



Native-Born Aliens: The Laws and Records of Expatriated Women

Rich Venezia

“**W**hat!... Why can’t I vote?” asked Helen Putnam Van Sicklen in a 1920 editorial. “I’m a native American citizen, a descendant of illustrious Americans who fought to make this country, and of others who later fought to keep it a United States. I, not a citizen of my own country?... Can you beat that?... Involuntarily expatriated!” Van Sicklen had lost her citizenship by marrying a Canadian alien.¹

From 1907 to 1922 (or 1931 in some cases), women born in the United States forfeited their American citizenship simply by marrying unnaturalized immigrants. Native-born men who married immigrants did not lose their citizenship. For several decades, records normally restricted to immigrant aliens document thousands of native-born women.²

Citizenship of married women before 1907

The citizenship of a woman in the United States was legally tied to that of her husband beginning 10 February 1855. Section 2 of the naturalization law

Websites cited in this article were viewed on 14 May 2020.

1. “When an American Woman Can’t Vote,” *The Dearborn (Michigan) Independent*, 30 October 1920, p. 3.

2. The situation for expatriated women who resided abroad with their husbands was different, and the rules or records mentioned in this article do not necessarily apply to them. For the purposes of this article, the term alien means an immigrant resident of the United States who had not yet naturalized as an American citizen and an American woman who lost her citizenship upon marriage to such an alien.

*Crystal Eastman, 1916, photograph by Arnold Genthe, Library of Congress (<https://www.loc.gov/item/2018709358>). Eastman was a suffragist, activist, lawyer, co-writer of the Equal Rights Amendment, and founder of the organization that became the American Civil Liberties Union. When she married Walter Fuller, a British citizen, in 1916, she lost her American citizenship due to the Expatriation Act of 1907. She was noted as a British citizen on several passenger lists, including the manifest for her last trip on the Rotterdam in 1927, and she is not known to have regained her American citizenship by the time she died in 1928. John Fabian Witt, “Crystal Eastman and the Internationalist Beginnings of American Civil Liberties,” *Duke Law Journal* 54:3 (2004), 737-738.*

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passed on that date states, "Any woman who might lawfully be naturalized under the existing laws, married, or who shall be married to a citizen of the United States, shall be deemed and taken to be a citizen."³ Prior to this point, women could naturalize on their own, but few did. Women were not equal persons before the law in many parts of the country, and naturalization did little to change their status.⁴

The 1855 law automatically granted citizenship to immigrant women married before or after its passage, whose husbands were native-born citizens or whose foreign-born husbands naturalized before or after 10 February 1855. These "silent citizens" generally do not appear in their husbands' naturalization records, but the laws in place allowed them the full rights and benefits of female citizenship.

Expatriation of married women

The Expatriation Act of 1907 was fueled by anti-immigrant sentiment and a desire to prevent dual citizenship. Section 3 states, "Any American woman who marries a foreigner shall take the nationality of her husband." The act had long-lasting impacts on the citizenship of married women in the United States.⁵ The newspaper headlines of the time focused on other provisions of the law, calling into question whether women realized that they would lose their citizenship upon marriage to aliens.

A challenge to the law made its way to the Supreme Court in 1915, when Ethel Mackenzie disputed the refusal of the Board of Electors of

San Francisco to register her as a voter. (California had extended the right to vote to women in 1911.) She contended that expatriation must involve "emigration, coupled with other acts indicating an intention to transfer one's allegiance." The Supreme Court upheld the law, affirming that McKenzie's marriage to an alien was voluntary and she should have known its consequences.⁶

Expatriation of native-born women upon marriage to foreigners continued for fifteen years, twenty-four years for women who married Asian men. When women gained the right to vote in 1920, calls to end the expatriation of American women grew louder.

