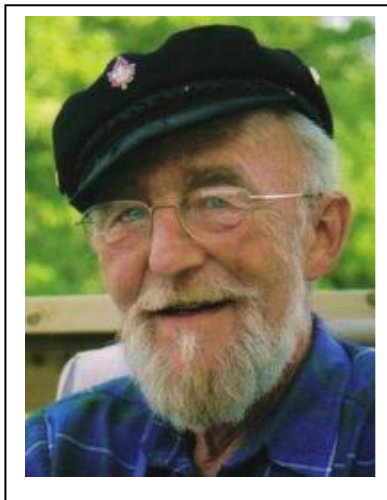


Ancestors from Alsace



I had a note recently from a reader who was looking for assistance in tracing his great grandfather who was a German speaking immigrant from Alsace and claimed France as his birthplace. He settled in Mildmay and was buried in Deemerton, Ontario.

Alsace Lorraine is a bit of a special case for research. It is on the border between France and Germany and its possession has fluctuated between the two powers for hundreds of years. This is why, although he claimed to come from France, his great grandfather spoke German. When he was born, it was part of France. At the end of the Franco-German War in 1871, it was ceded to Germany. It does create some interesting genealogical research problems.

A good place to start researching Alsace is: : <http://www.eogen.com/AlsaceLorraine> . This site has a lot of links to Alsatian resources including some surname lists.

To check immigration resources, I would go to the immigration database at Library and Archives Canada: www.collectionscanada.ca

Since the family appears to be Catholic, I would suggest checking out the local church records for baptismal, marriage, and burial reports. Here, you might find his wife's maiden name. Obituaries in the local paper may also be a fruitful source.

Mildmay and Deemerton are in Bruce County and are so small that they do not appear on many maps. To research that end of things, I would suggest the County GenWeb page at: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~onbruce> . The local branch of the Ontario Genealogical society has a web page but it doesn't do much more than list publications that are for sale, however some of them may be of interest to you. They are at: <http://www.bmts.com/~bgogs> .

Montreal Directories Online

Lovell's City Directories of Montreal have long been a treasured resource of researchers and I have spent many hours in the Archives looking for people in them and tracking people and their movements in the city over the years. The Directories also often include the occupation of the person and sometimes that is a difficult thing to establish.

One technique that I use is to check the person every five or ten years until there is a change in the entry or they disappear. Then I work backwards to find the point at which this change occurred. This can provide leads for when someone married, died or moved away from the city, both of which are very important to the family researcher.

These Directories are now being made available online by the Bibliotheque Nationale du Quebec. So far they have completed the Directories for the years 1842 to 1930 and plans are to continue to 1999.

I found the site very easy to use. You will need Adobe Acrobat to read the pages but this is available as a free download, if you don't already have it on your computer (remember to reboot the computer after downloading it and before trying to use it).

All you have to do is select the year that you want to research and then the category in the Directory that you want. If it is a people search, you can select the letter range for the last name and you will be shown how many pages are involved in that letter or letter range.

The top edges of the pages will now start appearing on your screen in sequence. They give you the beginning and ending name on that page. Scroll down until you find the page you want and click on it. It will appear on a reduced screen and will probably be barely legible. I maximized the screen and had no difficulty reading but you also have the option of using the magnifying lens icon to magnify the page.

I expect to spend a lot of time at this site and I am sure that anyone else with ancestors who once lived in Montreal will be doing the same. It is available at: <http://bibnum2.bnquebec.ca/bna/lovell/index.html> .