



# Overseas Ancestors: How to Search Immigration Records

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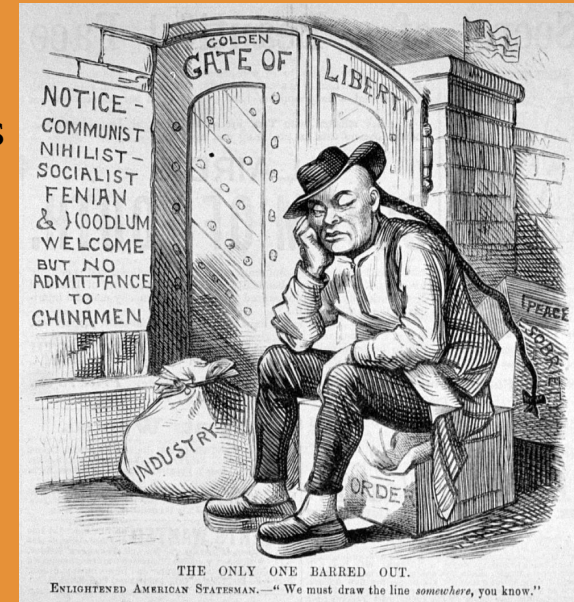
# Background of Immigration to the U.S.

- 1607 - Jamestown, Virginia - British & Indentured Servants
- 1620 - Plymouth, Massachusetts - English Puritans
- 1626 - NYC-area - Dutch
- 1600s - South - Spanish & French
- 1717-1775 - Frontier & Colonies - Quakers, Presbyterians, Scots-Irish, Africans
- 1790 - 3.9 million people: 2.5 million Brits, 750,000 Africans
- 1848 - U.S. takes New Mexico & California - 72,000 Mexicans
- 1850 - Census first asks birthplace
- 1850-1930 - Midwest - 5 million Germans, 4.5 million Irish, 3.5 million Brits
- 1880 - steam ships = young people, Southern Europe, Russia
  - 25 million Italians, Greeks, Hungarians, Poles, Slovaks; 4 million Jews
- 1920s/30s - Polish, Catholics, Jews, Eastern Orthodox, Lebanese, Syrians



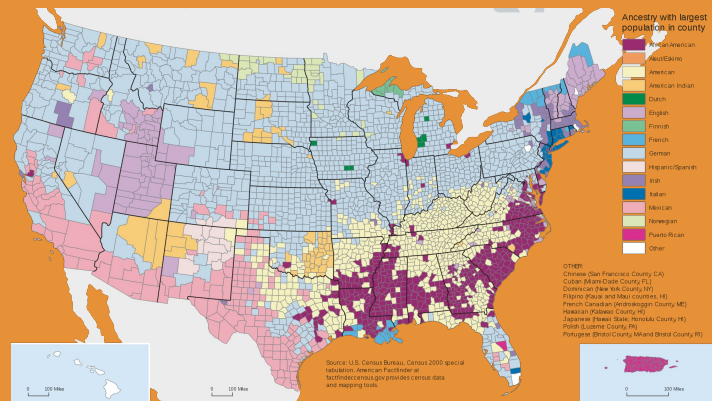
# Immigration Stoppages & Exceptions

- 1875: Page Act aka Asian Exclusion Act (women)
- 1882: Chinese Exclusion Act (renewed 1892, 1902) (added men)
- 1891: immigration changes to federal purview
- 1917: literacy tests installed
- 1921: Emergency Quota Act - S.Europeans/Russians/Jews
- 1924: Immigration Act - “ ”
- 1945: War Brides Act
- 1948: Displaced Persons Act - 600,000 immigrants



