

Genealogical Sources in the Cosmopolitan City of Hamburg, Germany



Presented by Andrea Bentschneider, Beyond History, Hamburg/Germany

Website: <https://www.Beyond-History.com> Email: info@beyond-history.com

Facebook: @BeyondHistory.Germany Instagram/Threads: @beyond_history

History

Hamburg, Germany, has a rich and complex history that is deeply intertwined with its status as a major port city. Here's a brief overview:

1. Early Beginnings and Middle Ages (up to the 15th century):

- Founded in the 9th century, Hamburg was originally a fort (Hammaburg) established by Charlemagne to convert the northern Saxons to Christianity.
- It became an important trading center due to its strategic location on the River Elbe.
- In 1189, Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa granted Hamburg the status of an Imperial Free City, which significantly boosted its trading privileges.

2. Joining the Hanseatic League (14th - 16th centuries):

- Hamburg joined the Hanseatic League, a powerful medieval trading alliance, in the 14th century. This enhanced its trade and economic prosperity.
- The city flourished as a center for international trade, especially in textiles and spices.

3. Religious and Political Turbulence (16th - 18th centuries):

- The Reformation had a significant impact on Hamburg, which embraced Protestantism.
- Despite religious and political upheavals, including conflicts with Denmark and Sweden, Hamburg maintained its status as a major trading hub.

4. Economic Expansion and Urban Development (19th century):

- The 19th century brought industrialization and a significant population increase.
- Hamburg became a center for international trade, shipping, and industry, leading to rapid urban development.
- The Great Fire of 1842 destroyed a large part of the city but led to modern urban planning and reconstruction efforts.

5. World War II and Post-war Era (20th century):

Hamburg suffered extensive damage during World War II, with many historic buildings destroyed. Post-war reconstruction focused on rebuilding the city while preserving its heritage. Hamburg evolved into a modern metropolis. It is known for its diverse cultural scene, major port, and status as a global trade center with a high quality of life, rich history, and cultural heritage.





Archive

Since Hamburg is one of the 16 German states and is considered a city state, there is only one state archive in Hamburg that holds all the records that in other German states would be spread out among state, municipal and/or city archives.

Here you will find all the records mentioned in the presentation, including emigration records, church books through 1865, Hamburg civil records 1866-1875, and regular civil records from January 1, 1876 onwards.

State Archive Hamburg

<https://www.hamburg.de/bkm/hamburg-state-archive/>

Kattunbleiche 19
22041 Hamburg / Germany

Telephone

Advisory service: +49 (0)40 42831-3143

Reading room: +49 (0)40 42831-3222

Protection of cultural assets (Kulturgutschutz): +49 (0)40 42831-3106

Records Management: +49 (0)40 42831-3108

E-Mail (Be sure to include your postal address in the email)

General inquiries: office-staatsarchiv@staatsarchiv.hamburg.de

This is the Website to search their online finding aids in English:

<https://recherche.staatsarchiv.hamburg.de/ScopeQuery5.2/suchinfo.aspx>

You can search by full text, i.e. by a specific name, as there may be individual files on legal matters, real estate, wills, correspondence, etc.; or by field search or by archival plan search.

Please note that certain restrictions may apply, usually between 30 and 110 years after a document was created.

Associations

Genealogische Gesellschaft Hamburg (*Genealogical Society of Hamburg*)

<https://gghhev.de/>

It was established in May 1918. The 2 libraries of the society contain more than 27,000 books, periodicals and other works on genealogy, local history and history.

The biggest project so far and still in progress is a family heritage book for all inhabitants of Hamburg, taking into account all sources and more than mentioned in the presentation. This database is only available to members of the society.





Verein für Hamburgische Geschichte (Society of Hamburg's History)

<https://www.vfhg.de/>

This society educates about the history of Hamburg; the website is in German only.

Databases / Special Collections / Research online

FamilySearch has a large collection of books and records on microfilm available for research at the FamilySearch Library in Salt Lake City.

Several of the sources discussed in the presentation are available for research, including

- passport application protocols
- marriage records of the Wedde II (1831-1865)
- guardianship records (1570-1900)
- Umschreibelisten (military *conversion lists*) (1831-1867)
- Registration protocols of servants, workers, factory worker, etc (1834-1890)
- Registration protocols of foreigners (1868-1889)

See here for more:

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/results?count=20&placeId=1928661&query=%2Bplace%3A%22Deutschland%2C%20Hamburg%22>

https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Hamburg_Research_Websites

Ancestry.com Ancestry (subscription service)

<https://www.ancestry.com>

The Hamburg civil records of births (1874-1901), marriages (1874-1920), and deaths (1874-1950) on their website. Records are in German only and Hamburg passenger departure lists (1850-1934).

MyHeritage (subscription service)

<https://www.myheritage.com>

Has some passenger information available as well as interesting family trees and DNA results.

