United States
West Virginia

Raleigh County

Guide to Raleigh County, West Virginia ancestry, genealogy and family history, birth records, marriage records, death records, census records, family history, and military records.

Contents
1 County Information
  1.1 Description
  1.2 County Courthouse
  1.3 Raleigh County, West Virginia Record Dates
  1.4 Record Loss
  1.5 Boundary Changes
  1.6 Populated Places
  1.7 History

2 Resources
  2.1 Bible Records
  2.2 Biographies
  2.3 Business, Commerce, and Occupations
  2.4 Cemeteries
  2.5 Census Records
  2.6 Church Records
  2.7 Court Records
  2.8 Directories
  2.9 Emigration and Immigration
  2.10 Ethnic, Political, and Religious Groups
  2.11 Funeral Homes
  2.12 Genealogies
  2.13 Guardianship
  2.14 Land and Property

County Information

Description
The County was named for Sir Walter Raleigh. The County has Beckley as its seat and the County was created 1850. The County is located in the southeast area of the state. [2]

County Courthouse

Raleigh County Courthouse
215 Main Street
Beckley, WV 25801
Phone: 304-255-9123

Raleigh County Website

County Clerk has birth, marriage, death records from 1850. Clerk of the Circuit Court has divorce and court records. [3]

County Facts

County seat: Beckley
Organized: January 23, 1850
Parent County(s): Fayette[1]

Neighboring Counties
Boone • Fayette • Kanawha • Mercer • Summers • Wyoming
See County Maps

Courthouse

Location Map

Adoption
West Virginia

Record Dates

Information for this chart was taken from various sources, often containing conflicting dates. This information should be taken as a guide and should be verified by contacting the county and/or the state government agency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Marriage</th>
<th>Death</th>
<th>Court</th>
<th>Land</th>
<th>Probate</th>
<th>Census</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>1870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statewide registration for births and deaths began in 1917. General compliance by 1925.

Record Loss

There is no known history of courthouse disasters in this county.

Boundary Changes

1850--Raleigh County was created 23 January 1850 from Fayette County.

- County seat: Beckley

For animated maps illustrating West Virginia county boundary changes, "Rotating Formation West Virginia County Boundary Maps" (1617-1995) may be viewed for free at the MapofUS.org website.

Populated Places

For a complete list of populated places, including small neighborhoods and suburbs, visit Hometown Locator. The following are the most historically and genealogically relevant populated places in this county:

**Cities**

- Beckley (county seat)

**Towns**

- Lester
- Mabscott
- Rhodell
- Sophia

**Unincorporated communities**

- Abney
- Abraham
- Affinity
- Amigo
- Arnett
- Artie
- Besoco
- Big Stick
- Hollywood
- Hot Coal
- Hotchkiss
- Jonben
- Josephine
- Killarney
- Lego
- Lillybrook
- Princewick
- Raleigh
- Redbird
- Shiloh
- Slab Fork
- Soak Creek
- Sophia
- Stotesbury
Census-designated places

- Blue Jay
- Blue Jay 6
- Cedar
- Cool Ridge
- Dorothy
- Eastgulf
- Egeria
- Fireco
- Flat Top
- Glen Daniel
- Glen Morgan
- McAlpin
- McVey
- Montcoal
- Naoma
- Bragg
- Odd
- Pemberton
- Pickshin
- Pinepoca
- Pluto
- Price Hill
- Sullivan
- Sylvia
- Tams
- Ury
- Whitby
- White Oak
- Willibet
- Winding Gulf
- Woodpeck

History Timeline

Resources

Bible Records

- Raleigh County, West Virginia Bible Records, USGenWeb

Biographies

Business, Commerce, and Occupations

Cemeteries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cemeteries of Raleigh County, West Virginia online and in print</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tombstone Transcriptions Online</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Findagrave.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- WVGenWeb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- WVGenWeb Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- WV Tombstone Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Interment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- WVGravestones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Billion Graves Index at FamilySearch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tombstone Transcriptions in Print (Often more complete)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Family History Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- WorldCat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Historical populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Census</th>
<th>Pop.</th>
<th>%±</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,765</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,367</td>
<td>90.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,673</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,367</td>
<td>100.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td></td>
<td>9,597</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td></td>
<td>12,436</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td></td>
<td>25,633</td>
<td>106.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td></td>
<td>42,482</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td></td>
<td>68,072</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td></td>
<td>86,687</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td></td>
<td>96,273</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td></td>
<td>77,826</td>
<td>−19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td></td>
<td>70,080</td>
<td>−10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td></td>
<td>86,821</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td></td>
<td>76,819</td>
<td>−11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td>79,220</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>78,859</td>
<td>−0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: "Wikipedia.org".

