

A Comprehensive Guide to Finding Your Immigrant Ancestor's Hometown Part 3

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The Online Guide

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A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO

Finding Your Immigrant Ancestor's Hometown

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This web page has been created to address a need I have found from consulting with many people who all share the same problem: **"I can't find the hometown of my immigrant ancestor!"** As a volunteer at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and in online consultations I have heard many patrons exclaim **"I've looked everywhere!"** So far, I haven't found anyone who has really looked everywhere. What follows is my attempt to provide some basic guidelines and examples of records that might contain the information so many are searching for. But, just because you don't see a record

Passports & Border Crossings

- You may think this doesn't apply to your ancestor, but it might
- These records have great information and are available on FamilySearch & Ancestry

The image displays two historical immigration documents. The top document is a "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. Passport Application" for Louis Schneider, born 1896, from Ireland. It includes a handwritten statement of birth and emigration. The bottom document is a "Naturalization Certificate" for Louis Schneider, issued on March 31, 1912, in Detroit, Michigan. It includes a handwritten statement of birth and emigration. The documents are overlaid on a background of a family tree chart.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. Passport Application

NAME: Louis Schneider
BORN: 1896
PLACE OF BIRTH: Ireland
I solemnly swear that I was born at [redacted] on or about the [redacted] day of [redacted] 1896, that I emigrated to the United States, sailing on board the [redacted] from [redacted] on or about the [redacted] day of [redacted] 1896, that I resided [redacted] years in [redacted] on or about the [redacted] day of [redacted] 1896.

Naturalization Certificate

NAME: Louis Schneider
BORN: 1896
PLACE OF BIRTH: Ireland
I solemnly swear that I was born at [redacted] on or about the [redacted] day of [redacted] 1896, that I emigrated to the United States, sailing on board the [redacted] from [redacted] on or about the [redacted] day of [redacted] 1896, that I resided [redacted] years in [redacted] on or about the [redacted] day of [redacted] 1896.

Source: "United States Passport Applications, 1795-1925," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:Q24F-FY5Q> : 16 March 2018), Louis Schneider, 1896; citing Passport Application, New Jersey, United States, source certificate #, Passport Applications, 1795-1905., 459, NARA microfilm publications M1490 and M1372 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.).

Passport Example

Name: Louis Schneider

Birthdate: 3 Jun 1851

Birthplace: Nieder Ofleiden,
Hessen Darmstadt

Arrival date: 30 Mar 1881

Port: Bremen

Ship: Gen'l Weider

Source: "United States Passport Applications, 1795-1925," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:Q24F-FY5Q> : 16 March 2018), Louis Schneider, 1896; citing Passport Application, New Jersey, United States, source certificate #, Passport Applications, 1795-1905., 459, NARA microfilm publications M1490 and M1372 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.).

[Extract of 1896] [FORM FOR NATURALIZED CITIZEN] FEB 12 1896

No. 305 Issued.....

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

STATE OF New Jersey }
COUNTY OF Union } 1896

I, Louis Schneider, a NATURALIZED AND LOYAL CITIZEN of the UNITED STATES, hereby apply to the Department of State, at Washington, for a passport for myself, ~~expiring on~~ on or about March 14, 1881.

I solemnly swear that I was born at Nieder ofleiden, Hessen Darmstadt the 3d day of June, 1851; that I emigrated to the United States, sailing on board the Gen'l Weider, from Bremen, on or about the 30th day of March, 1881; that I resided 14 years, uninterruptedly, in the United States.

I the Constitution of the United States, and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same, and that I will take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion. So HELP ME.

Sworn to before me this 12th day of February, 1896.

at Newark, N.J. Louis Schneider

My Comm. 1896

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICANT:

Age: <u>44</u> years, <u>8</u> months, <u>12</u> days	Mouth: <u>Medium</u>
Stature: <u>5</u> feet, <u>11</u> inches, Eng.	Chin: <u>Medium</u>
Forehead: <u>Medium</u> , <u>High</u> hair	Hair: <u>Light Brown</u>
Eyes: <u>Blue</u>	Complexion: <u>Ruddy</u>
Nose: <u>Medium</u>	Face: <u>Well</u> (Baldhead)

IDENTIFICATION

I hereby certify that I know the above named Louis Schneider personally, and know him to be the identical person referred to in the within-described Certificate of Naturalization, and that the facts stated in his affidavit are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

(ADDRESS OF WITNESS) John A. A. A. A.

