

# **A Guide to German Sources**

## **At the Nebraska State Historical Society**

Compiled 2016 by Gail Shaffer Blankenau

The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 created Nebraska Territory, which initially comprised Montana, as well as parts of what became South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming and Colorado. The Nemaha and Nebraska City land offices opened for the pre-emption of lands<sup>1</sup> in 1857. Once the land was surveyed and open for sale, Germans were among the many people who came to settle here.

The Homestead Act of 1861 brought another wave of settlers; many of them Germans who had “stopped over” in places east like New York, Ohio, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa. Be aware that the completed Nebraska Homestead land case entry files have been digitized and are available at [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com). Those land entries not completed may be found in local county deed offices. Nebraska became a state in 1867.

If your German family arrived in Nebraska before statehood, there are territorial records available in the manuscripts division.

### **Genealogy Tips**

You will want to collect as much information as you can in local, state, and federal records, much as you would with any individual. Start with what you know. Collect vital records, census records, cemetery records, land records, county and local histories, probate records, etc.

The more you know about the individual, the more likely you are to be successful in finding out more about his or her lineage and place of origin for further progress in your genealogical research.

If your direct ancestor does not yield the clues you are seeking, expand your search to family members and close associates. One of them may have left more records to point you in the right direction.

### **Finding the Germanic place of birth**

- Obituaries from local newspapers
- Obituaries from German language newspapers
- Naturalization records – we have a pre-1907 naturalization index for Nebraska and eastern Iowa. Later naturalizations are in the county district court records and are more likely to have the hometown.

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<sup>1</sup> This term was used in the 1800s to refer to a settler’s right to purchase public land at a minimum price—much like a right of first refusal.

- County and local histories – these are arranged alphabetically by county
- Local church records
- Probate records – we do not have these for all counties
- German POW Camp papers on 15 reels of microfilm
- Nebraska 1890 Gazetteer as a substitute for the 1890 census, which was largely destroyed in a fire.
- Passenger lists, both arrival records and departure records from German ports.
- Bibles
- Genealogies for your surname and associated families
- Funeral cards
- Birth and death certificates (these often only have the country)
- Auswanderer lists – in books and also online
- Oaths of allegiance
- Passport applications
- Military pensions

**Church Records in Nebraska Archives** –One of the best sources of information for Germanic ancestors are records from their local church. Look at finding aids for manuscript collections – Even if the church name does not indicate the church was German, many of these churches have changed names through the years and may have German immigrant ancestors in them.

Tip: Many obituaries indicate what church held the funeral, which can help to identify the correct church to explore. Here are just a few of the titles you may want to check on microfilm at the Nebraska State Historical Society:

- Alexandria Meridian German Presbyterian Church (Alexandria, Neb.), 1873-1925 [RG4904]
- Hickman German Presbyterian Church (Hickman, Neb.), 1878-1968 [RG2655]
- Humboldt German Evangelical Church Society (Humboldt, Neb.), 1880-1980 [RG4008]
- Humboldt German Methodist Church (Humboldt, Neb.), 1860-1924 [RG3078]
- Humboldt German Reformed Salem Church Society (Humboldt, Neb.), 1880-1980 [RG4008]
- Lincoln First German Congregational Church (Lincoln, Neb.), 1889-1977 [RG3022]
- Lincoln German Evangelical Congregational Salem Church (Lincoln, Neb.), 1901-1967 [RG4040]
- Lincoln German Evangelical Congregational Zion Church (Lincoln, Neb.), 1900-1966 [RG3037]
- Lincoln German Evangelical Lutheran Friedens Church (Lincoln, Neb.), 1907-1985 [RG4212]
- Lincoln German Evangelical Zion Church (Lincoln, Neb.), 1900-1966 [RG3037]
- McWilliams Precinct St. John's Parish, German Evangelical Church (McWilliams Precinct, Otoe County, Neb.), 1871-1917 [RG4361]

- Meridian German Presbyterian Church (Meridian, Neb.), 1873-1925 [RG4904]
- Seward Frieden German Evangelical Church (Seward, Neb.), 1878-1973 [RG3228]
- Stockham German Evangelical Congregational Church (Stockham, Neb.), 1898-1906 [RG4412]
- Stamford German Emmanuel Lutheran Church (Stamford, Neb.), 1899-1924 [RG4413]
- Sutton Federated Church (Sutton, Neb.), 1947-1962 [RG4173]
- Sutton First Congregational Church (Sutton, Neb.), 1892-1949 [RG4173]
- Sutton Free German Reformed Hope Church (Sutton, Neb.), 1908-1975 [RG3998]
- Sutton German Evangelical Congregational Church (Sutton, Neb.), 1876-1953 [RG4412]
- Sutton German Reformed Church (Sutton, Neb.), 1874-1946 [RG3218]
- Sutton Hope Reformed Church (Sutton, Neb.), 1908-1975 [RG3998]
- Sutton Methodist Episcopal Church (Sutton, Neb.), 1875-1949 [RG4173]
- York German Evangelical Lutheran Church (York, Neb.), 1879-1972 [RG3232]

