Chinook

The Journal of the Alberta Family Histories Society
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Ellis Island's Myths and Misconceptions

by Jayare Roberts, M.L.S., A.G.

In the 1990s the accelerated use and automation of passenger arrival records have allowed a better understanding of our ancestors as well as our nation. Millions of untold stories start with the names and related information on the ships' manifests.

Someday genealogists and family historians can begin this venture by doing free and simple searches with FamilySearch. It is a compact disc system at one of the 5,500 work stations made available by the LDS Church. People who are merely curious about their "roots" will do the same quick search.

Genealogists will continue to produce pedigrees and help build databases related to passenger records. The results, when used by family historians, local historians, and social historians, should provide more accurate stories and studies. The data, for example, may help demographers who have discovered that many Americans cannot identify their national origins or ethnic heritage. Poets and historians alike describe the United States of America as a nation of immigrants, a nation of nations. Although the story might begin with statistics or the names of the people, it should conclude with their experience. Each immigrant is a sine qua non [indispensable part] of America.

Ellis Island: The Place

Immigrants entering the port of New York might have seen the outlines of Coney Island, Staten Island, and the buildings of Brooklyn and Manhattan. They shouted, cheered, cried, laughed and prayed when they saw the great statue in the harbor. The Statue of Liberty is the symbol of freedom for immigrants, and Ellis Island is the monument to America's dynamic diversity. Ellis Island,

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Alberta Family Histories Society

Featured in this issue:

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The Alberta Family Histories Society

The society is a non-profit organization formed in 1980 to promote and encourage an interest in family history research. The activities of the society are funded completely by membership fees, fund-raising projects and donations from individual members.

Among the purposes of the society are:

- to encourage accuracy and thoroughness in family histories and in genealogical research
- to encourage and instruct members in the principles, methods and techniques of genealogical research and compiling family histories
- to assemble a library of family and local histories, genealogical guides, handbooks, reference books and materials which may assist the members, and which shall be available to them
- to publish bulletins, booklets, books or other documents and to make these available to members and others on terms determined by the society
- to establish friendly relations with other societies involved with family history and genealogy to promote common interests, and
- to present seminars and workshops that will be helpful to members.

Membership:

Membership in the society is open to anyone interested in family history and genealogy, and may be obtained through the membership secretary of the society at PO Box 30270, Station B, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2M 4P1. Membership fees are due 1 September each year.

Membership fees (1998-99):
Individual $30
Family $35
Individual (senior) $25
Family (seniors) $28
Institutional $35
Overseas: add $8 (Cdn) for airmail.
USA members: Please pay in US funds.
Life memberships are available.

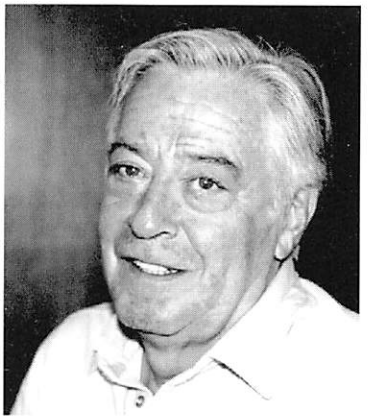
Meetings are held on the first Monday of every month (second Monday if first is a holiday). Beginner classes are at 6:30 pm and general meeting starts at 8:15 pm. Call 214-1447 for information.

URL: http://www.afhs.ab.ca

Editorial policy:

Chinook is published in October, January, April and June, and is distributed to all members of the Alberta Family Histories Society. The editor welcomes articles and news items for publication from members or from anyone interested in genealogy and family history. Articles should be typed or preferably in text format on computer disk. We assume no responsibility for errors or opinions of the authors. All materials submitted will be treated with care but will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope of the appropriate size, or if other arrangements are made in advance.

Advertisements pertaining to genealogy are eligible for inclusion in the journal. Rates are: full page, $55; half page, $30; quarter page, $15; and business card, $6. A discount of 25% is offered for any advertisement placed in four consecutive issues. Correspondence, articles and advertising or submissions may be addressed to the editor at PO Box 30270, Station B, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2M 4PI.



Editorial — Immigration to North America

by Doug Stobbs

The lead article in this *Chinook* will ultimately be of interest to most AFHS researchers; after all, hardly anyone actually 'came from' Alberta or any other province either.

While dealing mostly with the port of New York, the feature article "Ellis Island's Myths and Misconceptions' does provide very useful insights into the whole phenomenon of processing and recording the millions of people who came to the New World and contributed to what it is today.

It is significant to realize that not only did the flow of people vary considerably from year to year but the eligibility conditions applicable to being admitted also changed. There are distinct parallels between the rules in place both sides of the Canadian/US border.

The admittance of Orientals is just one example.

One other variable should be mentioned and that is the regulations governing the shipping companies. Through most of the 1800s, the regulations for carrying passengers to be landed at U.S. ports were consistently tougher than those in place for Canadian and other ports under British jurisdiction. These regulated the numbers of passengers allowed on vessels as well as safety features (lifeboats) and amenities such as fresh water, food and sanitation.

The distance from European ports to those in North America was also a significant factor as it affected the cost of transporting passengers. Halifax is roughly 500 statute miles closer to Liverpool than is New York, and in older vessels this represented an additional one or two days en route each way, or the difference in completing one or more return voyages, in any year.

Researching immigration records is straightforward for most family historians, however we've all encountered brick walls too.

Hopefully the "Ellis Island's Myths and Misconceptions" article will bring new insights to bear on the problems, and aside from being fascinating reading, will assist in adding new branches to many family trees.

Doug Stobbs

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The annual General Meeting of the Alberta Family Histories Society will be held during the evening of

Monday, June 7, 1999

at Southminster United Church, 3838 14A Street SW
Calgary Alberta.

The meeting will elect officers for the ensuing year, accept reports, approve the financial statements for the prior year, appoint auditors and conduct any other business required under the by-laws of the society.

Alberta Family Histories Society — A distinct society since 1980

Ellis Island... from page 101

called the Isle of Hope and Tears, was also the place of judgment between admission and rejection, and the symbolic divide between the Old World and the new. The entire story of the greatest mass migration in history, diverse and unorganized as it was, is a legacy worth remembering.

As we review the several myths surrounding the storied Ellis Island, note that the beliefs, rumors, and misconceptions are shown in italics. The explanations or refutations follow.

Myth: About 12 million newcomers experienced Ellis Island.

The National Park Service has estimated that 12 million immigrants came to America through Ellis Island. The actual number of individuals is not known. The varying definitions of citizens, aliens, immigrants in transit, and other classes of passengers confuse all statistical tallies. Other errors result from the differences between calendar and fiscal reporting years. Published estimates include the following totals: 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 25, 27, 32, 40 million aliens.

The inconsistent statistics, are a result of records made by U.S. admission and exclusion laws, under different administrative agencies. A compilation of numbers show that at least 40,000,000 immigrants had legally arrived somewhere in the United States of America by the end of 1954 when Ellis Island closed. This figure reflects only those who were alien passengers, immigrant aliens arrived, or immigrant aliens admitted for permanent residence with a foreign last residence.

Numbers that remain a mystery include:

- uncounted aliens refused admission
- uncounted citizens returning from abroad
- uncounted aliens in transit (not intending permanent residence) after 1903
- aliens arriving in cabin class before 1904
- arrivals at land borders before 1904
- aliens from the U.S. who are returning after 1906
- arrivals of aliens employed as crew who then remained
- counted aliens who had come previously and were counted again before 1907
- people on the manifest who did not sail or who died on the way
- uncounted people arriving in ports where no statistics were kept
- arrivals at certain outlying U.S. possessions
- any arrivals by airplane before 1931 and most before the 1940s.

The reporting year ending in June 1907 was the busiest ever for the port of New York with 1,005,000 aliens admitted. The year 1920 reported the following statistics:

121,000	aliens in cabin
213,000	aliens in steerage
68,000	citizens in cabin
18,000	citizens in steerage
361,000	crew
6,800	hospital patients

As an example of an uncounted arrival, a woman and her children, all born in Italy, arrived with a notation on the ship's manifest of returning to U.S. The father had naturalized after serving in the U.S. Army, thereby freeing the immigrants from any personal visit to Ellis Island. Moreover, the number of "on board inspected first and second cabin aliens" is not known. Because of the on board inspection they were exempted from personally experiencing Ellis Island. As mentioned below, passengers of any class were not always processed at Ellis Island between its 1892 opening and its 1954 closing.

Editor's Note

The article "Ellis Island Myths and Misconceptions" originally appeared in "Genealogical Journal", volume 23, numbers 2 and 3, 1995, a publication of the Utah Genealogical Association.

Permission to re-publish in Chinook is gratefully acknowledged.

The long awaited database of immigrant arrivals mentioned in the article as being compiled by the Family History Library will possibly be completed in 1999 and its subsequent release to researchers will stimulate considerable interest.

Because of the date (1995) the comments in the article on the Immigrant Database and other projects should be interpreted carefully as many of these had actually been completed as this is written in March 1999.

Myth: Half of all Americans trace back to the Plymouth Rock of Ellis Island.

In 1931 Edward Corsi, who had earlier, immigrated to America from Italy, was appointed Commissioner of Ellis Island. *His book In the Shadow of Liberty* (see bibliography) recalls his friend's comments on the Presidential appointment.

"You've got one of the most important jobs in the country. You'll be helping to make America. After all, this nation is only sixty-five percent Plymouth

Rock. The other thirty-five percent is Ellis Island."

Although, later press clippings changed this notion to fifty per cent Ellis Island, Mr. Corsi's friend was more accurate. We must admit first that the net immigration to the U.S. population has been as large as the natural increase. Second, earlier immigrants have contributed more descendants than twentieth-century arrivals. Even if, as publicized, a conveniently-totaled 100 million people did have an ancestral, parental, or personal connection to Ellis Island, this total would not equal fifty per cent of the current U.S. population. The number of aliens admitted through any method in the Port of New York from 1892 to 1954 was about 16,600,000. Hundreds of thousands of citizens and others also came.

Myth: Ellis Island has always been an important American institution.

As a small, obscure piece of land the island had many names: Kioshk (Gull), Oyster, Dyre, Bucking, Gibbet, Anderson, and Fort Gibson. The island changed hands from the Indians to Dutch merchants to a colonist, then to the British and finally Samuel Ellis.

Uses of the island ranged from parties to hanging pirates, and from detaining prisoners of war to storing ammunition. Through ballast from foreign ships and dirt from the subways, dug by immigrants, it became literally an island of nations.

Myth: Ellis Island belongs to the state of New York.

Shortly after the Revolutionary War a New Jersey resident, Samuel Ellis, bought a little island in New York Harbor and stayed there for a time.

Samuel died on a noted day, July 4. His 1794 will gave the island to the unborn child, (if male) of his daughter who was separated from her husband at the time. The child was born and named Samuel Ellis, but he died in infancy. In 1808 New York State ceded Ellis' island to the United States, although the nearby state of New Jersey disputes the ownership.

Myth: Ellis Island and Liberty Island opened in the centennial year of 1876.

The Statue of Liberty, originally conceived for the Suez Canal, was designed for New York Harbor. Although intentions were to present the statue July 4, 1876, only the hand came that year. By 1884 the full statue stood in Paris waiting for American

funds to create the base. After helpful fund raising by immigrant and successful publisher Joseph Pulitzer, the statue was officially unveiled on October 28, 1886. The Museum of Immigration opened inside the base in 1972.

