

# Passenger and Immigration Records of Your Ancestors

ACCORDING TO THE US CENSUS BUREAU, WHEN THE 2000 federal census was taken, 42.8 million people (15.2% of the population) considered themselves to have German ancestry.<sup>1</sup> That's not to say that they all thought they were 100% German, but they identified as being of German heritage. The question specifically was "What is this person's ancestry or ethnic origin". The census form only gave space for two countries, and the German nationality was either their first or second choice. This high percentage beat out all other ethnicities, with only four other countries coming in at over 20 million - those being Irish (10.8%), African American (8.6%), English (8.7%), and American (7.2%). I figure that most folks that said American either did not know, or didn't understand the question. I doubt that 20.2 million folks would identify as American Indian! By the 2010 US Federal Census, the number of Americans identifying as German had risen to 49.8 million.

The Canadian 2011 census also questioned folks about their ethnicity. Those who responded as "German" were 9.75%, or 3,203,325 individuals. Saskatchewan, with 28.6% was the province listing the highest percentage of those with German ancestry.<sup>2</sup>

America wasn't colonized by any of the German states, although large numbers of German immigrants arrived in the British colonies from the 1670s on. Pennsylvania and New York had many early German immigrants. In 1683, Germantown, Pennsylvania was initially settled by 33 settlers from 13 Mennonite families, who purchased 43,000 acres of land about six miles north of Philadelphia. The families came from Krefeld on the *Concord*. The city of Krefeld was west of the Rhine near Düsseldorf, and had long been known for its religious tolerance. However, things change, and when religious tol-

erance wasn't what it had been, this small group of families accepted William Pitt's invitation to settle in America. That acceptance started what became known as the Pennsylvania German, or Pennsylvania Dutch identity.<sup>3, 4</sup> Today, Pennsylvania has the largest numbers (3.5 millions) of any state of those who identify with their German heritage.<sup>6</sup>

During the 18th century, many German immigrants came to America, with most settling in the middle Atlantic colonies. Half, or more, of these immigrants came as indentured servants, selling themselves into white slavery for anywhere from four to seven years to pay for their crossing of the Atlantic Ocean. These "redemptioners" negotiated their servitude upon arrival, with no means of ever going back to their European homes.<sup>4, 5</sup>

The immigrants before 1850 were mostly farmers who, once any indenture was settled, sought out the most productive land. The availability of land was a huge American attraction. After 1840, many German immigrants came to American cities, where "Germania", or German-speaking districts, soon developed.<sup>6</sup> My own grandfather is an example of a typical German immigrant.

Karl (Charles) Meitzler, was a forty-eighter, who fled Germany after the failed liberal revolution. He first lived in New York City, but soon moved to Monroe County, then on to Rochester, near where his wife's sister and her family lived. The German community there was growing, and in 1840, German-born George Ellwanger had formed a partnership with the Irish Patrick Berry. Thus the Ellwanger and Berry Nursery came to be.<sup>7</sup> As did many others of German ancestry, my progenitor went to work for them in their Mount Hope operations. Charles soon purchased property from them, where he ran the Meitzler House hotel in the West Brighton

suburb until his death in 1899. Charles and his wife, Elizabeth both learned English. However, they often lapsed into speaking their native German tongue. Much to the consternation of my very American grandmother, Charles' children were bilingual, and conversations in the Meitzler House were often in German.

### Passenger Lists

#### Immigrants Often Traveled with Friends

Our ancestors seldom travelled alone in the 17th and 18th centuries and often moved in groups. It's nearly mandatory that when you find your ancestor in an early passenger list, take note of the other people on the list. Check the censuses, as well as any other available records to ascertain if any of these folks settled in the same area as your ancestor. If you don't have an exact place of origin for your immigrant, you may be able to locate it for a fellow traveler, and thus find the hometown of your ancestor.

#### Early Colonial German Passenger Lists

As mentioned earlier in this publication, very few colonial passenger lists were mandated, let alone survived. Since most immigrants were already British subjects, ship passenger lists were not seen as needed. A major exception to this lack of lists is what is known today as Strassburger and Hinke's *Pennsylvania German Pioneers: A Publication of the Original Lists of Arrivals in the Port of Philadelphia from 1727 to 1808*. In 1727, the Pennsylvania legislature required that lists of foreigners arriving at the Port of Philadelphia be kept. Most of these foreigners were German. The lists give the names of 38,000 immigrants, names of ships, dates of arrival, and places of origin. The place of origin is often just the port from which they came. Many entries do give the passenger's age however. The passenger list has been reprinted and is available as a 2-volume set at [www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product\\_view.php?id=3149](http://www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product_view.php?id=3149). It may also be accessed at Ancestry.com. See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=48379>.

