

A Guide to the Amherst County (Va.) Record of Convicts, 1871-1903

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia Amherst County (Va.) Reel 94
Library of Virginia
2009

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History

Processed by: Library of Virginia staff

Title Statement

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Subtitle: Amherst County (Va.) Record of Convicts, 1871-1903

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Publication Statement

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Publisher: Library of Virginia

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MARC record, created by Callie Lou Freed, 08 June 2009

Language Usage: Description is in English

Revision Description

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

Descriptive Summary

Microfilm reel number

Amherst County (Va.) Reel 94

Language

English

Collector

Amherst County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics

1 microfilm reel.

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

Use microfilm copy, Amherst County (Va.) Reel 94.

Acquisition Information

Microfilm Reel 94 was generated by a field operator for the Virginia State Library's (now the Library of Virginia) Microfilm Section while filming in the Amherst County Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

Preferred Citation

Amherst County (Va.) Record of Convicts, 1870-1903. Amherst County (Va.) Reel 94, Local government records collection, Amherst County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

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

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.

During the 1869-1870 session, the General Assembly passed an "Act to Secure Identification of Persons Convicted of Criminal Offences." On 2 November 1870, the act was approved. The act specified that "every clerk of the court of each county and corporation shall keep a register of full and accurate descriptive lists of every person convicted in his own or any other court of record of his county or corporation, of felony or other infamous offence, and a duly certified and attested copy of any such descriptive list may be used as prima facie evidence of the facts therein stated in any question of identity. Such registers shall be kept written up, well indexed, and shall be open to public inspection at reasonable hours. The register shall follow a set form and each descriptive list shall be attested by said clerk."

In addition, "the clerk of every court of record of each county or corporation, other than the county or corporation court, shall within ten days from the date of conviction of any person in his court of any offence mentioned in the first section of this act, deliver to the clerk of the county or corporation court, for record in said register, an attested descriptive list of the person so convicted, in the form hereinbefore prescribed." The judges of the respective courts are responsible for seeing that the provisions of the act are "punctually and properly carried out" by their respective clerks. The act was amended on 18 January 1871 and outlined the following: "For the services mentioned in this or the first section of this act, the clerk shall be entitled to a fee of fifty cents, to be paid out of the state treasury." By and large, the county and circuit court clerks went about compiling these registers throughout the counties of Virginia as late as the 1960s.

This original register was created by the County Court.

Scope and Content

Amherst County (Va.) Record of Convicts, 1871-1903, is a comprehensive register of convicted felons for the county in the nineteenth century. This register includes the name in full of the convict and whether there are any aliases, the present and last known residence of the accused, the color or race of the individual (including white, black, brown and mulatto), the individual's height, eye color, hair color and any identifying marks, the apparent and known age of the criminal, his or her occupation, the offense, the court in which the offense was committed, the date of the commitment and age of record of the individual and whether the judgment was reversed or pardon granted and the date thereof.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

Amherst County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Subjects:

African American prisoners--Virginia--Amherst County.
African Americans--Employment--Virginia--Amherst County.
African Americans--History--1863-1877.
African Americans--History--1877-1964.
African Americans--Virginia--Amherst County.
Occupations--Virginia--Amherst County.
Prisoners--Virginia--Amherst County.
Public records--Virginia--Amherst County.
Racially mixed people--Virginia--Amherst County.

Geographical Names:

Amherst County (Va.)--History.

Genre and Form Terms:

Criminal court records--Virginia--Amherst County.
Local government records--Virginia--Amherst County.
Registers (lists)--Virginia--Amherst County.

Added Entry - Corporate Name:

Amherst County (Va.) County Court.

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.