

## Purfürst Migration Patterns

The majority of emigrants to America from central and central-eastern Europe passed through the ports of Bremen and Hamburg. It was not until 1830 that the trickle of emigration from Germany began to increase dramatically. Emigrants coming from South West Germany could reach Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Antwerp, or Le Havre more easily than Bremen on the German North Sea Coast.

The constitution of the German Confederation (1815) guaranteed citizens of all German states freedom of movement, including emigration to other countries. Germans could not, however, simply pack up and leave. They were required to seek release from citizenship in their homeland. This practice helped officials identify those who might be leaving with unfulfilled military or other obligations. To further assist the police in all German states in identifying those who were leaving, port authorities were required to identify all passengers departing from their ports for foreign destinations.

With 1.7 million inhabitants (as of 1996) and massive port facilities that handle about 11,000 ships annually, Hamburg is Germany's largest port. The city is not on a sea coast, but on the banks of one of Europe's major rivers, the Elbe, sixty-eight miles south of Cuxhaven, where the Elbe flows into the North Sea. Hamburg was a key city in the medieval German Hansa, a trading union that linked central and eastern European cities for their mutual protection and benefit. Hamburg played a key role in Bismarck's plan to make Germany the foremost industrial power in Europe. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the city's wharfs berthed ships that plied all of the oceans of the world, especially ships that carried products to and from the New World. Hamburg has a long history of independence and is today an independent city-state in the Federal Republic of Germany. Until about 1850, few emigrants traveled to new homelands via Hamburg. Rotterdam, Antwerp, Le Havre, and Bremen/Bremerhaven were the busiest emigrant embarkation points.

Those applying for passports in Hamburg were residents of Hamburg—including many emigrants who came to the city to earn money for their passage—and persons who, for some reason, arrived in Hamburg without a passport that would provide clearance for leaving the port. Male emigrants, for example, were required to have papers certifying that they were not eligible for (or had fulfilled) the required military service in their homeland. Many emigrants arrived in Hamburg with their ship's ticket in hand, purchased from an agent in or near their hometowns. Others arrived without a ticket, hoping to earn enough money in this huge city to pay for their passage. Prospective emigrants planning to work in Hamburg were required to register with the police. Some of these persons may have actually applied to become citizens of Hamburg in order to enhance their ability to practice a trade.

Bremen is similar to its rival port of Hamburg in a number of ways: it was founded in the ninth century; it was an important member of the Hansa and is an independent city-state today; it served as the embarkation point for millions of emigrants from central and eastern Europe bound for America; and it's on the banks of a large river that flows into the North Sea. The city is on the banks of the Weser River,

some sixty miles southwest of Hamburg and about thirty miles south of its daughter city, the port of Bremerhaven at the mouth of the Weser. As silt on the bed of the Weser began to reduce access to Bremen's docks, the mayor and senate of Bremen purchased land near the mouth of the river from the King of Hannover in 1825 for a new port for Bremen's ships and merchants. By 1830 the newly constructed harbor, Bremerhaven ("Bremen's harbor"), was ready to receive its first customer, the American schooner Draper.

Bremerhaven soon became the embarkation point for most emigrants leaving Germany through Bremen. Although a massive re-routing of the Weser above Bremerhaven eventually solved the problem of accumulating silt, Bremerhaven remained the busiest emigrant port in Germany. The ports of Bremen and Bremerhaven today are much smaller than the port of Hamburg, with a combined population of 683,096 (as of 1993), and carry much less traffic than the port on the Elbe. In past years, however, Bremen and Bremerhaven consistently outperformed Hamburg as emigrant embarkation ports. In the later half of the 17 th century thirty-eight percent of the emigrant ships arriving at Atlantic and Gulf Coast ports of North America were from Bremen/Bremerhaven. Hamburg accounted for only about seventeen percent of ships' arrivals, nearly the same as Liverpool (sixteen percent), and was only six percent ahead of the French port of Le Havre (eleven percent). Over eighty percent of the ships arriving with German immigrants on board during those years came from these four ports. During the past two centuries, over seven million individuals emigrated through the ports of Bremen/Bremerhaven, about ninety percent of them to homes in the United States. About fifty percent of these emigrants - 3.5 million - were from German states that in 1871 became united as the German Empire. Between 1820 and 1980 nearly seven million Germans immigrated to the United States (fifteen percent of all U.S. immigrants during the period), more than from any other country. Probably half of the German emigrants to America embarked from Bremen/Bremerhaven.