When the archive does not have the record for your ancestor's hometown, and the church is still in existence, a telephone call to the church secretary may indicate that the records are still in the home church. Louisville, Nebraska, for instance, has an old country Lutheran church whose records are still at the church.

### **DDC 929.43**

This Dewey Decimal classification area has many helpful titles in German genealogy. An example is Roger Minert's German immigrants in American church records: Volume 6: Nebraska Protestant records (2008 Rockport, ME, Picton Press) at 929.43 G373c

This is not a complete record of German church records available in Nebraska, but it is a helpful first stop. This compilation does not include churches attended by Germans from Russia.

NOTE: If you do an "anywhere" search in the online library catalog for 929.43 it will bring up all the titles in this area (43 hits as of this writing).

### **Government Finding Aids – for Federal, State, County, Municipal**

The federal records consist of censuses, some fort records, federal land records, and federal department records. If your ancestor was in the post office, we also have Post office department records. [http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/public/federal\\_finding\\_aids/index.htm](http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/public/federal_finding_aids/index.htm)

For a list of finding aids for state-level records, go to [http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/public/state\\_finding\\_aids/index.htm](http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/public/state_finding_aids/index.htm)

County records will be particularly helpful to your research. Nebraska has records for almost all the counties of Nebraska, but the holdings for each county will differ. Go to this finding aid, [http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/public/county\\_finding\\_aids/index.htm](http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/public/county_finding_aids/index.htm) and click on the county of your ancestor's residence to see what we have for that location. One record set of particular interest is the marriage records, which we have on microfilm for most counties.

Municipal Records: [http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/public/municipal\\_finding\\_aids/index.htm](http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/public/municipal_finding_aids/index.htm)

### **Federal Tract Book Index**

This index is not for Germans only but helpful in identifying your Germanic ancestral land holdings. This index has all “first deeds” from the federal government to the owner. If your ancestor bought land from an individual, he or she would not appear in this index.

<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/databases/tractbooks.shtml>

Be sure to try different names, including the German form of your ancestor’s first and middle names. For instance, there are entries for William Koch and Wilhelm Koch in this database.

### **Deed Records**

The Nebraska State Historical Society Library/Archives have some early deed records for some counties. You can check the finding aid for that county to see if they have deeds available. If not, you may need to go to the courthouse to investigate their land records.

### **Maps and Plat Books**

Maps and plat books may not only show your German ancestor’s land holdings but will provide a snapshot of who his or her neighbors were. Because the first generation of settlers tended to settle in kinship and ethnic groups, you may want to check the maps for your Nebraska locality and get to know your ancestor’s neighbors, some of whom will probably be relations.

NSHS has a searchable County Atlas Name Index search. The index does not include “fuzzy” searches (which automatically look for other spellings), so be sure to try different spellings of your Germanic ancestral name. This index can be found at:

<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/databases/atlas.shtml#nameidx>

## Atlas Name Index Search Results

Search Parameters: Name=*Ruskamp*, County=, Year=

Name	County	Year	Page	Notes	Reel
RUSKAMP, HENRY	Cuming	1919	30	Directory Lincoln Pr	2
RUSKAMP, JOHN	Cuming	1919	30	Directory Lincoln Pr	2
RUSKAMP, JOSEPH	Colfax	1925	46	Atlas Index	9
RUSKAMP, L	Cuming	1908	31	T21N,R4E, Lincoln	7
RUSKAMP, LORENZ	Colfax	1917	15	T20N, R4E	2
RUSKAMP, LORENZ	Cuming	1919	30	Directory Lincoln Pr	2

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Example of a search for “Ruskamp,” a German family from Westphalia. The right-most column provides the microfilm reel you can check for a copy of the record.

### **City Directories**

Remember that many immigrants settled in towns and cities. Others would settle first in a city before going to more rural areas. The Nebraska State Archives website has a searchable city/county directory index database. You can use this to see if your ancestor’s town or city is represented among our holdings and for what years these resources are available.

