

Diamond Drill

Out of the Past

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The upcoming census will be getting nosier this year. In ancient times the takers just counted noses and property for the purpose of taxation. In 1790 the United States sent out 17 marshals and a few hundred assistants to count the population in order to provide a basis for taxing the States and to determine the number of representatives they would have in Congress. The first great invasion of privacy occurred in 1850 when census takers began to record the names of people in the country in addition classifying the population according to age, sex, race and place of birth. Soon the "enumerators" were poking their noses into such matters as occupation, education, income, marital status and the fertility of women. This year they will be asking whether you own a washing machine, clothes dryer, food freezer, air conditioner and the number of cars in the garage. The census count in 1800 in the area that is now the State of Michigan was a scant 551 persons. The 1950 figure totaled 6,371,766.