The passage on 22 September 1922 of the Cable Act, known as the Married Women's Independent Nationality Act, separated the citizenship of most women from that of their husbands. Under this law, foreign-born women no longer automatically gained citizenship upon their marriage to American men, though these wives could use an expedited process to naturalize. Native-born women who married alien men after this date were no longer expatriated, provided their alien husbands were eligible for citizenship.⁷ Since Asian men were not eligible, American women who married Asian men continued to lose their citizenship until 3 March 1931.⁸

The ramifications of a woman's loss of citizenship were dire. Senator John L. Cable's 1933 report to the Committee on Immigration highlighted this inequity:

(4) I am 42 years old. (5) I was born on Sept. 16, 1902 in Waterville,
(Month) (Day) (Year) (City or town)
Kennebec Co., Maine
(County, district, province, or state) (Country)

(8) I lost, or believe that I lost, United States citizenship solely by reason of my marriage on November 19, 1919
(Month) (Day) (Year)
to Joseph Rouleau then an alien, a citizen or subject of Great Britain,
and my marital status with such person was not terminated on _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)
by _____
(State by what means marital status terminated)

Figure 1. Portions of Alphonsine Pilot Rouleau's application to take an oath of allegiance to the United States, 1944, noting her birth in Maine and loss of citizenship due to her marriage to a British citizen. FamilySearch; Maine State Archives.

3. 10 Stat. 604, Act of 10 February 1855. This citation format refers to US Congress, *The Public Statutes at Large of the United States of America, 1789-1873*, 17 vols. (Washington, DC: various publishers), 10: 604.

4. In various states, women could not own property or serve as guardians, and many professions required licenses or degrees reserved for men only.

5. 34 Stat. 1228, Act of 2 March 1907.

6. Joseph McKenna and the Supreme Court of the United States, *U.S. Reports: Mackenzie v. Hare*, 239 US 299 (1915); digital images, *Library of Congress* (<https://www.loc.gov/item/usrep239299>).

7. 42 Stat. 1021b, Act of 22 September 1922.

8. 46 Stat. 1511, Sec. 4, Act of 3 March 1931.

“The American woman who married a foreigner... was subjected to a heavy penalty, absolute loss of her birthright. In some States she could neither inherit nor buy real estate... After 1900 many women began entering actively into commerce and the practice of the professions. The privileges enjoyed by citizens engaged in these occupations were closed to [her]... The same hardship confronted such a woman if she sought to practice law... Such a woman also was prohibited in many States from practicing medicine. She could not teach in the public schools. She could neither take a State or Federal civil service examination nor hold any Government office... In most States she could not vote, even after equal suffrage was granted. If she went abroad the United States Government would neither give her a passport nor protect her while outside the country.”⁹

LOSS OF CITIZENSHIP FOR AMERICAN-BORN WOMEN

2 March 1907–22 September 1922: upon marriage to aliens of any race

22 September 1922–3 March 1931: upon marriage to aliens ineligible for citizenship (Asian men)

Regaining citizenship

In the period between the Expatriation Act of 1907 and the Cable Act, an expatriated woman regained her citizenship automatically upon the termination of her marriage provided she remained resident in the United States. If her husband naturalized as a US citizen, she automatically became a US citizen again.

After the passage of the Cable Act, a husband’s

RACE AND CITIZENSHIP

The Naturalization Act of 1790 allowed “free white persons” to naturalize as US citizens.¹ The Naturalization Act of 1870 extended the rights of citizenship to “aliens of African nativity and to persons of African descent.”²

At the time of the 1907 Expatriation Act and the 1922 Cable Act, Asian individuals remained ineligible for citizenship. This inequity was only remedied in the 1940s and 1950s. Naturalization became completely colorblind in the United States under the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952.³

Native Americans were not fully granted citizenship until 2 June 1924, though certain Native American individuals were considered citizens via the Dawes Act of 1887 and an 1893 amendment.⁴

1. 1 Stat. 103, Act of 26 March 1790.
2. 16 Stat. 254, Act of 14 July 1870.
3. 66 Stat. 163, Act of 27 June 1952.
4. 43 Stat. 253, Act of 2 June 1924. 24 Stat. 390, Dawes Act of 8 February 1887. 27 Stat. 645, Act of 3 March 1893.

later naturalization did not naturalize or repatriate his wife. Nearly all expatriated women who wished to repatriate could become a citizen in the abbreviated way now allowed for alien women married to American men: without a declaration of intention, and with a US residency requirement of only one year, regardless of the location of court of naturalization.¹⁰ In 1930, this process was amended to eradicate the residency requirement. This remedy did not apply to women who had married Asian men until 3 March 1931.

