

A Guide to the Botetourt County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1868

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1868

A Collection in the Library of Virginia
Library of Virginia
2025

History

Processed by: LVA Staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Botetourt County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1868

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

Author: Caroline Collins

Publication Statement

Date: © 2025 By The Library of Virginia. All Rights Reserved.

Publisher: Library of Virginia

Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MS Word by Caroline Collins, 23 July 2025

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Botetourt County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Extent

1 item

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research. Document is fragile due to water damage.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These records came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Botetourt County (Va.) as part of an undated accession.

Processing Information

Botetourt County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records were originally described as part of the Botetourt County (Va.) Free and Enslaved Records, 1801-1862, but were removed to the present Botetourt County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1868, record to enhance discoverability in July 2025.

These records were processed and indexed by LVA staff at an unknown date.

Encoded by C. Collins: July 2025.

Preferred Citation

Botetourt County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1868. Local government records collection, Botetourt County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

See also: [Botetourt County \(Va.\) Free and Enslaved Records, 1801-1862](#)

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

Additional Botetourt County (Va.) Court Records can be found on microfilm at The Library of Virginia web site. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

Botetourt County is one of Virginia's Lost Records Localities. Additional Botetourt County records may be found in the [Lost Records Localities Digital Collection](#) available on the Library of Virginia website.

Historical Information

Context for Record Type: 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. It was officially abolished in 1872.

Locality History: Botetourt County was named for Norborne Berkeley, baron de Botetourt, the royal governor from 1768 to 1770. It was formed from Augusta County in 1769, and a part of Rockbridge County was added in 1785. The county court first met on 13 February 1770. The county seat is Fincastle.

Lost Locality Note: Many of the loose records including pre-1830 chancery and pre-1854 judgments suffered tremendous water damage as a result of a courthouse fire on 15 December 1970. Because of the near loss of records, the General Assembly passed the Virginia Public Records Act in 1975 for the purpose of preserving local records. Volumes that record deeds, court orders, and wills exist.

Scope and Content

Botetourt County (Va.) Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1868, consist of a letter written to Virginia Governor H. H. Wells by O. Brown regarding the transfer of marriage registers kept by the Bureau to the clerks of the county courts. Due to its impending dissolution, the Bureau sought to rehouse the registers per "an Act entitled 'an Act for receiving United States Registers of Marriages between colored persons'" passed in April 1867. In response, Governor Wells instructed the clerks to "receive such Registers of Marriages...and safely keep the same for future reference and use, as prescribed by the terms of the said Act."

Arrangement

This collection is arranged

- Series I: Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1868, arranged chronologically.

Contents List

Series I: Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Records, 1868

Extent

Extent: 1 item

Physical Location Library of Virginia

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically

Barcode number 1138041: Free and Enslaved Records, 1801-1818; 1868 [oversize]

Library of Virginia