# Ancestry.com

- Most records for USA, Europe, North American (~Australia, Canada)
  - USA many are by state
- 20th Century records have most detail
- Types of Records:
  - Departing Passenger & Crewlists, 1914-1966 - 7.8 million records
  - U.S. Select Crew Lists & Manifests, 1903-1962 - 2.4 million records
  - PA Federal Naturalization Records, 1795, 1931 - 899,000 records
  - Slave Manifests (New Orleans, LA), 1807-1860
  - NY Passenger & Crew Lists (includes Ellis Island & Castle Garden), 1820-1957 - 82.9 million records
  - Naturalization Records, 1840-1957 - 1.4 million records
  - Naturalization Index, 1794-1995 - 2.4 million records
- HOW TO SEARCH: birth date, place, name, immigration year - will give you occupation, date, place of departure/arrival, spouse, children
  - Many records are multiple pages long, so be sure to click previous/next to check



# Ancestry.com Examples

## Pennsylvania, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1800-1962

**Search** ☐ Match all terms exactly

First & Middle Name(s)

Last Name

Birth  Day  Month  Year  Location

Lived In  City, County, State, Count

Arrival  Day  Month  Year  City, County, State, Count

Departure  City, County, State, Count

Any Event  Day  Month  Year  City, County, State, Count

Keyword

e.g. pilot or "Flying Tigers" ▼

Nationality

Relationship to Passenger

Ship

Airline

Gender

-- Select --

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with National Archives  
and Records  
Administration

### Browse this collection

To browse this image set, select from  
the options below.

Series Title

Choose...

Roll Number

### Related data collections

[Pennsylvania, Federal Naturalization  
Records, 1795-1931](#)

This database consists of  
naturalization records for Pennsylvania  
from U.S. District Courts.

[Pennsylvania, Naturalization Records  
from Supreme and District Courts,  
1794-1908](#)

This database contains a collection of  
early Pennsylvania naturalization  
records.

[Philadelphia, Passenger and  
Immigration Lists, 1800-1850](#)

This data set contains alphabetical

## U.S. Naturalization Record Indexes, 1791-1992 (Indexed in World Archives Project)

**Search** ☐ Match all terms exactly

First & Middle Name(s)

Last Name

Birth  Day  Month  Year  Location

Lived In  City, County, State, Count

Arrival  City, County, State, Count

Any Event  Day  Month  Year  City, County, State, Count

Keyword

e.g. pilot or "Flying Tigers" ▼

Date of Action  Day  Month  Year

**Search** Clear search

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### Browse this collection

To browse this image set, select from  
the options below.

State

Choose...

Index (by court and/or location)

▼

Roll Description

### Related data collections

[U.S. Naturalization Records, 1840-](#)

## Pennsylvania, Federal Naturalization Records, 1795-1931

**Search** ☐ Match all terms exactly

First & Middle Name(s)

Last Name

Birth  Day  Month  Year  Location

Arrival  City, County, State, Count

Any Event  City, County, State, Count

Add family member: Spouse

First & Middle Name(s) Last Name

Spouse

Keyword

e.g. pilot or "Flying Tigers" ▼

Record Type

Declaration Number

Declaration Place  Day  Month  Year  Location

Petition Date  City, County, State, Count

**Search** Clear search

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and Records  
Administration

### Browse this collection

To browse this image set, select from  
the options below.

Court

Choose...

Description

### Related data collections

[U.S. Naturalization Records](#)

[U.S. Naturalization Records](#)

[U.S. Naturalization Record Indexes,  
1791-1992 \(Indexed in World Archives  
Project\)](#)

Contained in this database are indexes  
to naturalization records (primarily  
declarations and petitions) for various  
courts (predominantly U.S. District and  
Circuit courts) and years. The states  
whose records are currently included  
in the database are Alaska, California,  
Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois,

# Naturalization & Citizenship

- Naturalization began in 1790 - state/local level until September 1906 when became a federal responsibility
- Must be in USA 5 years to petition for naturalization
- 1790-1922 - women's citizenship depended on husband
  - When he became a citizen, so did she & minor children (<21)
  - If American woman married in "alien", she lost her citizenship
  - Married Women's Act of 1922 - woman's nationality separated from husband's
    - 1936 could apply just to take oath, but only if marriage ended in death or divorce
    - 1940 could repatriate regardless of marital status

