

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements apply to all volunteers of the Immigrant Ancestors Project:

Bimonthly Release: Issues of this newsletter will now appear on a bimonthly basis.

European Internship Trip: During the months of May and June, fifteen students from Brigham Young University will be traveling throughout Europe looking for emigration records in historical archives and researching their own family histories.

XIX National Congress of Genealogy, French Genealogical Federation—Tours, France—May 18-20: Ten representatives of the IAP from Brigham Young University will be managing a booth at the conference.

Who Do You Think You Are? The National History Show - Olympia, London, UK May 5-7: Eight representatives of the IAP will manage a booth and answer questions.

THE PONTICELLI STORY

by George R. Ryskamp, J.D. A.G.
Director
Immigrant Ancestors Project

In one of the greatest migrations the world has seen, approximately fifty five million Europeans emigrated between 1821 and 1924. The vast majority went to the Americas-- 33 million to the United States, 5.4 million to Argentina, 4.5 million to Canada and 3.8 million to Brazil and the rest in smaller but significant numbers to countries from Mexico to Chile as well as to Australia and other Pacific rim countries. These statistics and

associated studies are only a black-and-white sketch of the rich tapestry of individual emigrant experiences that make up this great migration.

For social historians and genealogists, the stories of individual emigrants are as



Ellis Island, ca. 1900. (courtesy of <http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/ellis-island/ellis-island-north.jpg>)

important as the statistics. Stories like that of Luisa Cervizzo and her husband Raffaele Ponticelli give faces and a sense of reality to the emigration experience. In May 1899 Raffaele emigrated to the United States on board the ship *Massilia* sailing from Naples, Italy to New York, where he landed at Ellis Island.¹ There he stated that he had never been to the U.S. before, did not know how to read and write and was going to join his brother Giuseppe in Canbury, Connecticut. His

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IT BEGAN WITH A SIMPLE ENTRY

by Dalva Gabriel
Volunteer
IAP - Portuguese Section

I was part of the group of those who do not have a family history because my father passed away at a very young age and my mother, a widow with seven children, did not have time to tell us stories. The only information that I had was the fact that the records of our ancestors had been destroyed by a fire in the records office of the town where they lived and there was nothing to do about it. Then one day, while helping a friend searching for her roots, I found the birth record of a person who could have been my maternal grandfather. And it was!

Once the first moment of incredulity was gone, I understood that the only thing left for me to do was to start. While entering the name of my great-grandfather in an online search site, once again, to my surprise, there he was, in a section of a book that tells the story of the sacrifices made by the European immigrants in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

While reading their stories I felt love, proud, insignificant before so many adversities and family tragedies. I understood that it was from them that I had inherited important principles, such as the value of hard work, respect for discipline, constancy, and determination to face difficulties.



Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais Torre do Tombo; Lisbon, Portugal

I have also done the genealogy of my husband, who is from Portugal. As a result of four years of research, I have gathered a pedigree chart that covers back to 1565, with more than 4,000 names, and clarified many curious and doubtful details about some relationships.

Today, I feel happy and rewarded, with a history to pass to my children; however, I must press on, because I have not yet finished.

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THE PONTICELLI STORY (CONT.)

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brother appears to have emigrated a month earlier on the ship *La Champagne* sailing from the French port of Le Havre to New York.² Neither passenger list tells where in Italy the brothers were born.

The details of the story continue in an October 1899 Naples passport application file, located by the Immigrant Ancestors Project. Raffaele moved north to Boston and worked as a construction worker to raise the funds to bring his wife and children to join him. In a June 1899 letter addressed to his wife, but written to his sister-in-law, he expresses his regret in not writing to his wife since his departure. Later in the letter he surprises wife by enclosing forty dollars to cover all expenditures, including the actual fare for her and their four children to make it safely to the United States. Only four months after Luisa received the letter from her husband, a passport was issued by the *Questura*³ of Naples to Luisa Cervizzo, housewife, and to her four children on 28 October 1899. That passport application offers a gold mine of information about the Ponticellis:

Raffaele Ponticelli, son of Antonio and Giovanna Ama-

dio (both deceased) was born in Gaeta, Naples. He married Luisa Cervizzo in the church of San Giuseppe in Naples on February 2, 1890 at the age of 30. Luisa Cervizzo was the daughter of Pasquale and Anna Vincente, born in Naples on 28 of January 1871 and baptized in that same San Giuseppe parish. She apparently had little education, as she was listed as illiterate in the application. By 1899 she was a busy housewife and mother of four children:

-Ponticelli, Giovanna: daughter born in Naples, Avvocata parish on the 31st of March 1892.

-Ponticelli, Antonio: son born in Naples, Avvocata parish on the 4th of December 1893.

-Ponticelli, Anna: born in Naples, Avvocata parish on the 27th of January, 1896.

-Ponticelli, Pasquale: born in Naples, the Porto area on the 12th of June 1898.

The 1910 U.S. Census shows that Luisa Cervizzo (28), Giovanna (7), Antonio (6), Anna (3), and Pasquale (1) all made it safely, reaching Raffaele Ponticelli in 1899 in Boston. By 1910, Raffaele and Luisa have an additional four children, born in Massachusetts, and were

living in a neighborhood with other immigrants from Italy, Ireland, Sweden, and Armenia. Like many immigrants, the parents spoke only their native language, but all of the children speak English.⁴

Stories like that of Ponticellis can be found throughout Europe during the nineteenth century. Under a wide variety of circumstances—rich, poor, convict, free, single, married, seeking economic opportunity or fleeing political or religious oppression—emigrants left homes and often families to go to the New World. The Immigrant Ancestors Project is finding and making available the records that tell these emigration stories, not only collectively, but individually.

