



RESEARCH IN NORWAY

2019

Determine the place of origin of your ancestor.

Norwegian records are not centralised therefore before any research can be undertaken, you need to first establish the exact County, Province, town or village that your ancestor was born in or that a particular event occurred in. You also need the correct names and dates (birth date, emigration year).

The golden rule of genealogy is to always work back from the known to the unknown. Therefore the place of origin of your ancestor should be looked for in New Zealand records, or if your family came via Australia or Britain then in those records.

The place of origin of your ancestor should be mentioned on N.Z. birth and death certificates after 1876 and on N.Z. marriage certificates after 1882.

It should appear in naturalisation papers so if your ancestor became naturalised then the full file for this should be applied for.

It may also appear in an obituary, on a headstone, in army records, shipping lists, as well of course as family sources. If the family were in Britain then the census there may show the place of origin.

Hamburg was a major port of embarkation for Norwegians.

The Hamburg Passenger Lists begin in 1850, are chronological by ship and show each passenger's last place of residence.

Researching in Norway

Norwegian research relies on you knowing the village/parish, which your ancestor came from. You can then search the parish Records (*Kirkebøker*).

These were kept by the Lutheran Church until about 1930. Even if your family were not Lutherans, eg; Roman Catholic, or non-conformist, they would be entered into the local Lutheran *Kirkebøker*.

Norwegian naming practices are important. Until about 1900, almost every person had a patronymic or father-name. If a man named Anders had a son called Jon, then the boy would be called Jon Anderssen, that is: Jon, the son of Anders. If Anders had a daughter called Anne,

she would be Anne Andersdatter, that is: Anne, the daughter of Anders. The women used their patronymic all their lives married or not. This is very helpful in determining relationships, but it can also be confusing when there are several generations using the same names.

Note that there are various Norwegian dialects and two different written languages.

This means that you will often find variations in spelling in different areas.

Norwegian Administrative Units

1. There are three secular levels: The state at the top, the county (*fylke*) in the middle and the local administration (*kommune*) at the bottom.

2. There are also three *clerikal* levels: The state church (Lutheran) at the top, the diocese (*bispedømme*) in the middle, and the parish (*prestegjeld*) at the bottom.

3. 'Secular' units and 'church' units at the same level may have different borders.

4. During the last four hundred years most of the units have changed borders and names.

Additional points about the administrative units: Norway is divided into 19 counties (*fylke*, pl. *fylker*). Previously they were called *amt*, and their individual names were changed.

(See map over page)

Each **county** (*fylke*) consists of local administrative units called *kommune* (pl. *kommuner*). This level was created in 1837. Previously they were called *herred* or *herad*. Oslo *Fylke* has only one *Commune*; Nordland *Fylke* tops the list with 45.

In 1964 the total number of *kommuner* was reduced from nearly 750 to 440. In many cases the borders were adjusted then to better suit today's communications.

In church administration, the diocese (*bispedømme*) is roughly equivalent to the County. There are, however, only ten dioceses, Borg, Oslo, Hamar, Tunsberg, Agder, Stavanger, Bjørgvin, Møre, Nidaros, Sør-Hålogaland, Nord-Hålogaland. The local level equivalent to the *kommune* is the parish.

There are two kinds of parishes in Norway: *Prestegjeld*, in most cases

identical with the *kommune* in extent and name. If there were more than one church (*kirke*) in the *Prestegjeld* in earlier centuries, there would usually also be a *kirkesokn* or *sokn* for each church, each with a separate name.

Details found on Church Records

Baptismal Certificate (Dopsattest):

There are separate sections for males and females.

Names, christening date, place, names of parents, parish.

Marriage Certificate (Vigselattest):

Names, year and place of births, marriage date and place, name of father, names of both bride and groom **after** marriage.

Burial Certificate (Dødsattest):

Parish, names, date of birth, place of birth, date of death, and death place, burial date and place, may include name of spouse.

Note that over time, the records vary somewhat. Registration started in the 17th Century but was patchy for some time.

Other Information

Parish registers also have sections for Immigrants and Emigrants, Confirmations, Vaccinations and Non-conformists (i.e. non-Lutherans) until about 1930.

Census (Folketelling)

1801 was the earliest useful census. The following are the most useful for genealogical purposes: 1865, 1875, 1891, 1900 and 1910. These are somewhat complicated but are available on-line.

Farm Books (Bygdebøker)

Farm books are books written by local historians and trace the history of individual farms located in a particular parish over time. They are an invaluable source of genealogical information for the people living on the farm. They also may give you the place to where a person has moved.

Not every parish has a farm book. They are written in Norwegian but often you can still garner the information you need. Many are now available online. You must know the precise names and parish of the family in order to use them. Johan Borgos has a useful article on this. (see website).

What you already know

Surname

Christian name

Country

County/Province

Town/Parish

Birth

Marriage

Arrival in NZ Year

Children born not in NZ

Parents

NZ Certificates to obtain

Birth

Marriage

Death

Naturalization

Military in NZ

Check List

UK Census

UK Alien Arrival

UK Naturalization

Archives

Hamburg Passenger list

MAP OF NORWAY



OLD COUNTIES ... NEW COUNTIES

Akershus	.....	Akershus
Bratsberg	.....	Telemark
Buskerud	.....	Buskerud
Finnmarken	.....	Finnmark
Jarlsberg og Larvik	..	Vestfold
Kristians	.....	Oppland
Lister og Mandal	....	Vest-Agder
Nordre Bergenshus	..	Sogn og Fjordane
Nordre Trondhjem	..	Nord Trøndelag
Nedenes	.....	Aust-Agder
Nordland	.....	Nordland
Romsdal	.....	Møre og Romsdal
Søndre Bergenshus	..	Hordaland
Søndre Trondhjem	..	Sør-Trøndelag
Smaalenene	.....	Østfold
Stavanger	.....	Rogaland
Tromsø	.....	Troms
<i>Municipal Counties:</i>		
Kristiania	.....	Oslo
Bergen	.....	Bergen

Recommended Reading

Thomsen, Finn A., *Scandinavian Genealogical Research*.

Smith, Frank & Finn Thomsen, *Genealogical Guide book & Atlas of Norway*

Norwegian Archives Key

To be used with the Archival Site

F: Født: Birth

K: Konfirmerede/Confirmation (around 14 yrs of age)

V: vigd: Marriage

D: Død: Death

J: Jævnforelser: Index (patchy)

A: Afganglister: Moving out of Parish

-(patchy)

T: Tilganslister: Moving into Parish (patchy)

European Interest Contact

Send research queries to the Contact on the **European Interest Contact** page at www.genealogy.org.nz

A group meets on the 1st Friday of most months at the Family Research Centre at 159 Queens Rd, Panmure from 4pm–10pm. Continental advice is usually available, however please first check with the Contact to be quite sure.

Websites

The National Archives of Norway (there is an English version) has church records, census, land records and much more. As well as images you can search in transcribed source material for free. There are also help guides.

<http://www.arkivverket.no/en>

Genealogical Sources (somewhat old site but still useful)

Written by a local Historian, Johan Borgos.

<http://www.borgos.nndata.no/sources.htm>

More "How To" articles

<http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~norway/articles.html>

Rootsweb have some very interesting tidbits, such as how to order the Farmbooks by Library Interloan and an English/Norwegian dictionary available to assist with basic genealogical terms

<http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~norway/bygdebok.html>