



National Archives and Records Administration

700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20408-0001

Immigrants Arriving at the Port of New York: Records of the U.S. Customs Service, 1820–1897

Beginning in 1820, the U.S. Customs Service supervised the arrival of immigrants through Castle Garden at the Port of New York. An act of Congress on July 31, 1789 (1 Stat. 29) established customs districts and officers in every state, known collectively as the U.S. Customs Service. Following an act of March 2, 1819 (3 Stat. 489), the U.S. Customs Service assumed oversight of immigration. The act required the master of foreign vessels arriving at a port in the United States or its territories to submit a manifest of passengers to the local collector of customs. The U.S. Customs Service supervised immigration until the creation of the Office of Superintendent of Immigration in the Treasury Department in 1891.

Microfilmed Records

___M237, *Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, 1820–1897*. 675 rolls. DP. Arranged by the date of arrival, however, manifests for each date are not necessarily arranged alphabetically by name of ship. Passenger information generally includes name, age, sex, occupation, nationality, the country of embarkation, and the country of destination. Lists may also include notations regarding the number and causes of deaths on board. Not all of the manifests have survived.

Passenger Indexes

___M261, *Index to Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1820–1846*. 103 rolls. DP. Arranged alphabetically by surname of passenger. This index includes the name of the ship and date of arrival at New York. No microfilm index exists for arrivals at the Port of New York from 1846 through June 1897, although alternate sources are available. Below is a select list of resources.

Online Resources

___www.castlegarden.org/. Indexes passenger arrivals for 1830–1892.

___www.ancestry.com. Free at NARA facilities.

Books

___*Germans to America: Lists of Passengers Arriving at U.S. Ports*. Vols. 1–39. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1994.

___*German Immigrants: Lists of Passengers Bound from Bremen to New York, 1847–1867*. Zimmerman, Gary J. and Marion Wolfert. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., 1986.

___*The Famine Immigrants: Lists of Irish Immigrants Arriving at the Port of New York*. Vols. 1–7, 1846–1851. Glazier, Ira A. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., 1985.

___*Italians to America: Lists of Passengers Arriving at U.S. Ports, 1880–1899*. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 2000.

___ *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in New York, 1820–1850*. Olsson, Nils William. Chicago: Swedish Pioneer Historical Society, 1967.

___ *Migration from the Russian Empire: Lists of Passengers Arriving at the Port of New York*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1995.

___ *Passenger Ships Arriving in New York Harbor*. Vol. 1, 1820–1850. Stuart, Bradley W. Bountiful, Utah: Precision Indexing, 1991.

CD-ROMS

___ *Passenger Immigration Lists: New York City, 1820–1850*

___ *Germans to America, 1850–1874 and 1875–1888*

___ *Irish Immigrants to North America, 1803–1871*

___ *Irish to America, 1846–1865*

___ *Italians to America, 1880–1893*

___ *Russians to America, 1850–1896*

Ship Indexes

If the name of an ancestor's ship is known, it may be possible to determine the date of arrival in New York through the following resources:

___ M1066, *Register of Vessels Arriving in New York from Foreign Ports, 1789–1919*. 27 rolls. DP. Arranged alphabetically by name of ship within an inclusive date range, however some lists are arranged chronologically. Ship information includes country of origin, date of entry, and last port of embarkation. **Rolls 1–19** and **23–26** include years that correspond to the Customs Service manifests.

___ *Morton Allen Directory of European Passenger Steamship Arrivals, 1890–1930*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1998. Arranged by shipping company, then chronologically. This publication covers the final years of the Customs Service, but is not always accurate.

For more information, see the following reference reports:

- *Irish Ship Arrivals at the Port of New York during the Potato Famine, 1846–1851*
- *Immigration into the District of Columbia: The Ports of Alexandria (1820–1865) and Georgetown (1820–1821)*

Rev. January 2012