

A Guide to the Newport News, City of/ Warwick County (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1824-1928; undated

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia

Library of Virginia

2011

History

Processed by: Library of Virginia staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Newport News, City of/ Warwick County (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1824-1928; undated

Subtitle: Newport News, City of/ Warwick County (Va.) Naturalization Records

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Publication Statement

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MARC record by Greg Crawford, 14 September 2011

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Newport News, City of/ Warwick County (Va.) Circuit Court

Extent

1.8 cu. ft. (3 boxes); 18 volumes

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Loose records, aside from clerk's correspondence regarding naturalization records, and both Declaration of Intention volumes came to the Library of Virginia in a 2007 transfer of court papers from the City of Newport News under the accession number 43558.

The remaining naturalization volumes and the clerk's correspondence regarding naturalization records came to the Library of Virginia in a undated transfer of court papers from the City of Newport News.

Processing Information

Loose naturalization records, 1824-1911; undated, were processed by G. Crawford.

The remaining loose naturalization records consist primarily of clerk's correspondence regarding naturalization records, 1921-1928, remain unprocessed.

Five volumes of Military Petitions for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918, with No. 1M-125M, No. 151-250, No. 251-500, No. No. 2001-2250, and No. 2251-2319; one volume titled Petition and Record, Division of Naturalization, Department of Commerce and Labor, 1910-1918; and one volume titled Naturalization Records, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1906-1910, were microfilmed by the Library of Virginia's Imaging Services Division in 1973.

Encoded by G. Crawford: September 2011; updated by M. Long: January 2026.

Preferred Citation

Newport News, City of/ Warwick County (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1824-1928; undated. Local government records collection, Newport News, City of/ Warwick County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

Alternative Form Available

Three volumes of Military Petitions for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918, with No. 1M-125M, No. 151-250, and No. 251-500 and one volume titled Petition and Record, Division of Naturalization, Department of Commerce and Labor, 1910-1918, are available on microfilm stored at the Virginia State Records Center on reel barcode 75256, SRC box 2433. Two volumes of Military Petitions for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News with No. 2001-2250 and No. 2251-2319 and one volume titled Naturalization Records, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1906-1910, are available on microfilm stored at the Virginia State Records Center on reel barcode 75255, SRC box 2433. Security microforms (i.e. microfilm and microfiche) stored through this program are not used for reference purposes and access restrictions apply. Contact the [State Records Center](#) with questions regarding these materials.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional Newport News, City of/ Warwick County Court Records can be found on microfilm at The Library of Virginia. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

Warwick County is one of Virginia's Lost Records Localities. Additional Warwick County Court Records may be found in the Lost Records Localities Digital Collection available on the Library of Virginia. Search the [Lost Records Localities Digital Collection](#) available at Virginia Memory.

Historical Information

Context for Record Type: Beginning in 1795, a person could declare their intent to become a citizen at any time and in any place after they arrived in the United States. Prior to the Naturalization Act of 1906, the naturalization process primarily occurred in local and state courts. Declarations of intent were the record by which an applicant for U.S. citizenship declared their intent to become a citizen and renounced their allegiance to a foreign government. This document typically preceded proof of residence or a petition to become a citizen by two or more years.

Following the passage of the Naturalization Act of 1906, the federal government standardized the naturalization process by issuing bound volumes containing standard naturalization forms. These bound volumes were kept by the various courts of record in which a person could make a declaration of intent to become a U.S. citizen, and copies of the records were sent on to the federal government.

During World War I, Congress passed a new law regarding the naturalization of military service members on May 9, 1918. This law allowed any alien or resident of a dependent territory serving in the armed forces during World War I to gain citizenship without a declaration of intention or residency requirement.

Locality History: Newport News was located in Warwick County, which is now extinct. The origin of the name is uncertain but the phrase "Newport News" appeared in documents as early as 1619 and probably commemorated Christopher Newport, who made five voyages to Virginia between 1607 and 1619. Newport News was a small settlement until late in the nineteenth century, when it became the eastern terminus of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway. The Old Dominion Land Company bought land there in 1880 and began laying out a new village in October. Newport News was incorporated as a city by act of the General Assembly in 1896 without ever having been incorporated as a town. On 1 July 1958 Newport News was enlarged by consolidation with the city of Warwick, which then became extinct.

Warwick County (extinct) was named either for Robert Rich, earl of Warwick, a prominent member of the London Company, or for the county of Warwick in England. The county was originally called Warwick River and was one of the original shires, or counties, first enumerated in 1634. The shorter name was adopted in 1643. Warwick County became extinct in 1952, when it became the city of Warwick. The new city was consolidated with the city of Newport News in 1958 and took the latter's name. Denbigh was the county seat.

Lost Locality Note: Warwick County is one of Virginia's Lost Records Localities. County court records were destroyed at several times with most destruction occurring during the Civil War. The clerk's office was burned on 15 December 1864. County court minute books and loose records from 1787 to 1819 were destroyed by the fire. Additional records were burned in Richmond on 3 April 1865, where they had been moved for safekeeping during the Civil War.

Scope and Content

Newport News, City of/ Warwick County (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1824-1928; undated, consists of loose naturalization records filed in the local court, 1824-1928; undated; four volumes of standardized naturalization volumes issued by the federal government, 1906-1918; thirteen volumes related to Military Petitions for Naturalization, 1918; and one 1918-1920 Certificate of Naturalization stub-book from Warwick County.

The bulk of the loose naturalization records, 1824-1911; undated, may include affidavits, reports for naturalization, declarations of intent to become United States citizens, and notices of application for admission of citizenship. The reports are narrative accounts made by applicants summarizing their journey to the United States. The declarations of intent record the person's name, place of birth, age, country of previous citizenship, renunciation of allegiance and fidelity to the nation of which the person is currently a citizen, and the date the intention was sworn. Affidavits, signed by those who knew the applicant and could vouch for their loyalty to the United States, may also be filed with the reports and declarations.

