



# **ALIEN FILES (A-FILES)**

National Archives as Kansas City



# Overview

- Background Information
- Record Requests

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION



# What is an A-File?

- The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) began issuing each alien an Alien Registration number in 1940, and on April 1, 1944, began using this number to create individual case files, called Alien Files or A-Files.
- A-Files contain all records of any case of an alien not yet naturalized as they passed through the United States immigration and inspection process.



# What is the research value of A-Files?

- A-Files are a rich source of biographical information in that they contain relatively modern immigration documents, all in one file. Since the early 20th century the United States collected increasing amounts of information from immigrants and A-Files from mid-century hold a wealth of data, including visas, photographs, applications, affidavits, correspondence, and more.
- Although the files were created beginning in 1944, documents and information included may be much older than that, and could date to the birth of the person. Documents may also be included that date up to the time of any final action related to the alien which could be deportation, permanent resident status, or citizenship.

# Who should have an A-File?

	<b>NO A-number</b>	<b>NO A-File</b>	<b>Likely A-File</b>
Died before Aug 1, 1940	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
Naturalized between Sep 27, 1906 and Aug 1, 1940 (likely a C-File)	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
Naturalized between Aug 1, 1940 and Mar 31, 1956 (likely a C-File)		<b>X</b>	
Registered in 1940 but never came back to INS for any benefit or reason		<b>X</b>	
Registered in 1940 and came back to INS after Apr 1, 1944 for a benefit or some reason other than naturalization			<b>X</b>
Immigrated after Apr 1, 1944 (and did not naturalize prior to Apr 1, 1956)			<b>X</b>
Naturalized on/after Apr 1, 1956			<b>X</b>



# RECORD REQUESTS



# How can I request copies of A-Files?

- Send us an e-mail or letter to request records



- We receive requests either by e-mail, postal mail, or fax **only**.

# How to Request A-Files for On-site Use

- Appointments are required.
- Because these records are housed off-site and are subject to review for privacy concerns under the Freedom of Information Act, researchers must submit a written request at least 3 business days in advance.
- Our staff is here and ready to assist you, and in order to insure an excellent research experience we need time to prepare for your visit!

# A-Files Fee Schedule

- We are completing a Pilot Fee Schedule program that utilizes the standard NARA fee schedule.

## Research and Reproduction Fees

### Mail Order Services

<i>Product/Service</i>	<i>Fee</i>
Minimum Reproductions Mail Order (up to 20 pages)	\$15.00
Paper to paper (up to and including 11 in. by 17 in.) made by NARA	\$0.75 per copy

### On-Site Service

<i>Self-service Product/Service</i>	<i>Fee</i>
Self-service paper to paper copy	\$0.20 per copy

**Note: The National Archives at Kansas City accepts credit cards, checks, or money order as payment for services rendered.**

# What information do I need to make a record request?

- To make a Record Request you must provide (at minimum):
  - the individual's complete name
  - Archival Research Catalog (ARC) ID number
  - Alien Registration number
- Also helpful to include to aid in locating the file:
  - Accession Number
  - Box Number

# ARC Search Result

Individual's Name

Alien Registration Number

Accession/Box Info

The screenshot shows a search interface with the following elements:

- Top navigation: [Refine Search](#),  [Highlight Search Terms](#), [Add all Results to My List](#)
- Sorting: **Sorted by** Relevance
- Results summary: Results 1 - 10 of 587, 10 results per page
- Page navigation: Results page: << 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >>
- View options: **View results by:** Summary Hierarchy
- Result 1: [Alien Case File for Regina Pilus](#)
- Metadata: ARC Identifier 5325346 / Local Identifier A5272291/085-10-0128/Box 44
- Description: Textual Records from the Department of Justice. Immigration and Naturalization Service. (06/14/1940 - 03/01/2003)
- Location: NARA's Central Plains Region (Kansas City), Kansas City, MO
- File Unit: File Unit from Record Group 85: Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1787 - 2004
- Action: [Add to My List](#)

Red arrows indicate the following mappings:

- From "Individual's Name" to the title "Alien Case File for Regina Pilus".
- From "Alien Registration Number" to "ARC Identifier 5325346".
- From "Accession/Box Info" to "Local Identifier A5272291/085-10-0128/Box 44".
- From "Location of Record" to "NARA's Central Plains Region (Kansas City), Kansas City, MO".

