

**Roanoke Public Libraries
Virginia Room
Giles County Poll Books, 1809-1923**

Collection Description:

Repository: Roanoke Public Libraries, Virginia Room

Title: Giles County Poll Books, 1809-1923

Physical Characteristics: 4 document storage cases

Donated by: unknown

Arrangement: Documents are arranged chronologically by year and thereunder by election.

Reproduction Restrictions: No known restrictions on publication. Virginia Room copy fees apply.

Processor: Alicia R. Sell, 10 January 2009

Historical Note:

Giles County, Virginia was formed in 1806 from portions of Montgomery, Monroe, and Tazewell Counties. Additional portions of Wythe (1808), Tazewell (1826 and 1836), Monroe (West Virginia) (1829), Mercer (West Virginia) (1841) and Craig (1858) counties were later added to Giles County.

Sections of the county later broke off to form parts of Logan (1824), Mercer (1837), and Bland (1861) Counties. Present day Giles County is located in southwestern Virginia, bordering West Virginia.

Virginia elections:

Virginia has a special place in the history and ongoing development of an electoral and representative form of government in the United States. In 1619, the colony of Virginia elected and convened its first legislative assembly, a practice that was repeated throughout the colonial era. In 1776, Virginia upheld this democratic tradition, electing delegates to the 1776 state constitutional convention, which made regular elections of the Virginia General Assembly a constitutional requirement in the 1776 state constitution. Since then, Virginia has extended the practice of elections to several additional state offices: to Members of the U.S. House of Representatives in 1789; to Governors, Lieutenant Governors, and State Attorneys General in 1851; to U.S. Senators in 1916; and to members of all but one of the state's constitutional conventions since 1776. The Virginia Supreme Court also was elected by popular vote from 1852 until the 1870 state constitution returned this power to the Virginia General Assembly. To be certain, throughout much of this electoral history the right to vote in state elections fell woefully short of the democratic ideal of a full recognition of Virginia's population. Significant advancements in the legal guarantee of voting rights, however, were made in 1920 by the Nineteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which granted women's suffrage; in 1964 by the Twenty-Fourth Amendment, which prohibited poll taxes; and by the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which barred various forms of registration and voter discrimination. Despite its shortcomings with regard to full voting rights, Virginia remained committed to the practice of regular and public elections, making it the oldest continuous electoral democracy in the United States and the world today.¹

¹ The Virginia Elections and State Elected Officials Database Project, 1776-2005. Retrieved December 30, 2005, from University of Virginia Library. Web site: <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/valeg/>.

Election Schedule:**Federal Elections:**

President, Vice President: 4 year term

U. S. Senate: 6 year term

U.S. Representative: 2 year term

State Elections:

House of Delegates: 2 year term

Senate: 4 year term

Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General: 4 year term

Local Representatives:

Clerk of Circuit Court: 8 year term

Sheriff, Commissioner of the Revenue, Commonwealth Attorney, Treasurer: 4 year term

Scope and Content:

The poll books for Giles County cover the time period of 1809-1923. Poll books contain election returns for local, state, and national government; votes on state issues include infrastructure improvements to bridges, roads, the railroad, and changes to the state constitution. Also included in this series is a tithe book (1820), petitions, and receipts for local school and dog taxes.

Poll books are precinct records listing the names of the persons who voted and the candidate for whom they cast their vote.² Twentieth century records are anonymous ballots. The tithe book lists the names of male personal property owners. Categories include number of white males (16+), blacks (12+, 16+) horses and mules. Petitions and receipts list the individual residents of Giles County to whom the petition or receipts pertain.

Records are arranged chronologically by year and thereunder by election. The records are for the following years: 1809, 1815, 1817, 1819-1828, 1830, 1836, 1837, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1844, 1846-1848, 1850-1852, 1855, 1856, 1860, 1862-1864, 1874, 1877, 1881, 1899, 1914, 1918, and 1923.

Container List:**Box 1 of 4:****1809**

Folder 1: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia

11 April 1809: Johnston, Shannon, Caperton

1815

Folder 2: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia

25 April 1815: John Chapman, John Peters, William Smith (Information regarding a subpoena written on back of one poll book.)

(2 poll books)

² Presidential and Congressional Election Returns at the Library of Virginia. Retrieved January 27, 2006, from Library of Virginia. Web site: http://www.lva.lib.va.us/whatwehave/elect/pres_election.htm.