The remaining loose naturalization records, 1921-1928, consist of clerk's correspondence with the federal government regarding naturalization records of individuals. These records are unprocessed.

Standardized naturalization volumes issued by the federal government for this locality, 1906-1918, include four volumes of the two primary types of naturalization volumes issued by the federal government: Declaration of Intention volumes and Petition volumes. Oftentimes, applicants were documented in both of these volume types within a locality, but that is not always the case. An applicant may have entered their declaration of intention in one locality before moving and completing their naturalization petition elsewhere.

Declaration of Intention volumes record declarations of intent to become United States citizens. Information on the declaration of intent includes a person's name, age, occupation, color, complexion, height in feet and inches, weight, color of hair, color of eyes, other visible distinctive marks, place and date of birth, current residence, place from where emigrated to the United States, vessel arrived on, last foreign residence, a renunciation of allegiance and fidelity to the state of which the person is currently a citizen, and the date the intention was sworn.

Petition volumes, often called Petition and Record, record the petitions for naturalization, oaths of allegiance, and orders of court admitting petitioner to United States citizenship. Not all parts may be completed as all stages of the citizenship process could be completed in different courts and in different locations in the United States.

A petition for naturalization contains the petitioner's name, address, occupation, birthdate and place, place where emigrated from and date and port of arrival in the U.S., name of ship on which emigrated, where declared intention to become a citizen, spouse's name, place of birth and address, and number of children with their names, birth dates and places of birth. Additional recorded information includes a renunciation of allegiance and fidelity to the state of which the person is currently a citizen or subject, a statement that the petitioner can speak English, and the date since the petitioner has resided constantly in the U.S. An affidavit of witness to these facts is signed by two persons.

For many petitions, a declaration of intent and occasionally other correspondence or related documentation is inserted into the volume facing the naturalization petition. Also sometimes included is an order of the court admitting the petitioner to United States citizenship that includes date of citizenship and certificate of naturalization number.

Inserted into the volumes at various points were correspondence and regulations from the United States Department of Labor's Bureau of Naturalization.

The Military Petitions for Naturalization volumes, 1918; undated, are petitions for naturalization from soldiers who were applying for citizenship under the law of May 9, 1918. Contents of these volumes are similar to other standardized naturalization Petition volumes: address, occupation, birthdate and place, place where emigrated from and date and port of arrival in the U.S., name of ship on which emigrated, where declared intention to become a citizen, spouse's name, place of birth and address, and number of children with their names, birth dates and places of birth. These volumes also include record of their military service. Earlier volume entries also include physical description applicants. Also included is an undated Naturalization Index that lists military petitions filed in Newport News Corporation Court and Circuit Court.

The Certificate of Naturalization stub-book from Warwick County, 1918-1920 contains certificate numbers 1033301-1033350. Each completed certificate gives the certificate number, name, age, declaration of intention number (if recorded in Newport News, City of/ Warwick County), court and locality of issue of declaration of intention, volume and number of petition for naturalization (if recorded in Newport News, City of/ Warwick County), date order signed, and name, age, and place of residence for wife and minor children. Laid in is a letter from the Naturalization Service dated 1938 stating that Joseph Russo (cert. no. 1033320) repudiated his citizenship in 1932.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:

- Series I: Loose Naturalization Records, 1824-1928; undated, separated between processed and unprocessed records. Processed records, 1824-1911; undated, are arranged chronologically. Unprocessed records, 1921-1928, are housed in a separate box and loosely arranged alphabetically.
- Series II: Standardized Naturalization Volumes, 1906-1918, separated into four volumes and arranged chronologically.
- Series III: Military Petitions for Naturalization, 1918; undated, separated into thirteen volumes and arranged chronologically.
- Series IV: Certificates of Naturalization, 1918-1920, arranged by certificate number.

Contents List

Series I: Loose Naturalization Records, 1824-1928; undated

Extent

1.8 cu. ft. (3 boxes)

Arrangement

Separated between processed and unprocessed records. Processed records, 1824-1911; undated, are arranged chronologically. Unprocessed records, 1921-1928, are housed in a separate box and loosely arranged alphabetically.

Barcode number 1177835: Naturalization Records, 1824-1909, undated

Barcode number 0007284311: Naturalization Records, 1907-1911

Barcode number 1012898: Naturalization Records, 1921-1928

Series II: Standardized Naturalization Volumes, 1906-1918

Extent

4 volumes

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Barcode number 1126989: Naturalization Records, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1906-1910

Barcode number 1182708: Naturalization Records: Record of Declaration

of Intention, Corporation Court, 1908-1910

Barcode number 1182712: Naturalization Records: Record of Declaration of Intention, 1910

Barcode number 1126991: Petition and Record, Division of Naturalization, Department of Commerce and Labor, 1910-1918

Series III: Military Petitions for Naturalization, 1918; undated

Extent

13 volumes

Arrangement

Separated into thirteen volumes and arranged chronologically.

Barcode number 1127035: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1127036: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1127037: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1127038: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1126868: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1126869: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1126870: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1126871: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1126872: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1127033: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1127032: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1127034: Military for Naturalization, Corporation Court, Newport News, 1918

Barcode number 1126990: Naturalization Index, undated

Series IV: Certificates of Naturalization, 1918-1920

Extent

1 volume

Arrangement

Arranged by certificate number.

Barcode number 1126988: U.S. Department of Labor, Naturalization Service Vol. 27247, Certificate of Naturalization, 1918-1920

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