August 11, 1890 the Treasury Department declared Ellis Island would become an immigration depot. Ellis Island opened on January 1, 1892. Its site was selected over others, such as Governor's Island and Bedloe's Island. One reason for its selection was to prevent the island being used as a threatening ammunition depot. The dramatic opening came only after the government improved the harbor's channel and erected buildings such as an inspection center, hospital, and laundry. Ellis Island was favored over the others due to a more isolated position than the earlier processing center at nearby Castle Garden. As the island expanded from three to twenty-seven acres, the ability to control immigration increased.

Myth: Ellis Island is now fully restored.

Among the most popular sites in the National Park Service system, Ellis Island hosts more than 2 million visitors yearly. For information on visiting Ellis Island you may call 212-363-3200.

Since 1965, when President Johnson declared Ellis Island a part of the National Park Service, various organizations have tried to re-establish Ellis Island as an historical landmark. The Restore Ellis Island Committee could not raise enough funds to renovate the facilities by the 1976 Bicentennial. Despite the lack of funds the site opened in May of that year for those who were curious.

In May 1982 the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island Centennial Commission (originally the SL-EL Foundation) received government authorization to raise funds. At the same time, the Ellis Island Restoration Commission was another private group with limited federal support. Major advertising and public campaigns began in 1984. The National Park Service and the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island Centennial Commission announced restoration work would begin immediately on the Main Registry Building and the Great Hall. Plans for other areas of the building included such modern additions as a computerized fiber optic genealogy center. In addition plans called for an oral history center, new exhibit galleries, modern theaters, a library a research center, and a restaurant.

Plans included a computer genealogy

center, where visitors would review available information on ancestor origins. The computer screen was to contain all the columns of the ship's manifest. Anderson Consulting of New York City has been giving advice for the Ellis Island family history center. The name was chosen though there is no affiliation with the system of 2,500 Family History Centers sponsored by the LDS Church.

The Ellis Island Foundation raised more than 300 million dollars for the renovation of the Statue of Liberty and buildings on Ellis Island. The Ellis Island Commission would need to spend another 25 million dollars to establish the computer center. Each visitor would use only 12 minutes for his computer search, and pay a small fee for a printout of any results. The center's computers also would include records for other ports.

The dilapidated Main Building and surrounding areas, restored at a cost of 156 million dollars, opened in September 1990. This premier structure is now restored to its appearance during the 1918-1924 era. Plans for the rest of the island have included fascinating ideas such as a luxury convention center or a gambling house. The computer center for family history is not presently a reality.

Myth: Castle Garden processed all arrivals until Ellis Island opened.

As early as 1847 it was proposed to use Ellis Island for immigration processing. Between August 1855 and April 1890 the state of New York tried to manage immigration through the facilities called Castle Garden, formerly Fort Clinton or Castle Clinton, a manmade island, and named for the former New York Governor, DeWitt Clinton. Located in Battery Park at the very tip of Manhattan Island, the military fort saw no action in the War of 1812, and was abandoned by 1821. It eventually was ceded to New York City in 1823. Renamed Castle Garden, it then became a resort. After being connected to Manhattan, it became the nation's largest concert hall.

Next the Castle was leased to the state of New York. Such facilities were not appropriate for the ever-increasing numbers of immigrants. In any language words such as Castle Garden and kesslegarten had connotations of dreadful mystery. After Castle Garden closed as an immigration depot it evolved into a famous aquarium until 1941, and now hosts visitors as a national monument.

When the federal government took responsibility for immigration activities in 1890, it used the Barge Office, also in the Battery, to inspect passengers. In 1891 more than 400,000 passengers were processed.

Myth: All immigrants to America came to Ellis Island once it opened.

In the heyday of Ellis Island, between 1892 and 1924, seventy-one per cent of the aliens admitted to the U.S. came through the port of New York. Between 1925 and 1954, about fifty-six per cent of admitted aliens came through New York.

After the Act of 1882, the U.S. government assumed all responsibilities for immigration activities. The federal government allowed the use of several ports.

Many states were already supervising immigration at the major ports of Baltimore, Boston, Galveston, Key West, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, Portland, Maine, and San Francisco. Before 1882 nearly 100 minor ports were in business. After 1882 about twenty minor seaports and fifty land ports of entry, continued with little state or federal regulation.

Floods of immigrants, many specifically avoiding U.S. officials, rules and fees, came through ports such as Quebec and Halifax in Canada. Three million people came between 1896 and 1914. Certain steamship companies kept two versions of the manifest. One included the wealthy and healthy who could be carried to New York. The other one for the unfit who could be unloaded in Canada. The U.S. government eventually persuaded Canadian port officials to use U.S. forms to record immigrants.

Myth: Ships bound for Ellis Island could not visit other American ports.

It was not unusual for the liners to make more than one port of call. In January 1895, for example, the vessel Sicilia carried some passengers rejected by the Commissioner of Immigration in Boston. The vessel brought them to Ellis Island, but its Commissioner refused to re-examine the immigrants. On April 15, 1906, the Gnelsenau bore 1,042 passengers bound for New York and 958 for Baltimore. Often included in the New York manifest books are names of those going elsewhere.

Myth: All passengers arriving at New York after 1892 went through Ellis Island.

After Ellis Island's buildings burned June 14th and 15th 1897, the Barge Office again was the site for the inspection of passengers. This continued until December 17th, 1900. In 1918 and 1919, while the military used Ellis Island, passengers were inspected on ship or at the Manhattan docks. If an ancestor traveled in the cabins of first or second class, they were also inspected on the ship, then released at the Hudson River or East River docks directly to the streets of Manhattan.

Many prepared and clever immigrants, believing Ellis Island was a criminal place like Castle Garden, purposefully avoided the authorities and processes at the island. They traveled in a cabin for the price of a

first or second class ticket. In 1907, for instance, the S.S. Amerika arrived with 386 in first class, 150 in second class, and 1,972 in steerage class. Inspection applied even to aliens who stated the intent to stay for a temporary sojourn or to be in transit to another country. If one could afford to avoid inspections and other discomforts, he would.

Those who came in steerage took a ferry or barge from the steamship's dock back into the harbor and to Ellis Island. A steerage passenger who could prove U.S. citizenship was released on the pier. In 1903, for example, about 57,000 steerage arrivals avoided Ellis Island. One law required even naturalized Americans to submit their papers and passports to government officials if they chose to travel in the steerage class. Any American traveling in any class was sent to the island if the immigration inspector on the vessel determined medical or legal problems.

Myth: Ellis Island processed immigrants only between 1892 and 1924.

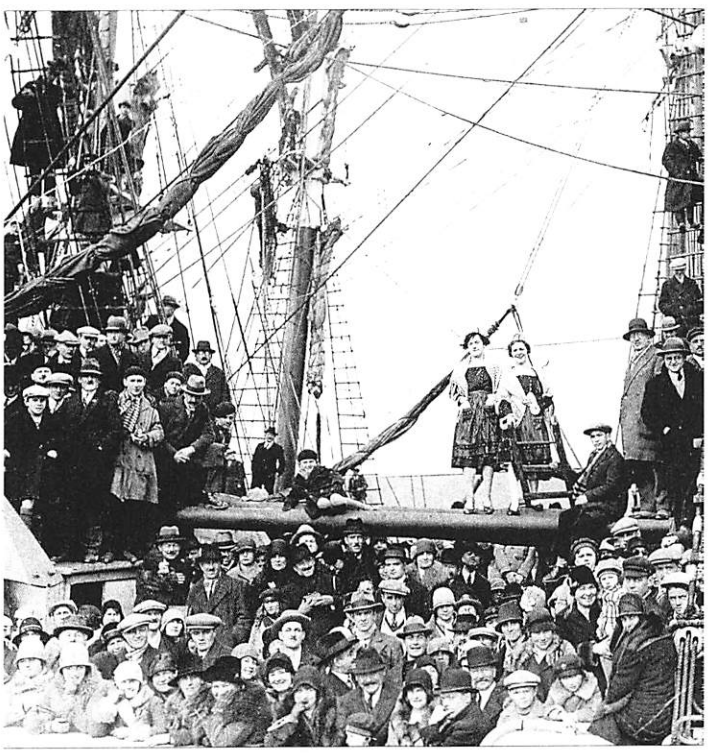
Ellis Island did not, in fact, close until November 1954. After the 1924 Quota Law that tried to maintain America's Anglo-Saxon identity, Ellis Island saw few immigrants.

After 1924 most passengers were inspected overseas at a U.S. consulate and later on the ship. The only immigrants sent to Ellis Island were those detained for further questioning, medical care, or possible deportation.

From 1892 through 1924 there were 14,280,000 aliens admitted, and from 1925 through 1954 there were 2,340,000.

Records of immigrants between 1924 and 1954 are available on microfilms at the National Archives, and to 1942 at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

After 1924, Ellis Island was transformed from a processing center to a detention center. Between 1931 and 1933, during the Great Depression, the 156,000 people arriving passed by 193,000 leaving. The Internal Security Act of 1950 required strict questioning of suspected Communists and Fascists.



Myth: In America where the streets are paved in gold.

The urban legends of America include: "I came to Amerik because they said the streets were paved with gold. I saw they were not paved. No one told me, I was to pave."

The People

Myth: History records a fifteen-year-old girl as the first Ellis Island immigrant.

With a bit of ceremony, the island began business on Friday, January 1, 1892. Annie Moore was honored with a ten dollar gold piece as the first immigrant passing inspection. The original list of the steamship S.S. Nevada clearly declares Annie as age thirteen. Newspapers of the day and later textbooks and TV programs give her age as fifteen. Annie and her brothers Tom and Joe were sailing to America from County Cork, Ireland, to join their parents, Matt and Mary, who already lived in New York City. Counting the passengers from the City of Paris and The Victoria, about 700 people were processed that first wintry day.

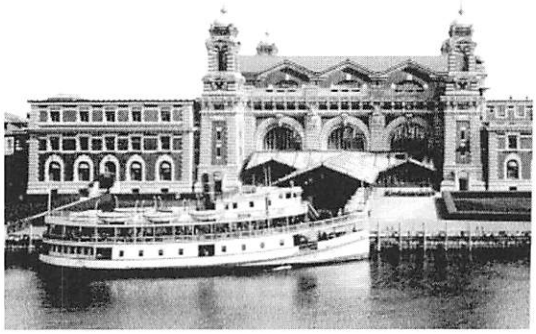
Myth: The immigrants were the "Wretched Refuse of Teeming Shores."

The United States of America has always tried to welcome immigrants. From famous founding fathers to the leaders of today, it has always dealt with influences against newcomers. Groups such as the Know Nothing Party, American Protective Association, and Ku Klux Klan have actively marshalled forces with labor unions to oppose immigration. Many Americans have not freely opened their arms to those seeking the land of the free. If an ancestor was Jewish, Catholic, Mormon, poor or illiterate, Chinese, Japanese, or Russian, the exclusionary laws and regulatory maze offered little or no welcome.

Millions of immigrants chose not to venture to the United States but went instead to Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, and various other countries. Nevertheless, agents of steamship

companies and speculative businesses purposefully traveled throughout Europe to solicit immigrants. "Come Sail the Friendly Seas," was the song of their posters and advertisements. "Come to the blue skies and green meadows of Nebraska" was a popular tune.

