

# A Guide to the Charlotte County (Va.) Records Related to the Registration of Free Persons, 1794-1865

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia

Library of Virginia

2007

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## History

**Processed by:** Library of Virginia staff

## Title Statement

A Guide to the Charlotte County (Va.) Records Related to the Registration of Free Persons, 1794-1865

**Subtitle:** Charlotte County (Va.) Records Related to the Registration of Free Persons, 1794-1865

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## Publication Statement

**Date:** © 2007 By The Library of Virginia. All Rights Reserved.

**Publisher:** Library of Virginia

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** Machine-readable finding aid derived from MARC record, created by Sarah Nerney, 6 September 2007

**Language Usage:** Description is in English

## Revision Description

**2013-11-21** Converted to schema conforming EAD by dtd2schema.vh.xsl.

## Descriptive Summary

### Language

English

### Collector

Charlotte County (Va.) Circuit Court.

### Physical Characteristics

digital images

### Location

Library of Virginia

### Repository

The Library of Virginia

# Administrative Information

## Access Restrictions

Charlotte County (Va.) "Register of Free Negroes," 1794-1865, is digitized and available through [Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative Digital Collection](#) on the Library of Virginia website. Please use digital images.

## Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

## Processing Information

The microfilm copy of these records was generated by The Library of Virginia's Imaging Services Branch.

These records have been processed, scanned, and indexed by L. Neuroth and other LVA staff for the purposes of digitizing them for the digital project Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative.

Encoded by Sarah Nerney, 2007; updated by M. Mason, July 2025

## Preferred Citation

Charlotte County (Va.) Records Related to the Registration of Free Persons, 1794-1865. [Indicate volume or record type], Local government records collection, Charlotte County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia

# Alternative Form Available

"Register of Free Negroes," 1794-1865, is available on microfilm as Charlotte County (Va.) Reel No. 146

# Custodial History

"Register of Free Negroes," 1794-1865" came to the Library of Virginia as a loan for digitization in 2025 under accession 54474 and was then returned to locality by request of the Clerk.

# Adjunct Descriptive Data

## Related Material

Records related to free and enslaved people of Charlotte County (Va.) and other localities are available through the [Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative Digital Collection](#) on the Library of Virginia website.

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

# Location of Originals

Original "Register of Free Negroes," 1794-1865 volume retained in locality by Clerk of the Circuit Court for Charlotte County

# Historical Information

## Context for Record Type:

"Free Negro" Registers

In 1793, the Virginia General Assembly specified that "free Negroes or mulattoes" were required to be registered and numbered in a book to be kept by the town clerk, which shall specify "age, name, colour, and stature, by whom, and in what court the said negro or mulatto was emancipated; or that such negro or mulatto was born free." The process was extended to counties in 1803. Although some clerks were already recording such features, an 1834 Act of Assembly made it a uniform requirement to record identifying marks and scars and the instrument of emancipation, whether by deed or will. This bound register often coincided with a loose certificate containing largely the same identifying information. Both the registration system and the process of renewal was enforced differently in the various Virginia localities. Thus, the information found in these registers may differ from year to year and across localities.

The register books resulting from the administration of the 1793 and 1803 Act of Assembly are evidence of

Virginia legislators' reaction to a quickly growing free Black and multiracial population in Virginia in the post Revolutionary War period. Acts such as these allowed white officials to police the activities and movement of free Black community members throughout the state thereby restricting their autonomy.

**Locality History Note:** Charlotte County was named for Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, wife of King George III. It was formed from Lunenburg County in 1764.

## Scope and Content

Charlotte County (Va.) Records Related to the Registration of Free Persons, 1794-1865 , consists only of the "Register of Free Negroes," 1794-1865.

"Register of Free Negroes," 1794-1865, of Charlotte County lists the date registered, registration number, age, name, color, stature, marks or scars, in what court the person was emancipated or whether the person was born free. Sometimes familial relationships are given within a registration. The clerk noted whether the registration was a renewal. There is an included index.

## Arrangement

This collection is arranged

- Series I: Records Related to the Registration of Free Persons, 1794-1865

## Contents List

### **Series I: Records relating to the registration of free persons 1794-1865**

#### **Extent**

digital images

**Physical Location** Library of Virginia

**Barcode number 0007907411: "Register of Free Negroes," 1794-1865**

Library of Virginia