

## Some Common Genealogy Myths and Beliefs

“Grandma said ...” Family stories are not always accurate. Sometimes family change the facts, don't remember details accurately, or are confused. However, elements of the stories could be at least partially factual. Keep an open mind as you explore the facts.

“Our name was changed at Ellis Island.” Passenger lists were compiled at the point of departure (in Europe and elsewhere). There is no evidence of names being changed by immigration officials. However, many families DID change their name by spelling and sometimes selecting an entirely different name. There was a desire to Anglicize names to “fit in.”

“My ancestor was a stowaway.” Probably not. If found, they would have been sent back to the original county.

“My ancestor was a Cherokee princess.” Not likely. Native Americans did not have royalty as such. You may have Native American ancestry but this needs to be researched and proven. “High cheeks bones” is not proof.

“We are related to Royalty.” Probably true, at least at some level. European royalty had many descendants and you could be one of them.

“The courthouse burned and all the records were lost.” Many records have been destroyed through the years but often other sources are available to establish records.

## Suggestions for Filling Out Genealogy Forms

Don't skip generations.

Start with yourself and record what you know.

Women are listed with their birth (not married) surname.

Do not use all number to records dates: Does 8/5/15 indicate August 5 1815? 1915? 2015?

Could it also mean May 8<sup>th</sup> of whatever year? (Some countries place the date before the month.)

Record the source of your facts.



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