

Publication Number: M-2016

Publication Title: Alphabetical Index of Alien Arrivals at Eagle, Hyder, Ketchikan, Nome, and Skagway, Alaska, June 1906-August 1946

Date Published: 1997

ALPHABETICAL INDEX OF ALIEN ARRIVALS AT EAGLE, HYDER,
KETCHIKAN, NOME, AND SKAGWAY, ALASKA,
JUNE 1906-AUGUST 1946

Introduction

On the single roll of this microfilm publication, M2016, are reproduced index cards to alien arrivals at Eagle, Hyder, Ketchikan, Nome, and Skagway, Alaska, from June 1906 to August 1946. 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 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. In 1903 the Bureau became part of the Department of Commerce and Labor, and, when functions relating to naturalization were added in 1906, its name was changed to the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. 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, INS was moved to the Department of Justice.

Records Description

The index cards (INS Form 502) reproduced in this microfilm publication include arrivals of more than 8,400 aliens at Eagle, Hyder, Ketchikan, Nome, and Skagway, Alaska, from June 1908 to August 1946.

The cards are arranged alphabetically; however, some are out of order. A small "retakes" section precedes the main body of records.

This is primarily an index of aliens who crossed the Canadian border into Alaska, usually by railroad, but occasionally on foot. Some arrived by steamship. The majority of the arrivals occurred before 1920, some were in the 1930s, and a few are dated 1941, 1942, and 1946. The arriving aliens were primarily citizens of Canada, Russia, Austria, Great Britain, Montenegro, Italy, Greece, Japan, Norway, Sweden, and various other European countries. Form 502 index cards include the following information for each person: name, age, nationality (citizenship), names of persons accompanying the individual, and the port of entry. These cards are an index to "long form" manifests that contain additional information; thus the cards also indicate the manifest number ("list number") and line number on the manifest ("group number") where that person may be found.

The records were filmed by the INS and transferred to the National Archives on microfilm. Although some of this film may be difficult to read, it is impossible to correct the situation since the INS destroyed the original records. While INS targets on the microfilm indicate that the index covers only the period June 1906 to June 8, 1931, the roll also includes cards from 1941, 1942, and 1946.

Related Records

"Long form" manifests (lists) for which this index serves as a finding aid are reproduced in other microfilm publications. Manifests of aliens who arrived at Skagway, Alaska, are reproduced in *Lists of Aliens Arriving at Skagway (White Pass), Alaska, October 1906-November 1934*, National Archives Microfilm Publication M2017 (1 roll), and manifests of aliens who arrived at Eagle, Alaska, are reproduced in *Lists of Aliens Arriving at Eagle, Alaska, Dec. 1910-Oct. 1938*, National Archives Microfilm Publication M2018 (1 roll).

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<u>Roll</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	None