Repatriation proceedings as opposed to

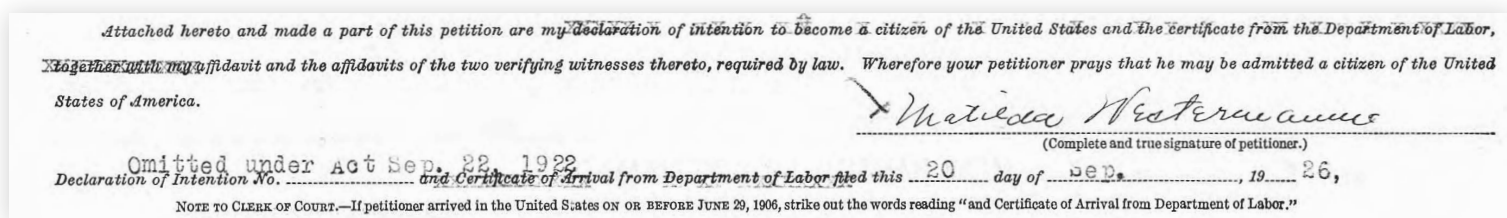


Figure 2. Portion of Matilda Westermann’s petition for naturalization, 1926, referring to the omission of her declaration of intention due to the 1922 law. San Francisco District Court, Ancestry; National Archives.

9. John L. Cable, American Citizenship Rights of Women, Hearing Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Immigration, United States Senate, Seventy-Second Congress, Second Session (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1933), 26; <https://www.loc.gov/law/find/hearings/pdf/0014160126A.pdf>.

10. In this timeframe, citizenship was generally granted only after five years of continuous residency within the United States, including six months within the county of naturalization; a declaration of intention, which could be filed after two years of residency; and a petition for naturalization, which could be filed after another three years of residency. There were also requirements for speaking English and witnesses, among others. In contrast, the process for expatriate women (and alien women married to citizen men) was expedited.

naturalization proceedings were finally specified in a 25 June 1936 law. Expatriated women could repatriate after taking an oath of allegiance in any naturalization court. However, this law only applied to women whose marriage had been terminated by death or divorce, as proven by related documents.¹¹ A 2 July 1940 amendment to this act permitted the repatriation of all women, regardless of marital status, who had resided continuously in the United States since their marriage.¹² The Naturalization Act of 1940, passed three months later, cobbled all these laws into one but did little to change the requirements for reacquisition of American citizenship by expatriated women.¹³

REACQUISITION OF CITIZENSHIP FOR AMERICAN-BORN WOMEN MARRIED TO NON-ASIAN ALIENS

2 March 1907–22 Sep 1922

- automatically when their husbands naturalized; or
- automatically when their marriages ended through death or divorce, if they remained in the United States

22 September 1922–2 July 1940

- through an abbreviated naturalization process; or
- after 25 June 1936, an abbreviated repatriation process if their marriages had ended

2 July 1940 forward:

- All American-born women could regain citizenship through an abbreviated repatriation process.
- Married women had to have resided continuously in the United States since their marriage.

Federal records

No records were automatically created upon the expatriation of a woman. It was only later, when she repatriated, naturalized, or interacted with the government as an alien, that records ensued. Since tens of thousands of women lost their citizenship between 1907 and 1922 (or 1931, in cases of women who married Asian men), there are likely hundreds of thousands of records for alien women born in the United States.

11. 49 Stat. 1917, Act of 25 June 1936.

12. 54 Stat. 715, Act of 2 July 1940.

13. 54 Stat. 1137, Act of 14 October 1940.

14. To locate the regional archives for each state and district, see "National Archives Court Records," *National Archives* (<https://www.archives.gov/research/court-records>).

REACQUISITION OF CITIZENSHIP FOR AMERICAN-BORN WOMEN MARRIED TO ASIAN ALIENS

2 March 1907–3 March 1931: Women could not regain citizenship.

After 3 March 1931: Women could regain citizenship in the same ways that women who had married non-Asian aliens could.

Naturalization or repatriation records for these women are held in the same places that have other naturalization records, though repatriation records may be filed separately. Generally, no files exist for women who automatically regained citizenship when their husbands naturalized prior to 22 September 1922.

