My Search for Chaike Schechter

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Record discovered on 5/14/2005

Important things to note:

• Handwritten notation indicates some naturalization activity in March, 1941
• X-marks to left of passenger names indicate that they were detained; look for Detained Aliens pages at end of manifest
• Post-1907 manifests are 2 pages; include name of contact in “old country” and who they are going to in US
• Passengers usually listed in chronological order, from oldest to youngest immediate family members, then others
• See JewishGen Manifest Marking Infofile (https://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/Manifets/occ/) for details about CofA & Form 505
Multiple searches over many years fail to find any trace of Chaike

Not in any census, marriage or death record: looking for a single woman of her age, with surname resembling Schechter
This request was on 2/2/2008, before USCIS Genealogy Program
I went ahead & subsequently paid for a USCIS Genealogy Program index search, with
same negative results

Notation on passenger manifest indicates that some sort of naturalization activity
took place in 1941
I have asked numerous experts for advice about this case at conferences & society meetings...their answers did help to clarify issues or lead me to other avenues of research.

I was fortunate enough to ask Marian Smith for advice on 3 separate occasions.

USCIS’s blanket “no CA” statement is not entirely accurate – the actual CofA situation is more complex (see slide #11)...
Passenger record discovered 10/25/2006
I had previously learned of Alex’s existence from Rochel & Ida’s Detained Aliens entry
Found Alex’s marriage record

Marriage record lists wife’s maiden surname as Olsberg

marriage record discovered 10/24/2015
Marriage record lists wife’s maiden surname as Olsberg
No results for Ida Olsberg
Marriage records of Alex’s children

Surname listed as Rosenberg or Eisenberg

Children’s marriage records discovered 4/26/2018
Ida’s surname listed as Rosenberg or Eisenberg
Searching for Ida Eisenberg proves fruitful
Date of Alex’s arrival is wrong on Ida’s petition (actual is January 16, 1907)
Date of Ida’s arrival on petition (not shown) is wrong (actual is December 8, 1907)

Which leads to finding naturalization of Alex’s wife
In this case, a Certificate of Registry was issued rather than a Certificate of Arrival. I was lucky that it was included with Ida’s petition – some petition collections do not have CofAs. Note that the date of arrival recorded on Certificate of Registry is wrong (actual is December 8, 1907)
To find actual naturalization papers on FamilySearch, I needed Petition Number (370911) and court (Brooklyn, NY = US Eastern District of New York)

Note that the date on the index card is date of admission (date that oath of citizenship was taken); petition date (not shown) was February 24, 1943.
Conclusions

- Always do comprehensive searches
  - Name variations
  - Search without names
  - “Less is more”
- Repeat searches as more records are added
- Search databases on every site
- Beware the dreaded ditto
- Remember the FAN club
- Don’t be discouraged by negative results
- Sometimes it pays to be lucky
Resources

- USCIS Index Search ($65)
  - [https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/genealogy/searching-index](https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/genealogy/searching-index)

- USCIS Record Request ($65)

- Ancestry.com US Naturalization Record Index
  - [https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1192/](https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1192/)

- FamilySearch Final petition and citizenship papers (New York: Eastern District), 1865-1958
  - [https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/988724](https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/988724)

- JewishGen Info File on Manifest Markings
  - [https://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/Manifests/occ/](https://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/Manifests/occ/)