

Guide to Jewish Genealogy in Chicagoland by Mike Karsen

Chicago Naturalization Records

Naturalization records contain a treasure trove of information for the Jewish genealogist. Naturalization records go back to 1871 in Chicago and a **soundex index of all naturalizations for Chicago, Cook County, and some portions of Indiana and Wisconsin exist for 1871-1950**. The index contains the name of applicant, address, court where naturalized, and certificate number, country of origin, birth date, date and port of arrival in United States, date of naturalization, and names of witnesses.

This **index** can be found in the following places:

1. Online at www.ancestry.com .

Do a normal search but in the list of results look in the folder:

Immigration & Travel

U.S. Naturalization Records Indexes

For Max Blumenfeld, I found the following record:

B - 455	
Family name Blumenfeld	Given name or names Max Harry
Address 650 E. 47th St.	Title and location of court Superior Court, Cook Co., Ill.
P. 11956	
Country Roumania	Date of naturalization 4/10/86
Date of birth 11/25/01 x	Date of arrival 5/8/14
Witness Samuel Harold Leavitt	Address 2634 W. North Ave.
Jacob Leavitt	1820 W. Taylor St.

2. This same record could be found by searching the on www.FamilySearch.org

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Name:	Max Harry Blumenfeld
Event Type:	Naturalization
Event Place:	Cook, Illinois
Event Date:	1914
Birth Year:	1886
Birthplace:	Roumania

Affiliate Publication Title: **Soundex Index to Naturalization Petitions for U.S. District & Circuit Courts, Northern District of Illinois and Immigration and Naturalization Service District 9, 1840-1950** , Affiliate Publication Number: **M1285** , Affiliate Film Number: **16** , GS Film number: **1432016** , Digital Folder Number: **004640960** , Image Number: **04706**

You can find the exact index card here that you found on ancestry.com by clicking further.

Another tool for online searching is the **Cook County Clerk of the Circuit Court: Declarations of Intentions Index.**

<http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/nr/default.aspx>

For Max Blumenfeld, I found the following record:

Click on a record to view details.

NAME	BIRTH DATE	BIRTH TOWN	BIRTH COUNTRY	OCCUPATION
BLUMENFELD [BLUMENFIELD], MAX	4/10/1886	BOTOSHAN	ROUMANIA	TAILOR

Record Details for Volume 25

Page Number: **127**
 Declaration Number: **10927**

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	OCCUPATION
MAX	BLUMENFELD [BLUMENFIELD]	TAILOR
BIRTH CITY	BIRTH COUNTRY	BIRTH DATE
BOTOSHAN	ROUMANIA	4/10/1886
CURRENT ADDRESS	CURRENT CITY	
47-1/2 E. 47TH ST.	CHICAGO	
DEPARTURE LOCATION	ARRIVAL DATE	DECLARATION DATE
HAMBURG, GERMANY	11/23/1901	2/20/1909

Once you have found your ancestor on the index, you can proceed with obtaining his/her full naturalization file including the "Declaration of Intention" (also called first papers) and "Petition for Admission to Citizenship" (also called final papers). Remember to find the Court from the Naturalization Index to determine where to find the papers. Early naturalization files (before about 1900) contained very little information, usually just the applicant's name, country of origin, court where naturalized and certificate number, date of

naturalization, and name of witnesses. It may be difficult to even verify that this file belongs to your family member.

In 1906 the federal government established standards for these papers, which included many valuable details including complexion, height, weight, place born and date, address, arrival date in United States with ship, port, where departed from, last foreign residence, name of wife, birth date/place of wife, names of children with birth dates and places, and witnesses. There are two places to obtain these records for Chicago naturalizations:

National Archives (NARA): District court (Federal): online ordering at
<http://www.archives.gov/chicago/finding-aids/naturalization-records.html>

Office of Circuit Court of Cook County:
Superior, Circuit, County and Criminal Courts: call 312-603-6601.

For more information on naturalizations go to
<http://www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/faq.html#Naturalization>

For specific questions on this article, email me at: mike.karsen@jgsi.org