

Alice Eichholz and James M. Rose, eds. *Free Black Heads of Household in the New York State Federal Census, 1790-1830*. Gale Genealogy and Local History Series, Vol. 14. (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1981) xxx, 301 pp., \$38.00.

Researching black genealogy is not the same as researching white genealogy, either in methodology or sources. Eichholz and Rose, assistant professors at Queens College, City University of New York, and also co-directors of the Ethnic Genealogy Center, are established authors in the field. Eichholz had published *The Linville Family in America* (1970) and *A Second Visit with the Linvilles* (1976). Rose has published *Tapestry* (1979) and *Black Roots in Southeastern Connecticut 1650-1900* (1980). Together they co-edited the book *Black Genesis* (1978), rated as one of the best handbooks on the methodology and sources for black genealogy.

One of the most formidable tasks in black genealogy is the determination of citizenship status during the slavery period—slave or free. This new index helps anyone doing research related to blacks in the New York area to deal with this aspect.

The co-authors state in their introduction that “. . . by the 1830 [Federal] census all blacks in New York State were counted as free.” The black researcher tracing a family in New York State during this time period will find the alphabetical listing especially helpful in that census year. County, township or ward, and page number from the microfilm editions are given, saving valuable research time in locating family name entries in the original records as preserved on microfilm. (Unfortunately, the recent discontinuance of the program by which Federal Census microfilm could be ordered from Fort Worth via inter-library loan greatly limits access to these valuable microfilm editions.)

The authors point out in their introduction that a high percentage of blacks, especially in the urban areas, still resided with white families at the time the censuses were taken and unfortunately are not included “since their names do not appear.”

It would have been helpful if Eichholz and Rose had provided fuller information such as indication of gender and age. This would have enabled the researcher to locate the person in question more quickly on the original census microfilm. With a common surname such as Johnson or Jones, age group would be a valuable identifying factor. Nevertheless, genealogists who have roots in New York will welcome this index.

Eichholz's and Rose's books, Carter G. Woodson's *Free Negroes Heads of Families in the United States in 1830* (1925) and his earlier *Free Negro Owners of Slaves in the United States in 1830; Together with Absentee Ownership of Slavery in the United States in 1830* (1924), and Deborah Newman's *List of Free Black Heads of Families in the First Census of the United States, 1790* (1973) belong on the shelves of all genealogical societies and libraries. Certainly Eichholz and Rose, in writing and co-editing books on black genealogy, have helped to create an interest in black family history, all too frequently overlooked, ignored, and sometimes obliterated.

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