Passenger and Immigration Lists Index User Guide

What is the Passenger and Immigration Lists Index?

The Passenger and Immigration Lists Index contains records of over 5 million individuals who immigrated to North America between the late 1500s and the mid-20th Century. While it primarily focuses on arrivals in the United States and Canada, it includes over 200 major and minor ports across North America.

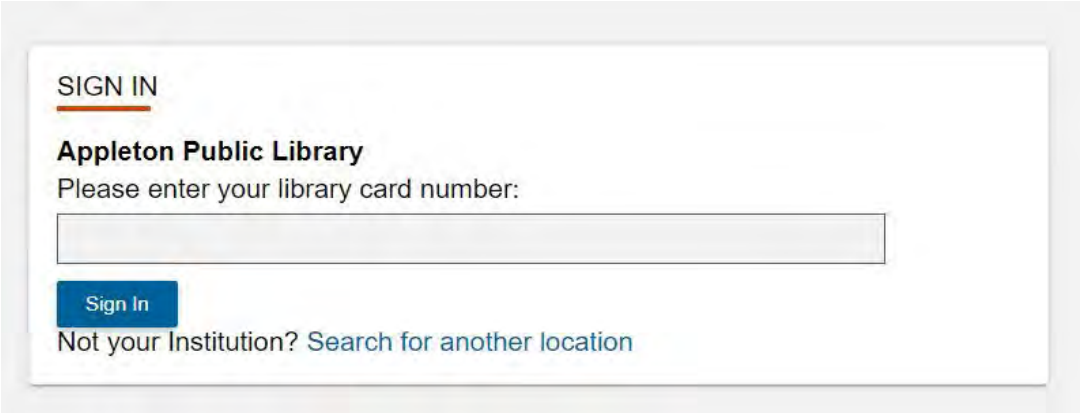
Though 5 million entries might sound vast, this index represents only a small portion of the total immigrants during this time. It serves as a reference tool that links users to resources and does not provide actual passenger lists or immigration documents. However, the information it contains—such as arrival dates and ships—can help you locate original documents through other genealogy websites.

The index is built from 3,500 primary and secondary sources, including books, microfilm rolls, articles in genealogy journals, and more.

Accessing the Passenger and Immigration Lists Index

You can access the index for free using your library card, even from outside the library. To begin:

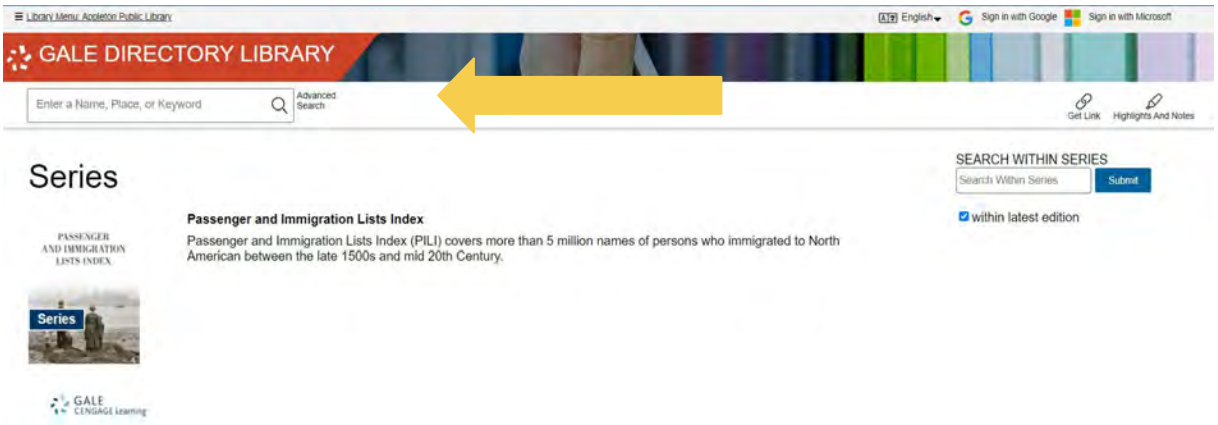
1. Visit apl.org and click on Research & Learn
2. Click on Genealogy & Local History and scroll down until you find Passenger and Immigration Lists Index and click on the title.
3. You'll be prompted to enter your InfoSoup library card number. After entering your *number, click Sign in.*



If you are accessing the site from outside of the library, sign in to the database with your library card number

How to Search

Use the search bar in the top left corner of the site to enter names, places, or keywords, then press “Enter” or click the magnifying glass icon to begin the search.