Location of Record

## Record Request (cont.)

- To confirm that we have referenced the correct file, it is also helpful to provide other biographical information you may have (i.e. the individual's date and place of birth and date of entry into the United States; names of spouses and/or parents).

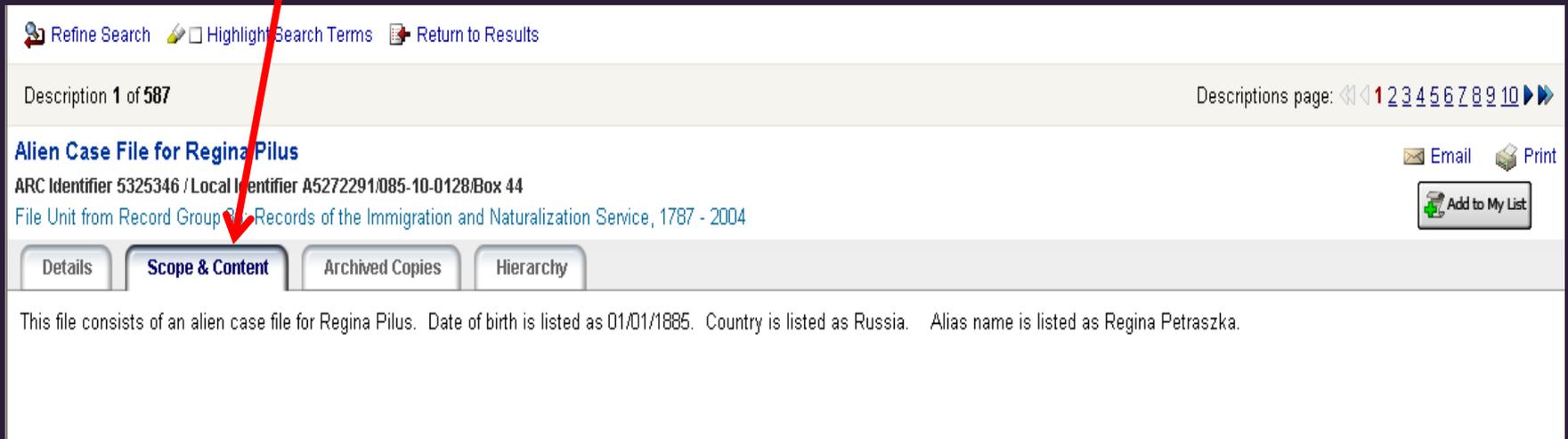
# What A-File information can I expect to find in the Archival Research Catalog (ARC)?

- Alien Registration number
- Last Name
- First Name
- Alias
- Date of Birth
- Sex
- Date of Entry
- Country of Birth
- Father's Name
- Mother's Name
- Naturalization Date
- Naturalization Court
- Naturalization Location



# ARC Entry

NOTE: Always click on the Scope & Content tab to learn more about the subject of the file.



Refine Search  Highlight Search Terms  Return to Results

Description 1 of 587 Descriptions page: << 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >>

**Alien Case File for Regina Pilus** Email Print

ARC Identifier 5325346 / Local Identifier A5272291/085-10-0128/Box 44

File Unit from Record Group 262 - Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1787 - 2004 Add to My List

[Details](#) **[Scope & Content](#)** [Archived Copies](#) [Hierarchy](#)

This file consists of an alien case file for Regina Pilus. Date of birth is listed as 01/01/1885. Country is listed as Russia. Alias name is listed as Regina Petraszka.

# Why can't I find my ancestor in ARC?

- If you cannot find your individual in ARC, it is because the National Archives does not currently maintain the record you are seeking.
- To continue your search contact the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) through their Genealogy Program: [www.uscis.gov/genealogy](http://www.uscis.gov/genealogy). The USCIS continues to maintain all active and inactive A-Files that have not yet been transferred into the holdings of the National Archives.
- The National Archives will accession new A-Files on an annual basis, so you can also continue to check back in ARC to see if your individual has been added to our holdings.

# How do I contact A-Files staff in Kansas City?

- **Website:**

<http://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/aliens/a-files-kansas-city.html>

- **E-mail:** [Afiles.KansasCity@nara.gov](mailto:Afiles.KansasCity@nara.gov)

- **Postal mail:**

National Archives at Kansas City

Attn: A-Files Request

400 W. Pershing Rd.

Kansas City, MO 64108

- **Fax:** (816) 268-8038