<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/databases/city.shtml>

For instance, a search in this index for Hall County turns up numerous years of coverage for Grand Island, as well as a farm and village directory in 1916 & 1917 for Hallam.

### **Germans in Omaha**

In the earliest days of Germanic settlement in Omaha, the largest concentration was between South 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> streets, where there were several German merchants and meat markets. There were also several boarding houses run by Germans in this area. St. Joseph’s church was established in 1887 to serve German-speaking Catholics. Protestant Germans built a German Methodist church in 1886.<sup>2</sup>

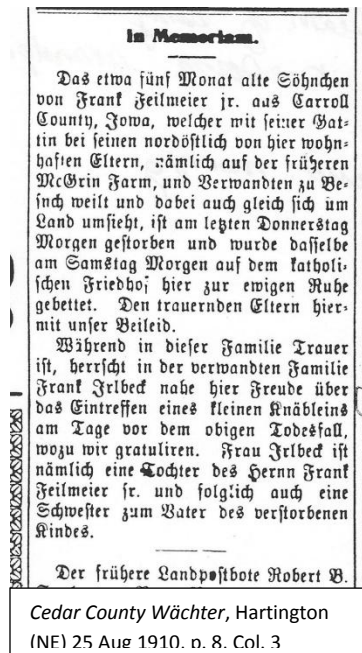
In 1890, Germans made up 23% of Omaha’s populations. By 1910, Omaha’s percentage of Germans reached 57.4%. You will want to check the city records for your German Omaha

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<sup>2</sup> Mead and Hunt. (2001) [Reconnaissance survey of portions of south central Omaha](#). City of Omaha. p 6. Retrieved 1/20/08

records as well as the Douglas County finding aid. Of particular interest to genealogists are the Douglas County Health Department records, which show births and deaths.

### Nebraska German Language Newspapers



The Society has more than 35,000 rolls of Nebraska newspapers, arranged alphabetically by town. The microfilms are arranged alphabetically by the name of the town where the newspaper was published.

The library has separate notebooks for those film numbers not in the 071 series. The German language newspapers are in the 073 series, so check these notebooks to see what might be available for your locality of interest and for what dates.

Go to <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/library/newspapr.htm> and click on the letter of the alphabet for your ancestor's hometown (or others nearby) to check what newspapers may be available for your place and time. Do not forget to check English language newspapers as well.

Location      Title

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <p>FILM<br/>073<br/>N27</p>        | <p><b>BEATRICE (Gage County, Nebraska)</b><br/><i>Beatrice Post</i><br/><i>Die Nebraska Post</i> (new title beginning Apr 1, 1897)<br/>Weekly.<br/>Reel 1:      Sept 5, 1895—May 13, 1897</p> |
| <p>Filmstrip<br/>073<br/>B38p</p>  | <p><b>BEATRICE (Gage County, Nebraska)</b><br/><i>Beatrice Presse</i><br/>Weekly.<br/>Reel 30, #10: Aug 28, 1890</p>  |
| <p>FILM<br/>071<br/>B615g</p>      | <p><b>BLOOMFIELD (Knox County, Nebraska)</b><br/><i>Die Bloomfield Germania</i><br/>Weekly.<br/>Reels 1-2:      Apr 9, 1908—May 28, 1914</p>  |
| <p>Filmstrip<br/>071<br/>B615n</p> | <p><b>BLOOMFIELD (Knox County, Nebraska)</b><br/><i>Der Nebraska Hermanns-Sohn</i><br/>Fraternal order publication<br/>Reel 34, #27: Oct 1910</p>   |
| <p>Filmstrip</p>                   | <p><b>BUTTE (Boyd County, Nebraska)</b></p>   |

