

A Guide to the Bland County (Va.) Health and Medical Records, 1902-1980

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1902-1980

A Collection in the Library of Virginia
Library of Virginia
2012
Author: Bari Helms

History

Processed by: Library of Virginia staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Bland County (Va.) Health and Medical Records, 1902-1980

Subtitle: Bland County (Va.) Health and Medical Records, 1902-1980

Author: Bari Helms

Publication Statement

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Publisher: Library of Virginia

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from being created directly into EAD, created by Bari Helms, 17 December 2012

Language Usage: Description is in English

Revision Description

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

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Bland County (Va.) Circuit Court

Physical Characteristics

6 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

These items came to the Library of Virginia in a shipment of court papers from Bland County.

Processing Information

Encoded by B. Helms: 2012; edited by V. Brooks: July 2026

Preferred Citation

Bland County (Va.) Health and Medical Records, 1902-1980, Local government records collection, Bland County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

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

Historical Information

Context for Record Type:

Mental health records may consist of a variety of documents that historically were referred to as "lunacy papers" in the courthouses of Virginia localities and municipalities.

In 1863, the Virginia General Assembly passed two pieces of legislation affecting persons committed to mental hospitals. In February, it passed legislation allowing for a committee to sell any stock and for any proceeds beyond that necessary for an individual's care to be invested in any stock, to include Confederate bonds. In March, the General Assembly widened the scope of this by passing legislation authorizing any fiduciaries such as the committee or trustee of the estate of any person to petition their circuit court to allow them to invest any part of estate funds in Confederate bonds or certificates.

On February 13, 1872, the General Assembly passed legislation to create a State Board of Health made up of 7 physicians appointed by the Governor. The Board was responsible for communicating with local boards of health, the hospitals, asylums and public institutions across the state. Local boards of health had been established in some cities as early as 1780 (Petersburg). The local and state boards made sanitary investigations regarding disease outbreaks such as smallpox or scarlet fever, documented sources of mortality, and any other information deemed relevant to public health. The local boards gathered information and reported to the state board. The State Board of Health also acted as an advisory board to the state in all hygienic and medical matters concerning the location, construction, sewerage, and administration of hospitals, prisons, asylums, and other public institutions.

Locality History:

Bland County is said to have been named for Richard Bland, a leader of colonial Virginia's resistance to Great Britain in the 1760s and 1770s. It was formed from Giles, Wythe, and Tazewell Counties in 1861, and another part of Giles was added in 1900. Its area is 369 square miles, and the county seat is Bland.

Scope and Content

Bland County (Va.) Health and Medical Records, 1902-1980, consist of Records of "Persons Adjudged Insane," 1902-1980, and Board of Health minutes, 1914. The "Persons Adjudged Insane" volumes contain documentation of individuals determined by the local court to be suffering from mental illness and unable to manage their own affairs. Includes demographic information about the subject, the commission assigned to determine their condition, date of the proceedings, date of commitment, institution/person committed to, and the date.

The Board of Health minutes consist of minutes for the Bland County Board of Health meetings.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:

- **Series I: Health and Medical Records, 1902-1980**

Contents List

Series I: Health and Medical Records 1902-1980

Barcode number 1097653: Board of Health Minutes 1914

Barcode number 1097615: Record of "Persons Adjudged Insane" 1902-1925

Barcode number 1097623: Record of "Persons Adjudged Insane" 1937-1949

Barcode number 1097613: Record of "Persons Adjudged Insane" 1949-1961

Barcode number 1097609: Record of "Persons Adjudged Insane" 1961-1972

Barcode number 1097606: Record of "Persons Adjudged Insane" 1972-1980