

#### Schedule



#	TIME (ET)	Session Title	Presenter(s)
	10 a.m.	Welcoming Remarks	<b>David S. Ferriero</b> Archivist of the United States of America
1	10:05 a.m.	Exploring History Hub for Genealogists and Researchers	Rebecca L. Collier Archivist at the National Archives at College Park and Coordinator for History Hub Darren Cole Digital Engagement Specialist at the National Archives in Washington, DC Kelly Osborn Community Manager and Web Developer at the National Archives at College Park
2	11 a.m.	Preserving Personal Collections	<b>Sara Holmes</b> Management and Program Analyst at the National Archives in St. Louis
3	12 p.m.	Immigrant Records: More Than Just Ship Passenger Arrival Lists	Elizabeth Burnes Archivist at the National Archives at Kansas City and NARA's Subject Matter Expert on Immigration Records
4	1 p.m.	Using National Archives Records to Research World War I Naval and Marine Corps Records for Genealogical Research	<b>Nathaniel Patch</b> Archivist at the National Archives at College Park and NARA's Subject Matter Expert on U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard Records
5	2 p.m.	Discovering and Researching Bureau of Indian Affairs School Records	<b>Cody White</b> Archivist at the National Archives at Denver and NARA's Subject Matter Expert on Native American Records
6	3 p.m.	The Homestead Act: Land Records of Your Ancestors	<b>James Muhn</b> Researcher, Writer, and Lecturer on Federal Land Policy
	4 p.m.	Closing Remarks	<b>Ann Cummings</b> Executive for Research Services



#### Immigrant Records: More Than Just Ship Passenger Arrival Lists



#### Elizabeth Burnes

Audience Skill Level: Beginner & Experienced

The breadth of immigration records available online and in archives can seem overwhelming. This session will identify what original records you can find at the National Archives and what you can discover online. Records discussed will range from passport applications, naturalization documents, passenger arrival lists, and more! Attendees will discover how immigration laws have changed over time and how the records that exist have been impacted by those laws; understand the different types of records available through the National Archives; and learn how to get started with research.



#### **Presenter Biography**





Elizabeth Burnes

**Elizabeth Burnes** is an Archivist for the National Archives at Kansas City who serves as NARA's Subject Matter Expert for Immigrant Records and is the lead archivist for Alien Files (A-Files) reference. Prior to joining the National Archives staff she held positions at Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Missouri History Museum, Herman T. Pott National Inland Waterways Library, and Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum. She received a Bachelor's degree in History at Truman State University, and a Master's degree in History and Museum Studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.



Research Services

#### NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

# Immigrant Records

More Than Just Ship Passenger Arrival Lists

OCTOBER 23, 2019



### Objectives

- Understand how immigration laws have changed over time and how the records that exist have been impacted by those laws
  - Understand the different types of records available through the National Archives
    - Learn how to get started with your research



# **Immigration Laws**



### Immigration Law 1789–1819

- Customs Bureau oversaw ports starting in 1789
- Records pre-1819 vary because they were not maintained by one single entity
- Two exceptions of note:
  - 1) Arrivals at New Orleans, LA, 1813–1819 (M2009, online at Ancestry.com)
  - 2) Arrivals at Philadelphia, PA, 1800–1819 (M425, online at Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org)



# Steerage Act of 1819

- Until January 1, 1820, the US Government <u>did not require</u> captains or masters of vessels to present a **passenger list** to US officials
- Act was designed to protect passengers arriving from foreign ports against overcrowding and inadequate provisions
  - 1) Required master of ship to provide a manifest of passengers boarded at foreign port
  - 2) Required each vessel entering the US to carry a specific quantity of provisions for each passenger
  - 3) Each passenger was entitled by law to \$3/day compensation if supplies proved deficient



### Immigration Act of 1891

- Created the Office of the Superintendent of Immigration, who oversaw US Immigrant Inspectors stationed at principal ports of entry
- Barred polygamists, persons convicted of crimes of moral turpitude, and those suffering from "loathsome or contagious diseases" (provided for medical examinations)
- Required information about immigrants entering the US overland from Canada and Mexico
- \*\*NOTE: Approximately 40% of the foreign passengers arriving in Canada were bound for the US



### Immigration Acts of 1921 and 1924

- Imposed national-origins quota
- State Department issued a limited number of visas each year
- Only immigrants who had obtained valid visas were permitted entry