Another important resource for early colonial German immigration research is *A Col-*

*lection of Upwards of Thirty Thousand Names of German, Swiss, Dutch, French and Other Immigrants in Pennsylvania from 1727 to 1776: Second Revised and Enlarged Edition, with an Index by Ernst Wecken from the Third Edition (1931), and Added Index to Ships*. This volume is concerned mainly with early Palatine immigration and contains 319 ships' passenger lists with a total of 30,000 names. The arrangement is chronological according to date of arrival, listing the names of the ships on which the passengers arrived and the places from which they emigrated. In addition, the appendices list over a thousand early settlers who landed at some port other than Philadelphia, but who afterwards came to Pennsylvania from New York, North Carolina, and Georgia. Included are "Names of the First Palatines in North Carolina, 1709 and 1710", and "Names of Salzburger Settled in Georgia, 1734-1741". The work is available at: [www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product\\_view.php?id=1889](http://www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product_view.php?id=1889).

Don't overlook P. William Filby's *Passenger and Immigration Lists* volumes, published by Gale Research. Found in major genealogy libraries, this set of books may list immigrants whose names are found in both major and obscure passenger lists and their transcriptions. An update titled *Passenger and Immigration Lists Index: 2012 edition, 1500s-1900s* has data on 4,712,000 individuals, and can be found at Ancestry.com. See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=7486>. This index is just that – an index. Let it lead you to the passenger list from which the index was made.

A decent bibliography of other early German passenger lists can be found in an article titled "German and American Sources for German Emigrants to America", by Michael Palmer at <http://www.genealogy.net/misc/emig/emigrati.html>.

#### Philadelphia Was the Arrival Port –

#### Southwest Germany was the Homeland

Philadelphia was where the vast majority (as high as 80%) of early German immigrants arrived, with some coming into New York, Baltimore, Charleston, and Boston. These early

immigrants came principally from the southwest German areas of Elsaß-Lothringen, Baden, Hessen, Pfalz, Rhineland, Westfalen and Württemberg. Many left their homelands by way of the Rhine river, using a *Neulander* agent to get them through the many toll-booths found along the way. Upon arrival in the Netherlands, they had to prove that they could afford the cost of the voyage to America, or were willing to be indentured to cover the cost. Some emigrants stayed and worked in the Rotterdam area for a time before moving on. During this time, ships to America were required to stop in England prior to the crossing of the Atlantic. This crossing could take from six to twelve weeks, with passage at the lower end of the scale in the late 1700s.<sup>10, 11</sup>

### **Why Go to America? (Up until 1850)**

The Napoleonic wars (1803-1815) slowed immigration during the early 1800s.<sup>8</sup> Political reform was also on the upswing. With the American revolution (1765-1783), the French revolution (1789-1799), and the demise of the Holy Roman German Empire in 1806, many German folks figured that it was just a matter of time, and things would also be better for them. However, it wasn't to be, and the lure of land in America was too much for many of our ancestors. Germany seemed to have little to offer for many. Unemployment was high, crop failures were many, and compulsive military service hung over the heads of the young men. By 1820, emigration from Germany was in full swing. Between 1820 and 1830, many residents of Württemberg decided it was time to get out. Memories of Württemberg's staggering loss of life during Frederick's short-lived alliance with the French Emperor during the Napoleonic Wars surely made moving all that much easier.

During the 1830s things didn't get better for most of the German population. Land was scarce, and mass-production, and overproduction was creating unemployment for artisans. Many settlers from the Rhine regions of Germany left during the thirties, and settled extensively in the Midwest states of Indiana, Missouri and Ohio.

The 1840s saw emigration from Germany continue to rise. Mass-production continued, with more unemployment. Crop failures of the late 40s pushed the cost of basic food stuffs up. Then the revolution of 1848 took place. With its failure, liberal dissidents, who had hoped for a democratic government, realized that Germany wasn't the place for them. Some had to flee just to save their skin, while others emigrated when they realized that things weren't going to change.

