

A Guide to the Brunswick County (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1808-1921

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia
Library of Virginia
2018

History

Processed by: Library of Virginia staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Brunswick County (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1808-1921

Subtitle: Brunswick County (Va.) Naturalization Records

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Publication Statement

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from being created directly into EAD, created by Greg Crawford, 12 October 2018

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Brunswick County (Va.) Circuit Court

Extent

.1 cu. ft. (1 box); 1 microfilm reel

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Brunswick County's loose naturalization records, 1808-1902, are digitized and available through the [Naturalization Records Digital Collection](#) on the Library of Virginia website. Please use digital images.

Department of Commerce and Labor, Division of Naturalization, Declaration of Intention, 1907-1921, is available in the Library of Virginia reading room on Brunswick County (Va.) Reel 133. See ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Loose records came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Brunswick County.

Microfilm images made from the original standardized volume of naturalization records issued by the federal government that is housed in the Brunswick County clerk's office.

Original volume retained in the locality. Contact the Clerk of the Circuit Court for access.

Processing Information

Loose naturalization records, 1808-1902, were processed and indexed for the purpose of inclusion in the Library of Virginia's Naturalization Records Digital Collection by Library of Virginia staff.

Standardized volume of naturalization records issued by the federal government was microfilmed by the Library of Virginia's Imaging Services Division in 1974.

Encoded by G. Crawford: October 2018; updated by M. Long: March 2025.

Preferred Citation

Brunswick County (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1808-1921. Local government records collection, Brunswick County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

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

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

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: Brunswick County was named for the duchy of Brunswick-Luneburg, one of the German possessions of King George I. It was formed by statute in 1720 from Prince George County and on 31 October 1723 the boundaries of the county were ordered to be laid out, but, because of the sparse population, the county court first met in June 1732. Brunswick County was enlarged by the addition of parts of Surry and Isle of Wight Counties in 1733. The county seat is Lawrenceville.

Lost Locality Note: Brunswick County is one of Virginia's Lost Records Localities. Most loose records prior to 1781 are missing. Pre-1781 volumes that record deeds, court orders, and wills exist.

Scope and Content

Brunswick County (Va.) Naturalization Records, 1808-1921, consists of loose naturalization records filed in the local court, 1808-1902, and a standardized volume of naturalization records issued by the federal government, 1907-1921.

Loose naturalization records, 1808-1902, 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 Department of Commerce and Labor, Division of Naturalization, Declaration of Intention, 1907-1921. 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, 1808-1902, arranged chronologically.
- Series II: Naturalization Volumes, 1907-1921, arranged chronologically.

Contents List

Series I: Loose Naturalization Records, 1808-1902

Extent

.1 cubic feet (1 box)

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Barcode number 1140953: Marriage Records and Vital Statistics, County Administrative Records: Overseers of the Poor Records, Organization Records, School Records, Town Administrative Records, Tax and Fiscal Records, Fiduciary Records, Court Records: Personal Documentation, 1800-1944

Series II: Naturalization Volumes, 1907-1921

Extent

1 microfilm reel

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically

Arranged chronologically.

**Brunswick County (Va.) Reel 133: Department of Commerce and Labor,
Division of Naturalization, Declaration of Intention, 1907-1921**

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