An Act of May 26, 1924, Public Law 68-139, 43 STAT 153, to Limit Immigration of Aliens into the United States for Other Purposes, 05/26/1924 NAID 5752154



# **Immigration Stats**

1821-30	143,439					
		98,797	30	11,564	16	33,032
1831-40	599,125	495,681	53	33,424	54	69,911
Carlo		1,597,442	141	62,469	55	53,144
	1,713,251	and the second second second		74,720	210	29,169
	2,598,214	2,452,577	41,538	20100-000 0000		
	2,314,824	2,065,141	64,759	166,607	312	18,005
	2,812,191	2,271,925	124,160	404,044	358	11,704
1881-90	5,246,613	4,735,484	69,942	426,967	857	13,363
1891-00	3,687,564	3,555,352	74,862	38,972	350	18,028
1901-10	3,795,386	8,056,040	323,543	361,888	7,368	46,547
1911-20	5,735,811	4,321,887	247,236	1,143,671	8,443	14,574
1921-30	1,107,209	2,463,194	112,059	1,516,716	6,286	8,954
1931-40	528,431	347,566	16,595	160,037	1,750	2,483
	1,035,039	621,147	37,028	354,804	7,367	14,693
	2,515,479	1,325,727	153,249	996,944	14,092	25,467
	3,321,677	1,123,492	427,642	1,716,374	28,954	25,215
	4,493,314	800,368	1,588,178	1,982,735	80,779	41,254
	7,338,062	761,550	2,738,157	3,615,225	176,893	46,237
	5,230,313	760,106	1,582,764	2,706,615	151,101	29,727
	62,215,942	37,853,476	7,601,938	15,773,776	485,245	501,507

1821–1995 US immigration trends by continent

FAIR, 5/96.



# Immigrant Records



### Passenger Arrival Lists

- Forms change over time
- Instructions to the collector can be found amongst the records
   \*\*NOTE: These can be a valuable tool for understanding notations made by the collector
- Many lists have been digitized and are available online at Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org

For more info: <a href="https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/overview">https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/overview</a>



Passenger Lists can record:			
Name	Height	Name and address of closest living relative in US	
Age	Complexion	If ever in US prior (when, where, how long)	
Sex	Color of hair	Whether in possession of a train ticket to final destination	
Occupation	Color of eyes	Who paid passage	
Able to read & write	Place of birth	Amount of money the passenger was carrying	
Identifying marks	State of health	Whether the passenger had ever been in prison, almshouse, or institution for the insane, or was a polygamist	
Nationality			



### Passenger List Research Tips

- TIP: Read passenger lists from back to front (last page to first page)
- TIP: Port names are often misremembered as the name of the ship (Example: SS Bremen, Hamburg, or Rotterdam)
- TIP: If you aren't sure what name an individual used, check "last residence" and "destination" columns to narrow options
- TIP: If an immigrant was rejected and returned from Ellis Island, check to see if they arrived approximately two weeks later at Philadelphia, Baltimore, or via a Canadian border crossing



# Passenger List Research Tips (cont)

TIP: Remember name variations are common
 Example: Scandinavians often traveled under the father's given or middle name, or under the city/village where born

Try Interchanging Letters			
a-o-u	d-nt	g-h (Russian)	k-c
b-p	e-i	h-ch	m-n
b-v-mp (Greek)	f-v	i-j-y	V-W
c-k	g-i-y	i-oi	s-cs-z-tx-tz



#### Common Misconceptions/Errors

- All passenger list records survive and are available for online research
- There is a list for every ship that arrived at a US port and all passengers were listed
- Passengers participated in the creation of the lists
- The lists were created at Ellis Island (or the port of entry)
- Assumptions about name of ship and/or port of entry/departure
- "This record is not my immigrant because the [name, age, nationality, destination, etc] is wrong"

More on misconceptions: <a href="http://www.avotaynuonline.com/2009/04/just-how-were-passenger-manifests-created-by-sallyann-amdur-sack-pikus-editor/">http://www.avotaynuonline.com/2009/04/just-how-were-passenger-manifests-created-by-sallyann-amdur-sack-pikus-editor/</a>



#### Vessel Crew Lists

- Ship lists can include accompanying lists of crewmen, both American and foreign-born, who
  worked on the vessels
- Lists exist because of an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century law that required masters of American vessels leaving US ports on foreign voyages, or arriving at US ports from abroad, to file crew lists with the customs agent at their port of entry
- \*\*NOTE: Foreign vessels were initially exempt from the law, but the Immigration Act of 1917 required specific documentation about all alien seamen on vessels entering the US
- Many lists have been digitized and are available on Ancestry.com or FamilySearch.org



