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PAMPHLET ACCOMPANYING MICROCOPY NO. 272

Quarterly Abstracts
of Passenger Lists
of Vessels
Arriving at New Orleans
1820-1875



NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
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The records reproduced in the microfilm publication

are from

Record Group 36

Records of the Bureau of Customs

in the National Archives

QUARTERLY ABSTRACTS OF PASSENGER LISTS
OF VESSELS ARRIVING AT NEW ORLEANS
1820-1875

On the 17 rolls of this microfilm publication are reproduced unbound and bound quarterly abstracts of passenger lists of vessels arriving at the port of New Orleans from foreign ports, January 1820-July 1875. The unbound abstracts were received in the National Archives from the Immigration and Naturalization Service; the bound copies were received from the New Orleans customhouse.

The records consist of copies of passenger lists in the form of unbound quarterly abstracts, 1820-44 and some later years, and a series of bound copies of abstracts of passenger lists for the period 1845-75. There are gaps in both series; however, some unbound abstracts for 1845-50 were inserted as substitutes for missing documents in the bound series.

The abstracts are arranged chronologically by arrival date of vessel and contain the names of the vessels, their dates of arrival, the port of embarkation, and usually the information required on the passenger lists. The abstracts, and the passenger lists of vessels arriving at New Orleans, 1820-1902 (Microcopy 259), are the only known Federal records of immigration through the port of New Orleans up to January 1903, with some exceptions noted later in the descriptions under record groups.

An act of March 2, 1819 (3 Stat. 489), provided that effective January 1, 1820, the captain or master of a vessel arriving at a port in the United States or in any of its territories from a foreign country was to submit a list of the passengers to the collector of the district in which the vessel had arrived. The act also provided that every collector of customs submit quarterly reports, consisting of copies of passenger lists, to the Secretary of State, who was required to submit such information at each session of Congress. The information was later published in the form of Congressional documents. An act of May 7, 1874 (18 Stat. 42), repealed the provisions of the legislation requiring collectors to send copies of passenger lists to the Secretary of State. Thereafter, collectors of customs were to send statistical reports only on passenger arrivals to the Department of the Treasury. The New Orleans customhouse apparently prepared no bound abstracts after June 30, 1875.

The lists normally give information about each passenger as to name, age, sex, occupation, the country to which he belonged, and the country of which he intended to become an inhabitant, and notations as to the number and cause of deaths on board. The law required that the list be sworn to by the master in the presence of the collector or his deputy.

In the National Archives are three alphabetical card indexes to the names on the passenger lists of vessels arriving at New Orleans. The indexes were prepared under the sponsorship of the Immigration and Naturalization Service by the Work Projects Administration between 1935 and 1937. These finding aids consist of an incomplete supplemental card index to passenger lists of vessels arriving at Atlantic and Gulf coast ports, 1820-74, including New Orleans up to 1850 (Microcopy 334), and two other card indexes, 1853-99, and 1900-1902 and January 1903.

The records reproduced on this microcopy and the indexes are part of Record Group 36, Records of the Bureau of Customs, in the National Archives.

In the same record group are journals of and alphabetical indexes to vessel entrances, and quarterly abstracts of tonnage duties paid at New Orleans, 1820-75 (with gaps), which also serve as finding aids to names of vessels and dates of arrival during the period included in this microcopy; and unbound passenger lists of vessels arriving at New Orleans, 1820-1902 (Microcopy 259).

Also in this record group is a series of eight bound volumes of quarterly transcripts of lists of names of passengers arriving at most Atlantic and Gulf coast ports, September 1819-December 1832, which includes names of passengers arriving at New Orleans from January 1820 through June 1827. For the year 1820 New Orleans arrivals are listed under the District of Mississippi. The volumes apparently were prepared in the Office of the Secretary of State from copies of lists or from the quarterly abstracts submitted by the collector of customs. Originally there were nine volumes, but volume 2 is missing.

Related records in Record Group 56, General Records of the Department of the Treasury, include letters received by the Secretary of the Treasury from the New Orleans collector of customs, 1833-69 (part of Microcopy 174); copies of correspondence of the Secretary with the New Orleans collector, 1803-33 (part of Microcopy 178); and copies of letters sent by the Secretary to the New Orleans collector, 1833-47 (part of Microcopy 175); and others for the period 1847-1909. In the same record group are correspondence registers and indexes that include entries for letters to Federal immigration authorities at New Orleans.

In Record Group 85, Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, is correspondence that contains some information relating to immigration through the port of New Orleans, 1882-1903. In the same record group are copies of passenger manifests from 1903 through 1945 that were submitted to Federal immigration authorities at New Orleans in compliance with legislation enacted in 1882 and later (Microcopy T-905). Manifests less than 50 years old are not available for reference purposes.

In the National Archives Library are five volumes prepared by the Work Projects Administration of Louisiana titled "Passenger Lists Taken From Manifests of the Customs Service, Port of New Orleans." These volumes, numbered 1-4 and 6, contain type-written lists for the years 1813-67. The lists seem to have been copied from cargo manifests and passenger lists now in the National Archives. The alphabetical index in each volume serves as a finding aid, although incomplete, to original passenger lists and abstracts in the National Archives.

Related published sources of information are reports of passenger arrivals submitted by the Secretary of State to Congress, 1820-70. His reports, published as Congressional documents, indicate by port of arrival the number of passengers, nationality, and occupation, and sometimes age and sex. Only those for 1820 report the names of passengers and include New Orleans arrivals under the District of Mississippi. Some of the reports are based on calendar years, but others are for report years ending September 30.

Comparable statements or reports, prepared and published by the Treasury Department, Bureau of Statistics, begin in 1867 and extend through Fiscal Year 1894. The statements for 1867-69 are included in the Annual Report of the Treasury Department for Fiscal Year 1869. The reports, also published as Congressional documents, indicate by district of arrival summary statistics on age, sex, nationality, and occupation of passengers. The details in the later reports are usually more complete.

Statistics on immigration from 1820 to 1910 have been published in volume 3 of the Reports of the Immigration Commission (S. Doc. 756, 61st Cong., 3d sess., Serial No. 5878, Washington, 1911).

The records reproduced in this microcopy were prepared for filming by Joyce D. Ciarrocchi, who also wrote these introductory remarks and provided the other editorial material.

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3	Oct. 6, 1845-Dec. 31, 1846	7
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5	Jan. 3, 1848-Mar. 31, 1849	8
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