

A Guide to the Legislative Petitions of the General Assembly, 1776-1865

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Access Restrictions

Petitions relating to enslaved and free Black individuals were digitized and available through [Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative Digital Collection](#) on the Library of Virginia website. Please use digital images where possible.

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There are no restrictions.

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Oversized petitions have been separated to boxes 305-370.

Bibliography

Church, Randolph W. (Randolph Warner), 1907-1984 Virginia legislative petitions : bibliography, calendar, and abstracts from original sources, 6 May, 1776-21 June, 1782. Richmond : Virginia State Library, 1984.
Robertson, James Rood, 1864-1932. Petitions of the early inhabitants of Kentucky to the General Assembly of Virginia, 1769 to 1792, Easley, S.C. : Southern Historical Press, c1981. Virginia State Library. Archives Division. A calendar of legislative petitions, arranged by counties: Accomac-Bedford. Richmond, D. Bottom, Superintendent of Public Print., 1908.

Historical Information

The legislative branch of government in Virginia is the oldest of its kind in the Western Hemisphere, tracing its lineage to the first meeting of the Grand Assembly of governor, councilors, and burgesses at Jamestown on July 30, 1619. Beginning with the session convened on March 2, 1643, an assembly was constituted with a House of Burgesses modeled after the House of Commons in Parliament, with the governor's Council serving as the upper house. Upon adoption of the first state constitution in 1776, the General Assembly was restructured to consist of the House of Delegates and the Senate. The General Assembly is composed of 40 Senators, elected every four years and 100 delegates, elected every two years, who formulate and enact laws in the Commonwealth. Major activities of the state legislature include representing citizens in the formulation of public policy, enacting statutory laws providing a statutory and financial basis for all government actions, electing judicial officers, and confirming executive appointments of the governor.

In the General Assembly, members of the House of Delegates and the Senate vote on legislation entered during the legislative sessions. Legislative bills can originate in either the House or the Senate, with both chambers having the ability to establish study committees. Each house serves as a check on the other to ensure a thorough debate on the merits of each bill. Currently the General Assembly holds annual sessions, alternately of thirty or sixty days' duration.

Scope and Content

The Legislative Petitions of the General Assembly are housed in 370 boxes and are arranged in five series. Series have been designated for Counties, Cities, Kentucky Counties, Miscellaneous (Chronological), and Miscellaneous (Alphabetical). The Counties & Cities are arranged in alphabetical order by locality, then chronological. The Kentucky petitions are arranged in chronological order. There are two series for miscellaneous petitions, one arranged in chronological order - Miscellaneous (Chronological), and one

arranged in alphabetical order - Miscellaneous (Alphabetical). Petitions to the General Assembly were the primary catalyst for legislation in the Commonwealth from 1776 until 1865. Public improvements, military claims, divorce, manumission of slaves, division of counties, incorporation of towns, religious freedom, and taxation were just some of the concerns expressed in these petitions. The petitions often contain hundreds of signatures and are a useful tool in genealogical research. Frequently, the petitions contain supplementary support documents useful in research including maps, wills, naturalizations, deeds, resolutions, affidavits, judgments, and other items.

A database, accessible through the website of The Library of Virginia (<http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/petitions>), was created to calendar the Legislative Petitions. The database lists the name of the petitioner, locality, date of presentation, description, reel number, box number, and folder number. In addition, each petition has been assigned one or more topics for indexing purposes. The petitions have been assigned with the following topics: Agriculture/Livestock/Farming; Appropriations/Salary Increases; Banks & Banking; Bridges; Canals; Charters/Incorporations; Churches/Religious Issues; Citizenship/Naturalizations; Commerce; Constitutional Conventions; Courts/Judicial System; Division of County/New County; Divorce; Elections; Ferries/Packets; Fishing/Oyster Industry; Free Negroes; Indians; Land/Real Estate; Manufacturers/Manufacturing Companies; Militia/Public Guard; Mining/Mining Companies; Miscellaneous; Name Changes; Navigation/Navigation Companies; Organizations; Paper Money; Pardons/Release from Fines, Judgments, etc; Private Relief/Compensation; Prohibition/Temperance; Railroads/Railroad Companies; Revenue/Taxation; Roads/Turnpike Companies; Schools/Universities; Slaves/Slavery; Tobacco Inspection/Industry; Towns; War Claims/Pensions; and Wills/Administrations.