The great majority of Germans left by "direct" passage to their foreign destination. However, over 35% of them went by "indirect" passage via England (i.e. Via Hamburg/Hull/Liverpool). Due to the close trade links between Hamburg and Hull in England (and the establishment later of a regular and rapid steamship line connection) many Germans emigrated by sea to Hull, then went by train to Liverpool, and after caught ships leaving for America.

Some Germans traveling indirectly by this route decided they preferred to remain in England or Ireland, and chose to travel no further. Others remained in England through lack of money, only reaching as far as Hull or Liverpool. Of those who remained behind, some sailed from Liverpool to Dublin Ireland. The southern German Catholics had no problem intermarrying with Irish Catholics in Dublin, Liverpool or London - as was the case in America.

The arrival of the railway system in Europe also brought (what later became) the great majority of emigrants (from South West Germany) traveling indirectly via the channel ports (Le Havre) to London,

and then to Liverpool for America. On finding a well-established German community in London - and employment - many remained in the capital.

Of those who arrived in the British Isles in the mid to late 1700s some of their descendants (as Anglo-Germans or Anglo-Irish-Germans) emigrated to America in the 1830s & 1840s, along with many others from the Britain & Ireland at that time.

Germans had been in England since the beginning of the 18th century. In 1714 when the first Hanoverian monarch (George I) became King of England a stream of German diplomats, officials, soldiers, artists, etc followed in his wake. The German community then expanded to include many business and professional men. However, by the end of the 1700s and early 1800s vast numbers of the more humble classes came to England in search of a better life (See references: Anglo-German History Society, publication 1990). This German emigration to England increased to such an extent that by 1850 it was estimated over eighty-five per cent (85%) of all foreigners living in the British Isles were natives from the German state(s).

In London the German community was especially visible. As a respected group they established, among other things, hospital(s), newspapers, schools, and chapels/churches. It was only as a result of extreme anti-German feelings in England during the First World War (and particularly following the sinking of the "Lusitania") that this large community decided to become less visibly German and more British. Hence the Anglicization of many (of the more obviously Germanic) names. The most notable occurring within the British Royal Family: their "Saxe-Coburg-Gotha" changing to "Windsor". Many, however, remained the same."

In the 18th and 19th century crossing the ocean to America was a dangerous adventure. Ships were designed and build to transport freight, not passengers. The ships were modified to accommodate people by building a deck between the upper deck and the hold which divided up the huge cargo area. The area, called the steerage, did not offer and kind of comfort and provided the dining room, bedroom and living room at the same time. Passengers had to provide their own mattresses and bedding as well as the food they needed on the passage. Only Bremen authorities after 1832 made efforts to require captains to have food supply on board. Ventilation was not possible except through hatches which were generally closed because of storms. There were no separate rooms for the sick people which encouraged the spread of disease.

So for a \$12.00 ticket, often prepaid by relatives in the United States, the immigrant received third-class passenger or steerage on a deck, crammed with hundreds of other bodies, enduring a week or more of rolling seas without a bath or change of clothes. Others had to sell their possessions to meet the cost of the ocean voyage. For many thousands of others, however, the "redemption system" provided the means to travel. Often referred to as "white slavery" the emigrant signed a contract made out to the ships captain, prior to embarkation, in which the emigrant agree that either a guarantor in America or the

future "master" would pay for the costs of transportation. After arrival in New York, only passengers whose transportation had been paid for were allowed to disembark. The other had to remain on board and were "for sale" until a master was found for them. When a ship arrived from Europe many people went to the harbor to seek among the healthiest emigrants for those who suited their business. They paid for the emigrants fare and the emigrant in turn agreed by his signature to serve his master until his debts were paid off. This usually took between three and seven years. Children, however, had to serve up to the age of twenty-one.

In 1819 the American Congress passed detailed regulations affecting passenger transport over the ocean. They determined the number of passengers on board as well as the food to be carried. For the first time passenger lists were required.