### **Passenger Lists Beginning in 1820**

Digitized passenger arrival records available at FamilySearch, as well as Ancestry.com, begin in 1820. The United States Congress passed the *Steerage Act of March 2, 1819*, in an attempt to cut the number of diseases and on-board death caused by poor onboard ship conditions. The numbers of arriving passengers were limited to two people for every five tons of ship. The act required that captains of vessels from a foreign country arriving in U.S. ports deliver a list of passengers aboard their vessel and report to a customs collector. The collector was then to deliver the lists to the US Secretary of State on a quarterly basis, who was to lay the statements before Congress in each session.<sup>17</sup> For this reason, we have pretty decent arrival lists from this date. The customs manifests of the early years weren't regulated, so the forms varied. It wasn't until 1883 that the United States government mandated the creation of the ship manifests. They then included columns for the passenger's precise birthplace, as well as their last place of residence. In 1891, Congress mandated that federal immigration officials record the immigrant's arrival.<sup>12</sup>

The following table of online indexed passenger lists may have your ancestor among them. The FamilySearch lists are free to access, and the Ancestry.com lists require a subscription. There is a lot of overlap between the lists.

### **Why Go to America? (From 1850 to 1860)**

As I mentioned earlier, political upheaval left from the failed revolution continued to act

## Table of Online Indexed Passenger Ship Lists

New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1891 - See: <http://familysearch.org/search/collection/1849782>

New York, Passenger and Immigration Lists, 1820-1950 - See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=7485>

New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1957 - See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=7488>

Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Passenger Lists Index, 1800-1906 - See: <http://familysearch.org/search/collection/2173965>

Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Passenger Lists, 1800-1882 - See: <http://familysearch.org/search/collection/1908535>

Philadelphia, Passenger and Immigration List, 1800-1850 - See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=7483>

Pennsylvania, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1800-1962 - See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8769>

Massachusetts, Boston Passenger Lists, 1820-1891 - See: <http://familysearch.org/search/collection/1860873>

Boston Passenger and Immigration Lists, 1821-1850 - See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=7482>

Baltimore Passenger Lists, 1820-1964 - See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8679>

Louisiana, New Orleans Passenger Lists, 1820-1945 - See: <http://familysearch.org/search/collection/1916009>

New Orleans Passenger Lists, 1813-1963 - See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=7484>

Maryland, Baltimore Passenger Lists Index, 1820-1897 - See: <http://familysearch.org/search/collection/2173933>

Maryland, Baltimore Passenger Lists, 1820-1948 - See: <http://familysearch.org/search/collection/2018318>

Baltimore, Passenger and Immigration, 1820-1872 (227,000 people) See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=7480>

as a catalyst for many to move to America, the land of democracy and opportunity. Unemployment continued to rise as well.

Railroads made travel easier, and access to the ports Bremerhaven and Hamburg meant that people in central and eastern German areas joined the migration of those from the south who previously went down the Rhine to the port of Rotterdam. The growing importance of the *Zollverein* (German Customs Union) made the construction of a coherent railroad infrastructure a necessity. The *Zollverein* was a coalition of German states formed to manage tariffs and economic policies. By 1855, there were 8,000 km of rail crisscrossing the region. Both state-owned and private rail companies were involved in these ventures.<sup>13</sup> Emigrants took advantage of the railroads to move overland to the port of their choosing.

### Passenger Lists Beginning in 1850

**The Port of Bremen** - Bremen itself is not on the North Sea, but it is only about 40 miles to Bremerhaven, which is, by way of the Weser River. Bremen and Hamburg were the two major points of departure for German, Austrian, Hungarian, and other Central European emigrants from the mid nineteenth-century on. Two to three times as many emigrants sailed from Bremen as from Hamburg. Sadly, most passenger lists for Bremen were destroyed. Bremen port officials kept excellent records on their ships' passengers from 1832. However, in 1874, all of the Bremen passenger records except for those of the current year and the two previous years were destroyed, because of a lack of storage space. This continued until 1909, when original copies of all the emigration lists were again kept. Then came World War II. An Allied bombing

raid on 6 October 1944 wiped out all of the remaining passenger lists. The German State Archives in Koblenz does have Bremen passenger list transcripts for 1907-1908 and 1913-1914. It's sad, but that's all that remains of these important emigration lists. This makes the American customs passenger lists the primary source for research of those leaving Bremen on their way to America.<sup>14</sup> Between 1985 and 1994, Gary J. Zimmerman and Marion Wolfert compiled four volumes of passengers arriving at New York from Bremen. They only extracted information on those passengers for whom a local place of origin was given. Twenty-one percent of those with Bremen as their port of departure were extracted for the years 1847 through 1871. The four soft bound volumes are:

*German Immigrants: Lists of Passengers Bound from Bremen to New York, 1847-1854, With Places of Origin.* About 27,000 passengers are listed. See: [www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product\\_view.php?id=3150](http://www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product_view.php?id=3150)

*German Immigrants: Lists of Passengers Bound from Bremen to New York, 1855-1862, With Places of Origin.* About 26,000 passengers are listed. See: [www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product\\_view.php?id=3151](http://www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product_view.php?id=3151)

*German Immigrants: Lists of Passengers Bound from Bremen to New York, 1863-1867, With Places of Origin.* About 34,500 passengers are listed. See: [www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product\\_view.php?id=3152](http://www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product_view.php?id=3152)

*German Immigrants: Lists of Passengers Bound from Bremen to New York, 1868-1871, With Places of Origin.* By Marion Wolfert alone, as Gary Zimmerman had passed away. About 24,000 passengers are listed. See: [www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product\\_view.php?id=3153](http://www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product_view.php?id=3153)

**The Port of Hamburg** - Fortunately, the passenger lists for ships sailing from Hamburg survive and are archived in the Hamburg State Archive. The lists are complete from 1850 through 1934, with the exception of the WWI

years of 1915 to 1919. Nearly one-third of German emigrants, as well as about 90 percent of eastern European (Russia, Poland, Austria-Hungary, and Romania) emigrants departed via this port.<sup>15,16</sup>

The Hamburg records are made up of two lists. Each of these lists has a handwritten index. They are:

- The Direct Passenger Lists, which include passengers who sailed from Hamburg, and went directly to their destination without stopping at any other European ports.
- The Indirect Passenger Lists, which include ships that stopped at a British or European port before sailing to their final destination. Only about 20 percent of the emigrants leaving took indirect routes.

**Internet Access to the Hamburg Passenger Lists, 1850-1934, are available at Ancestry.com.** The database includes a partial index, covering the years 1850 to 1914, and the start of WWI. The current partial index then skips to 1920 and runs through 1923. Yes – there's a gap, but the index is complete for the years covered. The index was created by the Hamburg State Archive, using the archived original lists stored there. It's a good thing they didn't use the microfilm version to produce the index, as many of the lists are in books that are bound so tight that the microfilm version often cuts off the first letter or two of any surname found in the "gutter" of the book. See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1068>. The database is easy to use. Just type in the name you're looking for, along with any other identifying information, and instantly search both the direct and indirect Hamburg lists.

On the right side of same screen, the "Browse this collection" option allows access to the direct and indirect lists for all years 1850-1934. Until the 1924 to 1934 database indexes are available, the researcher can also use handwritten indexes for the years 1855-1934 (1850-1854 need no index). These indexes were imaged from microfilm in partnership with the Hamburg State Archive. Use the browse feature on the right hand of the

Hamburg Passenger Lists, 1850-1934 for Joh Kratz

1830-1889 Direkt Band 040.11 Apr 1881 - 30 Jun 1881

The Passenger List (gray strip near bottom) showing John Kratz (32), his wife Marie (31), and children Herman (5) and Anna (11 months). They departed Hamburg on 1 Jun 1881 on the ship *Lessing*. Their former residence was Thurow, Mecklenburg-Strelitz. From a screen shot at the Ancestry.com site. (Image courtesy of the Hamburg State Archives.)

screen to locate the book you wish to use. Some of these index volumes are heavily damaged, making them difficult to read. Fortunately, the 1924 through 1934 index books are in decent shape, making them very legible. If you believe your ancestor came to America during this time period, and you can't find them in the indexes, you can always start with the indexed customs passenger lists (listed above), as well as the Ellis Island passenger lists (listed later), letting them lead you to the unindexed Hamburg lists for the years 1924 through 1934. See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1166>.

