

# Passports

By Walt Zaenker

## HISTORY STORIES

### Reflections of Pine Knoll Shores

*History Committee members in search of information about Alice Green Hoffman, one of Pine Knoll Shores' earliest residents, often unearth interesting general historical information. Such is the case for the following article. For a longer version with documentation and more graphics, go to [pineknollhistory.blogspot.com](http://pineknollhistory.blogspot.com).*

Department of State information pulled from [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com) represents four of the many passport applications Alice Hoffman probably filed. The original forms are filled out by hand and appear to be in her handwriting. Bold headings in the list below represent required information on each application:

**Description of Applicant:** On four applications (1891, 1917, 1920, 1922) some of Alice Hoffman's answers varied.

**Age:** She always entered an age consistent with her birth year, 1862.

**Stature:** She consistently described herself as being "5 ft., 7 inches." (Despite the stories we might read that she was 6'1".)

**Forehead:** She consistently described her forehead as being "high."

**Eyes:** First, she listed her eyes as "brown" and later as "hazel."

**Nose:** First, she described her nose as "straight," then as "ordinary," and later as "medium small."

**Mouth:** First, she described her mouth as "medium," then "medium small," and later as "straight."

**Chin:** First, she described her chin as "round," then as "small," and later as "sharp."

**Hair:** First, she described her hair as "brown," then as "sprinkled with gray," later as "brown-medium gray," and even later as "black-gray."

**Complexion:** First, she described her complexion as "clear," then as "fair," and later as "dark."

**Face:** First, she described her face as "oval," then as "round."

Her home address and occupation change from application to application. She never really had an occupation as we might define that term, so her various responses to this question are interesting. Equally interesting are the various places she lists as home addresses. Different addresses also appear on deeds to property she purchased in Carteret County. By 1917, Alice owned property in New York City, Paris, and on Bogue Banks. At various times, she claimed each location as home.

Her responses to questions of residence and occupation on three passport applications are as follows:

**1917:** Paris, France.

Occupation: rentiere (French: woman of private means)

**1920:** Bogue Banks, NC and New York City

Occupation: farming

**1922:** Paris, France

Occupation: temporary residence

The Department of State assembled a portfolio for each passport, which included the application, supporting justification and other documents. The contents of the portfolios provide us with additional clues about Alice, her world and the times. (Words with wavy underlining are the author's guess at handwritten text: x's were used when handwriting was indecipherable.)

### 1917 Portfolio

On August 6, 1917, Alice Hoffman applied for a passport while in New York City. This application was made during the latter part of World War I (1914-1918), shortly after the United States joined the war effort. The application resulted in the issuance of passport # 61527, replacing # 42915, which had a handwritten note indicating, "it was not used." The portfolio included there was a request for an affidavit by Leander F. Sniffin of Newark, N.J., or 49 Wall St., Satterlee, Confi & Stone, N.Y., N.Y. The following affidavits were also included. The first from "ONE HUNDRED AND ONE PARK AVENUE NEW YORK":

This is to certify that to my certain knowledge Mrs. Hoffman has for the past twenty years been a resident & householder in Paris.

Our families are connected & I have frequently been to see her at her Paris residence—29 Avenue Bois de Boulogne [sic].—This dates before her marriage when she was Alice Green.

Mrs. Hoffman desires to return to Paris to assist her niece Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt Jr. in YMCA work.

August 4 1917 Charles Ewing  
(of Ewing & Allxxx—Architects)

The Ewing affidavit confirms Alice's residence in Paris as a single woman and provides the exact location of the property she owned at the time.

A second item is a notarized deposition from Herbert L. Satterlee, counselor-at-law and member of the bar of the State of New York. Satterlee says he has known Alice Green Hoffman for 29 years and has known her father, her grandfather and other family members. He says she was born in New York, that her family and husband are American citizens, and she has never lost her citizenship. He also writes, "She is of good character and a good citizen." He ends by writing that his firm has documentation to prove the above, but it was destroyed in a fire at the Equitable Building in January 1912.

A *third* is a handwritten note by Alice Hoffman to xxxx Wm. Phillips. (Assume he is a passport office functionary.)

Dear Mr. Phillips -

Aug 6 1917

When I learned that my niece Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt Jr. was going to Paris for the purpose of doing work for the Y.M.C.A. I offered her my house (which has been open during the war, in fear for the xxxx xxxxx xxx years) to use in any way that she chose at my expense. [her added emphasis] I received a cable shortly after leaving finance orders to my housekeeper to prepare for Mrs. Roosevelt, that it would be impossible owing to the shortage of fuel & food. I repeated my instructions by cable & shipped the principal supplies enough to last six months—My reason for going to Paris is to take charge of all these necessary details & leave Mrs. Roosevelt free to devote her time to her work, in which I shall endeavor to help her as well.

I am accustomed to dealing with & overcoming difficulties. I think it desirable that I should be there.

Yours very truly

Alice Hoffman

Alice's note confirms she left Paris when World War I broke out. It also may help support the assumption that the war was a factor in her decision to buy property in an area as remote as Bogue Banks. We have no evidence she used a passport to return to France during the war. The note does, however, definitely show how close Alice was to her niece, Eleanor, Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt Jr., and the interest Alice had in helping to support her. Alice's words help us understand why Eleanor's children would become heirs to the Bogue Banks property.

Alice also gives us a sense of Eleanor's character. Eleanor followed her husband, who had enlisted, to France and was doing work for the YMCA in Paris. We know from other sources that during World War I Eleanor was running canteens, clubs, and leave centers for soldiers as well as teaching French. She also designed

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