

STUDY GUIDES FOR GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

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These study guides are meant to serve as an overview or outline for patrons using the genealogy collection at Fort Myers-Lee County Library. The compiler emphasizes that the information contained in these study guides should not serve as a substitute for taking the time to read one of the books or articles cited in the bibliographies, or attend lectures given by the subject specialists cited as authors. These study guides also provide resource information and references for those individuals attending a lecture by Bryan L. Mulcahy at the Manasota Genealogical Society meeting on April 7, 2009.

Eight study guides were prepared by Bryan Mulcahy to cover many subject areas pertinent to genealogical research by USA researchers. The topics covered in these eight study guides are:

- 1. Immigration History Settlements, Immigration, and Naturalization to North America
Chronology of Major Events: 1562-1960**
- 2. Immigrant Ports of Entry and Exit: United States, British Isles, and Europe**
- 3. Immigration & Naturalization Records**
- 4. Immigration to America Colonial Period Through 1820**
- 5. Genealogical Research in the New England States Colonial Era Through 1820**
- 6. Research in England**
- 7. Ireland - Genealogical Research Outline**
- 8. Canadian Research**

These eight study guides are contained in the following pages.

Immigration History
Settlements, Immigration, and Naturalization to North America
Chronology of Major Events: 1562-1960

This study guide is designed to provide researchers with an outline listing major events that impacted various ethnic groups that immigrated to the United States during the period between 1562 through 1960. These entries only reflect the major events. As you progress through your research, be aware that in each locality or jurisdiction, events took place that may not have made a national impact. However, within the setting and context of your immigrant ancestor, the event may have had a life event changing effect on decisions that he/she was forced to make.

Published state and county histories are good sources for locating these events that impact immigrants on the local or state level. It is also wise to take the time to read a genealogical how-to-book that pertains to a specific ethnic group. These sources often provide clues concerning the issues and events that motivated our immigrant ancestors to leave their country of origin and what important facts and events occurred after they reached the United States. The bibliography at the end of this study guide is a good source for additional readings.

Each year cited will have the major event or policy listed. Researchers should pay special attention to the year 1820. The year 1820 is a significant dividing point because prior to this time, there were few federal mandates for the compilation of passenger arrival lists for immigrants to the New World. Prior to this time period, each state made up their own rules. While they tended to following many of the same or similar guidelines, there were numerous variances.

As the United States federal authorities began to consolidate their power, they saw the need to begin forcing the states to follow a more standardized set of policies. This resulted in federal mandates that were implement in 1820. However, as time passed, there were still numerous loopholes and interpretations of these federal guidelines. While the federal government was technically calling the shots, they depended on operatives in the states to enforce the federal policies. As the number of immigrants began to increase dramatically after 1850, it became increasingly obvious over time that the system was still not working properly. This would eventually lead to a complete federal takeover of the system in September 1906.

During the Colonial Era, most immigrants to what would become the United States of America were British citizens moving from Britain to the British Colonies. Since the colonies were part of the British Empire, there were no established naturalization procedures. The only immigrants subjected to any type of scrutiny were those arriving from countries outside the British Empire. In theory, the colonies followed guidelines established by the Crown. In reality, each individual colony had their own guidelines which may or may not have followed established procedures to the letter. Your best sources to consult concerning guidelines will always be a state history that would cover the colonial period or any surviving statute books from the same colonial period. The sources listed in your bibliography are materials available at the Fort Myers-Lee County Library System.

Because of how complicated this area of study can be, especially the period prior to 1820, the compiler strongly recommends any patron researching in this topic area consult with a subject specialist in the field. The major portion of information for this study guide outline has been excerpted from [*The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy*](#), edited by Loretto D. Szucs and Sandra H. Luebking, Chapter 13, 'Immigration: Finding Immigrant Origins' by Kory L. Meyerink and Loretto Dennis Szucs. This is the Revised Edition published in 1998. The updated edition published in 2006 (3rd edition) can also be used to obtain information. Both are listed in the bibliography. Our companion study guide outline **Immigration & Naturalization Research** will go into greater detail concerning the entire field of this type of research. Like this study guide outline, it will also contain a bibliography of suggested readings for more comprehensive research.

Immigration Timeline

- 1562:** French Huguenots established a colony on Parris Island near Beaufort, South Carolina.
- 1565:** The earliest Hispanic settlers within the area of the United States settled around the area now known as Saint Augustine, Florida, in 1565.
- 1598:** Hispanics settled in New Mexico.
- 1607:** Jamestown, Virginia, was founded by English colonists.
- 1614:** The first major Dutch settlement was founded near Albany, New York.
- 1619:** The first black slaves arrived at Jamestown.
- 1620:** The Mayflower, carrying Pilgrims, arrived in Massachusetts.
- 1623:** New Netherland (Hudson River Valley) was settled as a trading post by the Dutch West India Company.
- 1629-40:** The Puritans migrated to New England.
- 1634:** Lord Baltimore founded Maryland as a refuge for English Catholics.
- 1642:** The outbreak of civil war in England brought a decrease in Puritan migration.
- 1648:** The treaty ending the Thirty Years' War stipulated that only the Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed religions would be tolerated in Germany henceforth. Religious intolerance motivated large numbers of Germans belonging to small sects, such as Baptist Brethren (Dunkers), to leave for America.
- 1649:** Passage of Maryland Toleration Act opened the door to any immigrant professing belief in Christianity.
- 1654:** North America's first Jewish immigrants fled Portuguese persecution in Brazil, arriving at New Amsterdam.
- 1660:** Acting on mercantilist doctrine that the wealth of a country depends on the number of its inhabitants, Charles II officially discouraged emigration from England.
- 1670:** English courtiers settled the Carolinas.
- 1681:** Quakers founded Pennsylvania based on William Penn's "holy experiment" in universal philanthropy and brotherhood.
- 1683:** The first German settlers (Mennonites) arrived in Pennsylvania.
- 1685:** Huguenots fleeing religious intolerance in France and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV settled in South Carolina.
- 1697:** The slave trade monopoly of the Royal African Company ended and the slave trade expanded rapidly, especially among New Englanders.

1707: A new era of Scottish migration began as a result of the Act of Union between England and Scotland. Scots settled in colonial seaports. Lowland artisans and laborers left Glasgow to become indentured servants in tobacco colonies and New York.

1709: In the wake of devastation caused by wars of Louis XIV, German Palatines settled in the Hudson Valley and Pennsylvania.

1717: The English Parliament legalized transportation to American colonies as punishment; contractors began regular shipments from jails, mostly to Virginia and Maryland.

1718: Discontent with the land system: absentee landlords, high rents, and short leases in the homeland motivated large numbers of Scotch-Irish to emigrate. Most settled first in New England, then in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

1730: Germans and Scotch-Irish from Pennsylvania colonized the Virginia valley and the Carolina back-country.

1732: James Oglethorpe settled Georgia as a buffer against Spanish and French attack, as a producer of raw silk, and as a haven for imprisoned debtors.

1740: The English Parliament enacted the Naturalization Act, which conferred British citizenship on alien colonial immigrants in an attempt to encourage Jewish immigration.

1745: Scottish rebels were transported to America after a Jacobite attempt to put Stuarts back on the throne failed.

1755: French Acadians were expelled from Nova Scotia on suspicion of disloyalty. The survivors settled in Louisiana.

1771-73: Severe crop failure and depression in the Ulster linen trade brought a new influx of Scotch-Irish to the American colonies.

1775: The outbreak of hostilities in American colonies caused the British government to suspend emigration.

1783: The Revolutionary War ended with the Treaty of Paris. Immigration to America resumed, with especially large numbers of Scotch-Irish.

1789: The outbreak of the French Revolution prompted the emigration of aristocrats and royalist sympathizers.

1790: The first federal activity in an area previously under the control of the individual colonies: An act of 26 March 1790 attempted to establish a uniform rule for naturalization by setting the residence requirement at two years. Children of naturalized citizens were considered to be citizens (1 Stat. 103).

1791: After a slave revolt in Santo Domingo, 10,000 to 20,000 French exiles took refuge in the United States, principally in towns on the Atlantic seaboard.

1793: As a result of the French Revolution, Girondists and Jacobins threatened by guillotine fled to the United States.

1795: Provisions of a naturalization act of 29 January 1795 included the following: free white aliens of good moral character; five-year residency with one year in state; declaration of intention to be filed after two years; petition to be filed three years after the declaration.

1798: An unsuccessful Irish rebellion sent rebels to the United States. Distressed artisans, yeoman farmers, and agricultural laborers affected by bad harvests and low prices joined the rebels in emigrating.

U.S. Alien and Sedition Acts gave the president powers to seize and expel resident aliens suspected of engaging in subversive activities.

Naturalization requirements were changed to require fourteen years' residency; the declaration of intention was to be filed five years before citizenship.

Aliens considered being dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States were to be removed; passenger lists were to be given to the collector of customs.

1802: Residency requirements of the 1795 act were reasserted; children of naturalized citizens were considered to be citizens.

1803: War between England and France resumed. As a result, transatlantic trade was interrupted and emigration from continental Europe became practically impossible.

Irish emigration was curtailed by the British Passenger Act, which limited the numbers to be carried by emigrant ships.

1807: Congress prohibited the importing of black slaves into the country. Individual states previously prohibited importation of slaves: Delaware in 1776; Virginia, 1778; Maryland, 1783; South Carolina, 1787; North Carolina, 1794; Georgia, 1798. South Carolina reopened importation of slaves in 1803.

1812: The War of 1812 between Britain and the United States brought immigration to a halt.

1814: The War of 1812 ended with the Treaty of Ghent.

1815: The first great wave of immigration to the United States brings 5 million immigrants between 1815 and 1860.

1818: Liverpool became the most-used port of departure for Irish and British immigrants, as well as considerable numbers of Germans and other Europeans as the Black Ball Line of sailing packets began regular Liverpool-New York service.

1819: The first significant federal legislation relating to immigration: passenger lists to be given to the collector of customs; reporting of immigration to the United States on a regular basis; specific sustenance rules for passengers of ships leaving U.S. ports for Europe.

1820: The U.S. population stood at 9,638,453. One hundred and fifty-one thousand new immigrants arrived in 1820 alone. Because of growing anti-immigrant feelings, the United States government initiated the first formal guidelines to mandate the compilation of ship passenger lists. Enforcement varied but tended to be most strict at the major ports of entry.

1824: Alien minors were naturalized upon reaching 21 years of age if they had lived in the United States for five years..

1825: Great Britain officially recognized the view that England was overpopulated and repealed laws prohibiting emigration. The first group of Norwegian immigrants arrives from their overpopulated homeland.

1830: Public land in Illinois was allotted by Congress to Polish revolutionary refugees.

1837: Financial panic caused by the Nativist Political party whose platform claimed that the increasing number of new immigrants lowered wage levels and contributed to the decline of the apprenticeship system, and generally depressed the condition of labor.

1840: Opening of the steamship era began with the Cunard Line introducing passenger transportation between Europe and the United States, opening the steamship era.

1845: The Native American party, precursor of the nativist, anti-immigrant Know-Nothing party, founded.

1846: Crop failures in Europe. Mortgage foreclosures sent tens of thousands of dispossessed to United States.

1846-1847: Irish migration (especially the poorest) to the United States due to the potato famine

1848: Failure of German revolution resulted in the emigration of political refugees.

1855: Castle Garden immigration receiving station opened in New York City. Alien women married to U.S. citizens were considered to be citizens.

1856: The Know-Nothing Party is defeated in the presidential election. The Albany convention intended to promote Irish rural colonization to the United States was strongly opposed by Eastern Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church

1860: New York is declared to be “the largest Irish city in the world.” Of its 805,651 residents, 203,760 were Irish-born.

1861-65: Civil War caused a significant drop in the number of foreigners entering the United States. Large numbers of immigrants serve on both sides during the Civil War.

1862: Aliens who received honorable discharges from the U.S. Army are now allowed to apply directly for citizenship without filing Declarations of Intention. The Homestead Act of 1862 encouraged naturalization. Citizens are granted title to 160 acres provided that the land is tilled for at least five years.

1864: Congress centralized control of immigration with a commissioner under the secretary of state. In an attempt to meet the labor crisis caused by the Civil War, Congress legalized the importation of contract laborers.

1875: The first direct federal regulation of immigration was established by prohibiting entry of prostitutes and convicts. Residency permits were required of Asians

1880: The U.S. population was 50,155,783. More than 5.2 million immigrants entered the country between 1880 and 1890.

1882: The Chinese exclusion law was established, curbing Chinese immigration. Further exclusions: persons convicted of political offenses, “lunatics”, “idiots”, and persons likely to become public charges. A head tax of fifty cents was placed on each immigrant.

A sharp rise in Jewish emigration to the United States was prompted by the outbreak of anti-Semitism in Russia.

1883: In an effort to alleviate a labor shortage caused by the freeing of slaves, the Southern Immigration Association was founded to promote immigration to the South.

1885: Contract laborers were denied admission to United States by the Foran Act. However, skilled laborers, artists’ actors, lecturers, and domestic servants were not barred. Individuals in the United States were not to be prevented from assisting the immigration of relatives and personal friends.

1886: The Statue of Liberty was dedicated.

1888: The first act since 1798 providing for the expulsion of aliens became law.

1890: New York had the distinction of being home to as many Germans as Hamburg, Germany.

1891: The Bureau of Immigration was established under the Treasury Department to federally administer all immigration laws (except the Chinese Exclusion Act). Congress added health qualifications to immigration restrictions. Classes of persons denied right to immigrate to the United States included the insane, paupers, persons with contagious diseases, persons convicted of felonies or misdemeanors of moral turpitude, and polygamists. Pogroms in Russia caused large numbers of Jews to immigrate to the United States.

1892: Ellis Island replaced Castle Garden as the reception center for immigrants.

Immigration of Chinese to the United States was prohibited for ten years; Chinese illegally in the United States could be removed.

1893: Chinese legally in the United States were required to apply to collectors of internal revenue for certificates of residence or be removed.

Economic depression brought dramatic strength to the anti-Catholic American Protective Association.

1894: Congress created the Bureau of Immigration. The Immigration Restriction League was organized to lead the restrictionist movement for the next twenty-five years. The league emphasized the distinction between “old” (northern and western European) and “new” (southern and eastern European) immigrants.

Aliens who received honorable discharges from the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps were not required to file declarations

1894-96: To escape Moslem massacres, Armenian Christians began emigrating to the United States.

1897: President Cleveland vetoed literacy tests for immigrants.

1900: The U.S. Population at 75,994,575. More than 3,687,000 immigrants were admitted in the previous ten years.

1903: Extensive codification of existing immigration law. Added to the exclusion list were polygamists and political radicals (anarchists or persons believing in the overthrow by force or violence of the government of the United States or any government, or in the assassination of public officials—a result of President McKinley’s assassination by an anarchist).

1905: As a protest against the influx of Asian laborers, the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League was formed by organized labor.

1906: The Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization was established. The purpose of the act of 29 June 1906 was to provide for a uniform rule for the naturalization of aliens throughout the United States. The law, effective 27 September 1906, was designed to provide “dignity, uniformity, and regularity” to the naturalization procedure. It established procedural safeguards and called for specific and uniform information regarding applicants and recipients of citizenship status. Rule Nine of the code required that all blank forms and records be obtained from and controlled by the Bureau of Immigration, “Those alone being official forms. No other forms shall be used.” As a consequence of the act, the agency controlled the number of courts able to naturalize. Knowledge of English became a basic requirement for citizenship.

1907: An increased head tax on immigrants was enacted. People with physical or mental defects or tuberculosis and children unaccompanied by parents were added to the exclusion list. Japanese immigration was restricted.

1907-08: Japanese government agreement to deny passports to laborers going directly from Japan to the United States failed to satisfy West Coast exclusionists.

1910: The Mexican Revolution sent thousands to the United States seeking employment.

1913: The Alien Land Law passed for California effectively barred Japanese, as ‘aliens ineligible for citizenship,’ from owning agricultural land in the state.

1914-18: World War I halted a period of mass migration to the United States.

1917: To the exclusion list were added illiterates, persons of “psychopathic inferiority,” men and women entering for immoral purposes, alcoholics, stowaways, and vagrants.

The Jones Act made Puerto Ricans U.S. citizens and eligible for the draft.

1919: Anti-foreign prejudice was transferred from German Americans to alien revolutionaries and radicals in the Big Red Scare. Thousands of aliens were seized in the Palmer raids, and hundreds were deported.

1921: The first quantitative immigration law set temporary annual quotas according to nationality. The emergency immigration quotas heavily favored natives of northern and western Europe and all but closed the door to southern and eastern Europeans. An immediate drop in immigration followed.

- 1922:** Alien wives of U.S. citizens were allowed to file for citizenship after one year of residency. The citizenship status of native-born American women was removed if they were married to aliens not eligible for citizenship.
- 1923:** A strong anti-immigrant movement spearheaded by the Ku Klux Klan reached peak strength.
- 1924:** The National Origins Act, the first permanent immigration quota law, established a discriminatory quota system, non-quota status, and a consular control system. The Border Patrol was established.
- 1929:** The National Origins Act came into effect. The stock market crash and economic crisis prompted demands for further immigration reductions. The Hoover administration ordered rigorous enforcement of a prohibition against the admission of persons liable to be public charges.
- 1930:** The U.S. population was 123,203,000. Only 528,000 new immigrants arrived in the previous decade, the lowest number since the 1830s.
- 1933:** As Hitler's anti-Semitic campaign began, Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany emigrated.
- 1934:** Filipino immigration was restricted to an annual quota of fifty by the Philippine Independence Act.
- 1936:** American women who had lost their citizenship because they married aliens are allowed to regain citizenship by taking oaths of allegiance to the United States (49 Stat. 1917).
- 1939:** World War II began.
- 1940:** The Alien Registration Act, also known as the Smith Act, called for registration and fingerprinting of all aliens. Approximately 5 million aliens were registered.
- 1941:** Immigrant groups supported the united war effort as the United States entered World War II.
- 1942:** Japanese-Americans were evacuated from their homes and moved to detention camps. Through the Bracero Program, Mexican laborers were strongly encouraged to come to the United States to ease the shortage of farm workers brought on by World War II.
- 1943:** Legislation provided for the importation of agricultural workers from North, South, and Central America—the basis of the “Bracero Program”. The Chinese exclusion laws were repealed.
- 1945:** Thousands of Puerto Ricans emigrated to escape poverty. Many settled in New York.
- 1946:** The War Brides Act facilitated the immigration of foreign-born wives, fiancées, husbands, and children of U.S. armed forces personnel.
- 1948:** The Displaced Persons Act, the first U.S. policy for admitting persons fleeing persecution, allowed 400,000 refugees to enter the United States during a four-year period.
- 1950:** Increased grounds for exclusion and deportation of subversives were enacted. All aliens were required to report their addresses annually.
- 1952:** The Immigration and Naturalization Act brought into one comprehensive statute the multiple laws which governed immigration and naturalization to date: reaffirmed the national origins quota system; limited immigration from the Eastern Hemisphere while leaving the Western Hemisphere unrestricted; established preferences for skilled workers and relatives of U.S. citizens and permanent resident aliens; tightened security and screening standards and procedures; and lowered the age requirement for naturalization to eighteen years (66 Stat. 163). The McCarran-Walter Immigration and Naturalization Act extended token immigration quotas to Asian countries.
- 1953-56:** The Refugee Relief Act admitted more than 200,000 refugees beyond existing quotas.

Visas were granted to some 5,000 Hungarians after the 1956 revolt. President Eisenhower invited 30,000 more to come on a parole basis.

1954: Ellis Island closed, marking an end to mass immigration.

1957: Special legislation admitted Hungarian refugees.

1959: Castro's successful revolution in Cuba began the emigration of refugees.

1960: The United States paroled Cuban refugees.

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**Immigrant Ports of Entry and Exit:
United States, British Isles, and Europe**

Part One: Ports of Exit From Europe and the British Isles

This study guide lists the major ports that immigrants to the New World departed from in Europe and the British Isles. Ships leaving these ports made regular runs to and from the United States and Canada. In most cases, they left on a ship from the port that was geographically closest to them.

Belgium: Antwerp

Sweden: Goteborg

Denmark: Copenhagen

Turkey: Constantinople/Istanbul

England: Liverpool, Southampton

Yugoslavia: Fiume, Rijeka

Estonia: Tallinn

Finland: Helsinki

France: Cherbourg, Le Harve, Marseilles

Germany: Bremen and Hamburg

Gibraltar: (British Zone)

Greece: Patras, Piraeus

Ireland: Cobh, Dublin, Galway, Queenstown

Italy: Genoa, Naples, Palermo, Trieste

Netherlands: Rotterdam

Northern Ireland: Belfast, Derry, Londonderry

Norway: Bergen, Oslo, and Stavanger

Poland: Gdansk, Gdynia, and Memel/Klaipeda

Portugal: Lisbon

Russia: Libau/Liepaja, Memel/Klaipeda, Riga, St.Petersburg/Leningrad

Spain: Barcelona

Sweden: Goteborg

Part Two: Ports of Entry Into the United States

Many beginning genealogists make the incorrect assumption that immigration to the United States begins and ends with Ellis Island or Castle Garden in New York City. There were ports of entry up and down the East coast, Gulf of Mexico, Canada and all points along the Canadian border, and a few on the West

Coast. The list below names the U.S. ports that were the most common destinations and for which the National Archives has some or all of the surviving passenger arrival records.

Alabama: Mobile

California: Los Angeles, San Francisco

Connecticut: Bridgeport, Fairfield, Hartford, Middletown, New Haven, New London, Saybrook

Delaware: Wilmington

District of Columbia: Georgetown

Florida: Apalachicola, Boca Grande, Carrabelle, Fernandia, Jacksonville, Key West, Knights Key, Mayport, Miami, Millville, Panama City, Pensacola, Port Everglades, Port Inglis, Port St. Joe, St. Andrews, St. Augustine, St. Johns, St. Petersburg, Tampa, West Palm Beach

Georgia: Brunswick, Darien, Savannah

Louisiana: New Orleans

Maine: Bangor, Bath, Belfast, Falmouth/Portland, Frenchman's Bay, Havre de Grace, Hingham, Kennebunk, Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, Portland/Falmouth, Waldoboro, Wiscasset, Yarmouth

Maryland: Annapolis, Baltimore

Massachusetts: Barnstable, Beverly/Salem, Boston, Dighton, Edgartown, Fall River, Gloucester, Marblehead, Nantucket, New Bedford, Newburyport, Plymouth, Provincetown, Salem/Beverly

Mississippi: Gulfport, Pascagoula

New Hampshire: Portsmouth

New Jersey: Bridgetown, Cape May, Little Egg Harbor, Newark, Perth Amboy

New York: New York, Oswegatchie, Rochester, Sag Harbor

North Carolina: Beaufort, Edenton, New Burn, Plymouth, Washington

Ohio: Sandusky

Pennsylvania: Philadelphia

Rhode Island: Bristol/Warren, Newport, Providence, Warren/Bristol

South Carolina: Charleston, Georgetown, Port Royal

Texas: Galveston

Vermont: St. Albans

Virginia: Alexandria, East River, Hampton, Norfolk/Portsmouth, Petersburg, Portsmouth/Norfolk,

Richmond

Washington: Seattle

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NOTE: This study guide is meant to serve as an overview or outline for patrons using the genealogy collection at Fort Myers-Lee County Library. The compiler emphasizes that the information contained in this study guide should not serve as a substitute for taking the time to read one of the books or articles cited in the bibliography, or attend lectures given by the subject specialists cited as authors.

Compiled by Bryan L. Mulcahy, Reference Librarian, Fort Myers-Lee County Library, 9/18/2008.

Immigration & Naturalization Records

Tracing ancestors across the ocean to the British Isles and Europe poses the most difficult challenge encountered by most genealogists. Even if you know the country they came from, it still may be a struggle to find information about them unless you know the exact town. Between the numerous wars and resulting boundary changes, researchers will be challenged even under the best circumstances. Most professionals will always recommend exhausting all sources in the United States and Canada before trying to cross the Atlantic back to the old country.

This study guide is designed to introduce researchers to the basic concepts. The bibliography at the end of the study guide will provide additional sources of information and guidelines for researchers. These sources are written by subject specialists in the field of immigration research.

Immigrant and Passenger Arrival Records

Clues for identifying immigrant ancestors may be discovered in obituaries, passports, home sources, federal and state census data, and an array of other records that are available in courthouses and archives. While some researchers get lucky and find information immediately, most searches will take time and effort. Patience will always be the key to success. Researchers must also be prepared for the possibility that family traditions that identify the point of entry may say one thing, but as they progress in their research, they may discover the ancestor or family in question may have arrived at a completely different port of entry.

The myth that illiterate European peasants left no records in their homeland or in America is disproved by the fact that there are numerous collections of immigration and ethnic documents scattered in repository collections on both sides of the Atlantic. Historical and genealogical societies that specialize in specific ethnic groups and studies are an excellent source for queries about the availability of those documents. Another strategy is concentrating on the passenger arrival records created for the United States government.

In the course of your genealogical journey, you must familiarize yourself with the following areas of study. Materials listed in the bibliography at the end of this study guide will provide a significant body of information to facilitate a better understanding of each point listed below:

1. Background and history of passenger arrival records
2. Genealogical value and contents of different types of arrival records
3. Availability of passenger records and indexes
4. Appropriate research strategies such as the use of indexes

You may also study the general background of United States passenger records by studying selected sources listed in the bibliographies of books at the end of this outline. The books listed in this outline have been written or edited by subject specialist in the field of genealogical immigration research. Another significant resource would be repositories such as the LDS Genealogical Library in Salt Lake City which has materials on sailing vessels, migration patterns, immigration and naturalization records and related documents, ethnic groups, Ellis Island, and related topics.

It is important to gain an appreciation and understanding of the contents and value of arrival records. The records, such as customs passenger lists, were filed by the masters of ships for the collectors of customs. This was in compliance with an act passed in 1819 and with later acts.

The National Archives and the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, have microfilms of the original customs lists (1819-1832). These records generally provide an immigrant's name, age, sex, occupation, and country of origin.

Immigration passenger lists or ship manifests were originally maintained by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and earlier offices. The National Archives has copies of the records for the years 1833 to 1951. Researchers will find the immigration lists provide far more genealogical and historical details than the customs lists. The twentieth-century lists reveal names of relatives, places of birth, and other critical information.

The book ***Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives*** will tell you who created the records, which records are available for each port, and what limitations you will face in using the documents. Here you will discover which ports have indexes for the year 1883. And if there is no index, you can decide if the contents of an 1883 list are worth the effort of reading 600,000 scribbled names. The Fort Myers-Lee County Library has the 3rd edition, which was published in 2000. It will provide you with the latest information available for researching these records.

The National Archives staff will search ships passenger records if a researcher completes form NATF 81. This form asks for the date of arrival, port of entry, ship name, country of origin, and naturalization status.

Reasons for not searching or for inconclusive searches are also detailed on this form. These forms may be obtained by utilizing any of the following options:

1. The instructions for the ordering process can be viewed at the National Archives website: <http://www.archives.gov/>. Note: forms and search requests can be submitted online. Site will provide instructions and guidelines for access.
2. Contacting any branch of the National Archives Branch Library System
3. Writing to the National Archives at the following address: National Archives and Records Administration, Attention: NWCTB, 700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20408-0001

It is interesting to note that the original passenger lists from 1820-1902 have been transferred from the National Archives to the National Immigration Archives, Balch Institute of Temple University in Philadelphia. An ongoing indexing project is slowly producing published lists of immigrants. The first results have been the 500,000 names of Irish "Famine Immigrants." Public access to the original records and to the National Immigration Archives database is not permitted at the present time.

The Family History Library in Salt Lake City is another excellent place to begin your research. They have a large number of ship passenger lists among their collection of microfilms that are from around the world. Access to these records is enhanced by the large number of microfilm/fiche and CD-ROM reading and copy machines, liberal rules for using the records, and staff or volunteers to help you chart your course. Much of this information is also available using their Family Search website at <http://www.familysearch.org/>. At this time, neither the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, The National Archives, or the Ellis Island Foundation has or is planning to create one master index of passenger lists.

In addition to using the resources of the Family History Library and the National Archives,

researchers can try contacting the Clerk of Courts for the county in jurisdictions where immigrants entered the United States or where your research indicates they initiated the naturalization process. Prior to 1906, this process was normally handled at the local level. In theory, the local officials would then forward a copy of the collected information to Washington.

For further information concerning questions about naturalizations occurring since 1906, use one of the following options:

1. Visit the Immigration & Naturalization Service website: <http://www.bcis.gov/>. This webpage lists various subjects. Genealogists will be interested in the section labeled "Forms and Fees."
2. For those who don't have access to a computer, a request for forms should be mailed to the nearest INS office. Request Form G-639. This address can be located in the following places:
 - a. Blue government pages in your local telephone directory
 - b. Consult the *United States Government Manual*, which is available in most public libraries

Ship Passenger Records

Ship passenger lists are the most popular target for researchers. There are four types of lists that fall under this category:

1. Customs Passenger Lists

These records were usually prepared by the ship captain and generally provide the following information:

- a. Name of ship
- b. Name of ship captain
- c. Port of embarkation
- d. Date of arrival
- e. Port of arrival
- f. Passenger name
- g. Age
- h. Sex
- i. Occupation
- j. Country of origin
- k. Country of intended settlement
- l. Date and circumstances of death when applicable

Most surviving passenger lists are on file at the National Archives. The Family History Library in Salt Lake City is another repository for many of these lists. In addition to the actual lists, there are also copies and abstracts of the original lists. These forms were prepared by the customs collectors and were forwarded quarterly to the State Department. Many collectors made abbreviated copies of the original lists to forward to Washington. In some cases, the information contained in the copies is the same as on the lists, but they can also include information missed on the original lists. You can also access the *Transcripts From the U.S. State Department* on file at the National Archives.

2. Immigration Passenger Lists

These are the actual lists of people who passed through the ports of entry based on ships'

manifests. The information in these varies greatly depending on the time period, state statutes, and the level of enforcement at the particular port. When properly filled out, the original lists may include some or all of the following information:

- a. Name of ship
- b. Name of ship captain
- c. Port of embarkation and other ports where passengers boarded in route
- d. Date of arrival
- e. Port of arrival
- f. Passenger name
- g. Age
- h. Sex
- i. Occupation
- j. Country of origin
- k. Country of intended settlement
- l. Date and circumstances of death when applicable

By 1893, new Federal laws expanded the requested information to include additional requests for information:

- a. Had the passenger ever been to America before (if so, when, where, what reason)?
- b. Was the passenger going to join a relative and if so, the relative's name, address, and relationship to the passenger?

By 1906, questions were added concerning race, personal description, specific birthplace, name, and address of the immigrant's nearest relative in the immigrant's home country.

3. Customs Lists Of Aliens

These are of little use to researchers unless the passenger came into the ports of Beverly or Salem, Massachusetts. Because these records mostly pertain to the period between 1798-1800, very few records from this port have survived.

4. Ship Passenger Lists

Ship Passenger Lists were required of the ships captains by governments and included people who migrated as well as crewmembers and those traveling for business or pleasure. Passenger Lists were kept as far back as the 1600s, but very few have survived for the period before 1820. Records are not uniform because no official guidelines existed, and enforcement was lax until the period after 1870. After 1870, these records became more detailed and included information on family members already living in the United States.

Depending on the time period, and when properly filled out, one may locate some or all of the following information on a ship passenger list page:

- a. Passenger name
- b. Age
- c. Occupation
- d. Date/port of embarkation
- e. Date/port of arrival

Most of the original records are kept at the National Archives and date from about 1820. Researchers should be aware that many passenger lists for the west coast of the U.S. were

destroyed by fire.

Most immigrants who came to America were usually part of a set migration pattern. These patterns developed to the point that a study of different geographical areas will shed light on where and how the people came and moved from one town or region to another. People usually traveled in groups, as friends, families, religious bodies, people of the same nationality/language, or groups who had the same background or special interests.

Most of our important early towns and cities were along waterways or big rivers. Rivers are very critical in genealogical research because in previous generations, they served as “highways”. Transportation by water was usually the cheapest, fastest, and safest way for travel between various locations. Our current system of roads and highways began as routes that the Indians and early pioneers traveled. The earliest routes usually ran parallel to waterways. These paths later became the principal means of migration from one region to another. When studying the development of these paths, a very useful tool is the “**Area Key**” which covers a specific county or region.

For additional information on this subject area and ports of embarkation and arrival, please consult our companion study guide *Immigrant Ports of Entry and Exit: United States, British Isles, and Europe.*

Naturalization Records

Naturalization records were created as a result of a 1790 law that gave authority to common law courts of record in any state to confer citizenship to aliens. Gradually, this law was amended to set up more specific procedures concerning how this was to be done and controlled. The usual conditions for citizenship included:

1. Good moral character
2. Forswear allegiance to any other country
3. Proof of legal immigration
4. Residence in the U.S. for the set period of time (initial requirement was 2 years, but by 1795 it had increased to 5 years). A wife or child of a naturalized person automatically became a citizen until September 1922 when it was mandated by law that the wife had to obtain her own citizenship.

Citizenship Documents

People wishing to become citizens of the United States had to fill out the *Declaration Of Intention.* After meeting all the requirements listed above, and being formally accepted as a citizen, the person was issued a *Certificate Of Naturalization.* Until 1869, the citizenship process was handled at the district court level. The initial naturalization process began at the local courthouse of the person’s residence, then continued in the nearest Municipal, State, or Federal Court.

The quality of information contained on records can vary for a variety of reasons. The degree of enforcement varied from one location to another. The alien may have filed a declaration of intent but never followed through all the steps. They may never have applied for citizenship at all. The actual information on the documents may also be very vague as in the following circumstances:

1. Providing only the names of the applicant

2. His/her native place of origin
3. Age
4. Witnesses to his character
5. Length of residence in the country

Census Records

Census records can be especially useful in determining if and when a person became a citizen. While the earlier censuses taken prior to 1850 did not specify where a person was born, it will list if the person was in the country. Every census taken after 1850 included more questions concerning birth location.

Ellis Island Immigration Information

Ellis Island immigration records contain information for over 22 million immigrants who arrived during the peak years of operation between 1892–1924. Ellis Island, located about a mile off the southwest tip of Manhattan, replaced the Castle Garden processing center that was located at what is now known as Battery Park in lower Manhattan. By 1891, the federal government, under the authority of the United States Bureau of Immigration, transferred all immigration functions to the new Ellis Island Immigration Center. The center was now officially designated as a combination detention and deportation center. Political pressures had been rising in the mid to late 1880s to stem the flow of immigrants coming from southern and eastern Europe. This was accomplished by making the entry process much more difficult for new arrivals. Those who could not pass the stiffer requirements were deported.

Ellis Island remained an immigrant receiving station until World War I, when the federal government began to enact new laws to tighten the immigration laws even more. Many of these new laws were in response to the climate that existed in Europe in the wake of World War I and its aftermath. After the 1924 Immigration Act was passed and adopted into law, the number of immigrants passing through Ellis Island dropped dramatically. The center was closed in November 1954.

In 1990, Ellis Island was reopened as a museum. Now the American Family Immigration History Center, located in the Ellis Island Immigration Museum and on the Internet at <http://www.ellisland.org> offers researchers access to an extensive database of the 22 million immigrants who entered the United States through Ellis Island between the years of 1892–1924. Information on each individual was written down in ship passenger lists, known as manifests. These manifests were used to examine immigrants at the time of their arrival at the Ellis Island Immigration Center.

Beginning in 1994, the Family History Library began a massive transcription process on the ship passenger lists. Their volunteers copied information by hand, digitized, and finally entered into this data into the LDS genealogy database. Much of this information is available at their Family Search website <http://www.familysearch.org> as well as through the Ellis Island database at www.ellisland.org.

The passenger record archives will enable you to search for the following information:

1. Passenger records showing the passenger name, date of arrival, name of the ship, age given on arrival, and other miscellaneous details that the clerk may have noted.
2. Original copies of the ship manifest showing passenger names and other information that

- was given when they boarded the ship.
3. Ship information, often with a picture or sketch, giving the history and background of the ship.
 4. The Community Archive is a growing collection of annotations to the passenger records, which may provide supplemental information on a passenger's background and life in The United States after their arrival. **NOTE: This information was provided by sustaining members of the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Foundation.**

When immigrants enter the United States, they are legally classified as aliens. They may reside in the United States as long as they register with the Immigration and Naturalization Service annually unless they fall into certain legal categories with different time limits. Naturalization is the process by which an alien achieves the status of U.S. Citizenship. The documents required to complete this process are known to genealogists as naturalization records. Naturalization records can provide valuable clues for tracking down the country of origin for our immigrant ancestors.

Prior to the American Revolution, citizenship was not a major issue. Most immigrants were British citizens moving from one area of British rule into another. The colonies were considered part of Great Britain. When immigrants from outside the British Empire began to arrive, they were required to take oaths of allegiance to the specific colony of residence and the British Crown as they got off the ship, in the presence of an official, or in a court. In 1740, the British Parliament passed a law mandating the following requirements:

1. The immigrant must reside in the colony for a minimum of 7 years in one colony.
2. Immigrant must make an oath of allegiance to the British Crown.