Court records and C-Files

To look for naturalization or repatriation records, start in the county court with jurisdiction over naturalization or the federal court with jurisdiction over the woman's residence. Although the naturalization or repatriation could occur in any court of record, many filed their applications in the court with jurisdiction over their residence. Federal court records are usually held by regional branches of the National Archives.¹⁴

A copy of a naturalization or repatriation document should exist as a C-File in the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Genealogy Program. (Repatriation files for these women are known as 129/series files.) To access C-Files, submit an index search request to determine whether a file exists (unless the file number is already known), and then request the record. The index search currently costs \$65, and the record request costs another \$65. For more information, see <https://www.uscis.gov/genealogy>.

The court copies of repatriation records contain details like date and place of birth and marriage, physical description, husband's date and place of birth, and signature. The USCIS files should contain the same records and may contain correspondence

To the Honorable the District Court of THE UNITED STATES at SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA

The petition of Matilda Westermann hereby filed, respectfully sheweth:

First. My place of residence is 1334-Van Ness Ave., San Francisco (Give number, street, city or town, and State.)

Second. My occupation is Wife

Third. I was born on the 8th day of March, anno Domini 1877, at San Francisco, Cal.

Fourth. I emigrated to the United States from on or about the _____ day of _____ anno Domini 1____, and arrived in the United States, at the port of _____, on the _____ day of _____ anno Domini 1____, on the vessel _____ (If the alien arrived otherwise than by vessel, the character of conveyance or name of transportation company should be given.)

Fifth. I declared my intention to become a citizen of the United States on the _____ day of _____, anno Domini 1____ at _____ husband in the _____ Court of _____

Sixth. I am _____ married. My wife's name is Ernst; he was born on the 21 day of Feb., anno Domini 1876 at Mesel, Germany, and now resides at with me, Married Feb. 3, 1912 at S.F. Cal. (Give number, street, city or town, and State.)

I have no children, and the name, date, and place of birth, and place of residence of each of said children is as follows: husband alien.

Figure 3. Portion of Matilda Westermann's petition for naturalization, 1926, providing details about her birth and her husband. San Francisco District Court, Ancestry; National Archives.

or other records. Some of the court copies of these records are available on Ancestry, Fold3, and FamilySearch. The collections may not specifically note that they contain repatriation records; they may be interfiled with other naturalization records.

Federal alien registration files

The Alien Registration Act of 1940 required all aliens over age fourteen to register with the government. Over 5.6 million Americans registered over the next four years.¹⁵ Among them were tens of thousands of native-born women who had lost their citizenship through marriage and were considered citizens of their husbands' native countries.¹⁶

The Alien Registration Forms, or AR-2s, are genealogical goldmines, including exact date and place of birth, participation in social clubs, arrest history, physical description, and other information. The files exist on microfilm and are held by the USCIS Genealogy Program. For

more information, see <https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/genealogy/historical-record-series/alien-registration-forms-microfilm-1940-1944>.

During World War I, women (and men) of enemy alien nationalities were required to register. This mandate included Germans, citizens of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and American-born women who married German or Austro-Hungarian aliens after

APPLICATION TO TAKE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES UNDER THE ACT OF JUNE 25, 1936, AS AMENDED, AND FORM OF SUCH OATH

To the Honorable, the Justice of the Superior Court of Maine at Augusta, Me.

This application, hereby made and filed, respectfully shows:

(1) My full, true, and correct name is Alphonsine Rouleau nee Pilot (Full, true name, without abbreviation, and any other name which has been used, must appear here)

(2) My present place of residence is 130 Halifax St., Winslow, Kennebec Co., Maine (Number and street) (City or town) (County) (State)

(3) My occupation is Housewife.

