

Some Pennsylvania Genealogy Resources Ted Bainbridge, Ph.D.

The Pennsylvania Archives

Go to fold3.com (a pay site)

Register or sign in so you can read the *Pennsylvania Archives* for free

In the search request box type "Pennsylvania Archives" without quotes

Click the magnifying glass icon

Choose the free item on the hit list

Type a request into the search box, then click the magnifying glass

Click the title of an item in the hit list (then the page of the P.A. will appear)

To save that page, choose Actions, then Download, then Entire Page, then follow instructions

To move to the prior or next page, click the < or > symbols at the bottom of the screen

Properly Dated County Maps

<http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~george/countyformations/pennsylvaniaformationmaps.html> offers a map of Pennsylvania's county boundaries for each year when any boundary changed. There are 81 maps, dated 1673 through 1878. Also explore all of that page's other features. To get the same materials for any other state, substitute its name in that internet address.

<https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Archives/Documents/Pennsylvania-Genealogical-Map-Counties.pdf> is a map with arrows that show each county's parent counties. It also shows all of Pennsylvania's land acquisitions and the dates those areas became part of the state.

https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Pennsylvania_County_Creation_Dates_and_Parent_Counties shows county creation information as text, which some people find easier to use than maps.

<https://sites.psu.edu/mapsgislib/pennsylvania-early-county-maps-and-altases/> has an amazing variety of Pennsylvania maps and information about maps, plus links to many other such sites.

Randy Majors Maps

In an ideal world, we would not have to collect old maps and compare them to modern ones. Somebody would do that for us. Better than comparing maps would be having all of them the same size, shown on transparent material, and the old overlaid on the new. Even better would be having every map at every scale we want. That would let us see every detail at every date, and know for certain which county every specific spot of ground was in at any specific date. Randy Majors does that for us - and it is free!

Go to <https://www.randymajors.org/maps>

Near the bottom left of the map displayed, check the box for "Show historical county labels".

In the search box above the map, type the name of a place. As you type, watch the drop-down box of known place names. When you see what you want, click that instead of continuing typing.

At the top center of the map, type the date you want. (Use the format of MM/DD/YYYY) Then click the "GO!" button.

Near the top left of the map, use the "-" button to zoom out until you see the county name and boundaries.

Clicking the “<” and “>” buttons beside the date changes the date in ten-year increments.
To zoom in or out, use the “+” and “-” buttons near the top left of the map.
To drag the map in any direction, hold down your left mouse button and move the map.
Buttons at the top right of the map display map-&-terrain, satellite, or points-of-interest displays.
Print using that button near the top right of the map.
Save the map to your computer using the image/screen capture that your computer provides.
The “•” button above the print button returns you to the map that opened the site’s home page.

The Strassburger Books

If your ancestors were Pennsylvania Germans, whether you think they were pioneers or not, “The Strassburger books” should be on your shelf or on your computer. The series title is, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers. A Publication of the Original Lists of Arrivals in the Port of Philadelphia from 1727 to 1808.* Volume 1 (776 pages) is 1727 - 1775, Volume 2 (893 pages) is *Facsimile Signatures 1727-1775*, and Volume 3 (709 pages) is 1785 - 1808 [and] *Indexes*.

You can get a FREE set of these books:

Volume 1: Go to <https://archive.org/details/pennsylvaniagerm42stra> , scroll below the image of the book’s pages until you see the **DOWNLOAD OPTIONS** panel, then select **PDF**.
Give the file time to load. Click your browser’s download button and proceed as instructed.

Volume 2: Change that internet address to <https://archive.org/details/pennsylvaniagerm43stra> and proceed as above.

Volume 3: Change that internet address to <https://archive.org/details/pennsylvaniagerm44stra> and proceed as above.

Double-clicking your saved copy of a volume will open the book inside a PDF viewer. Use that program’s Search or Find box to hunt what you want. Hunt each variant spelling of a name that you can think of. This is essential because of the following. (1) The old Germanic alphabet differed from the modern English alphabet, and there is not a one-to-one correspondence between the two. (2) Indexers can mis-read the script, err in transliterating from their alphabet to ours, and make typing errors. (3) The spelling a person used at the time of immigration may differ significantly from modern spellings you may have seen. For example, I have a copy of a document signed by my immigrant ancestor Jakob Reicherdt (as I transliterated his signature). Some of his descendants who still live in the same valley where Jakob settled spell their names *Reicherdt*, while others use several other spellings, some as different as *Richard* and *Reigard*.

To hunt somebody:

Load Volume 1 and search for the surname you want

Read the prior and following pages to be sure you have everything available

Load Volume 2 and search for the appropriate ship (they are listed by date)

Go to the page indicated to see the person’s signature (or a mark by his name if illiterate)

(If the person signed his or her own name, it probably was written with the old German alphabet, which is not like ours. Do an internet search for old German alphabet cursive.