

# Passenger Records and Naturalization Records

WITH THE PLETHORA of websites that contain passenger records online, it's easy to presume that finding your ancestor's arrival in the US or Canada (or departure from Europe) will be a breeze! Unfortunately, that's not always true.

Due to spelling variations, the large number of ports, records that have not survived and other factors, a supposedly straight search at Ancestry, <http://www.ancestry.com/>; Ellis Island, <http://www.ellisisland.org/>; Castle Garden, <http://www.castlegarden.org/>; AncestorsOnBoard, <http://www.ancestorsonboard.com/>; etc., may not reveal your ancestors. Though you may have found naturalization paperwork.

Or, you may have found a passenger record, know your ancestor was naturalized, but cannot find the naturalization paperwork. You may have your ancestor living in the US or Canada, but cannot find either a passenger record or a naturalization record. You are certain that at some point they arrived, though they may not have become a citizen.

My great-great-grandparents, for example, never became US citizens, though they lived here for more than 30 years. My husband's great-grandfather lived in the US from 1906 until his death in 1926 and never became a citizen.

So, what do you do now?

## HOW NATURALIZATION PAPERWORK JUMP STARTED MY RESEARCH

Before I answer that, let me first tell you about one of my earliest genealogical research breakthroughs 20 years ago. It was because of this success that I now search out naturalization paperwork, regardless of whether I have found passenger records.

**YLISTARO, FINLAND → PROBABLY A SWEDISH PORT → COPENHAGEN, DENMARK → NEW YORK → PEABODY, MASSACHUSETTS**

My maiden name is Acey. It is a pretty unusual name. Armed with that and knowing that my father's family was from Finland and lived north of Boston, I set out to find the family's passenger records. This was back when they weren't online and one visited a NARA regional archive or a Family History Center.

When I looked at the records for Boston and New York (the most likely port for an early 1900s Finnish emigrant), I could not find Acey (or Esi as it was spelled in the



*Certificate of Citizenship for Matti Acey, born in Finland, and became a naturalized US citizen on 23 March 1933.*

1900 census). Even recognizing how it could be misspelled, searches were not successful. From various censuses I knew that Matti Acey and family were listed as AL (Alien) from 1900 to 1920 and PA (First Papers Filed) for 1930 indicating that he had started the naturalization process.

In what I considered a desperate move at the time, I contacted the Essex County Courthouse. My thoughts were that since Matti lived in Peabody, Massachusetts (Essex County) for the duration of

his life in the US, I would see if he was naturalized in that court, and if so, learn what the paperwork said about when they emigrated and on which vessel.

I still remember that phone call. The clerk was searching the naturalization files and she said: "We don't have an Acey, but we do have a Matti Kujanpää a.k.a. Acey." That was the day that I learned that my unusual surname wasn't even the original unusual surname! Somewhere between emigrating in February 1900 and the census taken on 2 June 1900, the name changed from Kujanpää to Acey.

From the naturalization papers, I learned that the family came over on the SS *Thingvalla* in 1900, sailing to New York from Copenhagen. It was then easy to find the family in the Ellis Island passenger records and their passport records (via the Institute of Migration, [http://www.migrationinstitute.fi/index\\_e.php](http://www.migrationinstitute.fi/index_e.php)), though the record of their departure from Finland does not appear to have survived. The family appears to have originally sailed out of Hanko, Finland, probably to Gothenburg, Sweden or another Swedish port and then to Copenhagen, Denmark.

This shows how finding naturalization paperwork may jump start your search for a passenger record. An additional bonus was that I subsequently discovered that the daughter independently became a citizen in the 1950s, meaning that her file — at the height of McCarthyism — was very full compared to the few papers of her father's file. And, it included a translation of a page from their original passport. This document certainly confirms my

## Passenger Records and Naturalization Records

humble roots as it states: "the bearer, Mathew, son of Isak Kujanpja, a landless peasant".

### NATURALIZATION PAPERWORK LEADS TO PASSENGER RECORD

Now I will answer the question of what do you do now by focusing on some of the families that I have researched and what was found (or not) in terms of passenger records and naturalization records and how one can be used to help you find the other. Given the complexity of these records, this article will touch upon a few useful tools and hopefully give you enough ideas to help you jump start your research.

The following is an example of a situation where the naturalization paperwork did help in ultimately finding the passenger record. In my experience, it's more likely that I find either the passenger record or find the naturalization paperwork, and not both.