### Vessel Crew Lists (cont)

Crew Lists can record:		
Name	Ethnicity or nationality	
Age	Birth date	
Gender	Port of departure	
Last Residence	Port and date of arrival	
Birthplace	Name of vessel	



# Ship Photos

Information for each ship can include:

- 1) Line sailed under and builder
- 2) Ship type and description including: tonnage, dimensions, and number of masts and funnels
- 1) Ship history and years in service

Many ship photos have been digitized and can be found an Ancestry.com or through a Google search on the vessel name



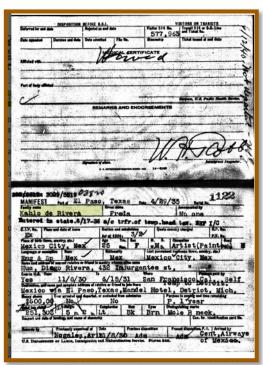


### **Border Crossing Records**

- Steamship lines and rail companies agreed to treat all passengers destined to the US as if they
  would be landing at a US port of entry
- At land border ports, inspectors prepared manifest lists
   \*\*NOTE: Prior to 10/1906 this excluded native-born Canadians
- Only those passengers who declared a US destination will be listed in the records of arrivals
- Many are digitized on Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org

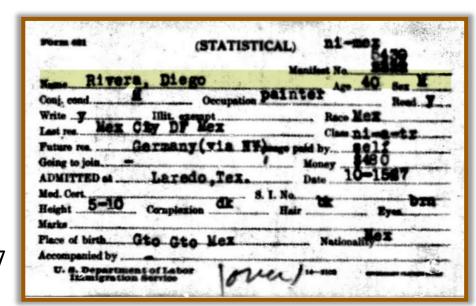


# Border Crossing Records: Mexico to US



Left: Frida Kahlo (de Rivera) Border Crossings from Mexico to US, 1903–1907

> Right: Diego Rivera Border Crossings from Mexico to US, 1903–1907



For more info:

https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/border-mexico



# Border Crossing Records: Canada to US

- Records are often found in "Manifests of Passengers Arriving at St. Albans, VT, District through Canadian Pacific and Atlantic Ports, 1895–1954" (M1464)
   \*\*NOTE: Ports reflected in these records include locations in Idaho, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, New York, North Dakota, Vermont, and Washington
- The records tend to be recorded on forms with fields similar to ship passenger arrival lists

#### For more info:

https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2000/fall/us-canada-immigration-records-1.html



#### Passport Applications, 1795–1925

• Early passports were generally valid for two years, so researchers should search dates covering the individual's entire lifetime because the same person may have multiple applications

Passport Applications can record:		
Name	Birthplace	
Age	Birth date	
Residence	Date of application or issuance of passport	
Wife's name	Information about father and/or husband	
Years of residence in US	Date and place of immigration to the US	



### Passport Applications, 1795–1925

- As a general rule, until 1941, US citizens were <u>not</u> required to have a passport for travel abroad \*\*Two exceptions: passports were required from 8/19/1861-3/17/1862 during the Civil War, and again from 3/22/1918-1921 during World War I (WWI)
- As a general rule, the US government only issued passports to <u>US citizens</u>
  \*\*Two exceptions: aliens who had declared their intent to become a naturalized citizen could obtain a passport under the act of Congress of 3/3/1863, which was repealed 3/30/1866, and again under the act of Congress of 3/2/1907, which was repealed 6/4/1920



#### Passport Applications, 1795–1925

- Digital copies are available online at Ancestry.com and Fold3.com (thru 1905)
- Original records: National Archives at College Park, MD, <u>archives2reference@nara.gov</u>
- April 1925—Present records: US State Department
   <a href="https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/after/passport-records.html">https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/after/passport-records.html</a>

For more info: <a href="https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/passports">https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/passports</a>



#### Visa Applications, 1914–1940

- Except for a brief time during the Civil War, before WWI alien visitors were not required to have visas in order to enter the US
- The practice of requiring all aliens to obtain visas from US officials abroad before departure for the US began in 1917 as a war measure during WWI and has continued since then
- With the exception of precedent cases and files that contain policy material, individual case files for 1914–1932 were destroyed by the Department of State\*