1817

Folder 3: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia
29 April 1817: Kirk, Smith, Peters, Burk, Douglas

1819

Folder 4: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia
1819: David Johnston, Christian Snidow, William Smith, Thomas Shannon, John Fancy, Robert Hutchison, George Pearis

1820

Folder 5: Tithe book (REMOVED, PLACED IN TITHE BOOK SERIES)
1 June 1820: Lists of taxable property. Includes number of white males (16+), slaves (12+, 16+); livestock, etc.)
Folder 6: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia
25 April 1820: Hogue, Smith, Shannon, Johnston, Snidow. (One unopened poll book; secured by wax seal.)

1821

Folder 7: Two Representatives for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia, Separate Election
24 April 1821: George Pearis, William Chapman, Daniel Hoge, William Smith, Robert Hutchison and Christian Snidow (9 polls books)

1822

Folder 8: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia, Separate Election
30 April 1822: William Snidow, Capt. William Smith, Col. George N. Pearis, W. Daniel Hoge, and Philip Peters (6 poll books)

1823

Folder 9: Two Representatives for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia, Separate Election
29 April 1823: Brush Creek: William Snidow, William Smith, Charles King and George Pearis. (Indenture agreement between George Pearis and Henry Clay written on back of Brush Creek poll book.) (3 poll books)

1824

Folder 10: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia
30 April 1824: King, Smith, Johnston, and Kirk (5 poll books)

1825

Folder 11: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia, Separate Election
26 April 1825: Smith, Kirk, Snidow and King (3 poll books)

Box 2 of 4:**1826**

Folder 1: Two Representatives for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia
25 April 1826: Snidow, Smith, Pearis, Hoge, McCoy (5 poll books)

1827

Folder 2: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia
24 April 1827: Hale, Peters, Johnston, Snidow, King (2 poll books)

Folder 3: Representative for Federal House of Representatives
26 April 1827: General John Floyd (2 poll books)

1828

Folder 4: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia
29 April 1828: Ralph A. Stafford, Samuel Pack, George N. Pearis, Charles Hale,
Ralph Lucas (3 poll books)

1830

Folder 5: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia
26 April 1830: Johnston, King, Peters, Pearis, Smith

Folder 6: Vote to ratify or reject amended constitution

1836

Folder 7: Election of President and Vice President of the United States of America
7 November 1836: Democrattick Tickett [sic]: for President, Martin Van Buren of
New York. For Vice President, Wm. Smith of Alabama. Federal Ticket: For
President, Wm. Henry Harrison of Ohio or Hugh Lawson White of Tennessee.
For Vice President, John Tyler of Virginia.
7 November 1836: Democratic Republican Ticket: for President, Martin Van
Buren of New York. For Vice President, Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky.
Virginia Electoral Ticket: For President, Wm. Henry Harrison of Ohio. For Vice
President, John Tyler of Virginia. (4 poll books)

1837

Folder 8: Representative for U.S. House of Representatives and Virginia House of Delegates
27 April 1837: Beirne and Donally (Federal House of Representatives)
(2 poll books)
27 April 1837: Chapman, King (Virginia House of Delegates) (6 poll books)

1840

Folder 9: Vote for or against new county
23 April 1840: "Poll for a New County at Webbs"
Folder 10: Senator for Virginia Senate
23 April 1840: Col. William Thomas and William B. Preston (3 poll books)
Folder 11: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia
23 April 1840: Johnston, Smith (4 poll books)
Folder 12: Certificate for Election Superintendent for U.S. Presidential Election
27 October 1840: Appointment of Guy D. French, Morton P. Emmons and
Samuel Pack to superintend the elector of electors for a President and Vice-
President of the United States. (3 certificates)

1841, 1842

Folder 13: Commissioners books for 1841, 1842. (Blank)

Box 3 of 4:

1844

Folder 1: Senator for Virginia General Assembly of Virginia
25 April 1844: Caperton, Chapman (6 poll books)
Folder 2: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia
25 April 1844: William H. French and Albert G. Pendleton (2 poll books)

Folder 3: President and Vice President of the United States

4 November 1844: Republican Electoral Ticket: James Polk of Tennessee Ticket: Henry Clay of Kentucky for President, Theodore Frelinghuysen of New Jersey for Vice President. (2 poll books)

1846

Folder 4: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia

23 April 1846: King, White

1847

Folder 5: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia, special election

19 August 1847: Madison Allen and William Smith (3 poll books)

1848

Folder 6: President and Vice President of the United States

7 November 1848: Democratic Ticket: For President, Lewis Cass of Michigan; For Vice President, William O. Butler of Kentucky.