**KALISZ, RUSSIA → HAMBURG/LIVERPOOL → NEW YORK → CHICAGO**

The Owczarek family emigrated just before 1907. Eventually they went by the name Ozark.

From cemetery records, I knew that the patriarch of the family who immigrated was Antoni Owczarek/Ozark and his wife was Michalena. I also knew from the census that they were Russian Polish, naturalized in 1915 and by 1930 were using Ozark.

It was assumed that they came through New York or Boston. An initial search of the passenger records to those two ports did not reveal the Owczarek family.

Fortunately, there is a Soundex index to naturalizations for Cook County, where Chicago is located, and the name was unusual enough that the case file was identified and the documents acquired.

The key details from the petition for citizenship, as far as finding Antoni's passenger record, are:

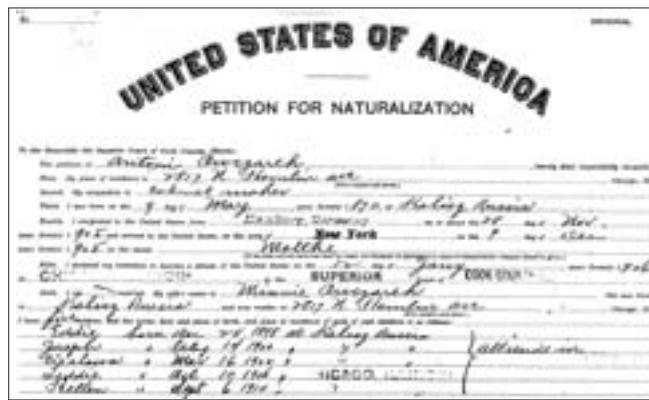
**Birth date: 9 May 1870**

**Birth place: Kalisz, Russia**

**Sailed from: Hamburg, Germany**

*Arrived at: New York  
Ship: Moltke  
Date: on or about 9 December 1905*

If I hadn't been able to find a passenger record once I had this type of detailed information, I would have been very frustrated. Though it was a little harder than expected, as 1905 should have been 1904 and his wife (listed as Michalina Owezarch) with the children actually did not arrive until 12 August 1905 on the *Etruria* which sailed from Liverpool and not with Antoni (listed as Anton Owczarik). In addition, the different passenger records indices each spelled his name differently: Owczarik (Ellis



Petition for Citizenship, dated 12 January 1906 for Antoni Owczarek, filed at Superior Court of Cook County.

Island); Owczarck (Ancestry, port of New York); Owczarek (Ancestry, port of Hamburg). This slowed the process down a bit. But, the passenger record for Michalina and children was also found.

Even with a naturalization record, some passenger records remain elusive.

Here are two recent examples of research where the passenger record was not found initially, the naturalization paperwork was then found, and the passenger record still remains elusive. The first example is from the mid-19th century and the second is from the turn of the 20th century. At least finding the naturalization paperwork provides another opportunity to learn more about the individual... sometimes.

**IRELAND → NEW YORK → MASSACHUSETTS → WISCONSIN**

Take this example of a naturalization found in a Wisconsin archive

for someone who was naturalized in Massachusetts after immigrating, probably via New York. The port name given is not one that you find on the lists of available ports.

Let's start at the beginning. From the Juneau County (Wisconsin) Library I learned that mentioned in the Juneau County "Declaration of Intentions" was:

*Name: Terrence Kelley  
Birthplace: Ireland  
Date: 1853  
Entry port: Whitehall  
Date of entry: June 1849  
Declaration: Mar. 14, 1853*

With this information, one figures that Terrence was naturalized in Wisconsin after entering the country at Whitehall. Whitehall?

After several inquiries, I still had no idea what Whitehall was referring to.

We do know that Terrence and family originally stopped in Wilbraham, Massachusetts for a few years and had a few children there. This would seem to indicate that Boston or New York would have been the likely port of arrival.

The actual naturalization paperwork for Juneau County is held at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point as part of the Area Research Center, <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/libraryarchives/arclnet/stevens.asp>.

The paperwork did clarify the issue of Terrence's port of immigration, though it still perplexes me that the Wisconsin archives has a naturalization document that was created in Hampden County, Massachusetts.

This document states: "Terrence Kelley of Wilbraham was born in Milton in the County of Clare Ireland, is now 33 years of age, he arrived at Whitehall in the district of New York on or about the 24th of June 1849."