# Naturalization & Citizenship

- “First Paper” = Declaration of Intent (2 years)
- “Second Paper” or “Final Paper” = Petition for Naturalization (5 years)
- Do not have to occur in same place
- More useful information in Declaration of Intent (includes imm. date)
- 1862: Army Veterans of War could petition without declaration after 1 year
- 1894: Extended to Navy & Marines
- 1918: WWI Veterans could petition without declaration
- National Archives has NO county-level naturalization records for PA
  - County naturalized should have these records, but don’t be surprised if they tell you they don’t

# Naturalization Papers Examples: 1924

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
NATURALIZATION SERVICE

ORIGINAL

No. 102398

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### DECLARATION OF INTENTION

☒ Invalid for all purposes seven years after the date hereof

State of Pennsylvania, } ss: In the District Court of the United States.  
Western District of Pennsylvania, }

I, Miss Mary Ethel Disney, aged 40 years,  
occupation School teacher, do declare on oath that my personal  
description is: Color White, complexion fair, height 5 feet 5 1/2 inches,  
weight 170 pounds, color of hair brown, color of eyes gray,  
other visible distinctive marks None.  
I was born in Stratford, Canada  
on the 4th day of January, anno Domini 1884; I now reside  
at 5127 Center Ave., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.  
I emigrated to the United States of America from Stratford, Canada  
on the vessel Starx Unknown; my last  
foreign residence was Stratford, Canada; I am not married; the name  
of my wife is                     ; she was born at                       
and now resides at                     .  
It is my bona fide intention to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign  
prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, and particularly to HER MAJESTY V. KING OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,  
of whom I am now a subject;  
I arrived at the port of Greenville, in the  
State of Pennsylvania, on or about the                      day  
of March, anno Domini 1895; I am not an anarchist; I am not a  
polygamist nor a believer in the practice of polygamy; and it is my intention in good faith  
to become a citizen of the United States of America and to permanently reside therein:  
SO HELP ME GOD.

Miss Mary Ethel Disney  
(Original signature of declarant.)

Subscribed and sworn to before me in the office of the Clerk of said Court  
at Pittsburgh, Pa., this 15th day of July,  
anno Domini 19 24

J. WOOD CLARK  
Clerk of the District Court of the United States.  
By B. B. O'Connell, Deputy Clerk.

[SEAL.]

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
NATURALIZATION SERVICE

ORIGINAL  
No. 84386

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### PETITION FOR NATURALIZATION

To the Honorable the District Court of the United States for the Western District of Pennsylvania

The petition of Miss Mary Ethel Disney,                      hereby filed, respectfully sheweth

First, My place of residence is 5712 Penn. Blvd., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Second, My occupation is Teacher, on or about the 1st day of January, anno Domini 1884, at Stratford, Canada.

Third, I was born on the 4th day of January, anno Domini 1884, at Stratford, Canada.

Fourth, I emigrated to the United States from Stratford, Canada, on or about the 1st day of April, anno Domini 1895.

Fifth, I arrived in the United States at the port of Greenville, Pa., on or about the 1st day of April, anno Domini 1895.

Sixth, I declared my intention to become a citizen of the United States on the 1st day of July, anno Domini 1895.

Seventh, I am now a subject of the United Kingdom, of whom I am now a subject.

Eighth, I have resided continuously in the United States of America for the term of five years at least, immediately preceding the date of this petition, to wit, since the 1st day of April, anno Domini 1895, and in the State of Pennsylvania, continuously since the date of this petition, since the 1st day of April, anno Domini 1895, being a continuous residence within the State of at least one year next preceding the date of this petition.

Ninth, I have not heretofore made petition for citizenship to any other                      (If made petition for citizenship to the 1st day of April, anno Domini 1895, and the said petition was denied by the said Court for the following reasons and causes, to wit,                      and the cause of each denial has since been repudiated or removed.)