- 073            *Vorwärts*  
B98g           Reel 40, #4:    Nov 3, 1899
- Stacks        **COLLEGE VIEW (Lancaster County, Nebraska)**  
286.7        *Christlicher Hausfreund*  
C46           Religious journal  
Bound volumes (2): Aug 29, 1912—Dec 20, 1917  
Moved to Brookfield, Illinois, in 1916.
- Stacks        **COLLEGE VIEW (Lancaster County, Nebraska)**  
286.7        *Zeichen der Zeit*  
Z3            Religious quarterly.  
Bound volume: 1913-1917  
Moved to Brookfield, Illinois, in 1916.
- FILM          **COLUMBUS (Platte County, Nebraska)**  
071           *Nebraska Biene*  
C72b          Weekly.  
Rolls 1-6+3A: Jan 1, 1897—June 28, 1918
- Filmstrip     **COLUMBUS (Platte County, Nebraska)**  
071           *Das Wochenblatt*  
C72b          Reel 33, #18:    Apr 22, 1892; May 13, 1892; May 20, 1892
- Filmstrip     **FREMONT (Dodge County, Nebraska)**  
073           *Nebraska Demokrat*  
N26          Reel 4, #6:      Dec 1, 1892
- FILM          **FREMONT (Dodge County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Platte River Zeitung*  
F88p          Weekly. Absorbed by the *Tägliche Omaha Tribune*, Jan 12, 1917.  
Reels 1-7:      Nov 25, 1892—Jan 11, 1917 (incomplete)
- Filmstrip     **GRAND ISLAND (Hall County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Grand Island Anzeiger*  
G76a          Weekly.  
Reel 34, #3:    Mar 7, 1890—Mar 21, 1890; Oct 3, 1890; Mar 13, 1891
- FILM          **GRAND ISLAND (Hall County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Grand Island Anzeiger*  
G76a          *Grand Island Anzeiger und Herold*  
                *Nebraska Staats-Anzeiger und Herold*  
                Weekly.  
Reels 1-15:     Sept 18, 1891—June 27, 1918

Filmstrip      **GRAND ISLAND (Hall County, Nebraska)**  
075              *Der Herold*  
G76h              Weekly. (Est. 1880) Absorbed by *Der Anzeiger*, forming the *Grand Island Anzeiger und Herold*, Apr 1893.  
Reel 34, #1:    May 25, 1883—June 1, 1883

FILM              **GRAND ISLAND (Hall County, Nebraska)**  
075              *Der Herold*  
G76h              Weekly. (Est. 1880)  
Reel 1:              Sept 16, 1886—June 16, 1892 (incomplete)

Filmstrip      **GRAND ISLAND (Hall County, Nebraska)**  
075              *Nebraska Staats-Zeitung-Tribüne*  
G76szt              Reel 15, #1:    Dec 6, 1879

Filmstrip      **GRAND ISLAND (Hall County, Nebraska)**  
075              *Nebraska Staats-Zeitung-Tribüne*  
G76szt              Reel 34, #2:    Mar 6, 1880

FILM              **HARTINGTON (Cedar County, Nebraska)**  
073              *Cedar County Wächter*  
H25w              Weekly.  
Reels 1-4:        Jan 2, 1908—Aug 22, 1918 (incomplete)

FILM              **HASTINGS (Adams County, Nebraska)**  
071              *Nebraska Volksfreund*  
H27v              Weekly.  
Reel 1:              Nov 22, 1895—Mar 3, 1899

Filmstrip      **HASTINGS (Adams County, Nebraska)**  
071              *Nebraska Volksfreund*  
H27v              Reel 9, #5:    Sept 16, 1886

Filmstrip      **HASTINGS (Adams County, Nebraska)**  
071              *Nebraska Volksfreund*  
H27v              Reel 6, #45:    Aug 29, 1889

FILM              **LINCOLN (Lancaster County, Nebraska)**  
630.5              *Deutsch-Amerikanischer Farmer*  
D48              Fortnightly, then weekly.  
Reels 1-9:        Nov 18, 1897—Nov 26, 1924



- FILM           **LINCOLN (Lancaster County, Nebraska)**  
053           *Deutscher Westen*  
D49           Literary weekly.  
Reel 1:       Dec 8, 1894—Feb 23, 1895
- FILM           **LINCOLN (Lancaster County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Lincoln Freie Presse*  
L63fp       Weekly.  
Reels 1-12:   Sept 3, 1891—Apr 14, 1925
- Stacks       **LINCOLN (Lancaster County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Lincoln Freie Presse*  
L63fk       1913 Kalender
- FILM           **LINCOLN (Lancaster County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Der Nebraska Ansiedler*  
N27a       Monthly.  
Reel 1:       June 1878—May 1880
- FILM           **LINCOLN (Lancaster County, Nebraska)**  
073           *Nebraska Staats-Anzeiger*  
N28       Weekly.  
Merged with *Grand Island Anzeiger und Herold* to form the  
*Nebraska Anzeiger und Herold*, and later the *Grand Island Herold*.  
Reels 1-5:    Nov 2, 1883—Mar 7, 1901 (incomplete)
- Note: *Der Sonntagsgast* (Aug 5, 1897), Supplement to the *Nebraska Staats-Anzeiger*: see Filmstrip Reel 5, #37.
- FILM           **NEBRASKA CITY (Otoe County, Nebraska)**  
073           *Nebraska Staats-Zeitung*  
N25       Supplement titled: *Beilage zur Nebraska Staats-Zeitung*.  
Weekly.  
Reels 1-3:    July 15, 1892—Jan 31, 1912 (incomplete)
- Filmstrip    **NORFOLK (Madison County, Nebraska)**  
071           *Norfolk Monatlicher Anzeiger*  
N76a       *Norfolk Anzeiger*  
Reel 3, #15:   Feb 15, 1887; July 29, 1892 (2 issues)
- Filmstrip    **NORFOLK (Madison County, Nebraska)**  
071           *Norfolk Anzeiger*  
N76a       Reel 28, #5:   Sept 28, 1906 (1 issue)

