



## ***Vaya con Dios: The Hispanic Immigrant Story***

Arturo Cuellar, AG<sup>®</sup>, Debbie Gurtler, AG<sup>®</sup>, and Karina Morales

FamilySearch

[CuellarArturo@familysearch.org](mailto:CuellarArturo@familysearch.org)

[DSGurtler@familysearch.org](mailto:DSGurtler@familysearch.org)

[KMorales@familysearch.org](mailto:KMorales@familysearch.org)

Every immigrant's story is unique. Most left with faith and hope for a better world not knowing if they would ever return to their homeland. Uncovering their story may present different challenges depending on when and why they left. We hope to present to you some ideas and motives for immigration that might cause you to ponder their experience more deeply. The resources listed below will help you learn more about their experience along with the where, why, and how of their story.

### **KEY INFORMATION**

- Name
- Approximate date of birth or marriage in country of origin
- Name of the hometown
- A family connection

### **BEST SOURCES FOR HISPANIC IMMIGRANT ORIGINS**

#### ***Memories of the Living***

The best place to start to learn where an immigrant came from is at home among the memories of the living, but it can be challenging at times to talk to relatives about the past.

**Possible challenges:** it can be painful to remember, some think they know too little to be worth sharing, and some may feel that bringing up the past would be dishonoring their deceased loved one

**Keys to success** in talking with living relatives:

- It is essential to form and build loving relationships with your family
- Begin with those you are closest to
- Invite others to help you (For Example: have your mom ask your grandmother) and thank them
- Don't expect to receive without giving anything in return; share what you are learning
- Don't be afraid to ask questions but be willing to wait for the best moment
- Always be prepared to write down new information
- Make it easy for others to share; don't expect them to put forth more effort than you

**Resources at home** that may give clues about the family's place of origin:

- Old photographs may have handwritten notes
- Church records (*fé de bautismo, de confirmación o de matrimonio*)
- Certificates of birth, marriage or death
- Immigration and naturalization papers
- Funeral cards or newspaper death notices
- Family letters or journals
- Legal records, such as wills
- Medical and military records

### ***Records in the country of arrival (U.S.)***

- Parish Records
  - Baptisms, marriages, or burial records of the immigrant or their children and grandchildren
- Civil Registration
  - Births, marriages, or death records of the immigrant or their children and grandchildren.
- Immigration records
  - Border crossings
    - Form 548, 548-B, or Form I-448, Manifest – These are the best!
    - Form Spl. 259, Statistical
    - Form Spl. 442, Nonstatistical
  - Passports
  - Citizenship and naturalization
  - Passenger lists
- Military records
  - Draft registration
  - Service records
  - Marriage petitions
- Social Security Applications
  - Order the Social Security application <http://www.ssa.gov/foia/request.html>
  - Pay extra for the full copy
- Alien Registration form
  - 1 August 1940 - 31 March 1944
  - All foreign-born non-citizens were required to register.
  - Search indexes online <http://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/aliens/a-files-kansas-city.html>
  - Request more information before ordering and paying for copies

### **COLONIAL PERIOD – MEXICO 1492-1821**

- Portal de Archivos Españoles - PARES [www.pares.mcu.es](http://www.pares.mcu.es)
- *Archivo de Indias*. Available on PARES
  - *Pasajeros a Indias*
    - Indexes 1509-1790
    - Published indexes 1509-1599
    - FHL books and microfilms
    - [Archive.org](http://archive.org)
    - [SoloGenealogia.com](http://SoloGenealogia.com)

