

A Guide to the Charles City County (Va.) Election Records, 1795-1939 circa

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia
Library of Virginia
2025

History

Processed by: Library of Virginia staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Charles City County (Va.) Election Records, 1795-1939 circa

Subtitle: Charles City County (Va.) Election Records

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Publication Statement

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from being created directly into EAD, created by McKenzie Long, 25 July 2025

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Charles City County (Va.) Circuit Court

Extent

.7 cu. ft. (2 boxes); 6 volumes

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

A portion of the election records came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Charles City County in an undated accession. Lists of voters volumes and associated records came to the Library of Virginia in a 2023 transfer of court papers from Charles City County under accession number 54001.

Processing Information

Loose election records, 1795-1896, were processed by Library of Virginia staff.

Lists of Voters and loose voter registration records, 1902-1939 circa, were processed by M. Long. The loose records were originally included between the covers and pages of the volumes at the time of transfer. These records were removed from the volumes and filed in a separate box of voter registration records during processing.

Encoded by M. Long: July 2025.

Preferred Citation

Charles City County (Va.) Election Records, 1795-1939 circa. Local government records collection, Charles City County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

See also the [Military Rule Election Records of the Virginia Secretary of the Commonwealth, 1867, 1869](#) at the Library of Virginia.

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

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

Historical Information

Context for Record Type: The election records group encompasses all of the documents dealing with public elections and is related to voters and voting. The franchise in Virginia has varied in its extent. Prior to the revolutionary war, white male freeholders (real property owners) over 21, were the only individuals entitled to vote. This condition was continued by the 1776 Constitution. Alterations in the extent of the franchise could only be made by constitutional change. There was an attempt in 1829-30 to extend the franchise as well as to reapportion the representation to the general assembly. The right to vote was extended to potential property owners (reversioners or remaindermen of freehold estates) and long term leaseholders, as well as white males over 21 who have resided in a locality for at least twelve months and paid taxes. The constitution of 1850-51 widely extended the suffrage. All white males aged 21, residents of Virginia for two years, and resident for one year in the locality in which they were living at the time of the election were now eligible to vote. The 1867-68 Constitution extended the vote to include newly emancipated black males.

Several attempts were made to restrict the suffrage by imposing educational requirements and making the ballot secret. These acts included the Anderson-McCormick law and the Walton law of 1893-94.

The 1902 voter registration books were created following the passage of the 1902 Virginia state constitution. The purpose of the 1902 state constitution was to maintain white suffrage while eliminating African-American voters by means of literacy tests as well as property and poll tax requirements.

The Nineteenth Amendment was granted the right to vote to women. It was proposed on June 4, 1919 and ratified on August 18, 1920.

The National Voting Rights Act of 1965 outlawed discriminatory voting practices that had been responsible for the widespread disenfranchisement of African Americans in the United States. The Act prohibited states from imposing any "voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure ... to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color." Congress intended the Act to outlaw the practice of requiring otherwise qualified voters to pass literacy tests in order to register to vote, a principal means by which southern states had prevented African-Americans from exercising the franchise.

Locality History: Charles City County was named for King Charles I and was one of the original shires, or counties, first enumerated in 1634. The county seat is Charles City. Part of James City County was added to Charles City in 1721.

Lost Locality Note: Charles City County is one of Virginia's Lost Records Localities. Records have been

destroyed at various times. The most damage occurred during the Civil War when the records were strewn through the woods in a rainstorm. A few pre-Civil War volumes such as deed books, will books, minute books, and order books exist.

Scope and Content

Charles City County (Va.) Election Records, 1795-1939 circa, consists of records documenting voting returns, election results, qualified voters, and the official processes involved in conducting elections at the locality level.

Loose election records, 1795-1896, include election appointments of various officers, such as clerks, judges, registrars, and the electoral board; election returns; election write ins for the Tyler, Harrison, and Chickahominy Magisterial Districts; and miscellaneous other election records including lists of voters.

Also included are six List of Voters volumes, 1902-1939 circa. These volumes were created following the passage of the 1902 Virginia state constitution. Lists of Voters were separated into lists of Black and Multiracial voters (referred to as "colored") and lists of white voters. Lists of Voters also include the names of women who registered following passage of Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. Information found in the lists includes date of registration; number of registered voter; name of registered voter; date of birth; age; occupation; residence; length of residence in state, county, and precinct; whether exempt from poll tax; if naturalized, and if so, date of papers and by what court issued; if transferred from another precinct, and if so, when and to what precinct. These Lists of Voters originated in Harrison Precinct in the Harrison Magisterial District and Tyler Precinct in the Tyler Magisterial District.

Charles City County's Lists of Voters originally included loose voter registration records, 1908-1936, undated, that had been filed between the pages of the volumes. The records were removed from the volumes and filed in a separate box during processing. These loose records consist of voter registration applications, vouchers, registration oaths, correspondence of the voter registrar, and certificates of registration for the transfer of voters.

A portion of the voter registration applications filed in the List of Colored Voters for the Harrison Precinct in the Harrison Magisterial District included voting tests that were administered to Black and Multiracial applicants.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:

- Series I: Election Records, 1795-1939 circa. Lists of Voters and associated voter registration records arranged chronologically. Remaining loose election records arranged by subject.

Contents List

Series I: Election Records, 1795-1939 circa

Extent

.7 cu. ft. (2 boxes); 6 volumes

Arrangement

Lists of Voters and associated voter registration records arranged chronologically. Remaining loose election records arranged by subject.

Barcode number 1044810: Treasurer; Election Records; Administrators' Accounts and Bonds, 1783-1896

Barcode number 0007866631: Voter Registration Records, 1908-1936, undated

Barcode number 0007866632: List of White Voters, 1902-1925 circa

Barcode number 0007866633: List of White Voters, 1902-1939 circa

Barcode number 0007866634: List of White Voters, 1902-1906 circa

Barcode number 0007866635: List of Colored Voters, 1902-1923 circa

Barcode number 0007866636: List of Colored Voters, 1905-1939 circa

Barcode number 0007866637: List of Colored Voters, 1902-1939 circa

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