Current Projects of the Center for Family History and Genealogy

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Immigrant Ancestors Project (IAP)

The Immigrants Ancestors Project team members have moved full force into the development of the online database. There are now over sixty volunteers from countries as far away as Russia, Israel and Argentina. The batches containing documents of emigrants records are sent via email to the volunteers who work on data extraction. Before receiving documents to extract each volunteer is trained through the online tutorials. As a confirmation that the volunteer is ready for extraction work, each volunteer is asked to take an online test. If a volunteer shows satisfactory skills they are assigned to a supervisor, who is a genealogy-trained student of Brigham Young University. The BYU student-extraction supervisors check entries for accuracy before completed files are added to the Immigrant Ancestors Database.

The Center provides the extraction software as a tool to aid the volunteers in the process of extraction. The software can be downloaded from Immigrants web site http://immigrants.byu.edu. Other projects are developing tools to assist volunteers, such a list of all parishes in Spain.

All data will be available to the public on the Immigrant Ancestors web site. The first database went online in September 2002. Currently the Center is developing a more user friendly searchable database that will contain the extracted immigrant data.

Visitors to the site who would like to contribute funds to support our efforts or who would like to work as volunteers on an aspect of the project are encouraged to send us an e-mail at immigrants@byu.edu.

(Phase I) Emigrants in German Archives Project:

Begun in 1999, the Emigrants in German Archives phase uses German emigrant records to identify millions of emigrants to the Americas before 1940 and include their names and vital information in the IAP web-based database. Filmed emigration records have been identified, scanned, and placed in batches. Those batches are now available to send. More volunteers are urgently needed who can read the old German script.

Since 1996 the students and faculty of the Emigrants in German Archives team have been gathering information about genealogical documents in German archives. The goal is to produce a one-volume guide to the locations of these records. First, surveys were sent to all of the church, national, state, and local archives in Germany. The replies have been translated into English and compiled into articles about each archive that describe their services, jurisdictions, and collections. Archivists are being asked to proofread the articles about their archives, making corrections and additions as needed. The finished product, Emigrant Records in German Archives, should be available by early 2004. This book will allow researchers to isolate the location of records from any community in Germany west of the Oder/Neisse Rivers. Germany.

(Phase II) Southern European Immigrant Ancestors:

Begun in 2002, the Southern European Immigrant Ancestors phase uses French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish emigrant records to identify millions of emigrants to the Americas before 1940 and include their names and vital information in the IAP web-based database. Students working in Spain last spring identified tens of thousands of pages of records and acquired images of many of those. Batches of those images are now being sent out to over fifty volunteers worldwide. Groups of students will return to Spain, Italy and France next year to continue the work there.

(Phase III) British Immigrant Ancestors:

Begun in 2003, the British Immigrant Ancestors phase will use local and national records to identify several million emigrants as they left their homeland for the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, and other countries. The focus will be on emigrants from the 1600’s to the 1940’s, with an attempt to identify the parishes from which the emigrants left. Currently, the project has
identified the types of records that were possibly generated for emigrants, such as outbound passenger lists (from 1890 to 1940), poor law records created at the time poor parishioners were assisted to emigrate to another country, transportation of criminals, and records created by other governmental schemes to encourage emigration to the British Colonies. The eventual goal for the project is to gather and extract records from all of the British Isles (England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man) and create a web-based searchable database with names, places of origin, ages, date of emigration, place of destination, and any other identifying information that will be available from the records.

**Family History Services Project**

The Family History Services project is working to create an index of every name that appears in approximately 1,500 family files compiled by the Genealogical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Family History Services of Brigham Young University between the mid 1930s and the late 1980s. The names and individual information (including associated names, places, and dates) are included. It is expected that many individuals will be able to locate their ancestors using this reference and avoid duplicating research. Due to the nature of this project, it will take several years to complete. However, both print and microfiche copies of the indexes will periodically be made available to the public as enough names are compiled to warrant publication.

**French Protestant Immigrant (FPI) Database**

The FPI database is being created to produce an Internet-based resource for individuals interested in Huguenots history and genealogy. The project is in the beginning stages. The database is being refined to accept extracted information and then present it in a user-friendly format. Information is first being collected from American colonial records referencing French-speaking immigrants. The project proposes to add data from extant records in European locales where Huguenot originally took refuge.

Extraction is currently underway and expected to continue indefinitely. Once initial extraction and organizational issues are resolved, the database will be made available to the public. Volunteers will then be invited to participate in the project by helping with the location and extraction of documents.

**Mormon Immigration Index (MII) Project**

The MII project, directed by Professor Fred Woods, is an extension of the Mormon Immigration Index CD released by the LDS Church in July 2000. The current project contains LDS immigration history for the years 1891-1925.

For more information about any of these projects, contact the Center for Family History and Genealogy at (801) 422-1968 or visit familyhistory.byu.edu.