1850

Folder 7: Construction of Bridge & Turnpike

18 November 1850: proposed bridge over the New River and the Turnpike to connect Giles and Pulaski Counties. (7 poll books)

1851

Folder 8: Representative for House of Delegates, General Assembly of Virginia

20 October 1851: James Baily, Ruben Garrison.

Folder 9: Ratify or reject constitution as amended

23 October 1851: (8 poll books)

Folder 10: for Federal House of Representatives

23 October 1851: Hon. Henry A. Edmondson (4 poll books)

1852

Folder 11: President and Vice President of the United States

2 November 1852: Democratic Republican Ticket: For President, Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire, Vice President, William R. King of Alabama. Whig Ticket: For President, Winfield Scott of New Jersey, Vice President, William A. Graham on North Carolina.

Folder 12: Railroad expansion

2 November 1852: Vote for and against railroads

1855

Folder 13: Elections for General Assembly, Congress and Gubernatorial (Blank)

1856

Folder 14: Clerks of Circuit and County Court

20 March 1856: Circuit Court: English, Jennings and Macomas (3 poll books)

20 March 1856: County Court: Woodram, Jennings and Macomas (3 poll books)

Box 4 of 4:

1860

Folder 1: Elections for Sheriff, Attorney of the Commonwealth, Commissioners of the Revenue, Constables, and Overseer of the Poor.

24 May 1860: Names of candidates illegible.

Folder 2: Justice of the Peace for Newport

24 May 1860: Lucas, Snidow, Eggleston, Rowan, Atkins and Payne
(2 poll books)

Folder 3: Justice of the Peace for Newport

24 May 1860: Pendleton, Mahood, Bailey and Ward

Folder 4: Certificate of fair election for Staffordsville district

24 May 1860: Election held in Staffordsville.

Folder 5: Election for President and Vice President of the United States

6 November 1860: Constitutional Union Ticket: For President, John Bell, Vice President, Edward Everett. For President, Stephen A. Douglas, Vice President H.V. Johnson. National Democratic Ticket: For President, John C. Breckinridge, for Vice President, Joseph Lane.

1862

Folder 6: Adoption or Rejection of Constitution

13, 14, 15 March 1862: (3 poll books)

1863

Folder 7: Justice of the Peace

21 November 1863: Hoge, Lucas

1864

Folder 8: Justices of the Peace

26 May 1864: Dills, French, Douthan, Chareton, Cecil, Willhem, Easton, Hale, Duncan, Stafford, Chapman

1874

Folder 9: Poll book for Wolf Creek District, Pearisburg Township

May 1874: (Blank)

1877

Folder 10: Petition to Circuit Court in Giles County RE: aggrieved final judgment

February 1877: Persons sending petition listed as C.W. Walker and Charles E. Pack Reeves.

1881

Folder 11: Petition to Hon. Henry E. Blair, Judge of Circuit Court of Giles County

24 May 1881: Person sending petition listed as H. Hauft

1899

Folder 12: State and Local Official Ballots

25 May 1899: Election for Commonwealth's Attorney, Clerk, Treasurer, Sheriff, Commissioner of the Revenue, Supervisor, Constable, Justice of the Peace, and Overseer of the Poor.

1914

Folder 13: School Board Payment Receipts

1914: 5 receipts issued by the Treasurer of Giles County on behalf of the County Board of School Trustees.

1918

Folder 14: Dog Tax Receipts

26 November 1918: 16 receipts issued to Giles County residents.

1923

Folder 15: State Officials Election Ballot

6 November 1923: Election held for Member of State Corporation Commission, State Senate (19th District), House of Delegates (Giles and Bland Counties), Attorney for Commonwealth, County Treasurer, Sheriff, Commissioner of the Revenue. Also, election for Supervisor, Road Commissioner, Constable, Justice of the Peace, and Overseer of the Poor held for the Walker's Creek District.