¹Raffaele Ponticelli, New York Passenger Arrival Lists, Ship *Massilia*, Year: 1899; Microfilm serial: 15; Microfilm roll: T715_62; Line: 17 viewed at Ancestry.com

²Giuseppe Ponticelli New York Passenger Arrival Lists, Ship *La Champagne*, Year: 1899; Microfilm serial: 15; Microfilm roll: T715_53; Line: 23 viewed at Ancestry.com.

³The *Questura* is a part of the National Police under direction of the Ministry of the Interior with provincial competence. Its primary task is to assure the maintenance of the order and the public security within of the province. In the nineteenth century in addition to its role in the prevention and repression of the crimes, the *Questura* processed all applications for passports. it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Questura

⁴1910 U.S. Federal Census, Massachusetts, Suffolk County, Boston City, Ward 22, Precinct 2, Roll: T624_623; Page: 13A; Enumeration District: 1598; Image: 880, viewed at Ancestry.com.



Map courtesy of <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/>



Italian immigrants to America (courtesy of http://www.eastman.org/taschen_m197701770169.jpg)

DALVA GABRIEL - JANUARY 2007

Dalva Gabriel is from São Paulo, Brazil. She has been a volunteer in the Portuguese section for a year. She started her genealogy eight years ago, with her husband, who is from Portugal. She has found her husband's ancestors back to 1565.



Dalva says, "Working for IAP has been rewarding because it has increased my knowledge in the field of name extraction, the ability to recognize locality names and different handwriting. However, my work has not been mechanical, because I find myself analyzing and imagining the life of the emigrants. Details get my attention. I have developed empathy and have caught myself cheering for the emigrants and hoping that everything went well in their lives."

CINDY MASON - FEBRUARY 2007

Cindy Mason is a native of Payson, Utah, USA and has been working for the Spanish section of the Immigrant Ancestors Project since December 2006. Her volunteer work for the IAP has been her first real experience with genealogical work. Cindy says she was



drawn to the Immigrant Ancestors Project because it was something she could do even with small children at home. She said: "I think that having children has inspired me to learn more about my ancestors." Cindy enjoys scrap-booking and card-making, crocheting, sewing, and reading. Her contributions and the sacrifices she makes to participate as a volunteer are greatly appreciated.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Seminars and Conferences

National Genealogical Society Conference

Richmond, Virginia
 May 16-19, 2007
 To find out more visit
<http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/>

The British Institute Sponsored by the International Society for British Genealogy and Family History

Salt Lake City, UT
 October 2-6, 2007
<http://www.isbgfh.org/institute.htm>

MESSAGE FROM THE SECTION LEADERSHIP



by Bradley Marchant
 Verification Specialist
 IAP - British Section

Spring is just around the corner. Soon we will be able to say goodbye to all the cold for another year. Despite the distraction of less bone-chilling weather, the IAP Team leaders are continuing to work to serve you to the best of our abilities.

We of the British Section Leadership would like to thank all of our volunteers for their hard work in extraction this past month. All of

the Section leaders appreciate their volunteers. We thank you for your time in the past and encourage you to continue your extraction goals throughout the year!

This newsletter will contain some helpful genealogical website resources, a handful of unusual terms and upcoming events. We hope you will use this newsletter as its own resource in furthering your genealogical knowledge.

In the first six weeks of 2007, British section volunteers have extracted over 260

Batches. As of February 12, you have extracted 81 batches. We are so pleased with this! Your extractions are impressive and contain thousands of names which will be made available to genealogist world-wide.

As partners in the Immigrant Ancestors Project, we would appreciate any suggestions you have in ways we may better serve you. If you have any questions or feedback, please direct them to iap-british@byu.edu.

FEATURED WEBSITES

As many of you know, we recently batched a new collection, which involves the passage of Liverpool Vagrants to Ireland. Many English emigrants left the country through the Port of Liverpool. We hope the following websites will assist you in your extraction as well in your own research.

A short tutorial on reading old handwriting, complete with practice exercises.
<http://www.amberskyline.com/treasuremaps/oldhand.html>

Having trouble knowing what your ancestors actually did for a living? Consult these helpful occupation online resources:
<http://rmhh.co.uk/occup/>
<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Prairie/9166/occupations.htm>

Are you not sure what a Wapentake is? Do you have an ancestor from the Forest of Bowland but have no idea what it is? This website will help with explaining some of English genealogical terms one may come across.
<http://homepages.nildram.co.uk/~jimella/counties.htm>

A listing of all British Isles Counties and their Codes:
<http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/Regions/Codes.html>

Ever wonder what your ancestors ate? Check out The Food Timeline to find out!
<http://www.foodtimeline.org/>

WORD LIST

- Bronze John** – Yellow Fever
- Costermonger** – Peddler of fruits and vegetables
- Commissariat** – Department of the military service which is charged with the duty of providing food and other supplies for the army
- Fee Tail** – An estate of inheritance limited to lineal descendant heirs of a person to whom it was granted
- Florin** – A British coin, originally of silver, worth of two shillings.

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The National Archives in London (Courtesy of: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/?source=about>)



St. Oswald (formerly Holy Trinity), Warton - Church of England (Courtesy of <http://www.genuki.org.uk/http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/LAN/WartonC/StOswaldformerlyHolyTrinity.shtml>)