Yet most U.S. citizens, who were naturally the descendants of immigrants, and even alien residents, wanted to stop undesirables from



Ferry from Ellis Island to Manhattan

coming to America. Concerned government leaders specifically passed a series of laws to restrict immigration by eventually prohibiting more than thirty classes of certain races, ages, and types of people. All passengers coming to Ellis Island received careful scrutiny to screen out the refuse and riffraff of the world. As expected, there were many exceptions.

The debate on opening "America's Golden Doors" to all mankind continues to rage today in the halls of Congress. Xenophobia is the word for this fear and hatred of foreigners. Before 1860, in the era called Old Immigration, the immigrants were commonly from northwestern Europe, including the British Isles. They were white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant farmers.

By the 1890s the total influx from northwestern Europe was only forty-five per cent, and it fell to less than seventeen per cent by 1920. During the New Immigration, after the 1880s, from fifty to seventy per cent of those coming to Ellis Island were typically from eastern and southern Europe and non European countries. The more the immigrants came from these parts of the world, the more the United States tried to close the gate. The 1924 National Origins act, using inaccurately calculated data from the federal census schedules, set new quotas at eighty-two per cent to countries of northwestern Europe. Reality nonetheless revealed that every country embraced an ethnic diversity.

Myth: Arrivals mostly came from England and Ireland.

Not counting the numbers of crew, and U.S. or Canadian citizens returning from abroad, the following countries are widely represented for the years 1892-1924. Aliens admitted to the U.S. by last country of residence:

3,919,000	Italy, Sicily
3,437,000	Austria-Hungary
2,893,000	Russia, Finland
2,005,000	England, Ireland, Scot.
1,360,000	Canada, Newfoundland
1,173,000	Germany, Poland

The ports of departure reflect the trends. In the peak year of 1907, 240,000 passengers sailed from Naples; 203,000 from Bremen; 177,000 from Liverpool; 142,000 from Hamburg. Based on the percentage of a country's population, the highest rates of emigration between 1891 and 1910 were from Ireland, Italy, and Norway.

Myth: The passengers on one vessel usually came from the same country.

In a group of twenty-five passengers arriving in 1920, the nationalities included: Russian, English, Finnish, Jamaican, Syrian, Spanish, Italian, Uruguayan, Argentinean, Australian, Canadian, Brazilian and Cuban.

Such a mixture of nations was not uncommon, especially if the vessel stopped at multiple ports. A single vessel might sail from Trieste, Palenno, Naples, and Gibraltar on the way to America, with immigrants from many countries.

Myth: The immigrants could come to the United States without knowing anyone in the country.

When U.S. immigration officials reported to work at Ellis Island, the ferries plying the harbor carried many friends and relatives bound to greet arrivals at the island. After the Immigration Act of 1893, ship manifests recorded the answer to the question "going to join a relative, and if so, what relative and where do they live?" The Act of 1903 changed the phrase to "whether going to join a relative or friend; and, if so, what relative or friend, and his name and complete address."

By 1910 nearly ninety-five per cent of the arrivals at Ellis Island declared a sponsor. It is no wonder, then, that almost forty per cent of the immigrants had pre-paid tickets to America. Sponsors had to make a bond to insure their responsibilities toward the immigrant, or that the immigrant would not become a welfare recipient.

Single women, picture brides, and children under twenty-one were the ones questioned most carefully about their American sponsor. This idea of sponsorship resulted in the most diverse set of answers to the questioning of immigrants. Examples of sponsors in the records are: Cornelius Vanderbilt, an Opera Company, a hotel, a bank, a tobacco company, one's own home, a friend, nobody, in transit to Canada, a brother-in-law and every other possible type of relative.

Years afterward, when Great Aunt Christine was asked about her sponsor, she refused to talk. She implied there was physical imprisonment for a time until she could escape him and flee New York for Milwaukee. Similar stories have been documented. At times the immigrant would frankly ask "Are you my father?" On occasion the immigrant refused to be picked up by a certain relative or spouse, or the sponsor arriving at the Island was impersonating the actual relative.

Myth: Most immigrants coming to Ellis Island were illiterate.

The immigrants came from all levels of society. Of the 312,000 arrivals in 1899, nearly eighty per cent could read or write. In 1907, seventy per cent of the immigrants were literate.

The controversial Act of 1917 required proof of literacy in any language or dialect for admission. Interpreters were on call to help the immigrant with this requirement. Literacy also varied widely according to race. As stated by the adult immigrants between 1899 and 1910, groups with higher than ninety per cent literacy included the Scandinavian, British, Dutch, German, French, and Chinese. Groups between sixty and seventy five per cent included Slovak, Japanese, Hebrew, Greek, Polish, and Russian. Those with less than fifty per cent literacy included the Ruthenian, South Italian, Mexican, Turkish, and Portuguese.

Myth: Women and children were the most typical immigrants.

Of the twenty-one million aliens admitted to the U.S. between 1892 and 1924, thirty-six per cent were female.

Many of the millions of young men who came often returned as seasons of work changed in this country and that of his homeland. This may be why men make up a majority of the entries on ship lists. Male predominance was greater among the Greeks, Italians, Poles, and Finns. Only after 1930, were females in the majority.

Less than fourteen per cent of the arrivals between 1892 and 1924 were under the age of sixteen. The percentage of children coming was higher among the Hebrews, Czechs, and Germans.

Myth: Crew members have only a small part in the immigration story.

Few immigrants actually "worked their way across on a cattle boat." As the government became aware of many aliens coming as crew members, it required a "List or Manifest of Aliens Employed on the Vessel as

Members of Crew." On some passenger vessels there were hundreds of crew members, and on certain cargo vessels the crew outnumbered the passengers.

Myth: Immigrants generally settled in the eastern United States.

Two-thirds of those admitted to America via Ellis Island went directly to New Jersey to board a train to their destination. Most of the steerage immigrants, therefore, never experienced New York City as did the other one-third who often lived and died in New York City.

Where were the immigrants going in America? Where did the immigrants work in America? In one Pennsylvania mine, at the turn of the century, 719 of the 768 workers were not U.S. citizens. The states with high concentrations of foreign-born residents included New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, and Texas.

According to the 1910 federal census, thirty-three per cent of the residents of Massachusetts and New York were foreign-born. Cities with more than twenty-five per cent foreign-born included Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and New York. It is notable that more than seventy per cent of all foreign-born residents lived in urban areas. The highest percentages of these clusters were for immigrants from Russia, Ireland, Italy, and Poland. These are the people who came to labor for America. Immigrants settled in all areas of the nation. They did many things such as sewing garments in a sweat shop, building a subway, working on a farm, and digging for silver or coal. The Southern States were the least likely destination.

The Experience

Myth: The typical voyage to America was long, crowded, and dangerous.

The journey getting to the port city was often much more arduous than the voyage itself. After the advent of the steamship, the average ocean journey lasted ten to fifteen days although slower ships could take thirty or forty days. The typical steerage conditions on the vessel often included bunk beds, poor ventilation, and few toilet or washroom facilities. The health conditions on the ship were poor at best. The August 30, 1892 arrival of the Moravia caused great concern. It carried cholera. In this era of travel, less than one half of

one percent of the passengers died during the voyage. In 1910 the major steamship lines were the Hamburg, German Lloyd, Cunard, French, and Red Star. About 2,230 westward voyages brought the wretched refuse that year. How many passengers could be crowded onto one vessel? The Kaiserin Auguste Kictoria once docked with 551 first class, 290 second class, 223 third class, and 1322 steerage immigrants.

Myth: Most immigrants sailed in the easy waters of spring and summer.

Anecdotal evidence shows that immigrants travelled whenever it was convenient or when the opportunity came. In 1892, for instance, most immigrants sailed in September, October, August, November, and June.

Myth: The most people processed in one day at Ellis Island was 5,000.

The design of the first Ellis Island provided facilities to process 350,000 people each year. After it burned, the second was capable of handling 500,000 each year. One of the first exceptional days was May 1, 1905. The New York Times reported that more than 15,000 steerage passengers arrived on a large fleet of steamships. On March 27, 1907 more than 17,950 passengers arrived on twelve vessels and May 2nd, more than 20,000 immigrants arrived.

April 17, 1907 was hailed as the most active day on the island, as 11,745 passengers were processed. The uniformed inspectors could interview about 5,000 people each day. It would take one or two days for some steamships to pass the quarantine and allow the processing of passengers.

The inspectors usually worked every day and evening of every week. Nonetheless, Ellis Island was never as busy as major train stations are today in India.

Myth: The immigration processing consumed many days.

From the ship, immigrants were transported from the Manhattan docks to the island. People waited on the ferry or an open barge, with almost no amenities, for hours or even days, if the ship was in quarantine. Hunger or exposure to the elements greeted them before they ever set foot on Ellis Island. Some immigrants passed out while waiting.

For eighty percent of the immigrants, the average stay on Ellis Island was only three to five hours. Twenty percent, or as many as 200,000 per year, were detained for medical or legal reasons. The time of detention ranged from several days to weeks and even months. After 1917 and literacy tests, the average stay on the island increased.

If the immigrant came to America without any contact from the sponsor, and the sponsor never came to the island or communicated in any way, detention would end and entry be denied. Some years more than ten per cent of the alien immigrants were detained to go before a Board of Special Inquiry. In 1907, for example, the boards heard 65,000 immigrants state their case. One inquiry story concerned a person born at Ellis Island in 1923. He was detained with German-Russian parents for six weeks until their deportation. Another told how a family watched a young son die during a three-month detention.

For the sick and disabled in 1896 an average hospital stay was eight days. About two per cent of all cases treated resulted in death, and the rate increased in following years. In 1903, less than 1% of arriving immigrants spent time in hospitals. 3,427 were sent to the Ellis Island Hospital, 1,035 to Long Island College Hospital, and 1,148 to City Health Department hospitals. Nearly thirty area hospitals from Bayonne, New Jersey to Ward's Island cared for ill immigrants.

Myth: Immigrants had to undergo all of their questioning after they landed.

The inquisition of immigrants often began when they got passports, health certificates, and police clearances in their homeland. Then they booked passage with a steamship line. Forms and questions naturally aroused fears, so wise or wealthy aliens tried to dodge the process by travelling first or second class. By 1899 the Treasury Department issued regulations that stated all passengers must submit to the admissions questions. The manifest must be completed before leaving the old country. This was not to be done merely on board by a purser's casual questioning or after arriving in America. After 1903, steamship lines were fined $100 for each excluded passenger, and the company would pay the expenses to return the person. In 1907 about 12,000 emigrants were turned back at German borders, 40,000 at European ports, and 13,000 at Ellis Island. Between 1892 and 1924 about two percent, or 250,000 people, were excluded from admission to the United States.

After the Quota Laws most immigrants received inspection

in their native land, usually by U.S. consulate officials and doctors. Passports and other documents were often shown at this time. Immigrants questioned at Ellis Island between 1924 and 1954 were primarily those who had serious legal or medical problems.

Myth: Arrivals at Ellis Island underwent lengthy questioning.

Each inspector had to decide if the person facing him was entitled to enter America. In addition to the medical inspection, a series of questions went something like this in one of twenty inspection lines:

"Where is your manifest ticket?'

"What is your name?"

