

Finding the Origins of Your German Ancestors

Doug Ayer

A. Start with: Name, place, date, and name of spouse

B. Where did they come from?

Not only Germany but other parts of Europe

C. Some sources of information

Marriage records

Family Bibles

Family papers (immigration papers, confirmation certificate)

Church publications, biographies of parishioners

Passenger lists

PERSI (Periodical Resource Index), Allen County Public Library, Indiana

Church records books

Internet correspondence

German language newspapers in the United States

Internet search for books—family genealogies

Notary public records

Naturalization petition—Declaration of Intention

Libraries

Mass cards

Death certificates

Obituaries

Find a Grave Memorials

German clubs and their publications

Draft registrations, WWI and WWII

Ahnenpaßen

Passenger and Immigration Lists Index

Books

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Useful References

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Burgoyne, Bruce E., compiler. *Waldeck Soldiers of the American Revolutionary War*. (943.41, M2b)

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Dufour, Charles L. *Ten Flags in the Wind, The Story of Louisiana*. A Regions of America Book. New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1967.

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Forsyth, Alice D. and Earlene L. Zerinque. *German "Pest Ships" 1720-1721*. (976.3, W3f)

Geue, Ethel Hander. *A New Land Beckoned. German Immigration to Texas, 1844-1847*. (976.4, W2g)

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Guth, Hermann. *Amish Mennonites in Germany, Their Congregations, The Estates Where They Lived, Their Families*. (943, F2gh)

Hacker, Werner, editor. *Eighteenth Century Register of Emigrants from Southwest Germany* (to America and other countries). (Index: 943, W2eh)

Jones, George F. *The Germans of Colonial Georgia, 1733-1783*. (975.8, A1, No. 7)

Jones, Henry Z., Jr. *The Palatine Families of New York, A Study of the German Immigrants Who Arrived in Colonial New York in 1710*. Two volumes. (974.7, D2j, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2)

Kelly, Arthur C. M. *Hessian Troops in the American Revolution*. (943, M2h)

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Robichaux, Albert J., Jr. *German Coast Families: European Origins and Settlement in Colonial Louisiana*.

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NOTE: Where given, call numbers are for the Orange County FamilySearch Library.

Ellis Island

Ellis Island was the gateway to America for more than 12 million immigrants between 1892 and 1924. In the late 18th century, Samuel Ellis, a New York City merchant, purchased the island and gave it his name. From Ellis, it passed to New York State, and the U. S government bought it in 1808. On Jan. 1, 1892 the government opened the first federal immigration center in the U. S. on the island. The 27½-acre site eventually supported more than 35 buildings including the Main building with its Great Hall, in which as many as 5,000 people a day were processed.

Closed as an immigration station in 1954, Ellis Island was proclaimed part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument in 1965 by Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson. After a 6-year \$170 million restoration project funded by The Ellis Island Fdn. Inc., Ellis Island was reopened as a museum in 1990. Artifacts, historic photographs and documents, oral histories, and ethnic music depicting 400 years of American immigration are housed in the museum. The museum also includes The American Immigrant Wall of Honor (<http://www.wallofhonor.com>). With its New Edition to open in late 2001, it will hold more than 600,000 names. The American Family

Immigration History Center, a genealogical center, opened in April 2001. It contains an electronic database of ship arrivals through New York harbor from 1892 to 1924 with over 22 million names, as well as an interactive database which features a Living Family Archive and multimedia presentations on various immigration groups and patterns (<http://ellislandrecords.org>). In 1998, the Supreme Court ruled that nearly 90% of the island (the 24.2 acres which are landfill) lies in New Jersey, while the original 3.3 acres are in New York. (The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 2002.)