- *Casa de la contratación*
  - Passenger lists – *Libros de asientos*
  - Informaciones y licencias 1509-1701
  - Commercial business ventures
  - Bonds
  - Probate or estate cases
- Peter Boyd-Bowman, *Índice geográfico de más de 56 mil pobladores de la América Hispánica* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, c1985), FHL INTL Book 980 W2bb.
- Peter Boyd-Bowman, *Patterns of Spanish Emigration to the New World* (Buffalo: Council on International Studies, State University of New York - Buffalo, 1973), FHL INTL Film 1410948, Item 10.
- Peter Boyd-Bowman, *Índice geobiográfico de cuarenta mil pobladores españoles de América en el siglo XVI* (Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo, 1964-1968), FHL INTL Book 980 W2b.
- Herbert Eugene Bolton, *Guide to Materials for the History of the United States in the Principal Archives of Mexico* (Washington, D.C., Carnegie institution of Washington, 1913), download a copy from [Archive.org](http://archive.org).

## 18<sup>TH</sup>, 19<sup>TH</sup> AND, 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY SOURCES – MEXICO

- ***Movimientos Migratorios de Iberoamericanos***  
<http://pares.mcu.es/MovimientosMigratorios/staticContent.form?viewName=presentacion>  
- Ibero-American Migratory Movements. Available on PARES.mcu.es
- ***Archivo General de la Nación*** <https://www.gob.mx/agn> in Mexico City. Many records are filmed.
- See also the syllabus **¿Raíces Mexicanas? Online Resources for Mexico** held on Friday, session RT3843.

## NORTHERN NEW SPAIN – SOUTHERN UNITED STATES

Knowing who governed the jurisdiction where your ancestors lived will help you locate records and resources to flesh out the details of their lives. Much of this area began under Spanish rule and after Mexico gained independence it became part of Mexico until the following historical events occurred which affected record keeping.

- **1803. Cession of Louisiana and the Floridas by Spain to France.**
- **1846–1848. Mexican-American War**
- **1848. Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.**
- **1854. Gadsden Purchase.**

For information on resources for the southwestern United States, see the FamilySearch Wiki article "[New Spain.](#)"

## RECORDS OF EMIGRATION

Until these are indexed and widely available, it is vital that you know the name of the hometown of the immigrant.

- FamilySearch Collections
  - [Spain, Consular Records of Emigrants, 1808-1960](#)
    - Includes passports and visas
  - [Spain, Province of Cádiz, Passports, 1810-1866](#)
  - [Spain, Cantabria, Passports, 1785-1863](#)

- Public Notices
  - Provincial and municipal level: you must know the location
- Notarial records: you must know the town and the name of the notary
  - Wills. FamilySearch collection - [Spain, Cádiz, Testaments, 1531-1920](#)
  - Power of attorney
  - Parental consent
  - Bond freeing them from military service or authorizing a replacement
- Passenger lists
  - Few and far between
- Passports, permits, or licenses to travel
  - Few have been filmed or digitized
- Immigrant Ancestors Project <http://immigrants.byu.edu/>
  - Records of emigration
- Emigrantes Riojanos a América <http://ias1.larioja.org/emigra/emigra/index.html> (1880-1936)

## Puerto Rico

Under Spanish rule until 1898 when it came under U.S. governance as a result of the Spanish-American War. FamilySearch.org has some online collections, books and films with lists of immigrants and passports. Try the usual U.S. Sources after 1900.

## Basques

Great diaspora throughout the Americas, often because of inheritance structures. First-born son inherited the family house and others left to join the military or to seek their fortune abroad. There are many populations of Basques scattered throughout the western United States.

Some websites for Basque research:

- **Dokuklik** <https://dokuklik.euskadi.eus/>. Online parish record indexes for the País Vasco provinces of Guipúzcoa, Álava, and Vizcaya in Spain.
- **Vascos en el oeste de los EEUU Basques in Western USA: Amerikanuak** <http://basquesinwestern.blogspot.com/> A blog.
- **UNLV Reno Center for Basque Studies** <https://www.unr.edu/basque-studies> has many links to all things Basque.

## Conditions of their journey

Discover the stories of those who left their homeland, and the challenges that they faced to reach their destination. You can learn about the conditions of their travels, the details their voyage, and how they survived and thrived in a new land.