"How old are you?"

"Who are you with?"

"Are you married?"

"What is your married name?"

"What is your nationality?"

"Where were you born?"

"Where are you coming from?"

"Where are you going?"

"Do you have a ticket there?"

Have you ever been to the United States before?" "When?"

"Where have you been in this country?"

"Do you have any relatives here?" "Who?" "Where do these relatives live?"

"Is there anyone who can come out to meet you here?"

"Who paid for your passage?"

"Do you have any money?" "Let me see it."

"What is your occupation?" "Do you have any skills?"

"Can you read or write?"

"Do you have a job waiting for you here in the U.S.?"

"Are you an anarchist?" "Are you a polygamist?"

"Do you have a criminal record?"

"Have you ever been in a poor house?"

"Are you related to this person here?"

On busy days, when this questioning was limited to two or three minutes, the judgment appeared an eternity. The result, more immigrants were detained for further ordeals. The intelligence tests given after 1907 would require the immigrant to complete a puzzle or count numbers backwards. Literacy tests were sought for decades before being approved in 1917 despite a Presidential veto. The literacy test involved reading forty words, such as Bible verses, in one's language. Less than one per cent of the immigrants, however, were rejected due to illiteracy.

Myth: Immigrants often had their names changed at Ellis Island.

The majority of passengers were detailed on the ship's manifest before the vessel left the port of departure. The purser or ship's officer was familiar with the name and ethnicity of the many passengers who typically used the port. The ship visited the port several times each year. The captain and the medical officer swore affidavits to the accuracy of each group of lists, with one to thirty people in a group.

On arrival in the port of New York the U.S. inspectors boarded each vessel and examined the manifest and tickets of all classes of passengers. For those passengers taken to Ellis Island, immigration officials reviewed the questions and answers with each person. The inspectors developed systems to prevent the misspelling of names. To handle difficult names, interpreters were on hand who could understand more than thirty languages from Albanian to Yiddish.

Between seeing the name on the manifest and writing it on a landing card there was a chance of changing the name. A few immigrants requested a name change, as a new beginning. Historical records and individual testimonies, indicate that most name changes occurred during the naturalization process, not at Ellis Island. Names were rarely changed intentionally. From mere confusion or a lack of communication names were sometimes cropped, spelled phonetically, or substituted with the name of a hometown. Will this most common myth about Ellis Island ever change?

Myth: The immigrants were very poor yet had to show money to enter America.

Before arriving at Ellis Island, each immigrant had already spent funds to travel to their port of departure. Then they spent $20.00 to $40.00 for a steamship ticket. By 1904 the inspectors at Ellis Island were asking for a show of $10.00 and a ticket to a destination. This was not a law but a suggestion by the Commissioner. After 1909, the minimum was $25.00 a large amount considering even the average American made less than $3.00 a week.

How much money did the immigrants bring? Of the 312,000 arrivals in 1899, only 39,000 had more than $30.00. A combined average of the funds of all passengers had $31.00 as the typical amount. Apparently, the immigrants knew how to share just enough money for each to pass by the inspector.

Wealth has always been an advantage. Especially during the Great Depression, immigration officials all along the way were more strict about admitting anyone likely to become a public charge. Some immigrants hid much more money than they showed or admitted. If after having sold all the family's belongings in Germany, and a

month later opening a complete shop in Cleveland, an immigrant had much more than the $30.00 claimed at Ellis Island.

Myth: Careful medical examinations were given to all prospective Americans.
First and second class passengers were inspected on the vessel; all others went to Ellis Island. There the eventful medical examination began as the immigrant climbed the stairs into the Great Hall. U.S. Public Health Service doctors at the top of the steps watched the immigrants as they climbed.

During this six-second physical, if the inspector suspected that the immigrant had a medical problem, he would take the person out of line. A mark was made on his clothing with a piece of chalk. This simple marking might mean the difference between the old life and a new life in America.

"B" for back problems

"K" for possible

"C" for conjunctivitis

"L" for lameness or limp

"E" for eye problems

"N" for neck problems

"F" for facial rash

"Pg" for pregnant

"Ft" for foot problems

"S" for senility

"H" for heart disease

"Sc" for scalp problems

"X" for mental illness

About twenty per cent of the arrivals were marked. The full medical inspection might take only five minutes. Those needing special inspection, however, would have to disrobe and in some cases be detained. Contagious diseases detected by the officials included: bubonic plague, chicken pox, cholera, diphtheria, dysentery, leprosy, measles, meningitis, scarlet fever, smallpox, syphilis, trachoma, typhus, and yellow fever.

Passengers of any class needing quarantine were placed in buildings on Ellis Island, and some on the nearby islands of Hoffman and Swinburne. Ellis Island eventually had fifteen medical buildings where diseases were cured and lives were saved.

Detection of a person's sanity created many quandaries. When there was doubt in the mind of the inspector, detention was ordered. One such passenger was labelled "Insane, loves America and wishes to defend America, will go into army. Delusions of patriotism." Great Aunt Christina, born in South Africa and raised in Sicily, and firmly believed in visions of the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ. If an inspector learned of this, might she too have been detained?

Myth: If you died on the Island you were buried there. One of the ultimate horrors of Ellis Island was death. At least 3,500 deaths occurred on the island. Most of the burials were in the Calvary and Evergreen cemeteries in Brooklyn. On the other hand, more than 350 births occurred on the Isle of Hope.

Myth: Marriages could not occur at Ellis Island.
Immigration officers tried to avoid white slavery for the many young women who came to America alone and were met by men identified as sponsors. The executives at Ellis Island kept a permanent record of marriages performed on the island under New York laws. Often an immigration official would take a young woman into New York City to be married by a city official to her sponsor, hopefully a legitimate fiancé.

Myth: Immigrants were easily lost at Ellis island.
Everyone was tagged with a number according to their exact listing on the ship's manifest. Each numbered group was herded to certain stairways, doors, lines, cages, rooms, or dormitories. While there the immigrants may have felt it but were not lost in the scheme of the immigration officials.

Did anyone escape this Battleground Island? Yes, although most were caught. In 1924, for instance, two Spaniards, one Italian, one Mexican, one Portuguese, one Russian, and one other man left after an afternoon concert and tried to swim to New Jersey. All were captured, except one who drowned.

Were families kept together at all costs? In June 1908 a two-year-old boy came with his mother and siblings. He was medically detained until April 1909, when his father could no longer afford the weekly seventy five cent cost. The child was deported. Fortunately, a Jewish organization helped him find a cure, return, and legally enter the U.S.

A women engaged to marry an American citizen might be deported for financial distress. A boy might be forced to leave his American born brother if the family returned him to the U.S. with a medical defect. Personal trials and victories were so frequent that parts of the Registry Building earned names such as, "Stairs of Separation" and "Kissing Post."

Myth: Deportation rarely occurred at Ellis Island.
Much of the trauma at Ellis Island came from the words "we cannot accept you." About two percent of the immigrants heard these words. Between 1907 and 1924, about 107,000 aliens were excluded from entering the United States via the port of New York. Another 19,000 were deported from Ellis Island after they had entered the country. The high mark for deportation was the fateful year of 1919. Seven percent of arriving aliens were deported. Many individuals were deported more than once.

After 1892 these were the main causes, ranked in order, for exclusion from America:

- likely to become a public charge
- tried to avoid inspection, or lacked proper documents
- mentally or physically defective
- unacceptable contract laborer
- criminal, immoral, or guilty of "moral turpitude"
- stowed away on the vessel
- adult and unable to read
- skipped inspection or made false statements.

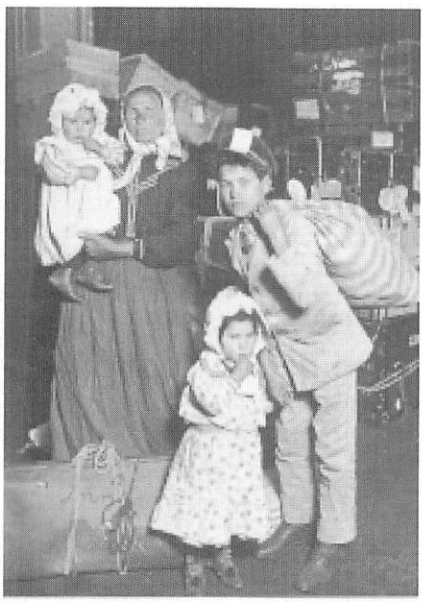
Certain local governments and churches in Europe purposefully sent their unwanted citizens to America in a way designed to avoid U.S. laws. Steamship companies placed questionable immigrants in cabin class where inspection was less thorough. Other passengers came on their own under false identities. As examinations became more strict, the percentage of those losing the fight for freedom increased. On occasion inspectors at Ellis Island resigned because they had to enforce such rigid guidelines.

Those passengers who appealed their rejection had to wait in wire cages until a decision of their case by a higher authority in Washington, D.C. After the Act of 1917 an alien who had been in the United States less than three years, and could show he was indigent or a political troublemaker, could return home at the expense of the federal government. Many altered the facts to receive this free trip.

Myth: There was little hospitality at Ellis Island.

In 1903 the commissioner at Ellis Island said "it is inconceivable that the millennium can ever exist here." The cause: inefficiencies, and corruption by both staff and businesses contracted to provide services. Years of exploitation of unknowing immigrants gave the island its reputation. Racketeering by concessionaires, lawyers, and supposedly helpful runners was a daily occurrence. This often committed by one's countryman who had come earlier.

Yet the government sent free postcards or telegrams to sponsors such as relatives and employers, describing



one's safe arrival and the procedure for the sponsor to visit the island. In the 1905 Annual Report it stated that 30,000 telegrams were sent from Ellis Island.

Available amenities included outdoor balconies, a library with foreign language materials, religious services, a cinema, a kindergarten, and Sunday concerts. They did complain about prune sandwiches and other unfamiliar foods served in the cafeteria.

In the busiest years more than 500 officials worked on Ellis Island. Ethnic and religious societies regularly assisted aliens through the process. The island itself was regularly expanded and improved. Fortunately, the many iron railings set up in 1900 were replaced in 1911 by benches. Unfortunately, many of the improvements to the facilities came after immigration subsided in 1924.

The Records

Myth: Passenger records are the best choice for tracing immigrant ancestors.

In surveys taken of genealogists at the Family History Library and at Brigham Young University, immigration records always ranks in the top three choices of records most requested. Patrons ask for classes to learn about indexes and databases. Nevertheless, researchers who follow basic genealogical methodology may discover their best information is in family and home sources: the precious photograph carried from the homeland with the village name mentioned, the passport used to leave the Old Country, the oral history made of a great aunt's immigration experience. In the United States, the goal of documenting the exact place of origin may sometimes-not always-be found quickly and easily. This information may be found in a passport application, naturalization paper, border crossing file, consulate file, church or civil death record, or similar sources.

Naturalization Files: When a search for a passenger list fails or is difficult, researchers should next turn to an immigrant's application for citizenship. Many helpful papers are created during the naturalization process over a period of years. The largest collections of applications for naturalization are available at the Family History Library. The declarations of intention to become a citizen, and the petitions for naturalization are the most valuable papers created in the process. In naturalization files one can learn of legal name changes, foreign birth date and place, port and date of arrival, residence, occupation, character witnesses, spouse, children, and physical description.

