

Indentured Servants Have Genealogies, Too!
Genealogy Society of Santa Cruz County 1 Oct. 2015

From **Wikipedia**, the free encyclopedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indentured_servant

Indentured servitude was a form of debt bondage, established in the early years of the American colonies and elsewhere. It was sometimes used as a way for poor youth in Britain and the German states to get passage to the American colonies.

An indenture was a legal contract enforced by the courts.

Restrictions

Indentures could not marry without the permission of their owner, were subject to physical punishment (like many young ordinary servants), and saw their obligation to labor enforced by the courts.

Southern New England Native Americans and indenture

In southern New England and parts of Long Island, starting in the late 17th century, Indians were increasingly pulled into indentured servitude.

Impact of American Revolution

The American Revolution severely limited immigration to the United States.

Caribbean

A half million Europeans went as indentured servants to the Caribbean (primarily the south Caribbean, Trinidad, French Guiana, and Suriname) before 1840.

Indentured Servants in the US (The History Detectives)

<http://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/feature/indentured-servants-in-the-us/>

Slavery and Indentured Servants (Law Library of Congress)

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/awhhtml/awlaw3/slavery.html>

Gottlieb Mittelberger On the Misfortune indentured Servants

<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/documents/1600-1650/gottlieb-mittelberger-on-the-misfortune-indentured-servants.php>

Italy Gen: <http://www.italygen.com/ships/index.html>

Approval to emigrate before departure

For paternalistic reasons and/or for control of population movement, governments enacted procedures to regulate emigration. At some time, requirements existing in most, if not all, countries included:

- 1) that the emigrant have completed military responsibilities;
- 2) that he or she was not wanted for criminal offences or trying to flee any authority;
- 3) that he or she was not trying to abandon family; and
- 4) that he or she, if under age, had permission from their father or other family authority.

Departure Records - From Europe to America

<http://www.italygen.com/ships/departure-records.html>

Virtual Jamestown: http://www.virtualjamestown.org/indentures/search_indentures.html

Search the Registers of Servants Sent to Foreign Plantations, 1654 - 1686

The Yorkshire Emigration

<http://www.libris.ca/yrkfam/>

South Sea Islanders – Fact sheet 289—Australia

<http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs289.aspx>

Child and youth migration

<http://guides.naa.gov.au/good-british-stock/introduction.aspx>

Convicts to Virginia

<http://www.genealogy-quest.com/collections/vaconvicts.html>

Irish Passenger Lists

http://members.tripod.com/~data_Mate/irish/Stgeor1.txt

The Irish Slave Trade – The Forgotten “White” Slaves

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-irish-slave-trade-the-forgotten-white-slaves/31076>

Index to "Paupers in Workhouses 1861" (10% sample)

<http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/Paupers/>

About London Apprenticeship Abstracts 1442-1850

<http://www.origins.net/help/aboutbo-lonapps.aspx>

Indentured Servants found in a search of FamilySearch:

<https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Special:Search?fulltext=true&search=indentured+servants&searchbutton=Search>

Tracing Immigrants Arrival Business Records and Commerce

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Tracing_Immigrants_Arrival_Business_Records_and_Commerce

Many immigrants were indentured servants, apprentices whose masters paid for their passage in return for labor. Indenture records often mention birthplace or residence. Examples of these kinds of records are—

- Coldham, Peter Wilson. *Child Apprentices in America From Christ's Hospital, London, 1617-1688*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1990. (FHL book 942.1/L1 J2cp.)
- ———. *The Bristol Registers of Servants Sent to Foreign Plantations, 1654-1686*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1988. (FHL book 942.41/B2 W2c.)

You can find similar records in the Place Search of the Family History Library Catalog under [COUNTRY or STATE] - BUSINESS RECORDS AND COMMERCE or under [COUNTRY or STATE] - OCCUPATIONS.

Clues to an immigrant's occupation are in family sources, census records, city directories, and even ship's passenger lists. Local histories, maps, census records, and city directories can help identify nearby businesses or companies that may have needed the immigrant's skills.

Tracing Immigrant's Arrival Newspapers

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Tracing_Immigrants_Arrival_Newspapers

Newspapers also provide immigration information. In addition to obituaries (described next), newspapers from the immigrant's lifetime may list:

- Passengers or new arrivals.
- Immigrants treated in a local hospital.
- **Immigrants who came as indentured servants** or apprentices.
- Missing relative or friend queries.
- Marriage announcements.
- Notices of estate probates.

London Emigration and Immigration

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/London_Emigration_and_Immigration

In lieu of passenger lists, genealogists have sought for London emigration records in a variety of other sources. Tens of thousands of records of indentured servants and transported convicts leaving London for America exist.

Mid Atlantic Publications in Name Search at Genealogical.com

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Mid_Atlantic_Publications_in_Name_Search_at_Genealogical.com

Virginia Emigration and Immigration

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Virginia_Emigration_and_Immigration

The original European settlers came in the early 17th century from the midland and southern counties of England. They first settled in Virginia's tidewater (coastal plain). Many colonists had connections to Barbados.

Barbados Occupations

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Barbados_Occupations

Since the early days of colonization, sugar cane production has been one of Barbados's most important industries.

<https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Barbados>

Chester County, Pennsylvania

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Chester_County,_Pennsylvania

[Emigration and Immigration](#)

For information about emigration into Pennsylvania, see the Pennsylvania Emigration and Immigration page.

- **1680s-early 1700s** - "Some Early Arrivals: Settlers in Chester County, Pa.," *Publications of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Mar. 1911):281-304. For online access, see [WeRelate](#); the Family History Library also has this series in its collection: [FHL Book 974.8 B2p](#).
- [Immigration Records of Chester County at Chester County, Pennsylvania PGenWeb Archives](#) including Early Chester Arrivals; index of names 1681-1687

Indentures from Early Court Records

quarter sessions indentures in 1697...8th and 9th days of the 4th month

http://chester.pa-roots.com/courtrecords/1697_indentures.html

Indentured Servants & Apprentice Records, 1700-1855 <http://www.chesco.org/>

[List of imported servants and transported convicts from Europe](#) who served labor terms in Colonial Chester County, Pennsylvania (work in progress), courtesy: [Immigrant Servants Database](#); [Poorhouse Bound Apprentices, 1801-1825](#)

Tracing Immigrant Origins

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Tracing_Immigrant_Origins

Berks County, Pennsylvania

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Berks_County,_Pennsylvania#Indentured_Servants_Indentured_Servants

[List of imported servants and transported convicts from Europe](#) who served labor terms in Colonial Berks County, Pennsylvania (work in progress), courtesy: [Immigrant Servants Database](#).

US Immigration Passenger Arrival Records

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/US_Immigration_Passenger_Arrival_Records

Indentured Servants Database

More than 75 percent of the colonists who settled south of New England financed their voyages to the New World as indentured servants, convict servants, and redemptioners. This project aims to identify all immigrants described by these terms in American and European sources from 1607 through 1820.

German Records: Research beyond vital records

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/German_Records:_Research_beyond_vital_records

Occupation Records: The culture, history and records of Germany Occupations are varied and steeped in tradition, (see [Understanding Occupations in German Research | Learn | FamilySearch.org](#)) Many provide name, age or birth date, trade, migration and residency information.

The Irish Slave Trade – The Forgotten “White” Slaves

Book: *White Cargo, The Forgotten History of Britain’s White Slaves*, Don Jordan and Michael Welsh.