Surviving oath records usually contain the following types of information:

1. Name of immigrant
2. Date of oath
3. Place where oath was given
4. Country of origin

In 1776, all those who supported the colonial cause were automatically considered citizens. In many of the former colonies that now referred to themselves as states, a second oath of allegiance was required to affirm the support of citizens to the colonial cause. New immigrants to the states were required to take an oath of allegiance. In 1778, the Articles of Confederation of the newly established United States of America made all citizens of the states citizens of the new country.

In 1790, Congress enacted a national naturalization act which required the following:

1. One year residence in the state
2. Two years residence in the United States
3. Loyalty oath taken in a local court of record

In 1795, a five year residence was required along with a Declaration of Intent three years before the final oath of allegiance. Over the years the process has been modified depending on various political circumstances. The materials listed in the bibliography will provide researchers with detailed descriptions of the changes and their implications for immigrants.

The Naturalization Process

Step One: Declaration of Intent or First Papers

After residing in the United States for at least two years, male aliens could declare their intent to become a citizen. This decision was limited to males until 1922 because women and children were granted “derivative citizenship” automatically when the husband or father was naturalized. Prior to 1906, the Declaration of Intent could be submitted to any local, county, state, or federal court. The applicant alien was required to supply the following information:

1. An oath declaring the intent to become a citizen of the United States.
2. Pledge of loyalty to support the Constitution of the United States .
3. Sworn statement renouncing any foreign allegiance or claims to hereditary titles that may have been granted in the applicant’s homeland.
4. Name of the applicant.
5. Date of the application.
6. Demographic information such as:
 - a. Current address
 - b. Age and birth date
 - c. Town and country of birth
 - d. Nationality
 - e. Port of immigration into the United States

After 1906, federal law mandated that several additional pieces of information be gathered in addition to the items listed above:

1. Occupation
2. Physical description information
 - a. Race/color
 - b. Height
 - c. Weight
 - d. Eye and hair color
 - e. Miscellaneous distinguishing marks
3. Biographical information
 - a. Date and specific locality of birth
 - b. Port of embarkation for the United States
 - c. Last foreign address and town
 - d. Name of vessel that transported them to the United States
 - e. Date and port of arrival in the United States
 - f. Biographical information about spouse, children, and next-of-kin

Note: Although federal law mandated that all of this information be gathered, enforcement prior to 1906 was dependant on local and state officials enforcing the guidelines. Customs officials worked for local and state authorities. This is why the quality of information will vary from one port to another.

Step Two: Residence Requirements

The alien immigrant was required to reside in the United States for a specified period of time. This was usually an additional three years after the Declaration of Intent was filed. In many cases, the Declaration of Intent was filed in the city where the port of entry was located. During the intervening years, many immigrants migrated westward. After 1906, this waiting period

could not exceed seven years.

Step Three Petition for Naturalization

The alien immigrant, upon satisfying the first two steps, could petition a court for admission as a citizen. This process is also referred to as the Petition for Second Papers. The court to which this petition was submitted was not necessarily the same court where the Declaration of Intent or First Papers were filed.

The data included on the Petition for Naturalization depended on the court to which it was submitted and the submission year. Generally, the documents created prior to 1906 contained some or all of the following information:

1. Name of the applicant
2. Oath of allegiance
3. Two affidavits from witnesses confirming that the residency requirement had been met

After the Basic Naturalization Act of 1906, the form used for this petition was standardized and the required information was expanded to include the following:

1. Applicant's name
2. Date of petition
3. Names/addresses of the witnesses
4. Age/birth date of the applicant
5. Port of entry into the United States
6. Date/location where the Declaration of Intent or First papers were filed
7. Date/place of birth for spouse and all children

If the applicant's request was granted, the court issued a Naturalization Certificate. Some courts referred to this as the Third Paper. This certificate was legal proof of citizenship. Many immigrants regarded this document as their most prized possession. Many had it framed and displayed in the most prominent position in their dwelling. These certificates were also standardized after 1906. They became two-part forms that were serially numbered. One copy went to the new citizen. The second copy went to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in Washington, DC. When cleaning up a house after the death of loved one whom you know or suspect was an immigrant, be sure to examine any old paintings or framed photographs before discarding them. People frequently framed certificates and important papers behind pictures or photographs for protection in the event of theft or other perceived circumstances.

How To Locate Naturalization Records

Naturalization records are the most difficult type of record to use because of conflicting legal guidelines and variable levels of enforcement at different time periods. They can be very difficult to track down for numerous reasons. Since immigrant aliens could begin the process of naturalization at any authorized court of record, the actual records of naturalization could be scattered over the various levels of American courts from local and county to state and federal. Another factor involves numerous spelling variations that have evolved over time.

It is crucial for the researcher to know where the ancestor was residing at the approximate time of the Declaration of Intent or First Papers were filed. The two most common ways people attempt to gather this information is by checking home sources and consulting with older family members, relatives, or neighbors. The later federal censuses can provide another avenue for

research, particularly the following:

1870 Census

Note the column “Male Citizens of the United States 21 years of age and upwards.” If your male ancestor was enumerated in this census and a check mark appears in column 19, this is a clue that the naturalization occurred before 1870. While that does not specify the exact year of naturalization, it serves as a starting point.

1900 Census

The 1900 census requested the individual’s naturalization status in column 18. The responses are “AL” for alien, “PA” for having filed first papers, and “NA” for naturalized. The census still does not provide the exact year of naturalization, but it can give you clues.

1910 Census

The naturalization status is mentioned in column 16 and the responses are identical to the 1900 census.

1920 Census

The 1920 census gives the naturalization status in 14, but also asks for the exact year when the individual was naturalized in column 15. Since the individual being interviewed was asked about an event in the past, the year mentioned may not be completely correct.

1930 Census

Column 21 asks for the language spoken in home before coming to the U.S. Column 22 asks for the year of immigration into the U.S. Naturalization status is mentioned on 23. Whether the person was able to speak English is mentioned in column 24.

Census records can provide many clues to enhance our ability to search naturalization records. Once you have determined the time period and locality where the proceeding took place, the researcher may now concentrate on finding the court where the papers would have been filed. The rule of thumb always suggests first looking at the court located nearest to the immigrant ancestor’s place of residence. Another rule of thumb recommended by many professionals to follow is the 25-50-75 rule. This rule would involve drawing a circle 25-50 miles in all directions from where you know or suspect the immigrant was living at the time of naturalization. Check all possible jurisdictions which fall within the radius, even if they are located in adjacent counties or states.

Requesting Naturalization Records

Naturalization is the procedure by which an immigrant was granted citizenship. Not all immigrants chose to be naturalized; some started the process and never completed it. Prior to September 27, 1906, your ancestor could have been naturalized in any one of several courts in given states. Often these records are available at the various county courthouses. The records are on file with the Clerk of Court. By legal mandate and when it was actually followed, copies of these records were also sent to the Federal Government in Washington DC. If the naturalization took place after September 27, 1906, it is much more likely that the legal mandate was followed. If it took place prior to that date, nothing is in stone regardless of what the law stated. This may be particularly true in poor rural areas and urban cities with strong political

machines. When the INS (Immigration & Naturalization Service) was formally organized into the agency as it exists today, they inherited the records that were received.

The Family History Library has microfilmed many old records in county courthouses throughout the country. Since the naturalization process was initially handled on the local level, they have access to many of these records. This provides researchers with another option for access.

After September 27, 1906, the naturalization records were filed with the Immigration & Naturalization Service. Some proceedings continued to take place in county courts, but most were conducted under Federal jurisdiction in Federal courts within the locality where the Declaration of Intent was filled out and the ancestor lived.

The steps listed below will address the post-1906 naturalizations. The information is intended to assist researchers in requesting copies of their ancestor's naturalization records. The information contained in these records, when available, has proven invaluable to genealogists trying to make that critical connection abroad to homes of origin in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

1. Locate your ancestor's immigration date by checking the 1910-1930 United States Federal Census. Federal censuses taken between 1880–1930 attempted to gather detailed information on the immigrant's country of origin.
2. If you cannot determine the exact date of immigration, try to get an approximate date. It is best to provide the INS with as much information as possible to expedite the search and minimize the cost factor. Most researchers start with the 1930 census and work backwards.
3. Have documentation available which will prove your direct descendency to the immigrant. Examples of this would include copies of death, birth, or marriage certificates. In most cases, the immigrant's death certificate plus birth certificate will be sufficient.
4. Request Form G-639. No handwritten letters will be processed. Form G-639 is the Freedom of Information Act Form that may provide access to your ancestor's Declaration of Intention and Naturalization papers plus any related documents. Form G-639 may be obtained by calling the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) office nearest to your place of residence or visiting their website at <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis> and follow the various prompts. **NOTE: The INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) is now part of the Homeland Security Department.** This is how they will be listed in your local telephone directory under Federal Government. Most cities place this information in the government blue pages. The forms will usually arrive within 10 business days.
5. Once you receive the form, fill out the requested information as completely as possible. Be sure to request copies of ALL RELEVANT documents, but always ask for the Declaration of Intention. This document will have the most useful information for research purposes. Information on this document will tell you places and dates of birth, marriage, children, dates of arrival in the U.S., the name of the passenger ship, ports of entry and departure, as well as an attached photograph in some later records.
6. Mail the completed form and attached paperwork to the INS Office nearest to your place of residence. The form will have the various regional offices listed. Some researchers prefer to send the completed documentation to the Washington, DC Office. The information will be processed regardless of the address you choose to use. It is very important to clearly mark the outside of the envelope "Freedom of Information Request". Failure to do so will delay processing.

7. As the request is processed, the INS will keep you informed of the progress. They will send you letters stating when your request is received, and when the request is forwarded to the actual searching organization. In most cases, the search is free of charge. However, if multiple searches are required because of lack of specific information, there will be a nominal charge. The INS is required to account for their search time to justify the fees charged.

Finding Naturalization Dates With Census Records

When researchers encounter problems tracking ancestors before they came to America, census records can assist in tracing their origins when other genealogical records fail. Beginning with the 1880 census, questions were asked pertaining to the birthplace of each person's parents. The 1900 census was the first to indicate how long immigrants had been in the United States and whether they had been naturalized. The 1910 census asked for the year of immigration and citizenship status, as well as the native language spoken (other than English). 1900 through 1930 census schedules identified citizenship status with the following symbols:

a for alien

pa for individuals who had applied but not completed the naturalization process

na for naturalized

The 1920 and 1930 census asked expanded questions concerning the background of immigration, the year of immigration, whether naturalized, if so, the year of naturalization, whether the person could speak English, country of birth, native tongue of the individual and for both parents (language other than English). By 1920, the census also recorded the date of naturalization.

The 1920 census was also influenced by political implications from World War I. Due to boundary changes after the war, census enumerators were instructed to spell out the name of the city, state, province, or region of respondents who declared that they or their parents were originally from Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, or Turkey. The enumerators, for the most part, followed this directive. However, while some enumerators made significant efforts to ensure the accuracy of the responses and make sure the place actually corresponded with a known place within the country and locality, others simply put down what was said and made no effort to get specific information. Researchers will find that some respondents failed to identify specific birthplaces within those specific target countries. The fact that some enumerators asked all respondents to spell out the exact location of their birth, for countries not designated in the instructions, has proven to be an unintended benefit.

If you are unable to find the primary ancestor's country of origin in census records, check for relatives or others with the same surname. Besides the federal census, state, city, township, and school censuses are other possible sources of information. Some of these censuses asked for the names of parents, mother's maiden name, nativity of parents, place of parents' marriage, military service, native tongue (other than English), occupation, and religious background. Except for school censuses which were sometimes taken each year, state, city, and township censuses were usually taken at the midpoint of a decade. Each federal census was taken every ten years beginning with 1790, 1800, 1810, etc. while the state, city or town might take a follow-up census in 1795, 1805, or 1815. Each locality had a specific procedure. Some never took a census while others might have done so every 10–15 years.

The *Handybook For Genealogists* (mentioned in the bibliography at the end of this study guide) is an excellent source that includes information on the types of special censuses that were conducted in given states. Local courthouses and school district administrative offices can inform you of local or school censuses and procedures for access. This source will also give complete listings for all courthouses in the United States. Please note that several other books listed in the bibliography provide additional information to aid researchers in using courthouse records in person, fax, mail, or by utilizing professional records retrievers. *Patterson's American Education* is a good source to find the addresses and contact information for school districts nationwide.

To find out if an ancestor appears in a 1900 or later census, you can consult on-line databases such as Heritage Quest and Ancestry, various CD-ROM products pertaining to specific censuses, or bound census indexes. Even if you cannot find the exact name you are searching for in the index, it is worth looking at all records for families with the same surname in that state. City directories might also help you locate an address of an ancestor to see if he or she is in a city at a given date. You may find a connection somewhere.

Many libraries have bound indexes for pre-1880 censuses. These indexes are organized by state and list individuals in alphabetical order by surname, so you do not necessarily need to know the exact county. Different indexes contain different information that will assist you in your census research. Some indexes simply list the county name, while others list the exact page number of the census, and district or town the ancestor lived in.

You can find bound indexes for most states at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., or at one of the National Archives regional centers listed at the end of this article. Another source for this information is the Family History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and branch Family History Centers. Some larger public libraries with genealogy collections may also have these. Different locations may have different indexes, so check with more than one library if you don't find the index you need. Soundex indexes are available, with some exceptions for the years 1880 to 1930.

Once you locate your ancestor's name in an index, you should look at microfilm copies of the original census records. The original records will help you find the information you need and verify that you have found your ancestor, not just someone with the same name. Census returns from 1790-1930 are available at the National Archives and National Archives Regional Centers, Family History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and their branch Family History Centers, some local public libraries, or at specialized genealogy repositories. Some libraries, even if they do not actually carry census data, might be able to borrow them via inter-library loan. Some genealogy societies also participate in borrowing census microfilm for their members.

The Lee County Library System does not borrow any type of National Archives microfilm at the present time. You can borrow films using the local Family History Center Library or by joining the National Archives microfilm rental program available online at <http://www.archives.gov/research/order/renting-microfilm.html/> . Our genealogy librarian can provide you with details on both services. The Lee County Genealogical Society does not offer microfilm rental service at this time.

The 1930 census is the most recent U.S. census that is available to the public without restrictions. Access to post-1930 census records is restricted to immediate relatives and descendants. If the individual whose records you are searching for is still alive, you must obtain their written permission to obtain a copy of their census record. If the individual is deceased, you must have a certified death certificate. Write to the following address for the form required to process your request:

**Bureau of the Census
P.O. Box 1545
Jeffersonville, IN 47131**

They will send you a form and information about the cost for processing your request. Another avenue to pursue is state and local censuses. Some states and municipalities took their own independent census during the period between censuses (example: Florida took a state census in 1885). The contents vary from place to place. Good places to contact about this information include large public libraries in the state you are searching for, state archives, or genealogy society repositories located at or near where your ancestors lived. LDS Family History Centers may also have some of this material on file.

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NOTE: This study guide is meant to serve as an overview or outline for patrons using the genealogy collection at Fort Myers-Lee County Library. The compiler emphasizes that the information contained in this study guide should not serve as a substitute for taking the time to read one of the books or articles cited in the bibliography, or attend lectures given by the subject specialists cited as authors.

Compiled by Bryan L. Mulcahy, Reference Librarian, Ft. Myers-Lee County Library 9/5/2008

Immigration to America Colonial Period Through 1820

This study guide provides an overview of immigration to America during the Colonial Period. The discussion also includes published sources containing relevant information. The bibliography at the end of this study guide contains sources that provides researchers with additional detailed sources for investigation. The authors are subject specialists whose areas of expertise include genealogical research specific to this time period.

Colonial immigration encompasses the entire colonial history of the United States, as well as the early federal period up to 1820. Some historians refer to this period as Jacksonian America. During this period, the sources and strategies to trace immigrant ancestors are essentially similar for both the American colonies and Canada since both areas were primarily British colonial possessions. .

While St. Augustine, Florida was settled by the Spanish in 1565, most historians, from the perspective of English speaking peoples, date the beginning of immigration to British North America with the founding of Jamestown, Virginia in 1607. During the next decade, a few Dutch settlers began arriving at the future site of New York City. Immigration was slow and poorly organized until the Pilgrims arrived at Cape Cod, Massachusetts in 1620. A few ships arrived during the next decade, but the arrival of Winthrop's fleet at Boston in 1630 truly signaled the first major immigration wave, often called the Great Migration.

Between 1607 and 1820 early European immigration was basically British (England, Scotland, Ulster Ireland, Southern Ireland, Wales) and German. However, there was little immigration between the Revolutionary War (1775-1783) and 1815, due to wars on both sides of the ocean. Hence, most of the immigration took place during the colonial period.

Researchers face a variety of challenges when tracing ancestors arriving in America prior to 1820:

1. Since the American colonies were a British possession, there were no specific laws requiring the recording of passenger information.
2. Even after the American Revolution ended, authority was fractured. The newly formed United States government did not mandate laws requiring passenger lists until 1820.
3. Surviving Pre-1820 passenger lists, when and if they were created, are scattered in various repositories, or manuscripts of wealthy landowners and entrepreneurs from that time period.
4. The only mandate for recording passenger information was if they ship was coming from outside the British Empire.

Overview of Pre-1820 Immigrant Groups

The largest numbers of documented immigrants were slaves imported from Africa, accounting for approximately 40% of the colonial immigrants to the colonies. However, due to unsanitary conditions and inhumane treatment on these ships, the number of slaves who survived the trip was minimal in comparison to those who originally boarded the ships. The table below

illustrates the approximate number of immigrants to America before 1790 and the country or continent of origin. This information is based on educated estimates from qualified historians:

Africa	360,000
England	230,000
Ulster	135,000
Germany	103,000
Scotland	48,500
Ireland	8,000
Netherlands	6,000
Wales	4,000
France	3,000
Jews	2,000
Sweden/Finland	500

Studies of the 1790 United States census have determined the approximate ethnic mix at that period. Clearly countries in the British Isles predominated, accounting for about two-thirds of the total population:

English	47.5
African	19
Scotch-Irish	8
German	7
Irish	5
Scottish	4
Welsh	3
Dutch	2.5
French	2
Native American	1
Spanish	0.5
Swedish, etc.	0.5

Distribution of these national groups, however, differed from state to state in ways that impact genealogical research during the colonial period. Immigration and naturalization policies, settlement and occupational patterns, and even cultural traditions are affected by the concentration of national groups. For example, in spite of the close proximity between French Canada and Vermont during the colonial period, less than 1 percent of the Vermont population was French in 1790. This ratio would change in the nineteenth century as Canadians entered the United States to work. The area which became Ohio in 1803 was over 50 percent French; and only one-third of Pennsylvania was actually German.

Early Immigration Lists

Prior to 1820, the federal government of the United States made no effort to require lists of immigrants arriving in the country. Before the Revolutionary War (1775-1783) there was no federal government to make such a request. Control of immigration was left to the original colonies. Each colony paid lip service to the British Crown when it came to official policy but in reality most had their own criteria for non-British immigrants.

Inasmuch as these were British colonies, and close to 80% of the white immigrants before 1790 came from British countries, there was no need to record these arrivals. For ships transporting our original immigrant colonists from the British Isles, there are few actual lists of passengers and even fewer that are undisputed in some manner. Travel between the British Isles and the American colonies were considered within the British Empire just as when we travel from one state to another within the United States in modern times.

Given this fact, it is fortunate that any colonial immigrants were recorded. In fact, a large majority of immigrant families have been documented, but, when our original ancestors were recorded, they are usually found in ancillary records and documents.

These supplementary or indirect records allow identification of at least some members of an immigrant's family (usually the head) for upwards of 70 to 80% of the colonial, white immigrants. The vast majority of ancillary records have been published over the past few decades in numerous resources. In addition, virtually all of them are indexed in the following title:

Filby, P. William. *Passenger and Immigration Lists Index: Guide to Published Arrival Records of About 500,000 Passengers Who Came to the United States and Canada in the 17th, 18th, and 19th Centuries.*

This multi-volume set is an alphabetical surname index guiding researchers to many resources, most of which can be borrowed through inter-library loan. There are more than 3 million entries in the index, drawn from more than 2,800 sources covering the United States and Canada.

Highlights from the set include:

1. The Filby Passenger List Index includes published lists up to 1900.
2. Some lists contain the names of immigrants arriving through the 1920's but this period is not covered as comprehensively as the pre-1900 period.
3. Colonial American immigration is the best feature in Filby's since virtually all surviving colonial immigration sources have been published. Only about 800,000 identifiable (white, European) immigrants came to North America before 1820, and many of them were women and children who do not appear on most substitute lists.
4. Most of the names in the Index are from published sources listing post-1820 immigrants. Individual names from periodical articles and other sources are well indexed.
5. Because this is a "master index" which references hundreds of different sources, not every entry will be equally useful.

6. Sometimes the source being indexed is incomplete or inaccurate. Other times the source may be obscure and hard to obtain.
7. In some cases, the same name will appear multiple times in the index because the immigrant is noted in several sources.

One problem that many researchers have with the set is the sheer volume of names. Often the entries will include several persons of the same name. It is the researcher's task to determine which, if any, is the immigrant they are seeking. There is no simple shortcut to avoid this challenge. It comes with the territory when searching for ancestors in this time period.

While the Filby index is an excellent source for tracing immigrant ancestors, especially during the Colonial Era, it does not include every immigrant, even those in published sources. Here are some reasons why you may not find your ancestor:

1. The immigrant may not be listed in a published source.
2. The ancestor you are seeking may not be the immigrant.
3. Many females and children were not listed in pre-1820 lists.
4. The published source with your immigrant has not yet been indexed.
5. Some published sources with hundreds of thousands of names may never be included in Filby's Index such as *Germans to America*.
6. The immigrant's name may be spelled differently from the version you know.

Locating Early Immigrant Settlers

While not every settler in a given location was an immigrant, many of them were during the colonial era. Indeed, one of the major factors influencing immigrants to come to America was the availability of land. Many came for the land and, therefore, became the first settlers in many areas. So another source for identifying immigrants are lists of early settlers.

Most lists of early settlers seem to be based on land grants of one kind or another. In some southern states these settler lists come from headrights, which is documentation of having transported a certain number of persons to settle on, and improve, various tracts of land. Colonial immigration to Virginia is of great interest to the millions of descendants of the early settlers, but can really only be documented in the early land records.

In New England, early settlers are sometimes determined from the lists of freemen, men granted full rights within a town to own land and hold office. While not every freeman was an immigrant, a large number were, especially in towns known to be settled by recent immigrants. Thus, to be an effective list of immigrants, settler lists need to pertain to the first settlement of a locality known to have attracted immigrants during the early history of North America. Many books have been written about immigration during the Colonial time period. The bibliography at the end of this study guide will provide a significant number of sources to enhance your understanding and research. Those in our collection will include the call number in our genealogy collection. Most books will also contain bibliographies and clues to the historical period they cover.

Major Compiled Sources for Locating Pre-1820 Immigrants

Compiled records consist of records assembled together around a particular surname, subject, or location in various formats:

1. Family histories
2. Genealogical dictionaries
3. Periodicals
4. Research collections
5. Emigrant group publications
6. Diaries, journals, and manuscripts written by wealthy entrepreneurs (Winthrop and Oglethorpe)

Compilations of records, also known as secondary sources, are often overlooked or ignored by researchers for three primary reasons:

1. Many contain material having little or no documentation
2. Some have been exposed as fraudulent
3. Several have proven to be poorly researched.

While there are limitations in accuracy, many sources have proven to be well researched and the facts are accurate. Each book, as well as article, needs to be evaluated on its own merits and should not be dismissed simply because it is a compiled source. One must also remember that during this time period it is nearly impossible to find the original immigration records. In most cases, none were even generated.

In spite of these issues, the number of genealogists tracing immigrants who arrived in America during the colonial era has continued to increase in size and scope. Although only about one million immigrants arrived during this time period, these immigrants tended to have a much larger number of descendants than those who arrived over 100 years later. The number of immigrants arriving during the colonial era amounts to less 2% of all immigrants to North America. Because of the growing level of interest, many individuals have focused their efforts and publications on discussions of immigrants. Where such sources have been compiled by knowledgeable and experienced researchers, they provide excellent, documented facts.

Some of these first published sources focused on individual immigrants and their descendants. This led to the creation of thousands of individual family history books. Later sources began to focus on groups as the interest of researchers shifted. These sources focused on groups of immigrants who settled a specific area, while some work from the old country, discussing groups who left a foreign area for the new world. When these compiled records include sources, and outline clues used to arrive at various conclusions, they can save a researcher much time and energy.

Family Histories: These are book-length discussions of a family's genealogical connections. Generally they two types of published family histories:

1. Most early family histories traced the male (surname line) descendants of a specific person (often an immigrant).
2. In recent years, an increasing number have discussed the ancestry of a specific person, often the author/compiler.

In either case, immigrant ancestors frequently are a significant part of these publications. An estimated 90,000 published, family histories exist for North American families, at least half dealing with immigrants. Many, of course, are not colonial era immigrants, but if you descend from a very early immigrant, particularly from the 17th century in the northern states, there is an excellent chance that a published account of his descendants exists.

The author may include information gathered about the immigrant's origin in the old country. It may, or may not, identify the town of origin, but it will at least provide clues, and is the best single source of such information for many colonial immigrants. The Heritage Quest database, one of our electronic resources on the Lee County Library System home page, is an excellent source to access this type of information via the PERSI and Books components.

Genealogical Dictionaries/Compendia: Genealogical dictionaries (also called compendia) focus on the genealogical connections of a group of persons, often in the same locality, or of the same ethnic group. Typically they include a few paragraphs or pages on each family within its scope, and may discuss several hundred families.

As nations with significant immigrant population, the United States and Canada have pockets of settlements of specific ethnic immigrant groups. Many of these areas have been the subject of dictionaries or compendia that explore the first two or three generations of these settlers. While only some of them identify the towns from which the immigrants left, all of them discuss the lives of the immigrants and provide some of the important clues necessary to identify them in foreign records.

Some of the most prominent and useful genealogical dictionaries and compendia are listed below:

Anderson, Robert Charles. *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England 1620-1633*,

This is part of the most comprehensive series for its scope, coverage, and thoroughness. The second series is now published by the same title covering the years 1634-1635. This multi-volume series fully discusses about 900 heads of households who settled in Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies through 1633. The author examined every available source, both compiled and original in all of the early towns, as well as the colonial records. The discussion of each family runs from just two pages to ten or more and includes the immigrant's documented activities in the colonies, his estate, children, associates, and of course vital information, including, where proven, his origin in England.

Cerny, Johni Cerny and Gary J. Zimmerman, *Before Germanna: The Origins and Ancestry of Those Affiliated with the Second Germanna Colony of Virginia*.

The focus of this series was each of the major founding families of this colony, exploring their ancestry in Germany and their descendants in the colonies.

Colket, Meredith B. Colket, Jr. ***Founders of Early American Families: Emigrants from Europe, 1607-1657.***

----- ***Founders and Patriots of America Index.***

Both titles are useful compendiums for identifying many early immigrants and identify additional published sources available for further research. Colket's books include upwards of 4,000 early settlers. Each entry includes:

1. The surname and given name
2. Spelling variations
3. Place of residence in the colonies with dates
4. Date and place of death
5. Published source listing further information on the immigrant and some of his/her descendants
6. When known, information includes the birth date, origin in England or Europe, and immigration information.

Johnson, Amandus. ***The Swedish Settlements on the Delaware, 1638-1664.***

The author identifies the officers, soldiers, servants, and settlers of the New Sweden colony during 1638 through 1656. This details the ships used, names of passengers, dates of arrival, male inhabitants in 1643-44 as well as a list of surviving settlers from 1648.

Jones, Henry Z. ***The Palatine Families of New York: A Study of the German Immigrants who Arrived in Colonial New York in 1710.***

The author, working with original records in New York and Germany identifies all of the immigrants who arrived in this first of major German groups to come to America. He then defines their family in New York and, for about sixty percent of them, identifies the town and family relations in Germany they left behind.

McCracken, George E. ***The Welcome Claimants Proved, Disproved and Doubtful with an Account of Some of Their Descendants.***

The author took some twenty or more versions of the passenger list for this early Pennsylvania-bound ship and carefully analyzed the names in contemporary sources to determine who really were among the first settlers.

Pope, Charles Henry. ***The Pioneers of Massachusetts, 1620-1650: a Descriptive List Drawn From Records of the Colonies, Towns, and Churches and Other Contemporary Documents.***

Unlike Savage's dictionary, this source does not attempt to link several generations together. Rather it provides a brief paragraph about those known to have settled the Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth colonies by 1650.

Savage, James. *Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England Showing Three Generations of Those Who Came Before May, 1692.*

The author provides capsulated information about hundreds of early New England immigrants, sometimes identifying relationships in England that help prove places of origin.

Skordas, Gust. *The Early Settlers of Maryland: An Index to the Names of Immigrants Compiled from Records of Land Patents, 1633-1680, in the Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.*

Land records are the main focus of this title. This alphabetical index of more than 25,000 settlers identifies virtually all of the immigrants who remained in Maryland as opposed to those who landed there and then moved on to other colonies. These list provide the following pieces of information:

1. Immigrant's full name.
2. Approximate date of immigration.
3. Place of residence.
4. Basis for the claim to land.
5. Reference to the source of the information.

While the information on the families in many early sources has often been superseded by more recent works, older sources still provide a good overview of early research about the families covered. The older publications often contain pieces of information that may not be included in the reprinted or later editions.

Periodicals: Often a researcher learns much about an immigrant, and his or her family, but the amount of information does not justify a book. Sometimes they have simply learned more than was published in an earlier family history. Diligent researchers want to share their findings so others do not have to make the same searches. In such situations, the researchers often write an article for a genealogical journal.

Several major genealogical journals routinely include articles about the origins of colonial immigrants. The three most prominent periodicals for searching colonial American ancestors are the following:

1. *The American Genealogist*
2. *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*
3. *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*

One of the best ways to seek these kinds of articles is to consult the *Periodical Source Index* (PERSI) available via Heritage Quest on the Lee County Library System homepage <http://www.lee-county.com/library> under "Research and Homework Tools-Databases A-Z. and scroll down until you see the Heritage Quest icon. Heritage Quest may also be used from home as long as the patron has a valid Lee County Library System library card.

Previous Compiled Research: Researchers often discover that someone else has already researched the ancestor or family of interest. Unfortunately, this previous research is seldom

accessible or published in an easy-to-find manner. Many researchers never publish their findings, but may have found an immigrant's origin. Such information may be difficult to find, but not impossible. Try these steps for acquiring information collected by other researchers:

1. Begin by inquiring at the state historical society where the immigrant lived. Ask if there are any manuscript collections of genealogical research about the early families. In many cases, someone donated their files to the local society.
2. Search the holdings of the Family History Library Catalog at <http://www.familysearch.org>. Type in the name of the state, and search under the category "genealogy." If you find a potential source, these items are usually able to be loaned to a local Family History Center.
3. Search the Internet for repositories where your ancestor lived. Then contact your local public library to see if they have interlibrary loan capabilities to order microfilmed materials.

Emigrant Groups: Because of the growing number of researchers tracing ancestors back to Europe or the British Isles, new compilations about immigrant groups are emerging, particularly those of Germans who settled Pennsylvania in the 18th Century. Three popular titles of interest on early emigration patterns are:

Eighteenth Century Emigrants from German-Speaking Lands to North America.

This title is published by the Pennsylvania German Society covers *The Northern Kraichgau* and *The Western Palatinate*. This sources documents over 1,000 emigrants with detailed discussions of their families both in Germany and in North America.

Eighteenth Century Emigrants from the Northern Alsace to America.

This title covers the highly contested portion of France from which at least 628 persons emigrated, still providing the depth of information and documentation all researchers seek.

Westerwald to America: Some 18th Century German Immigrants

This title documents 265 emigrant families or individuals from one region in southern Germany who settled in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Maryland and the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

David Dobson is another prolific author who has written a series of books pertaining to the Scotch-Irish. The Dobson titles provide detailed lists of immigrants, and discusses their origins and families. The following lists of books are available in the Lee County Library System. More detailed information on each title can be found in the bibliography at the end of this study guide.

Directory of Scots Banished to the American Plantations: 1650-1775

Directory of Scots in the Carolinas, 1680-1830

Directory of Scottish Settlers in North America, 1625-1825

Original Scots Colonists of Early America, 1612-1783

Scots on the Chesapeake, 1607-1830

Scottish-American Heirs, 1683-1883

Scottish-American Wills: 1650-1900

Scottish-Surnames of Colonial America

Diaries, Journals, and Manuscripts Written by Wealthy Entrepreneurs: Many early immigrants had to work their way to the New World. Many came as part of various apprentice, head right, and indentured servitude arrangements. Because official record keeping was spotty at best, references to these early immigrants are found in the diaries, journals, and published manuscripts of wealthy entrepreneurs. Two examples of prominent individuals who fell into this category would be John Winthrop and James Oglethorpe.

Part Three: The Importance of Early American Church Records

Freedom of religion in North America, was one of the main attractions for many early settlers to the New World. The concept of religious freedom has existed in some form or another since the early 1600s. Many persecuted churches established congregations in America. Although individual colonies may have been intolerant of certain denominations, generally a church would be welcome in at least one of the many colonies established in the New World.

Colonial America was perhaps the most religiously diverse place on earth at that time. During the Revolutionary War, newly arrived immigrants were exposed to hundreds of different denominations, some legit some not. Many historical Protestant denominations were already well-established in America and Canada. In some cases, they had been operating for as many as five generations.

The importance of church records takes on added significance during the colonial period due to the many challenges of tracing immigrant ancestors during this time period. One of the main challenges is determining who the immigrant was. Often, when we run out of records showing our surname, we assume that the first person of our surname mentioned in the records is our immigrant, when, in reality, there is no connection. Many researchers are confronted with people sharing the same name.

The scarcity of records during this era doesn't make the task any easier. There were fewer records kept. There no legal mandates for any of the following:

1. No formal censuses.
2. No government vital records
3. Virtually no newspapers
4. No formal requirements for immigration lists unless the ship came from Europe.

Due to these factors, church records usually play a more prominent role in our colonial research. This is particularly true when trying to track the origins of British colonial immigrants. However, even after finding an immigrant in a colonial church record, you may not find any reference to his or her home town. Generally you can expect greater success with non-British immigrants.

Primary Colonial Era Religious Denominations

The vast majority of non-British immigrants to North America were the Dutch of the 17th century and the Germans of the 18th century. Each brought its own culture, including their religious beliefs. Many of the Germans were Lutherans. Another large group also belonged to the German Reformed Church. Today they are known as the United Church of Christ.

Although German immigration traditionally dates from the 1680s, the first major German immigrant group was the 1709 refugees who were permitted to settle upstate New York and worked for the British harvesting naval supplies. Here they established their churches or intermarried and mixed with the local Dutch in their churches. Because of economic and religious differences with the British, the next wave of German immigration shifted to Pennsylvania where they were granted more freedom to establish their own communities and culture. Most of the Germans in Pennsylvania were Lutheran or Reformed, sometimes even sharing the same house of worship. Their record keeping practices were similar generally recording baptisms and marriages. Burials were seldom recorded on a consistent basis.

The most common denominations during this time period were:

1. German Reformed
2. Dutch Reformed
3. Mennonites
4. Dunkards
5. Brethren
6. Amish
7. Moravians (Anabaptists)
8. Quakers
9. Congregationalists
10. Roman Catholic
11. Presbyterians
12. Huguenots

When researching church records during the Colonial era, the following steps will put you in the best possible position for success given the nature of the time period.

1. Identify the immigrant.
2. Identify where he or she lived.
3. Search the local church records, including cemetery records, as that may be the only burial records extant.
4. If you learn that the immigrant arrived unmarried, try to locate a marriage record, as it will usually be easier to find than a burial, and have a greater chance of naming the home town.
5. Don't restrict your searches to the father. Remember, many Germans arrived as families, so you will want to track the young immigrant sons.
6. Women, when mentioned, seldom name their home town. The best solution for seeking the origins of a German female immigrant is to try and locate the origins of her father or brothers.

The following published sources are considered the best for locating records for the Reformed Churches:

Bricker, Florence M. *Church and Pastoral Records in the Archives of the United Church and the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society.*

This is an overall guide to German Reformed Church records. The Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society (555 West James Street, Lancaster, PA 17603) hold the transcripts made by William J. Hinke and others of most of the colonial and early national German Reformed congregations.

Epperson, Gwen. *New Netherlands Roots* .

This is a very useful guide for tracking the origins of early New York Dutch. The author discusses the various church records and includes information on other sources for learning the home towns of these early immigrants.

Galtfelter, Charles. *Pastors and People, I, Congregations and Pastors in "Publications of the Pennsylvania German Society," vol. 12.*

This title provides a list of most colonial Lutheran and Reformed congregations in Pennsylvania and reference to the years the records begin,

The Dutch were actually the first settlers of what became New York, having established a Dutch colony known as New Netherlands, with its chief city New Amsterdam which became New York City. Dutch Reformed Church records are among the best sources for any kind of genealogical research during the 17th Century. Although some records have been lost, especially for Dutch churches in New Jersey, most have survived. Most have also been transcribed, or published, sometimes in two, three, or four versions. Early transcriptions are often incomplete and may not name places in Holland where the families originated, so seek more recent transcriptions.