Essentially, Terrence ended up being part of the massive Irish emigration wave (1846-51). Now, I know that the reference to Whitehall indicates that he came through New York. With the research I had done, which

## Passenger Records and Naturalization Records

revolves around Castle Garden and Ellis Island, I learned that pre-1855 immigrants were let out wherever the boat docked. And, this reference was ambiguous enough in that there is a Whitehall at the southern tip of Champlain Lake in upstate New York where steamers from Canada would travel or at one point, the barge office was temporarily located at the foot of Whitehall Street near the Battery at the southeast end of Manhattan. Could the latter be the Whitehall of this reference?

Even with this information, the passenger record has yet to be found. We know that Terrence had a wife, Ellen. Whether she traveled with him and/or whether they married in Ireland or the US is unclear. An exhaustive search has not yet been carried out and at least the naturalization paperwork provided some key data about birth place, etc.

### **FINLAND → CONNECTICUT → CALIFORNIA → WASHINGTON**

My second example is Gabriel Thompson, actually born Kaappo Pauhu a.k.a. Kaappo Tuomanpoikka Pauhu, on 15 January 1863 in Alavus, Finland. He married in 1884 and had four children in Finland. In the 1910 US census, Gabriel is naturalized and living in Everett, Snohomish County, Washington. Here is his basic timeline.

*December 1890: last child born in Finland*

*1894/1895: living in Connecticut (daughter Aile was born there)*

*1900 census: The family was found in Placer County, California*

*1902: son born in Washington*

Given that the time frame for emigration was pretty narrow, and I'm now talking the late 1800s, the odds of finding this passenger record seemed good. I even had two names for Gabriel, his adopted name and his birth name.

After some preliminary searching of the passenger records for the 1890-94 period brought no success — either from the US end or the Finnish — a different approach had to be taken.

From the Institute of Migration, <http://www.migration>

*institute.fi*, I learned that there was a passport issued for the wife of Gabriel, Hedvig Latvala, and their children (Latvala is her maiden name). It was issued in Vaasa Province on 22 November 1892, number 3443. Her husband, Gabriel Thomasson Latvala (Gabriel is the same as Kaappo), got his traveling document on 5 April 1890 (number 689). Note: This means that he traveled before his son was born in December 1890.

They most likely traveled soon after they got their passports and went through Sweden and all by the surname Latvala.



*Naturalization document for Terrence Kelley, born in County Clare, Ireland and arrived via Whitehall in District of New York.*

Unfortunately, they have not been found in the surviving Swedish passenger records. Kaappo Pauhu appears to have become Gabriel Thompson before reaching the US and he traveled under his wife's maiden name (possibly they had lived on her family's farm before emigrating and the change in surname could be consistent with that).

The passport information places Gabriel in the US around 1890 with wife and children arriving a few years later. This gave three locales to look for naturalization paperwork — Connecticut,

California and Washington.

Connecticut can easily be eliminated from the list since in the 1900 census, Gabriel states that he is AL, indicating that no naturalization paperwork has been started. Given that they only lived in California for a few years, I decided to look into naturalizations for Snohomish County, Washington.

Paperwork was found for Gabriel and it's only the "final" paperwork. There is nothing about which port(s) the family traveled though. And, this means that the passenger record has still not been located.

In preparing this article, I took another look at passenger records since there are more online and found this entry on Ancestry.com, which is a very good candidate. I found Gabriel Latoada (I can see Latoada as Latvala and the original passenger list seems to support this); Arrival date: 29 April 1890; 26 years old; Finnish; Bremen to Southampton to New York; Ship: *Elbe*.

At FindMyPast, <http://www.findmypast.com>, the corresponding entry was not found. Only the passenger list for those staying in cabins appears to be available.

The found entry is not inconsistent with what I knew from the passport. Now to find Hedvig and the children.

### **OBTAINING NATURALIZATION RECORDS WHEN YOU HAVE A PASSENGER RECORD**

Sometimes, researchers figure that once they have the passenger record, there is no need to persevere and obtain the naturalization paperwork. Given the examples that I have talked about and how mobile many of these families were before settling, a passenger record only tells you part of the story. Even when combined with census information, birth documents, etc., there are still gaps in what we know about an individual and the naturalization paperwork would be beneficial.