Census Records

For tips on accessing Raleigh census records online, see: West Virginia Census.

- 1880 Raleigh County, West Virginia Census

Church Records

- Raleigh County, West Virginia Churches, USGenWeb

Court Records

Directories

Emigration and Immigration

Ethnic, Political, and Religious Groups

Funeral Homes

Genealogies


Guardianship

Land and Property Records

Land and property records can place an ancestor in a particular location, provide economic information, and reveal family relationships. Land records include: deeds, abstracts and indexes, mortgages, leases, grants and land patents.

See West Virginia Land and Property for additional information about early West Virginia land grants. After land was transferred to private ownership, subsequent transactions were usually recorded at the county courthouse and where records are currently housed.

Local Histories

Local histories are available for Raleigh County, West Virginia Genealogy. County histories may include biographies, church, school and government history, and military information. For more information about local histories see the wiki page section West.
Maps and Gazetteers

- Maps of West Virginia (1617-1995)
- Map of 1850 Virginia and West Virginia
- Raleigh County, West Virginia Maps
- Raleigh County, West Virginia 1895 Map

Migration

Military Records

Civil War

**Regiments.** Service men in Raleigh served in various regiments. Men often joined a company (within a regiment) that originated in their county. Listed below are companies that were specifically formed in Raleigh County:

**Union**

- 8th Regiment, West Virginia Infantry.[7]

**Confederate**

- 30th Battalion, Virginia Sharpshooters (Clarke’s) (Confederate). Company A.[8]
- 34th Battalion, Virginia Cavalry (Witcher’s Battalion, Virginia Mounted Rifles) (Confederate). Company K.[9]

*Records and histories are available, including:*

- **1861-1865** West Virginia Civil War Service Records of Union Soldiers, 1861-1865 at FamilySearch — index
- **1861-1865** U.S., Confederate Soldiers Compiled Service Records, 1861-1865 at Ancestry — index (free)
- **1861-1865** U.S., Union Soldiers Compiled Service Records, 1861-1865 at Ancestry — index (free)

Naturalization and Citizenship

- **1814-1991** West Virginia Naturalization Records, 1814-1991 at FamilySearch — index and images

Newspapers

- Beckley Post-Herald (Beckley, West Virginia) at Ancestry ($)
Obituaries

- Raleigh County, West Virginia Obituaries

Other Records

Periodicals

Probate Records

Online Probate Records

- 1724-1978 West Virginia Wills and Probate Records 1724-1978 at Ancestry — index and images $
- Raleigh County, West Virginia Will Books 1850 - 1969
- West Virginia Will Books
- Raleigh County, West Virginia Wills, Courtesy The Riffe-Smith Collection

School Records

Tax Records

West Virginia real and personal property tax records are managed by the County Assessor in each county. Land and land improvements are considered real property while mobile property is classified as personal property.

Many County Assessors offer an online searchable database, where assessment record searches can be performed by name, account number, year, or mp/parcel number. Where online records are not available, requests for records can be made to the Assessment Office in person, by phone, or in writing.

The search for tax information can start here

Vital Records

Birth

- West Virginia Vital Records, 1865-1969 (varies) - Includes birth, death, and marriage.
- Raleigh County Births, 1853-75 at Ancestry ($) 

Marriage

- 1801-1962 - West Virginia, United States Marriages at FindMyPast — index $
1851-1861 - Virginia Marriages 1851-1861 (Ancestry) ($).
Turner, Ronald Ray. Raleigh County West Virginia Marriages From Other Counties. Available online, courtesy: Prince William County Virginia website.

Death

1804-1999 - West Virginia Deaths, 1804-1999 at FamilySearch — index

Divorce

Research Facilities

Archives

Family History Centers

Family History Centers provide one-on-one assistance and free access to premium genealogical websites. In addition, many centers have free how-to genealogy classes.