Tenth, Attached hereto and made a part of this petition are my declaration of intention to become a citizen of the United States and the certificates from the Department of Labor, together with my affidavits and the affidavits of the two verifying witnesses thereto, required by law. Wherefore your petitioner prays that he may be admitted a citizen of the United States of America.

Miss Mary Ethel Disney  
(Original signature of petitioner.)

Declaration of intention, No. 102398 and Certificate of arrival from Department of Labor filed this 15th day of February, anno Domini 1924  
Filed to Clerk or Court-Certificates arrived in the United States on or about the 15th day of February, anno Domini 1924, after the words reading "and Certificates of arrival from Department of Labor"

### AFFIDAVITS OF PETITIONER AND WITNESSES

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA } ss:  
Western District of Pennsylvania, }

The undersigned petitioner being duly sworn, deposes and says that he is the petitioner in the above-entitled proceedings; that he has read the foregoing petition and knows the contents thereof; that the said petitioner is signed with his full, true name; that the same is true of his own knowledge; and that he is not a subject of any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, and that he is in these matters his belief is to be true.

Witness my hand and seal of office at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, this 1st day of February, anno Domini 1924.

Miss Mary Myrtle McGready, Teacher, residing at                     ,  
and Miss Rachel Robinson, residing at                     ,  
do hereby severally, duly and respectively sworn, depose and say that he is a citizen of the United States of America; that he has personally known the petitioner since mentioned, to have resided in the United States continuously immediately preceding the date of filing his petition, since the 1st day of January, anno Domini 1895, and in the State of Pennsylvania, continuously since the 1st day of January, anno Domini 1895, and that he has personal knowledge that the said petitioner is a person of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and that the petitioner is a very well qualified, in his opinion, to be admitted a citizen of the United States.

Miss Mary Myrtle McGready  
(Original signature of witness.)

Subscribed and sworn to before me by the above-named petitioner and witnesses in the office of the Clerk of said Court at Pittsburgh, Pa., this 15th day of February, anno Domini 1924.

J. Wood Clark, Clerk.  
By W. D. O'Connell, Deputy Clerk.

[SEAL.]

# Ship Manifests/Passenger & Crew Lists Examples: 1880

Form C. No. 34 1-43-10, 25, 28-100 Barks.



## AMERICAN LINE.

**Report or Manifest** of all the Passengers taken on board the

whereof

is Master, from

burthen

Tons

and owned by

of

and bound to

NAMES.	AGE.	SEX.	OCCUPATION.	To what Country belonging.	Country of which is their intention to become inhabitants.	Number and Names of Passengers who have died on the Voyage.
Bertha Jonsson	19	F	Spin	Norway	U.S.	
Ed. P. Kloppeken	53	M	Broker	Prussia	"	
Thorsten Knudsen	20	"	Farmer	"	"	
Wm. T.	22	F	Spin	"	"	
Mrs. T.	18	"	wife	"	"	
Christian Klint	112	M	Electrician	"	"	
Mary Kelly	22	F	Spin	Ireland	"	
Margt.	20	"	"	"	"	

# Ship Manifests/Passenger & Crew Lists Examples: 1959

Surname	Given Name	Initial	Passport Number
McFETRIDGE	EDWIN		
Nationality (Citizenship)	Birthplace	Birthdate	
USA	PAK Pa	MAR 24, 1911	
United States Address			
PAK Pa. P.D.T			
Permanent Address			
Same			
Visa Issued At		<b>IMM. &amp; NATZ. SERVICE</b> <b>PITTSBURGH, PA. 2</b> <b>ADMITTED</b>  <b>MAR 11 1959</b>  <b>CLASS</b> L.S.C <b>TO</b>	
Date Visa Issued			
Vessel Name or Airline and Flight No. of Arrival			
TWA - FLY 5951			
Passenger Registered At			
PITTSBURGH PA USA			

Form I-94 B (Rev. 7-1-57)  
ARRIVAL - DEPARTURE RECORD

16-1

ANY HANDWRITTEN ENTRIES MUST BE IN BLOCK CAPITAL LETTERS

# Passports Examples: 1918 & 1912



THIS blank must be completely filled out. The applicant must state in current or past tense order, and complete the application must state whether she is married or not, and a married woman must state whether her husband is a native citizen. The rules should be carefully read when making the application for the Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Washington, D. C.

