

Family History

German immigrants and immigration

German land boundaries have changed dramatically over the centuries. The Germany we know today covers a vastly different area to that of the German Empire in 1871. At times, parts of it came under the jurisdiction of other foreign authorities such as Austrian, Danish, French, Polish, or Russian.

Tracing early birth, death and marriage information in the former German States presents challenges, such as:

- requesting genealogical information in a foreign language
- tracking place name changes

State Library of Queensland holds some publications that can assist, including:

- ***Ancestors in German archives: a guide to family history sources*** (FAMHIS 929.343 2004). A comprehensive guide to the location and holdings of national, state, local and non-government archives in Germany
- ***Atlas of the German Empire, 1892*** (ATLAS 912.43 1989). Shows political and administrative divisions of the period
- ***German genealogical research*** / George K. Schweitzer. (G 929.1072 1992). Written from an American perspective but contains useful lists of German archival repositories, maps, and sample letters in German to use when requesting genealogical information.
- ***Namensänderungen ehemals preußischer Gemeinde von 1850 bis 1942*** / Fritz Verdenhalven (FAMHIS 914.3 1971). This is a German language key to name changes in former Prussian communities 1850-1942
- In-house ***German place names index*** for places in countries that are no longer part of Germany that includes original and modern names. Ask at family history desk on level 3.

Check the One Search online catalogue for additional titles. <https://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au/>

What online resources are available for German genealogical research?

Links to German family history resources on the Internet may be found at www.cyndislist.com. Check the alphabetical index at the bottom of the web page under 'G' for Germany.

FamilySearch (LDS) at <https://www.familysearch.org/en/australia/> provides extensive assistance. They have created a wiki for their various guides and useful information on many subjects. To access what's available click on 'Search' then 'Research Wiki' and type in "Germany", or go to https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Germany_Genealogy.

Use **ancestryLibrary edition** at State Library to search for other German records that can be of use in researching family history.

How can I find shipping details for my German ancestors?

Immigration

For information on where to find lists of assisted and unassisted immigrants see **State Library research guides: Immigration & shipping - getting started** and **Immigration & shipping - more than just lists**

See also:

- ***Immigration: Germans on bounty ships, 1849-52*** [microfiche] (MFC 929.3944 1986)
Gives name, marital status, religion and education of German workers brought out to New South Wales to relieve demands for special skills, such as wine making and carpentry

- **German immigrants to Port Phillip, 1849-1850** [microfiche] Compiled by Faye Guthrie (MFC 304.8945043 1995)
- **Estray correspondence and immigrant lists regarding certain German immigrants** [microfiche] (MFC 929.3945 1995). Title on the accompanying printed sheet is Immigration to Victoria: assisted German immigrants passenger lists and index 1849-1850
- **Ances-tree : journal of the Burwood-Drummoyne & Districts Family History Group** (FAMHIS 929.3943) Contains articles about German immigrant ships to eastern Australia in the late 1840s and 1850s, resources and problems.

Check the One Search online catalogue for additional titles. <https://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au/>

Emigration

German citizens had to apply for permission to emigrate and lists of departing migrants were maintained from around 1850. They form an invaluable additional resource to complement Australian immigration records and often supply a wealth of additional details on individual migrants. Unfortunately, not all emigration lists have survived.

Bremen 1920-1939

Lists of emigrants leaving through the port of Bremen were kept by the Bremen Chamber of Commerce from around 1851. Storage problems led to the destruction of many of the early records between 1875 and 1908. Most of the remaining records were lost in World War II. Two ships that came to Queensland in the 1850's are amongst those for which no lists exist. The only complete lists and files of passengers departing Bremen are for the period 1946–1974. These are held by **Staatsarchiv Bremen** <https://www.staatsarchiv.bremen.de/>

3071 passenger lists leaving Bremen for 1920-1939 still exist. They are being progressively digitised by an organisation called DIE MAUS. The online passenger index, <https://www.passagierlisten.de/>, can be searched by ship name, departure date, destination port, and native place as well as family name. Ship names for individual voyages link to images and further details. DIE MAUS will respond to email enquiries addressed to kwesling@gmx.de.

Hamburg 1850-1934

Hamburg emigration lists 1850-1934 are available digitally through **FamilySearch (LDS)** <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/43289?availability=Family%20History%20Library>

State Library is an affiliate library for FamilySearch therefore some locked images can be viewed onsite.

The following indexes are also available:

- **Hamburg Passenger Lists, 1850-1934** Check **ancestryLibrary edition** at State Library, to search these lists. Browse handwritten indexes (in German) to find your ancestor in the original passenger lists.
- **Index to emigrants from Hamburg to Australia 1850-1879** [CD-ROM] (QCFS 929.3943 2006) Transcribed from the official Hamburg emigration records, details given include original place of residence, age, occupation. Names on the lists appear in original order to reflect friends and family traveling together. Extracts from shipping intelligence columns published at ports of arrival provide additional details on each voyage. Also available in printed form and on microfiches under the title
- **Emigrants from Hamburg to Australia** / Eric & Rosemary Kopittke (FAMHIS 929.3943 1991-). State Library holds volumes for 1850-1879 with index volumes for 1850-59 and 1860-69. The years 1870, 1871, 1873 and 1877 and indexes for 1850-69 are also held on microfiche (FICHE/S 325.243 EMI).

Württemberg

- **Württemberg emigration index** / Trudy Schenk, Ruth Froelke & Inge Bork (FAMHIS 929.34347 1986) Multi-volume index (State Library holds Vol.1-5 only) of German emigrants from Württemberg. The list only includes people with approval to emigrate. Mainly covers emigrants bound for America, but some Australia bound passengers are included.
- Use **ancestryLibrary edition** at State Library, to search the Württemberg emigration index. Records include names of the principal emigrant, date and place of birth, date of emigration, 'Oberamt', destination, and the Family History Library microfilm number of the original document.

What other resources are helpful in tracing immigration details for German migrants?

Naturalisation records

To vote or hold land German migrants were required to become naturalised. Records of naturalisation may include information that can help locate immigration details. Check **State Library research guide - Naturalisations: a family history resource** for details of the records available for each State.

Newspapers

Obituaries in local newspapers may include immigration information. Other newspaper articles covering golden wedding anniversaries or significant birthdays (80th, 90th, 100th) may also include details. Check the online catalogue for newspaper titles and holdings. See also **State Library research guide - Newspapers**.

Pioneer registers/local histories

Pioneer registers are often compiled using private family papers and/or interviews with surviving family members, and frequently supply immigration details not available elsewhere.

Land orders (Qld.)

As an incentive to intending migrants the Queensland Government issued a kind of voucher or 'land order' that could be used towards the purchase of land. The land order register may provide the immigrant's date of arrival and/or ship's name. Queensland State Archives (QSA) has a card index to the register of land orders in their Public Search room. There are also land order indexes available online as part of the Immigration indexes.

Search the records < Indexes < Immigration.

<https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/arts/heritage/archives/search-the-records>

See also **State Library's research guide - Land records** for further information.

Need further information?

(07) 3840 7810 | slq.qld.gov.au/ask

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