(4) I am 42 years old. (5) I was born on Sept. 16, 1902 in Waterville, Kennebec Co., Maine (Month) (Day) (Year) (City or town) (County, district, province, or state) (Country)

(6) My personal description is as follows: Sex Female; color White; complexion Medium; color of eyes Brown; color of hair Brown; height 5 feet 2 inches, weight 125 pounds; visible distinctive marks None

(7) I am not married; the name of my husband is Joseph Rouleau; we were married on November 19, 1919 at Waterville, Maine; he was born at Megantic, P. Q., Canada on April 11, 1899; and now resides at Winslow, Maine. (City or town) (State) (Country) (City or town) (State) (Country) (Month) (Day) (Year) (Number and street) (City or town) (State) (Country)

Figure 4. Portion of Alphonsine Pilot Rouleau's application to take an oath of allegiance to the United States, 1944, with details for herself and her Canadian husband. FamilySearch; Maine State Archives.


2 March 1907. Records from some states survive— notably Kansas, New Mexico, and parts of Louisiana, California, and North Carolina, among others.¹⁷

15. "Alien Registration Forms on Microfilm, 1940–1944," US Citizenship and Immigration Services (<https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/genealogy/historical-record-series/alien-registration-forms-microfilm-1940-1944>) > Background.

16. Between 27 August 1940 and 26 December 1940, in just four months, 62,473 women born in the United States registered as aliens. United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, Alien Registration Division, *Alien Registration 1940*, vol. 10, "Registered Aliens in the United States Classified by Country of Birth and Sex," Table I-B, p. 2; digital images, USCIS Historical Library (https://eosfcweb01.eosfc-intl.net/CP4810_U95007_Documents/WorldWar2/AlienReg1940/AlienRegv10_RegAlienCtrySex.pdf). The vast majority of these women were expatriates who had married foreigners and lost their citizenship.

17. For a thorough explanation of these records and their known locations, see Julie Miller, "Enemy Alien Registrations during World War I," *NGS Magazine* 44:2 (April–June 2018), 21–27.

Figure 5. Portion of Irene Friedhoff's alien registration affidavit, 1918. National Archives (<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/286193>).



DESCRIPTION OF REGISTRANT.
(To be filled in by registration officer.)

Age 23 years 0 months. Mouth Medium
 Height 5' 2" Chin Round
 Weight 147 lbs Hair Dark Brown
 Forehead Medium Complexion Fair
 Eyes Brown Face Small
 Nose Straight

presence of the registration officer.

I, Mrs. Irene Friedhoff, hereby register as an alien female
Atchison, Kans. Police Dept. (Place where affidavit signed and oath administered.)

required to register under the President's proclamation dated April 19, 1917, and make the following statements and answers under oath:

1. Name Irene Friedhoff Maiden name Irene Spicer
 All other names at any time used, including all former married names:

2. Present residence 933 Atchison St., Atchison, Kans.
 (Give street and number, city, town, county, State, and if apartment house or tenement, the number of apartment or tenement.)
 If different from home address, state home address also.

3. Length of residence at the foregoing place About five years
 (Here state date on which you began living at your present residence.)

4. All other places of residence since January 1, 1914

5. Born in Ossawatimie, Kans., on June 10, 1895
 (Give city or town, Province, and country of birth.)

6. State particulars as to family, as follows:
 (a) Single? No. (b) Now married? Yes.
 (c) Name, residence, and citizenship of present husband Frederick Karl Friedhoff, 933 Atchison St., German

Friedhoff
St. Atchison
 e7-1123

Figure 6. Portion of Irene Friedhoff's alien registration affidavit, noting her birth in Kansas and marriage to a German citizen.

A-Files

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) may have created other files for some individuals who registered under the Alien Registration Act. Starting 1 April 1944, INS was supposed to consolidate all records of a person who had further contact with the agency, such as applying for a border crossing card to visit Mexico or a re-entry permit. An A-File almost always includes an original AR-2.

A-Files for this set of women should be found in the National Archives at Kansas City, the National Archives at San Bruno, or the USCIS Genealogy Program. To determine whether the National Archives holds an A-File, search for the individual's name on <https://catalog.archives.gov>. If an entry is located, it will have information on how to obtain a copy. If no entry is found, but an A-File seems likely to exist, request an index search with the USCIS Genealogy Program.

State records

Some state governments also required aliens to register.

