

A Guide to the Bland County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1874-1938 (bulk 1890-1920)

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia
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History

Processed by: S. Bagley

Title Statement

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Author: S. Bagley

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Profile Description

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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

Bland County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics

Digital images; 18.9 cubic feet (41 boxes)

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Chancery Causes 1874-1928 use digital images found on the [Chancery Records Index](#) available electronically at the website of the Library of Virginia.

Chancery Causes 1936-1938 are processed and indexed information is available on the Chancery Records Index, but digital images are not available at this time. Contact Archives Research Services for availability.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These materials came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Bland County (Va.) under an undated accession.

Processing Information

Bland County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1874-1938, were processed by S. Bagley in 2007.

Digital images were generated by Crowley Micrographics through the Library of Virginia's Circuit Court Records Preservation Program in 2008.

Encoded by S. Bagley in 2007; updated by C. Collins: July 2023

Preferred Citation

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Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional unindexed post-1913 records may be available at the Bland County Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

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

Bland County is one of Virginia's Lost Records Localities. Additional Bland County Court Records may be found in the Virginia Lost Records Localities Collection at the Library of Virginia. Search the [Lost Records Localities Database](#) found at the Library of Virginia web site.

Historical Information

Context for Record Type: Chancery Causes are cases of equity. According to Black's Law Dictionary they are "administered according to fairness as contrasted with the strictly formulated rules of common law." A judge, not a jury, determines the outcome of the case; however, the judge is basing the decision on findings compiled and documented by Commissioners. Chancery causes are useful when researching local history, genealogical information, and land or estate divisions. They are a valuable source of local, state, social, and legal history and serve as a primary source for understanding a locality's history. Chancery causes document the lived experiences of free and enslaved individuals; women; children; people living with physical disabilities or mental health struggles; people living in poverty; defunct institutions and corporate entities; or those that may not have otherwise left traditional written histories.

Locality History: Bland County is said to have been named for Richard Bland, a leader of colonial Virginia's resistance to Great Britain in the 1760s and 1770s. It was formed from Giles, Wythe, and Tazewell Counties in 1861, and another part of Giles was added in 1900. The county seat is Bland.

Lost Locality Note: Many Bland County loose records were destroyed by fire in 1888. All volumes and part of the chancery papers were saved.

Scope and Content

Bland County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1874-1938, consists of cases concerning issues of equity brought largely by residents of the county and filed in the circuit court. These cases often involve the following actions: divisions of estates or land, disputes over wills, disputes regarding contracts, debt, divorce, and business disputes. Other less prevalent issues include freedom suits, permissions to sell property, and disputes concerning trespass. Predominant documents found in these chancery causes include bills (documents the plaintiff's complaint), answers (defendant's response to the plaintiff's complaint), decrees (court's decision), depositions, affidavits, correspondence, lists of heirs, deeds, plats, wills, records involving

enslaved individuals, business records or vital statistics.

Commonly found surnames among the plaintiffs and defendants include Ashworth, Bishop, Bogle, Compton, Davis, Fanning, Fannon, Foglesong, French, Grayson, Groseclose (also spelled Grossclose), Hancock, Harman, Hoge, Honaker, Johnston, Kegley, Kitts, Lambert, McNutt, Muncy, Mustard, Neel, Newberry, Peery, Shrader, Stowers, Thompson, Thorn, Umbarger, Waddle, Williams, and Wohlford. The Round Mountain Mining & Manufacturing Company is involved in four suits between 1916 and 1924, while the Appalachian Power Company is involved in three suits between 1910 and 1921.

Arrangement

Organized by case, of which each is assigned a unique index number comprised of the latest year found in case and a sequentially increasing 3-digit number assigned by the processor as cases for that year are found. Arranged chronologically.

Arrangement of documents within each folder are generally as follows: Bill, Answer, and Final Decree (if found.)