

National Archives

by Claire Prechtel-Klusken

Chain Migration Studies Enhance Research



Genealogists are always pleased to find the date, port, and vessel of their ancestor's arrival in the United States. They're even happier upon discovering the name of their ancestor's village of birth abroad, since this data opens up avenues of possible research in the "old country."

Unfortunately, few researchers take the next step of placing the immigrant ancestor into the distinct pattern of emigration from the home village, parish, or county of origin. Each person was, in fact, a link in a chain of migrants.

Studies of "chain migration" can provide insight into the motives and results of emigration: socioeconomic mobility, settlement patterns, kinship patterns, and more. Genealogists, immigration historians, ethnic historians, sociologists, and others would find their studies enhanced by more detailed microstudies of migration between the old world and the new.

A chain migration study is a bold project, since both designing and implementing it are fraught with difficulties. In 1986, Walter D. Kamphoefner

described four means of conducting such studies,¹ but even though the quantity of print, microfilm, and online genealogical resources has exploded dramatically since then, this type of project still requires hard work, significant time, strong analysis, and a bit of luck.

Designing the chain migration study requires deciding the geographic and temporal scope of the project. For place of origin studies, what are the geographic limits (boundaries) of the study area from which migrants came? For destination studies, what are the boundaries of the study area to which they came? The larger the geographic area studied, the larger and more time-consuming the study will be. Yet a very small study area, such as a village, may obscure relationships the villagers had with persons in nearby villages.

Additional considerations are whether there is a specific time frame under study, or if it includes, all migrants to or from the geographic area. Also what records will be used to identify and corroborate the place of origin and other personal data?

Implementing the study requires careful analysis of the information found in the records and related indexes. As with all genealogical and historical studies, close and careful analysis must be made. Indexers and transcribers may make serious mistakes in interpreting

LIST OR MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS FOR THE
Required by the regulations of the Secretary of Commerce and Labor of the United States, under Act of Congress approved February 20, 1907

S. S. ZEELAND sailing from ANTWERP 19 OCT 1912

No. on List	NAME IN FULL	Age	Sex	Calling or Occupation	Place of Birth	Nationality	Country	City or Town
1	Lejchelski, Joseph	18 1/2	M	farmer	Poland	Polish	Poland	Warsaw
2	Gibelchick, Stefan	27 1/2	M	farmer	Poland	Polish	Poland	Warsaw
3	Winnicki, Stanislaw	24 1/2	M	farmer	Poland	Polish	Poland	Warsaw
4	Winnicki, Anna	16 1/2	F	farmer's wife	Poland	Polish	Poland	Warsaw
5	Winnicki, Julia	11 1/2	F	farmer's daughter	Poland	Polish	Poland	Warsaw
6	Winnicki, Karol	14 1/2	M	farmer's son	Poland	Polish	Poland	Warsaw
7	Tymczak, Stanislaw	14 1/2	M	farmer's son	Poland	Polish	Poland	Warsaw
8	Trzaski, Stanislaw	14 1/2	M	farmer's son	Poland	Polish	Poland	Warsaw
9	Trzaski, Stanislaw	14 1/2	M	farmer's son	Poland	Polish	Poland	Warsaw
10	Czopur, Wladyslaw	14 1/2	M	farmer's son	Poland	Polish	Poland	Warsaw

Selected portion of passenger list for S.S. Zeeland, departing from Antwerp 19 Oct. 1912, and arriving at New York, 30 Oct. 1912. Turzepole natives are on lines 7, 9, and 10 (Karol Tymczak, Stanislaw Trzaski, and Wladyslaw Czopur. Zmiennica native Anna (Chmielowska) Przybyla (line 8) traveled with this group.

Preliminary List of Emigrants from Turzepole, Poland

<u>U.S. Arrival Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Vessel</u>	<u>Port of Embarkation</u> ⁴
before 1900	Tymczak, Andres			
1900 May 14	Tymcsak, Felix	36	<i>Graf Waldersee</i>	Hamburg
1903 July 30	Sienczak, Teodora	20	<i>Graf Waldersee</i>	Hamburg
1903 July 30	Tymczak, Franz	33	<i>Graf Waldersee</i>	Hamburg
1904 Dec. 22	Szlama, Feliks	26	<i>Kroonland</i>	Antwerp
1905 June 6	Giermanski, Henryk	24	<i>Finland</i>	Antwerp
1907	Germanski, Henryk			
1907 Apr. 3	Pawlikowski, Frans	18	<i>Kroonland</i>	Antwerp
1907 Apr. 3	Pawlikowski, Wlad.	19	<i>Kroonland</i>	Antwerp
1907 Apr. 3	Reichel, Frans,	36	<i>Kroonland</i>	Antwerp
1907 May 26	Zglobicki, Stanislaw	19	<i>Batavia</i>	Hamburg
1909 Nov. 1	Germanski, Henryk	28	<i>Lapland</i>	Antwerp
1909 Nov. 1	Sienczak, Francisek	22	<i>Lapland</i>	Antwerp
1909 Nov. 1	Szlama, Stanislaw	26	<i>Lapland</i>	Antwerp
1910 May 31	Siwak, Franciszek	16	<i>Finland</i>	Antwerp
1910 May 31	Sienczak, Jan	19	<i>Finland</i>	Antwerp
1910 May 31	Rymarowicz, Josef	27	<i>Finland</i>	Antwerp
1912 May 29	Sienczak, Marya	20	<i>Zeeland</i>	Antwerp
1912 May 29	Tymczak, Zofia	20	<i>Zeeland</i>	Antwerp
1912 Oct. 30	Tymszak, Karol	24	<i>Zeeland</i>	Antwerp
1912 Oct. 30	Trzaska, Stanislaw	24	<i>Zeeland</i>	Antwerp
1912 Oct. 30	Czopur, Wladyslaw	18	<i>Zeeland</i>	Antwerp
1913 Oct. 28	Sienczak, Karil	26	<i>Zeeland</i>	Antwerp
1913 Oct. 28	Szuba, Ludwich	18	<i>Zeeland</i>	Antwerp
1913 Oct. 28	Giermanski, Henryk	32	<i>Zeeland</i>	Antwerp
1916 May 3	Pawlikowska, Wiktorja	60 [sic]	<i>Ryndam</i>	Rotterdam
1923 Oct. 6	Pawlikowska, Wiktorja	75 [sic]	<i>America</i>	Bremen
1946 May 26	Tymczak, Adolph	46	<i>Appleton Victory</i>	London
undetermined	Sienczak, Antoni			
undetermined	Tymczak, Louis			
undetermined	(Pawlikowski) Onysyk, [first name?]			