Original records: National Archives at College Park, MD, <u>archives2reference@nara.gov</u>
For more info: <a href="https://www.archives.gov/research/foreign-policy/state-dept/genealogy">https://www.archives.gov/research/foreign-policy/state-dept/genealogy</a>



### Brief Naturalization History

- Beginning with the Naturalization Act of 1906, Federal courts were responsible for naturalization procedures, uniform rules were enacted, and forms were standardized
- Locate records from Federal courts: <a href="https://www.archives.gov/research/court-records">https://www.archives.gov/research/court-records</a>

#### Progression of Immigration/Naturalization-specific agencies:

- Bureau of Immigration *and* Bureau of Naturalization 1906–1933
- Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) 1933–2003
- Department of Homeland Security: US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS); US
   Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE); and US Customs and Border Protection (CBP)



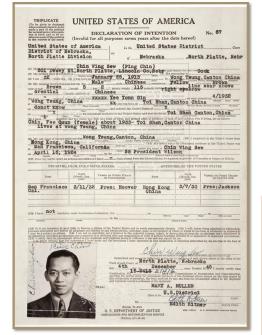
#### Naturalization Records

Declaration of Intention (AKA "First Papers")

- Declares an individual's intention to file a formal petition to become a citizen
- Following the 1906 Act, aliens had to receive a Certificate of Arrival that verified his/her legal immigration

#### For more info:

https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/naturalization



Declaration of Intention for Chin Wing Sew, dated 12/4/1945 NAID 595881

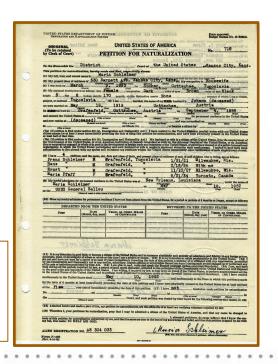


#### Naturalization Records (cont)

Petition for Naturalization (AKA "Final Papers" or "Second Papers")

- Final step toward becoming a citizen
- Filed a minimum of 2 years after the Declaration of Intention
- Immigrants petitioned before a judge and were either granted or denied citizenship

Naturalization Record for Marie Schleimer, dated 6/19/1957 NAID 76019806



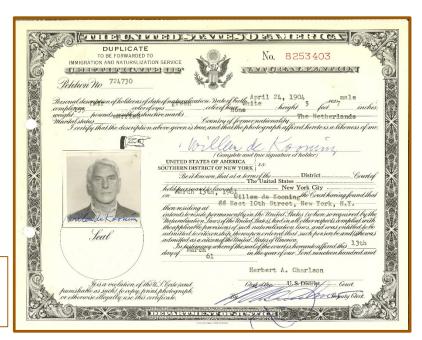


#### Naturalization Records (cont)

#### Certificate of Citizenship

- Issued by the court until October 1991 when INS took over responsibility for naturalization proceedings
- Given to the new citizen as proof of citizenship
- Used to prove eligibility to vote, apply for a US passport, to prove eligibility for other rights of citizenship
- Normally <u>NOT</u> available through the National Archives

Certificate of Naturalization from Alien Case File for Willem de Kooning <u>NAID 5330790</u>





#### Naturalization Records (cont)

- No central index exists
- Records from county or state courts are often at state archives or county historical societies\*
- Records dated prior to October 1991 from the Federal courts are at the National Archives\*\*
- Records dated October 1991 and after from INS are with USCIS

Basic information needed for a successful request with the National Archives:

- Name of individual (Variant names? Variant spellings?)
- Approximate date of naturalization
- Where the individual was living at the time of naturalization (city/county/state)
- Country of origin



#### Alien Files (A-Files)

- INS began issuing each alien an Alien Registration Number 1940, and on April 1, 1944, began using this number to individual case files
- A-Files were originally created to house all records of any case of an alien not yet naturalized as they passed through the US immigration and inspection process. Ultimately, the files can reflect the interactions of an immigrant with the Federal government throughout their time in the US



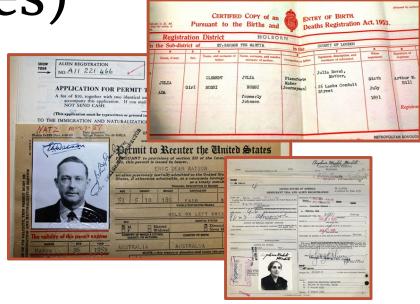
A-File Folders

For more info: <a href="https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/aliens">https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/aliens</a>



Alien Files (A-Files)

