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PERMANENT AND STATISTICAL MANIFESTS OF ALIEN ARRIVALS AT EAGLE PASS,
TEXAS, JUNE 1905-JUNE 1953

Introduction

On the 30 rolls of this microfilm publication, M1755, are reproduced manifests of permanent and statistical arrivals at the Port of Eagle Pass, TX, June 1905-June 1953. These records are part of the Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Record Group (RG) 85.

Background

Early records relating to immigration originated in regional customhouses. The U.S. Customs Service conducted its business by designating collection districts. Each district had a headquarters port with a customhouse and a collector of customs, the chief officer of the district. An act of March 2, 1819 (3 Stat. 489) required the captain or master of a vessel arriving at a port in the United States or any of its territories from a foreign country to submit a list of passengers to the collector of customs. The act also required that the collector submit a quarterly report or abstract, consisting of copies of these passenger lists, to the Secretary of State, who was required to submit such information at each session of Congress. After 1874 collectors forwarded only statistical reports to the Treasury Department. The lists themselves were retained by the collector of customs. Customs records were maintained primarily for statistical purposes.

On August 3, 1882, Congress passed the first Federal law regulating immigration (22 Stat. 214-215); the Secretary of the Treasury had general supervision over it between 1882 and 1891. The Office of Superintendent of Immigration in the Department of the Treasury was established under an act of March 3, 1891 (26 Stat. 1085), and was later designated a bureau in 1895 with responsibility for administering the alien contract-labor laws. In 1900 administration of the Chinese-exclusion laws was added. Initially the Bureau retained the same administrative structure of ports of entry that the Customs Service had used. By the turn of the century it began to designate its own immigration districts, the numbers and boundaries of which changed over the years. The port of Eagle Pass, TX, for example, was part of the INS's San Antonio District. In 1903 the Bureau became part of the Department of Commerce and Labor; its name was changed to the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization when functions relating to naturalization were added in 1906. In 1933 the functions were transferred to the Department of Labor and became the responsibility of the newly formed Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Under President Roosevelt's Reorganization Plan V of 1940, the INS was moved to the Department of Justice.

Keeping statistics on alien arrivals at U.S. land borders was not required by early immigration acts. Thus, the statistical treatment of Canadian and Mexican border immigrants at times has differed from that of other immigrants. When records of arrivals began to be kept at the Canadian border in 1895 and at the Mexican border, ca. 1906, the immigration authorities found it impractical to collect arrival information on lists as they did for ship passengers. Therefore, separate cards or "card manifests" for each person were used instead. These cards contained the same information as that collected on the traditional ship passenger arrival lists, such as full name, age, sex, marital status, occupation, point of arrival in the United States, and final destination.

An act of March 2, 1929 (45 Stat. 1512), which became effective July 1, 1929, and was amended on August 7, 1939 (53 Stat. 1243), allowed a record of lawful arrival—called a record of registry—to be made for certain aliens who had lawfully entered the United States at an earlier time but for whom the INS could find no record of arrival. In particular, if an alien had entered the U.S. before July 1, 1924, resided in the country continuously since that entry, was of good moral character, and was not subject to deportation, he or she could obtain a record of registry by making application to the INS and paying the requisite fee. The registry program was reauthorized by the Nationality Act of 1940 (54 Stat. 1137) under the name "Lawful Entry." Registry files cover the years 1929 to 1944; Lawful Entry paperwork after April 1, 1944, was placed in an alien's individual "A-File." As of 1997, both Registry/Lawful Entry Files and A-Files remain in the legal custody of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and researchers interested in examining those records should direct a Freedom of Information Act request to that agency citing the Certificate of Registry number and, if available, a Bureau file number.

Immigration Statistics and Definitions

Beginning in 1895, immigrants who arrived at Canadian seaports with the declared intention of proceeding to the United States were recorded and included in the immigration statistics. Other alien arrivals at land borders began to be reported in 1906, and reporting was fully established in 1908 under authority of an act of February 20, 1907 (34 Stat. 898).

Not all aliens entering via the Canadian and Mexican borders were necessarily counted for inclusion in the immigration statistics. Before approximately 1930, no count was made of residents of Canada, Newfoundland, or Mexico who had lived in those countries for a year or more if they planned to enter the United States for less than 6 months. However, from about 1930 to 1945, the following classes of aliens entering via the land borders were included in immigration statistics:

- (1) Those who had not been in the U.S. within 6 months, who came to stay more than 6 months;
- (2) Those for whom straight head tax was a prerequisite to admission, or for whom head tax was specially deposited and subsequently converted to a straight head tax account;¹
- (3) Those required by law or regulation to present an immigration visa or reentry permit, and those who surrendered either, regardless of whether they were required by law or regulation to do so;

¹A head tax was required to be paid by persons entering the U.S. who were not citizens of the U.S., the Dominion of Canada, Newfoundland, the Republic of Cuba, or the Republic of Mexico.