Prior to the construction of the original Ellis Island facility, over 8 million people entered the United States through Castle Garden, which was an Army fort constructed at the tip of Manhattan for defense of the New York harbor during the War of 1812. Later used an amusement hall and opera house, it was converted to use as an immigrant's reception hall primarily to prevent them from falling into the traps of swindlers offering their "help".

Upon cancellation of the government's contract with New York, Immigration operations were temporarily moved to an old Barge Office in Manhattan pending construction of Ellis Island off the tip of Manhattan. The original Ellis Island Facilities later burned to the ground in 1897 with replacement facilities re-opening in 1900. An estimated 12 million immigrants processed through Ellis Island. In the busiest years between 1898 and 1915 its overburdened staff processed 5,000 people a day. It could be a frightening experience but it also served them well. There were showers and hot food for everyone and the hospitals provided excellent medical care. Most immigrants were processed very quickly, in a matter of hours. Only two per cent were denied entry.

Those of our ancestors who came through New York City were actually processed through a variety of locations depending upon that date of arrival:

August 1, 1855	-	April 18, 1890	at Castle Garden
April 19, 1890	-	December 31, 1891	at Barge Office
January 1, 1892	-	June 13, 1897	at Ellis Island
June 14, 1897	-	December 16, 1900	at Barge Office
December 17, 1900	-	1924	at Ellis Island

The arrival process, regardless where it took place, must have been a daunting affair. If you wish to really grasp that feeling, pay a visit to Ellis Island in the Hudson River, which can be reached by scheduled ferry from the tip of Manhattan, New York or from Jersey City, New Jersey, which has a number of convenient hotels in a less congested environment. It is a very emotional experience to first

sit through the audio-visual program on the experiences of the immigrant as they processed through this enormous facility. Then, after your visit, as you step off the ferry back on the New Jersey shore, note the remnants of the 24-track train station. Now visualize our ancestors standing at the platform 150 years ago contemplating the language difficulty, the monetary change, the emotions, the confusion and the possible doubt racing through the mind, as they must have thought, "What do I do now?"



Ellis Island Immigration Center - 2000



Ellis Island Immigration Center Dining Room - ca 1910

The Ellis Island Foundation maintains a genealogical database now accessible through the Internet. It supposedly lists all immigrants who entered the country through Ellis Island. As my own research has proven, their database is not totally complete. The Ellis Island Internet database, in any case, was not intended to include immigrants entering the country through other ports.

This section of the publication is somewhat similar. It will provide you a consolidated listing of all known Purfürst immigrants. In the case of American immigrants, the port of entry will be identified. Along with the family member's name, the last column will key to the appropriate Family History which will be found in Volume Two. Also identified is the German city in which the individual last lived, if known. Those cities will be listed elsewhere in Volume One and will identify all other family members known to have lived in that location.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Port of Entry</b>	<b>Vessel</b>	<b>Passenger (Age)</b>
Jun 18,1835	Dover, England		Wilhelm August Eugene Purfürst (19) See London England Family History and Leipzig, Germany .
Jan 18,1839	New Orleans, LA	Olbers	Johann Friedrich Jacob Purfürst (29) See St Louis, Missouri Family History and Dresden, Germany
about 1850			Carl Friedrich Hermann Purfürst (20) See Steele County, Minnesota Family History and Neustadt, Germany.
Apr 29,1852	New York City, NY	Kosmos	Johann Friedrich Purfürst (19) See Covington, Indiana Family History and Neustadt, Germany.
about 1852			Carl Francis Leupold (25) See Newark, New Jersey Family History and Neustadt, Germany. (his mother was Maria Rossina Purfurst)
Sep 21,1852	Baltimore, MD	Mississippi	Karl Friedrich Ernst Purfürst (21) See Rice County, Minnesota Family History with sister Christiana Paulina Purfürst (15) See Newark, New Jersey Family History and Neustadt, Germany.
about 1857	Netherlands border crossing near Kleve, Germany		Gustav Adolph Purfürst (18) See Gelderland, Netherlands Family History and Schleiz, Germany.
Apr 15,1863	New York City, NY	Bremen	Anna Purfürst (17) (See Note 1)
Sep 28,1863	New York City, NY	America	Ida Francisca Purfürst (22) See Newark, New Jersey Family History and Neustadt, Germany.
Sep 13,1864	New York City, NY	America	Johann David Ernst Purfürst (59) with wife Christliebe Wilhelmine nee Seltmann (60) See Newark New Jersey Family History and Neustadt, Germany.

