

Finding African American History

at the
**Washington
County Archives**

Finding Guide for African-American History

When it comes to researching African American history, the Washington County Archives has a lot to offer, most of which can be discovered through our website: wctnarchives.org

Under the "Collection Guides" tab, researchers will find guides to most of the processed material located in the archives. Below are a few of the areas in which records related to this topic can be found.

Court Cases

Cases involving race, slavery, emancipation, and free blacks can be found in the following courts:

- Circuit Court
- Chancery Court
- Judicial Court
- Superior Court of Law and Equity
- Tennessee State Court

The earliest case relating to this topic dates back to 1783 with following cases taking place during the Civil War, antebellum Civil War, Reconstruction, and Jim Crow eras.

Estates & Wills (Clerk and Master records)

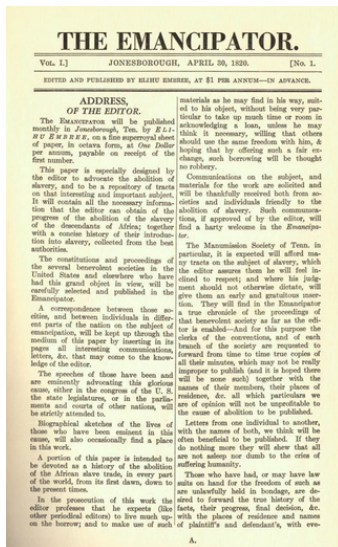
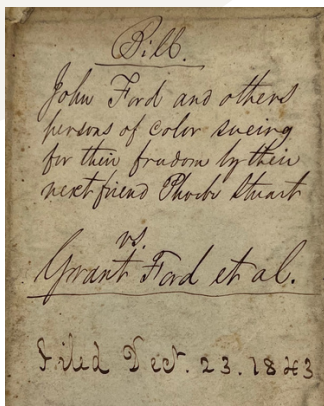
These probate records can contain information related to slaveholder estates and whether they emancipated their slaves or not after their death.

Petitions (County Clerk records)

Within this group there are 12 petitions ranging from 1815 to 1930, that relate to African-American history in Washington County. The majority of these focus on freeing slaves.

Emancipation Bonds (County Clerk records)

There are also 12 emancipation bonds within the collection with dates ranging from 1802 to 1841.



Book Collection

A number of titles can be used as reference for further research on this topic. Some of the titles include:

- *Black Life in Johnson City Tennessee 1856 - 1965: An Historical Chronology* by Mary Henderson Alexander (2001) Master's thesis
- *An Abolitionist in the Appalachian South* by Durwood Dunn (1997)
- *The Emancipator* by Elihu Embree with introduction by Ella P. Buchanan and John F. Nash (1995)
- *Race, Slavery and Free Blacks, Series II, Petitions to Southern County Courts, 1775 – 1867* by Loren Schweningen (2005)

Photograph Collection

There are two photographs in the collection that relate to this topic.

- *The Manumission Intelligencer*, and *The Emancipator* building; unidentified individuals, undated
- Warner Institute, undated