



Immigration Ports of Entry



www.ChristineCohenGenealogy.com

Immigrants into the United States from 1620 - 1820 were rarely recorded. These records are found in books, museums, historical societies, diaries & attics. *Keep in mind, our ancestors were cargo!*

<https://www.packrat-pro.com/ships/shiplist.htm> Early 1600's

arrivals that includes the names of 7,100 families on 290 ships

<https://www.americanancestors.org/index.aspx> 1620 - 1640

<https://archive.org/> *Original Lists Persons of Quality 1600 - 1700*

<https://www.hathitrust.org/> *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*

1727 – 1808 by Ralph Strassburger

<https://researchworks.oclc.org/archivegrid/> "Passenger Lists"

<https://www.ancestry.com/> *New World Immigrants* by Michael Tepper
Passengers to America / British Aliens in the US during the War of 1812

The Steerage Act of 1819 regulated the transport of passengers in ships arriving from foreign ports creating passenger list.

Therefore, these lists from 1820 on *may contain* the following details:

- Name / Age / Year of Arrival / Place of Arrival / Names, ages, and relationships of accompanying passengers

Where did they board and where did they arrive in the US?

Make sure you look at a map for all potential departure points.

Did they depart at one point and then change ships at another port?

- Such as Hamburg, Germany > Liverpool, England > United States

Places to look for clues on immigration dates include Federal & State Censuses / Voter Lists / Draft Registrations / Passport Applications

State Census - <http://www.researchguides.net/census/state.htm>

Voter Lists - <https://www.theancestorhunt.com/voter-lists.html>

United States Federal Census key questions:

1820 - 1840: Number of individuals in household “foreigners”

1850: Place of Birth

1870: Male Citizens of U.S. of 21 years of age and upwards

1880 - 1940: Parent’s birth place

1900 - 1950: Immigration information (Noted by these codes)

A = Alien / PA = in Process / NA = Naturalized

1920: Date of Naturalization

“Passenger and Immigration Lists Index, 1500’s – 1900’s” by William Filby. This data set contains the names of 4,712,000 individuals who arrived in the US and Canada ports 1500’s to 1900’s. Found on <https://www.ancestry.com/> & <https://www.myheritage.com/>

The biggest port of entry is New York especially after 1825 and the opening of the Erie Canal. Entry points there over time were called the Wharfs of Manhattan, Castle Garden, Barge Office, and Ellis Island.

Over 70% of immigrants arrived through New York and Ellis Island processed were steerage passengers. However, consider also researching the ports of Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Providence, Galveston, El Paso, Laredo, Brownsville, Key West, San Francisco, New Bedford and Portland-Falmouth, and Passamaquoddy.

Websites to search to broaden your search:

- 1) <https://stevemorse.org/>
- 2) <https://www.germanroots.com/> (not just German)
- 3) <https://immigrantships.net/>
- 4) <https://www.myheritage.com/> (index of departure and arrival contacts, such as siblings, in-laws, parents, uncles, cousins, etc...)
- 5) <https://www.genesearch.com/ports.html>
- 6) <http://www.passengerlists.de/> Bremen Passenger Lists
- 7) <https://apertus.rlp.de/> Rhineland Palatinate State Archives

Make sure you check over a large time span. Since surprisingly to us, immigrants did go back and forth. Men would come first, and then go back and marry, and then bring over their family.

- 1) <https://www.ancestry.com/>
UK, Outward Passenger Lists 1890 -1960
- 2) <https://www.familysearch.org/en/> US Germans to America
Index 1850-1897

- 3) <https://www.ancestry.com/> & <https://www.familysearch.org/en/>
Port of Hamburg (Direct and Indirect Indexes)
- 4) <https://www.genealogycenter.info/persi/> Periodical Source Index

Until 1895, border crossings from Canada to the US were not formally recorded at all. And starting in 1903, immigrants who entered the US from Mexico were recorded.

Crossing information is available <https://www.ancestry.com/> such as:

- 1) Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865 - 1935
- 2) US Border Crossing from Canada to US 1895-1960
- 3) Mexico Border Crossings 1895-1964
- 4) Mexico, European Immigrants to USA 1921-1931

Review the Library and Archives Canada at <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Pages/home.aspx> - a cheaper pond crossing?

Search and request registry files on <https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/genealogy/requesting-records> first “legalization program” authorized by Congress.

The law and program allowed immigrants subject to the Certificate of Arrival requirement for naturalization to have a record of their original arrival created after-the-fact when no arrival record could be found. Though dating after 1929, the records actually relate to immigrant arrivals occurring many years before. The initial Registry Program applied to immigrants who arrived before July 1, 1921. Later, as time passed, Congress moved the ending date progressively forward. Registry Files from 1929 to 1944 ***generally relates to immigrant arrivals between June 29, 1906 and July 1, 1924.***

There are about 250,000 files that consist of 4 biographical pages that contain applications, testimony, evidence, correspondence, and a photo. A search request of the index is \$ 65.00 and then \$ 65.00 for the record itself. (Rate as of October 1st 2020; pending legal injunction).

Reference Books, Charts, Forms & Articles to view or download:

<https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/charts-forms>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pJQ5pAYYTk&t=242s>

Bayor, Ronald H. (2016) *Encountering Ellis Island: How Europeans Immigrants Entered America*, Baltimore, MD

Colletta, John P. Ph.D. (2002) *They Came in Ships: A Guide to Finding Your Immigrant Ancestor's Arrival Record*, 3rd Edition, Orem, UT

Daniels, Roger (1990) *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 2nd Edition, New York, NY

Dennis Szucs, Loretta & Hargreaves Luebking, Sandra eds., (2006) *The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy*, Provo, UT

Flanders, Stephen A. (1998) *Atlas of American Migration*, New York, NY

Harlow, Alvin F. (1947) *The Road of the Century: The Story of the New York Central*, New York, NY

Houghton, Gillian (2015) *Ellis Island: A Primary Source History of an Immigrant's Arrival in America*, New York, NY

Novatny, Ann (1971) *Strangers at the Door: Ellis Island, Castle Garden and the Great Migration to America*, Riverside, CT

Powell, John (2005) *Encyclopedia of North American Immigration*, New York, NY