

A Guide to the Fluvanna County (Va.) Register of Marriage Certificates, 1781-1849

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Descriptive Summary

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Language

English

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1 vol. (162 p.) This volume is a negative photostatic copy.

Repository

Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Use microfilm copy, Fluvanna County, Reel 24.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

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Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

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

Historical Information

Fluvanna County was formed in 1777 from Albemarle County. It takes its name from an eighteenth-century term for the upper James River. The name, meaning river of Anne, was originally bestowed in honor of Queen Anne of England.

Prior to 1853, when the Commonwealth began recording vital statistics, Virginia marriages were recorded at the county or city level. Beginning in 1661, in order to be married by license, the groom was required to go before the county clerk and give bond with security that there was no lawful reason to prevent the marriage. The license, issued then by the clerk, was given to the minister who performed the service. Written consent from a parent or guardian was needed for individuals younger than twenty-one years.

Until 1780, marriages could be performed only by ministers of the Established Church, who were required by law to record marriages in the parish register. In 1780, dissenting ministers (only four per county from each sect) were permitted to perform marriage ceremonies. In order to have a record of all marriages, ministers were required to sign a certificate to be filed with the county clerk. Initially, ministers sent marriage certificates to the clerk every three months. Some ministers adopted a custom of making collected returns--a list of marriages performed within a period of time such as a year or several years. Beginning in 1784, marriage certificates were returned annually. The law was rarely enforced, and ministers' returns were sometimes late, incorrect, incomplete and in many instances, not made at all. County clerks compiled a register of marriages based, in part, on ministers' returns.

Scope and Content

Register of Marriage Certificates, 1781-1849, is comprised of individual marriage certificates. These certificates record the names of both parties celebrating the rites of matrimony, the date of the marriage, the name of the minister who performed the ceremony and the date that the marriage was registered in the county clerk's office. These signed documents certified that a minister had performed the actual marriage ceremony between the named individuals on a given date. By 1797 (p. 27), the minister's religious denomination is noted. Beginning in 1801 (p. 52), ministers' returns are also included. These returns, made by individual ministers of marriages performed within the county, are in the form of lists which record the names of all parties and the dates of the marriages. In addition, there is an internal index to this volume which is alphabetically arranged according to each married individual's order of appearance within the volume.

Access Terms

Fluvanna County (Va.). Circuit Court.

Christian sects--Virginia--Fluvanna County.

Clergy--Virginia--Fluvanna County.
Marriage--Virginia--Fluvanna County.
Fluvanna County (Va.)--History.
Local government records--Virginia--Fluvanna County.
Marriage certificates--Virginia--Fluvanna County.
Marriage records--Virginia--Fluvanna County.
Ministers' returns--Virginia--Fluvanna County.

Arrangement

Chronological.