In February 1918, aliens of all nationalities in Minnesota were required to register. These records held by the Iron Range Research Center in Chisholm, Minnesota, include expatriate women.¹⁸

In March 1927, the North Carolina General Assembly passed the Bolich Alien Registration Act, requiring the registration of all current and future alien residents.¹⁹ These registrations, with photos, include women, and some may be expatriates. The records are digitized and searchable at <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/digital/custom/alien-registration-and-naturalization>. Apparently many counties did not fully enforce the law upon its enactment, but may have restarted enforcement in 1940.²⁰

In June 1940, the governor of Maine issued a proclamation "direct[ing] the immediate registration

18. "Naturalization & Immigration Records: Step 5: Other MN Records," finding aid, Gale Family Library, *Minnesota History Center* (<https://libguides.mnhs.org/naturalization/s5>), see Alien Registration Records.

19. North Carolina General Assembly, *Public Laws and Resolutions Passed by the General Assembly at its Session of 1927* (Charlotte: The Observer Printing House, 1927), 532-533; digital images, *North Carolina Digital Collections* (<https://digital.ncdcr.gov>).

20. "Alien Registration Book Dusted and Examined for Patriotic Work in County," *The Daily-Times News* (Burlington, NC), 20 June 1940, p. 14, cols. 1-2.

of all aliens within our borders."²¹ Specific instructions were given to the municipal officers carrying out these registrations about the status of married women.²² Registrations were received from 694 American-born women who had lost their citizenship under the Expatriation Act of 1907.²³ These records are available in full and searchable at https://digitalmaine.com/alien_reg.

Other states passed alien registration laws, but many were struck down by the courts.²⁴

From native to alien to repatriated or naturalized

Matilda Habermacher, born in San Francisco, lost her citizenship when she married Ernst Westermann, a German alien, in 1912. In 1918 she registered as an enemy alien in San Francisco.²⁵ (See Figure 8.) She naturalized in the US District Court for the Southern Division of the Northern District of California at San Francisco in 1927.²⁶ (See Figures 2 and 3.) No further alien files should be found for her, as a naturalized citizen.

Another expatriate woman, Alphonsine Pilot, is an example of genealogical records in abundance when least expected. Born in Waterville, Maine, she married Joseph Rouleau, a Canadian alien, in 1919, and registered as an alien in 1940 in Maine.²⁷ (See Figure 7.) She repatriated under the 1940 Act at the Superior Court of

STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
AUGUSTA

ALIEN REGISTRATION

Winslow, Maine

Date June 27, 1940

Name Alphonsine Rouleau

Street Address Marcou Street

City or Town Winslow, Maine

How long in United States 38 How long in Maine 38

Born in Waterville, Maine Date of birth Sept. 16, 1902

If married, how many children two Occupation housewife

Name of employer (Present or last) --

Address of employer --

English Speak Yes Read Yes Write Yes

Other languages speak, read and write French

Have you made application for citizenship? NO - Married an alien Nov. 19, 1919

Have you ever had military service? No

If so, where? -- When? --

Signature Alphonsine Rouleau

Witness Joseph J. Rouleau

RECORDED JUN 29 1940

Figure 7. Alien Registration of Alphonsine Rouleau, Maine, 1940. Registrations, Digital Maine Repository (http://digitalmaine.com/alien_docs/16095), Maine State Archives.

21. Lewis O. Barrows, "Proclamation by the Governor," 1940, image, *Digital Maine Repository* (https://digitalmaine.com/alien_ref/10); citing Maine State Archives identifier 28548, Augusta.

22. "Citizenship of Married Women," 1940, image, *Digital Maine Repository* (https://digitalmaine.com/alien_ref/15); citing Maine State Archives identifier 28548, Augusta.

23. James W. Hanson, "Copy of Report to Governor Barrows on State of Maine Registration of Aliens," 1940, image, *Digital Maine Repository* (https://digitalmaine.com/alien_ref/17); citing Maine State Archives identifier 28548, Augusta.

24. Harry McMullan, *Biennial Report of the Attorney General of the State of North Carolina, Volume 28, 1938-1940* (Raleigh, NC: Department of Justice, 1940), 40-42; digital images, *Internet Archive* (<https://archive.org/details/biennialrep1938attnry1940/page/40>).

25. Mattie [Habermacher King] Westermann, Registration Affidavit of Alien Female, San Francisco Public Library, California; database and images, "California, San Francisco, Registration Affidavits of Enemy Aliens, 1918," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/1878523>) > DGS 4878713 > images 389-392 of 420.