Sep 11,1865	New York City, NY	America	Carl Fredierich Purfürst (31) with wife Augusta Pauline nee Rachold (30) See Covington, Indiana Family History and Neustadt, Germany.
about 1865			Heinrich Julius Purfürst (29) with wife Amelia nee Öfer (31), Jane (7), Henrietta (5) and Henry, Jr (2). See Brooklyn, New York Family History. (German home not yet known)
about 1868			Wilhelmine Purfürst (46). See Chicago, Illinois Family History (See Note 2)
May 8, 1869	New York City, NY	Union	Robert Richard Purfürst (31) with wife Friederike Theresa nee Schops (38). See Newark, New Jersey Family History and Neustadt, Germany.
Apr 27, 1872	New York City, NY	Batavia	Alf G. Purfürst (23). (See Note 3).
Oct 15,1873	Boston, MA	Olympus	Augustus Bernard Purfürst (24). See Hilo, Hawaii Family History and Schleiz, Germany.
about 1886			Edward Bruno Purfürst (23). See Milwaukee, Wisconsin Family History and Wer dau, Germany.
May 16,1890	Baltimore, MD	Karlsru e	Gottfried Hermann Kunze (32) and wife Anna Pauline nee Purfürst (27). See Milwaukee, Wisconsin Family History and Wer dau, Germany.
May 16,1890	Baltimore, MD	Karlsru e	Marie Augusta nee Geier Purfürst (60) with daughter Hedwig Klara Purfürst (17). See Milwaukee, Wisconsin Family History and Wer dau, Germany.
Jun 18,1892	Philadelphia, PA	Illinois	Franz Edward Weiss (31) and wife Anna Augusta nee Purfürst (31). See Milwaukee, Wisconsin Family History and Wer dau, Germany.
about Sep1894			Anton Purfürst, (34). See Milwaukee, Wisconsin Family History and Ponitz, Germany.
Mar 1, 1902	New York City, NY	Damperine	Friedrich Fritz Kunz (30) with wife Hulda nee Purfürst (30) and sons Kurt (6), George (5), Richard (2). See New Salem, North Dakota Family History and Euba, Germany
May 31, 1902	New York City, NY	St. Paul	Herman Purfürst (49).(See Note 4).
Sep 5, 1906	New York City, NY	Fred. der Grosse	Max Fritz Purfürst (16). See Bergen County, New Jersey Family History and Netzschkau, Germany.
May 5, 1909	New York City, NY	Fred. der Grosse	Gustav Albin Purfürst (42). See Bergen County, New Jersey Family History and

			Netzschkau, Germany.
Nov 3, 1909	New York City, NY	Kurfurst	Anna nee Schmalfus Purfürst (42) with sons Paul (10) and Kurt (6) and daughter Frieda (20). See Bergen County, New Jersey Family History and Netzschkau, Germany.
Feb 10,1910	Galveston, TX	Inkula	Ernst August Purfürst (26). See Houston, Texas Family History and Arnshaugk, Germany.
Nov 8,1926	New York City, NY	Andiana	Walter Arno Purfürst (28). See Chicago, Illinois Family History and Neustadt, Germany.
Oct 12,1928	New York City	Mauretania	Theresa nee Peterson Purfürst (29) with son Verner (4) and daughter Hildegaard (11). See Chicago, Illinois Family History

#### Notes

1. No later record of Anna Purfürst has been found. It is assumed she married after arrival in America and thus a name change concealed her location. Her vessel passenger record indicated she came from Dresden, Germany; however, Dresden city archive records fail to reveal the presence of a family member of this name.

2. A January 27, 1890 death record of Wilhelmine Purfürst was found in Chicago, Illinois. Based on the detailed age information on her death certificate she would be born about October 6, 1822 in Neustadt an der Orla, Germany. No record of her husband's name or other family has been found in Chicago. Neustadt, Germany parish records fail to reveal a Purfürst spouse of this name or age.

3. No later record of Alf G. Purfürst has been found.

4. No later record of Herman Purfurst has been found. Herman's vessel manifest record stated his last residence was Saxony and his destination was New York





Ellis Island Immigration Center Wall of Honor - 2000  
and Purfürst Family Engraving