Many immigrants applied for citizen-

ship, not all of them in New York. Using that state as an example we find there are thousands of micro-filmed records relating to the Ellis Island era:

Filmed naturalization records for immigrants applying in New York

• Thirteen NY courts; Soundex index to naturalizations, 1792-1906 (294)

• Common Pleas, County Superior, and County Supreme courts; petitions, records, and index, 1792-1906 (2,167)

• Common Pleas, Superior courts; German and British declarations, 1846-1895 (75)

• County Supreme Court; index to petitions, 1876-1924 (38)

• County Supreme Court; declarations, 1895-1905, 1907-1924 (179)

• County Supreme Court; German, Italian, and British declarations,1895-1906 (36)

• County Supreme Court; petitions and records, 1907-1924 (467)

• Eastern District, District Ct.; index to petitions, 1865-1957 (142)

• Eastern District, District Ct.; declarations, 1865-1929 (86)

Southern District, Circuit Court; declarations, 1845-1911 (63)

• Southern District, District Ct.; declarations index, 1917-1950 (113)

• Southern District, District Ct.; index to petitions, 1824-1941 (102)

• Southern District, District Ct.; declarations, 1924-1925 (28)

• Western District, District Ct.; index to petitions, 1907-1966 (20)

Passports: Applications for U.S. passports are being microfilmed by the Family History Department. More than 2,150 microfilms are now available for the years 1795-1925. More than 2 million applications are available for the principal years of Ellis Island, 1892-1924. Untold numbers relate to immigrants who naturalized and returned home to settle an estate, visit an ill parent, see friends, or conduct business. In passport files one can discover detailed information about the applicant's original arrival in America. The record will contain place of origin, naturalization, family members, reason for travel, and more. Relevant passport collections on microfilm include:

1829 - 1894 small index (1st letter) to special applications

1829 - 1897 special passports of government officials, etc.

1833 - 1905 passport applications, by volume number

1874 - 1906 index to emergency passports issued abroad

1877 - 1907 emergency passports issued abroad

1881 - 1906 book indexes (2nd-3rd letter) to applications

1906 - 1918 index to emergency passports issued abroad

1906 - 1925 passport applications, by certificate numbers

1906 - 1925 indexes (3-letter system) to applications

1907 - 1917 index to widows, divorced, women, minors

1908 - 1921 index (2-3 letter) to consular registrations

1909 - 1917 index to passport extensions

1915 - 1924 index to Jewish applications for emergency passports

1941 - 1947 nationals in German-occupied Europe.

Canadian Border Crossings.

Many immigrants chose to sail to Canada to avoid the strict policies of the U.S. immigration officials. After the immigration act of 1891, with its new exclusions, more classes of immigrants found Canadian ports quite appealing. Anyone searching for information on a relative who might have entered the U.S. from Canada during the period 1895-1954 should consult the indexes.

It is estimated that forty per cent of the passengers coming to Canada were bound for destinations in the United States. Moreover, the steamship and railroad fares in Canada were very reasonable. During this time many companies competed in Europe to lure immigrants to North America. After 1891, United States officials were allowed to inspect passengers arriving at Canadian ports or crossing the border on trains. Immigration district offices were established in Montreal, Detroit, Seattle, Spokane, and Winnipeg. Most of the relevant records were eventually centralized in an office at St. Albans, Vermont.

The available records are in six sets of documents. These records include information on individuals who entered the U.S. not only in the St. Albans District of Vermont, but also in the states of Washington, Montana, North Dakota, Minnesota, Michigan, New York, and other places along the U.S.-Canadian border. Researchers may explore 1,286 microfilms of Canadian crossings. They are available at the National Archives and Family History Library. One set of film index include more than 1,800,000 individual card manifests arranged according to the Soundex coding system, AOOO through Z665. These cards specifically list aliens, Canadians, American citizens, and debarred individuals.

Each index card contains an abstract of the information found on the original ship passenger manifest, or in the case of Canadian residents, what would have appeared on a manifest, normally including: port of entry and date of the original document; family

name, and given name; "accompanied by," listing names and ages, place of birth and age; race and nationality; last permanent residence; name and address of nearest relative or friend in country whence alien came; destination, and name and complete address of relative or friend to join; personal description, money shown; and other remarks.

Consulate Records. A unique research collection is the material generated by Russian consular offices in the U.S. and Canada during 1849-1926, with the majority dating from 1917-1926. The major consulates included were New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, and Honolulu. How the papers were confiscated and their subsequent return to the custody of the U.S. State Department and the National Archives is itself an amazing story in the annuals of America. The files contain a wide array of materials created for citizens living abroad:

- probates for people who died in the U.S., Canada, or on a ship
- emergency aid for their citizens who had been robbed or suddenly become destitute
- legal help
- passport renewal

Correspondence files include many letters from Russian women asking for help in tracing lost husbands or sons. Government officials searching for men overdue for military service. The key consulate office was in New York City. The masterful index to these records, is the Russian Consular Records Index and Catalog with 70,000 names. (FHL 973 D22s).

Myth: The popular passenger indexes by Filby include most Ellis Island names.

Passenger and Immigration Lists Bibliography, 1538-1900, by P. William Filby (FHL 973 W33p), cites hundreds of published sources giving names of ship passengers, naturalized citizens, headright land grant holders, and those taking oaths of allegiance. Most of these secondary sources are compiled in a continuing series by Mr. Filby and his assistants. These excellent finding aids are available in most major research libraries.

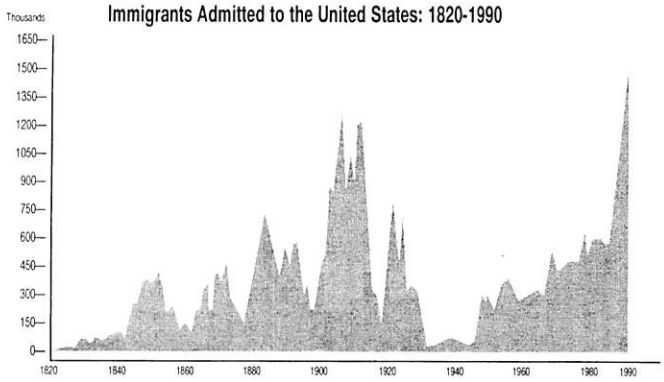
The indexes are the first place a genealogist should look for pre-1820 immigrants. The book that has been indexed may not give an exact place for the family origin. Nearly 2 million names are in the index volumes. Yet the indexes have very few entries for the 1500s, or for the Ellis Island era. Furthermore, none of the passenger manifests or related immigration records kept by the U.S. government are included in the Filby indexes.

Myth: The valuable records of Ellis Island and Castle Garden burned.

Many administrative and immigration records, dating back to 1855 and the Castle Garden era, are lost to fire. Stored in an ammunition magazine, the records now are reduced to ashes. Many texts report the fire that began shortly around midnight on June 15, 1897, meant the ruin of the valuable passenger manifests and the proofs of legal entry into America. This disaster happened the day after the construction work for the island was supposedly complete. Structures built of pine and covered with corrugated iron certainly suffered from the walls of flame that originated in the restaurant. Later in the day it was reported to the New York Times that the fire destroyed all the records.

During the fire, arrangements were made for immigrants to be safely taken from the island. Most of those sleeping on the island were Italians, and there were Hindu, Mormon, and other groups as well. There was no loss of life. The 7,000 arrivals due that week were inspected at other piers. For the next three years, immigrant processing took place at offices on Manhattan.

The day after the fire the Commissioner for Immigration for the port of New York discovered that two-thirds of the official records survived the fire. All the port of New York passenger arrival records from 1820 through June 1897 survived as did many of the island's filing systems. Particularly from 1892 to 1897, the New York arrival lists for about 1.5 million people are extant, handwritten, and arranged chronologically without an index.



The so-called ships' lists eventually were microfilmed and are a standard source for immigration research. The lists starting June 1897 for the port of New York, in custody of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, were filmed. After filming, the original records were destroyed in the 1940s by the federal government. Additional records, mostly administrative papers in the General Immigration files, also were destroyed in 1960.

Myth: The microfilmed records for the port of New York are legible.

By 1943-1944 about 14,000 bound volumes of the Ellis Island manifests were collected and microfilmed. A random sampling of 303 microfilms determined that six per cent were difficult or impossible to read. At the Family History Library such films are in boxes labelled "Best Copy Available." About seventeen per cent of the immigration films in the FHL were reprints or replacements from the National Archives. Of 303 random films, fifteen per cent from 1892-1901 had low legibility, and five per cent from 1902-1911; five per cent from 1912-1920 were typewritten.

Myth: The original records for the port of New York are at the National Archives.

The original manuscripts called the Customs Passenger Lists, January 1820 to June 1897 for New York arrivals, were fortuitously acquired by the Balch Institute when the National Archives needed additional storage space. Records of the ports of Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New Orleans also were transferred. In all, by 1978, the National Archives gave eleven tons of arrival records to the Balch Institute.

Founded in 1971, the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies (18 South 7th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106) sponsors one of the nation's finest museums, libraries, and archives for the study of immigration history. Affiliated with Temple University the Institute directs the Center for Immigration Research. All major ethnic groups are represented in the collections of books, newspapers, unpublished manuscripts, and artifacts. Researchers working on a doctoral dissertation may apply for access to the manuscripts housed here.

Myth: The ships manifests are very accurate.

Changes to the status of a passenger are noted on the manifest. U.S. officials on the vessel and at Ellis Island made annotations and corrections as needed. Naturalization officials many years later also added notes as they verified an applicant's legal admission.

A typical 1912 study for the government reported that the "manifests are full of inaccurate information." Often the responsible ship officials coached the passengers lest the steamship company be required to pay fines and expense of returning individuals not admitted. The passengers also coached each other with answers to the expected questions. Non-existent relatives and addresses were given when asked about sponsors.

Many answers given to the officials were no doubt memorized yet misunderstood. The officials themselves naturally varied in the accuracy of their questioning and noting. Other answers were purposefully misstated. For example, an age might be understated to get a price discount for a child. Or a falsehood was used as a way to conceal the actual destination of a forbidden contract laborer. Additional errors are in the records because manifests were sometimes made for fraudulent reasons. Such was the desperation of some people who wanted to be an American. Criminal cases followed if this was discovered.

Myth: U.S. citizens were not recorded on the ships lists.

All passengers were to be recorded on ships manifests after 1820. After 1906 special forms were used, titled "List of United States Citizens." The questions asked were concerning the dates and places of birth and naturalization. Citizens in steerage often had their name and information transferred to the list of citizens. Immigration officers also made notes such as "CL USC" to show which passengers claimed U.S. Citizenship by showing passports or talking about their birth or naturalization.

Government statistics do not note how many names appear on such lists, from 1906 through 1924. It is clear that not all citizens were recorded on the List of U.S. Citizens. Some passengers claiming citizenship are marked "US CIT" or 'CL USC" on an alien list and their entry may or may not be copied onto the List of U.S. Citizens. Note the following statistics:

1906: 936,000	aliens arrived in all classes
112,000	citizens in cabins
24,000	citizens in steerage
1920: 334,000	aliens
68,000	citizens in cabins
18,000	citizens in steerage

Myth: Emigrants returning home were not recorded by immigration officers.

