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1935 Census of Business: Schedules of Motor Trucking for Hire

by Claire Prechtel-Kluskens

REMARKS

PERMITS

I hereby certify that the information contained in this schedule is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief, and covers the period from Jan 1 to Dec 31, 1935

Mat Clate
(Signature of contractor)

F.A. Zimmerman
(Signature of permittee)
Jan 11
(Date of expiration)

“Schedules of Motor Trucking for Hire” might not sound very exciting at first, but they actually hold great promise to add some interesting background details to genealogists’ research on thousands of male (and even some female) ancestors alive in 1935.

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) microfilm publication M2068, *1935 Census of Business: Schedules of Motor Trucking for Hire* (103 rolls), contains four-page business census schedules that provide information on the fleet and finances of thousands of trucking companies, partnerships, and individual proprietorships.

Yes, there are big companies with scores of trucks and employees. There are many small local moving companies. There are lots of instances of “one guy with a truck” who had a real job doing something else, but supplemented it with part-time trucking.

Let’s look at some examples, all from roll 74, beginning with “one guy with a truck” and moving up to very large enterprises.

Trucking Company Examples

S. H. Johnson, Tilden Avenue, Chardon, Geauga County, Ohio, did local trucking as an individual proprietorship. His 1935 revenues were \$400. He paid \$80 in part-time payroll, and had \$60 in other operating expenses. He owned one truck that was between two and five years old, with a capacity between one and a half and five tons. Why did he earn so little in trucking? The enumerator, Hank Wallace, helpfully remarked that “this man uses his truck for his own use but has [hauls] material for Chardon Rubber Co. when called. No contract.”

Mike Zychowski, 1012 Fairfield Avenue, Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, was an individual proprietorship doing local light hauling on jobs. During 1935, he made \$780 and had operating expenses of \$172. He owned one truck that was between two and five years old, with a capacity between one and a half and five tons.

Ray’s Moving & Trucking, 1235 Hayden Avenue, East Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, was an individual proprietorship operated by Lena Sanders that did local trucking and warehousing of household goods. Its 1935 revenues were \$3,336. Total payroll was \$2,008, and other operating expenses

were \$716. It employed two men every month in 1935, and during the week of 19-26 October 1935, it paid them \$45. It owned one truck that was between two and five years old, with a capacity between three-quarters and one and a half tons.

Somewhat bigger was The F. W. Zimmerman Moving Co., 3400 St. Clair Avenue, Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, a corporation engaged in local trucking “operating under agreements with shippers over a definite period of time.” Its 1935 revenues were \$15,583. Total payroll was \$7,972, of which \$5,692 was paid to part-time employees. Its other operating expenses were \$3,182. During the week of 18-24 October 1935, its payroll consisted of one executive (paid \$25), one office or clerical employee (paid \$15), and three drivers and helpers (paid \$67). Its monthly payroll fluctuated depending upon how much business it had; it added part-time employees as needed. This is seen in its monthly employment data: January (five employees), February (five), March (five), April (five), May (three), June (seven), July (six), August (five), September (three), October (five), November (three), and December (seven). It owned eight trucks plus one semi-trailer (the details of their ages and capacities are reported on the schedule). The accuracy of the information was certified by F. A. Zimmerman, the Secretary-Treasurer of the corporation.

And finally, a big far-flung concern was the Motor Express, Inc. (of Ohio), 806 Columbia Building, Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, a corporation primarily engaged in intrastate trucking “on substantially regular routes and schedules.” Its 1935 revenues were \$1.6 million. Total payroll was \$579,545, and its other operating expenses were \$949,243. It employed 336 men and thirty women. During the month of October 1935, its payroll consisted of two executives (paid \$600), thirty office and clerical employees (paid \$5,323), 125 warehousing and platform employees (paid \$20,918), 180 drivers and helpers (paid \$24,044), thirteen mechanics (paid \$1,336), and sixteen other employees (paid \$1,697). Its monthly payroll fluctuated depending upon how much business it had: January (330), February (326), March (333), April (340), May (351), June (353), July (351), August (355), September (365), October (366), November (371), and December (373). It owned 69 truck tractors and 183 semi-trailers of various ages and capacities. In addition to its Cleveland office, Motor Express, Inc., had offices in Alliance, Conneaut, Elyria, Fremont, Kent, Lorain, Painesville, Ravenna, Salem, Willoughby, and

Section 2 of the Act creating the Department of Commerce and Labor, approved February 14, 1933, provides that: "The Secretary of Commerce shall from time to time make such special investigations and reports... which he himself may deem necessary and urgent."

DANIEL C. ROPES, Secretary of Commerce.

Form 75
BUREAU OF BUREAUX
Federal Works Project

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
WASHINGTON

SUPERVISOR'S DISTRICT
No. 20
State Ohio
ENumeration DISTRICT
No. 1273
County Cuyahoga
CONSECUTIVE NUMBER
OF REPORT
No. 37

MOTOR TRUCKING AND/OR
WAREHOUSING

CENSUS OF BUSINESS: 1935

A report on this form should be prepared for: (1) each concern whose principal business is trucking for hire, and (2) each establishment or place of business operated by a warehouse concern.

