

Voter registration cards

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As you read...

This page shows a 1902 voter registration card from Alamance County, North Carolina, certifying that the person registering had been eligible to vote prior to January 1, 1867 — that is, before the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave African Americans the right to vote. This certification was required under North Carolina's 1900 constitutional amendment that effectively disfranchised African Americans.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Would the first voter have been able to read or write any section of the constitution as required by the new amendment? Look at the voter's signature to find a clue that shows this person was unable to read and write. (The first signature is the voter's; the second signature is the registrar's.)
2. Why was this voter allowed to vote, even though he was unable to read or write?
3. Notice that the second voter, who was also unable to read and write, was not eligible to vote in 1867. (He would have been 18 in 1867, too young to vote.) Why was he allowed to vote in 1902?

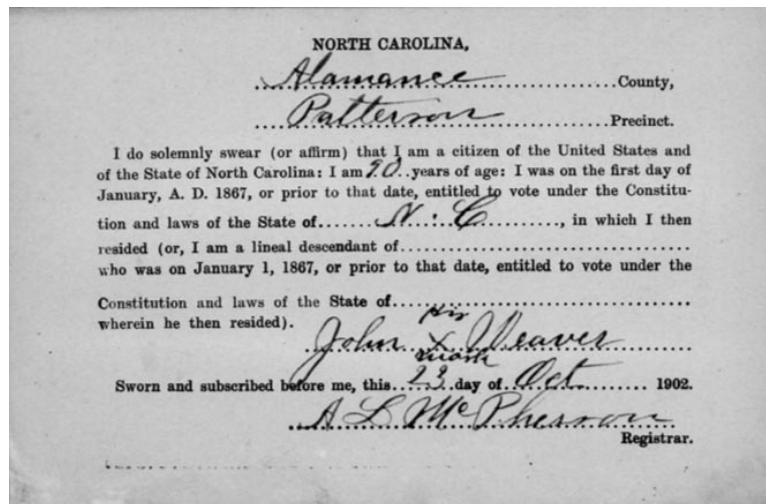


Figure 1.

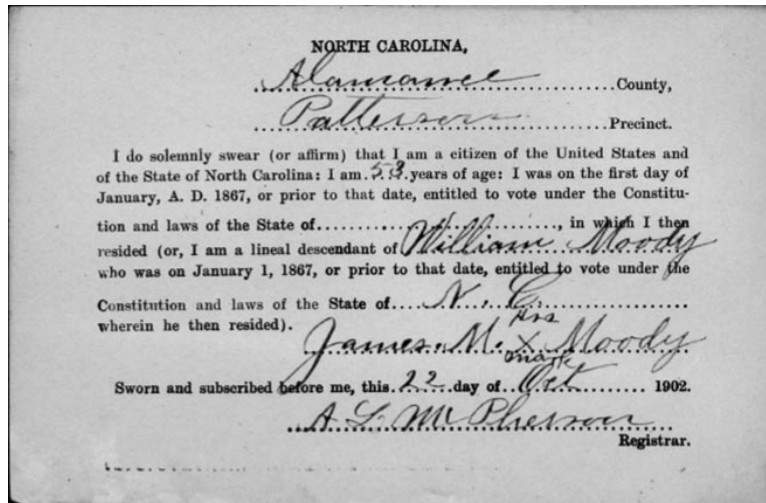


Figure 2.

Voter registration cards from Alamance County, 1902, in the North Carolina State Archives.

After the suffrage amendment¹ took effect, North Carolinians still eligible to vote registered with their local precincts. The two registration cards shown here are from Alamance County.

NORTH CAROLINA, ALAMANCE COUNTY, PATTERSON PRECINCT:

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am a citizen of the United States and of the State of North Carolina: I am 53 years of age: I was on the first day of January, A. D. 1867, or prior to that date, entitled to vote under the Constitution and laws of ..., in which I then resided (or, I am a lineal descendant of William Moody who was on January 1, 1867, or prior to that date, entitled to vote under the Constitution and laws of the State of N. C. wherein he then resided:

James M. X [his mark] Moody

Sworn and subscribed before me, this 23 day of Oct 1902. A. L. McPherson, Registrar.

On the web

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Notes

1. See <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/4365>.

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Figure 1 (page 1)

In "Miscellaneous Records" from Alamance County, North Carolina State Archives. This image is believed to be in the public domain. Users are advised to make their own copyright assessment.

Figure 2 (page 2)

In "Miscellaneous Records" from Alamance County, North Carolina State Archives. This image is believed to be in the public domain. Users are advised to make their own copyright assessment.