In the early years of Ellis Island more than 100,000 people returned each year to his or her homeland. Between 1908 and 1924 about 5.5 million aliens left from the U.S. Eighty-eight per cent were Europeans, and up to forty per cent of some ethnic groups left America. Three million intended to leave permanently. Others left to visit their former home, spend their earnings, find a spouse, or recover from an illness. Many people migrated back and forth with the baggage of discontent. In the Ellis Island era, most of these migrants had been in the U.S. less than 10 years. Each entry into the United States, for any length of time, was duly recorded.

In 1933, the lowest year during the Great Depression, only 23,000 people came to America while 127,000 left. In the early twentieth century, the approximate percentages of resident immigrants leaving America (emigrating) included:

90%	Bulgarians, Serbs
60%	southern Italians
50%	Russian

45%	Greek
40%	Polish
35%	northern Italians
20%	English, French, Scand.
18%	German, Dutch
11%	Irish
5%	Jewish

Myth: The boards of inquiry were too busy to keep records.

After the Act of 1893 as many as eight inquiry boards were working simultaneously, each with at least three inspectors, accompanying clerks, messengers, and interpreters. The resulting "Record of Detained Aliens" and "Record of Aliens Held for Special Inquiry" are microfilmed with the manifest sheets.

More than 1.5 million cases were documented by the boards at Ellis Island. The National Archives has custody of administrative papers and minutes of the immigration boards (Record Group 36). They are only available in Washington. The inquiry records for Philadelphia from 1893-1909 on eighteen microfilms at the Family History Library serve as an example of the content.

Myth: Stowaways often jumped ship and were not recorded on arrival lists.

Organized smuggling rings, using the aid of the ship's crew, sometimes tried to land hidden passengers in America. Most stowaways were almost always discovered — some were alive and others not — and recorded. In 1905, for example, the vessel Italia reported twenty stowaways. The immigration officials later fined the steamship company. As many as 18,000 stowaways were reported in one year. Information on stowaways also will be found on the "Record of Aliens Held for Special Inquiry." Even seamen who deserted were recorded on special forms.

Myth: Births and deaths were not recorded for the immigrants.

Momentous events such as a birth or death on the ship have been recorded since record keeping for immigrants began officially in 1820. These events are generally noted, for the Ellis Island era, at the bottom of the manifest page.

Myth: The manifest pages have no standard numbering system.

The manifest sheets were arranged in a complicated order that proved difficult for ship officials. There were generally four sheets per group. Thirty aliens on pages A and B, affidavits by the master and the surgeon on pages C and D. The groups are often microfilmed in reverse numerical order. A common order followed this pattern:

- groups of lst cabin passengers from port 1
- groups of 1st cabin passengers from port 2
- groups of citizens (without affidavit pages) from port 1
- groups of citizens (without affidavit pages) from port 2
- groups of 2nd cabin passengers from port 1
- groups of 2nd cabin passengers from port 2
- groups of steerage passengers from port 1
- groups of steerage passengers from port 2
- lists of changes in crew
- lists of aliens employed as crew (with one affidavit page)
- lists of aliens detained (no affidavit pages)
- lists of aliens held for special inquiry (no affidavit pages).

Since the records are compiled by class and port, many groups did not include the potential thirty passengers per page. It is common to find the same type of list, such as citizens lists, in several sections of the entire manifest.

Many page numbers are on each manifest page. For lists of aliens, expect to find a large list number on upper left of page A and the upper right of page B; and a small stamped page number on the bottom of page A and a different series of small stamped page numbers on the upper right of page B; and the next consecutive number on affidavit page D. By 1912 the list identifiers were usually changed from large letters to numbers.

Myth: There are few lists of the names of the ships arriving at New York.

The lists of ships are so bulky that they make up twenty-seven microfilms in the National Archives microcopy set M1066. These films are available in Washington, D.C. and at the Family History Library. The Morton Allan Directory of European Steamship Arrivals is a useful reference tool for the names of vessels, the dates of arrival by year and by steamship line. It includes the years 1890 to 1930 for the port of New York.

Myth: Steamship companies have records of the passengers they carried.

Collections of records about steamships are rare. A good archive to use is the Steamship Historical Society of America. It is at the University of Baltimore Library (1420 Maryland Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21201-5779). The SHSA collections include log books, post cards, and periodicals. From a valuable Photo Bank of more than 50,000 photographs a family may request a large glossy photograph of the immigrant vessel. A fee of $15.00 or more will be required.

The Family History Library has very few microfilmed collections of steamship records. Materials in the collection include log books and passenger lists of steamships that plied U.S. coastal waters (primarily in the Merchant Marine service). It also has copies of Lloyd's Universal American Register of Shipping, a description of many vessels, on 650 microfiche. Lloyd's established standards and regulations for inspecting ships. The available registers reveal the name of the ship and its captain, the class, construction data, borne port, owners, dimensions, and so on. Arranged alphabetically by the following categories such as ships, barks, brigs, schooners, and steamers. The Library has the years 1866, 1872, 1874, and 1880. It is also available for vessels leaving the British Isles between 1776 and 1880 (on 651 microfiche). A history of Lloyd's from 1760 to 1960 has been published (FHL 942.1/Ll U3bL). (see Bibliography). These types of research materials are often found in the library's Subject Catalog under the term Ship Registers. The 1896 Record of American Shipping is also available (film 1,321,078) for listing and describing U.S. vessels.

Ship arrival records are an aid in locating passenger records. The National Archives has records of ship entrances for Baltimore (1782-1934), Boston (1789-1899), New Orleans (1812-1903), New York (1789-1919), and Philadelphia (1789-1900). These records are arranged by calendar year. The ship entrance records contain information such as the name of the vessel, the port of embarkation, and the date of its arrival at port. The New York records are at the Family History Library on 27 microfilms.

A few foreign archives have partial collections of steamship company records. The University of Liverpool, for instance, has files of the famous Cunard Line.

Shipwreck Records: The National Ocean Service is developing an information file called AWOIS (Automated Wreck and Obstruction Information System). This computer file has about 3,000 of the estimated 20,000 entries which researchers may use to document shipwrecks. Most of the entries are based on archival records, hydrographic surveys, and maps with locations in latitude and longitude. Searches of the file will be made for a fee. The search may result in references to a relevant source document, but copyrighted materials are not sent to the public. A bibliography is also part of the fee.

Further details are available from:
Hydrographic Surveys Branch
National Ocean Service
Rockville, MD 20852
An educational pamphlet entitled 'Possible Sources of Wreck Information" FHL 973 Al #206) includes archives such as the following:

- Great Lakes Historical Society in Vermilion, Ohio
- Library of Congress
- Marine Museum at Fall River, Massachusetts
- Mariners Museum Library in Newport News, Virginia
- Mystic Seaport Museum in Mystic, Connecticut
- National Maritime Museum in San Francisco
- Peabody Museum in Salem, Massachusetts
- Philadelphia Maritime Museum Library
- Smithsonian Institution, Museum of American History
- Steamship Historical Society of America.

Myth: The best sources for Ellis Island research are at Ellis Island.

Few research sources are at Ellis Island. Its library, open by appointment, has secondary sources such as immigration histories and some published indexes. Its unique materials include original and unpublished studies of immigration to New York and the administration of Ellis Island. Passenger arrival records are not available now, nor do they have computer databases or microform reading machines.

The National Archives has microfilm copies of the pertinent passenger New York arrival records:

Records of the U.S. Customs Service

- 1892-1897 original customs passenger lists (M-237) 73 rolls
- 1789-1919 registers of vessels arriving (M-1066) 27 rolls

Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service

- 1897-1902 card index to immigration lists (T-519) 115 rolls
- 1897-1954 original immigration manifests (T-715) 8,537 rolls
- 1902-1943 soundex index to immigration lists (T-621) 755 rolls
- 1906-1942 book indexes to immigration lists (T-612) 807 rolls

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To be continued in the next issue of Chinook: fall 1999.

GEDCOM:

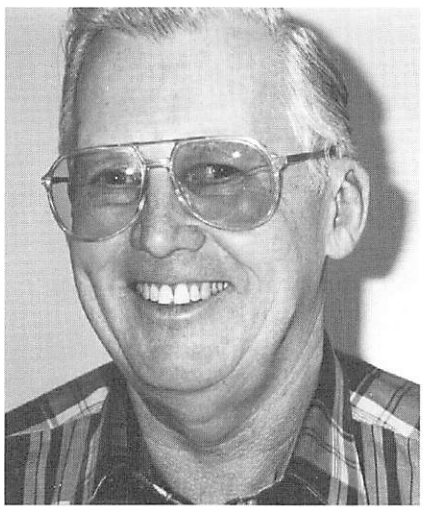
What it is; where it's going?

by Bill Mumford

Everyone, when choosing a genealogy program, is advised by the experts to get one with GEDCOM capabilities. So what is GEDCOM? It is simply another of those acronyms which seem to be becoming (a regular) part of our daily lives. It stands for **GE**nealogical **D**ata **COM**munication. Its purpose is to provide a means of transferring information between databases. The need for such a system was first discussed at a National Genealogical Society meeting in 1984. It was agreed that the development of such a system would require an organization with considerable resources. As a result, the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints (LDS) was requested to develop a system in consultation with the authors of the various genealogy programs. In 1987 the first commercial version (#3) appeared in the LDS program, Personal Ancestral File 2.0. In 1989 it was replaced with version 4 which remained the official version until December of 1995 when it was replaced with version 5.5.

GEDCOM has been described by many as a file format but it is more than that, it is also a language. It has a vocabulary, albeit limited, a grammar, and an alphabet. The vocabulary consists of shortened forms of English words which are referred to as "tags". These tags, there are only 129 of them, have specific uses and must be used as prescribed by the grammar. The grammar defines the structure the GEDCOM file will take. The alphabet, or character set, is something called ANSEL, another acronym. (American National Standard Extended Latin). This character set permits a computer to support diacritics, an essential when using some languages. The use of ANSEL allows users to read a GEDCOM file with a text editor such as Word Pad or a word processor. Because it is national standard, it may also be read by any computer regardless of platform type, e.g. Apple, PC. Each program developer is responsible for providing, within their program, the software required to create or read a GEDCOM file.

A GEDCOM file consists of four distinct parts. The header, submission data, general data, and trailer label. The header, a required element, will usually indicate the program which created the file, the version of GEDCOM used, the intended destination, the date, the character set,



Bill Mumford

and the name of the file. (Note: Early GEDCOMs allowed the use of various character sets.) The submission data is not a required element. If used it will provide the information required for an LDS Temple submission. The trailer segment, another required element, is simply the following expression, TRLR . This indicates the end of the file. Without it the file can not be processed.

The data section, interestingly, is not a required element but without it the file would be rather pointless. Within this section all the data stored in the user's genealogical database is tagged and placed in the sequence determined by the GEDCOM grammar. A data record may contain seven distinct elements. They are family records, individual records, notes, sources, repositories, submitter data and multimedia records. There may be any number of each of these types in a complete file. Within each of these sections the data is stored in a hierarchical fashion. The tag which identifies the type of element is preceded by the number 0 and a reference number. This allows each family, individual, note, source, etc to have a unique number. These numbers are used, as required, throughout the GEDCOM file to refer to each unique element.

Each of these 0 level items may be followed by a number of pieces of subordinate data. Each of these are preceded by a number 1 and a tag. Should subordinate data exist for these items, another tag, preceded by a number 2 will follow. This procedure may be extended although it rarely extends beyond the 4th level. A sample of this system would appear as follows. All capitalized characters are GEDCOM tags.

