

A3385

LISTS OF PASSENGERS WHO ARRIVED AT SAN PEDRO/  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, 1920–1949, IN TRANSIT  
TO THEIR FINAL DESTINATIONS

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National Archives and Records Administration  
Washington, DC  
2003

## **INTRODUCTION**

On the 30 rolls of this microfilm publication, A3385, are reproduced lists of passengers who arrived by ship at San Pedro/Los Angeles, California, March 1920–January 1949, in transit to their final destinations. Lists of airplane passengers are included, more frequently after 1948. Some vessel crew lists are also included. 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.

## RECORDS DESCRIPTION

These records primarily consist of lists of vessel passengers who arrived temporarily at San Pedro, California, enroute to their final destination. Beginning in 1948, lists of airplane passengers are frequently included. There are a few aircraft passengers or aircraft crew before 1948 annotated on ship passenger or crew list forms, such as the American Seaplane *Savoia Marchetti* noted below. Some vessel crew lists are also included.

The passengers' final destinations are either U.S. ports, such as San Francisco, or foreign ports, such as Yokohama, Japan. The ports of embarkation varied, but include ports in South America, Panama Canal Zone, Hong Kong, Japan, Canada, Hawaii Territory, and various U.S. ports on the Pacific, Gulf, and East Coasts. The lists are typically marked, either in handwriting or by a rubber stamp, indicating that shore leave was granted to the passengers and/or the vessel's date of inspection at and/or departure from San Pedro. Many lists before 1930 do not indicate a date of arrival or departure from San Pedro.

Since the date of arrival at the vessel's final destination is often annotated on the form, it is possible that the passenger lists may have been mailed back to the San Pedro INS office at the completion of the vessel's voyage. Some were collected by INS inspectors at a subsequent U.S. port. For example, the list for the American Seaplane *Savoia Marchetti*, on roll 4, indicates "3/16/30 Original taken up at San Diego, Calif. Jas. [or Joe?] W. Byrne Img. Insp."

Passengers include U.S. citizens and citizens of Japan, China, and various European and South American countries. Few arrived during World War II.

The passenger lists are arranged in chronological order, although there is some disarrangement within or between rolls. Overlap between rolls is noted in the Table of Contents. Since the vessel's exact date of arrival may not be noted in these records, the date spans used throughout the Table of Contents are based upon either the date of arrival, the date shore leave was granted, or the date of the vessel's departure from San Pedro. It is assumed that shore leave was granted the day of arrival or the day following, in case of arrival at night. In using the date of departure, it is assumed that most of these vessels were "in port" only a couple days, not for extended lengths of time.

### FORMS USED

The manifests primarily consist of Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) forms. The most common forms are described below.

**INS Form 500 or 500-B, *List or Manifest of Alien Passengers for the U.S. Immigration Officer at Port of Arrival***, were used by vessel masters to record information about ship passengers in advance of arrival at U.S. ports. Form 500-B includes the date of arrival, full name, age, sex, marital status, occupation, ability

to read and write, citizenship (“nationality”), “race or people,” town and country of last permanent residence, birthplace, final destination, and whether the individual possesses a ticket to final destination. It also includes the name and address of the friend or relative the alien intends to join. If the alien had ever been in the U.S. in the past, the dates and places of such residence or visitation are indicated. It also includes the alien’s height and color of complexion, eyes, and hair. Not all of the above information may be recorded for every alien. U.S. citizens are sometimes also included on these forms.

**INS Form 630, *List of United States Citizens***, includes each person’s name, age, sex, marital status, date and place of birth (if native) or date and court of naturalization (if naturalized), and U.S. address. The person’s passport number and date of issuance may be noted in a convenient blank spot on the form.

**INS Form 680 (later known as Form I-480), *List or Manifest of Aliens Employed on the Vessel as Members of Crew***, usually contains the names of vessels and shipmasters, ports of arrival and embarkation, dates of arrival, and the following information about each crew member: full name, length of service at sea, position in ship’s company, whether able to read, age, sex, race, nationality, height, weight, and physical marks or peculiarities. The “race” column indicates the crew member’s ethnic background, such as Irish, German, Polish, or other. It also indicates the date and place at which he was engaged for employment and whether he was to be paid off or discharged at the port of arrival. Although the primary purpose of this form was to record pertinent information about aliens, many U.S. citizen crew members are included on these lists.

**Form I-415, *Manifest of In-Bound Passengers (Aliens)***, includes the name of the ship, the port and date of embarkation, the port and date of arrival, and the following information about each alien: name, travel document number, citizenship (“nationality”), number and description of pieces of baggage, and a “column for use of masters, surgeon, and U.S. officials,” which may contain the alien’s “A-File” number, the section of the immigration law under which the alien was admitted to the U.S., and the country that issued the alien’s passport and its date of expiration. As of 2003, 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.

**Form I-416, *List of In-Bound Passengers (United States Citizens and Nationals)***, includes the name of the ship, the port and date of embarkation, the port and date of arrival, and the following information about each person: U.S. passport number and place of birth, number and description of pieces of baggage, and a “column for use of master, surgeon, and U.S. officers,” which is usually blank.

#### GENERAL REMARKS

The records were filmed by the INS in 1956 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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2	Feb. n.d., 1925 – ca. Aug. 1928
	Note: Manifests for 1928 are disarranged
3	ca. May 1928 – Mar. 7, 1929
4	Mar. 7, 1929 – Mar. 16, 1930
5	Mar. 17, 1930 – Nov. 1, 1930
6	Nov. 1, 1930 – July 31, 1931
7	Aug. 2, 1931 – Mar. 23, 1932
8	Mar. 24, 1932 – ca. Nov. 22, 1932
9	ca. Nov. 20, 1932 – June 16, 1933
10	June 16, 1933 – Mar. 7, 1934
11	Mar. 7, 1934 – Aug. 1, 1934
12	Aug. 1, 1934 – Mar. 2, 1935
13	Mar. 2, 1935 – July 18, 1935
14	July 18, 1935 – Jan. 15, 1936
15	Jan. 13, 1936 – May 4, 1936
16	May 4, 1936 – Sept. 29, 1936
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18	Feb. 3, 1937 – May 15, 1937
19	May 15, 1937 – Aug. 27, 1937
20	Aug. 27, 1937 – Feb. 17, 1938
21	Feb. 17, 1938 – July 6, 1938
22	July 6, 1938 – Jan. 14, 1939
23	Jan. 14, 1939 – June 23, 1939
24	June 23, 1939 – Nov. 12, 1939
25	Nov. 12, 1939 – Apr. 30, 1940
26	May 4, 1940 – Sept. 21, 1940
27	Sept. 21, 1940 – Jan. 4, 1941
28	Jan. 8, 1941 – May 4, 1941
29	May 4, 1941 – Sept. 26, 1947
30	Sept. 26, 1947 – Jan. 22, 1949