Applicant desires passport used in following address: Louis Schneider
Box 100
Elizabeth, N.J.

Border Crossing Example

Name: Martin Hart

Age: 26

Birthplace: Dublin, Ireland

Arrival date: 1 Sep 1906

Arrival Port: Boston

Ship: SS Saxonia

Last Permanent Residence:

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

Destination: Mr. Adams,

Milwaukee Ave. East #430

Description: 5'5" Brown Hair,

Blue Eyes, Wound left eye

Copied from BSI records

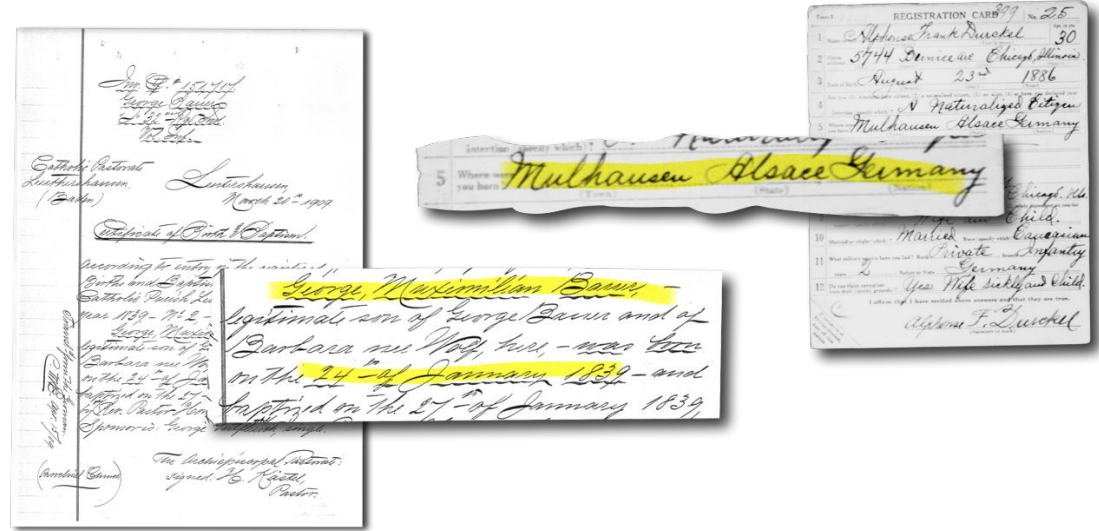
B. S. I. ADMITTED		MARCH 31, 1912.	
Family name HART		Given name MARTIN	
Place of birth (town, country, etc.) DUBLIN IRELAND		Accompanied by NONE	
Age 26 Yrs.		Sex M	
Race IRISH		N. B. W	
Nationality IRELAND		Occupation ?	
Last permanent residence (town, country, etc.) WINDSOR ONT. CANADA		Need YES Write YES	
Name and address of nearest relative or friend in country whence alien came ?			
Ever in U. S. YES		From 1906	
To 1911		Where GRAND RAPIDS MICH.	
Passage paid by SELF		Destination, and name and address of relative or friend to join there FRIEND	
MR. ADAMS. MILWAUKEE AVE. EAST #430.		Head tax status 00000	
Money shown \$2.00		Ever arrested and deported or excluded from admission NO NO NO	
Height 5 Ft. 5 In.		Complexion FAIR	
Hair BROWN		Eyes BLUE	
Distinguishing marks WOUND LEFT EYE.		Support and date of landing and name of steamship BOST MASS SEPT 1, 1906 "SS "SAXONIA"	
DETROIT MICH.		MARCH 31, 1912. VIA D & W.	
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, Immigration and Naturalization Service. Form 540-B.			

14-2201

Source: Detroit Border Crossing Index, 31 March 1912, index card (unnumbered), Martin Hart, age 25, arriving in Detroit from Windsor, Ontario, Canada; digital images, Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 6 November 2016); citing NARA publication M1478, roll no. 028.

