

North Carolina Marriage Bonds (1741-1868)

The Virginia-North Carolina Piedmont Genealogical Society has available in its Search Room 88 microfiche containing abstracts of marriage bonds from the State of North Carolina from 1741-1868 taken from the 170,000 marriage bonds in the North Carolina State Archives. These bonds were abstracted in the 1930s and have been arranged in two statewide indexes, one by groom's name and one by bride's name. These indexes are contained on the microfiche.

Marriage bonds were statements of intent for couples who planned to wed. The prospective groom took out a bond from the clerk of the court in the county where the bride had her usual residence as surety that there was no legal obstacle to the proposed marriage. One or more bondsmen signed the bond with the groom to guarantee the bond fee should the marriage prove illegal.

Most marriage bonds contain the following information: groom's name, bride's name, date of bond, bondsman or bondsmen's names, and witness name. When a marriage certificate (after 1851) is filed with the bond or when additional information appears on the bond itself, this information is also included in the abstract. Such information may include parents' names, date of the marriage, the person performing the ceremony, and similar data.

The first three digits in the "RECORD" column of the microfiche indicate the county where the bond was taken out. The digits (code numbers) for the counties covered by our Society are Person (078), Caswell (020) and Rockingham (084). A complete list of code numbers for all counties is available. The format for the first line of each entry is as follows:

Groom Bride Date Record Bondsman Witness

The second line will include any additional information given in the abstract.

Some common abbreviations used in the abstracts are: (AMECH) African Methodist Episcopal Church, (BM) Baptist Minister, (CC) Clerk of Court, (CCC) Clerk of County Court, (CH) Church, (CLK) Clerk, (CO) County, (COL) Colored, bride and groom were Negroes, (CT) Court, (DC) Deputy Clerk, (D OF) daughter of, (JP) Justice of the Peace, (LUTH MIN) Lutheran Minister