

US Passport Applications Online

ANCESTRY HAS ADDED a new database, <http://www.content.ancestry.com/iexec/?htx=List&dbid=1174>, that contains US passport applications from 1795 to 1925, including emergency passport applications (passports issued abroad) from 1877 to 1907. It also contains passport application registers for 1810-17, 1830-31 and 1834-1906.

This database is a goldmine of information as passport applications often include information regarding an applicant's family status, date and place of birth, residence, naturalization (if born outside the US) and other biographical information. Better yet, 20th-century applications often include marriage and family information, as well as dates, places and names of ships used for travel.

Charles Kannapel emigrated from Alsace-Lorraine to Pennsylvania in the mid 1800s. When researching him, we learned of a brother, Louis, who emigrated at the same time, though he moved to New York, served in the Civil War and became a citizen. A search of this database reveals a 19 December 1871 "oath of allegiance document" and the "passport application" which includes Louis' physical description.

Besides looking for specific individuals, I was curious to know how many people from Raleigh and/or Wake County in North Carolina applied for passports. It

looks like there were about 600 people who were either born in, or were currently living in Raleigh, or Wake County who applied for a passport.

As with any database, recognize that not all the fields are filled out and several entries are missing place of residence. The following entry indicates that this individual

tifying documents that were supplied.

Searching in the passports, I found several entries where the birth date listed was after the passport date, often by 50 or more years. In every case, the passport dates of 1803-24 were actually 1903-24. This reminds us to be

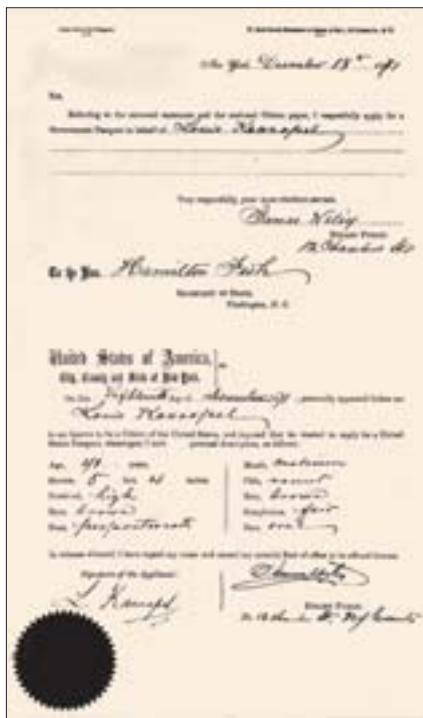
very careful with the index, as this is one of the more error-prone examples I have encountered recently.

There are passport application registers from the early 1800s, and these typically don't list a birth date or birth location and are just a list, with few details, of those who applied for a passport.

Additionally, there are some entries with no names and a passport issue date of 1812 that are real applications or parts of applications and are fascinating to read.

I discovered many entries, as one would expect, where the residence location differs from the birth location. Maybe you have always known that Uncle Charlie was born in North Carolina. If he applied for a passport, you might now learn exactly where in North Carolina that was!

Whether you have someone specific you are researching and/or an interest in those who traveled internationally, this is an interesting database to research and if you're successful, a lot can be learned.



Left: Passport application for Louis Kannapel from 1871. Right: Red US passport c.1930.



was abroad when he obtained his passport: *Thomas C. Boushall, 28 Mar 1894, Raleigh, North Carolina, 13 Jun 1919, Paris, France, Hotel Continental.*

Besides learning that Boushall applied for his passport and the details on him, including his photograph, the application tells us his father's name, where his father was residing, who he worked for and why he was in Paris. Reading further, we learn that he served in the American Army, there was an affidavit from his employer and a list of the iden-