

Did Your Ancestor Complete an Alien Registration Affidavit?

One of the best documents for information about your ancestor is an Alien Registration Affidavit. It only was completed by about 500,000 people starting in November, 1917. It was to identify German people in the U.S. who were not naturalized and hence may have allegiance to Germany rather than the U.S. It was required of men who were not naturalized. German born women were required to complete the document starting in April, 1918. For men the form was a "Registration Affidavit of Alien Enemy", for women it was a "Registration Affidavit of Alien Female."

In essence, if you have German ancestors who immigrated in the late 1800s to early 1900s, and were not naturalized by 1917, you might find that they were required to register as enemy aliens. Furthermore, even if your female ancestors were US citizens, if they were married to a non-naturalized German immigrant, they may have also been required to register.

The contents of these documents were amazing in what they included:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full name• Place where affidavit was signed and oath administered• All other names used• Present address• How long at current address• All other places of residence after 1914• City and country of birth• Date of birth• Employer's place, date, occupation, and name of employer• Arrival date in the U.S.• Name of ship• Name of Port of entry• Name at time of arrival• Father's name• Father's residence, if living• Mother's name• Mother's residence, if living | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Married?• Name of wife, if living• Residence of wife• Names of children, aged 10 to 14• Sex• Year of birth• Number of children under 10• State whether registrant has any male relatives for or against the USA in the present war• Names and relationships of those who are for or against• State For or Against for those named• Were you registered for the selective draft?• State all previous military, naval or other government service• Have you ever applied for naturalization or taken first papers in the U.S.?• If yes, state location and name of court | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you ever been naturalized, partly or wholly in any other country besides the U.S.?• If yes, state when and where, and in which country• Have you ever taken an oath of allegiance to any country besides the U.S.?• If yes, state when and where, and in which country• Have you since January 1, 1914 registered for military service with any country other than the U.S.?• If so, where and when and which country?• Have you ever been arrested or detained on any charge?• If so, where, when, and what charge?• Are you on parole?• Have you a permit to enter forbidden areas?• If so, what is the number of the permit? |
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The signature is required as well as the date and location. Then there are two official signatures.

There is a photo of the person signing the affidavit. Furthermore, there are questions regarding physical characteristics:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age• Height• Weight• Forehead | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eyes• Nose• Distinctive marks• Mouth | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chin• Hair• Complexion• Face |
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Not many individuals in the country were required to complete this document, but if your ancestor fits the criteria, make sure you try to find their affidavit. Further info is at the [National Archives](https://www.theancestorhunt.com)