



Beginning Genealogy: Session 5 Overseas Research

CHATHAM COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION
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Homework review

- Homework from last session:
 - Describe what you want to get from a DNA test.
 - Ethnic origins?
 - Answer a particular family history question?
 - Decide which DNA test will be most useful in the short run.
 - Decide who you will test and on which platform.
- What issues did you encounter?
- What did you learn?
- What holes did you find in your family history?



Your Session 5 objectives.

Understand the following:

- Describe your objectives for overseas research (the “research question” recommended by NGS standards).
- Understand the general process to do overseas research.
- Explore resources particular to your overseas objectives.

Ask questions throughout!



The USA is a country of immigrants!

- Except for a very few persons, the ancestors of most USA inhabitants have come from other places. Most traveled by ship!
- Some came very early, and no/ few records will exist.
 - Early Vikings were in North America about 1000 CE.
 - The Spanish and British came to North America in the 1500s and 1600s.
 - French explorers came into the continental US from French Canada in the 1500s.
- The vast majority of immigrants left some record of their entry, and ones entering from about 1820 *were* documented.
 - See <https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/passenger-arrival.html> for a description of early arrival records.
 - Earlier arrivals are partially documented in various compilations.



Finding your overseas ancestors is amenable to a process.

- Record what you know already.
- Build your tree backward from the present.
- Discover the originating country.
- Discover the border entry.
- Backtrack the border entry to the emigration port.
- Use the FamilySearch research wiki to learn of resources for research in the country/ location of interest.
- Learn the keywords for genealogical events.
- When civil records fail, look for religious records.
- View the actual records, not just the transcriptions.



Record what you know, build your tree.

- This is what you have already been doing!
- Key sources of interest to build your tree:
 - Birth, marriage and death records.
 - Census records often record country of origin and immigration status, e.g., “Pa” for “papers submitted.”
 - Military records like draft registration.
 - Naturalization records are especially valuable.
- Dates are important, particularly if a name is common.
 - If the person appears in the 1920 census, don’t look for initial arrival after then. However, trips “home” could occur after initial entry, which could have valuable information attached.
 - The 1920 census has immigration status data.



Backtrack to point of entry

- Using info garnered in all the other records, search passenger arrivals and immigration records.
 - Be mindful of name changes and variations, e.g., “Kimon Karavas” instead of the later “Cimon Caravas.”
 - Understand how Soundex works and doesn’t work.
 - Look for women traveling alone and children traveling with family members other than parents.
- Read the actual records! The transcriptions often do not contain all the info that is in the actual source.
- Note the ship name and port of departure, which you’ll need for the point of emigration.



How Soundex works

- Soundex is the major algorithm that genealogy search engines use to find matches to search criteria.
- Full description of Soundex is at <https://www.archives.gov/research/census/soundex>.
- Name variations may produce different Soundex codes and therefore a different list of “hits” from a search engine.
 - Use an online Soundex calculator like <https://homepages.rootsweb.com/~mschwitz/SoundexCalculator.htm> to see if name variations produce a different code.
 - Example: Emerson produces E562 and Emberson produces E516. If you think this is a variation on your family name, multiple searches are needed.

Read the actual records!

THE TRANSCRIPTION

Donald McLean Ritchie in the New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1957

Name:	Donald McLean Ritchie
Arrival Date:	30 Oct 1920
Birth Date:	abt 1862
Birth Location:	Scotland
Birth Location Other:	rosehearty
Age:	58
Gender:	Male
Ethnicity/ Nationality:	Scottish (Scotish)
Port of Departure:	Southampton, England
Port of Arrival:	New York, New York
Ship Name:	Aquitania

THE ACTUAL RECORD

Self	465	No	-	-	0120 - 1200 St. Highland Park, No	Perm	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Good	No	5	7	Fresh	Brn	Brn	None	Scotland	Portsay
Self	465	No	-	-	Daughter, Jemima Caravas, Mich.	Perm	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Good	No	5	9	Fresh	Fr.	Brn	None	Scotland	Rosehearty
Self	465	No	-	-	R.I. McLane, Virginia.	Perm	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Good	No	5	9	Fresh	Fr.	Brn	None	Scotland	Rosehearty
Self	465	No	-	-	Cousin, Mr. John McGill, 1887	Perm	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Good	No	5	9	Fresh	Fr.	Brn	None	Scotland	Rosehearty

Donald Ritchie departure from England

- Going to visit daughter Jemima Caravas (married name) in McLane [sic] VA, which is very near Alexandria where they actually lived.



Cross back to the point of emigration

- Find the records of departure from the originating country and read them!
 - The information in the departure records may be different than entry info.
 - The person may have told a different story to the departure and arrival officials.
 - Different, more complete info on point of origin may be in the departure records.
 - The embarkation port is usually NOT the same as the hometown.
- Learn the various migration routes from origination to USA arrival.
 - For Jim's Scots ancestors, one route to the USA was to leave Scotland, embark at an English port, arrive in Canada, live there a while, then come in over land in NY state.
 - If fleeing persecution, the paths to the USA may involve several intermediate countries.
 - Origination places may change nationalities over time. Kimon Karavas was from Chios, part of Turkey then and Greece now.