- (4) Those announcing an intention to depart from a seaport in the United States for Hawaii or other insular possession of the U.S. or for a foreign country, except arrivals from Canada intending to return there by water; and
- (5) Those announcing an intention to depart across the other land boundary.

These classes were revised in 1945 so that the statistics of arriving aliens at land border ports of entry for 1945-52 included arriving aliens who came into the United States for 30 days or more, and returning alien residents who had been out of the country more than 6 months. Arriving aliens who came into the United States for 29 days or less were not counted except for those who were either certified by public health officials, held for a board of special inquiry, excluded and deported, or were individuals in transit who announced an intention to depart across another land boundary or by sea.

From 1953 to at least 1957, all arriving aliens at land border ports of entry were counted for statistical purposes except Canadian citizens and British subjects resident in Canada who were admitted for 6 months or less; Mexican citizens who were admitted for 72 hours or less; and returning U.S. residents who had been out of the country for more than 6 months. Beginning in February 1956, residents returning from stays of less than 6 months in Western Hemisphere countries also were not counted. Because of regulation changes in 1957, returning residents without reentry permits or visas who had been abroad for 1 year or less were not counted.

Summary: Statistical arrivals were immigrants or nonimmigrants who were subject to the head tax and generally not from the Western Hemisphere. By contrast, nonstatistical arrivals were immigrant or nonimmigrants who usually were natives of the Western Hemisphere and not subject to the head tax. Although arrival of the latter was not included in immigration statistics, a record of that arrival may still have been made. It cannot be said with certainty that the definitions of statistical and nonstatistical arrivals were applied uniformly at any particular port on the Canadian or Mexican borders during the period covered by this microfilm publication.

Definitions of Permanent and Nonimmigrants

From 1906 to 1932, arriving aliens were divided into two classes: (1) immigrants, or those who intended to settle in the U.S.; and (2) nonimmigrants, who were admitted aliens who declared an intention *not* to settle in the U.S., and all aliens returning to resume domiciles formerly acquired in the U.S. From 1933 to at least 1957, aliens arriving to settle in the U.S. were further classified as quota or nonquota immigrants.

Quota immigrants were those admitted under quotas established for countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Pacific Basin and the colonies, dependencies, and protectorates belonging to those nations. **Nonquota immigrants** were spouses and unmarried children of U.S. citizens; natives from the independent countries of the Western Hemisphere, their spouses, and unmarried children under 18 years of age; and members of the clergy who entered with their families to carry on their profession. From 1933 to 1952, professors and their spouses and children were also classified as nonquota immigrants. **Nonimmigrants** were alien residents of the U.S. returning from a temporary visit abroad, or nonresident aliens admitted to the U.S. for a temporary period, such as tourists, students, foreign government officials, those engaged in business, people representing international organizations, the spouses and unmarried children of all these individuals, and agricultural laborers from the West Indies.

For more information about the keeping of immigration statistics and definitions used therein, see *The Statistical History of the United States from Colonial Times to the Present* (Stamford, CT: Fairfield

Publishers, Inc., ca. 1965), pp. 48-52. For further information about immigration and naturalization laws prior to 1953, see *Laws Applicable to Immigration and Nationality*, Edwina A. Avery and Catherine R. Gibson, eds., U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1953).

Records Description

The manifests are usually arranged in chronological order and thereunder by manifest number. Major exceptions to the chronological arrangement are noted in the Table of Contents. Some manifests lack a manifest number but are generally interfiled with other manifests of the same date.

The records consist of various INS forms that are further described below. Most are INS Form 548 or Form I-448, *Manifest*. Beginning in April 1945, the records include Form I-190, *Application for Nonresident Alien's Border Crossing Identification Card*, and records from 1952 and 1953 include Form I-94, *Record of Alien Admitted for Temporary Stay*. The latter two forms are interfiled with the manifests.

Although most of the alien arrivals are Mexican citizens, there are also Syrians (in 1906 and 1907, for example), large numbers of Japanese citizens (also in 1906 and 1907), and a scattering of Europeans.

Search Strategy

To locate an individual in these records, first consult the appropriate index. For arrivals from June 1905 to November 1929, consult M1754, *Nonstatistical Manifests and Statistical Index Cards of Aliens Arriving at Eagle Pass, Texas, June 1905-November 1929*. For arrivals after November 1929, consult M2040, *Index to Manifests of Permanent and Statistical Arrivals at Eagle Pass, Texas, December 1929-June 1953*. The indexes provide the date of arrival and manifest number which are needed to locate an individual in these records.

Forms Used

The records consist of three types of Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) forms. Both the front and reverse side of each form were filmed. The reverse side sometimes includes instructions for the form's use. The most common forms are described below.

