

Genealogical Research in the Virginia Room

The Virginia Room holds Southwestern Virginia's largest collection of genealogical materials. While many of the materials are Virginia specific, states closely associated with Virginia and its people by birth, boundary division, migration, and immigration are also included.

Searching for Resources in the Virginia Room

Published Works

To search the Virginia Room's holdings of published works visit the Roanoke Valley Libraries catalog at www.rvl.info. The catalog may be accessed by any computer or mobile device with internet access. Published works in the collection include family histories, county records, parish and vestry records, military records, county histories and subjects related to local, state and regional history.

From the dropdown menu on the top left of the page, select 'Virginia Room' from the list of library locations. This will limit the search to Virginia Room resources.

Enter search terms into the search box. Terms may include the subject, author, title, word or phrase.

- If no results are generated, try fewer search terms. Sometimes being too specific can eliminate all records.
- If too many results are generated, try to limit the search to more specific phrases.

Unpublished Works

Unpublished works include materials that cannot be searched using the Roanoke Valley Libraries catalog. This includes manuscript collections of genealogical materials, surname files, vertical files, and indexes to publications,

Searching unpublished genealogical collections

Finding aids are the tools used to determine what exists in genealogical collections and organizational records collections. Finding aids to all available collections in the Virginia Room can be searched at www.virginiaroom.org/digital

1. All Virginia Room finding aids can be browsed by clicking the 'Finding Aids' link at the top of the homepage.
2. Specific subjects can be searched by entering search terms into the search box on the homepage. It is recommended that the 'Advanced Search' function is used and limited to 'Exact Match' if more than one word is used in the search. Using the search box will generate results for not only finding aids, but all items in the digital collection that include a match to the search terms.

Surname files

A list of surnames included in the Virginia Room surname files can be accessed at http://www.virginiaroom.org/digital/files/original/13/1791/Surname_Files.1.pdf

To search the 'Surname File Index', press and hold the 'Ctrl' key and then the 'F' key. A search box will appear to search the index for a specific surname.

Microfilm

Below is a list of microfilm available in the Virginia Room.

Vital Records

Bureau of Vital Statistics Virginia Index to Birth Registers 1853-1896

Bureau of Vital Statistics Virginia Index to Marriage Registers, Husbands: 1853-1940

Bureau of Vital Statistics Virginia Index to Marriage Registers, Wives: 1853-1940

Bureau of Vital Statistics Virginia Birth Registers:

Augusta County: 1892-1896
Bath County: 1853-1896
Bedford County: 1853-1896
Bland County: 1861-1896
Botetourt County: 1853-1896
Buchanan County: 1858-1891
Buckingham County: 1853-1896
Campbell County: 1853-1859
Carroll County: 1855-1895
Fairfax County: 1853-1896
Floyd County: 1853-1896
Franklin County: 1853-1896
Frederick County: 1855-1896
Giles County: 1852-1896
Gloucester County: 1853-1883
Grayson County: 1853-1896
Greene County: 1853-1896
Hanover County: 1853-1896
Henry County: 1853-1896
Madison County: 1895-1896
Mathews County: 1853-1896
Middlesex County: 1853-1896
Montgomery County: 1853-1896
Nelson County: 1853-1873
Northumberland County: 1853-1896
Radford: 1891-1896
Rappahannock County: 1853-1896
Richmond: 1881-1896
Richmond County: 1853-1896
Roanoke: 1884-1896
Roanoke County: 1853-1896
Rockingham County: 1859-1884
Russell County: 1853-1889
Shenandoah County: 1892-1896
Staunton: 1854-1896
Williamsburg: 1853-1892

Wise County: 1857-1896

Bureau of Vital Statistics Virginia Marriage Registers

Alleghany County, 1822-1916
Appomattox, 1854-1935
Arlington, 1853-1935
Augusta County, 1853-1935
Bath County, 1853-1935
Bedford County, 1853-1882; 1909-1935; General Index to Marriage Bonds, 1754-1870
Bland County, 1861-1935
Botetourt County, 1853-1935
Brunswick County, 1853-1935
Buchanan County, 1858-1935
Buckingham County, 1854-1935
Campbell County, 1853-1935
Caroline County, 1853-1935
Carroll County, 1854-1935
Charles City County, 1853-1935
Charlotte County, 1854-1899
Fauquier County, 1914-1935
Floyd County, 1853-1935
Fluvanna County, 1853-1935
Franklin County, 1853-1935
Frederick County, 1853-1935
Fredericksburg, 1918-1935
Giles County, 1853-1935
Gloucester County, 1853-1935
Goochland County, 1853-1935
Grayson County, 1854-1929
Hanover County, 1918-1935
Henrico County, 1853-1935
Henry County, 1853-1935
Highland County, 1853-1935
Hopewell, 1853-1935
Isle of Wight County, 1853-1901
Lynchburg, 1853-1901
Mecklenburg County, 1883-1935
Middlesex County, 1853-1935
Montgomery County, 1853-1935
Nansemond County, 1853-1899
Page County, 1930-1935
Patrick County, 1853-1935
Pittsylvania County, 1853-1886
Portsmouth, 1927-1935
Prince George County, 1920-1935
Prince William County, 1854-1935
Princess Anne County, 1853-1935
Pulaski County, 1853-1935