Filmstrip      **NORFOLK (Madison County, Nebraska)**  
071              *Die Westliche Rundschau*  
N76r              Reel 3, #16: July 1, 1916; July 14, 1916

FILM              **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075              *America-Herold*  
Om1ah              Weekly.  
Reels 1-5:      Mar 12, 1975—May 28, 1982

Filmstrip      **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075              *Central Chronik* (“ein katholisches Familienblatt”)  
Om1cc              Weekly.  
Reel 19, #19: 1897: Apr 15, Apr 29, May 13, May 20;  
                         June 10—Aug 5; Sept 2, Dec 16  
                         1898: Jan 6, Jan 13

Filmstrip      **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
071              *Der Flaneur* (an “illustrated humorous magazine”)  
Om1df              Monthly.  
Reel 31, #12: Sept 1885

FILM              **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075              *Katholisches Wochenblatt und der Landmann*  
Om1k              Weekly. Printed in Omaha, 1941-1966.  
Reels 1-10:      June 1, 1950—Jan 29, 1971

Filmstrip      **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075              *Katholisches Wochenblatt und Der Landmann*  
Om1k              Reel 24, #11: Sept 24, 1942; Oct 22, 1942

Filmstrip      **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
073              *Nebraska Banner*  
Om1nb              Weekly.  
Reel 16, #6:      June 1, 1892—June 8, 1892

Filmstrip      **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
071              *Der Nebraska Hermanns-Sohn*  
Om1gn              Fraternal order publication  
Reel 34, #25: Oct 1924

Filmstrip      **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075              *Nebraska Staats-Journal*  
Om1nj              Weekly.  
Reel 19, #17: Sept 19, 1868

- FILM           **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Nebraska Tribüne*  
Om1f          Alternate titles: *Omaha Tribüne Omaha Post-Tribüne*  
Reels 1-7:     Mar 17, 1892—Aug 25, 1926 (incomplete)
- FILM           **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Nebraska Vorwärts*  
Om1v          Daily, then weekly.  
Reel 1:         Sept 27, 1894—Sept 9, 1897 (incomplete)
- FILM           **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Omaha Tribüne*  
Om1f          Alternate titles: *Nebraska Tribüne, Omaha Post-Tribüne, Council Bluffs Freie  
Presse und Wöchentliche Omaha Tribüne.*  
Weekly.  
Reel "A":      Dec 1, 1892—July 25, 1925 (incomplete)
- Filmstrip      **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Omaha Tribüne*  
Om1vt         Reel 34, #5:    Aug 3, 1911  
See also: *Tägliche Omaha Tribüne*
- FILM           **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
073           *Sonntagspost*  
So5p          Weekly (Sunday).  
Reels 1-2:     Mar 16, 1975—Apr 1, 1979  
Reels A-G:     Jan 7, 1962—July 31, 1977
- Starting on Apr 6, 1979, the *Sonntagspost* was published with *America Herold* under the title *America Herold und Sonntagspost*.
- FILM           **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Tägliche Omaha Tribüne*  
Om1vt         Alternate titles: *Omaha Tribüne, Tägliche Volkszeitung-Tribüne, Volkszeitung  
Tribüne.*  
Daily except Sunday.  
Reels 1-87:    Oct 2, 1912—May 28, 1982 (incomplete)
- Filmstrip      **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075           *Tägliche Omaha Tribüne*  
Om1vt         Alternate titles: *Tägliche Volkszeitung-Tribüne, Volkszeitung Tribüne*  
Daily except Sunday.  
Reel 19, #7:    These issues are missing on the original FILM:  
1912:           Mar 14  
1920:           Aug 5, Sept 15  
1922:           Apr 3, Dec 30

1923: Feb 14, Oct 30, Nov 22  
1926: Nov 18  
1927: Aug 7  
1928: June 23, Aug 10  
1937: Dec 3  
1938: Feb 4