0 @1@ INDI
Identifies following data as that of individual 1

1 NAME Joseph Quincy /Smith/
Name, surname defined by enclosing / /

1 BIRT
Identifies birth event data

2 DATE 02 OCT 1822
Date of event

2 PLAC Newport, Rhode Island
Place of event

2 SOUR @1@
Pointer to source of event information

3 PAGE section 4, page 6
Specific detail found in the source

3 EVEN BIRT
Identifies an event in the source

4 ROLE CHIL
Role individual played in the event

1 FAMS @1@
Pointer to family record, individual is a spouse.

The above example indicates that Joe Smith is the first individual in the database. The slashes around Smith indicate this is the surname. The Birth event has three bits of subordinate data: the date, the place and the source. The source has subordinate data as well. This is the citation detail specific to this individual. The source referenced from 2 SOUR @1@ will contain the general data for that item. The line 3 EVEN identifies the event in the source as a birth. At a fourth level the role of this individual in the birth is that of child. The FAMS points to family 1 where the individual will be, in this case, identified as the husband.

Obviously an individual would have considerably more data than shown. GEDCOM tags exist for recording a limited number of events and other information which may be found in the original database. As mentioned earlier certain tags may be used at different levels and may be followed by a limited amount of data. In some cases this may be as many as 248 characters. Where an item, such as a note exceeds those limits the data is parsed into segments which do not exceed the limits and each segment is given a tag.

Each of the seven 0 level items have a specific structure defined in the GEDCOM grammar. To illustrate each section is beyond the scope of this article but they generally follow the example shown above. Interestingly some of these 0 level tags such as SOUR (source) and NOTE (notes) can appear at lower levels and may, or may not, be present at the 0 level. This, as well as multiple use of tags like NAME or BIRT, DEAT etc in a subordinate position under one individual can lead to some confusion. It is flexibility such as this in the grammar that has created some of the problems now experienced by GEDCOM users.

Prior to introduction of version 5.5, version 4 GEDCOM presented few difficulties to program developers. The only record information contained in the file was the basic birth, baptism, death and burial data plus the notes. If you used a program such as Roots III, even though you recorded much more data than that, it could not be exported using GEDCOM. As programs became more complex a new version of GEDCOM was required. A draft proposal, version 5.3, was released for discussion and implemented by several developers. Unfortunately the final version, 5.5, did not contain many of the features found in 5.3. This created, and still creates, some difficulties. As a result of these problems and those created by the grammar, the reliability of a GEDCOM transfer now depends on how the standard has been interpreted by the authors of the exporting and importing programs.

In 1995 the failure of GEDCOM to meet the needs of users resulted in the formation of the Lexicom Group under the aegis of GENTECH and other sponsors. The intention was to provide a lexicon of terms used by genealogists before an attempt was made to define a data transfer scheme. The group, made up of several well-qualified genealogists, and supported by technical experts, quickly realized that it would first be necessary to define a data model for recording genealogical data. After two years of work a proposed data model was recently released for discussion purposes. The Office of the GEDCOM Coordinator, which is based in Salt Lake, has also recognized the need to upgrade the present GEDCOM standard and has released a discussion paper entitled GEDCOM, Future Directions. Another transfer scheme, GenBridge, has been proposed by the author of The Master Genealogist and implemented in his program. It involves the use of an interface program, which the developer first configures to his database, and then programs to correspond to that of the database to be imported. The advantage of this system is that no data is lost and the imported data remains in its native format. The disadvantage is that a developer must program the GenBridge for each program whose data is to be imported.

On the brighter side, for those

genealogists who wish to upgrade from a basic program such as PAF, Brother's Keeper or Ancestral Quest 2.1, there are few problems. All event data and notes will transfer, only source information might need to be re-entered. Those moving from the intermediate level programs such as Family Origins and Family Tree Maker to the top line programs will experience a few more difficulties but the greatest problems will be encountered by those attempting to move data from one of the advanced programs such as Ultimate Family Tree and Tree-O to another of the same or lesser category.

Data migration, i.e. moving data from one location or type of storage media to another is becoming a point of great concern not only to genealogists but to many other people who store great amounts of data. To this end an international standard has been formulated by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). It is called XML which stands for eXtensible Markup Language. It is a subset of the SGML (Standard General Markup Language) which has been around since 1986. Another subset of SGML is HTML, an acronym which most of us recognize as the language used to write Internet Web pages. HTML (hyper text markup language) describes to the user's web browser how the received data ought to be viewed. XML, by use of a prolog bit of code called a DTD (document type definition) describes the data itself. Obviously the DTD will require very specific terms for each type of data transmitted in this manner and a number of these have been standardized for use in the medical and engineering professions as well as by other interested groups. Interestingly these existing, standardized definitions are sufficient to create a DTD for genealogical purposes.

Robert Booth, the GEDCOM coordinator (for the LDS Church? NGS? or?), made an unexpected announcement at the GENTECH 99 tech session on XML, that the next version of GEDCOM would be XML encoded. What this means to the user is that a GEDCOM import will be done using the web browser. All incoming data will be shown on the screen even though much of it may not be passed to the user's genealogy program due to storage definition incompatibilities. The DTD preceding each GEDCOM data file will be based on the proposed Future Directions data model released as a discussion item about a year ago. This model, in theory, can accommodate any and all genealogical data. It fails however, to address a core issue, that of the genealogical lexicon. Until we can all agree on the difference between such items as baptisms and christenings, standards become meaningless. The GENTECH Lexicon group is now in the final stages of formulating its data model and will be moving to this, its original mandate, shortly. Mr. Booth is a member of the Lexicon group so I think it is safe to say that as long as the Church is represented in the Lexicon group's discussions any future GEDCOM will reflect the genealogical community's concerns.

Photographic Restoration and Preservation

by Joel L. Pullan

Family historians seek understanding through the lives of loved ones past; they seek knowledge of people, family, and friends. Why did their progenitors live their lives the way they did? How have their decisions affected the family historian and the family? How will decisions made today affect future generations?

Insights gained through genealogy are enhanced by images (photographs) from the past — images that tell stories. Everyone has experienced the exhilaration of finding a photograph, a tangible representation of a beloved ancestor. How do we care for these photographs? How can we preserve the memories recorded in these images? After images have experienced the ravages of time, can we restore them to their once pristine condition? What can we do with our photographs today to preserve a better record for future generations?

Each of these questions is addressed in the following article. First, types of historical photographs are discussed to help determine the time period the images were taken. Second, modern photographic processes that preserve images for future generations are discussed. Will we provide a better record than our ancestors? Third, the rules of photographic restoration are listed; new technology in photographic restoration follows.

Types of Historical Photographs

To properly determine the type of photograph you have and the type of restoration you should use, you must be familiar with basic types of early photography-he daguerreotype, the collotype, the ambrotype, the tintype, and the albumen print. When each process was popular, who invented it, how to recognize it, and who can restore it are questions answered herein. You will discover that restoration of these types of prints usually requires a qualified conservator.

The Daguerreotype

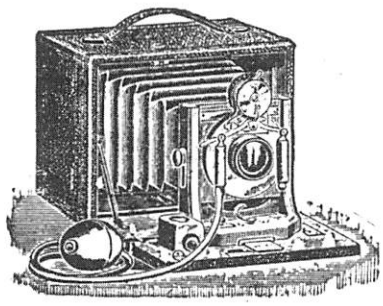
Patented in 1839 by Louis Dagueffe, the daguerreotype was used extensively until the late 1860s. Daguerreotype processes produce distinctive images on highly polished silver plates. When this highly reflective surface reflects a dark background, a positive image appears on the plate. Conversely, when this reflective surface reflects a bright or white background, the image appears as a negative. Because daguerreotypes are susceptible to scratching and tarnishing, they are protected by glass covers encased in decorative frames. Daguerreotypes are extremely sensitive and should only be restored and repaired by a competent conservator.

The Collotype

The collotype was invented by William Henry Fox Talbot in 1840 and patented in 1841. Unlike the daguerreotype, the collotype utilized a negative-to-positive printing process, which allowed a photographer to print several prints from the same negative. Talbot's negatives were actually salt paper dipped in a wax solution to make them translucent. Each negative was later utilized to make multiple prints of a single image and was the precursor for our negative processes today. You can recognize a collotype print by the overall texture evident in the final print. The texture of the paper in the negative is transferred to the final print. Collotype prints can be scanned, digitally enhanced, and restored.

Wet-Collodion

The wet-collodion process was developed by Frederick Scott Archer in 1851. Because collodion was waterproof when it dried, it had to remain moist during exposure and development; thus, photographers were required to take their darkrooms with them to prepare the glass negatives before shooting and to process the glass negatives immediately after shooting. Unlike the collotype process, this process produced clear and sharp images due to the glass negative. This process was popular through the 1870s. Wet-collodion negatives are fragile and should be repaired only by a conservator.



Pocofolding camera, Series A. The lens is the high-grade Rochester symmetrical, adapted for all general purposes. The prices: Complete with Unicum shutter, lens and one dry plate-holder—

Sizes	4 x 5,	5 x 7,	6½ x 8½,
	$25.00.	32.00.	40.00.

A dry-plate camera listed in the T. Eaton catalogue of 1901 for general sale to anybody who wanted a camera.

The Ambrotype

The ambrotype is a term devised by Marcus Aurelius Root for his variation of the wet-collodion process that produced a unique positive, silvery-white image on a dark glass plate. Purposely underexposed collodion plates were bathed in a

ferrous sulfate developer to produce the positive effect when viewed by reflected light. Ambrotypes were packaged in special presentation cases in imitation of daguerreotypes. The technique was not commonly used after the mid-1860s." A conservator should repair damaged arnbrotypes.

The Tintype

The tintype combined the daguerreotype and the wet-collodion processes. Tintype images were printed or photographed on tin utilizing wet-collodion. These images were cheaper to manufacture than the daguerreotype, yet just as difficult to produce because of the nature of the wet-collodion process. Tintype images are subject to rusting in humid conditions and are just as susceptible to damage as daguerreotypes; therefore, they should be repaired or restored by a conservator.

The Albumen Print

The albumen print was basically a variation of Talbot's salted paper printing process. This process involved spreading a solution of egg white and salt on paper. Once treated, the paper was sensitized to silver nitrate and dried in the dark. The process was manipulated several times to produce a high gloss surface. This process was popular from 1850 to approximately 1920. The prints were toned to make them different colors — red, sepia and purple. These prints can be restored through digital manipulation.

Modern Photographic Processes

There are three basic modem photographic processes:

1. Black-and-white Photography

2. Chromogenic or Color Negative Photography; and

3. Ilfochrome Prints or Cibachrome Prints.

The advantages and disadvantages of each of these processes will be discussed.

Black-and-White Photography

Black-and-white photography today has changed from early processes. Techniques, processes, and materials have been refined and streamlined in the past 50 years. Archival black and white print processing necessitates the use of fiber-based photographic paper. Papers known as resin coated or RC papers cannot be archivally processed.

Archival processing involves development, stop bath, fixing, hypo-clearing, and washing. Contamination in latter steps of this process can lead to less than archival processing of prints. "If a fixer is not replenished appropriately, or if a print is not submerged in the fixer long enough, problems can result. Unexposed silver compounds may remain in the paper of the print. Later, these may react with elements in the air, such as sulfur, and cause staining. These compounds can even cause exposed silver to deteriorate over time."