Radford, 1892-1935
Rappahannock County, 1853-1935
Richmond, 1853-1878; 1934-1935
Richmond County, 1853-1935
Roanoke, 1884-1935
Roanoke County, 1853-1935
Rockbridge County, 1853-1896
Shenandoah County, 1908-1935
Smyth County, 1853-1935
Southampton County, 1853-1900
Surry County, 1854-1935
Sussex County, 1854-1935
Tazewell County, 1853-1935
Warren County, 1853-1935
Warwick County, 1853-1935
Washington County, 1853-1930
Wise County, 1914-1935
Wythe County, 1853-1935
York County, 1854-1935

Bureau of Vital Statistics Virginia Death Registers

Bath County, 1890-1896
Bedford County, 1853-1897
Bland County, 1861-1896
Botetourt County, 1853-1896
Brunswick County, 1853-1860
Campbell County, 1855-1896
Caroline County, 1853-1896
Carroll County, 1854-1896
Charles City County, 1853-1896
Charlotte County, 1853-1899
Chesterfield County, 1853-1861
Essex County, 1895-1896
Fairfax County, 1853-1897
Fauquier County, 1853-1896
Floyd County, 1853-1897
Fluvanna County, 1853-1896
Franklin County, 1853-1896
Frederick County, 1855-1896
Giles County, 1853-1896
Gloucester County, 1853-1896
Goochland County, 1853-1896
Grayson County, 1853-1896
Greene County, 1853-1896
Greensville County, 1853-1896
Halifax County, 1853-1890
Henrico County, 1884-1896
Henry County, 1853-1896

Highland County, 1853-1896
Isle of Wight County, 1853-1873
Mecklenburg County, 1853-1896
Middlesex County, 1853-1896
Montgomery County, 1853-1896
Nansemond County, 1853-1856
Pulaski County, 1853-1893
Rappahannock County, 1853-1896
Richmond, 1884-1896
Richmond County, 1853-1896
Roanoke, 1884-1896; June 1894- May 1909
Roanoke County, 1853-1896
Rockbridge County, 1853-1862
Stafford County, 1876-1896
Staunton, 1853-1896
Surry County, 1853-1896
Sussex County, 1853-1896
Tazewell County, 1853-1896
Warren County, 1853-1876
Williamsburg, 1853-1896
Winchester, 1853-1895

Miscellaneous Records

Augusta County Court Martial Records, 1756-1796
Augusta County Index to Wills, 1745-1903
Augusta County Wills, Volume 1, 1745-1753
Augusta County Wills, Volume 1A, 2& 2A, 1778-1871
Augusta County Wills, Volumes 3 & 4, 1761-1772
Augusta County Surveyors Records, 1744-1906
Botetourt County Personal Property Tax Lists, 1783-1851
Botetourt County Surveyors Records, 1774-1914
Grayson County Ended Chancery Causes, 1809; 132-1842
Grayson County Ended Chancery Files, 1809-1813; 1842-1857; 1856-1862

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

Roanoke: 1886, 1889, 1893, 1898, 1903, 1907, 1919 (additional indexes 1946, 1948, 1951), 1930
(additional indexes 1948 and 1949)
Rocky Mount: 1893, 1898, 1902, 1907, 1913, 1922, 1928 (additional index 1943)
Salem: 1886, 1891, 1898, 1903, 1908, 1913, 1922 (South Salem), 1932 (additional index 1959)

Virginia State Land Office Index to Surveys, 1779-1819

Virginia State Land Office Index and Abstracts of Patents, 1623-1774 and Grants, 1779-

Reel 322: Accomack, Amelia, Augusta, Albemarle, Amherst, Bath, and Bedford Counties.
Reel 323: Botetourt, Caroline, Chesterfield, Cumberland, Charlotte, Campbell, Cabell,
Buckingham, Brunswick, Brooke, Berkeley, Culpeper, Dunmore, Fauquier, Fairfax. Charles City,
Dinwiddie, Elizabeth City, Essex, Gloucester, and Giles Counties

State Free Negro Capitation Tax Books, Charleston, South Carolina: 1811-1860

Newspapers

With the exception of the *Roanoke Times* from 1990 through current editions and the *New York Times*, **newspapers are not indexed**. It is important to know an approximate date before searching.

