

A3419

**PASSENGER AND CREW LISTS OF VESSELS ARRIVING
AT OR NEAR SAN LUIS OBISPO BAY, CALIFORNIA,
SEPTEMBER 1907–DECEMBER 1955**

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INTRODUCTION

On the nine rolls of this microfilm publication, A3419, are reproduced passenger and crew lists of vessels arriving at or near San Luis Obispo Bay, California, September 12, 1907–December 19, 1955. These lists indicate arrival at Port San Luis, Estero Bay, Port Harford, or San Luis Obispo, all locales on or near San Luis Obispo Bay. Passenger lists of vessels departing from San Luis Obispo, July 5, 1950, and from Ventura (Port Hueneme), California, August 20, 1948, and April 19, 1951, 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. 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 passenger and crew lists in this microfilm publication were submitted to the INS at San Luis Obispo, California, by the captain or master of each vessel that had last departed from a Canadian, Japanese, or other foreign port. Vessels that had last departed from a U.S. port are **not** included. These lists variously indicate arrival at Port San Luis, Estero Bay, Port Harford, or San Luis Obispo, all locales on or near San Luis Obispo Bay.

The records were filmed in chronological order, although there may be occasional errors in arrangement. Crew members were from the United States, Canada, various European countries, Japan, Mexico, and China. Occasional passengers may be noted on the crew lists, such as family members accompanying crewmen.

Passenger lists of vessels departing from Port San Luis, July 5, 1950, and from Ventura (Port Hueneme), California, August 20, 1948 and April 19, 1951, are also included.

FORMS USED

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

INS Form 500-B, *List or Manifest of Alien Passengers for the U.S. Immigration Officer at Port of Arrival*, 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.

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, 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.

INS Form 689 (later known as 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.

Form I-415, *Manifest of In-Bound Passengers (Aliens)*, includes the vessel name, dates and ports of departures, 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” that 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 2005, A-Files remain in the legal custody of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services, 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, 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.

Form 424, *Descriptive List of Chinese Seamen* (or other alternate title), includes the dates and ports of departure and arrival, and the following information about each person: name, occupation, age, height, physical marks, birthplace, and Chinese signature. It indicates if the person had ever been in the United States before and if he had any papers showing a right to enter the United States.

GENERAL REMARKS

The records were filmed by the INS in 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.

Roll 8 begins with “retakes,” that is, images refilmed to ensure legibility.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NEW ROLL NO.	OLD ROLL NO.	CONTENTS	DATE SPAN
*Occasional passengers may also be noted, such as family members accompanying crewmen.			
1	2 [<i>sic</i>]	Crew*	Sept. 12, 1907–Jan. 18, 1920
2	2	Crew*	June 20, 1920–Dec. 13, 1927
3	3	Crew*	Dec. 1, 1927–Feb. 6, 1932
4	4	Crew*	Feb. 6, 1932–July 18, 1935
5	5	Crew*	July 25, 1935–June 12, 1937
6	6	Crew*	June 12, 1937–Mar. 24, 1939
7	7	Crew*	Mar. 25, 1939–Nov. 21, 1941
8	8	Crew*	Retakes Dec. 16, 1941–July 13, 1946
9	9	Crew*	July 15, 1946–Nov. 11, 1954
	1	Passenger Departures from Port Hueneme, CA	Apr. 19, 1951, <i>Mathew Luckenbach</i> only
		from Ventura, CA	Aug. 20, 1948, <i>America Transport</i> only
	1	from Port San Luis, CA	July 5, 1950, <i>Mormacfuel</i> only
	1	Passengers & Crew	Dec. 5, 1954–Dec. 19, 1955
	1	Passengers	Oct. 28, 1919–Feb. 23, 1940