

**A3413**

**CREW LISTS OF VESSELS ARRIVING AT  
ESCANABA, MICHIGAN,  
MAY 1946–NOVEMBER 1956**

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Washington, DC  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

On the single roll of this microfilm publication, A3413, are reproduced crew lists of vessels arriving at Escanaba, Michigan, May 30, 1946–November 24, 1956. 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. 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. The INS was abolished, and its immigration and naturalization recordkeeping functions were transferred to the new Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services within the new Department of Homeland Security, established January 24, 2003, by the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Pub. L. 107-296, § 471, 116 Stat. 2135, 2205).

## **RECORDS DESCRIPTION**

The crew lists in this microfilm publication were submitted to the INS at Escanaba, Michigan, by the captain or master of each vessel that had last departed from a

Canadian or other foreign port. Vessels that had last departed from a U.S. port are **not** included. The records were filmed in chronological order.

Crew members were primarily Canadian citizens, but there are some U.S. citizens and Europeans.

The crew lists were generally recorded on **INS Form I-481, *List or Manifest of all Persons Employed on a Great Lakes Vessel***, which usually contains the names of vessels, shipmasters, shipowners, and local agents; ports of arrival and embarkation; dates of arrival; and the following information about each crew member: full name, citizenship, position in crew, whether to be discharged at the port of arrival, whether medically examined during the current season or year, and identification card number or alien registration number.

**INS Form I-489, *Statement of Master of Vessel Regarding Changes in Crew Prior to Departure***, sometimes accompanies the Form I-481. This form indicates names and other information of any crewmen who (1) deserted, (2) were discharged, (3) were left in a hospital at the port of arrival, or (4) signed on at the port of arrival.

The records were filmed by the INS in 1956 and 1957 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.

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