While some settlers continued to come, in general terms, Dutch settlers stopped immigrating to New York after the British took over in 1664. Most Dutch settlers had immigrated before 1650. Therefore, you will need to seek the earliest registers to find reference to immigrants. Watch especially for early marriage records, often within just a few years of arrival.

Fortunately, the Dutch were more likely to refer to themselves by their home town. For some, it even became their surname. Where families arrived, seek records for all family members, even the young girls, whose Dutch home is often mentioned in their marriage records. Original records are difficult to find. Sometimes only transcripts exist, but even they can be quite comprehensive. Begin with the transcriptions, where the preface may identify the existence of the originals.

Researchers should use caution when using the transcripts because they often focus only on birth or marriage information. Additional information, such as removal notations, or disciplinary

action, may not appear in the transcript or publication. This information may only survive in the original record, or complete copies.

Recognize that there are several German denominations besides Lutheran or "Reformed": The smaller German Pietist groups, such as the Mennonites, Dunkards, Brethren, and Amish churches, as well as groups such as the Moravians.

Understand that the church was literally a part of the immigration of its members. The Moravians, for example, often kept excellent records which may provide specific places of origin for their members. Remember, immigration of such groups was often church-sponsored.

Sometimes it is difficult to locate the parish registers of smaller denominations, but even better than their church registers are the histories of the churches. Both denominational and congregational histories will mention early immigrant members, often noting the home town in Germany.

Realize that many churches studied and published family history information. Few U.S. religious groups of the Colonial period have pursued genealogy and family history with greater zeal than the Mennonites. Undoubtedly some of this emphasis stems from being "a people apart." In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Mennonites were a persecuted people.

Given their "underground" status, it is difficult to find recorded evidence of the Mennonites in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century German and Swiss records. Indeed, tracing Mennonite and other Anabaptist immigrants from Pennsylvania back to their place of origin ranks as one of the most challenging tasks facing a German-American genealogist.

Mennonite records in Pennsylvania tend to be rather fragmentary as compared with those of the Lutheran and Reformed congregations. On the other hand, the Mennonites have published an impressive series of scholarly works concerning their particular history for the past sixty years. Often these histories identify not only the immigrant, but also his ancestors back two or three generations. An excellent bibliography of published Mennonite family histories is the following title:

Gingerich, Hugh F. and Rachel W. Kreider *Amish and Amish Mennonite Genealogies.*

Another colonial denomination, known for its excellent records, is the Religious Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers. Quaker records are perhaps the most useful of any colonial churches having predominantly British membership. In addition to records of birth (not baptism) and marriage, Friends kept minutes of their administrative meetings where they addressed matters of discipline and other aspects of their local society.

Often found among Quaker records are letters, or certificates, of removal or admission which document the previous Monthly Meeting (local Quaker society) to which a member belonged. In order to be readily accepted in a new meeting, members were encouraged to carry a letter of recommendation with them, testifying that they had been in good standing with the previous society.

Many immigrants were Friends/Quakers in the Old World before arriving in the colonies. Therefore, they would often bring such letters with them, which naturally identify the former meeting to which they belonged. Many, but certainly not all, of these records have survived. Once you establish that an immigrant ancestor was a Quaker, try to learn which meeting he or she attended then locate the records of that meeting. Usually they have been transcribed (often in handwritten form), and often published (perhaps just as a typescript).

The best known collection of Quaker records is the 8 volume set listed below:

Hinshaw, William M. *Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy.*

Most other colonial churches were not as careful or consistent in recording the various events in their parishioners' lives. Where they did record the burial or marriage of an immigrant, they seldom ever included reference to their home in the old country.

The Congregational Church in New England (now part of the United Church of Christ) and the Anglican or Episcopal (also called Protestant Episcopal) in Virginia and other southern colonies. The records of these two denominations tend to be sketchy and incomplete. Sometimes they are missing all together. Since their adherents were primarily British, who were the earliest immigrants to the colonies, you would have to find such records from the mid-1600s to document immigrants. Records from that time period are rare and mention of English homes is virtually unheard of.

The Roman Catholic Church was the dominant church in areas settled by the French and Spanish. The French occupied the area later known as Quebec and the Spanish established St. Augustine, Florida with parish records starting in 1594. There were few Catholics in the British colonies. Late in the colonial time period many English-speaking Catholics settled in Maryland. Where early Catholic records exist, they may provide the name of an ancestral home. This seems particularly the case with French Catholic parishes. There were virtually no German Catholics in North America before the Revolutionary War.

The Presbyterian Church had its origins as the Church of Scotland and arrived in America in the 1700s, becoming one of the largest denominations by the time of the Revolutionary War. Local records are often scattered, as there was no uniform movement to preserve the records. Where their records exist, they can be quite useful for general research, but few Presbyterian churches were established in areas with first-generation immigrants. Therefore, they don't document immigrant origins very well. Some Presbyterian churches in the southern colonies were established during the lifetime of the more recent colonial immigrants (often Scots-Irish) in that region, but seldom, if ever, name where those immigrants came from.

Huguenot (French Protestant) immigrants to the British colonies have been the subject of significant research over the past century and a half. This has resulted in many records being preserved, microfilmed, and even published. The French origins of many Huguenot families have been determined and well documented. Others have only been surmised. Many Huguenots settled near the Dutch, and are often found on the early records of Dutch Reformed

congregations. Among the hundreds of books on the subject, most researchers begin with is the following title:

Baird, Charles Washington. *History of the Huguenot Emigration to America.*

As with passenger lists, and many other colonial records, many colonial church records have been published in one form or another. They may appear as a series of articles in a genealogical journal, a separately published book of transcripts of the parish registers, an appendix to a congregational history, or, often, a typescript abstract of the registers deposited at an historical society or local library. Such typescripts are not actually published records, but there may be a few copies, created as carbon copies of the typescript, or later photocopies. Often these typescripts have ended up on microfilm, usually available on loan through the Family History Library, thereby increasing access to a point almost equal to formal publication.

Where a church served a specific ethnic group, publications of those church records may identify immigrants. Some examples of publications that included this type of information include the following:

Filby, P. William. *Passenger and Immigration Lists Bibliography*

This publication lists some parish register abstracts which mention immigrants.

Myers, Albert Cook. *Immigration of the Irish Quakers into Pennsylvania, 1682-1750.*

----- *Irish Quaker Arrivals to Pennsylvania: 1682-1750.*

----- *List of Certificates of Removal From Ireland Received at the Monthly Meetings of Friends in Pennsylvania, 1682-1750,* first published in

Don't expect all colonial church records to have been published. However, if you check the major indexes, including the *Periodical Source Index* (PERSI), bibliographies, and library catalogs (especially the Family History Library Catalog) under the locality of the church, you will likely find some records in print.

Part Four: Tracing Immigrants Using Court, Land, and Other Civil Records

There were three major influences at work in the lives of our Colonial ancestors:

1. Family
2. Church
3. Community

In each community (village, town, county, etc.), the residents established a system of recording transactions and of governing themselves. The records generated by the various levels of government are called civil records.

Civil records were often generated at the local town hall or county courthouse. Perhaps the most overlooked records in genealogy, regardless of the time period, are court and other civil records left behind by our ancestors, yet they are often some earliest records available for research in North America. Every Colonial researcher, regardless of whether they are pursuing an immigrant or not, should utilize of these sources. However, they are especially useful for immigrants, for they help document the first few years of their existence in their new country.

Throughout the Colonial Era, a sizable percentage of the adults in the British Colonies were immigrants. In fact, during the first half of the 17th century (1607 to about 1650), virtually all the adults in the colonies were immigrants. Therefore, any record that documents these persons documents an immigrant. However, not all records which mention immigrants identify the persons as immigrants, and only rarely do they actually mention the name of the immigrant's foreign home. In spite of these limitations, any piece of information about an immigrant is an important piece of the puzzle that may help identify the ancestral home.

Not all the persons mentioned in civil records were immigrants. Since civil records may include any persons who lived in a community, the later the records were made in the Colonial Era, the higher percentage of non-immigrants will appear in the records. This simply reflects the fact that, after 100 years or more, most of the population was not made up of original immigrants, but rather the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of earlier immigrants.

Outside of the family, life in Colonial America revolved around the church and the community. At some times, and in some places, the church was the community. However, even early in North America, local government became secular, with its own officers, duties, responsibilities, and records (although it may have supported one specific denomination). Most families participated, to some degree, in certain civil aspects of the community. Young men served in the militia. Older males engaged in the following community activities:

1. Bought and sold land
2. Paid taxes
3. Served on juries
4. Were called as witnesses in court actions
5. Took their neighbors to court
6. Were taken to court by their neighbors.

Items 4-6 above are interesting contrasts to the myth that people usually got along better before the modern invention of privacy fences. Disputes between neighbors were not only very common, but often resulted in clogging up the court systems as much as what seems to be the norm in modern times. Many of these actions were directed at immigrants as a form of harassment by residents already established and who felt threatened economically and/or politically.

All of these events, and many others, were recorded by the civil authorities. At first the colony was the community. As each colony grew in population, it established counties, with local officers and judges. Immigrant ancestors were as likely as any other resident to appear in these records. One of the fortunate aspects of researching this admittedly difficult era is that many civil records are in print. This makes searching easier, and should alert diligent researchers to the

value of these records. Conscientious researchers should also pursue unpublished, unindexed, often even unmicrofilmed, colonial and town civil records. Learn as much as possible about the cases being researched. Then contact the state archives or other repositories to learn if there are other early papers preserved from that court. Never assume that because some records have been microfilmed, or printed in a book, that all applicable records are available in the same format.

Of course, not all court actions are of equal value in tracking immigrant origins. While any record will prove the residence and adulthood of an immigrant, some records are typically more likely than others to provide immigration information.

Court Actions: The following are types of court records that may name a colonial ancestor:

1. Lists of jurors
2. Lists of taxables
3. Lists of residents
4. Depositions
5. Indentures
6. Criminal court proceedings
7. Civil actions between two individuals, such as slander, property rights, etc.

Records which provide some biographical information are the best sources for immigration information. Hence lists of jurors, taxables, residents, etc., are of lesser interest for this purpose. Situations where the immigrant is the subject of the court action are more valuable, such as admittance to freeman status which was granted by courts before towns began granting this privilege. Status as the plaintiff or defendant in a civil court case may provide excellent background information, including reference to when he arrived in the colony. Civil cases were very common in Colonial courts, as neighbors and others would turn to the local court to adjudicate differences between persons.

As a defendant in a criminal case, there may also be tidbits of biographical information about an immigrant. Also, don't be too shocked to find an ancestor on the wrong side of the law in these times. His "offense" may well have been minor (misconduct, property destruction) or a violation of strict moral codes (improper Sabbath observance); such are common in court minutes.

Never consider your immigrant ancestor to have been of too little importance to end up in court. The population was small in most places and the court was the only place to resolve problems. Over time, if an adult male remained in the same locality, the chances are very good that he would be mentioned in one or more court cases. It was not uncommon for ages of individuals to be included as part of the Colonial court record proceeding. In many cases this is the only record in existence where an estimated birth year can be obtained.

Court Depositions: As a witness to any action contested in court, your ancestor may have filed a deposition (statement of facts relative to the case) with important biographical information. Where they survive, these may be the most important documents in terms of determining origins of Colonial immigrants. Depositions often provide some background about the deponent, including their age and at least the country of origin. They may also specify their relationship to

the plaintiff or both. It is not uncommon in the earliest years for these depositions to mention when a person arrived in the colonies, or that he knew the defendant when they lived in England.

Depositions are seldom indexed, unless the court records have been printed with an every-name index. Indeed, many depositions no longer exist. It is frustrating to find brief minutes from a court case mentioning that your ancestor deposed certain facts, but does not include that statement. However, do not stop when encountering such problems.

Indentures: Indentures were contracts to serve someone in exchange for payments made on one's behalf. They are very often excellent sources of immigration information. Many colonial indentures were made between new immigrants and the person who paid for their passage. Potential immigrants would bargain with the ship's master or captain to provide them passage in exchange for selling them into a fixed term of servitude in the new world.

Records of such a transaction, usually called an indenture, often give the age of the immigrant, but seldom the town of origin. Of course the date of such an indenture is a close approximation of the immigrant's arrival date. Sometimes these immigrants are called "redemptioners" since they redeemed the cost of their passage after arrival in America. Two good sources for information of this nature are listed below:

Record of Indentures of Individuals Bound Out as Apprentices, Servants, Etc. and of German and Other Redemptioners in the Office of the Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, October 3, 1771 to October 5, 1773.

This book is an excellent source for tracking non-Germans, an important group often overlooked when dealing with Colonial Pennsylvania immigration.

Diffenderffer, Frank R. ***The German Immigration Into Pennsylvania Through the Port of Philadelphia from 1700 to 1775, and the Redemptioners.***

While this title is more historical than genealogical in content, many researchers have found it very useful in understanding the "why" behind certain life impacting decisions that their ancestors made during this era. Only five pages have lists of immigrants.

Town Records: New York, and the New England Colonies were considered the center of Colonial society. Records were maintained at the local town level. While the emphasis in most areas of the colonies later shifted to the county level, in New England and many New York towns, the historical records with the most genealogical information will continue to be at the town level. That is where researchers locate a wide variety of records naming their ancestors. Towns had regular meetings, often just once a year, where various inhabitants (often freemen) were elected to a number of different positions.

Many of the same local (town or county) government services are used today (such as road repair, property registration, etc.), and were accomplished by local townsmen, often in lieu of taxes. Over the course of several years, most adult males who remained in one town had the opportunity to serve in some capacity. Hence, town records, over time, will usually name most

men. Often town records will include a record of births, marriages, and deaths occurring in that town, as well.

While town records seldom mention a resident's overseas origin, or even the fact that he was an immigrant, just finding his name among the records will provide additional research information, including his residence and status. There is a long list of potential town officers. Each of those officers, along with the variety of records created by towns is well explained in the following title:

Lainhart, Ann Smith. *Digging for Genealogical Treasure in New England Town Records.*

While society and culture were different in the other colonies outside the New England region, the concept of local residents participating in local affairs still held true.

Freemen: Of the various town records, those of most importance to locating immigrant origins researchers are the lists of freemen accepted by each town. Freemen were inhabitants of towns who were qualified to vote and participate fully in town affairs. This included the use of a town's common areas, such as fishing ponds, and distribution of new lands acquired or subdivided by the town.

The requirements varied over time, and from place to place but generally required a man to:

1. Be of legal age (usually 21)
2. Own land
3. Membership in the established church
4. Be a resident

Of course, not all freemen were immigrants. However, in the early years of the colonies, and in the earliest towns settled, the first few lists of freemen are heavily populated with immigrants. In most cases, these lists do not identify which freemen were actually immigrants, but on occasion they may mention a man or two "recently arrived from England." Even if a rare list makes this notation, do not presume that others on that list were not immigrants. Often the immigrant lived in the colony for many years before being granted freeman status.

If a town of origin is not given, or even any allusion to immigrant status, what good are freemen lists?

1. Finding an ancestor on such lists does locate where he was living at a certain point in time.
2. Lists testify that an ancestor was an adult and accepted member of his community. These lists may provide clues that may lead to other records, such as church, land, or court records which might give more information.
3. If the list dates from a period of major immigration to that locality (such as the "Great Migration" period in New England) and from a recently settled town (whose history indicates settlement by immigrants), then it most likely suggests he was an immigrant, yielding a rough date of immigration (usually within three years of the list).
4. The list names others in the town who were neighbors, friends, and relatives of the

ancestor. They may have emigrated together, or at least from the same locale. Thus, the other freemen may be clues to an ancestor's origin.

Land Grants and Transfers: Land records are generally not a preferred source for learning the origins of immigrants. They are invaluable in other aspects of genealogical research, but seldom mention an immigrant's home. They also seldom identify that a person was indeed an immigrant, nor do they usually provide an age. They are generally best at establishing residency, and relationships. However, in the Colonial time period, land records can sometimes be used to establish immigration.

One of the major factors influencing immigrants to come to America was the availability of land; therefore many became the first settlers in given areas. Most lists of early settlers seem to be based on land grants of one kind or another. In some southern states these settler lists come from headrights, which is documentation of having transported a certain number persons to settle on, and improve, various tracts of land.

Examples of two titles which have proved useful for many researchers in this area are:

Coldham, Peter. *Settlers of Maryland*,

This is a continuation of the Skordas title listed below. Peter Coldham in his five volume series, covers the years from 1679 through 1783. Coldham used the same land office books at the Maryland Hall of Records as did Skordas to identify about 24,000 more settlers during the Revolutionary period. Each entry provides the name of the settler, county, name of tract granted or purchased, number of acres, date, and a reference to the original source.

Skordas, Gust. *The Early Settlers of Maryland: An Index to the Names of Immigrants Compiled from Records of Land Patents, 1633-1680, in the Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.*

This alphabetical index of more than 25,000 settlers identifies virtually all of the immigrants who remained in Maryland (as opposed to those who landed there and then moved on to other colonies). The list provides the immigrant's full name, approximate date of immigration, their residence, the basis for the claim for land, and a reference to the source of the information.

Colonial immigration to Virginia is of great interest to the millions of descendants of the early settlers, but can really only be documented in the early land records. The names of thousands of immigrants lie buried in patents because of the system known as headrights. In order to qualify for their own land, the patentees would list the persons they had transported to the colony. The following title is a good source for Virginia research:

Greer, George. *Early Virginia Immigrants, 1623-1666.*

The author extracted names of immigrants from those lists and issued them as. This list of some 25,000 immigrants does not serve as an index to the patents, nor even a good locator of where the immigrant settled. It does contain the name of the immigrant, year of the land patent, name of

the patentee or person who transported the immigrant, and the county where the patent was located.

Using civil, court, town, and land records for colonial immigrants is not easy. Limitations include:

1. Many records have been lost or destroyed.
2. Many others are only found in repositories many hundreds (or thousands) of miles from away from where the ancestors or researchers resided.
3. Most are poorly indexed, if they are indexed at all!
4. Their content varies considerably, and they often don't explicitly identify the immigrant.

However, those with the perseverance to endure, may find relevant pieces of hidden information that will never be found anywhere else. Even if you don't find the actual name of an immigrant's home, you will likely learn other important facts, including his approximate date of arrival, names of fellow travelers, and additional family members. All of this is significant information you will eventually use to properly find and identify him in the records of his ancestral home.

Part Five: Tracing Ancestors Using Periodicals, Compiled Research, and Narratives

Among the major published genealogical sources, the source most overlooked by many researchers is the genealogical periodical. This is especially true for those seeking immigrant origins, who somehow believe that the answers must lay in original documents, such as court records, deeds, or passenger lists. However, the very interest of others in those immigrants, especially of the Colonial Era, makes records dealing with immigrants a significant target of periodical publishers.

Immigration information in periodicals is found in two major formats. Genealogical accounts, which present the findings of a researcher, are a narrative discussion about a genealogical problem and the solution to that problem. Copied records include documents of genealogical interest into their pages. This makes the original records much easier to read and to search. In addition, it is likely that the index to that issue will identify many more names in the record than the original document's index.

Immigration, of course, is one of the greatest of genealogical problems, so the uncovering of an immigrant's home makes an excellent genealogical article. Even more than genealogical accounts, periodicals publish copies of records. They may be passenger lists, naturalizations, other court records, lists of early residents or land holders, or any other sort of record which may name an immigrant. Today there are literally thousands of English-language genealogical periodicals. Many of them include significant information about immigrants. Most typically, the immigrants covered in these periodicals arrived during the colonial period, although later immigrants are also covered.

Compiled Genealogical Accounts and Narratives: Another major component of many genealogical periodicals are compiled genealogies. Often a researcher has learned significant information about several generations of a family, but the number of people covered is too small

for a book. Many researchers publish corrections or updates to previously published family history books.

As we have often indicated, immigration and immigrant origins are some of the most popular of genealogical topics. Virtually all North Americans descend from many different immigrants. Over the course of their research, family historians will often find the foreign origins of many of those immigrants. These success stories make excellent articles for local and national genealogical periodicals.

More often than not, articles about immigrants deal with Colonial immigrants and identify where they came from in the old country. Even if the actual town has not been found, such articles provide the most up-to-date information about the status of research on the immigrant. Since they provide current findings, the articles often include whatever clues previous researchers have found. Sometimes this is enough for the next researcher to pick up the trail, and solve the question of an immigrant's origin.

Copied Records: Many genealogical documents have been transcribed or abstracted in periodicals. Transcriptions, of course, are a word-for-word printing of the original document. Punctuation and spelling are usually left as found in the original. Abstracts are an abridgment or an abbreviated version of the record that omits repetitive or nonessential information. Abstracts vary greatly in quality, especially regarding the depth or quantity of information included. Abstracts may contain "corrected," or modern spelling; punctuation is almost always changed in abstracts.

Transcribed records typically include Bible or cemetery records, censuses, church registers, passenger lists, tax lists, and vital records. When the originals of these records date from the Colonial Era, it greatly increases the chances that immigrants are included among the persons identified, even if they are not identified as immigrants.

Many genealogical records have been, and continue to be, abstracted into genealogical periodicals. However, the records most commonly seen in abstract form are court, land, military, probate, and naturalization records as well as minutes of church, town, and other organizations meetings.

Periodicals from the country whence an immigrant came may include articles listing persons who left a town or region for the New World. These are especially helpful for connecting American ancestors to their ancestral home. As with any record, particularly original records (even in copied form), it is essential to be certain the person in the record who has the same name as your immigrant is really the immigrant (not just another person with the same name). Often this takes additional research in other records to prove the correct identity.

Major Periodicals Dealing with Immigrants: There are a handful of periodicals which place a greater emphasis on immigrants and their records than most others. Some of the most significant include:

The American Genealogist: Cumulative index for vols. 1-60. With its focus on Colonial research problems, this quarterly journal usually includes at least one article in most issues discussing the origins or foreign ancestry of an early immigrant.

New England Historical and Genealogical Register: Published by the New England Historical and Genealogical Society, 101 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116. Every-name index to vols. 1-50, and 51 through 147. First 147 volumes also available on CD-ROM. With so many early immigrants settling in New England, the cumulated contents of America's oldest genealogical journal has a wealth of information about Colonial immigrants. Articles include both genealogical accounts and abstracts of records mentioning the ancestral home of early immigrants such as English probates mentioning Colonial residents.

New York Genealogical and Biographical Record: Published by the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 122 East Fifty-eighth Street, New York NY 10022. One of the best places to turn for the origins of Colonial Dutch settlers of New York, this quarterly journal has published hundreds of useful articles.

The Second Boat: Published by Bachelor/Dormer, P.O. Box 398, Machias, ME 94654. Designed to help document the arrival of persons who came on later ships (hence the title). This periodical contains few genealogical accounts. Emphasis is more in lists of immigrants, some well documented, others just speculative. Its primary focus is Colonial New England.

Ethnic periodicals have become increasingly popular in recent years. However, most of these periodicals deal with how to research ethnic families. Therefore, they tend to be more instructional, and less likely to have significant articles naming immigrants. Research into foreign ancestry and various ethnic groups often differs in varying degrees from traditional American-British research. Different records, customs, migration and settlement patterns, and even language need to be explained to researchers not raised in that particular ethnic culture.

The growth of interest in ethnic research has been mirrored by a growing number of periodicals that focus on these areas. Today there are close to 200 periodicals for ethnic genealogical research. The areas of greatest interest, in terms of English-language periodicals, seem to be (in descending order of number of publications): German, Jewish, French, African-American, Irish, Hispanic, and Native Americans. Other periodicals exist for Acadian, Dutch, Italian, Polish, Swiss and many other ethnic groups.

A few ethnic-oriented periodicals do specialize in discussing immigrants, or in publishing records which name immigrants. Three examples include:

Palatine Immigrant: Focuses on Germans, especially those who settled Colonial Pennsylvania.

Swedish American Genealogist: Although most Swedes arrived long after the Revolutionary War, this well-respected journal treats Swedes of any time period, including the short-lived colony on the Delaware.

The Swiss Connection: Relatively few Swiss arrived in the Colonial Era, but the editor's objective includes documenting all Swiss immigrants, as well as educating readers about Swiss research and culture.

Surname periodicals also deserve brief mention. Many periodicals focus on one family or a surname and its variants. They are often published by an individual interested in that name. Others are published by a family association. The purpose of surname periodicals, is to locate and publish information about people who share the surname of interest. Often not much more than a newsletter, they are still a significant research tool. They include all types of articles from compiled genealogies and abstracts of original records to queries and indexes. It should be noted that some publications of this type focus on just one family, rather than all persons who share the surname.

For the researcher, surname periodicals and their publishers can be a great boon. Finding a periodical for a surname of interest is much like finding a published genealogy on the family. Much of the information may not be directly helpful but it is likely that some will pertain to the family being searched. Most of the information is secondary and needs to be further proven, but, in essence, such a periodical becomes a master index to dozens or hundreds of records and identifies where there is information on the particular surname. While much of the content of surname periodicals does not deal with immigrants, virtually every publication of this type does discuss the immigrants who share that surname.

Periodical Indexes: Given the wide variety of genealogical periodicals, and possibility of finding an article about an immigrant almost anywhere, indexes are the only efficient way to access this important literature.

The *Periodical Source Index* (PERSI) is the first place to turn for finding articles in English-language genealogical periodicals. PERSI is available as part of our Heritage Quest subscription on the library homepage <http://www.lee-county.com/library> under ***Research and Homework Tools, Databases A-Z. Scroll down to Heritage Quest and click on the icon for Library or Home.***

PERSI indexes all issues of virtually every genealogical magazine, journal, or newsletter. However, it is not an every-name index. Rather, it indexes the subjects of various articles. It has two primary divisions, both of interest to the researcher. Use the Surname section to search for articles about specific persons, such as your immigrant. Use the Locality section to search for transcripts and abstracts of records for a specific locality, such as naturalization records for Queens County, New York.

Once you find a citation, you may find that article at your local research library, or a library near where the periodical was published. Or, contact the Allen County Public Library <http://www.acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy/index.html> (Fort Wayne, Indiana) where PERSI is created. If you are a member of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record Society <http://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/> or the New England Historical Genealogical Register <http://www.newenglandancestors.org/>, the Heritage Quest database is on the member's only

section of their website. You may also purchase the CD-ROM yourself. Most Family History Centers have an older edition of PERSI on microfiche.

As a subject index, PERSI does not serve the function of an every-name index. One very useful name index, seldom considered as an index to periodicals, is P. William Filby's *Passenger and Immigration Lists Index* which was discussed earlier. Since the objective of that index is to identify immigrants in published materials, it indexes more than a thousand articles dealing with immigrants in hundreds of genealogical periodicals.

Collectively these indexed articles include over a million references to immigrants, including a large percentage of colonial immigrants. Although not every article discusses an immigrant's origins, each name is a documented immigrant.

Part Six: Genealogical Reprints of Immigrant Lists

Over the years, a number of genealogical publishers have reprinted large numbers of immigrant lists into bound volume sets. Genealogical Publishing Company in particular has been active in publishing selected articles from dozens of major genealogical journals into one to five volume sets. Generally the selected articles have a common theme, such as ship passenger lists, compiled genealogies, or transcribed source records. The publisher adds an every-name index to the reprinted articles, and often a significant preface discussing the periodical and explaining the selection criteria and related information. Many genealogical libraries purchase these reprint series, making them much easier to locate and use.

Some of the more popular titles that focus specifically on immigrants that have been published under this format are listed below. You will find a more detailed bibliographic description in the bibliography at the end of this study guide:

Emigrants to Pennsylvania, 1641-1819: A Consolidation of Ship Passenger Lists from the Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography. 1975.

English Origins of American Colonists: From the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record. 1991.

English Origins of New England Families: From the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, First Series. 3 Vols. 1984.

English Origins of New England Families: From the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Second Series. 3 Vols. 1985.

Genealogies of Mayflower Families: From the New England Historical and Genealogical Register. 3 Vols. 1985.

Immigrants to the Middle Colonies: A Consolidation of Ship Passenger Lists and Associated Data from the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record. 1978.

Irish Settlers in America: A Consolidation of Articles from the Journal of the American Irish Historical Society. 2 Vols. 1979.

The Mayflower Reader: A Selection of Articles from the Mayflower Descendant. 1978.

New World Immigrants: A Consolidation of Ship Passenger Lists and Associated Data from Periodical Literature. 2 Vols. 1979.

Passengers to America: A Consolidation of Ship Passenger Lists from the New England Historical and Genealogical Register. 1977.

Pennsylvania German Immigrants, 1709-1786: Lists Consolidated from Yearbooks of the Pennsylvania German Folklore Society. 1984.

Record of Indentures of Individuals Bound out as Apprentices, Servants, Etc. and of German and Other Redemptioners in the Office of the Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, October 3, 1771, to October 5, 1773 [From: Pennsylvania-German Society. Proceedings and Addresses]. 1973.

Rhineland Emigrants: Lists of German Settlers in Colonial America / [From Pennsylvania Folklife Magazine]. 1981.

Virginia Gleanings in England: Abstracts of 17th and 18th-Century English Wills and Administrations Relating to Virginia and Virginians : a Consolidation of Articles from the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography. 1980.

Part Seven: Tracing Pre-1820 Ancestors in Probate Records

While less than 20% of our ancestors in this era had wills, probate records are one of the major types of records used in genealogical research. Wills and other papers created during the probate process are often the best possible source to document relationships between family members, particularly parent to child. Probate records can serve a secondary, but equally important role in your research. Some wills and other probate papers may provide a key link between an immigrant in the new world and his family in the old.

Interestingly, probate action can be helpful for immigrant origins research regardless of which side of the ocean the probate took place. American wills may mention a family's origins in the old country, while foreign wills, notably British, may bequeath property (as in goods or money) to relatives who had emigrated to the new world.

Colonial Probate: Probate records are one of the few records which date back to the earliest settlements in North America. Furthermore, with few exceptions, they have been well preserved. Hence they are an excellent source for documenting Colonial families. Remember, immigrants generally came to the New World in order to improve their economic status. The possibilities were endless, as was land and property at that time. Hence, most immigrant males obtained a fair

amount of property before their death. Probate is the process of passing that property, both land and various goods, on to one's heirs.

Of course, we expect a probate file to name the heirs; that is its function. But, before you think that heirs are only descendants, who typically would be living near the now deceased immigrant (or certainly somewhere in the New World), consider that there may be other heirs. Perhaps an immigrant had no living children. Then his heirs may be brothers, sisters, or cousins (in addition to his wife). Indeed, an heir may be anybody the testator (the person who made the will) chooses to name, including servants, in-laws, friends, and others.

There is no law defining heirs who may be named in a will. If a person dies "intestate" (without a will), then the prevailing laws dictate who inherits, and in what percentages. Consider the possibility that some heirs may still be living in the old country. In such cases, the will, or subsequent probate documents, may identify where that heir was last known to have lived. If they still lived in the old country, it stands to reason that the heir probably lived near the original home of the testator.

The family and social connections between England and her colonies were much stronger than we typically imagine. The colonies were, after all, an extension of England. English custom and law prevailed. Although the distances were greater, there was little practical difference between a resident of York migrating to London, or emigrating to Boston. In either case, there were often significant ties which bound him to his original home. Those ties may be reflected in the people and places he may have mentioned in his will.

Another factor to consider is the "identification" issue. Persons often identified themselves according to their place of origin. Thus an immigrant might refer to himself, in his will, as "from Dorset" or some other place in the old country. This seems to have been more prevalent among Dutch settlers in what later became New York (and New Jersey). Perhaps because surnames had not been fixed among many Dutch, their home town was one of their "identifiers" and it may well appear in a man's will.

Early British Probate Procedures and Records: The same cultural, familial, and social factors noted above were also at work with the immigrant's family left behind in the old country. They still communicated with their children or other relatives who had settled in the Colonies. And, when they died, they remembered those relatives in their will. Sometimes the references are vague "my brother who has gone over the seas", while at other times they may name the immigrant and the colony where they lived, such as "my son Henry, now in Virginia."

British wills seldom name specific towns in the American colonies, probably because there had been little communication, and they did not know the name of the town where their relative lived. Researchers should also be aware that some persons in North America still owned property in Great Britain when they died. English law required that whenever a deceased British citizen had died outside of England, owned property outside of England, or if a foreigner owned property in England, that probate had to be handled by the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. Hence, during the Colonial era, the records of that court include many references to persons who died in the colonies.

Published Wills and Files: Locating wills, especially those pertaining to potential relatives in the old country, can be very difficult. However, an increasing number of probate actions are being published. For years, genealogists have realized that among the family members left behind in the old country, some would mention the immigrant in their will. Many researchers have pored through old British probate records seeking mention of a son, brother, cousin, or other relative "in New England" or described in some other way as being in the British Colonies.

Several notable examples of titles in this type of research are listed below:

Coldham, Peter W. *American Wills and Administrations in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 1610-1857.*

American Wills Proved in London, 1611-1775.

These two titles continue the research process begun in the Waters publication: The focus of both titles are records generated in the Prerogative court.

Waters, Henry F. *Genealogical Gleanings in England: Abstracts of Wills Relating to Early American Families, with Genealogical Notes and Pedigrees Constructed from the Wills and from Other Records.*

The Waters title was considered one of the most comprehensive early publications dealing with early British probate.

While most of the interest in foreign records as proof of emigration has centered around English records, David Dobson has used a similar approach in his ongoing efforts to document the origins of Scottish immigrants to North America through several publications which are listed in the bibliography at the end of the study guide. These publications are briefly listed below:

Directory of Scots Banished to the American Plantations: 1650-1775

Directory of Scots in the Carolinas, 1680-1830

Directory of Scottish Settlers in North America, 1625-1825

Original Scots Colonists of Early America, 1612-1783

Scots on the Chesapeake, 1607-1830

Scottish-American Heirs, 1683-1883

Scottish-American Wills: 1650-1900

Scottish-Surnames of Colonial America

Early wills in North America have often been the subject of publications as well. While those publications do not focus solely on wills providing immigrant origins clues, the fact that they were published greatly enhances your research prospects. One of the most recognized sources is listed below:

Fernow, Berthold. comp. *Calendar of Wills on File and Recorded in the Offices of the Clerk of the Court of Appeals, of the County Clerk at Albany, and of the Secretary of State, 1926-1836.*

This title was originally published in 1896. Several reprint editions have been published. This source is especially useful for the early wills of the Dutch settlers of New York.

Direct Statements (America and the Old Country): When you do find a will with a statement about the family's origin in the old country, it will either be a direct statement of a specific locality or an indirect statement suggesting possible origins. Even direct statements often require additional research. First, consider that the place name may not be spelled as we find it today. Perhaps the copyist could not read the original very well, or the writer used a spelling long since discarded.

If the place name in a will refers to a non English place (such as towns in Germany or the Netherlands), the English spelling may be much different than the native spelling. Even if the place name is clear, it may not be completely specific. Perhaps it is only the region or district, or the nearest large city. You may need to do some research in the surrounding area to actually find the immigrant.

On those occasions when the place name is correct, you must still determine that the immigrant actually did live there, through records of that locality. This may also yield problems. Remember it is not uncommon to find several people in the same locality using the same name.

One must exercise caution when interpreting and evaluating the information in a will. The place name mentioned may be a town in the New World. After all, many Colonial town names in North America were taken from places where some of the settlers used to live in the old country. Be certain that the reference to a specific place in a will pertains to the English locality versus a locality by the same name in the colonies. This can sometimes be done by comparing the date of origin of the town in the new world with the date of the will.

Indirect Statements: You might find a probate record which names a place in the old world, but not necessarily connect it to the immigrant directly. Perhaps the testator bequeathed an item to a relative in Old England, even naming a town. This does not mean that the testator was born there. Perhaps this relative moved there later in life, or was from a different town originally. Many English wills simply refer to a relative living in "New England." This is an indirect statement.

Researchers must be aware of the three basic strategies in tracing immigrant origins, especially in the Colonial era. First, be certain you have properly identified the immigrant. It is too easy to get him confused with other persons of the same name in the old country. Always review recent literature (especially periodical articles) for the most current status of research on a Colonial ancestor. Remember that statements in old documents do not always mean the same as they would today. For example, New England is currently defined as the six U.S. states east of New York. However, in Colonial times, New England was often applied to any of the British colonies.

After the Colonial era, most immigrant wills do not mention origins in the old world. In large part, the United States was a new country, so the social, economic, and cultural ties to the former country were not as strong. Also the vast majority of post-Revolutionary immigrants were not

English. They were from other countries and chose to settle in a new country, often fully yielding their allegiance, as well as their identity, to their new land.

Even with colonial wills, such references may be rare. However, there are significant enough occasions where such clues do appear in probates that their use in locating immigrant origins is not uncommon. Given how few sources from this time period do name ancestral homes, it is certainly worth the effort to find the immigrant's will, or to seek reference to him (or a family member) in a will left in the old country.

Part Eight: Lineage Societies and Possible Sources of Hidden Clues

While at first it may not be obvious why one would seek out the records of a lineage society in order to trace colonial immigrant origins, there are many potential advantages for researchers that have the patience to do so.

Briefly defined, a lineage society (sometimes called a hereditary society) is an organization whose membership is limited to persons who can prove lineal descent from a qualifying ancestor. There are hundreds of lineage societies in North America, each celebrating a different group of historical individuals, such as those who fought in the American Revolutionary War, or those who arrived on the Mayflower. Indeed, many different historical groups are represented today by descendants who belong to a specific lineage society.

DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution): While it is by no means the only lineage society in operation, by far the most well-known and popular of all the lineage societies is the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). For the first hundred years of American genealogy (about 1850 to 1950), lineage societies, such as the DAR, were at the forefront in developing this new interest called genealogy. They continue today to be an important aspect of family history. Their devotion to accurate, well-documented lineages is an example to all family historians.

Because membership in lineage societies requires documented descent from a specific individual whose presence or actions qualifies his descendants for membership, there is significant genealogical information in the files of lineage societies. Of course, many lineage societies, including most of the largest, do not deal with immigrants, and are therefore outside the scope of the current discussion. This includes the DAR, and all other societies whose membership depends on an ancestor who served in a war, or who simply lived in the colonies prior to a certain date. However, the records of this group could help speed up your research between the present time and that of the Revolutionary War.

In addition, there are several lineage societies whose focus is the immigrant ancestor, or a notable ancestor in the old country, such as a King or Queen. In these cases, the files of that society will be full of information about immigrants, and often their origin.

Lineage Society Publications: Many lineage societies publish books of interest to their members, and of interest to other researchers. The most common of these are "lineage" books which publish the lineages of their members back to the qualifying ancestor. These books are

found in most major genealogical libraries and can help you determine if a society might have information about a possible ancestor. Where the society focuses on the royal ancestry of an individual, a lineage book should provide that ancestry, including the origin in the old country (usually England).

Many genealogists and historians recommend the following titles:

Faris, David. *Plantagenet Ancestry of Seventeenth-Century Colonists.*

Weis, Frederick Lewis. *Ancestral Roots of Certain American Colonists Who Came to American Before 1700: the Lineage of Alfred the Great, Charlemagne, Malcolm of Scotland, Robert the Strong, and Some of Their Descendants.* 7th Edition With Additions and Corrections by Walter Lee Sheppard; Assisted by David Farls.

----- *Magna Charta Sureties, 1215: the Barons Named in the Magna Charta and Some of Their Descendants Who Settled in America, 1607-1650.*

Be aware, however, that acceptance of any specific royal line is constantly changing as new sources, interpretations and understandings come to light. Many lineage societies have adopted more stringent guidelines for proof than what existed at the time of many of these early publications. This is especially true for the daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, and others.

Immigrant and Early Settler Societies: Dozens of societies have been established focusing on specific immigrant groups, or early settlers of some locality. While these societies have an interest in immigrants, they do not always know where any particular immigrant came from in the old country. Researchers must be aware that the normal objectives of most lineage societies seldom include establishing the immigrant or settler's ancestry, only their descent to current persons.

Also note that being an early settler does not automatically mean that a person was an immigrant. For example, the Daughters of the Republic of Texas requires descent only from a citizen who established residency in Texas before its annexation to the United States in 1846. Obviously, many Texas citizens at that date had not been born overseas. Their website is <http://www.drtd.org/>.

On the other hand, societies for descendants of settlers who founded a New England town during the early 1600s almost automatically should be considered immigrants, even if they lived elsewhere in the colonies for a few years before the founding. An example is the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford (Connecticut) which requires the ancestor be living in Hartford by early 1640. Researchers may access their website for the latest society information at the following address: <http://www.societyct.org/hartford.htm> .

Another society for early settlers is the Order of Descendants of Ancient Planters is applied to those persons who arrived in Virginia before 1616, remained for a period of three years, paid

their passage, and survived the massacre of 1622. Their web site, includes a list of about 150 known, qualifying planters. You may access their website at <http://www.ancientplanters.org/>.

The most well-known of lineage societies for immigrants is the General Society of Mayflower Descendants society has published a journal for many years, as well as a series of books defining the known descendants of the Mayflower passengers. Among their publications one can find the origins of those passengers, if it has been determined. You may access their website at: <http://www.mayflower.org/> . The situation with the Mayflower immigrants is an interesting case study in locating the origins of colonial immigrants. According to the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, of the 104 passengers on that ship, 26 men (and their wives) left issue from whom one can trace descent today. Interestingly, with all the research undertaken over the years, the English origins are known for only 12 of those 26 passengers (and suspected for 3 more). This suggests that, no matter how hard you research, or how good you are, you might only find the origins for about half of your colonial immigrants.

Other societies exist for descendants of persons who arrived on a specific ship. Two significant ones include The Welcome Society of Pennsylvania <http://www.welcomesociety.org/> for those who arrived on the Welcome in 1682, or other ships up to the end of 1682, and "The Society of the Ark and the Dove" <http://www.thearkandthedove.com/> for those arriving on those ships to Maryland in 1634.

If your colonial ancestor arrived in the British colonies by 1657, you should be interested in the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America <http://www.founderspatriots.org/> . They are interested in those early (pre-1657) founders who established families in America, among whose descendants, of the same surname line, were persons who fought for American independence in the Revolutionary War. The society has created one of the most useful tools for research into these early colonial families in the following title:

Colket, Meredith B. *Founders of Early American Families.*

This book lists some 3,500 immigrant male heads of families who appear to have male descendants today. The listing describes the immigrant, including his origin (where known) as well as identifying any published sources dealing with these immigrants.

European Ancestry Societies: Some lineage societies focus on ancestors who were notable long before the American colonies were established. Therefore, descendants who wish to join need to trace their ancestry back to the immigrant (called the "gateway" ancestor), and then trace that immigrant's ancestry back to the qualifying ancestor in the old country. Usually the qualifying ancestor was part of British royalty or nobility.

One of the most popular such societies is the Order of the Crown of Charlemagne in the United States which requires documented descent from that early emperor. This means tracing your ancestry back more than 1,000 years. While it may be difficult for you to conceive of doing that, your interest right now is whether your immigrant ancestor is one of the "gateway" ancestors whose known ancestry may include Charlemagne. Their website is <http://www.charlemagne.org/krs1.html> .

Other target ancestral groups, for which there are such lineage societies, include royal descent Order of the Crown in America, the Barons of the Magna Charta in 1215 Baronial Order of Magna Charta <http://www.magnacharta.com/>, and crusaders Military Order of the Crusades <http://www.magnacharta.com/articles/MOC01.htm>.

Nationality or Ethnic Lineage Societies: Many societies exist that celebrate and research the ethnic background of the many diverse cultures that have made America their home. However, a small number of such societies, and actually the oldest such societies in America, are true lineage societies. Membership is limited to those persons who can prove descent from an early settler of a specific ethnic group.

Many of these groups began in the colonial era as a way to assist newly arrived countrymen. The St Andrew's Society was for men of Scottish birth while The Saint George's Society focused on English birth. Both of these organizations have chapters throughout the United States. Colonial societies were also founded for Welsh and Irish descendants. Some of these have evolved into primarily charity organizations, but still maintain their lineage requirements.

One society with a more genealogical orientation is The Dutch Settlers Society of Albany <http://www.thehollandring.com/holland.shtml> which required descent from a Dutch settler of the Albany area prior to 1665. Their yearbook identifies all the qualifying ancestors from whom members have joined.

Important Facts To Remember Before Contacting Societies: Most lineage societies are small organizations run by volunteers. Often they do not have a web site, and the address may change with the officers. However, they are usually quite willing to help you, as they presume you might be interested in membership. Some societies are open by invitation only. Therefore, it pays to do some research about the society before inquiring.

The best and most accessible overview of all lineage societies (not just those dealing with immigrants), is Chapter 20 in *The Source* (Salt Lake City, Ancestry, 1997), titled "Tracking Through Hereditary and Lineage Organizations." This chapter, by Grahame T. Smallwood, the dean of American lineage societies, provides capsule overviews of the major societies, including a brief note about their qualifications for membership. It also lists key publications related to each society.

For a more comprehensive listing, with more information about each society, consult the Hereditary Society Blue Book which is available online at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~cahtgs/society.htm>. Some major research institutions may have the printed version published annually by Robert Davenport as well. The web site for this publication also lists all the societies in that directory, with links to their home pages, if they exist.

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This title was published by the Virginia State Library in Richmond in 1984. The information provided contains a description of the ship, when it was built, when it was registered, who owned it, how many Blacks or Indian slaves were aboard, the port of entry and where and when the bond was given. From the 1700s on the information contained the number of dead or drawn back slaves and where they came from. Although actual names are not given, the clues provided coupled with property, tax, court, and later census records can help in tracing colonial African Americans.

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NOTE: This study guide is meant to serve as an overview or outline for patrons using the genealogy collection at Fort Myers-Lee County Library. The compiler emphasizes that the information contained in this study guide should not serve as a substitute for taking the time to read one of the books or articles cited in the bibliography, or attend lectures given by the subject specialists cited as authors.

Compiled by Bryan Mulcahy, Reference Librarian, Fort Myers-Lee County Library, 9/4/2008.

Genealogical Research in the New England States Colonial Era Through 1820

The region of New England consists of the following states: Connecticut (1788); Maine (1820); Massachusetts (1788); New Hampshire(1788); Rhode Island (1790); and Vermont (1791). The New England States served as the nation's first industrial center.

Many New Englanders, especially in the rural north, are descendants of English Puritans who settled the region during the 1600s. The more densely populated industrial areas of southern New England have people of many different nationalities, many of whom were attracted by the industrial growth. The ethnic groups include African, Irish, Italian, French-Canadian, and Portuguese.

New England Ports of Entry

The main ports of entry used by our ancestors during the period covered by this study guide included the following ports listed by state:

Connecticut: Bridgeport, Fairfield, Hartford (areas of the Connecticut River to Hartford), Middletown, New Haven, New London, Saybrook

Maine: Bangor (via the Penobscot River), Bath, Belfast, Falmouth/Portland; Frenchman's Bays, Havre de Grace, Hingham, Kennebunk, Passamaquoddy, Portland/Falmouth, Waldoboro, Wiscasset, Yarmouth

Massachusetts: Barnstable, Beverly/Salem, Boston, Dighton, Edgartown, Fall River (now known as Freeport), Gloucester, Marblehead, Nantucket, New Bedford, Newburyport, Plymouth, Provincetown, Salem/Beverly

New Hampshire: Portsmouth

Rhode Island: Bristol/Warren, Newport, Providence

Vermont: Burlington (via Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence Seaway)

Colonial New England Settlement and Migration Patterns

In general terms, the settlement of the New England can be divided into three phases:

Phase One: 1620-1675

New Englanders often settled near the coast or along major waterways. Few inland towns were established, and those that were, like Concord, Massachusetts, were not more than one day's ride from the sea. During this period, families quickly migrated out in search of farmable land in the vicinity of rivers, as well as abandoned Indian fields and natural pasture. Some families moved two or three times before they located a home site suitable for their livelihood and family.

Movement of families was often influenced by Puritan rules and attitudes. They were encouraged to move in groups, and in their new location they were required to quickly appoint a new pastor, build a meetinghouse, and begin a school. The establishment of such church based institutions was thought to preserve family order and discipline, encourage church attendance, and hold back dark and evil forces believed to be lurking in the wilderness. The first generation of settlers also migrated because of religious differences. The initial settlements in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire all occurred because founders of these communities could not agree with the religious dictates of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Phase Two: King Phillip's War, 1675

This conflict and others that followed influenced the second phase of colonial migration in New England and the other original American colonies. For the next 30 years, settlement in the interior occurred at a slower pace. Many families chose to return to the safer communities along the coast, and most town building occurred close to the original line of coastal settlement. Examples of this would include towns in Connecticut east of the Connecticut River; Cape Cod in Massachusetts; and in the southwestern section of Rhode Island, adjacent to the Connecticut border.

Phase Three: The Signing of the Treaty of Augsburg in 1713 and the end of Queen Anne's War

These events signaled the reopening of the New England frontier to settlement. This third phase, which lasted until the beginning of the American Revolution, can be described as families flocking to western Connecticut, moving into the Berkshires in western Massachusetts, pushing into southern New Hampshire, and settling interior towns in Maine. After 1760, many families headed toward Vermont, settling on both the east and west sides of the Green Mountains. Other families, from Cape Cod and Rhode Island, moved to Nova Scotia to claim land abandoned or vacated by the Acadians.

The characteristics of migration changed quite dramatically in this period. Families still moved together, although the frequency seemed to be less than in previous times. On several occasions some of the older seaboard communities sent out their sons and daughters to establish townships in New Hampshire or Maine that had been granted them by the legislature. Migration to northern and eastern New England greatly intensified. Several new towns were settled in the interior of Maine between the Kennebec and Penobscot Rivers and along the Connecticut River in Vermont. Families were also attracted in great numbers in the Champlain River Valley near the New York border.

Land speculators also contributed to migration during this time period. Groups of proprietors acquired ownership of vast tracts of land in the interior with no intention of settling the land themselves. They would advertise and recruit settlers from many different locations. With profit as the obvious motive, less emphasis was placed on the orderly, corporate settlement of the frontier community, as was the case in the 17th century. New settlers were not required nor did most want to live close to one another, and sometimes decades would pass before a minister or school teacher was called into the community. This was a dramatic break with past tradition, especially with reference to ministers and church attendance. The spirit of individualism took

precedence over corporate control in these later 18th century frontier towns in northern and western New England.

Post Revolutionary War Migration

Two distinct types of migration seemed to emerge among New Englanders after the American Revolution. First, there was a steady generational flow of New Englanders into the nearby states of New York and Pennsylvania. This flow soon shifted to adjacent regions in the Old Northwest Territory. This flow of settlement often took families 50 to 75 years (2-3 generations) to move, for example, from Vermont to Illinois.

The second type of migration occurred in sudden, massive spurts, often described as “fevers” such as the following:

1. Genesee Fever in the mid-1790s
2. Ohio Fever after 1816
3. Oregon Fever in the 1840s

When these fevers swept New England, families who had lived in one place for several generations might suddenly pull up stakes and leave for distant lands in the west. It is important to note that what constituted the west in the late 1700s and early 1800s has no resemblance to what would be considered the west today.

Beginning in the 1790s, many New Englanders began moving to that region of New York known as the “Genesee Country”. Located in west-central New York, the Genesee Country contained over two million acres, which were ceded to Massachusetts in 1786 to settle an ancient land dispute. Massachusetts in turn sold this land to Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorman for \$100,000. They divided it into townships and offered buyers 160-acre tracts. This prompted the spread of “Genesee Fever” throughout New England and the area was rapidly transformed into a little New England commonwealth.

Even as New Englanders were migrating to upstate New York and western Pennsylvania, the more daring chose to move into Ohio. Settlements along the Ohio River were very popular but for whatever the reason, New Englanders tended to avoid them. They preferred the area in Ohio known as the “Western Reserve” which in New England became known as “New Connecticut”. The Western Reserve area of Ohio is a narrow strip of land running west from the Pennsylvania border and paralleling Lake Erie which the state of Connecticut withheld when all lands west of the Appalachian Mountains were turned over to the federal government. In 1795, Connecticut sold most of this land, approximately 3 million acres, to the Connecticut Land Company.

By 1800, the entire population of the Western Reserve area was only 1,302. New Englanders began moving to the region only after the War of 1812. The war had a devastating effect on the economy of the entire New England region. The British raided and ransacked the towns along the coast and prevented American ships from leaving ports. Foreign trade was ruined and New England went bankrupt. Compounding the problems caused by the war, was the deadly winter of 1816-1817. There were severe frosts even in June-August. Every crop was affected and many people were reduced to begging. Two consecutive deadly winters forced many New Englanders to migrate. A mass movement ensued to the Western Reserve area of Ohio.

Westward migration intensified after the Erie Canal opened in 1825. In one month, 4,000 farm families passed through the canal. After arriving in Buffalo, they boarded vessels to cross Lake Erie to Cleveland, Toledo, or Detroit, then westward overland to Michigan, Wisconsin, or across the Mississippi into Iowa and points further west.

Most Common Colonial Era Genealogical Records

Town Meeting Records: Since the town form of government was the essential unit of jurisdiction in New England, each town recorded its yearly proceedings in what is called “Town Meeting Records”. These records are often located in the town hall or in the Newberry Library in Boston. Indexes may or may not be useful for some of these records. Most have to be read thoroughly to unearth the various pieces of information. Town Meeting records can include some or all of the following:

1. Personal information on individuals or families in the area
2. Tax records
3. Elections of town officials
4. Lists of children of school age
5. Warnings out to poor families
6. Church disputes, including exclusions or excommunications
7. Ear marks for livestock

Church Records: These records often contain information about baptisms, christenings, confirmations, marriages, deaths, funerals, burials, membership rolls, tithing, admissions, transfers, dismissals, church histories, and school records. During the Colonial Era, the New England region tended to attract religious denominations such as the Puritans, Quakers, various Congregationalists, and various Baptist-oriented groups.

Land Records: Headrights, Proprietor’s Records, Land Patents, Bounty Grants, etc.

Family Heirlooms: May provide clues as to places or origin in New England and the old country.

Town Clerk Records: These would include land transactions, probates, tax records, vital records, ear marks, appointments, and anything else with which the town or county was concerned, all recorded together chronologically.

When doing colonial research, particularly early colonial research, one needs to be flexible and to be aware of the great differences that might be found in the records, their location, and the environment that created them, with variances over time in a single locality and between localities at the same time.

Governmental Structure and Records Organization

Our ancestors who settled the New England states brought ideas and customs with them that have become the foundation of democratic ideals in the United States and Canada. Unlike their fellow immigrants, for example, who settled the southern colonies and tended to adopt an

aristocratic form of government, New Englanders favored the concept of township centered governing.

The town or proprietor's meeting, originally prominent in every New England state, still remains a major component in modern times, especially in Vermont. Records of all varieties, especially those of interest to genealogists, were developed on the town level. Many areas of New York State also adopted many of these practices as a result of migration patterns that attracted many New Englanders into New York State.

Genealogical researchers in the south, Midwest, and west, where county, city, and township divisions are the major governmental jurisdictions, often encounter difficulties adapting their research skills to the New England region where the town and its abundant primary source materials is the focus for research. Once you become familiar with the way records were kept in each of the New England states along with the types of records and their location, then the process of tracking ancestors becomes easier.

Since the Colonial Era, the six New England states have undergone several changes regarding the way primary source records such as vital records, probate, and land records, are recorded. For that reason, a very brief description of each state's primary source materials follows along with the best strategies for locating the records in the major research facilities in each state.

Town maps are essential for research success in New England. The geographic boundaries of towns along with roads and waterways can help you place your ancestor's lives in the context of the places where they resided. Two published sources that can play a vital role in helping genealogists are listed below:

Eicholz, Alice. *Ancestry's Red Book*. 3rd Edition. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Publishing., c 2004. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1072 RED**

The maps in Ancestry's Red Book overlay the geography of rivers and other pertinent waterways on the town boundaries.

Melnyk, Marcia D. *Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research*. 4th Edition. Boston, MA: New England Historical Genealogical Society, c1999. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1072 GEN**

The handbook provides researchers with a detailed overview of holdings and research strategies applicable throughout the New England region.

In addition to the two published sources listed above, DeLorme Printing publishes modern day detailed maps for all six New England states, indicating town outlines, present day roads and other geographical features.

Massachusetts

During the Colonial Era, Massachusetts recorded vital records only at the town level. Many of these vital records were generated by the local churches from the beginning of settlement until 1841 when it became mandatory to file at the town clerk's office. Many churches served as the place where records were generated and then transferred the information to the clerk's office at a later time.

When a town was incorporated as a city, the city clerk's office became the place of recording. Once recording became mandatory in 1841, town and city clerks were required to send a copy of the record to the state's Registry of Vital Records. Hence, for Colonial Era research, the town or city clerk would usually have jurisdiction. All Massachusetts vital records are considered public records. There are normally no restrictions to their access unless they are sealed records, such as adoptions, or if they are still in the possession of churches that have their own guidelines for access. This situation seldom occurs, however.

Many Massachusetts towns have had their early vital records through 1850 published. These records are widely available at large research libraries such as the New England Historic Genealogical Society Library in Boston, the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Western Reserve Historical Society Library in Cleveland, Allen County Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and the New York Genealogical & Biographical Library in Manhattan. The Fort Myers-Lee County Library has some of these published materials in the Massachusetts section of genealogy. Other record sources in addition to town records, such as cemetery and church records, are often included in the various published town series for Massachusetts.

Unlike vital records, probate and land records for Massachusetts were recorded at county offices, not the town. For the Colonial Period, you will need to know what county was formed from the specific area of research. Surviving probate records are indexed by the name of the deceased, and land records are usually indexed by both grantor and grantee. Because there have been widespread changes in town and county boundaries since Colonial times and some counties have more than one registry office for deeds, it is critical to be as specific as possible about the exact location of the tract and time period for searches.

The ancestor's town of residence or county may not have changed over time, but the place of recording land and probate may have. Each registry will have its own index for the deeds in its possession. Sometimes the index will identify the town location for the land and sometimes it indicates that a land transaction was part of a town court, county court, or probate proceeding. ***Ancestry's Red Book*** and the ***Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research*** are two good sources to browse when formulating your research strategy and to determine the appropriate probate and deed registries associated with each town.

I also strongly recommend contacting and joining the New England Historic Genealogical Society. Their website is <http://www.newenglandancestors.org>. Anyone doing research in the New England region, especially during colonial times should familiarize themselves with the society and its website.

Maine

Maine was part of Massachusetts during the Colonial Era through 1820. This fact often causes major complications for researchers venturing into New England research for the first time. After Maine became a state in 1820, vital records for its more than 400 towns continued to be recorded in the town or city clerk's office. Statewide recording would not become mandatory until 1892. Unfortunately, some of the earliest records for Maine, during the Colonial Era, are no longer in existence. Because there are so many small towns with understaffed town clerk offices, obtaining responses to telephone or written queries can be spotty.

You must know the town of residence to locate records from the Colonial Era. Most of these records have been microfilmed and can be viewed at the major genealogical repositories mentioned in the previous section under Massachusetts, and in the New England Historic and Genealogical Society Library, and in the Maine State Archives. The Family History Library in Salt Lake City and their Family History Center branches are another good source for many of these records as well.

Maine followed the pattern of Massachusetts for probate and land records in centralizing them in the county seats. All of Maine was a Massachusetts Colony called York until 1760. Published versions of early deeds through 1737 and wills through 1760 can be found at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah and in the New England Historic Genealogical Library in Boston. After those dates, the indexes in the county seat must be consulted.

New Hampshire

The pattern of recording vital, land, and probate records in New Hampshire is similar to that of Massachusetts and Maine. Until 1901 when the state office of vital records was organized, each individual town was responsible for compiling all types of town records.

All recorded births before 1901, and deaths, marriages, and divorces before 1938 were gathered and indexed statewide by the New Hampshire Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics. These records are also available through the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah and the New England Historic Genealogical Library in Boston, Massachusetts. The index is unique when compared to many other indexing systems. The cards with copies of the vital records are organized in time periods, then in an elaborate grid of matching the first and third letter of the surname with the first letter of the first name. In this way, you can locate the appropriate file drawer or microfilm with the applicable surname in the appropriate time period.

New Hampshire vital records are not open to the public. Access is available only to those who can prove a direct and tangible interest. However, records from the Colonial Era would not be affected by this restriction. Probate and land records were recorded at the county seat where they are indexed by the name of the deceased or by grantor/grantee, respectively. Before 1771, when New Hampshire had a provincial government, probate and land records were centralized. Abstracts of probate records have been published for that time period and are available at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, and the New England Historic Genealogical Society Library in Boston, Massachusetts, as well as the New Hampshire Division of Records

Management and Archives. The New Hampshire Division of Records Management and Archives holds all the original provincial probate and deed records for towns before 1771 and their indexes. Some, but not all, counties have indexes to their deeds after 1771, but all original land records are located at the county seat.

An extensive statewide index located at the New Hampshire State Library and on microfilm available through the Family History Library and its branches, provides access to all of New Hampshire's town records through 1800. The index includes vital records, town meeting records, and some land distributions, all of which were recorded in town records.

Rhode Island

Rhode Island holds the distinction of being the New England state with only one jurisdictional location ~ town or city hall ~ for recording all of its vital, land, and probate records. Counties have little genealogical significance in Rhode Island except for locating census enumerations.

Many surviving vital records from the Colonial Era through 1850 have been published and distributed through the Family History Library, New England Historic Genealogical Society Library, and other major repositories either in print or microfilm. Land and probate records are under the jurisdiction of the town or county clerk although many have been microfilmed or published. Since Rhode Island vital records are deemed confidential, the only records available for public research are those more than 100 years old. The Rhode Island Historical Society is another good source for research information and assistance.

Connecticut

Connecticut's pattern for recording vital, land, and probate records differs from Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, but is similar to Vermont's. Vital records during Colonial times were recorded in Connecticut town offices. For vital records generated during the Colonial Era, researchers often use the Barbour Collection housed at the Connecticut State Library, the New England Historic Genealogical Library in Boston, the Western Reserve Historical Society Library in Cleveland, or on microfilm through the Family History Library in Utah or one of its branches.

The Barbour Collection is arranged alphabetically by surname for all towns in the state. A recent microfilming project now makes it possible to search all of Connecticut's town records (all record types) through 1897. Connecticut's land records were also recorded at the town clerk's office, not the county. Microfilm copies of town land records and their grantor/grantee indexes through the late 1800's can be found at the Connecticut State Library, but there is no statewide index. You must search town-by-town.

Probates are recorded at one of over 130 local probate district offices, with one or more towns in each district. The development of these offices from the original county courts is complex. A statewide index to estate papers through the late 1890s and the probate books through 1915 are located at the Connecticut State Library, the Family History Library, and the New England Historic Genealogical Society Library. Not all of these estate papers have been indexed.

Due to the issues of complexity mentioned in the probate district organization in Connecticut, the following sources listed below are strongly recommended for researchers to study before attempting to search these records:

Eicholz, Alice. ***Ancestry's Red Book***. 3rd Edition. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Publishing., c 2004. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1072 RED**

The maps in Ancestry's Red Book overlay the geography of rivers and other pertinent waterways on the town boundaries.

Melnyk, Marcia D. ***Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research***. 4th Edition. Boston, MA: New England Historical & Genealogical Society, c1999. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1072 GEN**

The handbook provides researchers with a detailed overview of holdings and research strategies applicable throughout the New England region.

I also strongly recommend contacting and joining the New England Historic Genealogical Society. Their website is <http://www.newenglandancestors.org> . Anyone doing research in the New England region, especially during colonial times should familiarize themselves with the society and their website.

Vermont

Vermont uses the town system of government for recording vital records and deeds. Probate records are recorded in probate districts. This was the system used in the Colonial Era and it remains intact today. Probate districts and their offices tend to conform geographically to county boundaries either wholly or in multiple districts for the more populated counties. However, counties themselves have little meaning for genealogical research in Vermont besides census enumeration information.

Prior to 1857, the vital records that were recorded were compiled at the town clerk's office. The records from the Colonial years would still be under their jurisdiction. Copies of some of these records are now available for public research, for over 251 towns and municipalities, along with a state-wide index, at the Vermont Division of Public Records, Reference Research Section. The state-wide index includes all events such as births, marriages, and deaths which are organized by chronological groupings 1760-1870; 1871-1908; 1909-1941; 1942-1954; 1955-1979, etc. Vital records are considered public records without restrictions.

Land and probate records are still kept by the town clerk (land) and district (probate) where each has appropriate indexes. Microfilmed copies of land and probate records are available through the Vermont Division of Public Records and other major repositories mentioned throughout this study guide.

Tips for Reading Early American Handwriting

When people begin researching their ancestry they often start by searching home sources, indexes, computer databases, and printed sources in order to determine what others may have researched on their pedigree. Home sources may include family Bibles, diaries, old handwritten letters or photographs with notations, certificates and other legal documents that have been passed down through generations.

After exhausting home sources, researchers may turn to libraries, courthouses, or other repositories to view primary and secondary sources that have been digitized. Such records include census schedules, church registers, wills and other probate records, land records, military records, court records, tax lists, passenger lists, journals, and so forth. It is at this stage that researchers often realize that many older records are handwritten in an antiquated script that is often difficult to read. Knowing how to read and interpret old records is an important aspect of the genealogical research process. The following tips listed below may help researchers decipher old script:

1. Keep a good quality magnifying glass with you when you go to a library, courthouse, or archives. You shouldn't anticipate that there will be one at the repository you can use.
2. Study more recent handwriting and work backward toward the seventeenth century.
3. When reading old records, you should compare letters and words that you can read with those that are more difficult to read in the same document.
4. Most records used by genealogists have dates and were kept chronologically; therefore, look for months of the year and compare the letters in the months with the words you are having difficulty reading.
5. Common phrases were often used and repeated in some records, such as wills and deeds. You can study common phrases to learn the handwriting style of the scribe.
6. Personal names and place names (localities) were often misspelled. You should use a gazetteer, map, or local history to help identify the correct spelling of place names (such as a city, town, or township). Scribes often abbreviated names, such as Abr. for Abraham.
7. Writing was often done phonetically (the way the word sounded).
8. Do not try to read the document too fast—transcribe and evaluate it carefully. And remember, always evaluate the evidence and cite your sources!

Bibliography

American Records and Research: Focusing on Families-Course One. Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, Coordinator-Paula Stuart Warren. Contributors-D. Joshua Taylor, Elissa Scalise Powell, William M. Litchman, and Birdie Monk Holsclaw, c2007. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 SALT**

American Records and Research: Focusing on Families-Course Two. Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. Coordinator-Paula Stuart Warren. Contributors- Chuck Knuthson, Marianne Crump, Thomas McGill, Anne Wuehler, Anne Roach, Ruth Maness, John Phillip Colletta, Kory Meyerink, Judith W. Hansen, and Birdie Monk Holsclaw, c2008. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 SALT**

Circulating Library Catalog for the New England Historic Genealogical Society. 9th Edition. Boston, MA: New England Historic Genealogical Society, c2000. **Genealogy Reference 929.374 New**

Genealogical Research in New England. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c1984. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 GEN**

Genealogist's Handbook for Atlantic Canada Research. 2nd Edition. Boston, MA: New England Historical Genealogical Society, c1997. **Genealogy Reference 016.9715 GEN (Canada)**

Guide to the Library of the New England Historic Genealogical Society. Boston, MA: New England Historic Genealogical Society, c2004. **Genealogy Reference 026.9292 GUI**

Guide to the Manuscript Collections of the New England Historic Genealogical Society. 1st Edition. Boston, MA: New England Historic Genealogical Society, c2002. **Genealogy Reference 929.374 New**

Land and Court Records. Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. Coordinator-Patricia Law Hatcher. Contributors-Lloyd de Witt Bockstruck, Michael J. LeClerc, Rhonda McClure, Gordon L. Remington, and Paula Stuart Warren, c2006. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 SALT.**

New York Essays: Resources for the Genealogist in New York State Outside New York City. Boston, MA: New England Historic Genealogical Society, c2007. **Genealogy Reference 929.1072 (New York)**

Tracing Immigrant Origins. Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, Kory Meyerink-Coordinator, Contributors- John P. Colletta, Jeanette K.B. Daniels, Richard W. Dougherty, Gerald Haslam, Larry O. Jensen, Marie Melchiori, John Kitzmiller, c2001. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 SALT**

Anderson, Robert Charles. **Migration & Settlement Patterns in Colonial New England.** 1980 LDS World Conference on Records. V.3, 1 paper no. 234.

Crandall, Ralph. *Shaking Your Family Tree: Basic Guide To Tracing Your Family's Genealogy.* 2nd Edition. Boston, MA: New England Historical Genealogical Register, c2001. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 CRA**

----- *Where Did Your Ancestors Go? Migration Patterns in New England & Beyond, 1620-1850.* 2000 NGS Conference in the States. Pgs. 142-145.

Croom, Emily Anne. *Genealogist's Companion & Sourcebook.* 2nd Edition. Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c2003. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 CRO**

----- *Unpuzzling Your Past: A Basic Guide To Genealogy.* 4th Edition. Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c2001. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 CRO**
The 3rd edition circulates and is shelved in Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 CRO

Eicholz, Alice. *Ancestry's Red Book.* 3rd Edition. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Publishing., c 2004. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1072 RED**

Melnyk, Marcia D. *Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research.* 4th Edition. Boston, MA: New England Historical & Genealogical Society, c1999. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1072 GEN**

Schweitzer, George K. *Handbook of Genealogical Sources.* Knoxville, TN: George Schweitzer, c1997. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1072**

Szucs, Loretto Dennis. *The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy.* 3rd Edition. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Publishing, c2006. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 SOU**

NOTE: This study guide is meant to serve as an overview or outline for patrons using the genealogy collection at Fort Myers-Lee County Library. The compiler emphasizes that the information contained in this study guide should not serve as a substitute for taking the time to read one of the books or articles cited in the bibliography, or attend lectures given by the subject specialists cited as authors.

Compiled by Bryan L. Mulcahy, Reference Librarian, Fort Myers-Lee County Library,
8/16/2008

Research in England

England occupies a very important place in the realm of United States genealogical research. In 1986, according to statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau, for the first time in more than 300 years, the leading ancestral background of American citizenry was German, not British. Many researchers can trace ancestral lines back to both Germany and the British Isles in general. The early settlement of the Atlantic Coast of what is now the United States was largely English, and these ancestors influenced many of the cultural and legal patterns which persist today.

If your genealogy research takes you to England, you are fortunate in several ways:

1. There will only be a minor language issue with certain terms
2. England has been a very stable country and has never been conquered by foreign powers.
3. For this reason, a significant amount of historical records are available for research.
4. Political boundaries have basically been the same for centuries hence the political divisions will usually have the same names and boundaries.
5. The only geographical change is that the counties were reconstructed in 1974. However, genealogy records are filed by pre-reconstructed boundaries. Because of this, researchers must obtain a pre-1974 map.

While genealogists searching for English ancestors have many advantages over their counterparts from other countries, they still face many of the same challenges once they attempt to “cross the pond” and locate records in England. Every possible effort must be made to try and locate the exact place of origin (town or parish) in American records. No record source should be overlooked. If you are able to locate this specific type of information, your research efforts have a much better likelihood for success.

Holdings, from England and the British Isles in general, at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City constitute one of the largest international collections available for research. These records are often better organized and more accessible than those in the Public Records Office in London or other British repositories. These records are accessible by visiting the main Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah or by visiting any of their Family History Center branches located throughout the United States. Many researchers find the records easier to access utilizing LDS sources.

Patrons may search the holdings of the Family History Library at the Family Search website <http://www.familysearch.org> to determine what sources are available for research. Most microfilmed records and sources may be borrowed through your local Family History Center branch. The key to finding a record in the Family History Library’s collection is using the Family History Library catalog component of Family Search. The catalog describes each record in the library and provides library call numbers whether the item is in print, film, or fiche format. When the item is in film or fiche format, researchers can identify the specific call number for the relevant item by clicking on the icon for viewing film or fiche notes.

Researchers have the following search options available when using the catalog:

1. Place Name Search
2. Surname Search
3. Keyword Search
4. Title Search
5. Film/Fiche Search
6. Author Search
7. Subject Search
8. Call Number Search

The catalog generally uses the same language that the records are written in to describe the records. The description includes a brief English summary of the content.

Place Name Searches list records according to the area they cover. Records relating to the entire country, such as passenger lists, are listed under ENGLAND. Most records are listed under a specific county or parish. Place name searches tend to be the most popular with researchers.

For example, a geographic level for a place where an ancestor lived, such as:

GREAT BRITAIN (kingdom)

ENGLAND	(country)
ENGLAND, DEVON	(country, county)
ENGLAND, DEVON, EXETER	(country, county, parish)

You may need to look at each geographic level to find all record types for your area of interest such as the following:

GREAT BRITAIN - **MILITARY RECORDS**

ENGLAND - **GENEALOGY**

ENGLAND, DEVON - **PROBATE RECORDS**

ENGLAND, DEVON, EXETER - **CHURCH RECORDS**

Call numbers in this outline are preceded by FHL, the abbreviation for Family History Library.

Surname Searches will list histories of families by the name of the family or individual.

Keyword Searches allow you to type a word or phrase that describes what you want to find. Keywords can be from titles, places, authors, notes, series, and subjects.

Title Searches lists records by the title of a record or item.

Film/Fiche Number Searches lets you find a record in the catalog by entering a microfilm or microfiche number.

Author Searches lists records by the author of a record or item.

Subject Searches lists records that are about a particular subject and not for a particular locality such as the **BOER WARS**.

Call Number Searches allow you to search if you know the call number assigned to the book.

Family Search also offers a variety of research guides for countries and regions as well as research guidance. Icons for both will appear on the search screen. The research guidance feature is especially useful for beginners or those who are searching in an area where they lack experience. This feature is designed to help you locate records that may contain information about your ancestors. Select a place where your ancestor was born, christened, married, or died. If you are not sure of the country, click on the icon for **Determining the Country Where Your Ancestor Lived**. Only places that research guides have been created for are listed. For absolute beginners you may want to click on the icon for **How Do I Begin**.

The records selection table listed below has proven to be very useful for researchers in identifying what records to examine as they progress through the process.