(Hearer or sign.)

(FOR FOR NATIVE CITIZENS.)

No. 84319  
BUREAU OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS  
NOV 12 1912  
Issued

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

STATE OF New York }  
COUNTY OF New York } ss:

I, Sara A. Tarbell, a NATIVE AND LOYAL CITIZEN of the UNITED STATES, hereby apply to the Department of State, at Washington, for a passport for myself, accompanied by my wife, and minor children, as follows: born at Brooklyn, New York, on the 14 day of July 1868 and born at Brooklyn, New York, born at

I solemnly swear that I was born at Brooklyn, Pa., in the State of Pa., on or about the 29 day of Sept, 1868; that my father is a native citizen of the United States; that I am domiciled in the United States, my permanent residence being at Brooklyn, in the State of Pa., where I follow the occupation of Artist; that I am about to go abroad temporarily; and that I intend to return to the United States within 2 months, with the purpose of residing and performing the duties of citizenship therein.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

Further, I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion: So help me God.

Sara A. Tarbell  
[Signature of applicant.]

Sworn to before me this 8th day of November, 1912  
Charles J. Newman Notary Public, of N.Y.

(Not must be stated or other evidence of non-baptist character furnished.)

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICANT.

Age: <u>44</u> years.	Mouth: <u>Medium</u>
Stature: <u>5</u> feet, <u>2</u> inches, Eng.	Chin: <u>Short, round</u>
Forehead: <u>High</u>	Hair: <u>Dark</u>
Eyes: <u>Blue</u>	Complexion: <u>Fair</u>
Nose: <u>Long</u>	Face: <u>Round</u>

IDENTIFICATION.

I hereby certify that I have known the above-named Sara A. Tarbell personally for Twenty years, and know her to be a native-born citizen of the United States, and that the facts stated in her affidavit are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Charles C. Tarbell  
[Address of witness.] 122 East 19th St.

Applicant desires passport sent to following address:  
Sara A. Tarbell  
122 East 19th St  
New York City

# Castle Garden

- First immigration processing center
- Processed immigrants from 1855-1892
- 8 million people

1852

[castlegarden.org/searcher.php](http://castlegarden.org/searcher.php)



# Castle Garden

MAY 29, 1880.]

HARPER'S WEEKLY.

341



IMMIGRANTS LANDING AT CASTLE GARDEN.—DRAWN BY A. R. SHOEN.

# Ellis Island

- Processed immigrants starting in 1892
- Peak years 1892-1924
- Spelling is terrible, so be vague
- Try lots of alternate spellings
- Online database has 65 million records
  - Will need free account to see whole records

<https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/passenger>

1905



## PASSENGER RECORD

## SHIP MANIFEST

## SHIP INFORMATION

## ANNOTATIONS

## TEXT PASSENGER LIST

# Hilbun, Hilda

PASSENGER ID  
600634010017

FRAME  
326

LINE NUMBER  
17



SHIP NAME  
Scythia

ARRIVAL DATE  
August 19th, 1924

PORT OF DEPARTURE  
Liverpool, England



decision once made. Whichever questions are asked him concerning his nationality, age, health, trade, resources, and prospects in the New World, and these answers must be

its aspects. Uninformed guards are everywhere—in all the passageways and at every door—to restrain the impulsive roamer. Here and there in the upper part of the great room

most all is confusion, the carefully ticketed groups broken, as friends find themselves separated, or parents their little ones stupidly assigned in another batch.



DETAINED IMMIGRANTS ON ELLIS ISLAND, NEW YORK HARBOR.—DRAWN BY M. COLEY.