Military Records May Reward You

- Draft Registration Cards
- Service Records
- Pension Files



Source: "Catholic Pastorate, Leutershausen, Baden, Copy of Birth Certificate for Georg Maximilian Bauer, 20 March 1909, George Bauer (Pvt., Co. P, 32nd Ind. Vols., Civil War)," application no. 169546, certificate no. 151717, United State of America, paper facsimile from Susan Murphy, direct descendant of Georg Maximilian Bauer, typically, such files appear in Record Group 15, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Source: "United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K6DN-NNH> : 23 February 2021), Alphonse Frank Durckel, 1917-1918.

Draft Registration Example

Name: Alphonse Frank Durckel

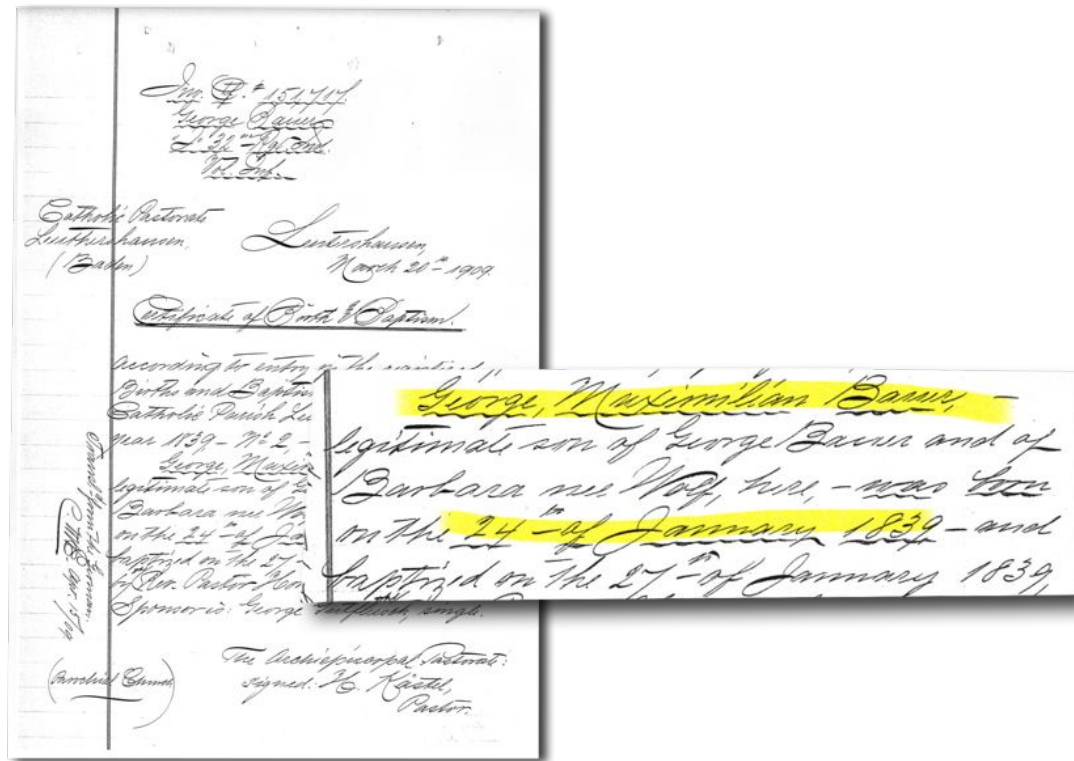
Birthdate: 23 Aug 1886

Birthplace: Mulhausen, Alsace,
Germany

The image shows two overlapping draft registration cards. The top card is a 'REGISTRATION CARD' for Alphonse Frank Durckel, born August 23, 1886, in Mulhausen, Alsace, Germany. He is a Naturalized Citizen of the United States, residing at 5744 Denice Ave, Chicago, Illinois. The bottom card is a 'DRAFT REGISTRATION CARD' for the same individual, also born in Mulhausen, Alsace, Germany. It includes details about his marital status (Married), occupation (Private), and military service (2 years in Germany). Both cards are signed by Alphonse F. Durckel.