RECORDS SELECTION TABLE: ENGLAND		
This table can help you decide which records to search. It is most helpful for research from 1800 to the present.		
Step 1. Choose an ancestor you would like to know more about. Decide what information you would like to learn about that person. This new information is your research goal.		
Step 2. In column 1 of this table, find the goal you selected.		
Step 3. In column 2 of this table, find the types of records most likely to have the information you need; then read the sections in this outline about those types of records.		
Step 4. Look in the Family History Library Catalog and choose a specific record to search.		
Step 5. Look at the record.		
Step 6. If you do not find the information you need, return to column 3 and search those record types.		
Note: Records of previous research (Genealogy, Biography, History, Periodicals, and Societies) are useful for most goals, but they are not listed unless they are especially helpful.		
1. If You Need	2. Search These Record Types First	3. Search These Record Types Next
Age	Census, Civil Registration, Church	Cemeteries, Obituaries, Military

	Records	Records
Birth date	Civil Registration, Church Records	Obituaries, Newspapers, Military Records, Occupations
Birthplace	Census, Civil Registration, Church Records	Obituaries, Newspapers, Occupations, Military Records
Place of foreign birth (not England)	Church Records, Census	Emigration and Immigration, Military Records
Parish, district, and county boundaries	Gazetteers	Maps, History
Death	Civil Registration, Church Records, Obituaries, Newspapers, Cemeteries	Probate Records, Court Records, Land and Property, Military Records
Historical background	History, Genealogy	Church History
Immigration date	See research outline for country to which ancestor immigrated	Emigration and Immigration, Church Records
Living relatives	Directories, Civil Registration	Societies, Newspapers, Periodicals
Maiden name	Civil Registration, Church Records	Obituaries, Newspapers, Cemeteries
Marriage	Church Records, Civil Registration, Genealogy, Periodicals	Newspapers, Biography, Nobility, Cemeteries
Occupation	Church Records, Census, Directories, Civil Registration, Occupations, Probate Records	Court Records, Obituaries, Officials and Employees, Military Records, Taxation
Parents, children, and other family members	Census, Obituaries, Probate Records	Church Records, Newspapers, Civil Registration
Physical description	Military Records, Court Records	Church Records, Newspapers, Civil Registration
Place-finding aids	Gazetteers, Directories, Maps	History, Taxation, Land and Property, Periodicals
Places of residence	Census, Church Records, Directories	Land and Property, Probate Records, Taxation
Place of residence when you know only the county	Directories, Census, Probate Records, Civil Registration	Church Records, Taxation
Previous research (compiled genealogy)	Biography, Genealogy, Societies	Nobility, Periodicals
Record-finding aids	Archives and Libraries, Genealogy	Societies, Periodicals
Religion	Church Records, Biography, Obituaries, Civil Registration	Cemeteries, Genealogy, History, Probate Records

Several genealogical websites can give researchers access to British records. Our companion study guide ***Internet Genealogical Research: Select List of the Most Popular Genealogical Websites*** provides some good Internet resources for you to begin your research.

The Lee County Genealogical Society <http://www.LeeCountyGenealogy.org> is another good source for those beginning their research in England. Among the many services offered by the society is the English Researchers Study Group. The bibliography at the end of this study guide and the section containing a complete list of our holdings in the Fort Myers Library Genealogy Collection for England provides additional sources of reference.

Major Record Sources In England

If you are working in the early twentieth or late nineteenth centuries, there are three main types of records that most researchers gravitate towards. These three main records tend to be widely available and have the greatest chance of covering the highest percentage of the adult population. The focus of this handout will be on these three major record types. The bibliography at the end of your study guide will contain references to other major works that will discuss the full spectrum of records available for comprehensive research. I have also included a complete listing of the titles held in our Fort Myers genealogy collection which pertain specifically to England. These titles have been taken from our genealogy shelflist.

The three major record types that are discussed in this study guide are listed below:

1. Civil Registration (births, deaths, and marriages, along with their indexes)
2. Census
3. Church Parish and Non-Comformist records

A large percentage of these records have been microfilmed by the Family History Library and are available through the Family History Centers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Census and parish records are arranged geographically, so you must know where your ancestors lived. Civil registration is legally mandated throughout England, but unless the name is very unusual, you will probably need to know at least the county to be sure that you have the right person. The International Genealogical Index (IGI), is available through the Family Search website <http://www.familysearch.org/> or by visiting any local Family History Center branch or the Family History library in Salt Lake City.

The Fort Myers-Lee County Library also has the 1978 microfiche edition of the IGI available. This is important because as the IGI has changed formats from fiche to computer to Internet, a small percentage of records have been lost. Researchers who have the patience to examine the fiche have found details that are missing in later editions.

Civil Registration

Civil registration is the government recording of births, marriages, and deaths. Civil registration records are excellent sources of names, dates, and places of births, marriages, and deaths. Because they are indexed and cover most of the population, English civil registration records are important sources for genealogical research.

Before 1837, churches were the sole source for recorded birth, marriage, and death information in England. In the early 1800s, Parliament recognized the need for accurate records for voting, planning, and defense purposes. Birth, marriage, and death registrations for England and Wales began on 1 July 1837.

Since July 1, 1837, legal mandate requires that every birth, death, and marriage be registered with the central government. This registration would normally take place at the local civil registration office in or within close proximity to the place of residence. However, prior to 1875, there were no penalties for not registering, so compliance between 1837 and 1875 was not 100%. The local office typically retains a copy, so each document should be available in both the local registry office, as well as the central office which may be in the nearest larger jurisdiction. When using civil registration records, it is wise to pay particular attention to any information concerning the informant. In most but not all cases, this person is usually a relative.

The basis of civil registration is the registration district. Each county is divided into districts. Each district has a superintendent registrar. Registrars receive birth and death registrations from individuals i.e. an officiating minister or other responsible official registers marriages. Copies of marriages performed by Church of England ministers are sent quarterly to the district and to the Office for National Statistics (formerly Registrar General). The ministers keep the original marriage registers in the parish chest. Quaker and Jewish marriages are registered by their own representatives directly with the Office for National Statistics.

Each quarter superintendent registrars forward copies of their district's registrations to the Office for National Statistics in London. The original birth and death records (and those marriages recorded by the registrar) remain in the district.

Beginning in July 1837 all births and deaths were to be reported to the registrar. An estimated 90 to 95 percent of births and nearly all deaths and marriages were reported. However, as previously noted, until 1874 no penalty was imposed for failure to register. By 1875, 99 percent of all births, marriages, and deaths were being recorded.

If you cannot find a civil birth, marriage, or death certificate, search church records. A church record may verify known details or give additional information. Most published English research guides have information on civil registration. Two of the most popular sources are listed below:

Cox, Jane, and Stella Colwell. *Never Been Here Before? A Genealogist's Guide to the Family Records Centre*. Kew, England: PRO Publications, 1997. This is a guide to the Family Records Centre in London which encompasses the birth, marriage and death records of the Office for National Statistics and the Public Record Office microfilms of census records, records of nonconformity, wills and death duties. (Available in the Fort Myers Genealogy Collection).

McLaughlin, Eve. *St. Catherine's House*. 8th ed. Solihull, England: Federation of Family History Societies Publications, Ltd., 1991. (FHL book 942 V27m 1991). This guide discusses the information found in the civil registration records. The records for England and Wales were transferred to the Family Records Centre in 1998.

Other guides may be located using the Place Name Search field search component of the Family History Library Catalog under:

ENGLAND - CIVIL REGISTRATION - HANDBOOKS

Types of Information Recorded in Civil Registration Records

Birth Records

Birth certificates are another useful source for information. When properly filled out, researchers will usually find the following pieces of information:

1. Child's name
2. Sex
3. Date and place of birth
4. Full name of father
5. Occupation of the father
6. His rank (military) or profession
7. Maiden name of the mother
8. Place of residence
9. Name and place of residence of informant including signature and description of relationship
10. The father, mother, neighbor, or other person present at the birth must register a birth within 42 days.

Death Records

Death records are least helpful to a genealogist. Information concerning the Parent's names or woman's maiden names is seldom provided. Even in the best of circumstances, they will only contain the following pieces of information:

1. Name of the person
2. Occupation
3. Address where they died
4. Sex
5. Age
6. Rank (military) and/or profession
7. Cause of death
8. Physical description
9. Name and residence of informant including signature and relationship
10. Spouse's name is sometimes given.
11. If a child died, a parent's name is often written in the space provided for the occupation.

Civil registration death records are of limited usefulness because the information:

1. Tends to be very limited in detail.
2. May be inaccurate because it is based on the informant's knowledge.
3. May be for the wrong person due to difficulties in identifying the correct index entry.

In spite of their limitations, researchers should note that a death certificate is often the only civil registration record for persons born or married before July 1837.

Divorce Records

Divorce records contain information on family members, their marital history (including marriage date and place), property, residences, and sometimes dates of events such as children's births. Divorce required an act of Parliament until 1857 and was uncommon before the mid-20th century. Records of parliamentary divorce acts are at:

House of Lords Library
London, SW1A 0PW
England

Civil divorce registration began in 1858. These divorce records are confidential for 75 years. Records older than 75 years can be consulted at the Public Record Office. Indexes for 1858 to 1937 are available. The Family History Library does not have any English divorce records.

Relatives of divorced persons may obtain information on divorces that occurred in the last 75 years by contacting: Divorce Registry of the Family Division
Somerset House, Strand
London W.C. 2
England

Marriage Records

Marriage records are far more helpful in terms of genealogical details. They tend to be filled out in greater and more accurate detail. The law required all marriages to be recorded in a civil register immediately after the ceremony. Marriages were often performed at the bride's parish. Researchers may obtain the following facts:

1. Names of the bride and groom
2. Place of residence
3. Father's name (both parties)
4. Occupation
5. Father's rank (military) or profession (both parties)
6. Mother's name (both parties)
7. Church where event took place
8. Presiding minister
9. Name and place of residence of the informant including signature and relationship

Stillbirths and Adoptions

No provision was made for registering stillbirths until 1874, when a new law required a death certificate before burying stillborn children. Since 1927 all stillbirths (any birth where the child never took a breath) are recorded in the Register of Stillbirths, which is not available to the public.

Civil registration adoption certificates began in 1927, giving the child's new name, birth date, court, entry date and reference number, and district and sub-district of birth as well as the adoptive parents' names, addresses, and occupation(s). Adoption records may be consulted only by arrangement with the Office for National Statistics.

Pre-1927 adoption records are kept by the agency or institution which handled the adoption and are very difficult to locate. Many may no longer exist. For more information on this topic, please see the following title which is available through the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah:

Stafford, Georgina. *Where to Find Adoption Records: A Guide for Counsellors*. London: British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering, 1993. (FHL book Ref 942 D27sgw)

Where to Locate Civil Registration Records

Civil registration records are kept at the Superintendent Registrar's district office. Duplicates are kept at the Office for National Statistics (formerly Registrar General).

You can obtain certificates in person at:

The Family Records Centre
1 Myddelton Street
London EC1
England

You can order copies by mail from:

Office for National Statistics
Smedley Hydro
Trafalgar Road
Southport, Merseyside PR8 2HH
England

When requesting a certificate by mail, send the following:

1. A check or money order for the search fee (the amount varies)
2. Full name and sex of the person sought
3. Names of the parents, if known
4. Approximate date and place of the event

Civil registration certificates are not open to public inspection, but you can request individual certificates. Indexes are available. To see more information than is given in the index, you must obtain the actual certificate. Certificates from the Office for National Statistics are less expensive if you supply index reference numbers.

If you know the registration district, you may wish to order a certificate from the superintendent registrar, since search policies are often more liberal and mail order requests less expensive than through the Office for National Statistics (formerly Registrar General). The Office for National Statistics' index reference numbers do not help the superintendent registrar locate records in his or her district. Registrars usually will not search marriage records because marriage registration procedures are so complex.

Addresses for superintendent registrars' are found in the following sources:

The Official List of Registration Offices. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1993. (FHL book Q 942 X4g 1993).

District Register Offices in England and Wales. 4th ed. Yorkshire, England: East Yorkshire Family History Society, 1989. (FHL book 942 E4ew 1989).

Addresses for the superintendent registrars can also be found on the Internet through the GENUKI Web site at www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/RegOffice.

Keep in mind that over time district boundaries have changed, and some districts have been abolished.

The Office for National Statistics has records for British subjects outside England, including registrations of events at sea, at consuls and embassies, and for military personnel. For further information, see the following source listed below:

Yeo, Geoffrey. *The British Overseas*. 3rd ed. London: Guildhall Library, 1995. (FHL book 942 V24y 1995).

Using Indexes to Civil Registration Records

Indexes can help you find an entry for your ancestor. The Office for National Statistics (formerly Registrar General) creates nationwide indexes after receiving quarterly returns. These indexes are arranged by calendar quarter and give name, registration district, volume, and page number. Later indexes include the following:

1. Age at death (post-1865 death indexes)
2. Mother's maiden name (post-June 1911 birth indexes)
3. Spouse's surname (post-1911 marriage indexes)
4. Birth date (post-March 1969 death indexes)

With the index reference you can send for the certificate (see above). If you cannot locate an index entry, consider the following reasons:

1. Surnames are often found under unexpected spellings.
2. Events are filed by the date registered, not the date they occurred (for example, a birth on 20 March which was registered on 6 April will be in the April-June quarter).
3. Indexes were prepared by hand and may contain copying errors (for example, "T" for "F") or omissions.
4. A person may have been registered under a different name than he or she used later in life.
5. Some marriages were indexed by the name of only one spouse.
6. Woman's surname in the marriage index may be her surname from a previous marriage.
7. Family information (particularly age at death) is often misleading.
8. Persons with common names may be difficult to identify in the index.
9. Some deaths were registered as "unknown".
10. Children born before the parents' marriage may be registered under the mother's maiden name.
11. Some children were registered as "male" or "female" if a name had not been selected before registration.

Knowing the district name and at least an approximate year in which the birth, marriage, or death occurred will reduce your search time. Places in the index are registration districts, which are usually not the same as the actual place of birth. In rural areas many villages and parishes are included in one district. Large cities have many districts.

The following sources will help identify the district that served the place where your ancestors lived:

1. *The Imperial Gazetteer* gives parishes and their civil districts.
2. Population Tables are available for each census year. They give the population for the various localities and are arranged by county, district, and parish. The indexes to these tables are very helpful because they give the district for each place listed. District boundaries changed over time, so it is helpful to refer to these indexes. The Family History Library call numbers for the indexes are as follows:

1841	FHL 942 X22ip 1841; fiche 6036965
1851	FHL 942 X22ip 1851; fiche 6036964
1861	FHL 942 X22ip 1861; fiche 6036966
1871	FHL 942 X22ip 1871; fiche 6036967
1881	FHL 942 X22ip 1881; fiche 6036968
1891	FHL 942 X22ip 1891; fiche 6036969
1951	FHL Q 942 X2i 1951; films 410102-3
1961	FHL Q 942 X2p 1961; film 990257
1971	FHL Q 942 X2p 1971; not filmed0037469

The following work contains nineteenth century maps and lists of districts:

A Guide to the Arrangement of the Registration Districts Listed in the Indexes to the Civil Registration of England and Wales. 2nd ed. Salt Lake City, Utah: Family History Library, 1977. (FHL book 942 V2icr 1977; film 990269 items 4-5; fiche 6020287.)

Civil Registration Records at the Family History Library

The Family History Library has microfilm copies of the civil registration indexes of all births, marriages, and deaths for England and Wales from 1837 through 1980. A microfiche copy of the indexes covering 1837-1983 is also

available. The library does *not* have any actual civil registration certificates. However, the library may have the church baptism, marriage, or burial records for the same time period. One of their best print sources is listed below:

England and Wales Civil Registration Indexes on Microfiche and Microfilm. Salt Lake City, Utah: Family History Library, 1997. (FHL book 942 V2ic 1997).

Indexes with their microfilm and microfiche numbers are listed in the [Place Name Search](#) field when searching the Family History Library Catalog under:
ENGLAND - CIVIL REGISTRATION - INDEXES

As mentioned previously, Civil Registration records are all indexed by type – birth, death, and marriage – and then by surname. Each index is produced quarterly so if you only know the year of the event, you may have to look in four indexes before finding it. Keep in mind that the event had to be reported within six weeks. For example, a birth that occurred at the end of March (the first quarter) may not have been reported until the beginning of May (the second quarter).

If you locate the event in an index, it will give you a reference to the book and page number. If you can supply this information with your application, the fee for obtaining a copy of the certificate is less. The indexes are available on microfiche and microfilm through the Family History Centers. Some of the large centers permanently keep the films in their collections, while others may have to order them individually from Salt Lake City. If your local center does not have the indexes and you have to search over several years, it may be expensive to order many films or fiche. In this case, you may want to hire a researcher in the United States or England to search for you.

The actual certificate must be ordered from England. If you know the exact date and place of the event, you can contact the General Register Office in Southport via mail or e-mail. If you know the district, you can contact the local registry office, as the certificates are less expensive there. If you are in London, you can order it at the Office of National Statistics, which is part of the new Family Records Centre. It houses civil registration and census records that used to be kept at St. Catherine's House, as well as Census reading rooms in Chancery Lane.

English Census Records

The census is available in decennial from 1841 through 1891. All census returns are available for research via the Family History Library. However, there are few indexes for every census. Because of this, you will need to have a good idea of the exact locality or jurisdiction where your ancestors lived. Birth, marriage, and death certificates can help you determine locations, especially if the name is not a common one.

Like their counterparts in the United States, English census records were a count and description of the population. The census may list only selected persons (such as males between the ages of 16 and 45) or list the whole population. Censuses provide information when other records are missing. The percentage of people listed varies with the purpose of the census and how careful the enumerator was.

Various types of censuses were taken by different English authorities for their own purposes, including:

1. Population studies
2. Military readiness (militia lists and so on)
3. Poor rates (taxes for relief of the poor)
4. Poll books (lists of eligible voters).

English national census records are especially valuable because they list nearly the entire population and are readily available at many repositories, including the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and through your local Family History Center.

The English government has taken censuses every 10 years since 1801, except 1941. The first genealogically useful national census was taken in 1841. Earlier national censuses contain only statistical information, but some church parishes compiled lists of names as they gathered the census information and some of these still survive. The best way to search for these church parish censuses in the Family History Library Catalog is under the heading listed below:

ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [PARISH] - CENSUS

The best source for locating surviving pre-1841 census records is in the following title::

Chapman, Colin R. *Pre-1841 Censuses & Population Listings in the British Isles*, 4th ed. Dursley, England: Lochin Publishing, 1994. (FHL book 942 X27cc). This title is available through the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and major British repositories. There will be more discussion on these other repositories later on in the study guide.

The original census records for 1841 to 1891 are also available at the Public Record Office in Kew which is now also known at the English National Archives. Census records less than 100 years old are confidential and cannot be searched by individuals. However, the 1901 census can be searched for you. To obtain an application and the cost for this search, write to:

Office for National Statistics
Census Legislation, Room 4303
Segensworth Road, Titchfield
Fareham
Hampshire PO15 5RR
England

The search will be done only if you provide the name and address (at the time the census was taken) of the individual you are seeking. You must also get the written consent of the person on the record or a direct descendant. The only information you will get from the census is the individual's age and birthplace.

English Census Returns – Fast Facts

The 1841 census was taken on 7 June. The censuses taken between 1851 through 1931 were conducted between 31 March and 8 April. Instructions to the census taker were to list only those persons who spent the night in each household when the census was taken. Those traveling, staying at boarding schools, or working away from home were listed where they spent the night. For example, night watchmen are often listed under their employer's business address rather than with their families.

You will find the following information in the censuses:

1. 1841. This census lists the members of every household with their name, sex, address, occupation, and whether or not they were born in the county. The census takers usually rounded the ages of those older than 15 down to a multiple of 5. For example, a 59-year-old would be listed as 55.
2. 1851 and later: These censuses list the names, ages, occupations, relationships to the head of the household, and parish and county of birth (except foreign births, which may give country only) of each member of the household.

The census office organized the censuses by civil registration districts, which were subdivided into enumeration districts. The only exception is the 1841 census which was arranged by "hundreds" (hundreds are administrative subdivisions of land). On the census films, each enumeration district includes a title page with the district number and a description of the area covered by the district.

Search Strategies and Cautions When Using English Census Records

As is the case with their United States counterparts, researchers are advised to keep the following facts in mind when searching census records:

1. Accept the ages with caution
2. Given names may not be the same as the name recorded in church or vital records.
3. Information may be incorrect.
4. Names may be spelled as they sound.
5. Place-names may be misspelled.
6. If the family is not at the expected address, search the surrounding area.

7. Parts of the 1841 and 1861 censuses are faint and sometimes unreadable.
8. When you find your family in one census, search the earlier or later census records to find additional family members and to verify details.
9. Individuals missing from a family may be listed elsewhere in the census.
10. Search available census indexes before using the actual census records.
11. If possible, find your ancestor's address for the time period of the census you are searching. In big cities an address will help you find your ancestor in a census, especially when street indexes exist for the city.

The following sources may help you locate an address or find an address:

1. Old letters
2. City, occupational, postal, or commercial directories
3. Certificates of births, marriages, and deaths
4. Church records of christenings, marriages, and burials
5. Probate records
6. Newspaper notices
7. Court records
8. Tax records
9. Rate books
10. Voting registers or poll books

How and Where to Locate English Census Records

In England original census records are located at the Public Record Office at Kew. Microfilm copies are located at the Family Records Centre and at individual English county record offices and some local libraries. The Family History Library has microfilm copies of all national censuses from 1841 to 1891. The following work, commonly known as the *Census Register*, gives film numbers for each census year and is arranged by parish, town, village, or city:

Index of Place-names Showing the Library Microfilm Numbers for the 1841–1891 Census of England, Wales, Isle of Man, and Channel Islands. Salt Lake City, Utah: Family History Library, 1992. (FHL book 942 X2pi; fiche 6024509).

To locate the microfilm numbers look in the Place Name Search of the Family History Library Catalog, search under:
ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [PARISH] - CENSUS

Population tables and other census aids may help you pinpoint a location on the microfilm or solve unusual difficulties you may have in finding a locality on the census. Census indexes can significantly reduce the time you take to search the census. There are many published surname and street indexes for the census.

Surname Indexes. Before you search the actual census, look for a surname index. There are many surname indexes for English censuses. Many of these indexes have been produced by family history societies in England. Most of the published indexes are available at the Family History Library. The indexes vary in format and information given. Some list surnames only while others give complete transcriptions.

An index may cover part of a parish, a whole parish, a town, a sub district, or a district. Make sure it covers the area you need. Many surname indexes do not give a Family History Library film/fiche or book call number. The indexes list a piece number (Public Record Office reference number). You may determine which microfilm a piece number is on by using one of the following census registers:

1841	FHL book Ref 942 X22p 1841; film 599273
1851	FHL book Ref 942 X23c 1851
1861	FHL book Ref 942 X2pib 1861
1871	FHL book Ref 942 X23cp
1881	FHL book Ref 942 X22g; fiche 6035786

To find census surname indexes look in the [Place Name Search](#) of the Family History Library Catalog under:

ENGLAND, [COUNTY] - CENSUS - [YEAR] - INDEXES

ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [PARISH or TOWN] - CENSUS - [YEAR] - INDEXES

You can also check the [Census Surname Indexes Register](#) at the Family History Library. This register is not available at Family History Centers.

For surname indexes that are not at the Family History Library, the best source to check is:

Gibson, Jeremy, and Elizabeth Hampson, eds. *Marriage and Census Indexes for Family Historians*. 7th ed. Birmingham: Federation of Family History Societies Publications, Ltd., 1998. (FHL book 942 D27gjh). We have the 3rd edition in our International Collection-England under the call number **Genealogy Ref. 942 GIB**.

1881 Census. There is a complete transcription and index on microfiche for the 1881 census returns of England, Wales, Scotland, Isle of Man, Channel Islands, and the Royal Navy.

The index and transcription were produced through a joint effort of the Federation of Family History Societies and the Genealogical Society of Utah. It can be searched either nationwide or by region. The regions include the following counties:

1. East Anglia-Bedford, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Lincoln, Norfolk, Northampton, Rutland, Suffolk
2. Greater London-London, Middlesex, Berkshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Oxford, Surrey, Buckingham, Essex, Hertford, Sussex, Kent
3. Midlands-Cheshire, Hereford, Shropshire, Stafford, Worcester, Derby, Leicester, Nottingham, Warwick
4. North Central-Lancashire, York
5. Northern Borders and Miscellany-Channel Islands, Cumberland, Durham, Isle of Man, Northumberland, Royal Navy, Westmorland, Miscellaneous
6. Southwestern-Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucester, Somerset, Wiltshire
7. Scotland
8. Wales and Monmouth

The microfiche version is available for use at the Family History Library, Family History Centers, and other record repositories. The microfiche can be searched either nationwide or by county. Within the nationwide index are two indexes:

1. Surname Index (alphabetical by surname, then given name)
2. Birthplace Index (alphabetical by birthplace, then surname)

Within each of the county indexes are seven sections:

1. Surname Index (alphabetical by surname, then given name)
2. Birthplace Index (alphabetical by surname, then birthplace)
3. Census Place Index (alphabetical by surname, then census place)
4. Census Record-as-Enumerated
5. Miscellaneous Notes (alphabetical by surname, then given name)
6. List of Vessels/Ships (alphabetical by ship's name)
7. List of Institutions (alphabetical by institution's name)

To locate the microfiche numbers for the 1881 census indexes, look in the [Place Name Search](#) of the Family History Library Catalog under:

[COUNTRY] - CENSUS - 1881 - INDEXES

[COUNTRY], [COUNTY] - CENSUS - 1881 - INDEXES

1851 Census. The 1851 census for the counties of Devon, Norfolk, and Warwick is completely transcribed and indexed. This index is available on microfiche. The microfiche version is available through the Family History Library, Family History Centers, and other record repositories. The information in an index may be incorrect or incomplete. If you believe your ancestor was in a particular census area, search the census even if your ancestor is not in the index.

Street Indexes. If you know the address where your ancestor may have lived, a street index can help you quickly find your ancestor in the census. Street indexes are available for major cities in England for each census year. Street indexes are available at the Family History Library in both book and microform. You can determine if a street index is available by looking in:

Register of Towns Indexed by Streets. Salt Lake City, Utah: Family History Library, 1999. (FHL book 942 X22r; fiche 6026692).

If this register does not list the town or district you need for a particular year, look for a street index in the **Place Name Search** field of the Family History Catalog under:

ENGLAND - CENSUS - [YEAR] - INDEXES

ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [CITY, PARISH, or DISTRICT] - CENSUS - [YEAR] - INDEXES

You may also write to the Family Records Centre and ask if a street index is available there.

1841 Census. The 1841 census lists everyone in the household by name, sex, and occupation. Ages are rounded down to the last multiple of 5 (for example, a 49 year-old person would be listed as being 45 years old). The place of birth is either Y or N, meaning “Yes”, born in this county, or “No”, not born in this county.

Later returns tended to be more specific in terms of information. They would be more useful for genealogical research. These additional details provided the following pieces of information:

1. Full names
2. Exact ages
3. Occupations
4. Relationships to the head of the household
5. Parishes and counties of birth.

If you are searching a fairly large city, you might be able to find the person in a city directory first. That will give you an address, which may be helpful since there are several indexes for large cities that tell you where you can find the records from each street in the census.

Church Parish Records

Church records are an excellent source for accurate information on names and dates and on places of births, marriages, and deaths. Most people who lived in England have information recorded about them in a church record. Since civil authorities did not begin registering vital statistics until July 1837, church records are the best source for family information before that date.

In the 1530s King Henry VIII severed ties with the Pope and declared himself the head of the Church of England. This church became known as the state church and was also known as the Established, Anglican, or Episcopal Church. In the 17th Century, there began to be dissension within the Church of England and other religions began to spring up. These other religions are referred to as “nonconformists”. Nonconformists are discussed further on in this section under the name of each denomination.

Some church records were destroyed by fire, lost, stolen, defaced, or damaged by dampness or aging. To protect their records, most parishes have deposited their early registers in county record offices.

The most authoritative source for locating these offices is the following source:
Humphery-Smith, Cecil R., *The Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers.* 2nd. ed. Chichester, Sussex: Phillimore & Co., 1995. (FHL book 942 E7pa 1995). Note we have the 1984, 1st edition in our International Collection-England under the call number **Genealogy Ref. 912.12 PHI.**

Parish maps can help you determine which parish to search. Maps will reveal neighboring parishes to search if your ancestor is not listed in the parish where you expected him or her to be.

For research before 1800, parish records are the primary source available for research. By using the names and ages found in the census and on civil registration certificates, you can move back before 1837 to the parish records that extend back to 1538. Naturally, not all parishes have kept their records intact for this period of time, but many

parishes go back to the 1600s and some to the 500s. As stated earlier, research in England is easier than for most countries because the Family History Library has filmed the majority of parish records in England and made them available on microfilm. Where it may take four films to cover one year of index in the civil registration, one film of parish records may cover up to 200 years..

The information in the record varies greatly. Examples of the wide variance of information would include the following:

1. Baptism or burial record may only give the name
2. More helpful parish records will give the father's name on a baptism and sometimes even the mother's name is listed.
3. It is extremely rare to find a mother's maiden name listed on a baptism record.
4. Burial records may give the age or the father's name, especially for children.
5. Marriage records may only contain the name of the bride and groom, but will often indicate the parish.
6. Since many of the early parish records were written on a blank sheet, rather than on a form, a comment may occasionally be added.
7. Keep in mind that the dates are for baptism and burial, not birth and death, although children were traditionally baptized a few days after their birth.

For the most part, parish records are from the Church of England. Rules required Catholics to register baptisms and marriages in a Church of England, and that they be buried by the Church of England. Anyone not conforming to the Church of England were called Nonconformists and included Catholics, Quakers, Jewish, Puritans, Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, and Methodists. Many people belonging to these outlawed denominations appear in the Non-Conformist records which will be discussed later.

Church of England Records

Each local parish keeps records. The parish is the jurisdictional unit that governs church affairs within its boundaries. Small villages often do not have their own parishes but are part of a parish headquartered in another town. A parish may have one or more chapelries (dependent branches), which often keep their own records.

Many parishes are grouped together under the jurisdiction of a bishop. A bishop heads the diocese. Some dioceses include one or more archdeaconries (administered by an archdeacon), which may be divided into rural deaneries headed by a "rural dean". Each deanery consists of several parishes.

The registers kept by the parish record christenings, marriages, and burials performed in that parish. The parish was also used by the government for taking care of the poor, the physical well-being of the parish, law enforcement, taxation and military conscription during the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. These functions required that the parish keep other records beside the registers. These other records are often called parish chest records which will be discussed in more detail later.

Earlier registers often contained christenings, marriages, and burials in one book, called a general register. In 1754 a law was passed that required marriages to be kept in a separate register. In 1813 parishes were required to use preprinted registers. There were separate registers for christenings, marriages, and burials.

The amount of information recorded varies from parish to parish. Later records are usually more complete than earlier ones. However, content often changed when a new minister began keeping the records.

Some pre-1733 parish registers are in Latin and even records in English may contain some Latin words. Local dialects may have affected the spelling of some family names or places.

Christenings (Baptisms)

Children were usually christened within a few weeks of birth, though christenings of some older children or adults were recorded. Depending on how complete the information was at the time of the event, researchers may find the following facts:

1. The parish registers give at least the infant's name
2. The christening (baptismal) date
3. Father's name and occupation
4. Mother's first name (maiden name is sometimes included as well but there is no

- consistency)
- 5. Child's birth date and legitimacy
- 6. Family's place of residence
- 7. In larger cities the family's street address is given.

The preprinted forms introduced in 1813 called for the child's christening date and given names, both parents' given names, family surname, residence, father's occupation, and minister's signature. The birth date was sometimes added.

Marriages

Parish registers often record only the marriage date and the names of the bride and groom. The records may also include the marital status and the parish of residence of both parties, the groom's occupation, signatures of witnesses, and the minister's name especially after 1754.

Starting 1 July 1837 all parishes were required to use a new form. This form called for the bride and groom's ages, residences, and occupations and the names and occupations of their fathers.

Couples usually married in the bride's parish. Typically, the English married in their 20s.

You may find records that show a couple's "intent to marry" in addition to the records of the actual marriage.

Sometimes, however, the couple registered their intent to marry but never married. There were two ways to meet the requirements to marry:

1. **Marriage Banns:** The law required couples to have the minister announce or post notice of their intent to marry for three consecutive Sundays unless they obtained a license. This gave others the opportunity to object to the marriage. Beginning in 1754 officials recorded banns in separate registers. Banns registers contain information almost identical to marriage registers, but banns usually do not list the witnesses or marriage date.

If you believe a marriage took place but cannot find a record of it, search the banns register (if available). The banns should have been recorded in both the bride's and the groom's parish. The marriage is usually recorded only in the parish where it took place. For banns registers, look in the [Place Name Search](#) field of the Family History Library Catalog under:

ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [PARISH] - CHURCH RECORDS

2. **Marriage License:** Couples applied to the proper church authority, usually the bishop, for a license when:
 - a. Circumstances made it desirable to marry without waiting the three weeks required for the proclamation of banns.
 - b. The bride and groom lived in different dioceses.
 - c. The couple preferred not to subject themselves to publication of banns (common among upper classes and nonconformists).

Marriage licenses could be granted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, bishops, and archdeacons, or their surrogates within their respective jurisdictions. The licensing process created three types of documents, which may provide additional information to what the marriage record itself contains:

1. **Marriage bond:** A written guarantee made by the groom and another person swearing to the legality of the planned marriage. The bond usually lists occupations.
2. **Marriage Allegation:** A statement filed by the couple in support of their license application. It records the couple's names, ages, and parish of residence. The allegation sometimes lists where the marriage was to take place or gives a parent's name or signature.
3. **Marriage License:** The actual document given to the couple to present to the minister. This document seldom survives but is sometimes found in family papers.

If a couple married by license but the bond or allegation cannot be found in the records for the diocese, check the records of the Vicar General and the Faculty Office of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which had a higher level of jurisdiction. The current location of original marriage license documents is given in the following source:

Gibson, J. S. W. *Bishops' Transcripts and Marriage Licences, Bonds and Allegations*. 4th ed. Birmingham: Federation of Family History Societies Publications, Ltd., 1997. (FHL book 942 K23b 1997)

Many license records are in county record offices. The Family History Library also has a good collection, usually listed in the Place Name Search field of the Family History Library Catalog under:
ENGLAND, [COUNTY] - CHURCH RECORDS

Indexes to marriages.

One of the largest sources for marriage indexes is:

Boyd, Percival. *Boyd's Marriage Index*. Bound typescript. N.p., n.d. This work is an index to marriages in 4,375 parishes throughout England. It is available on microfilm, on microfiche, and as a book. Look in the Author/Title Search fields of the Family History Library Catalog for library call numbers and film/fiche notes.

You can find an explanation of this series in the following source:

Wells, Claire T. Wells, comp. *A Key to the Parishes Included in Boyd's Marriage Index*. 2nd ed. Salt Lake City, Utah: Family History Library, 1988. (FHL book 942 K22b 1988; fiche 6035667)

A list of parishes is also given in:

A List of Parishes in Boyd's Marriage Index. London: Society of Genealogists, 1994. (FHL book 942 K22i 1994)

Some county record offices and other repositories have indexes to church records, some of which are on film at the Family History Library. Privately held marriage indexes for most counties are available by correspondence. Many indexes are listed with the addresses of where to write in the following two sources:

Humphery-Smith, Cecil R., *The Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers*. 2nd ed. Chichester, Sussex: Phillimore & Co., 1995. (FHL book 942 E7pa 1995). This book is also located in our International Collection-England under the call number **Genealogy Ref. 9192.12 PHI**.

Gibson, Jeremy, and Elizabeth Hampson, eds. *Marriage and Census Indexes for Family Historians*. 7th ed. Birmingham: Federation of Family History Societies Publications, Ltd., 1998. (FHL book 942 D27gjh). We have the 3rd edition in our International Collection-England under the call number **Genealogy Ref. 942 GIB**.

Researchers may also locate those marriage indexes that have been filmed by the Family History Library, via searching in the Place Name Search field of the Family History Library Catalog under:
ENGLAND, [COUNTY] - CHURCH RECORDS - INDEXES

Burial Records

A burial usually took place in the deceased's parish a few days after the death. Pre-1813 burial records list the deceased's name and burial date and sometimes mention the age, place of residence, cause of death, or occupation. The husband's name is sometimes given on the wife's burial entry. The father's name may be on the record for a deceased child. After 1813 the forms called for the name, age, abode, burial date, and minister's signature. Burial registers may mention infant children who were not christened including stillbirths. Christening records never record stillbirths.

Obtaining Copies of Parish Registers

Copies of parish registers may be available in manuscript or published form. These copies include transcripts and abstracts that may have errors or omissions. Compare the transcript to the original parish register, if available. Individuals and societies collect and compile copies of parish registers. Both the Society of Genealogists in London and the Family History Library have major collections of such records.

Bishop's Transcripts: Beginning in 1598 each parish was supposed to send a copy of its registers to the bishop of its diocese. Most parishes complied. The current location of original bishop's transcripts is given in the following source:

Gibson, J. S. W. *Bishops' Transcripts and Marriage Licenses, Bonds and Allegations*. 4th ed. Birmingham: Federation of Family History Societies Publications, Ltd., 1997. (FHL book 942 K23b 1997)

Many bishops' transcripts are on film at the Family History Library, listed in the Place Name Search field of the Family History Library catalog under:
ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [PARISH] - CHURCH RECORDS

Most films contain all the years for one parish on one film. However, some are arranged by deanery and year. Those arranged by year and then by deanery are listed in the Place Name Search field of the Family History Library catalog under:

ENGLAND, [COUNTY] - CHURCH RECORDS

Locating and Using Indexes to Church Records

The International Genealogical Index (IGI) is the most comprehensive surname index of English parish registers. Other indexes to parish registers exist. Many of these indexes have been published by family history societies in England.

