



National Archives and Records Administration

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Immigration into the District of Columbia: The Ports of Alexandria (1820–1865) and Georgetown (1820–1821)

Although most immigrants to the District of Columbia arrived at other ports and traveled overland to the capital, Alexandria and Georgetown had small ports accessible via the Potomac River. Georgetown has always been a part of the District of Columbia; Alexandria remained within the District of Columbia until 1846, when the Federal Government retroceded the territory to Virginia.

Note: The dates in this report are general ones. There are not lists for every month, but there are indexes and other finding aids to help determine if there are lists for specific dates.

Index

___M334, *A Supplemental Index to Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at Atlantic and Gulf Coast Ports (Excluding New York), 1820–1874*. 188 rolls. This microfilmed index is arranged alphabetically by passenger's surname. It provides the name of the port at which the passenger arrived and the date of arrival. This index was created as a Work Projects Administration (WPA) project and is an incomplete index to the lists reproduced on M575, below.

Passenger Lists

An act of March 2, 1819 (3 Stat. 489), required masters and captains of vessels arriving at U.S. ports to submit a list of passengers to the collector of the district beginning January 1, 1820. The collectors were to submit quarterly returns to the Department of State, including the passenger lists. For each passenger, the lists include the following information: name, age, sex, occupation, county of which the passenger was a citizen, and country of intended residence.

___M575, *Copies of Lists of Passengers Arriving at Miscellaneous Ports on the Atlantic and Gulf Coast and at Ports on the Great Lakes, 1820–1873*. 16 rolls. The abstracts and lists are arranged alphabetically by port and then chronologically. They contain the vessel name, the port of embarkation, name of the master, and date of arrival. Abstracts usually only contain the quarter in which the vessel arrived instead of the exact date. The following rolls may have relevant information, although lists may be incomplete: **roll 1**, Alexandria (1820–1865), and **roll 4**, Georgetown (1820–1821).

Transcripts of Passenger Lists

The Department of State prepared transcripts from the abstracts and lists that the collectors of customs sent them in accordance with the act of March 2, 1819 (3 Stat. 489). The transcripts contain the name of the district or port, and vessel name. For each passenger, the lists include the following information: name, age, sex, occupation, country of which the passenger was a citizen, country of intended residence, and a note if the passenger died en route.

___T1219, *State Department Transcripts of Passenger Lists, ca. October 1819–ca. December 1832*. 2 rolls. The records are arranged chronologically by quarter of arrival (quarters ended March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31), then by district or port of arrival, then by name of vessel, then

by name of passenger. The districts and ports of arrival are randomly arranged. The bulk of the records cover the years 1819–1827; there are no transcripts for October 1831 through September 1832. The transcripts contain information pertaining to passengers arriving at Alexandria (1820–1831) and Georgetown (1820), although lists do not exist for every month. The first roll of the publication includes a series of index cards arranged by port. Each card gives the months for which there are passenger lists.

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