**Microfilm Access to the Hamburg Passenger Lists** - The passenger lists, as well as a Fifteen-Year Direct Index, and the handwritten indexes are on 486 rolls of microfilm at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, and can be ordered at Family History Centers. An additional 48 rolls of microfilm for the Klüber Card Indexes for the years 1850-1871, and one additional roll for the 1872 Di-

### Interpreting Column Headers in Hamburg Passengers Lists

#### Column Headings on the March 1850 Hamburg lists

- Namen - names
- Geburtsort - place of birth
- Name des Schiffes - name of vessel
- Wohin? - Where?
- Datum des Abganges - date of leaving

#### Column Headings on the 1860 Hamburg Lists

- Zu- und Vername und Familie - Surname and first name and family
- Gerburts- und Wohnort - place of birth and residence
- Landee - Countries
- Gewerbe - Trade
- Alter - Age
- Geschlecht - Gender

#### Found on Later Hamburg Lists

- Legter Wohnort - place of last residence

rect and Indirect Index are also available. If you know the name of the ship on which your ancestor arrived from Hamburg, Roger P. Minert's, Kathryn Boeckel's, and Caren Winter's *Germans to America and the Hamburg Passenger Lists: Coordinated Schedules* (<http://tinyurl.com/hs66mdn>) can help you quickly locate your ancestor in the Hamburg Lists. You can skip searching the alphabetical name index for your ancestor, because in this book, each ship arrival in America from Hamburg is listed by arrival date and ship name. The Family History Library film and page number of that ship's list in the Hamburg Passenger Lists is given.

**Germans to America** – This series of volumes lists Germans who came to America between 1850 and 1897. The books were created by the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, Center for Immigration Research. While the volumes often give the immigrant's birthplace as the German state, now and then you'll find place of former residence listed that will give you a name of a town or city. This series can now be found online in several places including <http://familysearch.org/search/collection/2110801>.

**Port of Le Havre, France** - Another port often used by those emigrating from south Germany in the 1800s was the port of Le Havre in France. There are only a few incomplete passenger lists for French ports. A few online transcriptions for the Port of La Havre begin in 1887, and can be found at: [www.gjenvick.com/PassengerLists/BrowseByPortCity/LeHavreFrance-PassengerLists.html#axzz48UGN7rai](http://www.gjenvick.com/PassengerLists/BrowseByPortCity/LeHavreFrance-PassengerLists.html#axzz48UGN7rai).

**Castle Garden 1855-1890** - Prior to 31 July 1855, Immigrants arriving in New York simply walked down the gangplank onto the wharf. No processing was required. Even after the Steerage Act of 1819, onboard conditions continued to often be deplorable. A number of passenger-related acts were passed by Congress, ending in the Passenger Act of 3 March 1855. This Act codified health and safety regulations beyond any established earlier.<sup>18</sup> New York then passed legislation establishing a receiving station to provide the arrivals protection from fraud, and other serv-

ices. The City of New York, with the cooperation of the State, set up the station in a circular sandstone fort on an island off the southern tip of Manhattan. Originally known as Southwest Battery, and built to prevent a British Invasion in 1812, in 1815, its name was changed to Castle Clinton in honor of New York City Mayor Dewitt Clinton. The circular fort still exists today, although due to landfills, it sits in Battery Park at the southern tip of Manhattan. After the army ceased using it in 1821, they leased it to New York City for use as a place of public entertainment. For three decades, Castle Garden functioned as an exhibition hall, beer garden & restaurant, opera house and a theater. An Emigrant Landing Depot was established and opened on 1 August 1855, serving immigrants until 18 April 1890. Over 8 million people were processed into the United States through Castle Garden. Two out of every three immigrants entering the USA during this period had come through the Castle Garden facility. When the federal government took control of immigration and naturalization in 1890, New York City did not want the feds to use Castle Garden. The facility was quickly becoming too small anyway, so they moved on. Opening on 10 December 1896, for the next fifty years, the Castle Garden site was the New York City Aquarium. On 12 August 1946 Castle Garden was designated as a national monument and restored to its original design by the National Park Service. It reopened in 1975 as Cas-



*Aerial view illustration of the tip of Manhattan in New York City, featuring Castle Garden in Battery Park and docks on the rivers. Brooklyn Bridge under construction is shown in exaggerated scale. (Public Domain)*

tle Clinton National Monument. If you wish to visit the Statue of Liberty or Ellis Island today, you purchase your ticket at Castle Clinton, and depart from the nearby wharf. The site welcomes over 3 million visitors per year.<sup>19, 20</sup>