To locate what indexes to parish registers are available at the Family History Library, look in the Place Name Search field of the Family History Library catalog under:

ENGLAND, [COUNTY] - CHURCH RECORDS - INDEXES

The Church of England also required that banns be read in the parishes of both the bride and the groom for three weeks prior to their marriage. After 1754, when stricter marriage laws were passed, the banns were recorded in a separate book or in the parish record. These banns books may also be available to help you with your research. If the couple did not marry in the parish of the bride or groom, they had to obtain a special license. Licenses are found in many different locations, but may not contain interesting additional information. Another helpful researching tool is Boyd's Marriage Index by Percival Boyd. Many parishes have been indexed by bride and groom and are arranged by county. If you locate your ancestors, this source will direct you to the correct parish.

Parish Chest Records

Church records were kept in a chest (or strongbox) known as the "parish chest". Records other than the parish registers were called "parish chest records." Some of these records still exist from the 16th century, but many do not begin until the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.

Many parish chest records are available at county record offices. Parish chest records include the following:

1. Vestry Minutes: A vestry is a parish's presiding council. Minutes of vestry meetings often mention individuals, appointments of parish officers, and other affairs (such as agreements for the care of illegitimate children, lists of apprentices, parish newcomers, officials, and men eligible to serve as parish officers).
2. Poor and Other Rates: Parishes recorded payments made to the poor and rates, or taxes, assessed to meet welfare needs. Parishes also charged rates for things such as night watch, lighting, highway, pest control, constable expenses, sewer, and victim's or soldier's relief. They kept records of assessment, receipt, and disbursement.
3. Bastardy Bonds: When an unmarried woman was expecting a child, parish officials pressured her to reveal the father's name so the father, not the parish, had financial responsibility for the child's care. A "bond of indemnification", also known as a "bastardy bond", was the father's guarantee of responsibility for the child. Bastardy bonds or records of the mother's examination may still exist in the parish chest records or among quarter session records (see the "Court Records" section of this outline). Churchwardens (church officials) sometimes bypassed the bond with a gentlemen's agreement, records of which are among churchwardens' accounts or vestry minutes.
4. Churchwardens Accounts: Churchwardens, generally appointed at the Easter vestry meetings, were responsible to the bishop or magistrate to present any wrongdoings at quarter sessions, including failure to provide for the poor, failure to attend church, drunkenness, or other undesirable behavior. They were to report misbehavior of the vicar or other vestry members as well. Churchwarden records often list men qualified to serve as churchwardens.
5. Settlement and Removal Records: Settlement records relate to a person's legal place of settlement, as determined by a set of rules. The parish of settlement was responsible for the welfare and old-age care of family members. Parish officials often aggressively denied settlement. When a family sought parish welfare, officials determined the family's legal

settlement. A “removal order” was a document directing the constable to transport the family back to their parish of settlement.

6. **Apprenticeship Records:** These records often list the apprentice’s father, his master, the length of the apprenticeship, and the occupation. A child’s father often arranged the apprenticeship, but the parish “put out” many pauper children, since it was cheaper to pay for an apprenticeship than to raise a child. The child’s name may also be in vestry minutes when the vestry decided to put the child out as an apprentice.

Parish chest records are listed in the [Place Name Search](#) field of the Family History Library Catalog under:
 ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [PARISH] - CHURCH RECORDS
 ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [PARISH] - POORHOUSES, POOR LAW
 ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [PARISH] - TAXATION

For further information on parish chest material, see:

McLaughlin, Eve. *Annals of the Poor*. 3rd ed. Solihull, England: Federation of Family History Societies Publications, Ltd., 1986. (FHL Book 942 H6mev)

Tate, W. E. *The Parish Chest*. 3rd ed. Chichester, Sussex: Phillimore, 1969. (FHL book 942 K2t)

Non-Conformist Records

A nonconformist denomination is any denomination not conforming to the Church of England, including Roman Catholics, Jews, and Quakers. The registers of these religions sometimes contain more information than those of the Church of England. They rarely contain marriage records (except for Quakers and Jews). Nonconformist registers contain some burial entries, though nonconformists were usually buried in parish churchyards until the chapel obtained its own burial grounds or until civil cemeteries opened.

It is not uncommon to find an ancestor affiliated with more than one religion during his or her lifetime. Search all religions and all chapels of a particular religion if an ancestor might be a nonconformist because some people changed religions and traveled long distances to attend their meetings. Ministers often traveled large circuits keeping the vital statistics of several places in the register they carried with them. A law passed in 1836 required many nonconformist groups to send their registers into the Public Record Office. The Family History Library has microfilm copies of those that were deposited. Many of these records have been extracted, and the names appear in the International Genealogical Index (IGI).

The following two sources contain more information about nonconformist sects:

Steel, Donald J. *Sources for Nonconformist Genealogy and Family History*. London: Phillimore, 1973. (FHL book 942 V26ste, vol. 2). We have this book in our International Collection-England under the call number **Genealogy Ref. 929.309 STE**.

Sources for Roman Catholic and Jewish Genealogy and Family History. London: Phillimore, 1974. (FHL book 942 V26ste, vol. 3). We also have this book in our International Collection-England under the call number **Genealogy Ref. 025.52 SOU**.

Presbyterians, Baptists, and Independent Denominations

These religions evolved from 16th century Puritanism. The records of these religions are similar to those of the Church of England. The Baptists, however, practiced adult baptism and recorded births in birth registers, not baptism registers. The Independent Church is also known as the Congregational Church.

Many congregations did not keep consistent records. In January 1743 officials formed a central registry for births for all three denominations, called *Dr. Williams’ Library*. This registry contains about 50,000 birth records. Information recorded includes the child’s name, parents’ names, birth date, address, names of witnesses, registration information, and sometimes the grandparents’ names.

The original records are housed at the Public Record Office. Copies of these records are on microfilm in the Family History Library to 1837. To find the film numbers, look in the Author/Title Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

DR. WILLIAMS' LIBRARY (LONDON)

The following source discusses Baptist history and records:

Breed, Geoffrey R. *My Ancestors Were Baptists: How Can I Find Out More About Them?* London: Society of Genealogists, 1988. (FHL book 942 K23bg 1988)

For information or history about Baptists, contact:

Baptist Historical Society
15 Fenshurst Gardens
Long Ashton, Bristol BS18 9AU
England

The Family History Library filmed pre-1837 Presbyterian records from the Presbyterian Historical Society. The Presbyterian and Congregational churches are now combined. For information or history about either denomination, contact:

United Reformed Church History Society
86 Tavistock Place
London WC1H 9RT
England

For information on Presbyterians, see the following two sources:

Ruston, Alan R. *My Ancestors Were English Presbyterians/Unitarians: How Can I Find Out More About Them?* London: Society of Genealogists, 1993. (FHL book 942 K23ra)

For information on Congregationalists or Independents, see:

Clifford, D. J. H. *My Ancestors Were Congregationalists in England & Wales: With a List of Registers.* London: Society of Genealogists, 1992. (FHL book 942 K23cd)

Methodists

There are three main groups of Methodists in England and a number of smaller offshoots. The Wesleyan group is the largest. Some groups recorded their baptisms and burials in the Church of England until the 19th century.

The three primary groups are:

1. Wesleyan
2. Primitive
3. New Connexion

For historical material, contact:

The Methodist Archives and Research Centre
John Rylands University Library
Deansgate, Manchester M3 3EH
England

To find the location of the birth and burial records, contact:

Wesley Historical Society
34 Spiceland Road
Northfield, Birmingham B31 1NJ
England

A useful guide for tracing Methodist ancestors is:

Leary, William. *My Ancestors Were Methodists: How Can I Find Out More About Them?* 2nd ed. London: Society of Genealogists, 1990. (FHL book 942 D27l 1990)

The Wesleyan Methodist Metropolitan Registry recorded over 10,000 Wesleyan Methodist births and baptisms that occurred between 1773 and 1838 throughout England, Wales, and elsewhere. The records and index are on microfilm at the Family History Library and in the Public Record Office. To find the records in the Family History Library, look in the Author/Title Search field of the Family History Library Catalog under:

Wesleyan Methodist Metropolitan Registry at Paternoster Row Register of Births and Baptisms, 1818–1841

Roman Catholic Records

Catholic priests usually did not keep registers before 1778 and many registers were written in Latin. Baptism registers usually include the names of the child's sponsors or godparents.

Some registers have been published by the Catholic Record Society. The Family History Library has most of these published registers, which are listed in the [Place Name Search](#) field of the Family History Library Catalog under:

ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [PARISH] - CHURCH RECORDS

ENGLAND, [COUNTY] - CHURCH RECORDS

For information on records not available at the library, contact the society at:

The Catholic Record Society
c/o 114 Mount Street
London W2Y 6AH
England

Jewish Synagogue Records

Most synagogues have retained their own records. For historical information, contact:

Jewish Historical Society
c/o Mocatta Library
University College, Gower Street
London WC1E 6BT
England

Isabel Mordy collected and indexed a group of English Jewish records. This is now available in the Family History Library, listed in the [Place Name Search](#) field of the Family History Library Catalog under:

ENGLAND, LONDON - JEWISH RECORDS

For more information, see:

Gandy, Michael. *My Ancestor Was Jewish: How Can I Find Out More About Him?* London: Society of Genealogists, 1982. (FHL book 929.1089924 G153).

Huguenot Records

This Protestant group began in France, then spread to England as its members fled persecution. Huguenots began keeping records as early as 1567; however, few pre-1684 records still exist.

After their arrival in England, many Huguenots changed their names from French to English. For example, the French surname LeBlanc may have changed to White.

Until 1754 Huguenots often recorded their marriages in both Huguenot and Church of England registers. None were recorded in Huguenot registers after that date. The Huguenot Society has transcribed and published most of their original church records.

Huguenot Society
c/o University College, Gower Street
London WC1E 6BT
England

The best way to locate published Huguenot records at the Family History Library is to look in the Author/Title Search field of the Family History Library Catalog under:

PUBLICATIONS OF THE HUGUENOT SOCIETY

Quaker (Society of Friends) Records

Also known as Quakers, the Society of Friends did not have appointed clergy to perform the rites of baptism. They recorded births instead. Burial registers usually include the date of death. Quakers recorded marriages to ensure their validity.

The organization of Quaker religious groups, known as “meetings”, includes:

1. The preparative meeting or the local church group, is about the size of a parish.
2. The monthly meeting, made up of several preparative (local) groups, is the primary meeting for church affairs and includes records of births, marriages, and deaths.
3. The quarterly meeting, comprised of two to seven monthly meetings, is similar to a diocese.
4. The yearly meeting includes representatives from the quarterly meetings and Friends from other countries.

Quaker registers began in the late 1650s. From 1840 to 1842, the Society made digests of its records (to about 1837), which cover all English meetings. The digests are arranged first by date and then alphabetically by surname. Copies of digests and original registers are in the Family History Library. The original records are in the Public Record Office.

A good source to consult for Quaker research is:

Milligan, Edward H., and Malcolm J. Thomas. *My Ancestors Were Quakers: How Can I Find Out More About Them?* London: Society of Genealogists, 1983. (FHL book 942 D27m)

Locating Church Records

To find an ancestor in church records, you should know his religion and the parish where he lived. The Place Name Search field of the Family History Library Catalog usually uses the parish names as given in *The Imperial Gazetteer*. Local residents sometimes referred to their parish by the name of the parish patron saint (such as St. John) rather than by the location of the parish. In cities where there is more than one parish, the Family History Library Catalog uses the patron saint’s name with the name of the city to identify records of different parishes.

Many parishes had chapelries that served a small area within the parish boundaries. Chapelries kept separate registers. Their records are usually located using the Place Name Search field of the Family History Library Catalog under the parish with which the chapelry is associated.

Some good sources that describe the location or survival of church records are:

Lists of Non-Parochial Registers and Records in the Custody of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages. London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1859. (FHL book Q 942 B4pro vol. 42)

This volume from the Public Record Office series, *Lists and Indexes*, series tells which pre-1837 nonconformist parish registers are in the Public Record Office.

Humphery-Smith, Cecil R., *The Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers*. 2nd. ed. Chichester, Sussex: Phillimore & Co., 1995. (FHL book 942 E7pa 1995). This gives the location and repository address for each parish register.

Parish Register Abstract. England: House of Commons, 1833. (FHL book Q 942 X2gbc; film 599640 items 1–2). This book shows which pre-1813 parish registers existed in 1831.

Steel, Donald J., et al. *National Index of Parish Registers*. 13 vols. Chichester, England: Phillimore & Co. Ltd., 1968–. (FHL book 942 V26ste).

This index helps identify church records and congregations. Not all counties are published yet.

Youngs, Frederic A., Jr. *Guide to the Local Administrative Units*. London: Royal Historical Society, 1979, 1991. (FHL 942 C4rg no. 10, 17)

This guide helps identify Church of England ecclesiastical jurisdictions and gives an outline history of changes to the parishes.

Records at the Family History Library

The Family History Library has many church records. The most common are:

1. Parish registers from their beginning up to the nineteenth century or later
2. Bishops' transcripts from 1598 up to the mid- 19th century
3. Transcripts of parish registers
4. Parish chest records
5. Registers of nonconformist churches to 1837 (sometimes later)

You can determine whether the library has records, denominational histories, or religious society journals from your ancestor's parish by looking in the Place Name Search field of the Family History Library Catalog under:

ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [PARISH] - CHURCH RECORDS

ENGLAND, [COUNTY] - CHURCH RECORDS

ENGLAND, [COUNTY] - CHURCH HISTORY

ENGLAND - CHURCH HISTORY

ENGLAND - PERIODICALS

The Family History Library is always adding records to its collection. The catalog is updated periodically. If you need a record that is not at the library, you may write to the minister or to a repository to request a search.

Records Not at the Family History Library

Since England has no single repository of church records, the current location of records depends on several factors.

Some counties have more than one approved repository. A few records remain with the parish minister. To determine the location of the original parish registers, use *The Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers* .

The following types of repositories often answer mail requests for information:

1. County record office. Contact the county record office to determine the procedure for searching records.
2. Local parish. Parishes will generally answer correspondence when a small donation is enclosed. Ask that your request be forwarded if the records are now in a repository. To find parish addresses, consult a church directory.
3. Other archives. Some church records are in libraries, museums, or other repositories.

When writing to England for genealogical information, be as concise as possible. Do not add unnecessary history about the family you are researching. If staff members at the archive cannot look up the requested information, ask them to send you a list of recommended researchers. Send the following with your request:

1. An international money order for the search fee and postage or a donation to the church
2. The full name and sex of the person sought
3. The names of the parents, if known
4. The event you are looking for, with approximate date and place
5. Request for a complete copy (or photocopy) of the original record

If your request is not answered, write to the local family history society and ask if one of their members would do the search for you.

Another way to access some church records and indexes is through the Internet. On the Internet there are lists of people who volunteer to search various types of records for certain areas free of charge. You can locate these lists through the **GENUKI** Web site at:

www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng . Once in the site, use the following steps:

1. Click **[County of your choice]**.
2. Click **Genealogy**.
3. Click **Look-up Exchange**.

Additional English Repositories of Interest

Public Records Office/British National Archives:

The Public Record Office (now known as the National Archives) collects records of the central government (such as parliamentary papers) and law courts from 1086 to the present. These records provide a wealth of information for the family researcher but are best used after you have gathered information elsewhere. You must have a reader's ticket to use this collection. The staff does not do research but will usually do brief searches if you supply enough information. You can write to this office at the following address:

National Archives
Public Records Office
Ruskin Avenue, Kew
Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU
England
Tel: +44 (0) 20 8876 3444

Internet: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/contact/> or access via GENUKI at <http://www.genuki.org.uk>

Office for National Statistics:

The Office for National Statistics (formerly known as the General Register Office) houses government birth, marriage, and death certificates from 1 July 1837 to the present for all of England.

Street Address: 1 Drummond Gate, London SW1V2QQ, England Tel: +44 845 601 3034

Internet: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/>

Contact Information:

E-mail: All emails must include a contact telephone number and also a return postal address or fax number. This is because some data may not be in a format that can be easily emailed. Supplying a telephone number will also ensure that they can contact you quickly, should they need to clarify any aspect of your enquiry.

If your enquiry is about National Statistics please email info@statistics.gov.uk.

If your enquiry is about the registration of births, marriages or deaths or other certificate services please visit the General Register Office.

If your enquiry is about Census 2001 please visit the Census advice and services department..

If you have any comments about the design or working of this Web site please email info@statistics.gov.uk.

Email enquiries will be handled in accordance with the Code of Practice for Access to Government Information..

By telephone

+44 (0) 845 601 3034

ONS Minicom (for the hearing impaired): +44 (0)1633 812399

Our standard opening times are Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm (excluding Public Holidays)

Please note, calls may be monitored for training purposes.

Fax: +44 (0)1633 652747

Correspondence:

Office for National Statistics
Customer Contact Centre, Room 1.015,
Cardiff Road
Newport
NP10 8XG

Family Records Center:

Copies of the records of the Office for National Statistics are also housed at the Family Records Centre in London.

The Family Records Centre also has copies of census records from 1841 to 1891, nonconformist church records, probate records, Regimental Registers, and Chaplain's Returns.

Contacting the Family Records Centre

Internet: <http://www.familyrecords.gov.uk/frc/>

Births, Marriages, Deaths, Adoptions and Overseas enquiries

General enquiries about certificates

Telephone: 0845 603 7788

Fax: 01704 550013

E-mail: certificate.services@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Census and general enquiries about the FRC (not Births, Marriages and Deaths)

Telephone: 020 8392 5300

Fax: 020 8487 9214

E-mail: frc@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Or you can write to us at:

The Family Records Centre

1 Myddelton Street

LONDON

EC1R 1UW

The British Library

The British Library is the national repository for all published materials in England. Because its collection is so complex, usually only experienced researchers use it. The library has several departments. The following are the most useful to family history researchers:

British Library at St. Pancras

96 Euston Road

London NW1 2DB

England

Internet: <http://www.bl.uk/>

Tel: (Inquiries/Customer Service) +44 (0) 1937 546060

E-Mail: Customer.Services@bl.uk

British Library Newspaper Library

Colindale Avenue,

London NW9 5HE

England

Tel: +44(0) 20 7412 7353

Guildhall Library

http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/leisure_heritage/libraries_archives_museums_galleries/city_london_libraries/guildhall_lib.htm

The Guildhall Library collection includes many guild (occupation) and business records which may contain relevant genealogical information.

Guildhall Library

Aldermanbury

London EC2P 2EJ

England

The Guildhall Library also has *Lloyd's Marine Collection* (see the "Merchant Marine" section of this outline) and London city parish registers.

For more information about these repositories, consult the Locality Search of the *Family History Library Catalog* under:

ENGLAND - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

ENGLAND, [COUNTY] - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [CITY] - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts (Now part of the British National Archives).

This repository houses the Manorial Documents Register and the National Register of Archives (NRA). The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts has been working to inventory records that are in archives and private collections. They have a finding aid called the National Register of Archives (NRA) which includes over 191,000 lists of manuscript collections and close to 5,000 finding aids and annual reports from various repositories. These lists are indexed.

The Family History Library has a topographical index to the reports of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts on microfiche 6021002 through 6021007. These indexes are divided into three sections: people, businesses, and organizations. The commission has also published several inventories and reports, some of which are available through the Family History Library. Look in the Author/Title Search of the library catalog under "Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts." Also check the Place Name Search field in the Family History Library Catalog under:

GREAT BRITAIN - HISTORY - SOURCES

GREAT BRITAIN - HISTORY - SOURCES - INDEXES

Many of the records described by the commission have changed hands since being examined. For information about the present location of records surveyed by the commission see:

The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts. *Guides to Sources for British History based on the National Register of Archives. Guide To The Location Of Collections Described in the Reports and Calendars Series 1870-1980*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office. 1982. (FHL book 942 H25gs vol.3).

The records are now considered part of the British National Archives. See entry #1 in this section for further information.

These records and information pertaining to their contents can also be accessed through GENUKI at <http://www.genuki.org.uk>.

County Record Offices:

In England each county has one or more offices that house records about the particular county. Records of genealogical value in these offices include land records, church records, taxation records, probate records, miscellaneous indexes, and collections. Some county record offices have personal or place-name indexes to some of the records in their collection.

County record offices are open to the public. Some require a reader's ticket. If you write for information, be as concise as possible. The offices are small and have limited staff, so you may have to wait a few weeks for a reply. If staff members are unable to search their records, you may ask for a list of record agents who can search the records for you.

Two of the best print sources for listing addresses for county record offices are:

Church, Rosemary, and Jean Cole. *In and Around Record Repositories in Great Britain and Ireland*. 3rd ed. Huntingdon, Cambridge: Family Tree Magazine, 1992. (FHL book 942 J54cj)

This gives street and mailing addresses and maps showing the locations of offices.

Record Repositories in Great Britain: A Geographical Guide. 10th ed. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1997. (FHL book 942 J54r 1997) This gives street and mailing addresses of the repositories, along with their telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and Internet sites.

The following Internet sources will also provide more up to date information

British Genealogy.com

<http://www.british-genealogy.com/>

CyndisList

<http://www.cyndislist.com/england.htm>

England GenWeb Project

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~engwgw/>

GENUKI

<http://www.genuki.org.uk>

Public Libraries & Archives

Public libraries collect many published sources such as local histories, city directories, maps, newspapers, family histories, and parish registers. Our collection shelflist for England and your bibliography include several sources that will facilitate locating and contacting libraries in England.

Some of the most prominent sources available through the Family History Library are listed below:

Foster, Janet, and Julia Sheppard. *British Archives: A Guide to Archive Resources in the United Kingdom*. 3rd ed. New York: Stockton Press Ltd., 1995. (FHL book 942 J54f 1995.)

This guide lists addresses, major records, and publications of various repositories in the United Kingdom. It is indexed by county and by type of collection.

Harrold, Ann, ed. *Libraries in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland*. London: The Library Association Publishing Limited, 1991. (FHL book 942 A51u)

Iredale, David. *Enjoying Archives: What They Are, Where to Find Them, How to Use Them*. Chichester, Sussex: Phillimore & Co. Ltd., 1985. (FHL book 942 A5i 1985)

This guide describes the heritage of documents in Great Britain and a few of the archives where documents are stored. It explains the work of the county record office, how the staff preserves manuscripts, and a method for reading old records.

Moulton, Joy Wade. *Genealogical Resources in English Repositories*. Columbus, Ohio: Hampton House, 1988. Supplement published 1992. (FHL book 942 J54m)

This book contains addresses and describes the holdings of county record offices, genealogical and family history societies, and other repositories. Maps of repository locations are included.

English Local History Societies

Local history society librarians collect and write histories of the people and places in their area. Addresses of local history societies are in the following books:

Henderson, S.P.A., and A.J.W. Henderson, ed. *Directory of British Associations & Associations in Ireland*. 13th ed. Beckenham, Kent: CBD Research Ltd., 1996. (FHL book 942 E4hd)

Pinhorn, Malcolm. *Historical, Archaeological and Kindred Societies in the United Kingdom: A List*. Isle of Wight: Pinhorns, 1986. (FHL book 942 C4h 1986, 1995)

The following Internet sources will also provide more up to date information

British Genealogy.com

<http://www.british-genealogy.com/>

CyndisList

<http://www.cyndislist.com/england.htm>

England GenWeb Project

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~engwgw/>

GENUKI

<http://www.genuki.org.uk>

Inventories, Registers, and Catalogs

Most archives have publications that describe their collections and how to use them. If possible, study these guides before you visit or use the records so you can use your time more effectively.

Many published inventories, guides, catalogs, and directories for archives and libraries are listed in the Place Name Search field of the Family History Catalog under headings such as:

ENGLAND - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

ENGLAND, [COUNTY] - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

ENGLAND, [COUNTY], [CITY] - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

The *National Inventory of Documentary Sources in the United Kingdom and Ireland* is a microfiche collection of calendars and finding aids for British archives, libraries, and museums. It provides a detailed listing of the box, folder, and sometimes individual documents contained in various collections. To find the call numbers, look in the Author/Title Search of the Family History Library Catalog under::

NATIONAL INVENTORY OF DOCUMENTARY SOURCES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

The following Internet sources will also provide more up to date information

British Genealogy.com

<http://www.british-genealogy.com/>

CyndisList

<http://www.cyndislist.com/england.htm>

England GenWeb Project

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~engwgw/>

GENUKI

<http://www.genuki.org.uk>

Genealogical Societies

There are currently over 80 family history societies in England. The **Federation of Family History Societies** serves as the coordinating body for societies in England and elsewhere. The Federation supports and encourages genealogy and family history research among its member societies. It publishes *Family History News and Digest*, a journal that includes the names and addresses of its member societies. For information, please visit their website at <http://www.ffhs.org.uk/> or write to:

Administrator

The Benson Room

Birmingham & Midland Institute

Margaret Street, Birmingham B3 3BS

England

You may also access the Federation's Internet Web site through the GENUKI Web site at:

<http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/#Societies>

Society of Genealogists: <http://www.sog.org.uk/> has extensive records from all over England. They also have the largest collection of transcribed parish registers in England. The mailing address is:

Society of Genealogists

c/o Hon. Sec.

Box G

14 Charterhouse Buildings

Goswell Road

London EC1M 7BA

England

You may also access the society's Internet Web site through the GENUKI Web site at:

<http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/#Societies>

For an introduction to their library and research services, please visit their website or you may examine the following print source:

Using the Library of the Society of Genealogists. London: Society of Genealogists, 1991. (FHL book 942.1/L1 J5u 1991)

The Family History Library has several other guides to this library, as well as their publications. The publications are listed in the Author/Title Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:
SOCIETY OF GENEALOGISTS

Fort Myers-Lee County Library Genealogy Collection England

016.0942 KAM	<u>Kaminkow, Marion J.</u> Genealogical Manuscripts in British Libraries., c1967.
016.9293 MAR	<u>Marshall, George W.</u> Genealogists Guide to Bibliographic Sources in Great Britain. Reprint of the 1903 Edition., c1973.
286.09 BRE	<u>Breed, Geoffrey R.</u> My Ancestors Were Baptists., c1986.

289.6 GAN	Gandy, Michael. Quaker Ancestors in England: 1650-1750., c1995.
289.6 MIL	Milligan, Edward. My Ancestors Were Quakers., c1983.
296.34 GAN	Gandy, Michael (editor). My Ancestor Was Jewish., c1982.
299.16 ELL	Ellis, Peter Berresford. Druids., c1994.
301.45 BER	Bermant, Chaim. The Cousin-hood: A Vivid Account of the English-Jewish Aristocracy (Cohens * Rothschilds * Goldsmids* Montefiores * Samuels * Sassoons)., c1971.
336.220 LAN	Turner, Michael (editor). Land & Property : The English Land Tax, 1692-1832., c1986.
355 DYM	Dymond, Steve. Which Medals did he Win?, c1996.
359 WAT	Watts, Christopher T. My Ancestor was a Merchant Seaman., c1986.
359.009 CLO	Clowes, William Laird. Battle of Trafalgar, British Ships, Trafalgar Roll, 21 st of October, 1805., c1999.
364.1523 CUL	Cullen, Tom A. When London Walked in Terror., c1965.
912.12 PHI	Smith, Cecil Humphery (editor). Phillimore Atlas & Index of Parish Registers., c1984.
914.1 BAE	Baedeker, Karl. Great Britain. v.2., c1968.
914.1 BUL	Bullock, L.G. Historical Map of England & Wales., c1969.
914.2 BLY	Blythe, Ronald. Akenfield: Portrait of and English Village., c1969.
914.2 KEN	Kendall, Paul Murray. The Yorkist Age., c1962.
914.2 MIL	Mills, A.D. Dictionary of English Place Names., c1991.
914.2 MOR	Morton, H.V. In Search of England., c1935
914.2 MUI	Muir, Richard. The English village., c1980.
914.2 SMI	Smith, Frank (compiler). Genealogical gazetteer of England., c1968.
914.2 STE	Stevens, William Oliver. Forever England., c1941.
914.21 MOR	Morton, H.V. In Search of London, c1951.
914.24 MID	Midland Ancestor: Journal of the Birmingham & Midland Genealogy & Heraldry Society. Library has miscellaneous issues: v.8 – v.9 (1989-1990).
920 BLU	The Blue Book: Leaders of the English-Speaking Word (primarily the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, Australia)., c1970
929.1 CAM	Camp, Anthony. Everyone has roots., c1978.
929.1 CAM	Camp, Anthony. My Ancestor was a migrant., c1987.
929.1 CHU	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Resource Outline: 1881 British Census Indexes., c1996.
929.1 CHU	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Resource Outline: England., c1997.
929.1 CHU	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Resource Outline: Using the 1881 British Census Indexes., c1996.
929.1 COL	Colwell, Stella. Family Roots., c1991.
929.1 COX	Cox, Jane. Never Been Before? Genealogists' Guide to the Family Records Centre., c1998.
929.1 COX	Cox, Jane. Tracing Your Ancestors in the Public Record Office. 4 th Edition., c1993.
929.1 DRU	Druse, Joseph L. Through Parish and Probate to your English Ancestry., c1965.
929.1 FIT	FitzHugh, Terrick V.H. Dictionary of Genealogy., c1985.
929.1 HAM	Hamilton-Edwards, Gerald. Tracing Your British Ancestors: a Guide to Genealogical Sources., c1993.
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942.05 ELT	<u>Elton, J.R.</u> England Under the Tudors., c1955, 1974, and 1991.
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NOTE: This study guide is meant to serve as an overview or outline for patrons using the genealogy collection at Fort Myers-Lee County Library. The compiler emphasizes that the information contained in this study guide should not serve as a substitute for taking the time to read one of the books or articles cited in the bibliography, or attend lectures given by the subject specialists cited as authors.

Compiled by Bryan L. Mulcahy, Reference Librarian, Fort Myers-Lee County Library, 2/1/2008.

Genealogical Research Outline - Ireland

Section One: Historical Overview

The experience of researching Irish ancestors has been described in two extremes. For many, having the opportunity to visit or study a country with the traditions and pageantry unique to Ireland is exhilarating. However, tracing many of those same ancestors in Irish records offers many challenges. This catches many researchers by surprise since the records availability in England, Scotland, and Wales seems far better organized in comparison.

In Ireland, religious affiliation is a very important component. The churches as a rule kept the most accurate records on the general population. Their records were being kept long before formal civil registration mandates. While this situation is true throughout Europe and the British Isles, its importance to success in Irish research is magnified. When researching Irish ancestors in Ireland, the most important requirement is to pinpoint as accurately as possible, the region where your ancestors came from, since the surname may be very common or unique to a certain area. Most Irish family traditions make some reference to a parish or region. Hence this is considered the best starting point for all research projects.

Another important factor in establishing a link with Ireland is locating the date and port of arrival for when your ancestor arrived in the United States. There are several potential types of records that would provide information of value:

1. Personal diaries
2. Personal correspondence
3. Family Bibles
4. Passports (Irish, British, and American)
5. Ship passenger tickets or passes
6. Naturalization documents.

Ship passenger lists are available through the National Archives, the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and their nation-wide branches known as Family History Centers, and on-line via numerous websites such as Ancestry Library Edition, Ancestry.com, or Cyndislist-United Kingdom and Ireland. A brief listing of suggested websites will follow at the end of this study guide.

Most of the important sources of genealogical information in Ireland are located in or around the immediate vicinity of Dublin. General Civil Registrations of births, marriages, and deaths began in 1864. These records are kept at the office of the Register-General, Custom House. Marriages of Protestants are recorded since 1845, and are housed in this same office. Certified copies are available from this same office.

The Public Records Office of the Courts is another good records source. The Tithe Allotment Books contain the first Valuation Office Records and the names of people whose holdings were subject to tithes during the first half of the last century. Another valuable type of record found in this office are collections, such as wills, will abstracts, and indexes to administrations and marriage license bonds of particular families. The 1901 Census is also a valuable research tool

that is housed in this office.

The Registry of Deeds, located on Henrietta Street in Dublin, is another useful research location. Its records cover the period from 1708 to the present. They relate to all the usual transactions in property, which involve the execution of a deed, leases, mortgages and property settlements.

The National Library on Kildare Street in Dublin, has a large collection of books and manuscripts. There are many sources of information for the genealogist. Among the many holdings are: city and regional directories, family histories, journals of local antiquarian and historical societies, topographical works and histories of particular areas, and newspapers (national and provincial). The manuscript collection includes deeds, correspondence, rentals, and other papers relating to Irish families. Local public libraries in Ireland may also provide you with sources of local information. Throughout the country, there are cemeteries and tombstone inscriptions that provide names and dates that might not be available in other sources.

If your emigrant ancestor came from Northern Ireland, you should direct your genealogical queries to the following address: Public Records Office of Northern Ireland, 66 Balmoral Avenue, Belfast BT9 6NY. This office handles records that cover the six counties of Northern Ireland: Antrim, Down, Armagh, Tyrone, Fermanagh, and Derry. Although efforts have been made to normalize relations between the two sections, record keeping is still segregated.

Irish Church Records

Church records are another source of primary genealogical source materials. A baptismal record is an obvious proof of birth. The parochial registers of the Catholic Church are in the custody of parish priests and dioceses throughout Ireland. In the urban areas, some of the records go back between 200 and 300 years. In rural parishes and regions, records generally exist dating back to the middle 1800's. Many Church of Ireland records were destroyed in 1922 when the Public Records Office was burned. Those that survived are in the possession of pastors in various parishes throughout Ireland. Some of these registers date back to the 17th and 18th century.

If your ancestors were Presbyterian, the Presbyterian Historical Society, Church House, Fisherwick Place in Belfast may be your best source of information. This organization has many congregational registers and can provide information on others kept by local ministers.

Irish Immigration Waves to the U.S and Canada

Phase One: The first major wave of Irish-American emigration originated in Ulster (Northern Ireland) and was composed predominantly of Presbyterians heading for the middle colonies of America. Pennsylvania was a major destination for this group along with Maryland, Virginia, the Carolina's and Georgia. These immigrants are also known as Scotch-Irish and Ulster-Irish. Upon settlement, they recreated their closely-knit family-farm culture where hard work, family independence, and communal religion dominated all aspects of daily life. They also brought their Irish architecture, house plans, the use of potatoes as a staple crop, and the skills of

distilling whiskey.

Around 1,000 immigrants arrived annually in Philadelphia from 1720 to 1770, many of them coming in family groups, some even as full congregations led by the pastor of their respective churches. This was in a sense, a replication of an earlier phase of their own history, the 17th century immigration from Scotland to Ulster plantations, and the subsequent swarming in compact farming colonies all along the Ulster borderlands. These people were tough, tenacious farmers, well-educated, prudent managers of money, and strongly identified with Biblical precedents. The Presbyterian Church organization, with its intensely democratic and localist emphasis, was ideally suited for successful adaptation to the New World.

The Ulster-Irish were especially affected by the “Great Awakening” of the 1760s and became a powerful influence on the growth of evangelical religion in the South in later decades. They were also good farmers, soldiers, effective administrators and educators; this combination of characteristics made a powerful contribution to the building of the United States. By 1790, the Irish comprised 17% of the total U.S. population and of these, 70% were Ulster-Irish.

Phase Two: The second great 18th century Irish migration was from the southeast counties of Ireland (Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford, and Tipperary) to the Atlantic province area of Canada. This was composed primarily of Catholics and began in the early decades of the 18th century. The English West-Country merchants, who controlled the Newfoundland cod fisheries, discovered that they could victual ships and recruit youngsters for the cod fishery at a much cheaper rate than in the Bristol Channel area. From 1675 onward, ships from England’s west country called in the spring to Waterford, to collect provisions and laborers. Waterford, Ireland’s third largest city, dominated the Irish-Newfoundland trade between 1675-1850, supplying the bulk of the provisions and passengers. This Irish-Newfoundland migration provides a clear example of the way in which migration processes were superimposed on a pre-existing mercantile network.

By the mid-1770's over 5,000 immigrants made the annual trip. At this stage, it was still predominantly a seasonal migration (spring-summer). Between 1790 and 1830, the seasonal migration pattern had given way to permanent settlement. Between 1800 and 1830, 35,000 Irish immigrants had arrived in Newfoundland. By 1836, Irish were 50% of the total population of the island and St. Johns had become the first significant Irish town in the New World. A distinctively Catholic-Irish culture soon evolved and was conserved by subsequent isolation so. Even today, the Avalon Peninsula in Newfoundland is under this cultural influence.

From Newfoundland, many Irish entered Nova Scotia, especially around Halifax. As the timber trade blossomed, this attracted others to New Brunswick and especially the Miramichi Valley. The migration field for these two provinces overlapped considerable with the Newfoundland one, although with a much heavier Cork presence, and with a more significant South Ulster component. This Atlantic migration was important in another way because it was the cheapest passage to America. Many immigrants used it as a gateway to interior Canada up the St. Lawrence Valley or down the New England coast to Boston.