Form	Field	Value
REGISTRATION CARD	1. Name	Alphonse Frank Durckel
	2. Place of birth	5744 Denice Ave, Chicago, Illinois
	3. Date of birth	August 23 rd 1886
	4. How you became a citizen	N Naturalized Citizen
	5. Where you were born	Mulhausen Alsace Germany
DRAFT REGISTRATION CARD	1. Name	Alphonse Frank Durckel
	2. Place of birth	Mulhausen Alsace Germany

Source: "United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K6DN-NNH : 23 February 2021>), Alphonse Frank Durckel, 1917-1918.



Civil War

Pension File Example

Translated copy of
Church Birth Record
Company I, 32nd Reg. Indiana
Volunteer Infantry

Name: George Maximillian
Bauer, son of George Bauer and
Barbara Wolf

Birthdate: 24 Jan 1839

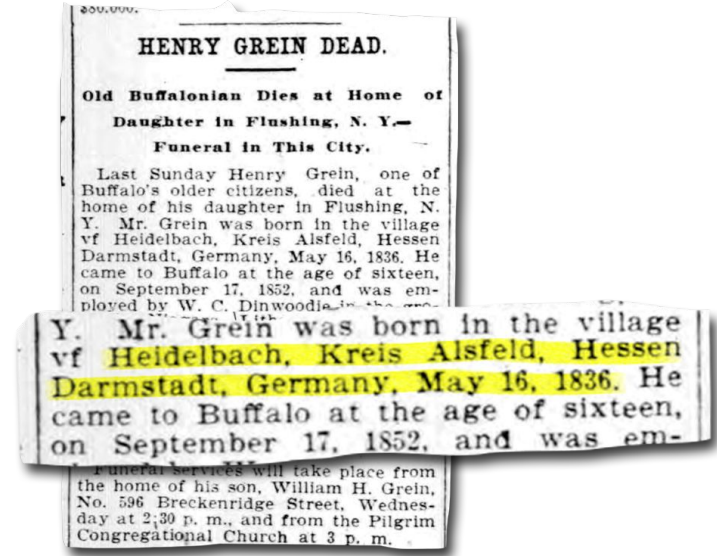
Baptism date: 27 Jan 1839,

Church: Leutershausen (Catholic
Church), Baden

Source: "Catholic Pastorate, Leutershausen, Baden, Copy of Birth Certificate for Georg Maximilian Bauer, 20 March 1909, George Bauer (Pvt., Co. P, 32nd Ind. Vols., Civil War)," application no. 169546, certificate no. 151717, United State of America, paper facsimile from Susan Murphy, direct descendant of Georg Maximilian Bauer, typically, such files appear in Record Group 15, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Newspapers Are a Must Read

- Newspapers should be thoroughly researched
- Obituaries sometimes give the place of birth
- Funeral notices and obituaries often list the church where the funeral was held—a way to find where to look for church records
- Relatives are often mentioned, expanding your research possibilities
- Research every member of the family for newspaper records



Source: "Henry Grein Dead.," Obituary, Buffalo Courier, 26 August 1902, p. 10, col. 3; online images, fultonhistory.com (fultonhistory.com : accessed 29 April 2014).

