

A Guide to the Petersburg (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1810-1936, undated

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia
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2018

History

Processed by: Library of Virginia staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Petersburg (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1810-1936, undated

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Publication Statement

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MARC record by Greg Crawford, 29 November 2018

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Petersburg (Va.) Circuit Court

Extent

.45 cu. ft. (1 box); 34 volumes

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

City of Petersburg's loose naturalization records, 1810-1936, are digitized and available through the [Naturalization Records Digital Collection](#) on the Library of Virginia website. Please use digital images.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Loose records and certificates of naturalization 930401-930450, 930501-930600, 930651-930755, 932201-932300, 932401-932458, 933501-933529, 933551-933650, 933751-933778, 933851-933900, 934001-934006, and 934151-934178 came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from the City of Petersburg.

Record of Declaration of Intention, 1907-1924; Department of Commerce and Petitions for Naturalization, 1907-1918; and certificates of naturalization 932351-932400 and 933701-933750 came to the Library of Virginia in a 2008 transfer of court papers from the City of Petersburg under the accession number 43614.

Certificates of naturalization 933451-933500, 933801-933850, 1066951-1067000, 1067151-1067200, 1093501-1093550, 1093651-1093700, 1093751-1093800, 1094301-1094350, 1094401-1094450, 1094551-1094600, 1095301-1095350, and 1095401-1095450 came to the Library of Virginia in a 2021 transfer of court papers from the City of Petersburg under the accession number 53422.

Processing Information

Loose naturalization records, 1810-1936, undated, were processed in two separate groups for the purpose of inclusion in the Library of Virginia's Naturalization Records Digital Collection. The first section, ranging from 1810 to 1936, was processed and indexed as a distinct unit by E. Jordan. The second section, ranging from 1818 to 1854 and housed in a folder at the end of the box, was removed from the Petersburg Hustings Court papers and then processed and indexed as a distinct unit by M. Long.

Record of Declaration of Intention, 1907-1924; Department of Commerce and Petitions for Naturalization, 1907-1918; and certificates of naturalization 932351-932400 and 933701-933750 were processed by D. Dulaney in 2008.

The two standardized volumes of naturalization records issued by the federal government were microfilmed by the Library of Virginia's Imaging Services Division in 1975.

Encoded by G. Crawford: November 2018; updated by M. Long: January 2026.

Preferred Citation

Petersburg (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1810-1936, undated. Local government records collection, Petersburg (City) Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

Alternative Form Available

Record of Declaration of Intention, 1907-1924, is available on microfilm stored at the Virginia State Records Center on reel barcode 82477, SRC box 2685. Department of Commerce and Petitions for Naturalization, 1907-1918, is available on microfilm stored at the Virginia State Records Center on reel barcode 80916, SRC box 2614. 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 Petersburg Court Records can be found on microfilm at The Library of Virginia. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

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.

Locality History: Petersburg was formed from parts of Dinwiddie, Prince George, and Chesterfield Counties. A garrison and fur trading post called Fort Henry was established there in 1645 on the site of the Indian town

Appamattuck. The present name, suggested in 1733 by William Byrd (1674-1744), honors Peter Jones, Byrd's companion on expeditions into the Virginia backcountry. Petersburg was established in 1748 and incorporated as a town in 1784. In the latter year the towns of Blandford, Pocahontas, and Ravenscroft were added to Petersburg. It was incorporated as a city in 1850.

Scope and Content

Petersburg (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1810-1936, undated, consists of loose naturalization records filed in the local court, 1810-1936; two standardized volumes of naturalization records issued by the federal government, 1907-1924; and thirty-two naturalization certificate booklets issued by the federal government, 1918, undated.

Loose naturalization records, 1810-1936, 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.

Standardized volumes of naturalization records consists of Record of Declaration of Intention, 1907-1924, and Department of Commerce and Petitions for Naturalization, 1907-1918. There were 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 certificates of naturalization, 1918, undated, consists of certificate booklets for certificates numbered 930401-930450, 930501-930600, 930651-930755, 932201-932300, 932351-932458, 933451-933529, 933551-933650, 933701-933778, 933801-933900, 934001-934006, 934151-934178, 1066951-1067000, 1067151-1067200, 1093501-1093550, 1093651-1093700, 1093751-1093800, 1094301-1094350, 1094401-1094450, 1094551-1094600, 1095301-1095350, and 1095401-1095450. Each certificate gives the certificate number, name, age, declaration of intention number (if recorded in Petersburg), court and locality of issue of declaration of intention, volume and number of petition for naturalization (if recorded in Petersburg), date order signed, and name, age, and place of residence for wife and minor children.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:

- Series I: Loose Naturalization Records, 1810-1936, arranged chronologically. Records processed at a

later time than the bulk of the series, ranging in date from 1818 to 1854, are housed in a folder at the end of the box.

- Series II: Naturalization Volumes, 1907-1924, separated into two volumes and arranged chronologically. Housed together in one box.
- Series III: Certificates of Naturalization, 1918, undated, separated into thirty-two booklets and arranged by certificate number. Separated between four boxes and housed with other record types.

Contents List

Series I: Loose Naturalization Records, 1810-1936

Extent

.45 cubic feet (1 box)

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically. Records processed at a later time than the bulk of the series, ranging in date from 1818 to 1854, are housed in a folder at the end of the box.

Barcode number 0007450499: Naturalization Records, 1810-1936

Series II: Naturalization Volumes, 1907-1924

Extent

2 volumes

Arrangement

Separated into two volumes and arranged chronologically. Housed together in one box.

Barcode number 1183565: Various Naturalization Volumes: Certificates of Naturalization, 933701-933750, May 1918. Certificates of Naturalization, 932351-932400, May 1918. Record of Declaration of Intention, 1907-1924. Petitions for Naturalization, 1907-1918, 1907-1924

Series III: Certificates of Naturalization, 1918, undated

Extent

32 volumes

Arrangement

Separated into thirty-two booklets and arranged by certificate number. Separated between four boxes and housed with other record types.

Barcode number 1183565: Various Naturalization Volumes: Certificates of Naturalization, 933701-933750, May 1918. Certificates of Naturalization, 932351-932400, May 1918. Record of Declaration of Intention, 1907-1924. Petitions for Naturalization, 1907-1918, 1907-1924

Barcode number 1199457: Naturalization Certificates, undated

Barcode number 1047085: Naturalization Certificates 932201-932250; Estate Cases; Deed and Delinquent Land Receipts; Deposit Book, 1845-1918

Barcode number 0007805335: Naturalization certificates booklets, 1918