Selenium toning encapsulates the silver within a print and can prolong the life of a print. "Selenium is a known carcinogen; therefore, skin contact should be avoided. The selenium seems to be inert in the toning solutions commercially available, but there may be risk. Work in well-ventilated areas ... [and] ... avoid contact with your skin."

A negative aspect of archival black-and-white processing is that it is costly and time-consuming. The positive aspects of archival black-and-white processing are that these prints, with proper care, will last for generations. When comparing the life of an archivally processed black-and-white print to a modern chromogenic or color print, the black-and-white print will always come out ahead. Glenn Collins addresses this issue and quotes Douglas Severson, a conservator of the Art Institute of Chicago, in an article in the New York-Times, October 3, 1987 entitled, "Fading Memories: Albums Damage Photos."

"Those who grew up during the nearly universal proliferation of the color snapshot belong to the most photographically documented era in history. Yet Mr. Severson said, 'Their parents will have a much more durable record, since their childhood pictures were taken entirely in black and white film,' which has more stable images." Severson continues:

"It's quite rare to find color prints from the 50s and 60s that don't look markedly changed... Right now the visual heritage of a generation is being lost. These are the people in their mid-30s whose childhood pictures were taken in the 50s and 60s."

Chromogenic or Color Negative Prints

The color dyes used in early color photographic prints were less stable than those used today. Peter Krause wrote an article for Historic Preservation magazine, entitled "How to Care for Vintage Photos." In this article, he addresses several issues relative to the durability of chromogenic prints. He states:

"Color photographs generally have poorer stability because

the organic dyes that provide the image colors are not as resistant to chemical change as silver. In addition, dyes fade sooner or later when exposed to bright light-especially light rich in ultraviolet radiation-whereas properly processed silver images are unaffected by light."

He later suggests "that to prolong the life of chromogenic prints you should keep them cool and dry, away from bright light."

Kodak further supports this position by stating that one of the most common causes of damage to photographs is improper storage. The conditions in many attics and basements are "hot and humid in the summer to cold and dry in the winter." This causes images to curl and crack."

Ilfochrome Prints or Cibachrome Prints

Color positive printing is the most archival form of color photography. All of the recommendations for color negative photography apply here as well. These prints, like any other color print, will eventually fade if exposed to direct light. Color positive prints are made directly from color positives or slides — often referred to as chromes. These prints exhibit high contrast, high gloss and an incredible sense of depth. Most people know them as Cibachrome prints; the name has been changed to Ilfochrome prints.

No matter what type of print you are preserving, how you store it is the key to successful preservation. There are many types of photographic albums on the market. The type of plastic, glue, or cardboard used in inexpensive albums can damage photographs. When choosing an album, choose one whose viewing pages are made of "polyester (trade name Mylar), polyethylene, polypropylene or triacetate.

Says Collins "The worst type of album, conservators say, is the most common one: the so-called magnetic albums. It has no magnets, but its cardboard pages grip photographs on a sticky adhesive coating covered by a layer of plastic that is peeled back to position the photos.

In such albums, says Collins, "the cheap quality cardboard gives off peroxides that cause yellow staining in the whites of the prints.

"The plastic covering can be harmful not only because it completely seals the photograph in with cardboard, but because the plastic gives off gases that attack photographic images."

Best Technology Forms of Photographic Restoration

Rules for Photographic Restoration

Some basic rules for photographic restoration are as follows:

1. When in doubt about whether or not a certain type of photographic restoration should take place, consult a qualified conservator.

2. Never jeopardize the integrity of the original photograph. If there is a possibility that the original could be damaged in the restoration process, do not proceed.

3. Leave photographic originals only with professionals whom you can trust implicitly with your family history.

Technology and Photographic Restoration

In the past photographic restoration was done by hand. Airbrushing, fluorescing and redeveloping was common practice. These practices still have a place in restoration in certain circumstances; however, with the advent of the computer and advanced digital imaging technology, many photographs can be restored more quickly and effectively than ever before.

Family historians need to part with their original images only for the time that it takes to scan them into the computer. After digitally restoring the scanned images, images can be converted to negatives, and archival black and white images can be produced from these negatives.

Other options for output include Photo CDs which are permanent. Images preserved on Photo CDs are saved at a higher resolution. These images can be manipulated and used in various formats without changing the original on the Photo CD. Many people choose to incorporate these images in written family histories and personal life stories.

Recently, Kodak created what they call the Image Magic Enhancement Station for retouching photographs while you wait. While this is a quick and easy way of getting images into the hands of many people, Kodak fails to mention whether the images produced by this system are of archival quality. If they are not archival, perhaps we are doing no more to preserve the history of our ancestors than our ancestors did. We are not thinking of future generations and how we can help preserve our histories for them.

Technology opens a new world for family historians when displaying images of their ancestors. You are limited only by your own creativity.

Conclusion

Understanding the history of photographic processes helps us identify the era in which photographs were taken. Understanding how to care for photographs and how to restore them is vital to our success as family historians. Likewise, learning to care for photographs that record our personal histories is significant as we prepare to make an archival record for future generations. New technologies

and advancements have made the creation of these records easier than in the past.

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Collins, Glenn. "Fading Memories: Albums Damage Photos." New York Times, Style (Oct. 3, 1987).

Gassen, Arnold. Exploring Black and White Photography. Madison, Wisconsin: Brown and Benchmark, 1989.

Greenough, Sara. On The Art of Fixing A Shadow. Bullfinch Press, 1989.

Kodak. "Explore the Magic of Image Restoration." Article submitted to the Genealogical Journal by Kodak.

Krause, Peter. "How to Care for Vintage Photos." Historic Preservation. (March/April 1987),14-16.

Acknowledgement:

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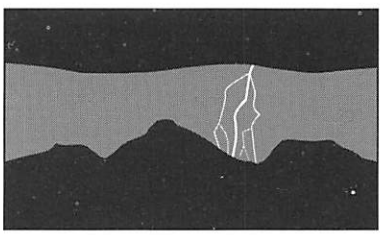
Book review—
Murder in Missouri

Family Skeletons / Rett MacPherson. St. Martin's Paperbacks: 1998 (Originally published 1997). ISBN 0-312-96602-4

reviewed by Jan Roseneder



The town of New Kassel, Missouri, is a typical American town, with the people, the landmarks, the history and the foibles that go with such a setting. Settled originally by German immigrants in the early 1800s, New Kassel is home to Victory O'Shea, otherwise known as Torie, who is firmly entrenched in all the workings of the town. Her husband, Rudy, works there; her two daughters, Rachel and Mary, go to school. Torie herself is the tour guide at the local historical society's museum and is the resident historian and genealogist of the Society. She also occasionally takes on paying customers as a genealogical researcher.

Told by Torie herself, this is a genealogical mystery appropriate to its setting. Torie first meets her client, Norah Zumwalt, during one of the tours of the museum. Norah wants Torie to research her family tree, that's true, but she is most interested in tracking down her missing father, who never came back from World War II. He was never declared missing or dead but Norah's mother never heard from him after 1942. Now Norah, a mother herself, wants to complete that part of her family history. The steps that Torie takes to trace Norah's father would be of interest to many genealogists, particularly those with ancestors in the United States Armed Forces. The results of this research leads Torie to other more mundane sources such as city directories; using all of these resources, she uncovers a startling fact. However, before she can inform her client of the discovery, another much more significant factor intervenes: **Murder!** Who and why?? Well, you'll just have to read the story to find out, and to follow Torie as she attempts to make sense of what has happened.

This is a realistic and enjoyable genealogical mystery. Torie has other things to cope with besides her paid-for genealogical research. Her mother, who is in a wheelchair, lives with the family; her divorced father is still around. A minor contretemps with the head of the Historical Society takes up some of Torie's attention as it threatens to become a major problem, and, to top it all off, the mighty Mississippi River which flows through New Kassel is flooding! I'm looking forward to Torie's second adventure, scheduled to published later in 1999: A Veiled Antiquity.

Highlights from exchange journals received in the AFHS library

by Helen Backhouse and Lorna Stewart

Remember: Journals are listed under country of publication. Check them all. Your area of interest may be included in any one of the following journals.

AUSTRALIA

Genealogical Society of Victoria,
vol 24 no 4 summer 98
- After Australasian mining disaster
- A tank, a stove, and a leaking roof

CANADA

Family Chronicle Magazine,
vol 3 no 2 Dec 98
- Revolutionary War Records (USA)
- What can you learn in cemeteries

vol 3 no 3 Jan 99
- Swiss Genealogy
- Illustrating your family history

Mennonite Heritage Centre,
XXIV no 4 Dec 98
- Mennonites in the Soviet Inferno 1929-1941
- The Heinrich Voth family: from Minnesota to Winkler to Vanderhoof

Neya Powagons,
no 58 Oct 1998
- Queries
- Surnames

no 59 Dec 98
- Queries
- H.B. Co. record — Bunn, Thomas

no 60 Jan 99
- Surname Interests
- Hudson's Bay Archives — John Palmer Bourke

Alberta

Alberta Genealogical Society,
vol 26 no 3 Aug 98
- Mad Donald McKay
- Where did you find that? The case for careful citation of sources

vol 19 no 4 Nov 98
- Hudson's Bay Company Archives inter-library loan programme
- Old Prussia INDEXES

Brooks and District Branch AGS,
vol 11 no 2 Fall 98
- The EID (Eastern Irrigation District) Archives
- An amazing emigrant story

Ft. McMurray Branch AGS,
vol 20 no 3 Sept 98
- The Desjarlais family of Fort McMurray
- The Silence of the North

vol 20 no 4 Dec 98
- Was your ancestor a Canadian Civil Servant?
- How to build a better query

Grande Prairie and District Branch AGS,
vol 21 no 3 Sept 98
- De Bolt and District Pioneer Museum
- Old Newspapers 1921

vol 21 no 4 Dec 98
- The library is more than just books (Alberta Brand Registry)
- The Spallin family mysteries

Medicine Hat and District Branch AGS,
vol 19 no 3 Sept 98
- 20th Anniversary celebration

vol 19 no 4 Dec 98
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- Canadian Geographical Journal • 8 copies

Geoff Burtonshaw
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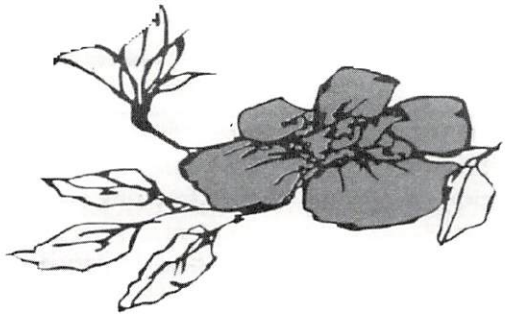

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Super weekend, October 29-30, 1999

Place: Crossroads Hotel (soon to be the Radisson Calgary)

2160 16th Avenue NE, Calgary

Friday evening keynote speaker, reception

16 family history sessions on Saturday

Saturday luncheon

2 display rooms open Friday and Saturday

Complete program details to be announced on May 3rd

Be sure to attend.

Alberta Family Histories Society

All meetings are on Mondays: beginners meet at 6:30 pm; the main program is at 8:15 pm

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