Obituary Example

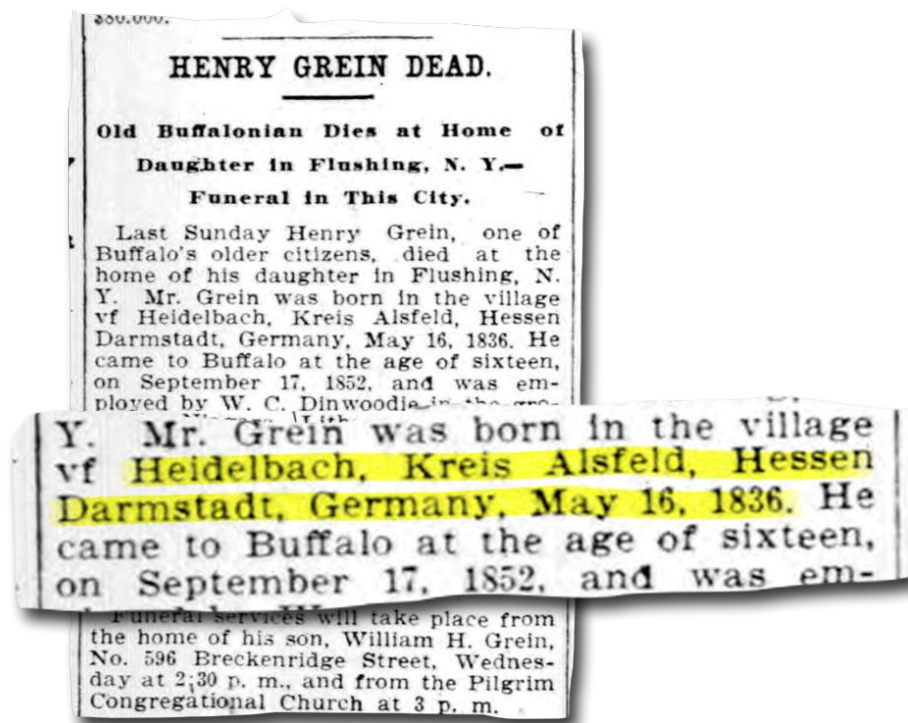
Name: Henry Grein

Birthdate: 16 May 1836

Birthplace: Heidelberg, Kreis
Alsfeld, Hessen Darmstadt

Arrival date: 17 Sep 1852

Funeral: Pilgrim Congregational
Church



Source: "Henry Grein Dead.," Obituary, Buffalo Courier, 26 August 1902, p. 10, col. 3; online images, fultonhistory.com (fultonhistory.com : accessed 29 April 2014).

Obituary Example German Newspaper

Death Notice

Tobias F. Berner

4 December 1883

Age 83

Funeral 1pm house of his son,

No. 21 Peru Avenue

Sons: Gottlieb Berner, Charles

Berner



"Tobias F. Berner Death Notice," Indianapolis, Indiana Taglicher Telegraph, 5 December 1883, p. 1, col. 1; online images, Google News (<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=MwdXMY9cq6YC&dat=18831205&printsec=frontpage&hl=en> : accessed 5 December 2016).

Newspaper Search Strategies

- Check multiple sites, not just the big subscription sites (Newspapers.com, NewspaperArchive.com, GenealogyBank.com)
 - [Chronicling America](#), [Google News Archive](#), local/state sites (Google them), [Elephind.com](#)
 - If you have New York state ancestors, search fultonhistory.com/fulton.html
 - Ancestry's "U.S. Obituary Collection, 1930-Current"
 - Foreign Language Newspapers at all sites
- Search page by page for dates immediately following deaths
 - What do they call the columns about births, marriages, deaths?
 - Do these records consistently appear on certain pages? In certain sections.
 - OCR technology misses many articles about our ancestors, always search the images
- Learn more at [The Ancestor Hunt](#)

Family Structure Must Match

- Many persons of the same name are found in the country or origin - verify you have the right family by checking the names, dates of birth and death, they should match closely
- Build a table to compare this information
- Some discrepancies are acceptable - an older child may not have travelled or came separately

	Hamburg Pssgr. List 1 Oct 1856	New York Pssgr. List 15 Nov 1856	1860 Census 4 Sep 1860	Retgendorf, Zittow, Tempzin Birth Records	Retgendorf Death Records
Christ[ian Hartwig] Boldt	1806	1806	-	10 Jan 1808	
Maria Sophia Dorothea Wollner	1806	1806	1805	25 Jul 1805	
Ida Christina Elisabeth Boldt				24 Feb 1833	29 Apr 1838
Johann Joachim Wilhelm	-	24 / 1832	26 / 1834	6 Apr 1835	-
Anna Friederica Carolina	-	-	-	25 Jul 1837	3 Aug 1852
Rudolph Christian Helmuth	-	-	-	15 Mar 1840	22 Aug 1851
Dorothea [Elisabeth Friederica Carolina]	14 / 1842	14 / 1842	18 / 1842	18 Jan 1842	-
Johann [Joachim Carl]	9 / 1847	7 / 1849	[12?] / 1848?	16 Oct 1846	-

