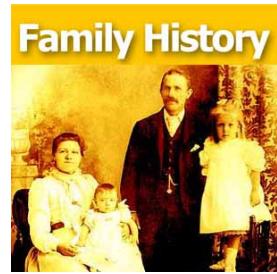


# **Family History: Genealogy Made Easy**

*with Lisa Louise Cooke*  
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Welcome to this step-by-step series for beginning genealogists—and more experienced ones who want to brush up or learn something new. I first ran this series in 2008-09. So many people have asked about it, I'm bringing it back in weekly segments.



## **Episode 29: U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Records for Family History, Part 1**

In this podcast episode, one of my favorite experts talks about one of my favorite topics: immigration and naturalization records. Stephen Danko, PhD is a genealogy lecturer and a very popular blogger (<http://stephendanko.com/blog/>). In this episode he's helping U.S. genealogists cross the pond through the use of immigration and naturalization records. He'll talk to us about the challenges we'll face in locating these records—and some documents you may not even know existed: certificates of arrival.

In the next episode, we'll continue our conversation with a discussion of Departure Passenger Lists. Departure information from European ports is often available on microfilm at the Family History Library, on Ancestry.com or other websites. Some of the passenger steamship lines themselves kept departure lists, like the White Star Line or the Red Star Line, and these are on microfilm.

Here are my favorite tips from the episode:

Once you find an ancestral hometown, use Stephen Morse's advanced search tools (see below) to look for others who arrived from the same place. This can help you identify other relatives, friends and others who part of a group or chain migration.

Usually we start with the most recent records and work backward. But when we look for immigration and naturalization records, look FIRST for immigration papers. THEN look for naturalization papers they may have filed later. You know they arrived—but not every immigrant naturalized, and their naturalization papers may have been filed in multiple places and may not be indexed.

Beginning in 1926, applicants for naturalization who arrived in 1906 or later had to be issued a certificate of arrival. These certificates were issued after their names were confirmed by the government on the original passenger lists. Between 1926 and 1943, information about certificates of arrival was noted on the original passenger lists.

The certificate of arrival information helps you in two ways:

- The date tells you about when they applied for naturalization
- The first part of the certificate number is the naturalization district (Northeast, Midwest, West coast, etc), to help you narrow down where to look.

Anything that helps you narrow down a search for naturalization records helps!

## Updates and Links

About 70 million immigration and naturalization records have been indexed in recent years through an enormous community indexing project led by FamilySearch. Check out their site (below) to see what records are searchable now.

Ancestry.com (<http://www.ancestry.com>)

Ellis Island (<http://www.ellisisland.org>)

FamilySearch.org Immigration and Naturalization Online Resources  
([https://familysearch.org/search/collection/list?page=1&region=UNITED\\_STATES&recordType=Migration](https://familysearch.org/search/collection/list?page=1&region=UNITED_STATES&recordType=Migration))

One-Step Webpages by Stephen P. Morse (Ellis Island Search Tool)  
(<http://www.stevemorse.org/>)

Timeline of U.S. Immigration Laws  
<https://familytreemagazine.com/upload/images/PDF/naturalizationlaws.pdf>