26. Naturalization petition of Matilda Westermann, 20 September 1926, no. 8337, U.S. District Court for the Southern Division of the Northern District of California, Records of District Courts of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Record Group 21, NARA identifier 605504 [actually 605234], San Francisco National Archives, San Bruno; database and images, "California, Federal Naturalization Records, 1843-1999," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/3998>), naturalization petition of Matilda Westermann.

27. Office of the Adjutant General, Augusta, Maine, Alien Registration, Alphonsine Rouleau entry, dated 27 June 1940, no. 16905; index and images, *Digital Maine Repository* (https://digitalmaine.com/alien_docs/16095); citing Maine State Archives identifier 28541, Augusta.

Kennebec County, Maine, at Augusta in 1945.²⁸ (See Figures 1 and 4.) A USCIS 129/Series C-File and AR-2 should exist for Alphonsine Rouleau. An A-File for her is held at the National Archives at Kansas City.²⁹ This woman who seems to have never left her home county appears in at least five different record sets generally reserved only for immigrant aliens.

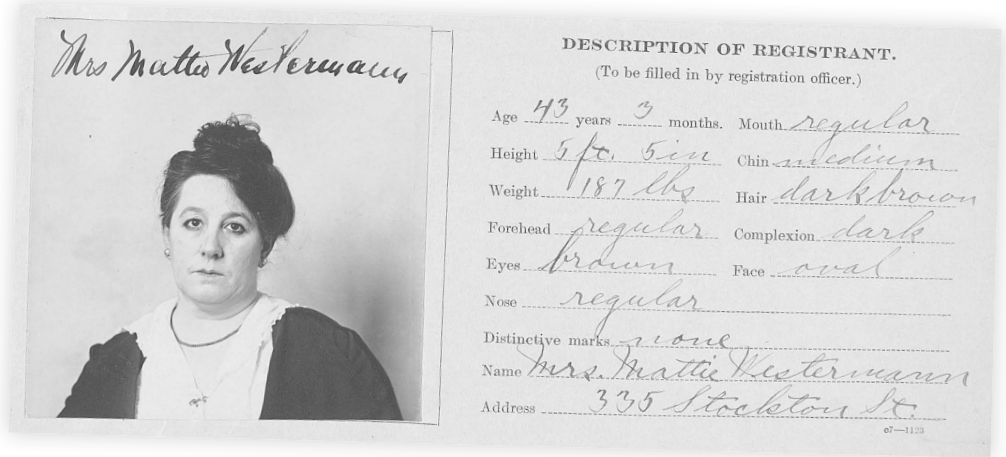


Figure 8. Portion of Mattie Westermann's alien registration affidavit. FamilySearch; Alien Enemy Registration Affidavits (SFH 48), San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

Conclusion

American-born women who lost their citizenship from 1907 through 1931 were still filing for repatriation as late as the 1970s. The expatriation, repatriation, and naturalization of these women form a little-known part of history that produced many unexpected records over several decades. Learning about the laws behind those records is necessary to fully understand an affected family's story.

Genealogists had a profound impact on the last chapter for these women. In 2014, spurred by conversations with descendants of expatriate women, the Senate apologized for the "injustice, humiliation, and inequality" caused by Section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907.³⁰ 🌳

Resources

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28. Application to Take Oath of Allegiance to the United States Under the Act of June 25, 1936, As Amended, and Form of Such Oath of Alphonsine Rouleau, 12 September 1944, no. 62, Superior Court of Kennebec County, Maine; Maine State Archives, Augusta; images, "Naturalization records (Kennebec County, Maine), 1895-1990," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/1316386>) > FHL microfilm 1409172, Item 11 (DGS 5615889) > image 1073 of 1122. An index entry for Alphonsine Rouleau was not located in the county's general naturalization index, but was located at the beginning of the volume for repatriated citizens.

29. See the catalog entry, Alien Case File (A-File) for Alphonsine Rouleau, *National Archives Catalog* (<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/146772102>).

30. "S.Res. 402—113th Congress: A resolution expressing the regret of the Senate for the passage of section 3 of...", *GovTrack.us* (<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/sres402/text>).