

Immigrant Cultures and Communities

Documents seen here chart the immigrant experience in the United States from the late 1700s to the late 1900s. Immigrants preserved aspects of their inherited cultures, such as religious practices, foodways, and celebrations, while adapting to their new home. New institutions, including the ethnic press and benevolent organizations, protected both cultural traditions and ensured the material survival of immigrant groups.

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP) acquired many of these documents when it merged with the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies in 2002. To learn more about the Balch and how the merger enriched HSP's collections, see Dominique Daniel's article, "Interpreting American Ethnic Experiences: The Development of the Balch Library Collections," in the October 2016 *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*. Other articles cited here also appear in this issue, which is dedicated to immigration and ethnicity in Pennsylvania history.
