

# A Guide to the John W. Frazier and Bath and Rockbridge Alum Springs Ledger, 1850-1854

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1850-1854

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## History

**Processed by:** Bari Helms

## Title Statement

A Guide to the John W. Frazier and Bath and Rockbridge Alum Springs Ledger, 1850-1854

**Subtitle:** John W. Frazier and Bath and Rockbridge Alum Springs Ledger, 1850-1854

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** Machine-readable finding aid derived from being created directly into EAD, created by Bari Helms, 7 July 2008

**Language Usage:** Description is in English

## Revision Description

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

## Descriptive Summary

### Barcode number

1187991

### Language

English

### Collector

Augusta County (Va.) Circuit Court.

### Physical Characteristics

1 v.

### 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

This item came to the Library of Virginia in transfers of court papers from Augusta County under the accession number 43658.

## Preferred Citation

John W. Frazier and Bath and Rockbridge Alum Springs Ledger, 1850-1854. Local government records collection, Augusta County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. 23219.

# Historical Information

John W. Frazier, born about 1810, was a farm and hotelkeeper in Bath County and Rockbridge County, Virginia. Frazier owned and operated two mineral springs resorts -- Bath Alum Spring and Rockbridge Alum Spring. Frazier purchased the Rockbridge Alum Spring property, a noted antebellum spa complex, in 1852. Frazier began building on the property in 1852 but died in 1853 before the building project was completed. Frazier's brother William Frazier oversaw the completion of the project, and the final results consisted of a large central hotel building flanked with cottages and supporting service buildings. The resort included a barroom and a building used as a store and post office. The hotel property was converted into a hospital in 1861. After the Civil War, an attempt to revive the spa resort failed and the property was ultimately sold at auction in 1880. Today what remains of the old spa property is owned by the Young Life organization.

# Scope and Content

John W. Frazier and Bath and Rockbridge Alum Springs Ledger, 1850-1854, records the financial activities of Frazier and his hotels, two of which were the Bath Alum Spring and the Rockbridge Alum Spring. The ledger documents the accounts of individual customers and employees. Each entry includes the date, type of transaction, and monies credited and debited to the accounts. The early part of the ledger pertains to the accounts of John Frazier's store customers. Customers purchased such items as butter, meal, eggs, sugar, coffee, tobacco, and bacon. Beginning in 1852, the ledger was used to record the business activities of the two alum springs resorts. For Bath Alum Spring, customer accounts document purchases made at the Fairview Store, which sold items such as whiskey, tobacco, sugar, coffee, and cloth. Beginning in 1852, Frazier made entries pertaining to the building project at Rockbridge Alum Spring. Employee accounts document blacksmith work and the buying and hauling of lumber and other building supplies. Also in 1852, customer accounts for hotel customers begin to appear. Transactions document lodging expenses, tavern bills, meals purchased, and livery fees.

Recorded throughout the ledger are entries pertaining to the hire of slaves. One such entry, mentions the arrival of slaves by name -- Alfred Tyler and Rachel and brother. The remainder of these entries merely include the prices paid for the slave hires.

In 1853, the ledger was used by William Frazier who took control of John W. Frazier's estate after his death. William Frazier primarily used the ledger to document the settlement of outstanding accounts. Located in the back of the ledger is a detailed listing of inventory on hand at the Fairview Store in 1854. Examples of items in the inventory include china, glassware, spices, medicines, hardware items, and cloth.

# Index Terms

## Persons:

Frazier, John W.

## Corporate Names:

Bath Alum Spring.  
Rockbridge Alum Spring.

## **Subjects:**

Consumer goods--Virginia.  
Health resorts--Virginia.  
Hotelkeepers--Virginia.  
Hotels--Virginia.  
Mineral waters--Virginia.

## **Geographical Names:**

Augusta County (Va.)--History--19th century.  
Bath County (Va.)--History--19th century.  
Rockbridge County (Va.)--History--19th century.

## **Genre and Form Terms:**

Business records--Virginia.  
Ledgers (account books)--Virginia.  
Local government records--Virginia--Augusta County.

## **Added Entry - Personal Name:**

Frazier, William.