1. DESCRIPTION OF CONCERN:

a. NAME OF CONCERN OR ESTABLISHMENT THE F. W. ZIEMERMAN MOVING CO.
b. NAME OF OWNER RACH (not for corporations)
c. LOCATION OF PRINCIPAL (State OHIO County Cuyahoga Township)

4. OPERATING REVENUE FOR 1935:

a. Total receipts from warehousing or storage operations \$ E-1
b. Total receipts from trucking and cartage for hire: \$ E-2
1. From local operations \$ 16,155.00 E-2
2. From intrastate operations \$ E-3
2. From interstate operations \$ E-4
4. TOTAL (sum of 1, 2, and 3) \$ 16,155.00 E-5
c. Total receipts from freight terminal operations \$ E-6
d. Total receipts from transportation of passengers \$ E-7
e. Other operating revenues (specify sources) \$
f. Total operating revenue (sum of a, b, c, d, and e) \$ 15,583. A-1

5. OPERATING EXPENSES:

a. Total pay roll for the year 1935 for full-time and part-time employees (salaries, wages, bonuses, and commissions, after all deductions) \$ 7,972. A-2
b. All other operating expenses (supplies, depreciation, insurance, overhead, and all other operating expenses except pay roll) \$ 3,182. A-3
c. Total operating expenses (a plus b) \$ 11,154. B-1
d. How much of the total pay roll (a, above) was paid to part-time employees? \$ 5,692. B-2
e. Total depreciation for 1935 included in b, above \$ None A-4

6. PROPRIETORS AND FIRM MEMBERS (Does not apply to corporations):

a. Total number of proprietors and firm members (including those reported under b, below) B-3
b. Number of active proprietors and firm members devoting major portion of their time to the business B-4
c. Number of members of families of proprietors or firm members who are regularly working full-time or part-time, in the business, but to whom no stated salary is paid:
Number 18 years of age or over B-5
Number under 18 years of age B-6

7. PAID EMPLOYEES AND WEEKLY PAY ROLLS:

EMPLOYMENT AND PAY ROLL DATA FOR FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME EMPLOYEES FOR ONE WEEK ONLY

(Give figures for week ending Oct. 20, 1935. For highly seasonal businesses, report instead one week of normal employment during active season.)
Week covered: From Oct. 18, 1935 to Oct. 24, 1935

Table with 4 columns: Full-time (Number of paid full-time employees, Pay roll for the week) and Part-time (Number of paid part-time employees, Pay roll for the week). Rows include various employee categories like executives, clerical, warehouse, etc.

a. How many of the total number of employees shown above (full-time and part-time combined) are Negroes? None B-7
b. How many of the total number of employees shown above (full-time and part-time combined) are females? 1 C(7)-6

(time combined) working during the pay period ending nearest the

Table with columns: Key, Month, 1935, Number, Key, Month, 1935, Number, Key. Rows for July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec.

1935, or other more representative period. These should include all those owned by your drivers should be included.

Table with columns: Ten years old and over, Five to nine years old, etc. and rows for (A), (B), (C), (D), (E).

branch office, etc.) operated at each address. Include consolidated in such manner as to give a single figure for number of employees given here should check with figures given in inquiry 5-e.

Table with columns: Number of employees, full-time and part-time, during the year 1935 (during wages, bonuses and commissions, after all deductions) and Total pay roll for the year 1935 (during wages, bonuses and commissions, after all deductions).

Youngstown, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Buffalo, New York. The schedule reports the street address, the number of employees, and total 1935 payroll for each office.

The Schaab Bros. Trucking, Inc., 1643 E. 40th Street, Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, a corporation owned by John and Frank Schaab, provides an example in which a woman is specifically named. The accuracy of the information on its schedule was certified by Gertrude Schaab, Secretary of the corporation.

How to Search and Use M2068

So, how do you know to look in M2068 for someone?

If your ancestor lived in a city, your research should certainly include reviewing city directories for information. City directories are like modern telephone books, except that there is normally no phone number. Names are arranged alphabetically by surname, then by first name. Each person's address, occupation, and, frequently, the person's employer's name are given. If the employer's name is noted, look up the employer in the city directory to learn more: its address, officers, and frequently also its line of business. If it was large enough, the business may even have an advertisement. City directories are usually found in the public library of the city, and may also be available on microfilm in libraries with large genealogical research collections.

There's probably no way to know if your ancestor happened to be "a guy with a truck." You'll just have to look and see.

In general, it is a straightforward lookup. The records are generally arranged alphabetically by state, then

by county, then by political subdivision, and then by "company name," which could be a personal or company name as demonstrated in the above examples. There are some exceptions to this general arrangement, however, that are reported in detail along with the complete M2068 roll list in "Nonpopulation Census Records: 1935 Census of Business Roll Lists" at http://www.archives.gov/research_room/genealogy/census/1935_business_roll_lists_content.html on the NARA Web site.

By the way, much of the financial data in M2068 appears to have been "crossed out" by Census Bureau employees while they tabulated and processed the data, but you can still read it. In interpreting the wage data, remember that it is the total amount paid to all persons in that employment category. Divide the wages by the number of employees in that category for an approximate wage per person. Thus, dividing the \$5,323 paid by Motor Express, Inc., by thirty (the number of office employees) will tell you that each earned approximately \$174.43 per month. Undoubtedly some earned more, and some less, than that average amount.

M2068 is available for public use in the National Archives Building, 700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20408 (facility information at http://www.archives.gov/facilities/dc/archives_1.html) and at NARA's Central Plains Region (Kansas City, MO), 2312 East Bannister Road, Kansas City MO 64131-3011 (facility information at http://www.archives.gov/facilities/mol/kansas_city.html). In addition, the Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana, expects to have M2068 available by 1 March 2004 (facility information at www.acpl.lib.in.us/locations).

For instructions on how to purchase individual rolls of microfilm, see "How to Obtain Microfilm" at http://www.archives.gov/publications/how_to_order_microfilm.html.



Author Claire Prechtel Kluskens is pictured at left.