Phase Three: The third phase of Irish migration began in the pre-famine period, especially post

1815, when the Irish economy began to exhibit marked signs of strain. Uninhibited population growth in the 18th century had seen a massive demographic surge of population from around 1 million in 1600 to 8.5 million by 1840. Deteriorating economic circumstances made emigration a necessity for human survival. Between 1815 and 1845, over 1 million Irish crossed the Atlantic and established a strong Irish footing in the eastern seaboard cities, long before the famine emigrants arrived in masse shortly thereafter. Irish-Canadian emigration was largely pre-famine in character and split between Protestants and Catholics. The bulk of these immigrants came from Ulster, due to an economic downturn in the linen industry. By the mid 19th century, the Irish were the largest ethnic group in British North America. Popular stereotypes have always painted the picture of an urban immigration. In reality, most the majority of immigrants settled in rural areas. This was especially true in Canada.

In the pre-famine period, the regional origins of migration within Ireland are essential to an understanding of pre-Irish emigration. The two earlier core groups - Ulster & Southeastern Ireland - remained the areas of heaviest out-migration. It was only during the famine and subsequent decades that source of Irish emigration shifted to the west towards the poorest and most densely populated counties along the Atlantic seaboard, especially Cork, Kerry, Clare, Galway, Mayo, and Donegal.

The famine broke the older pattern of chain migration, with close ties built up over several generations between “emigrant” and “host” regions. The famine also marked a decisive shift in the class origins of the Irish emigrants. Prior to the famine, the emigrants tended to be from the skilled levels of Irish society. This included carpenters, masons, shoemakers, and other skilled occupations. The famine and post-famine periods saw a shift to unskilled laborers, surplus children to alleviate over-population, and criminals who sought to escape imprisonment. Between 1820-1920, over 5 million Irish immigrants came to the United States. Over 1 million came to Canada during the same period and most eventually made their way into the United States.

Section Two: Irish Genealogical Resources Found In Ireland

Unlike most countries in Europe and their neighbors in the British Isles, it is often very difficult to get past 1800 in tracing Irish ancestors in Ireland. Most of our Irish ancestors prior to 1800 were landless tenant framers. Another problem is that many of the most valuable records for the later periods were destroyed by fire in 1922.

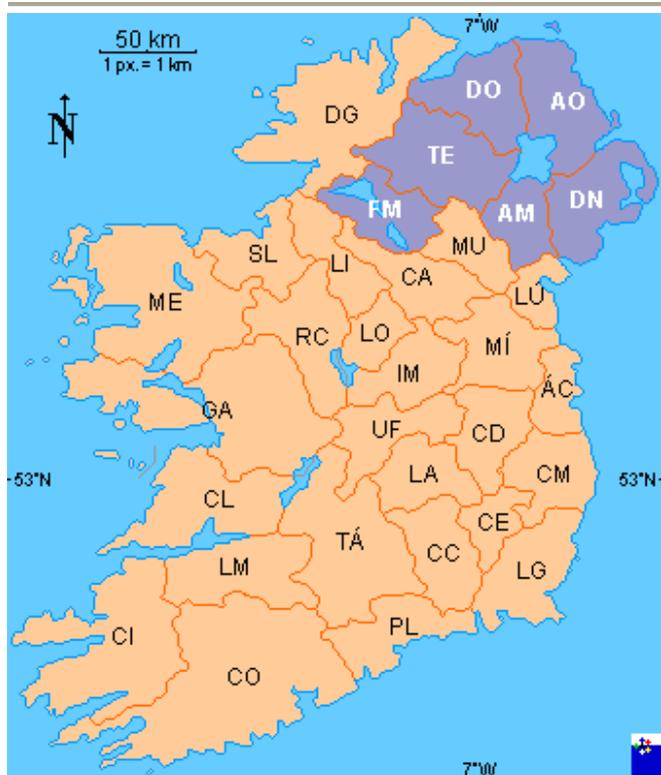
While a trip to Ireland can be a wonderful experience, and will often provide some measure of success in one’s research, it is only fair to point out that most surviving Irish records, especially those unique to Ireland, can be accessed right from her by using the Irish Cultural centers as a means of correspondence, and using the Family History Library and their branches. The family History Library has an extensive collection of records covering the British Isles and Ireland in print, and microform format. These materials can be borrowed through any of the Family History Centers throughout all 50 states.

Irish Civil Records

State registration of non-Catholic marriages in Ireland began in 1845. All births, deaths, and marriages have been registered in Ireland since 1864. Between 1838-1852, 163 workhouses were built throughout the country, each at the center of a designated area known as the Poor Law Union. These workhouses were normally situated in a large market town, and the Poor Law Union comprised the town and its surrounding area. Poor Law Unions often did not adhere to the parish, and County boundaries, so care must be used when using these records.

In the 1850's a large scale public health system was created, based on the areas covered by the Poor Law Unions. Each Union was divided into Dispensary Districts, with an average of 6-7 Districts per Union, and a Medical Officer (normally but not always a doctor). When the registration of all births, deaths, and marriages then began in 1864, these Dispensary Districts also became known as Registrar's Districts.

The records/returns for the all Poor Law Union or Registrar Districts were indexed and collated centrally, and master indexes for the entire country were produced at the General Register Office located at 8-11 Lombard Street in Dublin. They are available for Public Research. The General Register Office houses the indexes for all 32 counties in Ireland thru 1921, and the 26 counties of the Republic of Ireland after that date. For Northern Ireland, from 1921, the indexes and registers are held at Oxford House, Chichester, in Belfast Northern Ireland.



Legend key:

ÁC <u>Áth Cliath / Dublin</u>	Co <u>Corcaigh / Cork</u>	Lo <u>An Longfort / Longford</u>
AM <u>Ard Mhacha / Armagh</u>	DG <u>Dún na nGall / Donegal</u>	Lú <u>Lú / Louth</u>
Ao <u>Aontroim / Antrim</u>	Dn <u>An Dún / Down</u>	ME <u>Maigh Eo / Mayo</u>
Ca <u>An Cabhán / Cavan</u>	Do <u>Doire / Derry</u>	Mí <u>An Mhí / Meath</u>
CC <u>Cill Chainnigh / Kilkenny</u>	FM <u>Fear Manach / Fermanagh</u>	Mu <u>Muineachán / Monaghan</u>
CD <u>Cill Dara / Kildare</u>	Ga <u>Gaillimh / Galway</u>	PL <u>Port Láirge / Waterford</u>
Ce <u>Ceatharlach / Carlow</u>	IM <u>An Iarmhí / Westmeath</u>	RC <u>Ros Comáin / Roscommon</u>
Ci <u>Ciarraí / Kerry</u>	La <u>Laois / Leix</u>	SI <u>Sligeach / Sligo</u>
Cl <u>An Clár / Clare</u>	LG <u>Loch Garman / Wexford</u>	TÁ <u>Tiobraid Árann / Tipperary</u>
CM <u>Cill Mhantáin / Wicklow</u>	Li <u>Liatroim / Leitrim</u>	TE <u>Tír Eoghain / Tyrone</u>
	Lm <u>Luimneach / Limerick</u>	UF <u>Uíbh Fhailí / Offaly</u>

One should note that it was the legal obligation of the public to register births, deaths, and marriages. However, it was not obligatory to register a first name for the child even though most did include the first name. By 1864, any person whose marriage was to be celebrated by a Catholic clergyman was required to have the clergyman fill out a certificate containing the information detailed below, and forward it within three days of the marriage to the Registrar. This was already the case for marriages in the northern Irish tier of counties (which now make up Northern Ireland) by 1845.

Other Civil Records found in Ireland include:

1. Maritime Records from 1864 up to the present
2. Separate marine Register of births, and deaths of Irish subjects which took place at sea maintained by the General Register Office
3. Army records of births, deaths, and marriages from 1879 and after
4. Schulze Register which includes a general index to baptisms and marriages purported to have been celebrated by the Rev. J. G. F. Schulz from 1806-1837 and contains upwards of 8,000 marriages.

Irish Census Records

Full government censuses were taken of the whole island in 1821-1871, 1901, and 1911. The censuses for 1821-1851 were largely destroyed in the 1922 fire at the Public Records Office. However, some fragments have survived or have been reconstructed using other record types. The census records for 1861 and 1871 were destroyed by governmental decree. Only the 1901 and 1911 census are available in their comprehensive format. The 1901 and 1911 Irish census records included the following types of information:

1. Full name of family members
2. Relationship to the head of household
3. Religion
4. Literacy
5. Occupation
6. Age

7. Marital status
8. County of birth
9. Ability to speak English or Irish

In many cases, the largest number of our Irish ancestors came over just before the Potato Famine of 1848, or afterwards up until the 1880's. thus, the surviving Irish census records may be of little use to many genealogists.

The surviving census fragments from earlier periods are as follows:

1. The 1821 census has fragments for parts of the following counties and are located in the National Archives of Ireland:
 - a. Cavan
 - b. Fermanagh
 - c. Galway
 - d. Meath
 - e. Offaly (Kings County)
2. The 1831 census fragment only exists for County Derry.
3. The 1841 census fragment only exists for one parish in County Cavan.
4. The 1851 census fragment only exists for parishes in County Antrim.
5. For the 1861 and 1871 census fragments, only the catholic registers of Enniscorthy (1861) and Drumcondra and Loughbraclen in County Meath (1871) exist.

Irish Census Substitutes

While the loss of these records complicates Irish research, all is not lost. There are a variety of substitute records that have survived which may provide some of the same details that the censuses would have given had they survived. The most popular are listed below:

1. Undertaker Records: the Historical Manuscripts Commission Report (1612-1613). This set of records were compiled from large scale English and Scottish landlords in the counties of Cavan, Donegal, and Fermanagh.
2. Muster Rolls (1630) This set was compiled from large scale landlords in Ulster.
3. Books of Survey and Distribution 1641. Identifies land ownership throughout Ireland. These books record ownership before the Cromwellian and Williamite confiscations around 1641 and after 1703-1704.
4. The Civil Survey: 1654-1656. This survey was published by the Irish Manuscripts Commission. This is a record of civil land ownership. Only 12 counties were surveyed:
 - a. Cork
 - b. Derry
 - c. Donegal
 - d. Dublin
 - e. Kildare
 - f. Kilkenny
 - g. Limerick
 - h. Meath
 - i. Tipperary

- j. Tyrone
 - k. Waterford
 - l. Wexford
5. Pender's Census 1659: The names of persons with title to the land, and principle Irish names in each barony. All counties are covered except for Cavan, Galway, mayo, Tyrone, and Wicklow.
 6. Subsidy Rolls, 1662-1666: These rolls list the nobility, clergy, and laity.
 7. Hearth Money Rolls, 1664-1666: These rolls list the householders names located in the Public Records Office.
 8. Convert Rolls, 1703-1838: This was a list of those who converted from Catholicism to the Church of Ireland.
 9. Protestant Householders, 1740: (for the following counties)
 - a. Antrim
 - b. Armagh
 - c. Derry
 - d. Donegal
 - e. Tyrone
 10. Elphin Diocesan census, 1749: This is a listing of householders, religious affiliation, sex and religious affiliation of their children.
 11. Householders of the Church of Ireland, 1766: This is a listing of the households in their parishes. Most of the original records were lost in 1922, but some transcripts have survived and are located at the National Archives of Ireland.
 12. Charlton Trust Fund Marriage Certificates, 1795-1862: Protestant records for the counties of Meath and Longford. Some additional records exist for the counties of Cavan, King's (Offaly), Louth, and Westmeath.
 13. Flax-growers Entitlement Lists, 1796: This is a listing of persons employed in the linen trade, free spinning wheels or looms, and Flax growers for all of Ireland. The list contains around 60,000 persons.
 14. Losses in the 1798 Rebellion: This is a listing of persons who suffered losses during this rebellion, whose property was destroyed. The counties included in the list are:
 - a. Wexford
 - b. Carlow
 - c. Dublin
 - d. Kildare
 - e. Wicklow
 15. Tithe-Applotment Books 1824-1838 (are discussed later)
 16. National School Records 1831-1921: In 1831 a county-wide system of primary education was established under the control of the Board of Commissioners for national Education. Information in these records includes the following:
 - a. Name and age of pupil
 - b. Religion
 - c. Fathers address and occupation
 17. Griffith's valuation 1848-1864 (are discussed later)
 18. Landowners in Ireland: Returns of owners of land of one acre and upwards; 1876. This list includes over 32,000 land owners.

Irish Church Records

Unlike research in America, Irish church records are predominantly concerned with only two major religious denominations:

1. Catholic Church
2. Church of Ireland (Protestant)

Other denominations where one may find church records for in Ireland would include the Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptist, and Quakers. While other religious denomination existed, records for them are virtually non-existent. Practitioners of these other religions often were lumped in with the two major churches. In most instances, these people practiced their faith behind closed doors while professing loyalty in public to one of the two major churches.

The civil parishes, which were the basic geographical units in early censuses, tax records, and land survey records are also identical to the Church of Ireland parishes. The Catholic parishes which underwent many changes during the period of the 17th to the end of the 19th centuries, used larger boundaries for parishes. Members of the Church of Ireland were almost always a smaller minority. Hence their parish registers are usually smaller and easier to research. Catholic records cover the majority of the population and a much larger geographical area. Researchers face a more challenging task when searching these records.

In regards to parish research, it is important to understand that sometimes the Church records in one parish, could overlap with those in adjoining parishes. You should never assume that records may not exist in multiple parishes. This applies to both the Catholic and Church of Ireland denominations. It is especially relevant to Catholic research since in the 19th century, many new Catholic parishes were created. Records exist in the newly created parish as well as the old parish from which it is was formed.

Catholic records can be difficult to locate. Patience is a definite virtue. Writing multiple letters (and keeping copies) may be the only ways to obtain information. Before the start of Civil Registration for all Ireland in 1864, the only consistent sources of family information for the vast majority of the population are local church parish records. Very few registers survive from before the latter half of the 18th century. The earliest Catholic parish records in the country appear to be the fragments for Waterford and Galway dating from the 1680's. The majority of catholic registers begin in the first decades of the 19th century.

The National Library of Ireland catalogue is the only comprehensive county-wide account of Catholic registers, and records in detail the period covered by each set of registers, including gaps up through 1880. These Catholic registers consist almost exclusively of baptismal and marriage records. Unlike the Church of Ireland, very few Catholic parishes kept any consistent register of burials.

Information found in baptismal records often includes the following:

1. Date of baptism
2. Child's name
3. Father's name
4. Mother's maiden name
5. Names of sponsors (often relatives or siblings)

Marriage records often include the following information:

1. Date of ceremony
2. Place where ceremony was held
3. Names of bride and groom (her maiden name)
4. Parents names (sometimes this is not given)
5. Names of witnesses (usually relatives)
6. Presiding priest

The National Library of Ireland carried out a project to microfilm the surviving Catholic parish registers of the entire island. A total of 1000 sets of registers were filmed. Only a small percentage of Waterford City Registers were missed. These are held in Waterford. Not all the registers are available for public research in the National Library. Researchers are advised to contact the library in advance of a visit to determine whether you can access your particular parish of interest.

Another good source for parish research are the local heritage centers.. These centers began coming into existence around 1980. They are engaged, as part of the Irish Genealogical Project, in indexing and recording all the surviving parish records for the entire country. Their computerized records also includes other local information that could add additional insights to the research at hand. Researchers are able to contact these centers online and request research information for a fee. There will be more discussion about these centers later in the study guide.

Church of Ireland records generally start much earlier than those of the Catholic Church. From as early as 1634 local parishes were required to keep records of christenings and burials in registers supplied by church authorities. Unlike Catholic records, Church of Ireland records often include burials. Baptism records usually include the following information:

1. Child's name
2. Father's name
3. Mother's maiden name
4. Christian name
5. Name of the officiating clergyman
6. Witnesses (often relatives)
7. Occupation of the husband (sometimes)

Church of Ireland marriage records also included members of the various other Protestant denominations. They also maintained vestry books, many of which can be found at the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland and the National Archives of Ireland.

By 1922, the original registers of nearly 1000 parishes, more than half the total for the country, were stored at the Public Records Office in Dublin. Most of these perished in the fire in June

1922. Fortunately, a large number of registers had not been sent to Dublin. The local rectors had kept many and also made transcripts of the originals that were sent. Another positive chance of fate dealt with the number of local historians using the Public Records Office prior to the 1922 fire. They had amassed collections of extracts from the registers. In general, the records from the northern counties have been microfilmed by the Public Records Office in Belfast. Records for the southern counties that make up the Republic of Ireland are found in Dublin.

Irish Land Records

Because of the destruction of 19th century census records, surviving land and property records from the period have been magnified in importance. Two surveys cover the entire country:

1. Tithe Applotment Books 1823-1838
2. Griffith's Valuations 1848-1864

Both of these used administrative division which are no longer in widespread use and need some explanation. The smallest division, the **Townland**, is the one which has proved the most enduring. There are more than 64,000 townlands in the country. They were used as the smallest geographical unit in both types of records. Anywhere from 5 to 30 townlands were grouped together to form a civil parish. These records use the parish boundaries used by the established church at that time, the Church of Ireland. These parishes must not be confused with catholic parishes which were much larger but were not recognized by the government. In turn, civil parishes are collected together in **Baronies**. Both baronies and civil parishes are no longer used as civil administrative units.

The Tithe Applotment Books started out as part of the Composition Act of 1823, where tithes were due to the established national church, the Church of Ireland. As a result, it was necessary to carry out a valuation of the entire country, civil parish by civil parish, to determine how much would be payable by each landholder. This process was done from 1823-1838. The records compiled during this period are valuable, especially when one knows the date and locality of birth, and most importantly if they carry very rare, or unusual first or last names. Many Catholics ignored this survey for a variety of reasons. However, this is the only country-wide survey for the period in question. Hence, even with its limitations, it is still considered a valuable source.

From a genealogical point of view, the information recorded in these books is quite basic. The tax was based on the average price of wheat and oats over the ages previous seven years up to 1823. The original tithe books for the 26 counties of the Republic of Ireland are available at the National Archives of Ireland. Those for the 6 counties of modern Northern Ireland were transferred to the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland in 1924. The Family History Library also has this information in their collection and database as well.

Information found in these books will include the following:

1. Townland name
2. Landholders name
3. Area of land
4. Tithes payable

Since only the landholders name was given, with no indication of family relationships, any conclusions drawn are speculative. However, for parishes where the registers do not begin until after 1850, they are often the only early records surviving. They can provide valuable circumstantial evidence, especially where a holding passed from a father to son in the period between the Tithe survey and Griffith's Valuation.

In order to produce the accurate information necessary for local taxation, the Tenement Act of 1842 provided for a uniform valuation of all property in Ireland to be based upon the productive capacity of the land and the potential lease/sale value of buildings. The man appointed as the Commissioner of valuation was Richard Griffith, and the results of his survey were published between 1848 and 1864.

Griffith's Valuation is arranged by county, barony, poor law union, civil parish, and townland. The survey lists all landholder and every householder in Ireland. The survey also includes the following information:

1. Name of the person from whom the property was leased
2. Legal description of the property
3. Acreage
4. Valuation

The most useful family information supplied is in the areas where a surname was particularly common since the surveyors often adopted the Gaelic practice of using the father's first name to distinguish between individuals of the same name. For example, John Reilly (James) is the son of James, while John McNamara (Michael) is the son of Michael.

Griffith's Valuation was not intended as a census substitute, and if the 1851 census had survived, it would have little genealogical significance. However, it does list most people in Ireland during this time period, and when we are dealing with ancestors with very rare names, it can be a significant research aid. One of the drawbacks is the dates when many of the County surveys were taken. Most of the Potato Famine Irish came to America between the years of 1846-1860. Many of the survey's were taken after 1860.

Another set of records that provides some potential for research assistance are the Valuation Office Records, which offers two components. The first of these are the notebooks used by the original surveyors, which also consists of field books, house books, and tenure books. These books are useful in tracking down any changes in ownership in properties, which can indicate a father to son gift of land. The second set of records are the "Cancelled Land Books" and "Current Land Books". These give details of all changes in the land holdings.

In the 18th and 19th centuries the vast majority of the Irish population lived as small tenant-farmers on large estates owned for the most part by English or Anglo-Irish landlords. The administration of these estates produced large quantities of records including the following:

1. Maps
2. Tenants lists
3. Rental account books

4. Lease books
5. Miscellaneous related information

The Registry of Deeds was set up by the Irish Parliament in 1708 to assist in regularizing the massive transfer of land ownership from the Catholic Anglo-Norman and Gaelic populations to the Protestant Anglo-Irish which had taken place over the preceding century.

Registering deeds was not obligatory, hence many people were left out. The overwhelming number of property owners were members of the Church of Ireland. Less than 20% of the Catholic owned land or any other type of property even though they constituted the majority of the country's population. If you have Catholic ancestors, this may prove to be a useless tool. However, if you have Protestant Irish or Scots-Irish ancestry, the odds are in your favor for finding useful information. The information in these deeds often includes leases, marriage settlements, mortgages, bills of discovery, wills, and rent charges.

During this time period, the majority of Catholics had no legal rights to land. Most had their land confiscated prior to the establishment of the Registry of Deeds. Here is another interesting sidebar to this discussion. In the few instances when a Catholic owned any type of property, if any member of the family converted to the Church of Ireland, they inherit all legal rights to the family assets immediately.

Irish Wills

Wills provide a clear picture of a family at a particular point in time. They can provide enough details of a much larger network of family, personal, and business relationships as in the following examples:

1. Siblings
2. Cousins
3. Nephews
4. In-laws
5. Neighbors and close friends
6. Mistresses
7. Business partners

How much information one finds on wills depends on a wide variety of circumstances. In general, the information most often found would include some or all of the following:

1. Name of the decedent
2. Address and occupation of the testator
3. Names of the beneficiaries (often the place of residence as well)
4. Names of the executors
5. Names of witnesses
6. Date the will was made
7. Date the will was probated

Before 1857, the Church of Ireland, as the state mandated and established church, had jurisdiction of all testamentary affairs. Consistorial Courts in each diocese had jurisdiction for

granting probate as in legally authenticating a will and conferring on the executors the power to administer and settle the estate. This court also had the power to issue letters of administration to the next of kin or the main creditor on the estates of those who died intestate. Each court was responsible for wills and administrations in its own diocese.

The wills and administration records of the Consistorial Courts were held locally in each diocese up to the abolition of the testamentary authority of the Church of Ireland in 1857. This authority was then transferred to the Public Records Office which began the slow process of collecting the original records and transcribing them into Will and Grant Books. The Public Records Office then indexed the wills and administration bonds. These bonds were the sureties which the administrators had to produce as a guarantee that the estate would be properly administered.

The original wills and administrations in the Public Records Office were destroyed in 1922, along with almost all Will and Grant Books into which they had been transcribed. The indexes to wills and administration bonds were badly damaged but many were salvaged. These are available at the National Archives of Ireland. There is another potential source for copies of these originals. If you know the lawyer who would have been involved in the probate process, many firms still retain copies. Access is problematic and expensive. The LDS is trying to motivate the surviving firms to turn these records over for research. Thus far their efforts have been fruitless but past experiences are no guarantee that the day will never come when researchers can look at these copies.

Prerogative Wills and Administrations dealt with Irish estates. They tended to deal with the wealthier portion of the Irish population, especially the English landlords, and Protestant Scots-Irish. If your ancestral search includes a Catholic, or Protestant tenant farmer, these will books may not be of much assistance.

The Probate Act of 1857 removed the testamentary authority of the church of Ireland. Instead of the Consistorial Courts and the Prerogative Court having jurisdiction, the power to grant probate and issue letters of administration became vested in a Principal Registry in Dublin and eleven District Registries.

For more information on this subject, see our companion study guide ***Irish Probate and Estate Records.***

Miscellaneous Records

Besides the records mentioned up to this point in your study guide, there are some additional options in Ireland that may shed light on your ancestors:

1. Newspapers: Researchers may find some or all of the following information by browsing old issues of newspapers published in Ireland:
 - a. Elopements
 - b. Bankruptcies
 - c. Engagement announcements
 - d. Court proceedings and announcements
 - e. Marriages

- f. Obituaries
- g. Names of people who emigrated to America and where they were headed

The newspapers through 1850 contained valuable marriage and obituary information. However, the information was primarily limited to well known people and the wealthy classes. Some researchers have described these as more society pages versus being real newspapers. Most marriage announcements contained significant personal information about both families. In the post 1850 period, many Irish Catholic marriages began to appear, including some announcements for family members that now lived in the United States. Some came back to Ireland to get married, then returned to America afterwards.

Major cities in Ireland with established newspapers were Dublin (1719), Cork (1753) Limerick/Clare (1787), Carlow/Kilkenny (1768), Waterford (1770), Belfast and Ulster (1737).

The British Library in London has the largest repository of these records. The National Library of Ireland and local Irish Heritage Centers (nearest to these cities) may have issues from later years after the mid 1800's.

2. Directories: These records were mostly compiled for larger towns. Listings will include most working people regardless of the economic status, widows, and merchants in the region (not just the cities themselves). However, small tenant farmers and landless laborers are rarely included.

Section Three: Irish Heritage Centers

As a direct result of the growing popularity of genealogical research, a system county-based heritage centers have been opened throughout Ireland and Northern Ireland. Both governments have recognized the economic benefits these centers bring to their areas. These centers are designed to assist visitors in tracing their Irish ancestors.

Each heritage center contains materials for a particular county, although some centers in larger areas may only cover part of a county while regional centers in less populated areas may cover two counties. Heritage center staff will search their databases for a fee. If you know what county in Ireland your ancestors came from, one of the best ways of finding a more specific origin may be to write to one of these heritage centers. The latest contact information is listed below.

Antrim

[Ulster Historical Foundation](#)

Balmoral Buildings
12 College Square East

Belfast BT1 6DD.
Northern Ireland
Tel: + 44-2890-332288
Fax: + 44-2890-239885
enquiry@uhf.org.uk

Armagh

[Armagh Ancestry](#)
40 English Street, Armagh BT61 4BA
t: +44 (0)28 3752 1800 f: +44 (0)28 3752 8329
email: info@visitarmagh.com

Carlow

[Carlow Genealogy](#) [temporarily closed]
Carlow County Council
Carlow Town
Co. Carlow.
Tel./Fax: + 353-503-30850
carlowgenealogy@iolfree.ie

Carlow

St. Mullins Muintir Na Tire
Heritage Centre
St. Mullins Village
Co. Carlow.

Cavan

[Cavan Genealogical Research Centre](#)
Cana House
Farnham St.
Cavan Town
Co. Cavan.
Tel: + 353-49-4361094
Fax: + 353-49-4331494
canahous@iol.ie

Clare

[Clare Heritage and Genealogical Centre](#)
Church St.
Corofin
Co. Clare.
Tel: + 353-65-6837955

Fax: + 353-65-6837540
clareheritage@eircom.net

Cork (Diocese of Cork & Ross)

[Cork City Ancestral Project \[not yet open\]](#)
c/o County Library
Farranlea Rd.
Cork City.
Tel: + 353-21-4346435
corkancestry@ireland.com

Cork (Diocese of Cloyne)

[Mallow Heritage Centre](#)
27-28 Bank Place
Mallow
Co. Cork.
Tel: + 353-22-50302
Fax: + 353-22-20276
mallowhc@eircom.net

Derry/Londonderry

[County Derry Genealogy Centre](#)
Heritage Library
14 Bishop St
Derry City
Co. Londonderry BT48 6PW
Northern Ireland
Tel: + 44 (0) 28 71269792 / 71361661
Fax: + 44 (0) 28 71360921
E-mail: niancestors@btclick.com or ancestors@irelandmail.com
Info: <http://www.irishroots.net/Derry.htm>

Down

[Ulster Historical Foundation](#)
Balmoral Buildings
12 College Square East
Belfast BT1 6DD.
Northern Ireland
Tel: + 44-2890-332288
Fax: + 44-2890-239885
enquiry@uhf.org.uk

Down[Banbridge Genealogy Services](#)

c/o Banbridge Gateway Tourist Information Centre
200 Newry Road
Banbridge
Co. Down BT32 3NB.
Northern Ireland
Tel: + 44-2840-626369
Fax: + 44-2840-623114
banbridge@nitic.net

Donegal[Donegal Ancestry Ltd.](#)

The Quay
Ramelton
Co. Donegal.
Tel: + 353-74-51266
Fax: + 353-74-51702
donances@indigo.ie

Dublin (South County)[Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Heritage Society](#)

Moran Park House
Marine Parade
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin.
Tel: + 353-1-2806961 ext 238
Fax: + 353-1-2806969
heritage@dlrcoco.ie

Dublin (North County)[Fingal Heritage Group](#)

Carnegie Library
North St.
Swords
Co. Dublin.
Tel./Fax: + 353-1-8400080
swordsheritage@eircom.net

Dublin (Dublin City)[Dublin Heritage Group](#)

c/o Dublin Public Libraries
138-144 Pearse St

Dublin 2

Tel: + 353-1-3744800

Fax: + 353-1-6744879

E-mail: dublinpubliclibraries@dublincity.ie

Comment - Indexes to Dublin church record compiled by the Dublin Heritage Group are available for examination at the Dublin Public Libraries and Archives (Pearse Street). [Details are available here.](#)

Fermanagh

[Irish World](#)

51 Dungannon Road

Coalisland

Co. Tyrone BT71 4HP

Northern Ireland

Tel/Fax: + 44-2887-746065

info@irish-world.com

Galway (East)

[East Galway Family History Society](#)

Woodford

Loughrea

Co. Galway.

Tel: + 353-509-49309

Fax: + 353-509-49546

E-mail: eastgalwayfhs@tinet.ie or galwayroots@eircom.net

Galway (West)

[West Galway Family History Society](#)

Unit 3

Liosbaun Estate

Tuam Road

Galway City.

Tel/Fax: + 353-91-756737

E-mail: galwayfhswest@eircom.net or galwaywestroots@eircom.net

Kerry

[centre temporarily closed]

Kildare

[Kildare Heritage and Genealogy Co.](#)

c/o Kildare County Library

Newbridge

Co. Kildare.

Tel: + 353-45-433602

Fax: + 353-45-432490

capinfo@iol.ie or kildaregenealogy@iolie

Kilkenny

[Kilkenny Ancestry](#)

Address: Rothe House, Parliament St., Kilkenny

Tel: 353 (0) 56 7722893

Fax: 353 (0) 56 7751 108

Contact: Mary Flood

e-mail: rothehouse@eircom.net

Laois (formerly Queens County)

[Irish Midlands Ancestry](#)

Bury Quay

Tullamore

Co. Offaly.

Tel./Fax: + 353-506-21421

ohas@iol.ie

Leitrim

[Leitrim Heritage Centre](#)

County Library

Ballinamore

Co. Leitrim.

Tel: + 353-78-44012

Fax: + 353-78-44425

leitrimgenealogy@eircom.net

Limerick

Limerick

Limerick Genealogy (formerly Limerick Ancestry)

Library Headquarters

58 O'Connell Street,

Limerick City,

Ireland

Phone + 353 -61-496542

Fax + 353-6- 318750

website: www.limerickgenealogy.com

email: research@limerickgenealogy.com

Longford

Longford Roots
Longford Museum & Heritage Centre
1 Church Street, Longford.
Tel: 353 (0) 43 41235
Fax: 353 (0) 4341279
e-mail: longroot@iol.ie

Louth[Louth County Library](#)

Roden Place
Dundalk
County Louth
Tel.: + 353-42-9353190
Fax: + 353-42-9337635
info@louthcoco.ie or referencelibrary@louthcoco.ie

Louth[Meath-Louth Family Research Centre](#)

Mill Street
Trim
Co. Meath.
Tel: + 353-46-36633
Fax: + 353-46-37502
meathhc@iol.ie

Mayo (North)[Mayo North Family Heritage](#)

Eniscoe
Castle Hill
Ballina
Co. Mayo.
Tel: + 353-96-31809
Fax: + 353-96-31885
normayo@iol.ie

Mayo (South)[South Mayo Family Research Centre](#)

Ballinrobe
Co. Mayo.
Tel./Fax: + 353-92-41214
soumayo@iol.ie

Monaghan[Monaghan Ancestry](#)

Clogher Historical Society

6 Tully St.

Monaghan Town

Co. Monaghan.

Tel: + 353-4782304

monaghanancestry@eircom.net

Offaly (formerly Kings County)[Irish Midlands Ancestry](#)

Bury Quay

Tullamore

Co. Offaly.

Tel./Fax: + 353-506-21421

ohas@iol.ie

Roscommon[Co. Roscommon Heritage and Genealogical Society](#)

Church St.

Strokestown

Co. Roscommon.

Tel: + 353-78-33390

Fax: + 353-78-33398

info@roscommonroots.com

Sligo[Co Sligo Heritage and Genealogical Society](#)

Aras Reddan

Temple St.

Sligo Town.

Tel: + 353-71-43728

heritagesligo@eircom.net or info@sligoroots.com

Tipperary (North)[Tipperary North Family Research Centre](#)

The Governor's House, Kickham St., Nenagh, Co. Tipperary

Tel.: 353 (0) 67 33850

Contact: Nora O'Meara

e-mail: tipperarynorthgenealogy@eircom.net

Tipperary (South)[Brú Ború Heritage Centre](#)

Rock of Cashel

Cashel

Co. Tipperary

Tel: + 353-62-61122

Fax: + 353-62-62700

bruboru@comhaltas.com[Tipperary \(Catholic Archdiocese of Cashel & Emlly\)](#)

Tipperary Family History Research

Excel Heritage Centre

Mitchell St.

Tipperary Town.

Co. Tipperary.

Tel: + 353-62-80555/80556

Fax: + 353-62-80551

tfhr@tipperary-excel.com**Tipperary (Roscrea)**

Roscrea Heritage Centre

GPA Damer House

Castle St.

Roscrea

Co. Tipperary.

Tel: + 353-505-21850

Tyrone[Irish World](#)

51 Dungannon Road

Coalisland

Co. Tyrone BT71 4HP

Northern Ireland

Tel/Fax: + 44-2887-746065

info@irish-world.com**Waterford**[Waterford Heritage Centre](#)

St Patrick's Church

Jenkin's Lane

Waterford City.

