

A Guide to the Powhatan County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1866

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1866

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History

Processed by: Chris Smith

Title Statement

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Subtitle: Powhatan County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1866

Author: Greg Crawford

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MARC record, created by Greg Crawford, 12 January 2015

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Powhatan County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics

.45 cubic feet (1 box)

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Powhatan County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1866 are digitized and available through [Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative Digital Collection](#) on the Library of Virginia website. Please use digital images.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These records came to the Library of Virginia in transfer of court papers from Powhatan County in an undated accession.

Processing Information

Freedmen's Bureau Apprenticeship Indentures were originally described as "Powhatan County (Va.) Freedmen's Bureau Apprenticeship Indentures, 1866" but were retitled "Powhatan County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1866" in February 2024 to help standardize description of records and increased context between various Freedmen's Bureau records.

These records have been scanned and indexed by C. Smith and other LVA staff for the purposes of digitizing them for the digital project Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative.

Encoded by G. Crawford, 2015; Updated by M. Mason, February 2024

Preferred Citation

Powhatan County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1866. Local government records collection, Powhatan County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

See also: [Powhatan County \(Va.\) Free and Enslaved Records, 1780-1866, undated](#)

See also: [Powhatan County \(Va.\) Apprenticeship Indentures, 1788-1884](#)

Records related to free and enslaved people of Powhatan County (Va.) and other localities are available through the [Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative Digital Collection](#) on the Library of Virginia website.

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

Historical Information

Context for Record Type:

Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands

On March 3, 1865, the federal government created The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands using the Freedmen's Bureau Bill. Also known as the "Freedmen's Bureau," this agency was responsible for aiding refugees of the Civil War, especially formerly enslaved people in the areas of education, employment, and health care. Meant to last for only one year after the war, the Bureau was largely operational from June 1865 to December 1868, and officially abolished in 1872.

Freedmen's Apprenticeship Indentures

In the fall of 1865, the Freedmen's Bureau assumed responsibility as the governing body for apprenticeship indentures and oversaw the binding out of children of formerly enslaved people to indenture holders. Although these contracts were generated by the federal government, a few localities retained possession and they were filed in the courthouse as Freedmen's Bureau records. They typically contain the name of the person or institution binding out, the person to whom bound, the name of the person being indentured, the length of the apprenticeship, and the responsibilities of the person taking on the indenture.

Locality History: Locality History: Powhatan 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. It was formed from Cumberland County in 1777, and part of Chesterfield County was added in 1850. The county seat is Powhatan.

Scope and Content

Powhatan County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1866, consist of Freedmen's Bureau Apprenticeship Indentures, 1866.

These Apprenticeship Indentures record the binding of emancipated Black and multiracial children to individuals for the purpose of learning a trade. They are contractual agreements between the indenture holder and agents of the Freedmen's Bureau. They stipulate the amount the indenture holder agreed to pay to the Freedmen's Bureau in exchange for the child to be bound to them by the Freedmen's Bureau; length of apprenticeship; and a statement of the obligations and responsibilities of each party. Information found in the apprenticeship indentures include names of the indenture holder and Freedmen's Bureau agents, bond amount, date of indenture, names and age of the apprentice, and name of trade.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into

- Series I: Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1866, and organized chronologically

Contents List

Series I: Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1866

Extent

.45 cubic feet (1 box)

Barcode number 7551007: Apprenticeship Indentures - Freedmen's Bureau, 1866

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