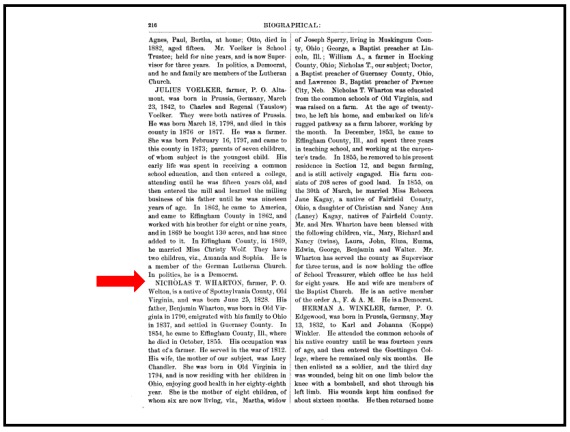

216 BIOGRAPHICAL:

Agnes, Paul, Bertha, at home; Otto, died in 1882, aged fifteen. Mr. Voelker is School Trustee; held for nine years, and is now Supervisor for three years. In politics, a Democrat, and he and family are members of the Lutheran Church.

JULIUS VOELKER, farmer, P. O. Altamont, was born in Prussia, Germany, March 23, 1842, to Charles and Regenal (Yauslow) Voelker. They were both natives of Prussia. He was born March 18, 1798, and died in this county in 1876 or 1877. He was a farmer. She was born February 16, 1797, and came to this county in 1873; parents of seven children, of whom subject is the youngest child. His early life was spent in receiving a common school education, and then entered a college, attending until he was fifteen years old, and then entered the mill and learned the milling business of his father until he was nineteen years of age. In 1862, he came to America, and came to Effingham County in 1862, and worked with his brother for eight or nine years, and in 1869 he bought 130 acres, and has since added to it. In Effingham County, in 1869, he married Miss Christy Wolf. They have two children, viz., Amanda and Sophia. He is a member of the German Lutheran Church. In politics, he is a Democrat.

NICHOLAS T. WHARTON, farmer, P. O. Watson, is a native of Spottsylvania County, Old Virginia, and was born June 25, 1828. His father, Benjamin Wharton, was born in Old Virginia in 1799, emigrated with his family to Ohio in 1837, and settled in Guernsey County. In 1854, he came to Effingham County, Ill., where he died in October, 1855. His occupation was that of a farmer. He served in the war of 1812. His wife, the mother of our subject, was Lucy Chandler. She was born in Old Virginia in 1794, and is now residing with her children in Ohio, enjoying good health in her eighty-eighth year. She is the mother of eight children, of whom six are now living, viz., Martha, widow of Joseph Sperry, living in Muskingum County, Ohio; George, a Baptist preacher at Lincoln, Ill.; William A., a farmer in Hocking County, Ohio; Nicholas T., our subject; Doctor, a Baptist preacher of Guernsey County, Ohio, and Lawrence R., Baptist preacher of Pawnee City, Neb. Nicholas T. Wharton was educated from the common schools of Old Virginia, and was raised on a farm. At the age of twenty-two, he left his home, and embarked on life's rugged pathway as a farm laborer, working by the month. In December, 1853, he came to Effingham County, Ill., and spent three years in teaching school, and working at the carpenter's trade. In 1855, he removed to his present residence in Section 12, and began farming, and is still actively engaged. His farm consists of 208 acres of good land. In 1855, on the 30th of March, he married Miss Rebecca Jane Kagay, a native of Fairfield County, Ohio, a daughter of Christian and Nancy Ann (Laney) Kagay, natives of Fairfield County. Mr. and Mrs. Wharton have been blessed with the following children, viz., Mary, Richard and Nancy (twins), Laura, John, Elnea, Emma, Edwin, George, Benjamin and Walter. Mr. Wharton has served the county as Supervisor for three terms, and is now holding the office of School Treasurer, which office he has held for eight years. He and wife are members of the Baptist Church. He is an active member of the order A., F. & A. M. He is a Democrat.

HERMAN A. WINKLER, farmer, P. O. Edgewood, was born in Prussia, Germany, May 13, 1832, to Karl and Johanna (Koppe) Winkler. He attended the common schools of his native country until he was fourteen years of age, and then entered the Goettingen College, where he remained only six months. He then enlisted as a soldier, and the third day was wounded, being hit on one limb below the knee with a bombshell, and shot through his left limb. His wounds kept him confined for about sixteen months. He then returned home

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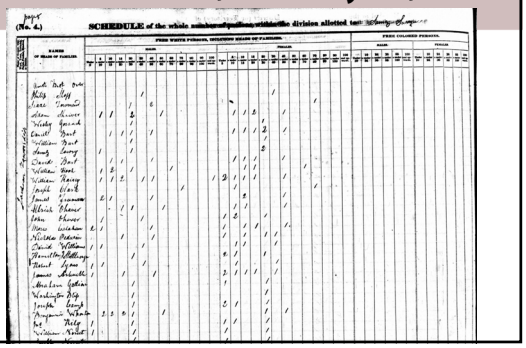
1840- Jackson, Guernsey Co., OH



