

Searchi Ellis



ng Island Immigration Records

What is Ellis Island?

About 1890, the federal government took control of immigration which had been under the jurisdiction of the states in prior years. Ellis Island, located in the New York harbor, was the major immigrant processing station since most immigrants entering the United States landed in New York. From 1892 to 1954, over 62 million immigrants were processed through Ellis Island leaving a wealth of information for family history researchers. Realize that for many years only the third class passengers were processed through the center and the first and second class passengers were given a cursory processing on board the ship.

The Ellis Island web site allows you to search for passengers who came through Ellis Island between 1892 and 1924 and to see the ship's manifest and pictures of the ships upon which the immigrants sailed. You may search the site without registering, but to see the results for someone on the list and to take full advantage of the site you must register; however, registration is free.

Registering

- In the upper-right corner of the window, click on **Sign In**.
- On the resulting window, look on the right side of the window and you will see a box "**ARE YOU NEW TO THIS SITE?**"; click on the button below that is labeled **YES, I AM NEW TO THIS SITE**.
- Fill in all fields on the **Membership** window and check the box, **I have read and agree to the terms of use**.
- Click on **SUBMIT**. NOTE: write down your User Name and **Password**. You will need to know these for future use.
- You may now click on **PASSENGER SEARCH** at the top of the window to begin searching.

Searching the Ellis Island Passenger Records

- Go to <http://www.ellisland.org>
- While more advanced searches are available by clicking on **Passenger Search** at the top-left of the page located under the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island logos, first try the **Search Passenger Arrival Records** box.
- If the last name is uncommon, fill in the **Last Name** field only and click on **Start Search** or press the **<enter>** key.
- Fill in the **First Name** field if the last name is common.
- Fill in the **Approximate Year of Birth** and select one of the options from the drop-down menu immediately after this field – **Exact year, + or - 1 year, + or - 2 years, + or - 3 years, + or -5 years or .**
- **Fill in Gender field.**
- Click on **Start Search** or press **<enter>**.
- Scroll through results. If you find a record you wish to view, you may click on the name link to view the passenger record which is a synopsis of what is on the manifest or you may click on **View** under **Passenger Record** to see the passenger record, to see the same thing. If you click on **View** under **Ship Manifest** to see the ship's manifest page on which the person appears. Lastly, if you click on View under Ship Image, you will be able to see a photo of the ship on which the person arrived.
- You may enlarge the manifest by clicking on the magnification icon to the right of the image.
- If you want to save the manifest image, it cannot be in the enlarged view. The "Right Click" function has been disabled for this site, if you put the cursor over the smaller view of the manifest image, an iconic menu will appear. Select the **Disk** icon to save the image, select the **Printer** icon to print the image (what you get if you print using this method will not be very good!).

Saving the Manifest Image

NOTE: Getting the image using a PC does not produce a very good image. Of course, you can pay the Ellis Island Foundation to make the photocopy for you.

NOTE: It is not possible to save the image of the ship from this site using a PC. There are other pages where you can find the ship's images.

Advanced Searching

- To access the advanced search, put your cursor on **Passenger Search** and wait for the drop-down menu to appear, then select **Advanced Search**. It is not necessary to use all the fields provided.
- Use the drop-down in front of **Passenger First Name** field to select the desired option – **Ignore, Is, Starts With** or **Contains**. Fill in the desired search text in the **Passenger First Name** field.
- Use the drop-down menu in front of the **Passenger Last Name** field to select the desired option – **Is, Starts With, Alternate Spellings**, or **Sounds Like**. Next, fill in the desired search text in the **Passenger Last Name** field.
- Select a gender from the **Gender** options or leave it set at **Any**.
- Fill in the **Approximate Year of Birth** field, then make a selection from the **Year Range – Exact Year or + or - 1, 2, 5 or 10 years**.
- Fill in the **Approximate Year of Arrival** field, then make a selection from the **Year Range – Exact Year or + or - 1, 2, 5 or 10 years**.
- The last two fields and the drop-down menus associated with them may not be helpful. If you know the ship, that could be a very helpful limiting factor. Fill these in, if desired. Be aware, however, that you may know that a person was born in a specific place, but they may have a totally different town listed. For instance, the person may have been born in a small town in Denmark; however, they left from Copenhagen and that is what may show up in the **Village of Origin** field on the ship's manifest.
- Click on **Start Search**.
- In addition to these parameters, you may also narrow your search by ethnicity by clicking on the box in front of the desired ethnicity.
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