

A Guide to the Amherst County (Va.) Marriage Consents, 1836-1897 (bulk 1873-1897)

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia 1180857-1180858, 1208484
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History

Processed by: Library of Virginia staff

Title Statement

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

Descriptive Summary

Barcode numbers

1180857-1180858, 1208484

Language

English

Collector

Amherst County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics

1.35 cu.ft. (3 boxes)

Location

State Records Center - Archives Annex, Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These items came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Amherst County.

Preferred Citation

Amherst County (Va.) Marriage Consents, 1836-1907 (bulk 1873-1897). Local government records collection, Amherst County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

This collection is found at the State Records Center. Contact Archives Research Services for access information, directions and hours.

Related Material

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

Historical Information

Amherst County was formed from Albemarle County in 1761. Islands in the Fluvanna (now the James) River were added in 1770. The county was named for Major General Jeffery Amherst, British commander in North America during the latter part of the French and Indian War and governor of Virginia from 1759 to 1768.

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 bond was pledged, with two or more sufficient securities (or witnesses), but no money was exchanged. The license, issued then by the clerk, was given to the minister who performed the service. The practice of bonding was discontinued in 1849, although in some communities bonds were pledged into the 1850s. This practice insured against legal action should the marriage not take place, if either party declined to go through with the union, or if one of the parties was found to be ineligible for marriage--if either the bride or groom was already married or was underage and lacked approval to wed. The marriage 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 minister's religious denomination.

According to Virginia law, individuals under the age of twenty-one needed the consent of a parent or guardian to marry. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, officials were especially concerned about females under the age of 16 marrying without consent. County clerks were not authorized to issue a marriage license without certificate (permission) from the parent, master or guardian. In the nineteenth century, a parent or guardian could give consent verbally to the clerk of the court, or provide written consent in front of one to two witnesses; the consent was then delivered to the county clerk.

These original consents were created by the County Court.

Scope and Content

Amherst County (Va.) Marriage Consents, 1836-1907 (bulk 1873-1897) is a collection of loose, original consents. The consents indicate the names of the parties intending to marry. The earliest consent from 1836 includes an additional marriage bond. A marriage certificate (1859) and a marriage license (1861) are also included in this collection. There are no consents for years 1879, 1892 and 1896. African American consents are found in the collection as well. There are a small number of undated consents found in Box 2.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

Amherst County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Subjects:

African Americans--Marriage--Virginia--Amherst County.

African Americans--Virginia--Amherst County.

Marriage--Virginia--Amherst County.

Geographical Names:

Amherst County (Va.)--History--19th century.

Genre and Form Terms:

Local government records--Virginia--Amherst County.

Marriage consents--Virginia--Amherst County.

Marriage records--Virginia--Amherst County.

Added Entry - Corporate Name:

Amherst County (Va.) County Court.

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically by month and year.

Box 3 is unprocessed

Contents List

Barcode number 1180857: Marriage Consents, 1836-1889 (bulk 1873-1889)

Barcode number 1180858: Marriage Consents, undated-1897 (bulk 1890-1897)

Barcode number 1208484: Marriage Consents, 1850-1907 (bulk 1852-1897)