Begin your search in the search bar located in the top left corner

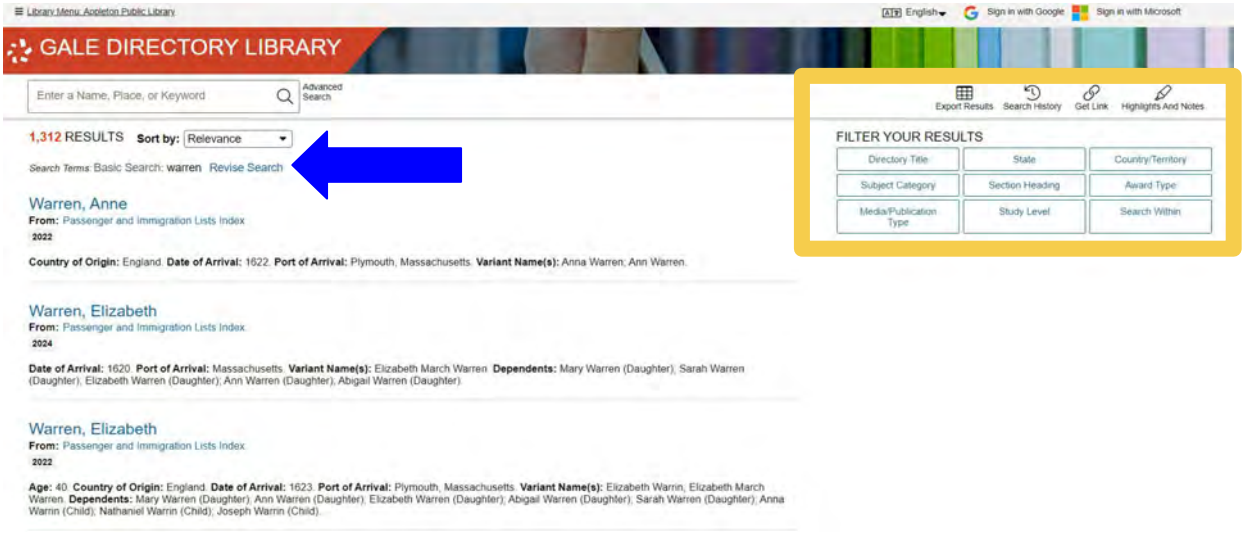
Search tips:

- **Search by surname:** If the first name is missing, abbreviated, or potentially misspelled, try searching by just the surname. For common surnames, consider adding variations.
- **Special characters and operators:** You can use wildcards, quotation marks, and operators like AND, OR, NOT for more complex searches. For more guidance, check out the Advanced Search and Search Tips sections.

Understanding the Results Page

The results page provides a snapshot of each entry and tools to refine your search. You can export search results, view search history, or save a link to return to your results later.

To see full details, click on the name of the person. You can adjust your search by selecting “Revise Search”.



A sample results page

Sample Entry

Upon selecting a name, you will see detailed information, which may include:

- Immigrant's age
- Year and place of arrival
- Ship name
- Port of departure
- Occupation

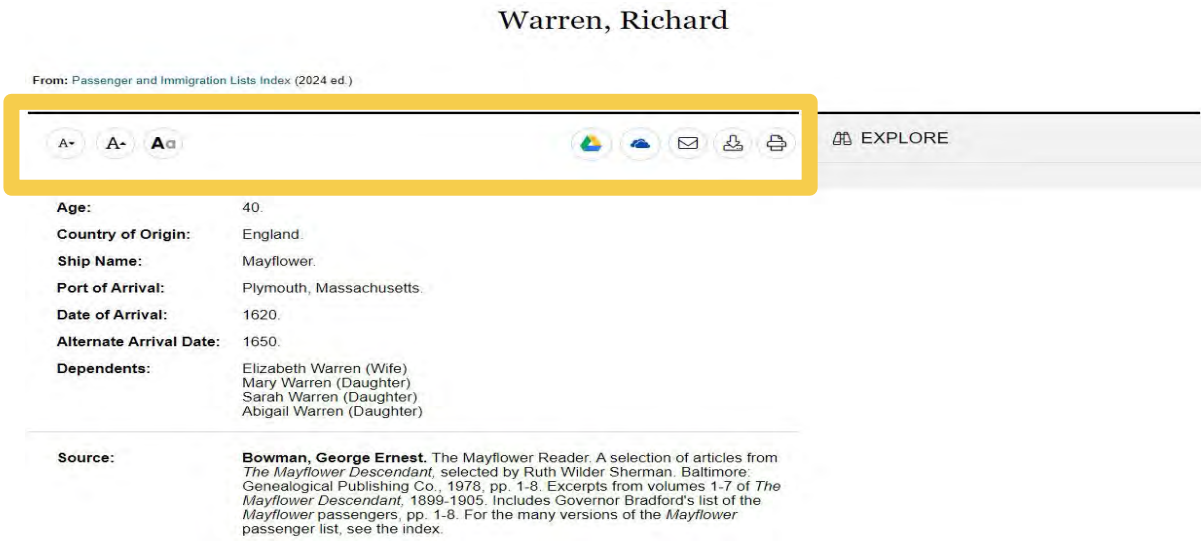
Each entry varies in detail and references the sources from which the data was obtained. You can track down these sources for further information.