Christian Hartwig Boldt of Holdorf, and Maria Sophia Dorothea Wollner of Cambs married 11 May 1832 in Retgendorf

Table 2. Comparison of Georg Bauer and Catharina Barbara Wolf Family

Information from Leutershausen Catholic Church Books

Ship Victoria Passenger List, 18 May 1850, New York^a

Name	Age on 18 May 1850	Occupation or Relationship	Name	Age	Occupation or Relationship
Georg Bauer ^b	55	Farmer	George Bower	55	Farmer
Casper Friedrich Pfisterer ^c	22	—	Frederick Pristra [sic]	22	do
Catharina Barbara (Wolf) Bauer ^d	46	Wife	Barbara Bower	35	Wife
Johann Jacob Bauer ^e	28	<i>not listed - married in Leutershausen</i>			
Eva Elisabetha Bauer ^f	23	Daughter	Eva Bower	23	Daughter
Eva Margaretha Bauer ^g	18	<i>not listed - died in Leutershausen</i>			
Katharina Bauer ^h	16	<i>not listed - died in Leutershausen</i>			
Barbara Bauer ⁱ	15	<i>not listed - died in Leutershausen</i>			
Margaretha Bauer ^j	21	Daughter	Margaretta Bower	20	Daughter
Conrad Bauer ^k	13	Son	Conra Bower[sic]	11	Daughter[sic]
Georg Maximilian Bauer ^l	11	Son	Max Bower	9	Son
Wilhelm Michael Bauer ^m	8	<i>not listed - died in Leutershausen</i>			
Franz Michael Bauer ⁿ	6	Son	Francis Bower	7	Son
Friedrich Bauer ^o	4	Son	Frederick Bower	3	Son

Colonial America

- Many early New England immigrants have already been heavily researched - books
- Start with the “[Passenger and Immigration Lists Index 1500s-1900s](#)” on Ancestry and MyHeritage (2,600 sources)
 - If not found, look for other passenger lists (FamilySearch, Ancestry...)
- Read “[Early U.S. Immigrant Records](#)” on the FamilySearch Wiki
- Watch Beth Foulk’s “[Colonial Immigration](#)” 52 minute video in the FamilySearch Learning Center
- Original records, see Beth Foulk’s presentation

Henry Stoneham Colonial Example

- Henry Stoneham lived in Lancaster County, Virginia in the late 1600s-1713
- Reasonably exhaustive search discovered a record in a deed book from 13 Sep 1675
- Henry Stoneham to Paul Wheeler of London for £15 a parcel of land in “South lans ham,” Sussex, England, currently occupied by Francis Fuller
- Henry appointed Thomas Cooke of Sompting, Sussex and Richard White of Steyning, Sussex as his attorneys to transfer the land from Francis Fuller to Paul Wheeler

[illegible][illegible]

Henry Stoneham Esq of South Devon

[illegible]