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Family Breakdown

Males	Tally Marks	Females	Tally Marks
Under 5	0	Under 5	0
5-9	2	5-9	0
10-14	2	10-14	0
15-19	2	15-19	0
20-29	1	20-29	1
30-39	0	30-39	0
40-49	0	40-49	1
50-59	1	50-59	0
60-69	0	60-69	0

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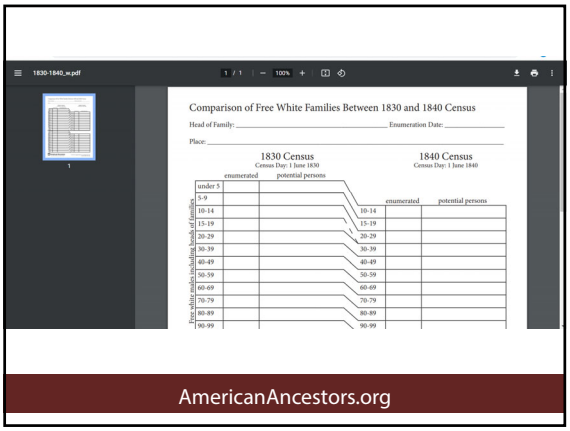

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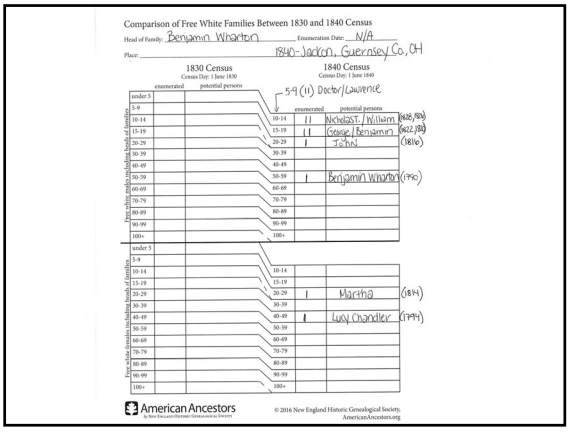

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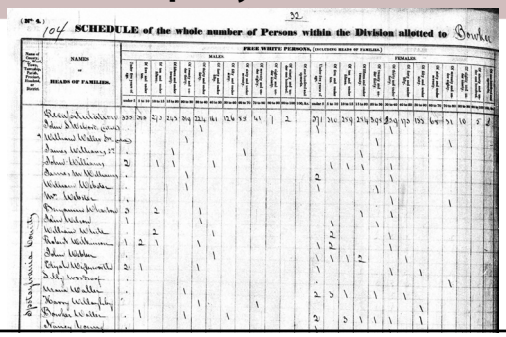
1830- Spotsylvania Co.,VA



SCHEDULE of the whole number of Persons within the Division allotted to

58

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Reconstructing a Census Record

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Which Timothy?

- Timothy Pond
  - Whitestown, Montgomery Co., NY (1790)
  - 7 persons in household
- Timothy Pond, Jr.
  - Whitestown, Montgomery Co., NY (1790)
  - 1-2 persons in household ???

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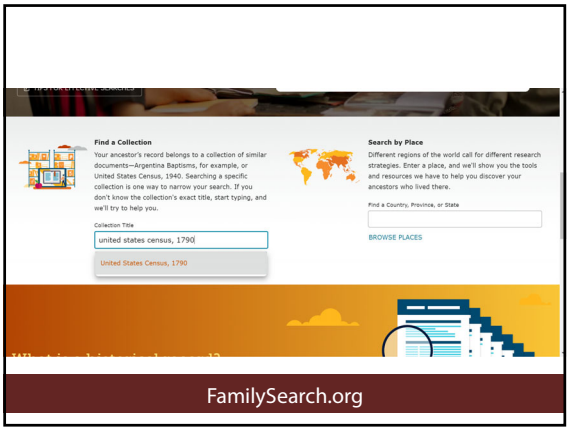

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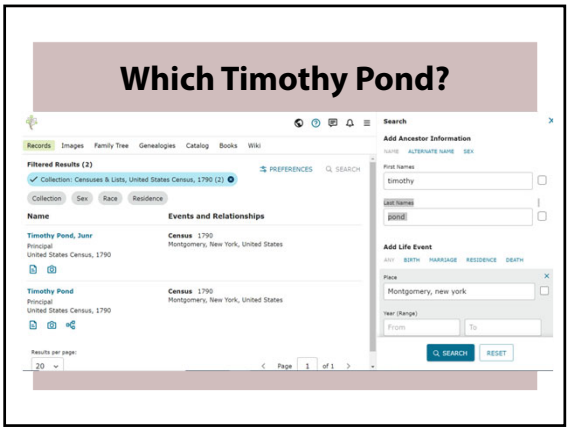

