



Madison County Genealogical Society



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FAMILY HISTORY COMPASS: "SEARCHING FOR SHIPS," by Juliana Smith

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I received the following e-mail request a few weeks ago and thought it might be an interesting topic to explore.

"My great-grandfather came to America in 1854. His ship docked in Baltimore, Maryland. The name of the ship was 'The Harvest of Bremen.' I have searched everywhere I know of and have been unable to find any information. Can you help me? Where can I find this ship? Thank you so very much. God Bless, "Nan"

As a bona fide landlubber who gets seasick in the bathtub, I have to admit I don't know much about ships, but I enjoy the challenge of exploring what's available on the Internet, I thought it might be fun to poke around a bit online.

"THE HARVEST OF BREMEN" The first thing that struck me was that the name might be off a bit. Since Bremen was a popular port of departure from Europe, I speculated that it might actually be a ship called the "Harvest" that sailed out of Bremen. I headed for the Immigration Collection at Ancestry.com to check out the Baltimore Passenger Arrival databases. There are two databases currently available for the port of Baltimore:

Baltimore Passenger and Immigration Lists, 1820-1872
<http://www.ancestry.com/rd/prodredir.asp?sourceid=831&key=D7480>
Baltimore Passenger Lists, 1892-1948 (Includes manifest images)
<http://www.ancestry.com/rd/prodredir.asp?sourceid=831&key=D8679>

I chose the former since that fit the time frame that Nan said her great-grandfather arrived in. I asked Nan what her great-grandfather's name was, and she replied that it was Nichlaus Hufnagle (sometimes spelled Hufnagel) and that he had left Germany in 1854. She thought he was born in 1834.

Initial searches came up empty, but after doing a Soundex search for "Hufnagle" with the ship name as "Harvest," I was rewarded with the following entry:

Name: Vichaldt Hofnagle	Arrival Date: 26 May 1854
Age: 20	Gender: Male
Port of Departure: Bremen	Occupation: Farmer
Ship: Harvest	Ship Type: Ship
Port of Arrival: Baltimore	Place of Origin: Hessia
National Archives' Series Number: M255	Microfilm Roll Number: 10
List Number: 34	

Although the spelling is off, it is close and the age, ship, and date of arrival match perfectly with what Nan told me. The database description told me that the ships that passengers may have arrived on the following types of ships.

- Bark - A ship of three to five masts with the after mast fore-and-aft rigged.
- Brig - A two-masted square-rigged sailing ship.
- Galliot - A small galley propelled by sails and oars.
- Ketch - A large fore-and-aft rigged boat with two masts.
- Schooner - A fore-and-aft rigged sailing ship.
- Steam Ship - A ship driven by steam.

Upon clicking on one of the hits for the "Harvest," the ship type was simply listed as Ship."

On the website for the Peabody Essex Museum, I found an interesting page that described the riggings of various ship types. <http://www.pem.org/archives/guides/rigs.htm> The last description was for "Ship." "The ship is properly only a vessel of at least three square rigged masts, each composed of a lower-mast, top-mast, and topgallant mast. Each is outfitted with a yard and a full complement of square sails."

For further information on the ships, I turned to John Colletta's book, "They Came in Ships." In it he recommends several museums that may supply more information, and possibly photographs of your ancestor's immigrant ships.

Mystic Seaport Museum (Mystic, Connecticut) <http://www.mysticseaport.org>
Research Services <http://www.mysticseaport.org/library/immigration/Researchpage.cfm>

Peabody Essex Museum (Salem, Massachusetts)
<http://www.pem.org/archives/maritm1.htm>
Research Services http://www.pem.org/museum/lib_research.php

Mariners Museum (Newport News, Virginia) <http://www.mariner.org/>
Research Services <http://www.mariner.org/library/research/index.php>

Another resource that I knew of is the Steamship Historical Society of America (<http://archives.ubalt.edu/steamship/index.htm>). Their collection is housed at the University of Baltimore.

All of the above mentioned collections look promising and my advice to Nan would be to investigate further and for more information on the "Harvest," take advantage of the one of the museum's research services. The research fees for non-members were between \$25 and \$30 for the first hour.

OTHER SOURCES

A Google search also turned up a transcription on the Immigration Ship Transcribers Guild (ISTG -- <http://www.immigrantships.net/>) of a ship called the "Harvest" that sailed from Rotterdam to Baltimore. I had noticed these entries in the Ancestry.com database as well, where they all had an arrival date of 27 April 1847. On the ISTG transcription (<http://www.macatawa.org/~devries/Harvest.htm>) there was a little more information, presumably taken from the manifest. It read:

The Harvest was a 623 ton American ship out of Rotterdam. It left on March 9, 1847 from Hellevoetsluis with Captain Josiah Fuller Jr. and arrived at Baltimore, Maryland on April 27, 1847. Many of the passengers were from the Province of Drenethe, in the Netherlands.

If this was the same ship as the one that sailed out of Bremen regularly, here was a bit more information. If you have the arrival record of an ancestor, it is worth looking at an image of the manifest to see if there is any descriptive information included.

A resource for locating ship photos is available on Ancestry.com through the Immigration Collection. The New York Port, Ship Images, 1851-1891 database (<http://www.ancestry.com/rd/prodredir.asp?sourceid=831&key=D8644>) includes images (photographs and artistic renderings) of ships that arrived from foreign ports at the port of New York from 1851-1891. Although the "Harvest" wasn't among them, for those searching other ships, it is worth a look.

The Great Lakes Maritime History Project includes images of barges, cargo ships, lake steamers, lighthouses, passenger ships, river steamers, schooners and shipwrecks. (<http://webcat.library.wisc.edu:3200/GreatLakes/>)

The Library of Congress' American Memory Project includes a collection called, "Westward by Sea: A Maritime Perspective on American Expansion, 1820-1890." (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award99/mymhihtml/mymhihome.html>) This collection from Mystic Seaport includes logbooks, diaries, letters, business papers, and published narratives of voyages and travels, as well as some photographs, paintings, maps, and nautical charts.

I barely scraped the surface of the resources available to those interested in learning more about the ships of their ancestors and it's been quite a voyage! If you've ever been curious to learn more about the ship that your ancestor traveled in, dive in and explore some of the great resources that are available to us.

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