- The closest family history centers are in the Huntington Family History Center and the Charleston Family History Center
- Introduction to Family History Centers

Libraries

- Raleigh County Public Library
  Main Branch
  221 N. Kanawha St.
  Beckley, WV 25801
  Phone: 304-255-0511

Museums

Societies

Websites

- Raleigh County, WV History, Records, Facts and Genealogy
- West Virginia Genealogy Network Community on Google+
- West Virginia Genealogy Network Group on Facebook
- Cyndi’s List West Virginia
- Raleigh County Records from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
- FamilySearch Catalog - The FamilySearch catalog contains descriptions and access information for all genealogical materials (including books, online materials, microfilm, microfiche, and publications) in their collection. Use Historical Records to search for specific individuals in genealogical records

Research Guides

References

1. Handybook for Genealogists: United States of America, 10th ed. (Draper, Utah: Everton Pub., 2002), West Virginia. At various libraries (WorldCat); FHL Book 973


### Links to West Virginia-related articles (see also Virginia-related articles)

#### Topics

- Search Strategies
- Record Finder
- Introduction
- African Americans
- American Indians
- Archives and Libraries
- Bible Records
- Biography
- Cemeteries
- Census
- Church Records
- Court Records
- Directories
- Emigration and Immigration
- Gazetteers
- Genealogy
- History
- Land and Property
- Maps
- Military Records
- Naturalization and Citizenship
- Newspapers
- Online Records
- Periodicals
- Probate Records
- Societies
- Taxation
- Vital Records
- Voting Registers
- For Further Reading

#### Counties

- Barbour
- Berkeley
- Boone
- Braxton
- Brooke
- Cabell
- Calhoun
- Clay
- Doddridge
- Fayette
- Gilmer
- Grant
- Greenbrier
- Hampshire
- Hancock
- Hardy
- Harrison
- Jackson
- Jefferson
- Kanawha
- Lewis
- Lincoln
- Logan
- Marion
- Marshall
- Mason
- McDowell
- Mercer
- Mineral
- Mingo
- Monongalia
- Monroe
- Morgan
- Nicholas
- Ohio
- Pendleton
- Pleasants
- Pocahontas
- Preston
- Putnam
- Raleigh
- Randolph
- Ritchie
- Roane
- Summers
- Taylor
- Tucker
- Tyler
- Upshur
- Wayne
- Webster
- Wetzel
- Wirt
- Wood
- Wyoming

#### Major Repositories

Boyd County Public Library (Ashland, KY) • Clarksburg-Harrison Public Library • Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh, PA) • Library of Congress (Washington, DC) • Library of Virginia (Richmond, VA) • Martinsburg-Berkeley County Public Library • Mary Ball Washington Museum and Library (Lancaster, VA) • Maryland State Archives (Annapolis, MD) • National Archives I (Washington, DC) • National Archives II (College Park, MD) • National Archives at Philadelphia (PA) • New York Public Library (New York City, NY) • Parkersburg and Wood County Public Library • Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston • Santa Cruz Public Library Downtown (Santa Cruz, CA) • University of Chicago Library (Chicago, IL) • Virginia Historical Society (Richmond, VA) • Washington National Records Center (Suitland, MD) • West Virginia Archives and History • West Virginia University Wise Library • West Virginia Vital Registration Office

#### Migration Routes

- Potomac River
- Braddock's Road
- Great Indian Warpath
- Great Valley Road
- Kanawha Trail
- King's Highway
- National Road
- Cumberland Road
- New River and Southern Trail
- Old Northwestern Turnpike
- Pamunkey-New River Trail
- Zane's Trace
- Baltimore and Ohio Railroad

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**Categories:** West Virginia Maps | Raleigh County, West Virginia | West Virginia Counties
The following historical population figures are compiled from multiple sources. They are not of uniform reliability or methodology and may not represent uniform time series. They are presented as illustrative of the development of global demographic trends. Sources are given at the end of the page. For graphs of this data see this page. World and regional populations (in millions). year. world. Template:Historical populations is used as an information box on pages, showing each census year with a population, and a percent gain/loss comparison. It is intended to combine the functionalities of two existing templates, Template:US Census population and Template:Histpop, the former of which is specialized for the United States, and the latter of which lacks many features of the former. Contents. 1 Usage. Historical demography concerns itself with two families of questions -- factual description of population behavior and explanation of the patterns that are observed. On the descriptive side, historical demographers are concerned with estimating the absolute population size of a group or region -- Tuscany in 1400, New England in 1700, the Anasazi in 1000. And they are interested in measuring the underlying demographic rates -- for example, natality, mortality, age of marriage, nutritional and health status, or sex ratios.