Turzepole native Carl Tymczak circa 1941.

the original handwritten records. Further, the original handwritten records may themselves contain "mistakes" in spelling and/or content. One record may identify the place of origin differently than another—and one or both might be correct. For example, a person might have been born in one town but have been a resident of another at the time of migration. Critical thinking and comparison of multiple sources is required!

Some of the bigger and genealogically well known studies of foreign immigrants to the United States include the Great



Unidentified Polish family before World War I.

Migration Study Project of immigrants to New England, 1620-1635, by Robert Charles Anderson, George F. Sanborn, and Melinde Lutz Sanborn,² and Henry Z. Jones's research of Palatine immigrants.³ Smaller studies of more limited geographic areas also have usefulness. The following article presents modest preliminary results of initial research into the emigration from Turzepole (sometimes "Turze Pole"), Galicia, Poland, a village at Latitude 49°40' North, Longitude 22°00'.

Like many research projects, this one began from interest in a single historically anonymous individual. The author's grandmother, Zofia Tymczak (later Sophie Prechtel), who was born in Turzepole, immigrated to the United States in May 1912 aboard the S.S. *Zeeland* which departed from Antwerp and arrived at the port of New York. The passenger manifest noted her intent to join her cousin Jan Sienczak in Cleveland, Ohio. In October 1912, Zofia's brother, Karol "Tymszak" (later Carl Tymczak), also immigrated to the United States aboard the S.S. *Zeeland*, and his passenger manifest likewise notes his intent to join his cousin Jan Sienczak. Also on this vessel in October 1912 were two other men from Turzepole: Stanislaw Trzaski and Wladyslaw Czopur. From this small acorn the project began.

The Turzepole chain migration study has thus far found twenty-seven persons with



Turzepole natives and siblings Adolph Tymczak and Sophie (Tymczak) Prechtel in the 1950s.

twelve different surnames arriving at the port of New York from circa 1900 to 1946. One person (Henryk Giermanski/Germanski) arrived three times, and one person (Wiktoria / Wiktoria Pawlikowska) arrived twice. There are some interesting preliminary patterns of migration that warrant further study and investigation: (1) preference for travel in May or October/November; (2) preference for Hamburg through 1903, then Antwerp from 1904 on; (3) World War I largely halted migration; (4) arrival usually occurred in groups of twos or



Turzepole native Zofia ("Sophie") Tymczak Prechtel in 1920s.

threes; (5) the men outnumbered women; (6) the men were usually older than the women; (7) preference for Cleveland, Ohio, or Elizabethport, New Jersey, as final destination.

Claire Prechtel-Klusdens is a microfilm projects archivist at the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC, and served as NGS Registrar (1996-98) and Director (1998-2000).

Notes

1. Walter D. Kamphoefner, "Problems and Possibilities of Individual-Level Tracing in German-American

Migration Research," in *Generations and Change: Genealogical Perspectives in Social History*, Robert M. Taylor Jr. and Ralph S. Crandall, eds., pp 311-323 (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1986).

2. Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England, 1620-1633* (3 vols., 1995) and Robert Charles Anderson et al., *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1634-1635* (3 vols. to date, 1999-).

3. His books include *The Palatine Families of New York: a Study of the German Immigrants to Arrived in Colonial New York in 1710* (1985); *Westerwald to America: Some 18th Century German Immigrants* (1989); *The Palatine Families of Ireland* (1990); *More Palatine Families: Some Immigrants to the Middle Colonies,*

1777-1776, and their European Origins; Plus New Discoveries on German Families who Arrived in Colonial New York in 1770 (1991); *Even More Palatine Families: 18th Century Immigrants to the American Colonies and Their German, Swiss, and Austrian Origins* (2002).

4. Spelling of names is subject to error. All individuals arrived at the port of New York, and their passenger lists will be found in National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) microfilm publication T715, *Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957* (8,892 rolls). NARA has many other immigration records; for information, see the Web page "Immigration Records (Ship Passenger Arrival Records)" at www.archives.gov/researchroom/genealogy/immigrant_arrivals/passenger_records.html.