**Undesirable  
Immigrants  
at Ellis  
Island to be  
Sent Home,  
1902**

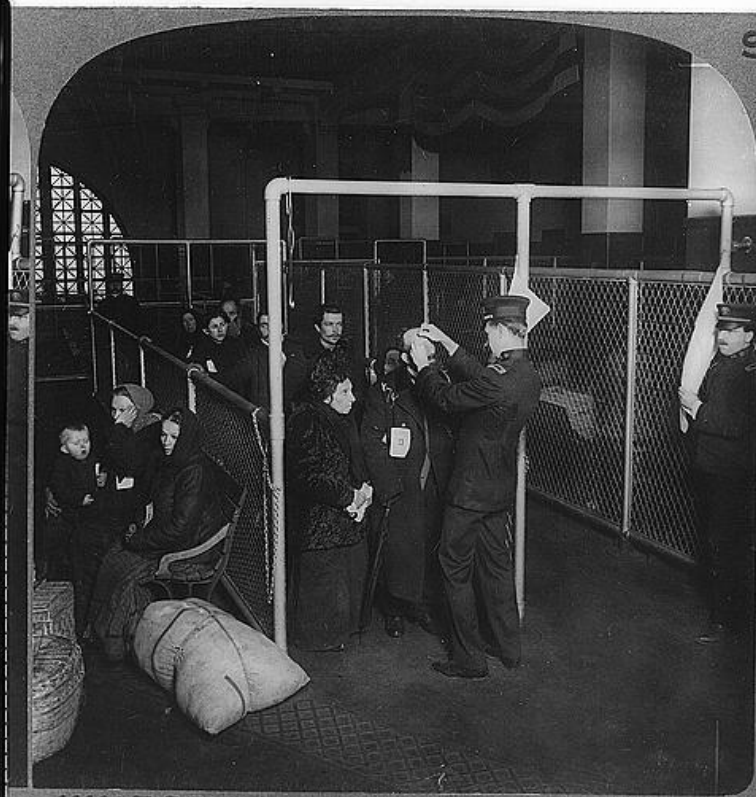


**Arriving at Ellis  
Island near  
Christmastime,  
1906**

LC-USZ62-11203



**Waiting to be  
Transferred,  
1912**



11164-U. S. Inspectors examining eyes of immigrants, Ellis Island, New York Harbor. Copyright Underwood & Underwood. U-97328

## Ellis Island, Inspection of Immigrants, 1913



**Waiting to  
Naturalize,  
1916**

# National Archives

- Most records held there on microfilm - aka NOT ONLINE, no remote access
- CAN access some passenger lists online
  - Russians to U.S. 1834-1897
  - Irish Famine 1846-1851
  - Germans to U.S. 1850-1897
  - Italians to U.S. 1855-1900

[aad.archives.gov/aad/series-list.jsp?cat=GP44](http://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-list.jsp?cat=GP44)



## Genealogy/ Personal History: Passenger Lists

4 series, listed chronologically

Series and Files		No. of Records
<b>Data Files Relating to the Immigration of Russians to the United States, created, ca. 1977 - 2002, documenting the period 1834 - 1897 - <i>Collection CIR</i></b>		<b>566,865</b>
 Russians to America Passenger Data File, 1834 - 1897	 <a href="#">search</a>	527,394
 Manifest Header Data File, 1834 - ca. 1900	 <a href="#">search</a>	39,471
<hr/>		
<b>Records for Passengers Who Arrived at the Port of New York During the Irish Famine, created, 1977 - 1989, documenting the period 1/12/1846 - 12/31/1851 - <i>Collection CIR</i></b>		<b>607,822</b>
 Famine Irish Passenger Record Data File (FIPAS), 1/12/1846 - 12/31/1851	 <a href="#">search</a>	604,596
 List of Ships that Arrived at the Port of New York During the Irish Famine, 1/12/1846 - 12/31/1851	 <a href="#">search</a>	3,226
<hr/>		
<b>Data Files Relating to the Immigration of Germans to the United States, created, ca. 1977 - 2002, documenting the period 1850 - 1897 - <i>Collection CIR</i></b>		<b>4,108,378</b>
 Germans to America Passenger Data File, 1850 - 1897	 <a href="#">search</a>	4,068,907
 Manifest Header Data File, 1834 - ca. 1900	 <a href="#">search</a>	39,471
<hr/>		
<b>Data Files Relating to the Immigration of Italians to the United States, created, ca. 1977 - 2002, documenting the period 1855 - 1900 - <i>Collection CIR</i></b>		<b>884,839</b>
 Italians to America Passenger Data File, 1855 - 1900	 <a href="#">search</a>	845,368
 Manifest Header Data File, 1834 - ca. 1900	 <a href="#">search</a>	39,471
<hr/>		