FILM **OMAHA and LINCOLN (Douglas/ Lancaster Counties, Nebraska)**  
075 *Die Welt-Post* (“Organ of the Volga Germans in America”)  
Om1wp Weekly.  
Title changed to *Die Welt Post und Der Staats-Anzeiger*, Sept 25, 1970.  
Publication moved to Canada on May 28, 1982.  
Reels 1-29: Apr 13, 1916—May 28, 1982

Filmstrip **OMAHA and LINCOLN (Douglas/ Lancaster Counties, Nebraska)**  
075 *Die Welt-Post*  
Om1wp Weekly.  
Reel 6, #12: Mar 18, 1966

Filmstrip **OMAHA (Douglas County, Nebraska)**  
075 *Westliche Presse*  
Om1f Reel 51, #13: Dec 1, 1913

FILM **SEWARD (Seward County, Nebraska)**  
071 *Nebraska Deutsche Farmer-Zeitung/ Deutsches Journal*  
Se8j Weekly.  
Reels 1-4: Jan 24, 1908—June 4, 1920 (incomplete)

Published in German until June 28, 1918; beginning on July 5, 1918, it was published only in English as the *Seward Journal*.

Filmstrip **SEWARD (Seward County, Nebraska)**  
071 *Nebraska Deutsche Farmer-Zeitung*  
Se8j Reel 22, #10: July 25, 1902

FILM **STEINAUER (Pawnee County, Nebraska)**  
071 *Steinauer Star/ Steinauer Star-Post*  
St23s Published in German and English; **NSHS has only the English version.**  
Reels 1-8: Nov 1, 1895—May 28, 1925

FILM **STERLING (Johnson County, Nebraska)**  
071 *The Sterling Sun*  
St4s Published in German and English; NSHS has only the English version.  
Reels 1-23: July 18, 1890—Oct 11, 1945

FILM           **SUTTON (Clay County, Nebraska)**  
071           *Sutton News*  
Su85n       Published in German and English; NSHS has only the English version.  
Reels 1-13:   Sept 6, 1895—Feb 28, 1936

Filmstrip      **WEST POINT (Cuming County, Nebraska)**  
071           *Lichtstrahlen*  
W5241       Reel 34, #26: May 2, 1900; Feb 18, 1903  
For philosophy and knowledge of the occult and spiritualism.

FILM           **WEST POINT (Cuming County, Nebraska)**  
071           *Nebraska Volksblatt*  
W524v       Reels 1-17:   Sept 24, 1879—Dec 29, 1916

### *Out-of-State German-Language Newspapers*

FILM           **YANKTON/ABERDEEN (South Dakota)**  
071.83       *Dakota Freie Presse*  
D14         Reels 1-3:    Apr 8, 1909—Sept 19, 1916 (incomplete)

286.7  
C46           **BROOKFIELD (Illinois /also College View, NE)**  
              *Christlicher Hausfreund*  
              *Zeichen der Zeit*  
              Seventh-Day Adventist.  
              Location NHT

### **Military Records**

Many Germans and German-Americans served in the Civil War (1861-1865), in the Nebraska Battalion or elsewhere. NSHS has a Nebraska Civil War Veteran database. Try your German ancestor's name and surname variants to see if he may have served.

<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/databases/necivilwarveterans.shtml>

Your Nebraska ancestor may have served at a prior residence before moving to Nebraska. If you have access to Ancestry.com or Fold3.com, these databases have indexes, and, in the case of Fold3, digital images of some records.

NSHS also has a searchable index of WWI Draft Cards online, which you can then find on microfilm. This index can be found at:

<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/databases/WWIdraft.shtml>

Say you are researching a German Schmidt family in Saunders County. A search for “Schmidt” in Saunders County yields 9 hits in the WWI Draft Card index. The record for Bernhard Schmidt gives his birthdate and his exact birthplace.

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## Nebraska WWI Draft Cards Index Search Results

Search Parameters: Name=*Schmidt*, Birthdate=, Birthplace=, City/County=*Saunders*

Name	Birthdate	Birthplace	City/County	Film Reel No.
SCHMIDT, BERNHARD	2/06/1888	STREHLA, GERMANY	Saunders	44
SCHMIDT, CLEMENT M	18/01/1890	TOUHY	Saunders	44
SCHMIDT, FREDERICH ADOLPH	8/05/1878		Saunders	44
SCHMIDT, HARRY AUGUST	22/05/1899		Saunders	44
SCHMIDT, HERMAN	15/11/1875		Saunders	44
SCHMIDT, HERMAN J	31/12/1887	CERESCO	Saunders	44
SCHMIDT, IVAN ARND	21/01/1884		Saunders	44
SCHMIDT, JOHN D	15/10/1885		Saunders	44
SCHMIDT, JOHN OSCAR	12/12/1881		Saunders	44

To get a copy of Bernhard Schmidt’s draft registration, you would look at Record Group (RG) 544, Roll 44. This series is arranged alphabetically by county, then by surname.