Form 548 or Form I-448, *Manifest*, includes the person's name, age, sex, marital status, place of birth, physical description, occupation, citizenship ("nationality"), race, ability to read and write and in what language, place of last permanent residence, port and date of arrival, destination, purpose for entering U.S., intention to become a U.S. citizen or return to country of previous residence, head tax status, and previous citizenships. It also includes the name and address of the friend or relative the alien intended to join, persons accompanying the alien, and the name and address of the alien's nearest relative or friend in the country from which he or she came. If the alien had ever been in the U.S. in the past, the dates and places of such residence or visitation are indicated. Additional information may be recorded if the alien appealed a decision deporting or barring him or her from entering the U.S. Form 548 or I-448 is generally a card manifest. However, during some periods at some ports, the INS used an entire sheet of paper for the Form 548 manifest. Both sizes of manifests generally included the same information. The manifest number, which is either handwritten or mechanically stamped, is annotated near the upper right-hand corner of the form. On long form manifests dated after April 1908, the manifest number is the "serial number" annotated near the upper right-hand corner.

Form IB190, *Application for Nonresident Alien's Border Crossing Identification Card*, includes the person's name, address, date and place of birth, sex, marital status, occupation, ability to read and write, nationality, weight, visible distinctive marks, and purpose for coming to the U.S. It also includes the color of the person's complexion, eyes, and hair, as well as the alien's signature and fingerprint. The number, date of issuance, and issuing authority of the alien's foreign passport or other identification card are noted. Also included are the border crossing identification card number and its date of issuance.

Form I-94, *Record of Alien Admitted for Temporary Stay*, includes the person's name, home address, date and place of birth, sex, marital status, occupation, nationality (citizenship), race, visible distinctive marks, color of hair and eyes, height, name and address of nearest relative at home, date and place of admission to the U.S., date of previous entry into the U.S., name and address of the friend or relative the alien intended to join, purpose and length of intended stay, identification of the alien's travel documents, and whether the alien was accompanied by an alien child under age 14. The "manifest number" is handwritten or mechanically stamped in the upper-right hand corner, and is distinct from the "T" number in that corner.

General Remarks

The INS microfilmed these records in September and October 1956, and subsequently transferred the microfilm to the National Archives. Although some of this film may be difficult to read, it is impossible to correct the situation since the INS destroyed the original records.

Related Records

In addition to the microfilm publications listed under "Search Strategy," additional alien arrivals at Eagle Pass, TX, have been reproduced on the 14 rolls of M2041, *Temporary and Nonstatistical Manifests of Aliens Arriving at Eagle Pass, Texas, July 1928-June 1953*.

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²Many rolls begin with "retakes" sections (records refilmed due to poor original filming). However, "retakes" sections are not noted in the Table of Contents if (1) they are not lengthy or (2) a large portion of the roll was refilmed in its entirety in such a manner that there is no discernible "break" between the retakes and the original filming. "Retakes" sections are are noted in the Table of Contents if they are (1) lengthy or (2) include a significant inclusive span of dates and manifest numbers.

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- July 1, 1915-Feb. 7, 1916; 1-1088
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 15 (42) Oct. 22, 1919-May 26, 1920; 2762-6025
 16 (43) May 27-June 30, 1920; 6026-6596
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 17 (44) Nov. 27, 1920-June 29, 1921⁴; 2296-4628
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 21 (48) Jan. 31-Oct. 20, 1924⁶; 3083-6031; 6644-6714; 208-284; 823-906; 414-1525;
 2020-2087
 22 (51) Mar. 11-June 30, 1924; 3923-6980
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³A number of manifests having an entry date of Sept. 1920 are found among the April 22, 1921 manifests on roll 17 as that date and the word "transferred" are stamped to the right of the "Character of Head Tax Assessment" heading.

⁴A number of manifests indicating an entry date of Sept. 1920 are found among the April 22, 1921 manifests as that date and the word "transferred" are stamped to the right of the "Character of Head Tax Assessment" heading.

⁵A number of manifests having entry dates of June 1923 to March 1924 are found among the February to October 1924 manifest on roll 21 as the latter dates and the word "transferred" are stamped to the right of the "Character of Head Tax Assessment" heading.

⁶A number of manifests indicating entry dates of June 1923 to March 1924 are arranged by "transfer date" of February to October 1924, as the latter dates and the word "transferred" are stamped to the right of the "Character of Head Tax Assessment" heading.

⁷These manifests are not arranged chronologically.

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	July 1, 1939-June 29, 1940; 2-414

⁸Some December 1927 arrivals are on roll 26.

⁹Some May 1928 arrivals are included in the July 1, 1928-July 25, 1929 section of this roll.

¹⁰This section includes some December 1927 and May 1928 arrivals. In addition, the manifest cards are sometimes out of numerical order; for example, 5419 is found after 5425.

29 (56) July 1, 1940-June 30, 1941; 1-574
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July 2, 1951-June 24, 1953¹¹; 1-1183

¹¹Some U.S. citizens are included.