



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
RICHMOND

ENNION G. WILLIAMS, M. D.,
COMMISSIONER
W. A. PLECKER, M. D.,
REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS

October 25, 1929.

Hon. A. T. Shields, Clerk,
Lexington,
Rockbridge Co., Va.

Dear Mr. Shields:

I have wondered frequently how you are holding out against the demand of the "free issue" people of Rockbridge for licenses to marry white people, and whether you have had any more applications since the unfortunate mistake made by Judge Holt in deciding that one of those families is of Indian blood and should be allowed to be considered as white.

I have recently been called upon to give a definite answer as to the racial classification of the family of P. S. Beverly, of Amherst County, in our office and have made a careful investigation of his racial origin. Our final conclusion is summed up in a letter to him, a copy of which I am herewith enclosing. You will see that there is absolutely no trace of Indian blood in his family, yet he has been posing as of that stock. The rest of the group have but little more foundation for that claim than he.

The Amherst people are standing firm in opposing their admittance into the white public schools, and I believe none of them can get a license to marry a white person from the Clerk of Amherst.

I hope it will be possible to create a stronger public sentiment in Rockbridge in reference to the great danger of classifying these people other than as of negro descent. I regret, however, that our office is not in position to handle every case that may possibly come up. It will be necessary for the local authorities to do that from the knowledge already in their possession and which may be found in the old records of your office.

The principal families composing this "free issue" group are, as you doubtless know:- Beverly, Johns, Hartless, Terry, Tyree, Adcock, Redcross, Clarks, Sorrells, John Mays (white but wife a "free issue"), Vent, Rogers, Roberts, and Hicks.

With highest regards, I am

Yours very sincerely,

WAP:W

State Registrar.