The Nebraska Historical Society also has Selective Service Records at Record Group 18; the seven rolls are arranged alphabetically by surname. These Adjutant General records often show dates of service, the names of company, rank, transfers, as well as place of birth.

Form 1 <i>1039</i> REGISTRATION CARD		No. <i>65</i>
1	Name in full <i>Bernhard Schmidt</i> <small>(Given name) (Family name)</small>	Age, in yrs. <i>29</i>
2	Home address <i>Wahoo, Nebr.</i> <small>(No.) (Street) (City) (State)</small>	
3	Date of birth <i>June 2nd 1888</i> <small>(Month) (Day) (Year)</small>	
4	Are you (1) a natural/born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien, (4) or have you declared your intention (specify which)? <i>Alien</i>	
5	Where were you born? <i>Strehla, Saxon, Germany</i> <small>(Town) (State) (Nation)</small>	
6	If not a citizen, of what country are you a citizen or subject? <i>Germany</i>	
7	What is your present trade, occupation, or office? <i>Watchmaker 29</i>	
8	By whom employed? <i>Anderson &amp; Thorsen</i> Where employed? <i>Wahoo, Nebr.</i>	
9	Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or a sister or brother under 12, solely dependent on you for support (specify which)? <i>No</i>	
10	Married or single (which)? <i>Single</i> Race (specify which)? <i>Caucasian</i>	
11	What military service have you had? Rank <i>Non-Commissioned Officer</i> ; branch years <i>2 months</i> ; Nation or State <i>German Col. Africa</i>	
12	Do you claim exemption from draft (specify grounds)? <i>Not a citizen</i>	
I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true.		
<i>1634</i> <i>Bernhard Schmidt</i> <small>(Signature or mark)</small>		
<small>If person is of African descent, tear off this corner.</small>		

Not only does this record furnish Bernhard Schmidt's birthplace, but provides additional information to enhance your family history, including that he was a non-commissioned officer in German colonial Africa, his occupation is watchmaker, and he works for Anderson and Thorsen in Wahoo. Further, Bernhard Schmidt had not yet been naturalized. Knowing this, a check of the Saunders County finding aid shows the microfilm reels to see if you can collect his naturalization record. For instance you would check, RG204 (Saunders County) Roll #2 Card Index to Naturalizations, Papian-Zuhlke to find out when Bernard was naturalized. The actual records are filmed in chronological order.

### German Prisoners of War

Germans were held at various military installations in Nebraska during WWII. Some of these men went back to the homeland, while others stayed and became Americans.

In RG 1517.AM, the Fort Robinson Reference collection has a wide variety of records, which includes records (some in German) for German prisoners of war held at that outpost. The detailed finding aid for this collection can be found at: <http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/manuscripts/organize/fortrob.pdf>

Series 4, Prisoners of War 1943-1961, has a variety of records, including correspondence, daybooks, diaries, reminiscences, certificates for completion of classes, interviews, etc. Anyone with a family member who was a prisoner of war at Fort Robinson should look at this collection.

See also RG 501, Fort Robinson, Nebraska, Roll #19 for POW Camp reports.

[http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/public/federal\\_finding\\_aids/ft\\_robinson.pdf](http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/public/federal_finding_aids/ft_robinson.pdf)

### **Family Manuscript Collections with ties to German ancestors**

The list below may not be a complete list of German material located in the manuscript collections. Staff at the archives/library will be happy to assist you with the card catalog and other inventories not available online.

- George A. Berlinghof, native of Germany, Gage and Lancaster counties
- Jacob Beutler of Sembach Germany, Nebraska City, Nebraska.
- Grasmick Family of Scotts Bluff (Germans from Russia)
- Augustus Theodore Haase collection 183501920, from Hanover, Germany
- August Hasse – letter of 1894, in German with English translation
- Ernst Herman Herminghaus
- Ketelnut-Meyer-Guse Families
- Klinker, Margarite
- Kloberdanz Family
- Koenig, William, ?-1863 Berlin; St. Louis, Omaha.
- Krebs, Karl G
- Krontz Family
- Lau Family
- Loder, John P. 1828-1908
- Overholser Family
- Rohke-Zutz Family (Hoskins, Nebraska)
- August A. Schormann 1918 photocopies of German notes, as a “Four Minute Man” Staplehurst, Nebraska
- Schwader, Maria Rickli Flueckiger
- Stolley, William 1831-1911
- Vennemann, Otto K
- Wagner, John P. or Johann Peter – 1914, York German Cong. Church pastor.
- Wuerth, John F.



