

# A Guide to the Elizabeth City County (Va.) Marriage Licenses and Consent, 1866

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1866

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## History

**Processed by:** Catherine G. O'Brien

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## Descriptive Summary

### Barcode numbers

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### Language

English

### Collector

Hampton (Va.) Circuit Court

### Physical Characteristics

6 p.

### Location

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 shipments of court papers from Hampton.

## Preferred Citation

Elizabeth City County (Va.) Marriage Licenses and Consent, 1866. Local government records collection, Elizabeth City County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

# Adjunct Descriptive Data

## Related Material

Additional Elizabeth City County marriage records and vital statistics 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 web site.

See the [Lost Records Localities Digital Collection](#) available at Virginia Memory.

For more information and a listing of lost records localities see [Lost Records research note](#).

# Historical Information

Elizabeth City County (extinct) was named for Elizabeth, daughter of James I, and was one of the eight shires established in 1634. It became extinct in 1952, when it was incorporated into the city of Hampton, which was the county seat.

Hampton takes its name from Hampton Creek, earlier called Southampton River in honor of the earl of Southampton, an important figure in the Virginia Company of London. An Indian village stood on the site in 1607, when John Smith visited the area. The English established a village there in 1610 and a trading post in 1630. Hampton was established by an act of assembly in 1680 and was designated as a port in 1708. It was first incorporated as a town in 1849, then incorporated again in 1852, but the act of incorporation was repealed in 1860. The General Assembly again incorporated the town of Hampton in 1887, and it became a city by court order in 1908. It was greatly enlarged in 1952 by a merger with Elizabeth City County and the town of Phoebus; the county and town thereby became extinct.

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. Written consent from a parent or guardian was needed for individuals younger than twenty-one years. The license, issued then by the clerk, was given to the minister who performed the service. In 1853, the General Assembly passed a law requiring the statewide recording of vital statistics. The marriage register, still compiled by the county clerk from ministers' returns and other original marriage records, became more standardized and comprehensive. In Virginia, a statewide index of marriage records was compiled from 1853 to 1935.

Records were burned or destroyed during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. Additional records were burned in Richmond on 3 April 1865, where they had been moved for safekeeping during the Civil War. A few pre-Civil War volumes such as deed books, will books, and order books exist.

# Scope and Content

Elizabeth City County (Va.) Marriage Licenses and Consent, 1866, document the marriages of James Nisser and Mary E. Lancaster, and John Williams, Sr., and Mrs. Mary Frances Heath. The marriage licenses record the time and place of the marriage, the full name, age, place of birth, and names of parents of the parties married, and the occupation of the husband. The licenses also include a minister's return signed by the

minister performing the marriage and documenting the date and place of the marriage. The consent is a handwritten letter from George Nisser to his son James granting permission to marry, for registration with the court.

## **Index Terms**

### **Corporate Names:**

Hampton (Va.) Circuit Court.

### **Subjects:**

Marriage--Virginia--Elizabeth City County.

### **Geographical Names:**

Elizabeth City County (Va.)--History--19th century.

### **Genre and Form Terms:**

Local government records--Virginia--Elizabeth City County.

Marriage licenses--Virginia--Elizabeth City County.

### **Added Entry - Corporate Name:**

Elizabeth City County (Va.) Circuit Court.