



Trades in Otsego County, 1855

Below is a record of the tradesman and businessmen in Otsego County, NY in 1855. Use this information to answer the questions that follow.

<u>PROFESSIONS, TRADES, & OCCUPATIONS, OTSEGO COUNTY, 1855</u>	
13,973	Total people with occupations reported
9,985	Farmers (71.46%)
<u>Artisans:</u>	2,496 (17.86%)
322	Blacksmiths
281	Boot & shoe makers
66	Cabinet makers & dealers
580	Carpenters & joiners
154	Coach & wagon makers & wheelrights
88	Coopers
167	Dress makers, sewers, & seamstresses
32	Machinists
94	Masons, plasterers, & bricklayers
68	Millers
100	Milliners
82	Painters, glaziers, & varnishers
26	Printers
78	Saddle, harness, & trunk makers
7	Stone & marble cutters
263	Tailors
38	Tanners & curriers
23	Tinsmiths
17	Weavers
<u>Clerical/Professional:</u>	535 (3.83%)
129	Clerks, copyists, & accountants
93	Clergymen
52	Lawyers
89	Physicians
172	Teachers
<u>Sales & Service:</u>	315 (2.25%)
16	Grocers
78	Hotel & Inn keepers
197	Merchants
23	Teamsters
1	Railroad employee
<u>Unskilled:</u>	(4.59%)
642	Laborers

1. Looking at the list of occupations, what occupation has the highest number of people listed? How many were there? **Farmers, 9985 people listed**

2. In the artisan category, which trade has the highest number of people? How many people practice that trade?
Carpenters and joiners, 580

3. Why do you think there are so many carpenters and joiners?

People needed skilled carpenters and joiners to build houses and other buildings including businesses and barns.

4. Which artisan has the second highest number?

Blacksmith

5. Why do you think there are so many blacksmiths? What do they do for the community?

Blacksmiths supported everyone in the community with their products: cooking utensils, door hardware, farm tools, horseshoes, repairing wheels and tools, and so on.

6. How many more shoemakers than dressmakers are listed?

281-167=114

7. There are only 17 weavers listed, one of the lowest number of artisans. Why do you think there were so few weavers in the county at this time?

Fancy weavers were only affordable by wealthier people. The average person didn't need fancy woven objects. Also, as factories started producing woven items, the need for the artisan was reduced.

8. How many more artisans are there than clerical/professional and sales/service combined?

535+315= 850 clerical and sales. 2496-850= 1646 more artisans

9. What is the biggest category under clerical/professional? Why do you think that is a big group?

Various answers: Teachers 172, they provided the basic skills needed for people to run their businesses

Expanded question:

Looking at the list of trades, which ones do you think support the farmers? You may need to look up some of the definitions of the trades for your answer. Explain why you think those trades support farming. **Various answers—most trades supported farmers in some way, so allow for flexibility in answers**