\* Results are displayed in the indicated formats:



HTML format



Image format



PDF format

# What You Should Know Before Searching

- First and last name
- Date of birth or immigration
- Place immigrating from or to
- Relatives names

If you do not know ALL of this information, that's ok! - Name and birth year are most important to narrow down and trace your specific ancestor.

# TIPS

- Search for other family members
- Use alternative spellings or misspellings
- Use a broad time period
- Not all countries are listed in English
- Not all records are in English
- Ships went to many ports!
- Use asterisks for multiple spellings
  - Jo\*n\* = Jon, John, Jonathan, Johnathan
- If you don't know the country of origin, try the census first



# Resource Links

- Immigrant Servants/Indentured Servants Database - 20,000 entries

[pricegen.com/immigrantservants/search/simple.php](http://pricegen.com/immigrantservants/search/simple.php)

- Stephen Morse Website with immigration links

[Stevemorse.org](http://Stevemorse.org)

- Get confused? Try the FamilySearch immigration wiki for guidance!



## **Ellis Island & Castle Garden Search Forms and Ship Arrivals**

**Overview:** Which Ellis Island Search Form to use

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**Ellis Island Passengers Gold Form (1892-1924):** Preferred Form for Searching for Ellis Island Passengers in One Step

**Ellis Island Passengers White Form (1820-1957):** Form for Searching for Ellis Island Passengers prior to 1892 or beyond 1924 in One Step

**Ellis Island Ship Lists (1820-1957):** Searching for Ships in the Ellis Island Microfilms in One Step

**Ellis Island Manifest Viewer (aka Missing Manifests) (1820-1957):** Direct Access to Ellis Island Manifests in One Step

**Ellis Island Passenger IDs:** Converting Ellis Island Passenger IDs to series/roll/frame in One Step

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\$ **All NY Passengers (1820-1957) - ancestry:** Searching for all New York Passengers in One Step

**All NY Ship Lists (1820-1957) - ancestry:** Searching for Ships in all New York Microfilms in One Step

\$ **All NY Manifest Viewer (1820-1957) - ancestry:** Direct Access to all New York Manifests in One Step

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**New York Passengers (1820-1891) - familysearch:** Searching for New York Passengers up to 1891 in One Step

**New York Passengers (1925-1957) - familysearch:** Searching for New York Passengers from 1925 onward in One Step

**All NY Ship Lists (1820-1957) - familysearch:** Searching for Ships in all New York Microfilms in One Step

**All NY Manifest Viewer (1820-1957) - familysearch:** Direct Access to all New York Manifests in One Step

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**Castle Garden Passengers:** Searching the Castle Garden Database in One Step (castlegarden.org)

**Castle Garden Browser:** Browsing the Castle Garden Database in One Step (castlegarden.org)

**Castle Garden Destination Codes:** List of Destination Codes (castlegarden.org)

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**Ship Pictures:** Obtaining Pictures of Passenger Ships in One Step

**Ships & Fleets:** Obtaining Details on Ships and Fleets in One Step

**NARA/FHL Roll Numbers:** Obtaining NARA and FHL Roll Numbers for NY Ship Arrivals in One Step

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**Ellis Island Name Change Myth:** Did Officials Change Immigrant Names at Ellis Island

**Ancestrylibrary.com/Ancestryinstitute.com:** Using Ancestry from a library or institute in One Step

# QUESTIONS?

