

Beyond the Pines: Researching Your Black Forest Ancestry in Baden Wurttemberg

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History:

- Baden-Württemberg is a federal state located in the southwestern part of Germany. It was formed in 1952 through the merger of the states of Baden, Württemberg-Baden, and Württemberg-Hohenzollern after World War II.
- Geographically, Baden-Württemberg is bordered by France to the west, Switzerland to the south, Bavaria to the east, and the state of Hesse to the north.
- For genealogy research, Baden-Württemberg's historical significance means that records are plentiful but sometimes complex.

Identify what you know:

- What do you know about your grandparents and great-grandparents? Where did they live?
- What was the family's religious tradition?
- Do you know who your immigrant ancestor was?
- When did they arrive? Do you know the port of entry? The ship's name?
- Any family documents?

Finding Church Records in the United States:

- Identify the denomination.
- Locate the church records by checking online sources or visiting local archives or libraries.
- Online resources - Numerous online databases and websites specialize in digitizing and indexing church records. Websites like Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org, and Findmypast.com often have collections of church records that you can search through.

Finding Passenger Records:

- Search tips
 - Narrow down by date range
 - Try alternate spellings and variations
 - Use wildcards
 - Check for indexes and transcriptions
 - Utilize other advanced search functions

- **Where to find passenger records online:**
 - Ancestry.com
 - FamilySearch.org
 - Ellis Island Passenger Search/Ship Search
 - Steve Morse.org
- **Books containing German passenger records in the Genealogy Center:**
 - Germans to America: Lists of Passengers Arriving at U.S. Ports (67 chronological volumes - 1850-1897)
 - 929.13 B92e - Emigrants from Baden and Wurttemberg in the Eighteenth Century by Bridgitte Burckett
 - 929.13 B92n - Nineteenth Century Emigrants from Baden-Wurttemberg by Bridgitte Burckett
 - 943.46 Em44a - Emigrants from the Kingdom of Wurttemberg before 1850

Church Records in Germany

- Lutheran churches: Generally began keeping records in the mid-1500s.
- Catholic churches: Parish records were mandated by the Pope in 1563.
- Record Titles
 - Baptisms (Taufen)
 - Marriages (Heiraten)
 - Burials (Begräbnisse)
- Where to find them?
 - FamilySearch Catalog
 - Catholic Dioceses include: Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart for Wurttemberg or the Archdiocese of Freiberg for Baden.
 - [Archion](#) (Lutheran records, subscription site)
 - [Matricula](#) (Catholic records, free site)

Tools for Deciphering German

- FamilySearch Wiki - [German Genealogical Word List](#)
- Google Translate
- ChatGPT or other AI Tools
- German Genealogy or translation groups