Roanoke Times: November 1889 – December 2018. January 2019 through current issues are available digitally at NewsBank: <http://www.viriniaroom.org/databases/>

Roanoke World News: January 1903 -November 1991

Roanoke Tribune: January 1992 – current

Salem Times Register: 1909; August 1934 – current

Vinton Messenger: January 1998 – December 2008

Floyd Press: January 1944 – December 1990

Herald of the Valley: July 1820 – July 1823

Bluefield Daily Telegraph: 1939

Lynchburg Press: 1809 – April 1822, scattered issues

Lynchburg Virginian: August 1822 – August 1869

Lynchburg Daily Virginian: September 1870 – September 1885

Virginia Gazette: September 1736 – December 1780

Virginia Gazette Daybooks: 1750-1752; 1764-1766

Negro History Bulletin: October 1937 – November 1970

Railway Age: 1905-1966; 1969-1988

Southern Workman: 1872 – 1989

Fredericksburg Christian Banner: September 1850 – August 1862

Wall Street Journal: 1957 – 2010

New York Times: September 1851 – December 2009

Firstworld: 1978 – 1980

Encore American & Worldwide News: 1975 – 1982

Online Resources

In addition to databases available through Roanoke Public Libraries, there are a number of online resources which can be used in genealogical research.

Hathitrust Digital Library - <https://www.hathitrust.org/>

Hathitrust includes full scans of books, including genealogies, which are not subject to copyright restrictions. Access is free and no registration is required.

Library of Virginia – www.lva.virginia.gov

Unknown No Longer - <https://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/aan/search-the-narrative>

The Virginia Museum of History & Culture launched Unknown No Longer in 2011 to make accessible biographical details of enslaved Virginians from unpublished historical records in its collections.

Virginia Land Patents and Grants - <https://lva-virginia.libguides.com/land-grants>

This collection consists of Virginia land patents (1623–1774) and land grants (1779–), including land grants within the Northern Neck proprietary (1690–1874) and survey plats and descriptions for the Northern Neck land grants (1786–1874).

Lost Records Localities Digital Collection - <https://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/lost>

This collection consists of images for a wide variety of court records found as part of chancery and other locality records-processing projects. The images are of surviving records from localities where most records are no longer extant. The original record is scanned and the images are filed together in an artificial online collection—the Lost Records Localities Digital Collection. Please check periodically as this is an ongoing project.

Cohabitation Registers for Virginia Counties - <https://tinyurl.com/rtjcxsb>

A cohabitation register, or as it is properly titled, *Register of Colored Persons...cohabiting together as Husband and Wife on 27th February 1866*, was the legal vehicle by which former slaves legitimized both their marriages and their children. The information about an individual person contained in a cohabitation register is literally priceless as it is often the first time that a former slave appeared officially in the public record and because of the extensive kinds of information that the register recorded. Though recorded at the local level, registers may not exist for every county in Virginia.

Confederate Disability Applications - <https://lva-virginia.libguides.com/confederate-disability>

This collection consists of certificates submitted by injured veterans to the Virginia Board of Commissioners on Artificial Limbs. Injured soldiers submitted certificates from their county court stating that they were Virginia citizens, that they had been disabled in the war, and what assistance they required.

Confederate Pension Applications, Veterans and Widows - <https://lva-virginia.libguides.com/confederate-pensions>

This collection consists of pension applications and amended applications filed by resident Virginians who served in the Confederate military and their widows, as well as more than 500 enslaved and free Blacks who labored as cooks, herdsman, laborers, servants, or teamsters.

Revolutionary War Bounty Land Claims - <https://lva-virginia.libguides.com/bounty-claims>

The collection consists of images of application files for military bounty land. Related bounty land certificate files are indexed, but not imaged. Following a 1779 legislative act, the state offered bounty lands for Revolutionary War military service. To qualify, a Virginia soldier or sailor had to serve at least three years continuously in the Continental or state forces. No bounty land was given by the state for militia service.

Revolutionary War Virginia State Pensions - <https://lva-virginia.libguides.com/revolutionary-pensions>

Between 1777 and 1785, the Virginia General Assembly passed several laws authorizing pensions for disabled soldiers and for widows of soldiers who died while on active duty. This collection of 646 pension files provides digital images of the documents submitted for pension claims.

Rare Book Digital Collection – <https://tinyurl.com/ykdws9zi>

This collection of text and images features entire works, as well as selected title pages, frontispieces, illustrations, plats, maps, and designs from the pages of the Rare Book Collection. The Rare Book Collection houses 51,700 titles focused on the history and formation of Virginia, early Virginia imprints, and also includes other diverse topics that span the 16th through the 21st centuries such as agriculture, architecture, botany, customs and trades, genealogy, law, mathematics, natural history, theology, and the history of our state and the nation.

Genealogy Gophers - <https://www.gengophers.com/#/>

Search 80,000 genealogy books for an ancestor's name. The site includes full scans of books. Access is free and no registration is required.