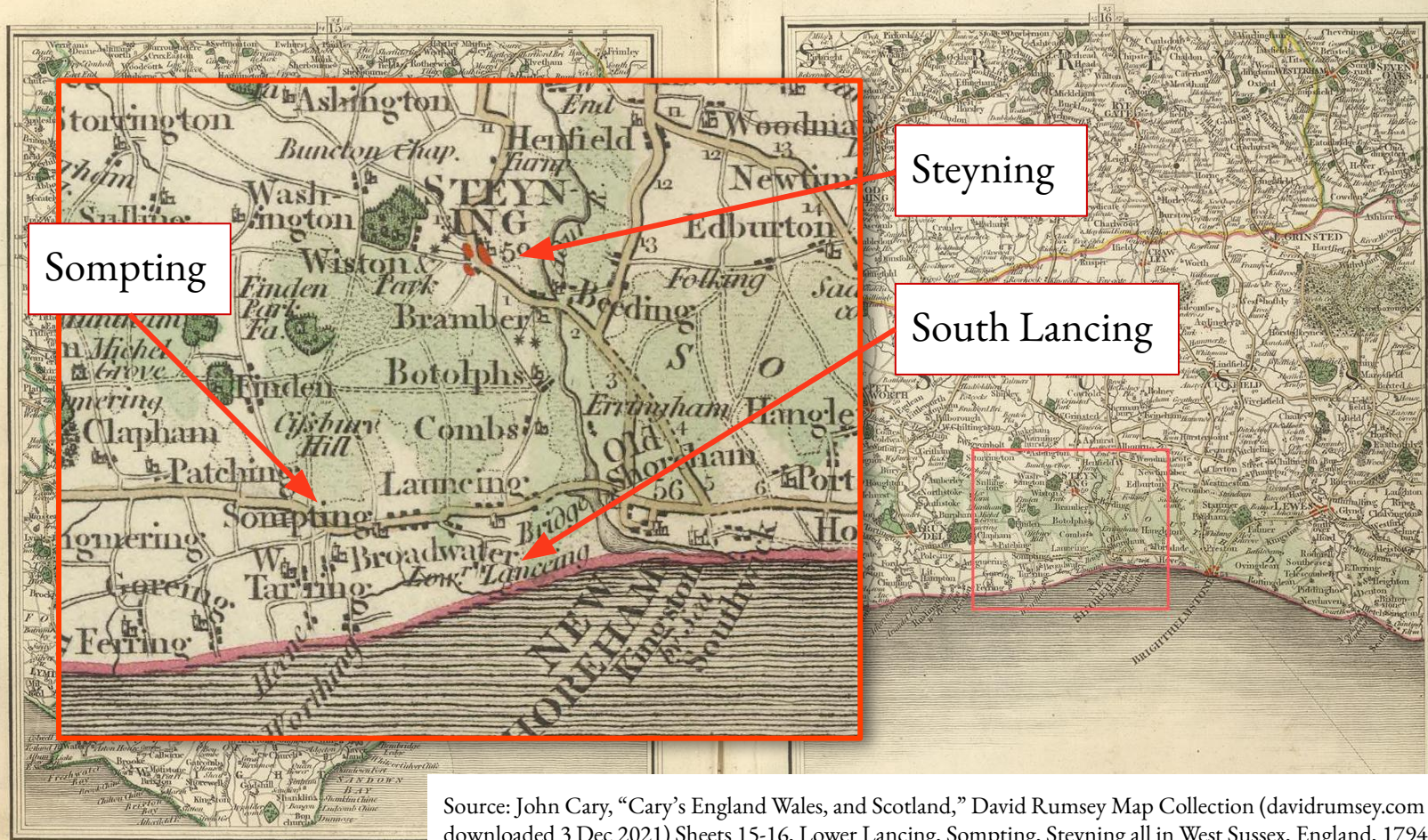
Source: Lancaster Co., Va., Deeds Vol. 4 1666-1682, Deeds Vol. 4 1666-1682, pp. 238-239, Henry Stoneham to Paul Wheeler, clothworker of London, 3 acres in South Lancing, Sussex; FHL microfilm 32,130.

Henry Stoneham late of South lan sham

“Henry Stoneham late of south lan sham”

Thomas Cooke of Sompting in the County of Sussex Gents and Richard White of Steyning in the County of Sussex Gents

“Thomas Cooke of Sompting...Sussex...Gents...Richard White of Steyning...Sussex”



This Summe Sent
by the grace of God King of
England Duke of Burgoyne
three twenty pounds of good
receiv. In the thir four hundred
fourty Administrators every
that in left to the said Edward

