

From Namur to Namur :

Belgium Immigration to the USA in the 19th century



1. They were called the GASTUCHE, the PAQUES and BODART or LEURQUIN. They had hopes and a lot of courage in their small luggages to cross the ocean and establish themselves in an unknown surrounding, starting a new life from scratch.. During this lecture, you will hear moving stories of belgian families who left for the New World but also how to research for your immigrant family from Belgium.
2. How do you know your ancestors are from Belgium ? (And what if you think they may be from somewhere else).
3. Objective: learn all about belgian immigration, hear similar stories and BREAK that Belgian brickwall!!!
5. Exchange and discuss over Belgian immigration, especially from Wallonia.

Context of Immigration :

Poverty and doomed future in Belgium of the 19th century can explain immigration to Belgium but behind those social and economical facts, there are stories of families. Those events touched Men, Women and children alike but of course women and children were more enclined to be faced with illnesses and death. Meet some of those families and learn how you can too find your family in Belgium...even if you think they may come from a totally other location !

Immigration :

- a. Why a Belgium from immigration ? What happened specifically in the region of Namur and Walloon Brabant?

- b. Where from ? Where to ?
- c. Who were they ? What about the women and children ?
- d. What happened to them ? Did some come back to Belgium ?
- e. Settlements in the United States especially in Wisconsin
- f. Events regarding Belgian Community in Wisconsin (1871 Peshtigo Fire....)
- g. Building bonds with Belgium even after centuries / Connect with distant family members !

Materials & Resources

Reading Rainbow Tip: There's a lot of resources to learn about your family history and the links with Belgium. So multiplying, crossing records and checking informations is also very important.

a. Oral History/Cultural Transmission/ Personal documents : How to help passing on cultural heritage

b. Online Archives and how to use them in the context of a Belgian :

<http://www.familysearch.org> / <http://www.arch.be> / <http://www.belgicapress.be> / <http://www.kbr.be> /

c. Offline Archives and how they can be of help : **Belgium States Archives - Belgian Heritage Center-**

d. What about DNA ? Can you get brickwall down with genetic genealogy for belgian cases ?

But genealogy is not an easy journey sometimes and there are easily identified problems links to research Belgium immigration !

Problems that can arise when searching your belgian ancestors :

Here are the main problems that you can encounter while searching for your family history in Belgium !

You can use this as a checklist to be sure that the coast is clear and you can take your research a step further :

- a. Problems with surnames
- b. Problems with places (Identifying the right location for the right family)
- c. Problems with countries (Germany instead of Belgium)
- d. Problems with languages
- e. Problems while researching / Missing archives/archives not available online.

Assignment

Do you have belgian ancestors ? A Belgian brickwall you'd like me to break before-after the lecture and perhaps get the chance to meet new ancestors doing so ? Feel free to write at belgianroots@gmail.com