

EUROPEAN IMMIGRANT ANCESTORS: THE EXPERIENCES & THE RECORDS



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Many factors pushed or pulled our European ancestors to emigrate from Europe. Follow in the footsteps of family members who arrived between 1820 and 1920.

What did our ancestors experience when they decided to leave their homes and communities to sail to America? What was the voyage like? How did they make their way in the New World? Discover essential and unusual resources for migration research for all United States ports in this presentation.

1. LEAVING THE OLD WORLD AND VOYAGING TO THE NEW

■ PUSH AND PULL FACTORS

What influenced your ancestors to leave their native lands? Economic, political, and demographic factors pushed some to leave for America, while other factors pulled ancestors from their native countries.

■ IMMIGRATION BEGINS: THE COLONIAL ERA

American immigration history before 1965 unfolded three waves, each with its own distinct motivations, ethnicities, peaks, and ebbs. The first wave of immigration was relatively small. About one million people arrived in the American colonies as free men and women, indentured servants, or enslaved persons.

■ SECOND WAVE OF IMMIGRATION, C. 1820-1860

Approximately eight to ten million immigrants arrived during this period, when New York became the largest port of entry. Irish, Germans, Prussians predominate.

■ THIRD WAVE OF IMMIGRATION, 1880-1920

At least 20 million immigrants – and perhaps as many as 27 million – arrived during this third wave. In 1901, the Hamburg–Amerikanische Packetfahrt–Aktien–Gesellschaft (HAPAG)



Entrance to the [HAPAG](#) Auswandererhallen, or emigrant village, in [Veddel](#), 1909. ([veddel-bilder.de](#))

built this Auswandererhallen, or emigrant village, in [Veddel](#). Thousands of emigrants, who arrived in Hamburg from many places in Europe, were quarantined here before they sailed for the United States.

Hamburg was Germany's leading emigration port because HAPAG marketed directly to prospective emigrants. In 1891, for the first time, more emigrants left Germany via Hamburg than from Bremen .

■ **STEERAGE: 4/5THS OF PASSENGERS, 1/5TH OF THE SHIP**

The steerage area of an immigrant ship (aka third class or tween decks or Zwischendeck) accommodated passengers traveling third class, the cheapest class of ticket. It was called “steerage” because the control lines for the rudder ran through this part of the ship.

Discover what steerage passage to America was like, what it cost, and what was included in the fare.

2. ARRIVING IN PORT AND MAKING THEIR WAY

Ports, arrival experiences, and entry inspections were dependent primarily on prevailing US immigration laws. New York was the leading port of entry during peak European immigration; immigrants at other US ports had similar experiences. Resources for all US ports are included in this presentation. Immigrants landing in New York went to the following locations:

- A. US Customs House, 1820–1855
- B. Castle Garden, 1855–1890
- C. Barge Office, 1890–91; 1897–1900
- D. Ellis Island, 1892–1897; 1900–1954
 - 1. Disembarking
 - 2. Baggage Room
 - 3. Waiting
 - 4. Medical Examinations
 - 5. Registry Room
 - 6. Legal Inspection
 - 7. Possible Medical or Legal Detention
 - 8. Entering the Country

3. FINDING MIGRATION RECORDS

European emigration (departure) records often were created and kept at the town level, making the identification of your immigrant ancestor's native village or parish imperative. As you work to locate immigrant ancestors and their families, search backward through the immigrant ancestors's life.

Find every US record available for that person and their family group. Resources for immigrant ancestors include:

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| A. Passenger Arrival Lists | E. Passports & Passport Applications |
| B. Passenger Departure Lists | F. Emigrant Aid Societies |
| C. Resources by Nationality/Ethnicity | G. Naturalization, Citizenship and Alien Records |
| D. Permission To Emigrate | |

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Free monthly newsletter
www.sassyjanegenealogy.com/newsletter
- *European Immigrant Ancestors: Their Experiences & the Records* ebook, covering the information in this webinar in depth.
www.sassyjanegenealogy.com/shop/
Promo code: europe10
- "Passenger Lists for US Ports"
www.sassyjanegenealogy.com/passenger-lists-for-us-ports
- FamilySearch, "Emigration and Immigration Resources," <http://bit.ly/2SAAWme>

