

# A Guide to Westmoreland County (Va.) Register of Colored Persons cohabiting together as Husband and Wife, 27th February 1866

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## History

**Processed by:** Greg Crawford

## Title Statement

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

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English

**Physical Characteristics**

Digital images.

**Repository**

Library of Virginia

## Administrative Information

## Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

## Use Restrictions

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## Acquisition Information

This item was transferred to the Library of Virginia by the circuit court clerk of Westmoreland County. Accession number 51798.

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## Preferred Citation

Westmoreland County (Va.) Register of Colored Persons of Westmoreland County, State of Virginia, cohabiting together as Husband and Wife on 27th February 1866. Local Government Records Collection, Westmoreland County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

# Adjunct Descriptive Data

## Related Material

Additional Westmoreland 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.](#)"

Additional cohabitation registers are available digitally with searchable transcriptions through the Library of Virginia's [Virginia Unntold: the African American Narrative](#) website.

## Historical Information

Westmoreland County was named for the English county. It was formed from Northumberland County in 1653. The county seat is Montross.

The Virginia legislature passed an act on 27 February 1866 to legalize the marriages of former slaves who had been cohabiting as of that date. See Virginia Acts of Assembly, 1866-1867, Chapter 18, An act to amend and re-enact the 14th section of chapter 108 of the Code of Virginia for 1860, in regard to registers of marriage; and to legalize the marriages of colored persons now cohabiting as husband and wife.

The federal Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands directed the Assistant Superintendents of the states to order the county clerks to make a registry of such cohabiting couples. See Circular No. 11, dated 19 March 1866, in Orders, Circulars, Circular Letters, and Letters of Instruction, vol. 2 (1866). Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Virginia, 1865-1869. Miscellaneous reel 3880, Library of Virginia. National Archives microfilm M1048 (reel 41), Record Group 105.

## Scope and Content

Westmoreland County (Va.) Register of Colored Persons of Westmoreland County, State of Virginia, cohabiting together as Husband and Wife on 27th February 1866. Also commonly called Westmoreland County (Va.) Cohabitation Register. This register records the name of the husband, his age, place of birth, residence, occupation, last owner, last owner's residence, name of the wife, her age, place of birth, residence, last owner, last owner's residence, name of children with the ages of each, and the date of commencement of cohabitation. Of note is the wide range of localities reported as the former slaves' places of birth.

## Access Terms

Westmoreland County (Va.). Circuit Court.

United States. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands.

African Americans--Employment--Virginia--Westmoreland County.

African Americans--Virginia--Westmoreland County.

Freedmen--Virginia--Westmoreland County.

Slaveholders--Virginia--Westmoreland County.

Westmoreland County (Va.)--History--19th Century.  
Marriage records--Virginia--Westmoreland County.  
Marriage registers--Virginia--Westmoreland County.  
Local government records--Virginia--Westmoreland County.

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