

A Guide to the Winchester (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1907-1918; undated

Winchester (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1907-1918; undated
1907-1918; undated

A Collection in the Library of Virginia
Library of Virginia
2024

History

Processed by: M. Long

Title Statement

A Guide to the Winchester (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1907-1918; undated

Subtitle: Winchester (Va.) Naturalization Records

Author: McKenzie Long

Publication Statement

Date: © 2024 By The Library of Virginia. All Rights Reserved.

Publisher: Library of Virginia

Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from being created directly into EAD, created by McKenzie Long, 30 September 2024

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Winchester (Va.) Circuit Court

Extent

.23 cu. ft. (1 box); 2 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

These items came to the Library of Virginia in an undated transfer of court papers from the City of Winchester.

Processing Information

Loose naturalization records, 1907-1918; undated, were processed by M. Long. Personal naturalization records, 1910-1918, were indexed for the purpose of inclusion in the Library of Virginia's Naturalization Records digital collection by M. Long.

Naturalization Records: Declarations of Intention, 1910-1911, was microfilmed by the Library of Virginia's Imaging Services Division in 1976.

Encoded by M. Long: September 2024; updated by M. Long: January 2026.

Preferred Citation

Winchester (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1907-1918; undated. Local government records collection, Winchester (City) Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

Alternative Form Available

Naturalization Records: Declarations of Intention, 1910-1911, is available on microfilm stored at the Virginia State Records Center on reel barcode 107377, SRC box 3918. 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 Winchester 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: Winchester, in Frederick County, was first known as Opequon, then as Frederick's Town (or Fredericktown), and, finally, on establishment as a town in 1752, as Winchester. According to tradition, one of the town's founders, James Wood, named the town in honor of his birthplace in England. Winchester was incorporated as a town in 1779 and as a city in 1874.

Scope and Content

Winchester (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1907-1918; undated, consists of loose naturalization records filed in the local court, 1907-1918; undated, and two standardized volumes of naturalization records issued by the federal government, 1910-1911.

Loose naturalization records, 1907-1918; 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.

Additional administrative naturalization records included in this collection consist of blank and sample

naturalization forms, policies sent from the Federal Bureau of Naturalization, and correspondence between the clerk and the Federal Bureau.

Standardized volumes of naturalization records consists of Naturalization Petition and Record, 1910-1911, and Naturalization Records: Declarations of Intention, 1910-1911. 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.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:

- **Series I: Loose Naturalization Records, 1907-1918; undated**, separated between personal and administrative naturalization records and arranged chronologically.
- **Series II: Naturalization Volumes, 1910-1911**, separated into two volumes and arranged chronologically.

Contents List

Series I: Loose Naturalization Records, 1907-1918; undated

Extent

.23 cubic feet (1 box)

Arrangement

Separated between personal and administrative naturalization records and arranged chronologically.

Barcode number 0007892942: Naturalization Records, 1907-1918; undated

Series II: Naturalization Volumes, 1910-1911

Extent

2 volumes

Arrangement

Separated into two volumes and arranged chronologically.

Barcode number 1096836: Naturalization Petition and Record, 1910-1911

Barcode number 1096755: Naturalization Records: Declarations of Intention, 1910-1911

Library of Virginia