## Germans from Russia

Germans from Russia Photograph Collection at RG 4427

American Volga Relief Society (AVRS) letters and documents

The original manuscript documents for the AVRS are kept at the archives at RG 4879.AM

Russia under the Bolsheviks began a campaign against German Russians called the “age of the Great Massacres,” from 1917-1921. This period was followed by a period of mass starvation. Germans from Russia who had immigrated to other countries still had family back in the old country and in 1921, George Repp of Portland, Oregon organized the Volga Relief Society. The Central States Volga Relief Society was formed in Lincoln, Nebraska and the two organizations merged in 1922.

<http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/manuscripts/organize/volga-relief.htm>

Study the finding aid for additional letters and documents : [http://www.nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/treasures/volga\\_relief.htm](http://www.nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/treasures/volga_relief.htm)

Staack, Ehmen family correspondence

<http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/manuscripts/family/staack-ehmen.pdf>

We also have many books on Germans from Russia that are too numerous to list. Use the online library catalog to identify titles of interest.

### **Books:**

The Nebraska State Historical Society Library and Archives have a wide variety of books that may assist you in your research. Below is not an exhaustive list of German titles, but examples of what you may find in the library catalog.

- Arends, Shirley Fischer, *The central Dakota Germans: their history, language, and culture* 978.3 A681c
- *Germans in the New World, Chapter 2, The German-American Alliance in Nebraska 1910-17*
- Brunner Edmund de S. *Immigrant Farmers and Their Children* (1929), sociological study 978.3 A681c
- Faust, Albert Bernhardt, *The German Element in the United States:* 978.3 A681c
- Furer, Howard B. *the Germans in America 1607-1970, a chronology & fact book*, (Dobbs Ferry, N. Y., Oceana Publ. c1973. 325.243 G373i
- Luebke, Frederick C. *Immigrants and Politics: The Germans of Nebraska 1880-1900* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1969), Chaps. 2 and 3. 325.243 L96i
- Riemer, Shirley J. *The German Research Companion*, 325.243 L96

- Luebke, Frederick C., German immigrants and churches in Nebraska 1889-1915, 325.243 L96
- The Württemberg Emigration Index by Schenk (For earlier immigrants) 929.43 S324w

**Genealogies** (*not a comprehensive list*) Search with your surname as well as with keywords *German American*, with and without the hyphen. A search for *German genealogy* brings up over 100 hits. Arranged by Author, Title and NSHS Call Number:

- Junkin, William Sumner, *Excerpts of the Henckel Genealogy* 325.243 L96
- Goff, Lois B., *Ancestry and descendants of Andreas and Maria Elisabeth (Waldschmidt) Sauer: immigrants in 1850* 929 S355a
- Foster, Karen, *From Hanover to Nebraska*, Hamme Fooken Mueller 929 M958f
- Petersen, Helen Wenzel, et al., *The Wenzel Family from Germany to Nebraska, Cass and Lancaster counties and their Frohlich and Griffin Connections* 929 W482f
- Sand, Paul Frederick, *Family History of Joseph Anton Sand: A Nebraska Pioneer, immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1838 (Otoe County, Nebr.)* 929 S213h
- Hellerich, Janice May, *Johann Gottfried Schnitter : coming to America on the ship SS Werra, came November 11, 1883, (Raymond, Nebr.)* 929 S361j
- Hellerich, Janice May, *The Hellerich's (six) coming from Korb, Germany (Lancaster County, Neb).*
- Bose, H. Maxine & Andrew Bose, *Konrad Boese-Bose Family 1806-1984*, 929 L772l
- Lovell, Evelyn Lissman, *The Lissman family's long journey: Germany to Russia 1766, Russia to America, 1900-1913*, (E. L. Lovell 2000). 929 L772l
- Jira, Helen, *Schaeffer genealogy* (Newton Ks, Mennonite Press). 929 L772l
- Ziegler, Marvin E., *The Stricker-Ziegler families from 1849-to 1990* 929 L772l

Be aware that if you are old Pennsylvania German, there are many more titles for these earlier arrivals.