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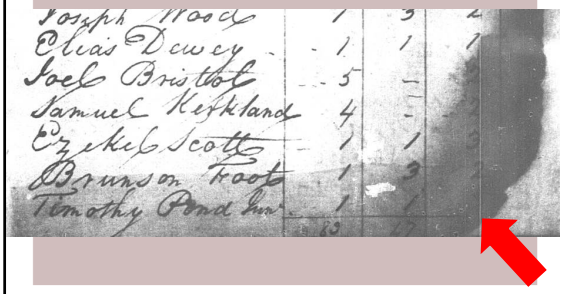
Hard to Read Information



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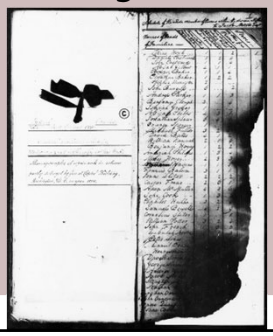

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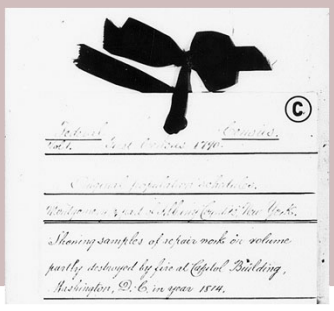
Remember the Organization



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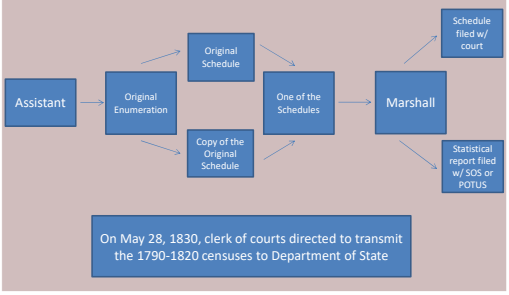
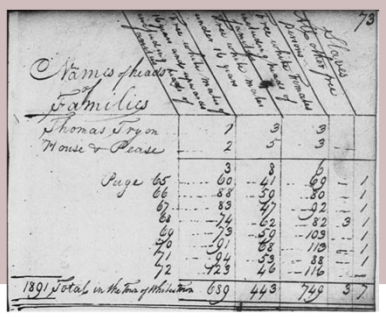
1790-1820



On May 28, 1830, clerk of courts directed to transmit the 1790-1820 censuses to Department of State

70

Last Page



71

Timothy Pond

- 2- (free white males of 16 years and upwards including heads of families)
- 1- (free white males under 16 years)
- 4- (free white females including heads of families)
- 0- (all other free persons)

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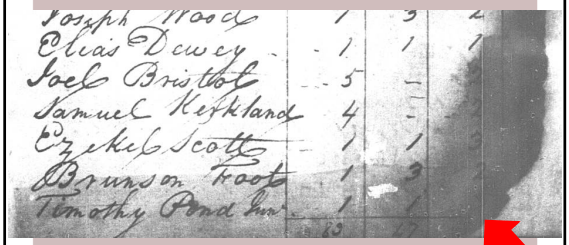
Hard to Read Information



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Timothy Pond, Jr.

- 1- (free white males of 16 years and upwards including heads of families)
- 1- (free white males under 16 years)
- 3- (free white females including heads of families)
- 0- (all other free persons)

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QUESTIONS?

Hire Research Services
research@nehgs.org

Chat with a Genealogist
AmericanAncestors.org/chat

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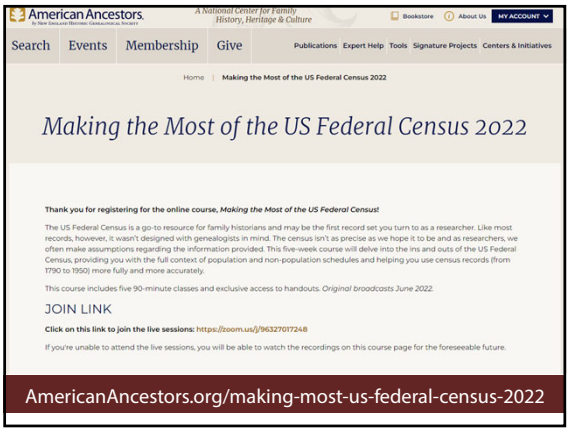

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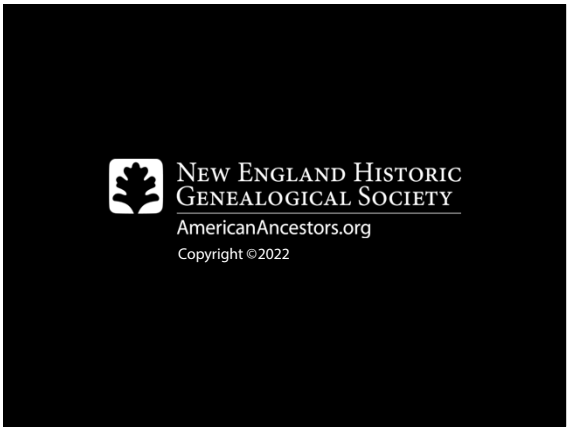
77



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