lands of Henry Stonnam

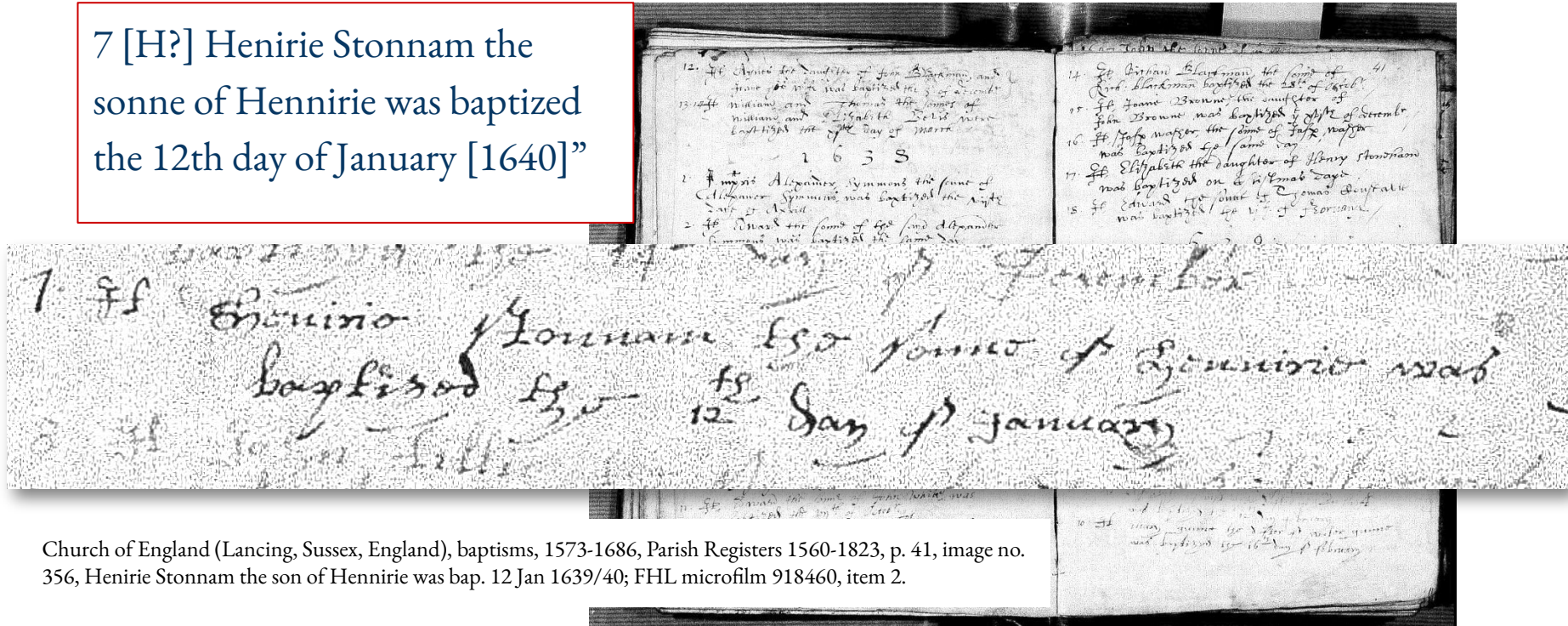
[illegible]

“...FRANCIS FULLER,
mason, of Lancing, Sussex to
EDWARD MAYNE, miller, of
Lancing, for £23 all his
tenement, barn, garden &
orchard in South Lancing,
Sussex.

“That is to say one acre thereof
lying on the East side of the land
house haveing the lands late of
one HENRY STANNAM &
now of JOHN STONAM on
the North...”

South Lancing Baptism Record Henry Stoneham

7 [H?] Henirie Stonnam the
sonne of Hennirie was baptized
the 12th day of January [1640]"



Church of England (Lancing, Sussex, England), baptisms, 1573-1686, Parish Registers 1560-1823, p. 41, image no. 356, Henirie Stonnam the son of Hennirie was bap. 12 Jan 1639/40; FHL microfilm 918460, item 2.

Examples Discussed

- **Family Records** - Charles Becker
- **FAN Club** - Susannah Pfisterer > Georg Bauer Family
- **Census** - Conrad Grein
- **U.S. Church Records** - Daniel Ludwig Friedrich Wilhelm Otte, Catharina Barbara (Wolf) Bauer
- **Passenger List** - Martin Hart
- **Emigration List** - Heinrich Klies family
- **Naturalization** - Martha Sieverding
- **Passport** - Louis Schneider
- **Border Crossing** - Martin Hart
- **Military** - Alphonse Frank Durckel, George Maximillian Bauer
- **Newspaper** - Henry Grein
- **Family Structure** - Bauer family, Boldt family
- **Colonial deed** - Henry Stoneham

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