

Bernard, Thomas Hill, Ledger

Thomas Hill Bernard Ledger

1853-1881



Title Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.2024.093

Unit Date

1853-1881

Language

The material in this collection is in English.

Abstract

This collection contains the ledger dated 1853-1881 of Thomas Hill Bernard (1824-1905), an enslaver and manager of Big Meadows Plantation in Franklin County, Virginia. This ledger is also signed by his daughter Mary E. Bernard (1874-1952). The ledger lists the names, occupations, ages, and "value" of five enslaved people: Terry, [Tom?], [Amistead?], James, and [Banks?]. The majority of the ledger includes the farming activities of the farm and the daily activities of Bernard and his family, mostly from the 1870s. The ledger also contains a receipt of taxes owed to the Sheriff of Franklin County in 1853 for the plantation signed by Judith Bernard.

Creator

Bernard, Thomas Hill, 1824-1905

Extent

0.2 Cubic Feet 1 box

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

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Source of Acquisition

The Thomas Hill Bernard Ledger was purchased by Special Collections and University Archives in November 2018.

Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the Thomas Hill Bernard Ledger was completed in September 2024.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Thomas Hill Bernard Ledger, 1853-1881, Ms2024-093, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

The son of Zadock and Mary Bernard, Thomas Hill Bernard (1824-1905) was an enslaver, farmer, and manager of Big Meadows Plantation in Franklin County, Virginia. He enslaved seven people, including children, according to the 1850 census, and five people in 1860, according to this collection. During the American Civil War, Bernard enlisted in the Confederate Army with the Virginia Volunteers in Company F of the 57th Infantry Regiment on April 19, 1862, and was discharged on May 20, 1862. He also served as the superintendent of Franklin County schools from 1870 to 1872 and as a judge for Franklin County Court from 1879 to 1883.

Thomas Hill Bernard married Sarah Annie (Sallie) Eudaily or Endaily (1831-1917) in 1852 in Stokes County, North Carolina, and they had several children, including Walter, Arthur, Zadock, William T., James C., and Mary Bernard (1874-1952).

External Links:

United States Federal Census, 1850-1900.

Wingfield, Marshall. *Franklin County, Virginia, a history*, p. 139. Berryville, Va.: Chesapeake Book Co., 1964. (Call number: F232.F7 W49 SCUA Large)

Salmon, John S., and Emily J. Salmon. *Franklin County, Virginia, 1786-1986: A Bicentennial History*, p. 383. Franklin County, Va.: Franklin County Bicentennial Commission, 1993. (Call number: F232.F7 S25 1993 SCUA Large)

"Thomas H Bernard", Findagrave.com, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/6711029/thomas-h-bernard>, accessed October 29, 2024.

"Ex-Judge Bernard" [obituary], *The Times Dispatch* (Richmond, Va.), April 2, 1905. Available online from Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers by the Library of Congress at <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85038615/1905-04-02/ed-1/seq-18/>, accessed October 29, 2024.

"Mrs. Sallie E. Bernard" [obituary], *Richmond Times-Dispatch* (Richmond, Va.), March 29, 1917. Available online from Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers by the Library of Congress at <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045389/1917-03-29/ed-1/seq-3/>, accessed October 29, 2024.

"Sarah Annie Bernard" in the Virginia, U.S., Death Records, 1912-2014, Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/554387:9278>, accessed October 29, 2024.

"Thomas H Bernard", in the U.S., Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, 1861-1865, Ancestry.com,

<https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/124460:1555>, accessed October 29, 2024.

"Thomas H Bernard" in the North Carolina, U.S., Marriage Records, 1741-2011, Ancestry.com,

<https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/5573721:60548>, accessed October 29, 2024.

Scope and Content

This collection contains the ledger dated 1853-1881 of Thomas Hill Bernard, an enslaver and plantation owner from Franklin County, Virginia. It is also signed by his daughter Mary E. Bernard. The ledger was published in 1852 as a "Plantation and Farm Instruction, Regulation, Record, Inventory, and Account Book" in Richmond, Virginia, by J.W. Randolph, a publisher, bookseller, and stationer. There are two advertisements at the beginning of the ledger. After that is a 17-page "explanation" that discusses how to run a plantation and how to keep the ledger properly. This also contains a portion about how to treat enslaved people.

The majority of the book is lined pages with manual entries about farming and other activities starting in 1853 and ending in 1881 for the Big Meadows Plantation with Thomas H. Bernard as manager. Some of the entries were written by his children, including a draft letter to a cousin and information about preaching or attending church. Within the ledger is a receipt of taxes owed to the Sheriff of Franklin County in 1853 by Judith Bernard.

On the first page of the manual entries, page 20, an inventory lists the names, occupations, ages, and "value" of five enslaved people: Terry, [Tom?], [Amistead?], James, and [Banks?] The first three were listed as farm laborers and [Banks?] as a blacksmith. Their ages ranged from 28 to 40 and their "values" from \$200-\$400.

In another entry from 1861 on page 32, Bernard mentions the American Civil War. He wrote, "The war has started and everyone thinks it won't last a month." On the same page is another entry about the war dated 1862, "I have enlisted in the army of the Confederate States with the VA Volunteers." The next page skips to 1871.

The ledger underwent conservation in 2019 and was rebound. The paper label on the front of the new cover misspells Bernard's last name as "Brevard." The original cover is included in this collection.

Keywords

Agriculture

Civil War

Ledgers (account books)

Local/Regional History and Appalachian South

Slavery -- United States

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

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Description of Subordinate Components

Thomas Hill Bernard Ledger

Unit Date 1853-1881

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