A fire at the Ellis Island facility took place on 13 June 1897, and destroyed all the administrative records for Castle Garden from 1855 through 1890. Fortunately, the customs passenger lists were stored in Washington, DC and thus survived.<sup>19</sup>

The primary online research site for Castle Garden immigration is *CastleGarden.org*. This site offers free access to the records of 11 million immigrants (arriving from 1820 through 1892) by way of their database. The database may be searched in various ways. I find that searching by surname, then sorting the fields alphabetically or by date allows the researcher to view the data. The sortable fields are Last Name, First Name, Age, Sex, Arrival Date, and Place of Residence. Use the database at: <http://castle.garden.org/searcher.php>.

**The Barge Office** – From 19 April 1890 until 31 December 1891 – over a year and a half – all processing of arriving immigrants took place at a location known as the Barge Office. This was in anticipation of the opening of the more permanent Ellis Island facility. The 13 June 1897 fire at the Ellis Island facility destroyed the administrative records of the Barge Office. The customs passenger lists were stored in Washington, DC and thus survived.



The Ellis Island Museum, from the [www.libertyellisfoundation.org](http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org).

**Ellis Island 1892-1954** – The Island was purchased by the Federal Government from New York State in 1808. It was fortified, with the fort there being named Fort Gibson, after an officer killed in the War of 1812.

Up until 1890, the various states regulated immigration into the United States. The Federal Government took control upon the move from Castle Garden, and soon began construction of a new Georgia pine building on Ellis Island that was to be used as the new federal processing center. The facility opened on 1 January 1892. Three ships disembarked their 700 passengers that day. Nearly 450,000 immigrants were processed in the first year alone. As mentioned above, on 13 June 1897, fire swept through the 3-story structure and burned it to the ground, along with immigration records dating back to 1855. About 1.5 million immigrants had come through those halls in the first five years.

Plans were made to build a fireproof building, and while it was in construction, processing was returned to the barge office. The new building opened on 17 December 1900. Although huge, it was barely able to keep up with the surge of immigration taking place. Soon new structures were built. The facility was used up until 12 November 1954, processing about twelve million immigrants. About 1/3 of the American population today can say that they had ancestors who came through the Ellis Island facilities.<sup>21</sup>

The Ellis Island Passenger Lists have been transcribed and indexed and are available at [www.libertyellisfoundation.org](http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org). You'll need to register (which is free), but that gives you access to the index. It's pretty amazing, and I recommend that every researcher have an account. Searching on the surname Meitzler, I got 30 exact matches, starting in 1892.

### Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865-1935

If your ancestor was coming from Germany to settle in Canada, it makes sense that they would travel directly to a Canadian port. Besides, it was often less expensive to travel to Canada than to a US port. So even immigrants heading to the States would often go through a Canadian port.

NAME	BIRTH	LAST PLACE OF RESIDENCE / BIRTH PLACE	SHIP NAME	ACTION
Meitzler, Mrs. Charis	1892	U.S.	Friesland	[Icons]
Meitzler, Mrs. Charis	1892	N/A	Friesland	[Icons]
Meitzler, Sandra Sylvia	1946	N/A	Washington	[Icons]
Meitzler, Edwin	1934	Columbia City Ind	Santa Rosa	[Icons]
Meitzler, Joseph	1901	Switzerland	Saint Paul	[Icons]
Meitzler, Priscilla	1953	England	Ascania	[Icons]
Meitzler, Theresa	1856	Germany	United States	[Icons]
Meitzler, Merrill H	1945	N/A	George Washington	[Icons]
Meitzler, Ernst	1924	Germany	Albert Ballin	[Icons]
Meitzler, Ernst	1937	N/A	Hamburg	[Icons]
Meitzler, Irene	1949	Wash	Pan American Airways Inc N-88931	[Icons]
Meitzler, John	1922	N/A	W.L. Steed	[Icons]
Meitzler, Prycilla Rose	1944	N/A	Washington	[Icons]
Meitzler, Wilmer	1956	Pa	United States	[Icons]
Meitzler, Charles W H	1942	N/A	Passenger List 1942-1947	[Icons]

*A passenger search at The Statue of Liberty – Ellis Island Foundation website for the surname Meitzler resulted in 30 exact matches, several of whom are listed as being born in, or a resident of, Germany.*

Passenger lists of ships arriving in various Canadian ports, as well as some eastern US ports, from 1865–1935 are indexed in an Ancestry.com database. This collection covers 2.2 million people who arrived at the following ports and years.