P.M. 21.

Name of Ship *Aquitania* Date of Departure *23rd October 1920* Where bound *New York*
Port of Departure *Southampton* Steamship Line **CUNARD.**

NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF **BRITISH** PASSENGERS EMBARKED AT THE PORT OF *Southampton*

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)								(7)						(8)		
Contract Ticket Number.	NAMES OF PASSENGERS.	CLASS. (Whether 1st, 2nd, or 3rd).	Port at which Passengers have contracted to land.	Profession, Occupation, or Calling of Passengers. In the case of First Class Passengers this Column need not be filled up.	AGES OF PASSENGERS. Except for First Class Passengers state the age last birthday.								Country of last Permanent Residence.†						Country of Intended Future Permanent Residence.†		
					Adults of 12 years and upwards.				Children be- tween 1 and 12.				Infants.		England.	Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.		British Possessions.	Foreign Countries.
					Accom- panied by husband or wife.		Not accom- panied by husband or wife.														
					Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.									

84074	Frederick James			Labourer																
84101	Ritchie Donald																			

Donald Ritchie departure from England

- No occupation listed.
- Age of 58 makes birth year 1862 (correct).
- From Scotland, headed to New York.
- Intended permanent residence in the USA.



Use the FamilySearch research wiki to understand resources

- At https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Main_Page, enter a location or topic to see what is available.
- Enter the location in the search box. Select from the choices that appear, such as *[location]* genealogy, *[location]* Societies and so on.
- Selecting Societies brings up a list. Some have websites and some are likely to be in the United States. These affinity organizations may already have done your work for you!
- Live demo for the city of Naples.
 - See the tab for finding city of origin.
 - See the links for the videos on doing Italy research.
 - See the link to understanding Italy church records.



Learn the key words for major events in someone's life

- You will find documents in Italian that you must translate. Having a list on hand for that work will be valuable.

English word	Italian word
Birth	Nascita
Death	Morte
Christening, Baptism	Battisimi or battesimo
Parents	Genitori
Marriage	Matrimonio

- Use Google Translate to get a rough idea what documents mean.
- FamilySearch has great pages for genealogy terms in other languages.
- See https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Italian_Genealogical_Word_List for Italian words.



Learn the way key documents are written and what they contain

- For any particular faith, learn the process of marriages so you now what key documents may be available.
- In Italy, most marriages are in the Roman Catholic faith. An excellent resource for the process and what is included in documents is at [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Italian Marriage Records More Than You Think](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Italian_Marriage_Records_More_Than_You_Think).
 - Priests were required to keep registers of baptism, marriage and death for each parishioner after 1595.
 - Church records are online as described at [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Italy Church Records](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Italy_Church_Records).
- Civil records are of extreme importance.
 - The Napoleonic period instituted, for a brief while, a different process where the Catholic church was subordinate to civil process.
 - In 1861, many Italian kingdoms were unified into a single nation.
 - See the discussion at [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Italy Civil Registration](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Italy_Civil_Registration).



If you're lucky, find your ancestor's town of origin.

- Given the way national boundaries have moved over time, it is important to find the exact place where your ancestor lived.
- For Italy, there's a good discussion at https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Italy_Finding_Town_of_Origin.
- The Kingdom of Italy united a number of states in 1861 (not including Rome or Venice).
 - That is not too long ago compared to many other European countries.
 - Knowing the location of your ancestors will help discover records prior to then. Even after 1861, recordkeeping was very local.
 - The first census of Italy was taken in 1871 and every ten years thereafter. Records to 1991 are held in the state archive of each province.



Other research ideas

- Go to the Search section of Ancestry to view the collections for that particular area. Example:
 - <https://www.ancestry.com/search/places/europe/italy/>
- Find on this page the message boards and member directory.
 - Search the message boards for someone researching the same person as yourself.
 - Do a Member Search by research interest.
 - <https://www.ancestry.com/community/membersearch?researchSurname=Tramonte&researchLocation=Sicilia%2C%20Italy&researchYear=&q=&queryId=d67ec3db-4a5a-4ae9-862e-bb5d6f34ceca>
 - Explore the results through Ancestry's messaging engine.

All Members

LG

Lisa Gockel-Carl
California, USA

 2 family trees

Tramonte; Puglia, Italy; 1889-1923

Joined: 02 Apr 2012

Last signed in: This month



More research ideas

- Do an online search for something like “[*location*] genealogy services.”
 - Somewhere in the list will be links to professional genealogist who cover your desired locations.
 - <https://www.trace.com/genealogists/italian/>
 - <https://www.progenealogists.com/>
- Join a Facebook [*location*] group and ask for help.
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/italiangenealogy/> is only one of several devoted to Italian genealogy.
 - Check the Association of Professional Genealogists for someone living in your research location.
 - Home page is <https://www.apgen.org/cpages/home>.
 - [Here's a link to researchers for Italy.](#)



Time for your genealogy.

- Open discussion and questions.
- Homework forever:
 - Set up your tree either online or in DGS and chase your origins!
 - Contact Jim if you want assistance or have questions.
 - genealogy@creeksidefarm.org