

A Guide to the Amelia County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1767-1859

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1767-1859

A Collection in the Library of Virginia
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History

Processed by: E. Jordan

Title Statement

A Guide to the Amelia County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1767-1859

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MS Word, created by Mary Ann Mason, 11 July 2024

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Amelia County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics

.23 cubic feet (1 box).

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Amelia County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1767-1859, 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 a transfer of court papers from the Amelia County (Va.) Circuit Court in 2004 under accession number 41505.

Processing Information

Deeds of Emancipation, 1767-1859, were removed from the larger Amelia County (Va.) Deeds record set and then processed and indexed as a distinct unit by E. Jordan and L. Neuroth for the purposes of digitizing them for the digital project Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative.

Encoded by M. Mason: July 2024.

Preferred Citation

Amelia County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1767-1859. Local government records collection, Amelia County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

See also: [Amelia County \(Va.\) Deeds, 1734-1914](#)

See also: [Amelia County \(Va.\) Free and Enslaved Records, 1801-1866](#)

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

Additional Amelia County (Va.) 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

Context of Record Type: Deeds of emancipation and manumission record an enslavers' intent to emancipate enslaved people from bondage. Some of the earliest legal manumissions in Virginia occurred in the early 1770s. However, there was a sharp rise following the 1782 manumission act that allowed enslavers to privately emancipate enslaved people "by last will and testament or other instrument in writing sealed." They were no longer required to seek a special act from the General Assembly. These documents sometimes include an enslavers' intent for emancipation ranging from religious and moral motivations to binding legal agreements.

Deeds of emancipation and manumission essentially provide the same information and there is little difference between the two. Both include the name of the enslaver, the name of the enslaved person to be freed, the date of anticipated freedom, the date the manumission was proved or certified, and as mentioned, sometimes a reason why the enslaver decided to emancipate the enslaved person. In a deed of manumission, an enslaver directly freed an enslaved person by manumission. In a deed of emancipation, an enslaved person could be freed after the enslaver's death by those executing a last will and testament. This collection also includes court orders that record the date or age when enslaved individuals were to be emancipated by deed as stipulated in an enslaver's will.

Locality History: Amelia County was named for Amelia Sophia Eleanora, daughter of King George II. It was formed from Prince George and Brunswick Counties by an act passed in 1734 to take effect on 25 March 1735. The county court first met on 9 May 1735.

Scope and Content

Amelia County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1767-1859, includes deeds of emancipation and manumission that record the name of enslaver, the name of the enslaved person to be freed, the date the enslaved person shall achieve freedom, the date the manumission was proved or certified, and sometimes a reason why the enslaver decided to emancipate the enslaved person. The two methods of relinquishing ownership of an individual differ only in that enslavers directly freed their enslaved property by manumission. Deeds of emancipation could be generated after the enslaver's death by those executing a last will and testament.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged

- Series I: Deeds of Emancipation, 1767-1859, arranged chronologically.

Contents List

Series I: Deeds of Emancipation, 1767-1859

Extent

.23 cubic feet (1 box)

Physical Location Library of Virginia

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically

Barcode number 7874741: Deeds of Emancipation; Deeds of Emancipation, Unrecorded and/or Partially Proven, 1767-1859

Library of Virginia