

19 Reasons Why You Should Research Passport Applications for Genealogy

One of the often overlooked genealogical documents, are passport applications and the passports themselves. For United States passport applications, required reading is from the U.S. National Archives - [Passport Applications](#). The history, types, limitations and how to access the microfilms of registers and indexes are included.

So what unique and interesting information can be found in a U.S. passport application from the collection of 1795 - 1925?

- Name of applicant
- Birth date or age
- Birthplace
- Date of application or issuance of passport
- Marital status
- Father's or husband's name
- Father's or husband's birth date or age
- Father's or husband's birthplace
- Father's or husband's residence
- Wife's name
- Date of immigration
- Date of naturalization and where and what court
- Ship information
- Possible information about children and other relatives
- Occupation
- Current residence and length of residency
- Destination and reason for travel
- Physical description - with no photograph, this may be the only hint of what they looked like
- Photograph - this is a huge bonus as these applications provided the only photograph that I have of some ancestors. Low quality, but better than nothing.

In microfilm form, they are available from NARA and the Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

Online, check out these collections:

FamilySearch - free

- [United States Passport Applications, 1795-1925](#)
- [Hawaii, Passport Records, 1874-1898](#)
- [Also, Passport Documents from Fiji, Finland, Germany, Portugal, and Spain](#)

Ancestry - subscription

- [U.S. Passport Applications, 1795-1925](#)
- [Connecticut, Passport and Birth Certificates, 1852-1928](#)
- [U.S. Consular Posts, Emergency Passport Applications, 1915-1926](#)
- [Hawaii, Passport Records, 1849-1850, 1874-1900](#)
- [Also, Passport Documents from Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania, France, Portugal, and Romania](#)

FindMyPast - subscription

- [United States Passport Applications](#)

Fold3 - subscription

- [Passport Applications, 1795-1905](#)

My Heritage - free

- [United States Passport Applications, 1795-1925](#)