

A Guide to the Powhatan County (Va.) Ministers' Returns Register, 1820-1850

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia Barcode number 1123742/Powhatan County (Va.) Reel 86
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History

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Descriptive Summary

Collection numbers

Barcode 1123742/Powhatan County (Va.) Reel 86

Language

English

Collector

Powhatan County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics

1 v.; 1 microfilm reel

Location

State Records Center - Archives Annex, Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

Use microfilm copy, Powhatan County (Va.) Reel 86.

Acquisition Information

This item came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Powhatan County.

Microfilm Reel 86 was generated by Backstage Library Works through the Library of Virginia's Circuit Court Records Preservation Program.

Preferred Citation

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Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

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

Related Material

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

Historical Information

Powhatan County was formed from Cumberland County in 1777, and part of Chesterfield County was added on 16 March 1850. The county was named for the paramount chief of the Powhatan Indians in the tidewater of Virginia in the late sixteenth and early years of the seventeenth century.

Until 1780, marriages could be performed only by ministers of the Established Church, who were required by law to record marriages in the parish register. In 1780, dissenting ministers (only four per county from each sect) were first permitted to perform marriage ceremonies. In order to have a record of all marriages, ministers were required to sign a certificate to be filed with the county clerk. Initially, ministers sent marriage certificates to the clerk every three months. Some ministers adopted a custom of making collected returns--a list of marriages performed within a period of time such as a year or several years. Beginning in 1784, marriage certificates were returned annually. The law was rarely enforced, and ministers' returns were sometimes late, incorrect, incomplete, and in many instances, not made at all. County clerks compiled a register of marriages based, in part, on ministers' returns.

The original ministers' returns, from which this volume was compiled, were created by the County Court.

Scope and Content

Powhatan County (Va.) Ministers' Returns Register, 1820-1850, was a volume used by the county clerk in the mid-nineteenth century to record the returns made by individual ministers of marriages performed within the county. The majority of returns were in the form of lists which record the date of the marriage and names of both parties. In the process of preparing and sending the returns, the name of the minister and the minister's denomination were often included.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

Powhatan County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Subjects:

Christian sects--Virginia--Powhatan County.

Clergy--Virginia--Powhatan County.

Marriage--Virginia--Powhatan County.

Geographical Names:

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

Genre and Form Terms:

Local government records--Virginia--Powhatan County.

Marriage records--Virginia--Powhatan County.

Ministers' returns--Virginia--Powhatan County.

Registers (lists)--Virginia--Powhatan County.

Added Entry - Corporate Name:

Powhatan County (Va.) County Court.