- Quebec Ports (May 1865–Jun 1908, Jun 1919–Jul 1921, Apr 1925–Nov 1935)
- Montreal, Quebec (Apr 1925–Nov 1935)
- Halifax, Nova Scotia (1881–Oct 1922, 1925–1935)
- North Sydney, Nova Scotia (Nov 1906, Aug 1908–Aug 1922, 1925–1935)
- Saint John, New Brunswick (1900–Sep 1922, 1925–1935)
- Vancouver, British Columbia (1905–Sep 1922, 1925–1935)
- Victoria, British Columbia and Pacific Ports (Apr 1905–Sep 1922, 1925–1935)
- Eastern US Ports (Jul 1905–Feb 1919, 1925–1928)
- New York (1906–1921)

All of the passengers' names are included in these lists, regardless of country of origin or na-

tionality. Passenger lists comprised the official immigration records of Canada between the years covered by this collection, although the forms that were used and the information recorded varied widely. Later lists often contain more details, dependent on the form.

Information recorded may include: Name of passenger; Age; Gender; Marital status; Whether ever been in Canada before and if so, when, where, and how long; Whether intend to permanently reside in Canada; Whether able to read and write; Birth country; Race; Destination; Occupation; Religious affiliation; Port of arrival; Date of arrival; Port of embarkation; Name of the ship; Shipping line; and Special notes.

Passengers from mainland Europe typically sailed to Great Britain, where they boarded trans-Atlantic ships at ports such as Glasgow, Liverpool, or London. It is interesting to note that passenger lists for the port of Quebec included those who disembarked at Montreal during the winters between 1865 and 1921 because the St. Lawrence River ports were frozen. See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1263>.

Note that from 1919 to 1924, individual manifest Form 30A was often used instead of passenger lists as the official immigration record. The use of Form 30A, also known as “Ocean Arrivals”, accounts for most of the gaps in years covered in the Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865-1935 database. This form was officially in use between 1 June 1921 and 31 December 1924 and was regulated by the Canadian Department of Immigration and Colonization. A form was to be completed for each passenger, including children. Since an exception was made for passengers in transit to the United States, your ancestor may not show up if they were traveling on. These forms were submitted to immigration officers upon arrival at the port of destination. See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1588>.

If your ancestor went through Canada on their way to the USA, there may be US/Canada border crossing records available to search. Ancestry.com has an online database covering the years 1895-1956. Border crossings in

this database are from Idaho, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, New York, North Dakota, Vermont, and Washington State. See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1075>. In addition, there are the Detroit Border Crossings and Passenger and Crew Lists, 1905-1963. The Ancestry.com database indexes and links to card manifests of aliens crossing from Canada and entering the US through the port of Detroit, Michigan from 1905 to 1954. It also includes passenger and alien crew lists of vessels arriving at the port of Detroit, Michigan, from 1946 to 1963. See: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1070>.

For more interesting and informative reading about passenger list records, see John P. Colletta's 1993 book, *They Came in Ships* (Salt Lake City, Ancestry).

### Naturalization Records

From 1828 to 1906, anyone wishing to become an American citizen could do so by applying in any court in any place in the United States. Only the person's name, the date, and country to which the person was giving up their allegiance was required. Witnesses names were also to be included in the record,

but may not be found on the Certificate of Intention to Become a Citizen. Places of birth were not required and will seldom be found in these records. Beginning 27 September 1906, records were filed with the court as well as the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. Included in these records were the immigrant's birth date and place, port and date of arrival, as well as the name of the ship. The National Archives holds most Federal Court Records. Contact the Clerk of the Court in the county where your ancestor may have been naturalized in a search for original records. See *Guide to Naturalization Records in the United States*, by Christina K. Schaefer - [www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product\\_view.php?id=651](http://www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product_view.php?id=651).

### Manumission Records

One of the formalities of emigrating from Germany was that the emigrant was supposed to get legal permission to move. Not everyone dealt with this formality, but if they did, you may be able to locate additional records that may prove where your ancestor was from. The district officials within each kingdom normally kept the records.<sup>9</sup>

### Guide to Footnotes

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