



OFFICE *of* GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

June 19, 2015 — Sent via email

[REDACTED]

Re: Case No.: 201500648
NG: CM

NATIONAL
ARCHIVES
and RECORDS
ADMINISTRATION

8601 ADELPHI ROAD
OGIS
COLLEGE PARK, MD
20740-6001

web: www.ogis.archives.gov
e-mail: ogis@nara.gov
phone: 202-741-5770
toll-free: 1-877-684-6448
fax: 202-741-5769

Dear [REDACTED]:

This responds to your April 16, 2015 request for assistance from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), which we received via email. Your request for assistance pertains to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for records about your grandfather, [REDACTED].

Congress created OGIS to complement existing FOIA practice and procedure; we strive to work in conjunction with the existing request and appeal process. The goal is for OGIS to allow, whenever practical, the requester to exhaust his or her remedies within the agency, including the appeal process. OGIS has no investigatory or enforcement power, nor can we compel an agency to release documents. OGIS serves as the Federal FOIA Ombudsman and our jurisdiction is limited to assisting with the FOIA process.

I understand that you seek information that would indicate whether [REDACTED] became a citizen of the United States. You made a request to USCIS for [REDACTED] records, and USCIS released two pages to you in part. In your submission to OGIS, you reiterate your interest in learning [REDACTED] citizenship status, and you express incredulity that USCIS believes it was justified in withholding information from [REDACTED] records.

We contacted USCIS to discuss your request and the agency's response. According to USCIS, the withheld sections of the records released to you do not relate to [REDACTED] citizenship status; rather, USCIS withheld addresses of [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], citing FOIA Exemption 6, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6). This exemption protects information about third parties that happens to be located in government records. Courts have found that individuals have privacy interests in their names, addresses, date of birth, place of birth, and employment history, among other personal information, and that the those privacy interest in protecting the information outweighs the public interest in the release of the information.

Regarding your search for information about [REDACTED] citizenship status, USCIS informed OGIS that there is no evidence anywhere in its file that shows [REDACTED] ever applied for U.S. citizenship. According to the agency, [REDACTED] did file an Alien Registration Form on [REDACTED] (a date that you referenced in your records request), however, such a form is not an application for citizenship.



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While USCIS informed OGIS that its records show no indication that [REDACTED] applied for U.S. citizenship, I understand that you believe that [REDACTED] did. If [REDACTED] did apply for U.S. citizenship and did so in New York City, it is possible that the Queens County Clerk's Office may have a record of [REDACTED] participation in a naturalization ceremony (the office keeps records of naturalizations from 1906 through 1941). You may contact the office at:

Queens County Clerk's Office
88-11 Sutphin Blvd., Room 106
Jamaica N.Y. 11435

I hope you find this information useful in understanding why USCIS responded to your request as it did. Although we cannot assist you further with this matter, we wish you the best of luck in your research. We will close your case.

Sincerely,

/s/

Nikki Gramian, Acting Director
Office of Government Information Services (OGIS)

cc: Mark Porter, USCIS