Sample entry

Additional Options

At the top of each entry page, you have options to:

- Change font size and style.
- Export the entry to Google Drive, Microsoft OneDrive, or email.
- Download or print the entry in PDF format.

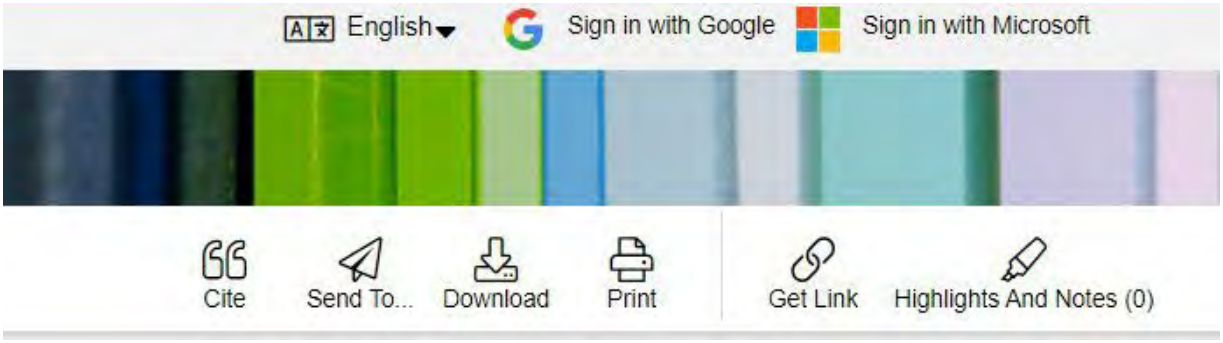


See additional options at the top of the entry page

Additional Tools

In the very top right corner of the page, you will see several additional tools. Here you can change the language from English (default) to another language. There are also options to sign in with your existing Google or Microsoft accounts to save your results and any notes or highlights you would like to make.

The Cite option will bring up a box that will allow you to get a citation in several formats (MLA, APA, Chicago, Harvard) and/or to export the citation to several resources such as NoodleTools, EasyBib, RefWords, or to download a citation to be used with EndNote, ProCite, Reference Manager, and Zotero.



Additional tools are available in the top right corner of the page

The Send To option will allow you to send the entry to Google Drive, Microsoft OneDrive or Email. The Download option will download a PDF file of the entry.

The Print option will print a copy of the entry.

The Get Link option will bring up a box that contains a link that you can use to get back to that exact entry.

The Highlights and Notes option will display any highlights or notes you have made during your session. You will want to download or send the highlights and notes to yourself before exiting your session as these will not be saved once you close out of the session. To send the highlights and notes, click on Highlights And Notes then “Send to” where you can select to send them to your Google Drive, Microsoft OneDrive or email.

Locating Sources

If an entry references a specific source, you can search for it online or through library catalogs such as Internet Archive, Google Books, HathiTrust, Digital Public Library of America, and FamilySearch's Digital Library. For physical copies, submit an inter-library loan request.

If you're looking for actual passenger lists or naturalization records, use the entry's information (e.g., ship name, port, and year) to find related records on sites like FamilySearch or Ancestry Library Edition (available for in-library use only). Keep in mind not all passenger lists and naturalization records exist or are digitized and available online.

Need More Help?

For additional assistance with the database or genealogy research, you can schedule an appointment with a Local History Librarian.

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