Whereas for the previous examples, the passenger record could not be found, here are two

# Passenger Records and Naturalization Records

## WEBSITES FOR PASSENGER RECORDS AND NATURALIZATION RECORDS

Starting a new project involving naturalization and/or emigrants and passenger records? Check out these websites:

- What Passenger Lists are Online?  
<http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/onlinelists.html>
- Online Searchable Naturalization Indexes and Records  
<http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/naturalization.html>

- Finding US Naturalization Records  
[http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/naturalization\\_records.html](http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/naturalization_records.html)
- Additionally, these NARA links give overviews on naturalization and immigration records,  
<http://www.archives.gov/genealogy/naturalization/> and  
<http://www.archives.gov/genealogy/immigration/>

examples where the passenger record is found, all clues point to the individual being naturalized and yet no naturalization paperwork can be found. This shows that naturalization paperwork can remain just as elusive as passenger records, and, as a researcher, you ideally would like both!

**BALTZER, RUSSIA → LIVERPOOL → BOSTON → MANITOBA → SHEBOYGAN COUNTY, WISCONSIN → MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

Using the found passenger record, census records and other documents, we can track Jacob Grassmick to all these locations and yet have not found his naturalization paperwork. Maybe he never did become naturalized.

1911: Arrives in Boston

1911 Canadian census: Manitoba

1912 & 1914: Children born in Canada

1920 US census: Sheboygan, Wisconsin — listed as in the country since 1916, indicating the probable move from Manitoba to Wisconsin

1930 US census: Sheboygan, Wisconsin — listed as PA

1961: Dies — Multnomah County, Oregon

Working with the archives at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, which houses the naturalization records for select Wisconsin counties, including Sheboygan, at <http://www.uwm.edu/Libraries/arch/genie.htm>, a search was undertaken for the naturalization paperwork for Jacob. One would assume that he filed while living in Sheboygan since the census gives a status of PA. A check of "Wisconsin, Circuit Court (Sheboygan County), Naturalization records, 1851-1982" did not locate a naturalization record for Jacob.

As this issue goes to press, I

learned from a Portland, Oregon Foreign Born Voter Registration card that Jacob Grassmick states that he was naturalized on 12 November 1932 in Lincoln, Nebraska – District Court. Nebraska? Let's see where this trail now leads!

**SELZ, RUSSIA → BREMEN, GERMANY → BALTIMORE, MARYLAND → IOLA, KANSAS → SOUTH DAKOTA → MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

Another case of an individual's travel was helped by a diary that was discovered in the possession of a descendant. Up until this time, no passenger record or naturalization paperwork had been found for Joseph Herrle.

From the 1910 census, I knew that Joseph was naturalized, had arrived in the US in 1899 and was living in Portland (Multnomah County) Oregon.

I subsequently learned that from 1902 to 1905, he served with the Coastal Artillery at Camp McKinley in Honolulu, Hawaii after joining up in Iola, Kansas.

Interestingly, when Joseph enlisted, his paperwork was stamped "And that I am a citizen of the United States." At this time, he had only been in the country three years. The so-called small print says that they could add in case of an applicant for first enlistment: "And that I am (or have made) legal declaration of my intention to become a citizen of the United States." So, that opens the door that Joseph did not have to be a citizen, just plan to become one.

Recently, it was revealed that a distant family member had a diary written by Joseph detailing his journey.

Using the information from the diary, I found the passenger record. The search was complicated in that his name is listed as Herrle Joseph,

not Joseph Herrle, on the passenger record, it was the diary's entries about which ship he traveled on to which port and in which year that allowed this passenger record to then be easily found. No naturalization paperwork has yet been found.

## CONCLUSION

I didn't even talk specifically about those individuals who entered the US and migrated to Canada or those who entered Canada and migrated to the US (the so-called St. Albans crossing records) or did the same via Mexico! That's a topic for another article.

As you can see, there are many sources for passenger, immigration and naturalization records or clues to these records. The clues suggest how to locate the companion records. Given the frequent challenges to finding passenger records, don't overlook the information that you can learn from naturalizations, and vice versa. Though some naturalizations, like that for Gabriel Thompson, told me nothing, the paperwork for Terrence Kelley and Matti Acey revealed a lot!

Sometimes, though one finds the naturalization paperwork, as for Terrence Kelley, the passenger list remains elusive. Don't forget the situations, like Joseph Herrle, where you do find the passenger record and not the naturalization paperwork, — though subsequent records strongly indicate that he became a US citizen. And, what about Jacob Grassmick who was purportedly naturalized in Nebraska while yet to be found living in that state? Every document about an ancestor tells you something — make sure to dig into the fascinating and often frustrating world of passenger, immigration and naturalization documents!