Tel: + 353-5- 876123

Fax: + 353-51-850645
mnoc@iol.ie

Westmeath

[Dun na Sí Heritage Centre](#)
Knockdomney
Moate
Co. Westmeath.
Tel: + 353-902-81183
Fax: + 353-902-81661
dunnasimoate@tinet.ie

Wexford

[County Wexford Heritage and Genealogical Society](#)
Yola Farmstead
Tagoat
Rosslare
Co. Wexford.
Tel.: + 353-53-9132610
Fax: + 353-53-9132612
wexgen@iol.ie or wexgen@eircom.net

Wicklow

[County Wicklow Family History Centre](#)
Wicklow's Historic Gaol
Kilmantin Hill
Wicklow Town.
Tel: + 353-404-20126
Fax: + 353-404-61612
wfh@eircom.net

Section Four: Internet Sources

More and more United States records and resources are becoming available via the Internet. The following select lists of websites listed have proven useful for tracing Irish ancestors in Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the United States. This is not a complete list. However, these sites have proved to be the most useful. They also contain links to additional websites of value to Irish research:

1. **Ancestry.com**
<http://www.ancestry.com>
2. **Ancestry Library Edition** (available through the Lee County Library System homepage or by appointment with Bryan Mulcahy)

3. Cyndi's List-Ireland/Northern Ireland <http://www.cyndislist.com/ireland.htm>
4. Emigrant Savings Bank Project
<http://www.genexchange.com/esb/>
5. Family Search – This website allows researchers to search records and holdings of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah pertaining to Irish research. Most of these materials can be borrowed through local Family History Centers located throughout the United States.
<http://www.familysearch.org>
6. GEN UKI: UK and Ireland Genealogy
<http://www.genuki.org.uk/>
7. Heritage Quest (available through the Lee County Library System homepage)
8. Ireland Roots
<http://www.irelandroots.com/>
9. New England Historical Genealogical Register
<http://www.newenglandancestors.org/>
10. New York Public Library-Irma and Paul Milstein Division of United States History, Local History, and Genealogy <http://www.nypl.org/research/chss/lhg/genea.html>
11. Olive Tree Genealogy – Irish Ship Passenger Lists
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ote/iriship1.htm>
12. Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) <http://www.proni.gov.uk/>
13. Sources of Research in Irish Genealogy-Bibliography-United States- Library of Congress
http://www.loc.gov/rr/genealogy/bib_guid/ireland.html
14. US GenWeb Project
<http://usgenweb.org/>

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Ancestors in the Isles: England, Scotland, and Ireland Found in the FHL Records. Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, Dean J. Hunter-Coordinator, Contributors- Richard S. Wilson, Kory Meyerink, Patricia Law Hatcher, Alan E. Mann, Judy A. Jones, Judith Eccles Wight, Paul F. Smart, Diane C. Loosle, c2002. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 SALT**

Ellis Island: An Illustrated History of the Immigrant Experience. New York: Toronto: Maxwell Macmillan International, c1991. **Adult Non-Fiction 325.1 Ell.**

Tracing Immigrant Origins. Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, Kory Meyerink-Coordinator, Contributors- John P. Colletta, Jeanette K.B. Daniels, Richard W. Dougherty, Gerald Haslam, Larry O. Jensen, Marie Melchiori, John Kitzmiller, c2001. **Genealogy Reference 929.1 SALT**

Baxter, Angus. **In Search Of Your British & Irish Roots: A Complete Guide To Tracing Your English, Welsh, Scottish, & Irish Ancestors.** 3rd Edition. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c1991. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 BAX**

- Begley, Donal F. (Editor). *Ancestor Trail In Ireland: A Companion Guide.* Dublin, Ireland, Heraldic Artists, Ltd, c1985. **Genealogy Ref. 929.3415 ANC (Ireland)**
- . *Irish Genealogy: A Record Finder.* Dublin, Ireland, Heraldic Artists, Ltd., c1987. **Genealogy Ref. 929.3415 BEG (Ireland)**
- Black, J. Anderson. *Your Irish Ancestors.* Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, c1974 **Genealogy Ref. 929.3415 BLA (Ireland)**
- Church Of Jesus Christ Of Latter-Day Saints. *Research Outline: Ireland.* Salt Lake City, UT: Family History Library, c1998. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 CHU (Ireland)**
- Colletta, John P. *They Came In Ships: A Guide to Finding Your Immigrant Ancestor's Arrival Record.* 3rd Edition. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Publishing, c2003. (2nd edition circulates) **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 COL**
- Cox, Jane. *Never Been Here Before? A Genealogist's Guide To The Family Records Center.* Kew, Surrey, England: PRO Publications, c1997. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 COX (England)**
- *Tracing Your Ancestors In The Public Records Office.* 3rd Edition. London, England: HMSO, c1984, **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 Cox (England)**
- During, William & Mary. *A Guide To Irish Roots: Including Celts, Vikings, Normans, Kings, Queens, & Commoners.* La Mesa, CA: Irish Names Society, c1986. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 DUR (Ireland)**
- Greenwood, Val D. *Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy.* 3rd Edition. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c2000. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 GRE**
- Grenham, John. *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors.* 2nd Edition. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c1999. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 GRE (Ireland)**
- Hargrove, Jim. *Gateway to Freedom: The Story of the Statue of Liberty & Ellis Island.* Chicago, IL: Children's Press, c1986. **Juvenile Non-Fiction 974.7 Har.**
- Humphery-Smith, Cecil. (Editor). *Phillmore Atlas & Index Of Parish Registers.* Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c1984. **Genealogy Ref. 912.12 PHI (England)**
- Irvine, Sherry. *Your English Ancestry: A Guide For North Americans.* Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Publishing, c1993. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 IRV (England)**
- Johnson, Anne E. *Student's Guide To British American Genealogy.* Phoenix, AZ: Orxy Press, c1996. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 JOH**

- Lewis, Samuel. *Topographical Dictionary Of Ireland: Comprising The Several Counties, Cities, Boroughs, Corporate, Market, Post Towns, Parishes, & Villages With Historical & Statistical Descriptions.* Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing, c1984. **Genealogy Ref. 914.2 (Pine Island Branch)**
- Markwell, F. C. & Pauline Saul. *The A-Z Guide To Tracing Ancestors In Britain.* Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c1985. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 MAR**
- Mitchell, Brian. *Guide To Irish Churches & Graveyards.* Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c1990. **Genealogy Ref. 929.3415 MIT (Ireland)**
- Mitchell, Brian. *Pocket Guide To Irish Genealogy.* Baltimore, MD: Clearfield Publishing, c1991. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 MIT (Ireland)**
- Moulton, Joy Wade. *Genealogical Resources In English Repositories.* Columbus, OH: Hampton House, c1988. **Genealogy Ref. 929.3025 MOU (England)**
- Newman, John J. *American Naturalization Records 1790-1990: What They Are & How to Use Them.* Bountiful, UT: Heritage Quest, c1998. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1072 MOR**
- Novotny, Ann. *Strangers at the Door: Ellis Island, Castle Garden, & the Great Migration to America.* Riverside, CN: Chatham Press, c1971. **Adult Non-Fiction 301.3 Nov.**
- Radford, Dwight. A. *Genealogist's Guide To Discovering Your Irish Ancestors: How To Find & Record Your Unique Heritage.* Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, c2001. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 RAD (Ireland)**
- Rowlands, John. (Editor). *Welsh Family History: A Guide To Research.* Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c1994. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 WEL**
- Ryan, James G. *Irish Records: Sources For Family & Local History.* Revised Edition. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Publishing, c1997. **Genealogy Ref. 016.9415 RYA (Ireland)**
- Stockwell, Foster. *Sourcebook for Genealogical Research; Resources Alphabetically By Type & Location.* Jefferson, NC: McFarland Publishing, c2004. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 STO**
- Szucs, Loretto Dennis. *The Archives: A Guide to the National Archives Field Branches.* Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Publishing, c1988. **Genealogy Ref. 353.007 SZU**
- Szucs, Loretto Dennis & Sandra Hargreaves Luebking. *Family History Made Easy.* Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry, c1998. **Adult Non-Fiction 929.1 SZU**
- *The Source: Guidebook of American Genealogy.* 3rd Edition. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Publishing Company, c2006. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 SOU**

- . ***They Became Americans: Finding Naturalization Records & Ethnic Origins.*** Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Publishing, c1998. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 SZU**
- Tepper, Michael. ***American Passenger Arrival Records.*** Updated & Enlarged Edition. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, c1993. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 TEP**
- Viola, Herman J. ***The National Archives of the United States.*** New York, NY: H.N. Abrams, c1984. **Adult Ref. 027.573 VIO**
- Vicars, Sir Arthur. ***Index To The Prerogative Wills Of Ireland: 1536-1810.*** Baltimore, MD, Genealogical Publishing Company, c1989. **Genealogy Ref. 929.3415 IND (Ireland)**
- Wuehler, Anne. ***Beginner's Guide To British Reference Works.*** North Salt Lake City, UT: HeritageQuest, c2002. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 WUE (England)**
- Yurdam Marilyn. ***Irish Family History*** Baltimore, MD: Clearfield Publishing, c1990. **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 YUD (Ireland)**

NOTE: This study guide is meant to serve as an overview or outline for patrons using the genealogy collection at Fort Myers-Lee County Library. The compiler emphasizes that the information contained in this study guide should not serve as a substitute for taking the time to read one of the books or articles cited in the bibliography, or attend lectures given by the subject specialists cited as authors.

Compiled by Dr. John LaCoste, Genealogy Volunteer and Bryan L. Mulcahy, Reference Librarian, Ft. Myers-Lee County Library, 10/20/2008.

Canadian Research

This study guide is designed to introduce the beginning researcher to important techniques and record types for tracing Canadian ancestors. This information is applicable to all areas of Canada. The bibliography will contain additional materials and sources to facilitate further research. Canadian and American genealogical research techniques share many common traits:

1. Record keeping methods and structure are similar.
2. Little if any language barrier.
3. The ethnic makeup of the population for both countries is similar.
4. Both countries share many of the same economic, political, social, and religious considerations in everyday life.
5. Immigrants were attracted to Canada for many of the same reasons given by those who went to the United States.
6. Many immigrants initially chose to reside in Canada for extended periods before emigrating to the United States.

While even a casual reading of history should make it obvious, many genealogists are caught by surprise because some of our ancestors deliberately chose to come to Canada before they finally settled in the United States. Some of the ancestors made a conscious decision to hide this fact from their offspring. The Canadian connection may remain a family secret until a current genealogist encounters a brick wall trying to find the ancestor who supposedly came in via Ellis Island or one of the other northeastern ports. If you suspect that your ancestor may have entered the United States through Canada, the information contained in this study guide will be complimented by our companion study guide *Immigration Across the United States/Canadian Border.*

As genealogists encounter ancestors who initially entered North America through Canada as opposed to coming directly to the United States, they must become familiar with the genealogical resources available north of the border. The most important Canadian record types, from a genealogical perspective are:

1. Civil Registration
2. Census Returns
3. Church Registers
4. Land Records
5. Immigration Records

Beginning Tips

The basic steps to begin your research are the same regardless of what ethnic group or country is being researched. However, the following recommendations will enhance your success in Canadian research:

1. Take the time to do some background reading about Canadian history, which will be helpful when you begin to use Canadian records. The titles listed in the bibliography at the end of this study guide are some excellent sources.
2. Consult how-to books and articles about genealogy in Canada and the provinces you are interested in, and read through them to gain a sense of Canadian genealogy.

3. Utilize the vast resources of the Internet to help you access and understand Canadian records. The Ancestry.com Learning Center at <http://www.ancestry.com> and Cyndi's List section on Canada at <http://www.cyndislist.com> (enter "Canada" as your search term) are two excellent sources for information via Internet links.
4. Visit the local Mormon Family History Center to utilize the large number of Canadian records available on loan from the Family History Library. The Family History Library in Salt Lake City and their Family History Centers worldwide are open to all individuals regardless of religious affiliation.
5. Join a Canadian genealogical society, read its journal, and enlist its help with your research.

Canadian History: Important Dates and Facts

The importance of history is critical to successful genealogical research. Immigration to Canada was influenced by historical factors in Europe and the United States. In addition to knowing these dates and facts, it is critical to know the history of each individual Canadian Province and town where your ancestor resided. Historical sources will provide important clues as to the social and economic factors that would affect the immigrant. These factors often play significant roles in future migratory patterns.

When French and English settlers began to colonize Canada, it was already inhabited by various Native American peoples. The settlers frequently married these native people or sought them out for missionary work. Colonization between the French and British continued, but France lost nearly all of its Canadian possessions to the British in 1763, including Quebec. Because it was a French colony until 1763, Quebec has a separate history with different laws and methods of record keeping than the British colonies.

Canada developed over many decades from British colonies into an independent nation that is part of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The year 1867 is particularly important because New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Canada East (Quebec), and Canada West (Ontario) were united to form the Dominion of Canada. Settlers also came from the United States during the American Revolutionary War and after the United States formally gained its independence from Britain in 1783. These settlers were known as Loyalists.

Canadian immigrants in the nineteenth century include Scots, Irish, Welsh, Germans, Ukrainians, and other ethnic groups. Its population remains as diverse today as the inhabitants who founded it over two hundred years ago. And for the Canadian genealogist, the various research venues are valuable and extensive. The dates listed below are significant to Canadian history and often impact genealogical research as well:

1604	Sieur de Monts of France founded Acadia
1608	Samuel de Champlain of France founded the city of Quebec
1610	Henry Hudson of England sailed into Hudson Bay
1642	French missionaries founded the city of Montreal
1673	Louis Jolliet and Jacques Marquette sailed down the Mississippi River to its junction with the Arkansas River
1682	Sieur de La Salle sailed to the mouth of the Mississippi River and claimed all the

- land drained by the river and its branches for France
- 1689-1763 Series of wars between British and French Colonists end with the British conquest of New France
- 1774 The Quebec Act gave French Canadians political and religious rights
- 1775-1783 During the American Revolution, an American invasion of Canada failed
- 1784 The colony of New Brunswick was established
- 1791 The Constitutional Act divided Quebec into the colonies of Upper Canada & Lower Canada
- 1812-1815 During the War of 1812, British and Canadian troops turned back two major invasion attempts of Canada by the United States
- 1837 Revolts break out in Upper and Lower Canada (Quebec)
- 1841 The Act of Union joining Upper and Lower Canada into the Province of Canada is implemented
- 1848 The Province of Canada and Nova Scotia gained self-government status
- 1858 Colony of British Columbia was established
- 1864 Conferences in Charlottetown and Quebec City planned for the Confederation (Union) of the Canadian Colonies
- 1867 The British North American Act established the Dominion of Canada
- 1869 Louis Riel led the Metis (people of mixed White and Indian ancestry) in the Red River Rebellion in Manitoba
- 1870 Establishment of the Northwest Territories
- 1885 Louis Reil led a Metis (people of mixed White and Indian ancestry) revolt in Saskatchewan. The Canadian Pacific Railroad was completed
- 1898 Creation of the Yukon Territory
- 1914-1918 More than 600,000 Canadians served in World War I
- 1920 Canada joined the League of Nations
- 1931 The Statute of Westminster made Canada an independent nation

Canadian Population Timeline

This section provides an overview of population development in Canada. I've included it as an overview of how the population increase was impacted by the important dates listed in the previous section.

1688	10,000 (estimated)	1911	7,200,000
1698	15,355	1914	7,879,000
1812	75,000	1929	10,029,000
1824	151,000	1932	10,510,000
1867	3,463,000	1957	16,610,000
1871	3,700,000		

Canadian Provinces and Territories

New Brunswick	1867	British Columbia	1871
Nova Scotia	1867	Prince Edward Island	1873
Ontario	1867	Yukon (Territory)	1898
Quebec	1867	Alberta	1905
Manitoba	1870	Saskatchewan	1905
Northwest Territories (Territory)	1870	Newfoundland	1949

Settlement Highlights & Historical Facts

16th Century: European explorers, such as John Cabot (Great Britain), Jacques Cartier and Samuel de Champlain, discovered valuable fishing grounds and other rich natural resources. Various Native American tribes already settled most of Canada.

17th Century: The first European settlement was founded at Port Royal in Acadia in 1604. Throughout the century, French settlers established residence in New France. Most early French settlements tended to be along the St. Lawrence River and its tributaries. They were followed by more settlers from France and Britain who gradually established competing colonial outposts in the Maritime provinces. Fur traders and various explorers were among the first settlers who braved the area.

18th Century: Growing numbers of immigrants from England, Scotland, Ireland, and Germany settled in Canada. The competition between descendants of the original French and British settlers resulted in more violent confrontations. These problems had their roots in economic, social, cultural, and religious differences. The eventual victory of the British over the French at Quebec, coupled with the aftermath of the French and Indian War in the lower colonies that would eventually form the United States, led to British domination in most areas of Canada. The British defeat in the American Revolution in 1776 resulted in Loyalists moving northward into Canada to maintain their loyalty to Britain. These Loyalists were among the first political refugees to call Canada their adopted home.

19th Century: Social and economic changes created by the Industrial Revolution influenced an increasing number of immigrants to head for North America. While the majority headed for the United States, Canada also received its fair share. British immigration continued to increase. A growing stream of immigrants from Western Europe joined them. In the years before the U.S. Civil War, thousands of black slaves escaped from the U.S. by following the Underground Railroad northward into Canada. After the Canadian Confederation was formed in 1867, thousands of Irish and Chinese laborers were imported as workers to build the Canadian Pacific Railroad. On the Pacific coast, other Chinese joined the rush of fortune hunters from all over the world who trekked into British Columbia and later the Yukon interior to search for gold during the Canadian Gold Rush. Immigrants were lured from Eastern Europe, Russia, and the Ukraine

in hopes of developing lands in the more isolated areas of the country. In 1867, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario (also known as Western Canada at that time) united to form the Dominion of Canada. Quebec, because of its long association with France, had separate laws and methods of record keeping from the very beginning to the present. Even after the British took control of the area after the French and Indian War in 1763, immigrants were never able to diminish the French control of social and religious life.

20th Century: Immigration boomed during this period leading up to World War I, reaching its peak in 1913 as more than 400,000 immigrants, mainly from Eastern Europe and the Ukraine entered the country. Many made their way to western Canada. Hundreds of thousands of American farmers moved northward into the Canadian prairies in search of farmlands. Canadian immigration agents eager to fill the west with farmers recruited people from Central and Eastern Europe seeking land. Other newcomers labored in Canada's expanding lumber, mining, railway, manufacturing, and construction industries.

After the lull caused by the Depression and both World Wars, many Europeans displaced by war (especially World War II), chose to settle in Canada rather than the United States. The lower cost of land in Canada was another attraction as well as homesteading programs that tried to lure people to the unsettled areas in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon region. These programs exist even in modern times.

Many immigrants were attracted to Canada because of less stringent immigration laws. The various colonies were more interested in attracting settlers than enforcing laws since the area was very under-populated. This was still true when Canada became a country and is still true to this day. Canada has always been a destination for Americans who have chosen to leave the United States of America.

In 1924 the U.S. began to establish formal quotas for aliens from foreign countries. However, these guidelines did not apply to Canada. Unofficial quotas existed prior to this time in certain colonies and states. Therefore, many immigrants established residency in Canada for a short period of time, then moved to the United States.

Ethnic Groups of Canada

Acadians: The Acadians were French settlers of eastern Canada who were exiled from their lands in France in the 1750s due to religious persecution.

African-Americans: Many of the early settlers were ex-slaves escaping via the Underground Railroad.

English: Large numbers of settlers came to Canada from Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. Many settled in areas such as Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Ontario. Their numbers included many Loyalists who fled America after the American Revolution.

French: Settlers who began to establish fur trading posts and other economic ventures along the St. Lawrence River and its tributaries.

Germans: They settled around Lunenburg, Nova Scotia and three areas of the province of Ontario: Niagara Peninsula, the Kitchener region, and the townships around Pembroke. Their numbers were never very large, but the majority of this group emigrated from the United States between the years of 1803 and 1828. Most German settlers in Canada emigrated directly from Europe. Many of the Hessians (German mercenaries) who fought for the British during the American Revolution settled in Canada.

Huguenots: French Protestants who, like the Acadians, migrated to Canada to escape religious persecution. Their migrations were not as organized as those that went to the United States. Families settled in various places in the Atlantic colonies (i.e. areas that became New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, and the area that now comprises Ontario). They eventually converted into various Protestant religions, principally Lutheran. Smaller numbers became Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians.

Inuits: Inuits are also referred to as the Eskimos. They arrived by way of a land bridge that once connected Asia and North America in the area that is now known as Alaska. They are the original descendants of Native-Americans.

Jews: Jewish settlement in Canada dates from about 1760 and coincided with the British conquest of New France. Jewish soldiers served in the British Army, later took their discharges and eventually settled in Lower Canada (Quebec). Large numbers of Jewish immigrants arrived in the years between 1880-1939. They settled mainly in Ontario and Quebec. In the 1930's, another group traveled and settled in Manitoba.

Metis: People of mixed White and Native-American ancestry. These were the descendants of Whites and Europeans who intermarried.

Native-Americans: The original settlers of the North American continent. These people came from a variety of Indian tribes. The main tribes represented were:

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------|
| a. Eskimo | e. Blackfoot Flathea | i. Micmac |
| b. Athabaskan | f. Crow | j. Erie |
| c. Algonquin | g. Chippewa | k. Mohawk |
| d. Yakima | h. Penobscot | |

Ukrainians: The largest movement of this group of immigrants began in the years between 1896-1914 when an estimated 200,000 entered Canada. They were attracted by the success of Germans and other Eastern and Southern European ethnic groups such as Greeks, Italians, and Poles in carving out new lives for themselves. Ukrainian immigration has been especially influential in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

Primary Record Types – Genealogical Information

The most popular Canadian record types of interest to genealogists are listed below:

Census Records: Canadian censuses were taken officially every 10 years beginning in 1851. Some areas were taking local or regional censuses prior to this year. Gaps exist in census data from these earlier years. The largest collection of census data is available at the National Archives of Canada and the Family History Library in Salt Lake City or at any of their local branch libraries throughout the United States and Canada. Censuses from 1851 and later list each member of the household and include ethnic origin and religion. Canadian censuses are not indexed, except for the 1871 census of Ontario, which was indexed by county.

Details in Canadian census information depend on the time period. Information in the records often includes the name, sex, family relationship, marital status, age, birthplace, immigration and naturalization information, ethnic origin, religion, occupation, and education. The census often reveals some of the same characteristics of a population or area at a particular period in time, allowing the researcher to discover the historical, social, and genealogical features of people and places as was the case with censuses conducted in the United States.

Censuses were first conducted in what is now Canada in the seventeenth century. These and subsequent censuses conducted up to the year 1851 were scattered and selective in regard to the time periods in which they were conducted and the areas enumerated. These very early censuses generally listed only the head of the household, his/her age and occupation, the number of family members, and perhaps the person's birthplace and religion and a few other facts.

The first comprehensive censuses conducted in Canada were the 1851 and 1861 censuses of Upper Canada (Ontario) and Lower Canada (Quebec). These censuses provided a listing and information for each person in a household. They consisted of an agricultural and a personal schedule. The agricultural schedule presented information on crops and land. The personal schedule included genealogical information such as name, age, sex, marital status, relationship of occupants, occupation, education, and information on ownership of property, land, and livestock.

The 1871 census was the first nationwide census to occur after provincial confederation in 1867, when Canada became a unified nation of provinces. This census was much larger, consisting of nine schedules. The first schedule, the personal schedule, provided information on name, age, sex, marital status, place of birth, ethnic origin, religion, occupation, and education. The other schedules provided information on property, land, livestock, manufacturing, forestry, shipping, fishing, and mining.

The 1881 and 1891 censuses consisted of only one schedule. They provided information on name, age, sex, marital status, place of birth, ethnic origin (1881 census), place of birth of father and mother (1891 census), religion, occupation, and education.

The 1901 census is the most comprehensive census available and consisted of two schedules. Schedule 2, property, preceded Schedule 1, population. Schedule 2 provided the following information: reference to Schedule 1, which in this census indicated exact street address of the population enumerated in Schedule 1, as well as building information. Schedule 1 provided the following genealogical information: name, age, sex, year and date of birth, age, year of immigration to Canada, year of naturalization, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, occupation, employment, and education information.

The 1901 census is the last federal Canadian census available to researchers. The only exceptions were the 1921, 1935, and 1945 censuses of Newfoundland, which did not join confederation until 1949. There are no national census indexes similar to the U.S. Soundex indexes. However, many individuals and genealogical societies have published indexes for some census years and locations.

Canadian census records are available to U.S. researchers on interlibrary loan through the local Family History Center branches of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In Canada they are available on interlibrary loan from the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa, Ontario. Visitors to Toronto will find a complete set of Canadian census records, as well as many census indexes, in the Canadiana Room of North York Central Library and at Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library.

Church Records: These records have proven to be the most popular and informative sources for Canadian research, although the quantity and quality of information will vary by denomination, time period, and locality. If your ancestors lived only transiently in an area and were not there during a census year, church records may be the only manner in which to locate them. This is especially true if they lived in the more isolated areas. This transient scenario is also true if they stayed in Canada a very short time before crossing the border into the United States to avoid stringent immigration rules at the port cities prior to 1895. Church records usually include the following information at a minimum:

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Birth places | 4. Places of residence |
| 2. Parents' names | 5. Names of sponsors (godparents) |
| 3. Occupations | 6. Marriage witnesses |

Major sources of information for most churches are parish registers of baptisms/births, marriages, and burials/deaths. If you are not sure of the religious affiliation of an ancestor, their ethnic background may provide valuable clues:

1. Many Presbyterians came from Scotland.
2. Many Catholics came from France.
3. Many of the Russian or Eastern Orthodox came from the Ukraine or Greece.

There are several large religious denominations in Canada. The major denominations are:

1. Anglican Church of Canada
 - a. Affiliated with the Church of England and the Church of Ireland.
 - b. Members of both churches brought their religion with them to the British North American Colonies.
 - c. The groups formed the Church of England in Canada before adopting the current name.
 - d. Churches are organized on a parish and diocesan basis.
 - e. Each church has a rector or parish priest, and a bishop administers each diocese.
 - f. Each Anglican diocese has archives with varying amounts of information about the parishes within its jurisdiction.
2. Roman Catholic Church
 - a. Majority of Catholic parishes are in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

- b. The Family History Library has many parish registers on microfilm.
 - c. If you are tracing French-Canadian ancestors, the Quebec marriage records will provide the greatest amount of information:
 - (1) names and residences of the parents of both bride and groom
 - (2) dates and places of birth of bride and groom
 - (3) names and residences of witnesses
 - d. Search the various indexes to Quebec Catholic marriages.
 - e. Many genealogists consider the *Loiselle Index* to be the best for this purpose.
3. United Church of Canada
- a. This denomination was formed in 1925, through a union of the Methodist Church (Canada), most of the congregations of the Presbyterian Church (Canada), and the Congregational Churches of Canada.
 - b. The Canada Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church joined in 1968.
 - c. The United Church Archives are gathering all local congregational records of the various uniting denominations. However, the majority of records are still in the possession of the local churches in their respective cities, towns, and villages.

Civil Registration Records: In the United States, we refer to these types of records as “vital records” consisting of births, deaths, marriages, and divorces. In Canada the dates when formal civil registration was established vary by province.

Land Records: Many immigrants were attracted to the U.S. and Canada because they saw an opportunity to own land and practice their religious beliefs without governmental interference. Beginning in 1870, the Canadian government offered potential settlers 160 acres of land for a \$10 fee if they moved to the western areas of Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. This land offer attracted a significant number of Americans who were tired of overcrowding in the east, and annoyed at the growing power of the federal and state governments. To receive this land offer settlers were required to provide the following information:

1. Applicant’s country of birth
2. Subdivision of country of birth (city, town, village, county, or province)
3. Last place of residence
4. Previous occupation

Land records often predate censuses. They can often provide some or all of the following information:

1. Date of an immigrant’s arrival
2. Country of origin
3. Birth place
4. Place of last residence (in Canada, U.S. or foreign country)

Canadian land records vary according to province, but there are five general types of interest to genealogists:

1. Records showing transfer of land from the government or crown to the first patentees, usually in national or provincial offices or repositories

2. Subsequent transactions, usually in local land registry or land title offices
3. Indexes, both original official indexes and historical and genealogical compilations
4. Maps showing boundaries of land holdings and names of owners or occupiers
5. Records of taxes on lands (assessment and collectors' rolls) that provide the legal description of the property

Canadian land records can be viewed in various locations:

1. Town or county magistrate or courthouse
2. Provincial Archives
3. Family History Library
4. National Archives of Canada

Immigration Records (Canadian) : The two primary sources of research using immigration records are the National Archives of Canada, and the Family History Library. The archives of the individual provinces and city/town halls may also have some records on-site to supplement what is available at the National Archives and the Family History Center.

Canadian Naturalization Records

Canadian censuses can provide much valuable genealogical information to the researcher. But while they will provide the country or possibly province or state of a person's birth, only in rare cases will they provide the exact city, town, or village where a person was born. There is only one Canadian source that will almost universally provide this. Canadian naturalization records provide this and much more, although they include somewhat less information than the average U.S. naturalization record. There is no master index available to the public for Canadian naturalization records from the period of Canadian confederation in 1867 to the present. There is, however, a partial index available in selected issues of a government newspaper called the *Canada Gazette*. Issues between 1918 and 1938 offer, at various intervals, lists of aliens who have been naturalized by the Secretary of State. The newspaper is available at the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa and at some Canadian university libraries.

There are basically two types of naturalization records available:

1. Those completed prior to 1918
2. Those processed after this date.

Prior to 1918, naturalization was handled locally in Canada by provincial courts. The basic information in these early records was forwarded to the Secretary of State and placed on index cards which have been microfilmed. (The original records held by provincial courts have been destroyed in most cases.) These index cards contain the name of the person naturalized, residence at time of naturalization, occupation, former residence, date and place of naturalization, number of naturalization, and name of court. These entries provide only basic genealogical information, but they are valuable if the country of birth and place of residence in Canada are not known. Many people who were naturalized prior to 1918 often had further correspondence with the Secretary of State for reasons such as applying for a new naturalization certificate. In these instances, full records are available.

Naturalization records issued after 1918 are usually complete and contain much genealogical information. A typical record may consist of an Application for a Decision, a Royal Canadian

Mounted Police Report, a Petition for Naturalization, an Affidavit Proving Petition, an Oath of Allegiance, and other documents and correspondence. Information provided on these documents may include name, date and exact place of birth, address, occupation, details of entry into Canada, marital status, physical description, information on relatives (limited), reasons for wanting naturalization, and names and addresses of persons who could vouch for the character and reputation of the applicant. Naturalization records can be obtained by writing to: Steven M. Clemenhagen, Public Rights Assistant, Public Rights Administration, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Journal Towers North, Third Floor, 300 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 1L1.

The cost is fifteen Canadian dollars for each naturalization record requested; check or money order should be made out to the Receiver-General of Canada. It should be stated that the request is being made through the Freedom of Information Act. The following information should be provided to aid in the search: name at time of naturalization (include all known forms of name used); approximate year of birth within five to ten years; approximate year or place of naturalization, if known; and proof that the person has been dead twenty years (for those individuals born fewer than one hundred years ago). Any other known identifying information about the individual may also be provided. The information provided in the documents sent should allow the researcher to determine the individual's exact place of birth, as well as his or her method of entry into Canada. This will allow for the search of other records such as ship passenger manifests.

Canadian Border-Crossing Records (Into the United States)

1600-1895:

No official records exist. The border area was completely open except for a few areas where individual colonies, states, or towns took it upon themselves to monitor their individual borders. No records were mandated for Canadians or other immigrants entering the United States from Canada. This lack of enforcement allowed Canadians, Asians, British, Irish, Germans, Italians, Greeks, Russians, Ukrainians, and other groups to evade the increasingly stringent immigration policies at U.S. ports which began to develop in the 1860s onward.

1895-1954:

The various types of records available pertain to late 19th and 20th century immigrants who entered the United States through Canada. These records include first time immigrants, returning U.S. citizens who visited Canada on business or pleasure, "debarred" persons and returning aliens who may have originally entered through U.S. ports. Most existing records have been microfilmed and are available through the National Archives (United States & Canada), and the Family History Center Library System.

St. Albans Records

St. Albans District: Although officially called *Records of the St. Albans District*, they cover the land area from Maine to Washington State. These records consist of the following types:

Border Crossing Records: In July 1895, the U.S. began keeping records of all border crossings:

- a. U.S. Immigration officials met ships in Canada at all ports of entry along the borders and major ports in adjacent cities and towns.
- b. Persons were recorded entering not only by ship, but also by train, footbridge, and

- other modes of travel.
- c. Lakes, rivers, and smaller waterways were patrolled for those attempting to evade detection.

Ports of Entry: These were legally defined as any place (land or sea) having customs facilities through which goods or persons could enter or leave Canada. United States ports along the Canadian border are located in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, and Washington. Every province on the Canadian side of the border would also qualify in the same criteria. As ships crossing over from Europe and the British Isles reached Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, there were ample opportunities for people to disembark legally or illegally.

Ship or Train Manifests: They provide a record of the ship or train passengers or cargo, signed by the ship or train's captain or chief officer, and for the informational use of custom's officials. Canadian border crossing records consist of two types of manifests: (1) Aliens entering the United States from foreign contiguous territory (Canada) and (2) Aliens entering from a foreign country of origin, which was supposed to be recorded at the ship's port of arrival.

Aliens entering under this category were required to provide the following information:

1. Port of entry
2. Date of entry
3. Application made for Canadian citizenship – yes or no
4. Name
5. Age
6. Sex
7. Marital status
8. Occupation
9. Read/write-yes or no
10. Nationality
11. Race
12. Last permanent address
13. Nearest relative or friend in country of origin–name and address
14. Final destination - state, city, and town
15. Ticket to final destination - yes or no
16. Who paid for immigrant's passage?
17. Whether in possession of \$50.00? If less, how much?
18. Ever been in the United States before? - If so, when, where, number of years, date of last departure
19. Joining a friend or relative - name, Address
20. Polygamist /anarchist - yes or no
21. Ever in prison, almshouse, institution, or supported by charity
22. Coming by reason of offer, solicitation, or agreement of employment - yes or no
23. Condition of health, mental, and physical
24. Deformed or crippled - length of time and cause
25. Height
26. Complexion

27. Color eyes and hair
28. Marks of identification
29. Place of birth (country, county/province, city or town)
30. Seaport and date of landing
31. Name of ship
32. Date of examination

Aliens entering from a foreign country of origin, which was supposed to be recorded at the ship's port of arrival had to provide the following information:

1. Name of person
2. Name of ship
3. Port of embarkation
4. Date of departure
5. Port of arrival
6. Age
7. Sex
8. Marital status
9. Occupation
10. Able to read, write - yes or no
11. Native tongue
12. Nationality
13. Race
14. Last permanent residence - country, city, or town
15. Name and address of nearest relative in country of origin
16. Final destination, state, city, or town
17. Ticket to final destination - yes or no
18. By whom was passage paid
19. Whether in possession of \$50.00 - If less, how much?
20. Ever been in the United States before? If so, when, where?
21. Joining relative or friend - name, address, relationship
22. Purpose of coming to the United States
23. Intend to return to country of origin after temporary engagement in labor pursuits?
24. Length of time intends to remain in the United States
25. Intend to become a United States citizen – yes or no?
26. Ever in prison, almshouse, institution, or supported by charity
27. Polygamist / anarchist - yes or no
28. Coming by reason of employment offer, solicitation, or employment agreement
29. Previously deported within one year - yes or no
30. Condition of Health, Mental and Physical
31. Deformed or crippled - nature of injury/condition
32. Height
33. Complexion
34. Hair/eye color
35. Marks of identification
36. Place of birth - country, city, or town

Manifest Procedure Revisions:

- 1882: Specific procedures were set and maintained by immigration officials. They were required to record the ship's name, master, ports and dates of embarkation and arrival, name of each passenger, place of birth, last legal residence, age, sex, occupation, and any miscellaneous remarks.
- 1893: The format was amended to include the immigrant's full name, marital status, nationality, final destination, whether in the U.S. before (when, where), and whether going to join a relative (name, address, and relationship).
- 1903: Questions involving racial characteristics were added.
- 1907: Immigrants were required to provide the name and address of nearest relative in the old country or country of origin.

Index Cards: Index cards were prepared for each record. They could be typed or handwritten. If a family traveled together, each individual was usually cross-referenced on an index card. When done properly, this is an excellent resource because researchers are alerted to other related family members accompanying the immigrant. Information on the reverse side will frequently contain medical data and/or reference numbers for Alien Registration in the U. S. All original index cards and manifest lists have been destroyed. The microfilm copies are the only existing records.

Microfilmed Records: Records of the St. Albans District, 1895-1954, consist of 5 series of microfilmed index cards and manifests. Three are indexes contained in five hundred and four (504) rolls of microfilm. The other two are manifest copies contained in six hundred and sixty four (664) rolls of microfilm.

M1461 - SOUNDEX INDEX (1895-1924) 400 rolls

M1462 - ALPHA INDEX - SMALL VERMONT PORTS (1895-1924) 6 rolls

Some entries are from as late as the 1950s. They are arranged alphabetically within each port. Information includes:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. Manifest cards | c. Primary inspection documents |
| b. Oaths of returning citizens | d. Records of registry |

Canadian Ports of Entry:

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| a. Alborg | d. Highgate Springs | g. Richford |
| b. Beacher Falls | e. Island Pond | h. St. Albans |
| c. Canaan | f. Norton | i. Swanto |

M1463 - SOUNDEX INDEX - (1924-1952) - 98 rolls

M1464 - ARRIVALS (1895-1954) Canadian Atlantic and Pacific Ports - 639 rolls

M1465 - ARRIVALS (1929-1949) Canadian Pacific Ports - 25 rolls

NOTE: There are an additional one hundred seventeen (117) rolls of microfilm for the Detroit Port, 1906-1954, in series M1478 that was never included in the St. Albans District.

Canadian Resources in the Family History Library

The Family History Library in Salt Lake City has a large collection of genealogical materials pertaining to Canada. These materials may be accessed via the Family Search website <http://www.familysearch.org>, as well as through loan using any of the Family History Centers nationwide. The Family History Centers are branches of the main Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

1. Canadian censuses, 1851-1901 and some earlier, published indexes
2. Catholic Church registers for Ontario and Quebec, and published abstracts and indexes
3. Land records, such as land grants and homestead records
4. Inward passenger lists beginning in 1865
5. Outward border crossings into the United States beginning in 1895.
6. Quebec genealogical dictionaries such as those by Tanguay and Jetté
7. Quebec marriage indexes by Loiselle and Rivest
8. Ontario province-wide civil registration (vital records) from 1869 onward

Internet Websites Pertaining To Canadian Genealogical Research

Archives Canada - <http://www.archivescanada.ca/english/index.html>
 British Columbia Archives - <http://www.bcarchives.bc.ca/bcarchives/default.aspx>
 Canadian GenWeb - <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~canwgw/>
 Canadian Genealogy and History Links - <http://www.islandnet.com/~jveinot/cghl/cghl.html>
 Canadian Institute for Historical
 Micro Reproductions - <http://library.uvic.ca/site/micro/CIHMhandout.pdf>
 Canadian Military Heritage - <http://www.cmhg-phmc.gc.ca/cmh/en/default.asp>
 Canadian Telephone Numbers, Addresses - <http://www.canada411.ca/>
 Church of Jesus Christ of
 Latter-Day Saints (Family Search) – <http://www.familysearch.org>
 Cyndi's List of Genealogical Sites (Canada) <http://www.cyndislist.com/canada.htm>
 Canada Geographic Maps, names, etc. - http://geonames.nrcan.gc.ca/index_e.php
 Manitoba, Archives of - http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/genealogy/gen_text/q_faq.html
 National Archives of Canada - http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/02/020202_e.html
 National Archives (United States) - <http://www.archives.gov/>
 National Library of Canada - <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/amicus/>
 New Brunswick Archives - <http://archives.gnb.ca/Archives/default.aspx?culture=en-CA>
 Nova Scotia Archives - <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/>
 Ontario Archives - <http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/>
 Prince Edward Island Archives – <http://www.edu.pe.ca/paro>
 Québec (Nationales Archives du
 Quebec) - http://www.banq.qc.ca/portal/dt/accueil.jsp?bnq_resolution=mode_1024
 Saskatchewan Archives Board - <http://www.saskarchives.com/>
 United Empire Loyalists' Association
 of Canada - <http://www.uelac.org/>

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Compiled By Bryan L. Mulcahy, Reference Librarian, Fort Myers-Lee County Library, 3/25,2008