

Records relating to Italian migration held in Brisbane

Large numbers of Italians migrated to Queensland in the period following World War I to the 1930s, and again after World War II. Many Italian workers were recruited to the sugar industry in North Queensland, where they settled before their families joined them.

The National Archives in Brisbane holds many records documenting the relationship between Italian migrants and the Commonwealth Government. These records are a valuable source for those searching for a particular Italian person, or researching the general Italian experience in Australia.

Immigration

Records documenting Italian migration to Queensland include passenger lists, nominal rolls and correspondence files relating to reception and resettlement. Details of records held in Brisbane are listed below.

Collection references

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Inwards passenger lists – Brisbane (For details of holdings of passenger lists of arrivals at other Queensland ports see Fact Sheet 190 – Passenger records held in Brisbane) *</u>	1852–1964	J715
<u>Files relating to the reception and employment of Italian migrants to Queensland</u>	1945–70	J25
<u>Personal documents of Italian migrants entering Queensland</u>	1946–57	BP145/1
<u>Visas issued to Italians for admission into Australia</u>	1954–57	BP384/27
<u>Nominal rolls of Italian migrant cane cutters arriving at Cairns</u>	1956–57	BP311/1

* Available as microfilm

Alien registration

Records on aliens (ie non-British residents of Australia) are held for the two periods of compulsory registration. Aliens were first registered in 1916 during World War I, under the War Precautions Regulations 1916–1920, and again from 1939, under provisions of the Aliens Registration Act 1939. These measures continued beyond the war with the Aliens Act 1947 until 1971. Registration

forms were collected by Customs and Immigration officials or local police. During World War II enemy aliens were required to present their alien registration to the local police station each week.

Alien registration

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Aliens travel documents</u>	1909–41	BP313/1
<u>Alien registration forms</u>	1916–44	BP4/3
<u>Alien registration cards</u>	1920–78	BP289/1
<u>Personal statements and declaration of aliens entering the state of Queensland</u>	1927–49	BP9/3
<u>Alien registration papers</u>	1939–85	BP25/1

Service with Civil Construction and Civil Alien Corps

During World War II many aliens served in the Civil Construction Corps and the Civil Alien Corps, which undertook projects to support the war effort. The National Archives in Brisbane holds personal files for those who served with both corps.

Civil Construction Corps and Civil Aliens Corps

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Personal history cards for Civil Construction Corps members</u>	1942–46	J1732
<u>Personal files of members of the Civil Construction Corps</u>	1942–46	J1736
<u>Personal files of members of the Civil Alien Corps</u>	1942–51	J1737

Naturalisation

The office in Brisbane holds naturalisation files for persons naturalised in Queensland after 1945 in the series J25. Naturalisation files for earlier years are held by the National Archives' office in Canberra. Microfiche copies of naturalisation certificates for the years 1904–37 are also held. Please see *Fact sheet 68 – Naturalisation records held in Canberra* for further information on naturalisation records.

Internment

The Brisbane office holds many records relating to Italians who were investigated and interned. During World War II, Italians living in Australia were considered 'enemy aliens', including those born in Australia of Italian parentage. Concerted efforts were made to restrict the movement of those considered to be a threat on the home front. Enemy aliens, naturalised and Australian-born persons of enemy alien descent, and Australians whose political activities or loyalty was called into question were interned in camps administered by the Australian Army. Italians suspected of involvement with secret societies such as the Black Hand (Mana Nera) were particularly targeted during police investigations. Members of the Black Hand were suspected of being involved in

organised crime during the 1930s in north Queensland, and were often held responsible for cases of extortion, kidnapping and murder.

Enemy aliens transferred from overseas and prisoners of war captured in war zones were also held in Australian internment camps. The majority of Italian internees from Queensland were sent to camps in Barmera and Loveday in South Australia and to Cowra in New South Wales, predominately during the period 1940 to 1943. Most internees were away from home until the end of the war. For those on the land this meant leaving their farms to be maintained by their wives and children.

Collection references

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Indexes of aliens interned *</u>	1914–17	BP230/11
<u>Correspondence files relating to national security (many files relate to individuals interned during WW II)</u>	1924–71	BP242/1
<u>Identity cards for Italian prisoners of war *</u>	1943–45	J3118
<u>Italian prisoner of war and internee pay sheets</u>	1944–45	J2255

* Digital copies of some records in these series can be viewed on the RecordSearch database

Other sources

For information about records on Italian migration to New South Wales and Western Australia held by our offices in Sydney and Perth see also:

- *Fact sheet 100 - Records relating to Italian migration held in Sydney*
- *Fact sheet 207 - Records relating to Italian migration held in Perth*