- Files hold a wealth of data including visas, photographs, affidavits, correspondence, and more
- Documents and information included may be much older than 1944 and could date to the birth of the person
- Files can include documents that date up to the time of any final action related to the alien, which could be death, deportation, permanent resident status, or citizenship



Sample A-File Documents

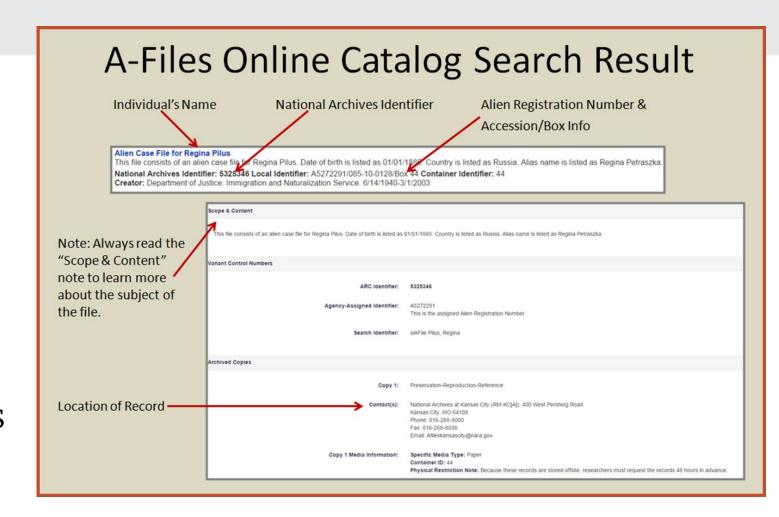


All A-Files currently maintained by the National Archives are indexed in our Online Catalog:

https://catalog.nara.gov

#### Original records:

- National Archives at Kansas City <u>afiles.kansascity@nara.gov</u>
- National Archives at San Francisco <u>sanbruno.archives@nara.gov</u>
- \*\*SF has *some* of the A-Files from INS district offices in San Francisco, Honolulu, Reno, and Guam





# Immigrant Records Clues



#### Where to Find Clues

Federal Records: Census; Naturalization; Military Service

Family Records: Naturalization Certificates; Bibles/Church Records; Newspapers;

Obituaries/Gravesites; Vital Records



Photographs from immigrant records:

NAID 286245 NAID 536456 NAID 286238



#### Clues in Census Records

• Check the "Citizenship" column on census forms starting in 1900 for clues to immigration date and citizenship status

Naturalization Codes Used on Census (1900–1930)

- NA Naturalized
- PA Papers Filed
- AL Alien

#### 1940 Census

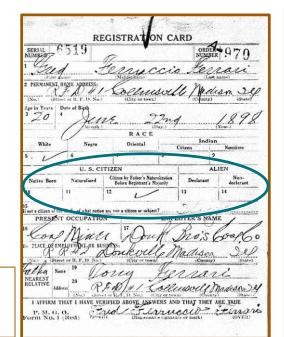
AmCit – American Citizen

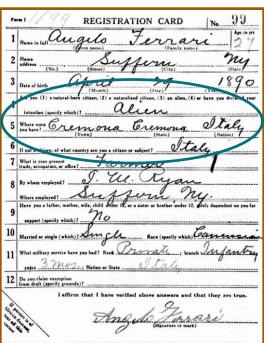


#### Clues in WWI Draft Cards

- Cards have been digitized and are available on Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org
- Original records:
  National Archives at Atlanta
  <a href="mailto:atlanta.archives@nara.gov">atlanta.archives@nara.gov</a>

Registration Cards for Fred and Angelo Ferrari







## NARA's Digitization Partners

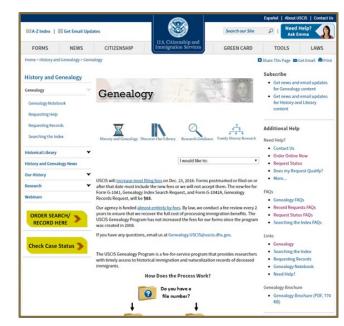




# US Citizenship and Immigration Services

(USCIS)

- Website: <u>www.uscis.gov/genealogy</u>
- Benefit: Locate copies of immigration and naturalization file types (post-1906) that have not yet been transferred to the National Archives for permanent retention!





# Questions?



### Thank you for attending!



Please stay tuned for the next session.

If we did not get to your question, you may submit it to inquire@nara.gov

Video recording and handouts will remain available at www.archives.gov/calendar/genealogy-fair



#### Feedback



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