Agriculture/Livestock/Farming - There are 384 petitions in the database related to agriculture, livestock, or farming. These petitions are from farmers, agricultural societies, and others. The petitions relate to declaring waterways as lawful fences, the incorporation of agricultural societies, bounties for wolf & fox scalps for the protection of livestock, taxes on dogs, legislation respecting enclosures, the driving of livestock, the production of silk, the prohibition of the distillation of grain during the Civil War, and prohibitions against hogs & other livestock from running at large in towns.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Edmund Ruffin, Chairman of the Committee of the State Agricultural Club, asking for the enactment of some proper measures in aid of agricultural instruction & improvement (Nelson Co. - 1851/02/12); Edmund Ruffin asking for a law requiring the Commissioners of the Revenue of the counties to ascertain the quantities of all lands marled or limed (Hanover Co. - 1852/02/12); the Virginia State Agricultural Society asking for an act of incorporation (Richmond City - 1850/03/04); and Committee of the Farmer's Assembly asking for the establishment of a professorship of agriculture upon a donation of Philip St. John Cocke at the University of Virginia (Albemarle Co. - 1957/12/21).

Appropriations/Salary Increases - There are 888 petitions in the database related to requests for appropriations by the Legislature and salary increases. There are petitions from commissioners of revenue, colonization societies, inspectors of tobacco, clerks, sheriffs, trustees of colleges, and other citizens. The petitions relate to appropriations for internal improvements, colleges & academies, and salary increases for tobacco inspectors, clerks, and other state employees.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: James Warrell asking for an appropriation for the repair of the roof of his museum erected on Capitol Square (Richmond City - 1821/12/19); William Tatham asking for an appropriation to complete his map of the Southern Division of the United States (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1791/10/31); Trustees of the Deaf & Dumb Asylum asking for an appropriation (Augusta Co. - 1833/12/28); Samuel P. Parsons, Superintendent of the Penitentiary, asking for a salary increase (Richmond City - 1818/01/02 & 1818/12/23); Blair Bolling, Commandant of the Public Guard, asking for compensation for his services as Superintendent of Public Buildings (Richmond City - 1831/02/18); Cadets of the Virginia Military Institute asking for an appropriation to reconstruct & enlarge their barracks (Rockbridge Co. - 1849/01/03); Cavalry & Volunteer Corps asking for an appropriation to convey the remains of Light Horse Harry Lee from Georgia to Virginia (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1861/01/15); Citizens of Albemarle County asking for an appropriation to erect a marble statue in honor of Thomas Jefferson at the University of Virginia (1850/12/04); Richard Oglesby Davidson asking for an appropriation to aid his enterprise in constructing a machine to be employed in the navigation of the air (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1841/02/10); Directors of Public Buildings asking for additional funds for the completion of the Capitol (Richmond City - 1786/12/06); Andrew Dunscomb asking for additional allowance as commissioner for adjusting the accounts of the Commonwealth against the United States (Richmond City - 1790/11/16); Inhabitants of Richmond asking for aid in the establishment of a library and depository of the arts & sciences on Capitol Square (1817/12/20); and the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, & Common Council of Williamsburg asking for an appropriation for rebuilding the former Capitol or granting the lot on which it stands (1832/12/10).

Banks & Banking - There are 619 records in the database related to banks & banking. Included are petitions from presidents & boards of directors of banks, citizens, merchants, stockholders, and others. These petitions relate to the incorporation of banks, the renewal or extension of banks charters, the establishment of branches of the Bank of Virginia, Exchange Bank of Virginia, North Western Bank of Virginia,

etc., permissions to issue notes of less denomination, and increases in the capital of banks.

Bridges - These are 534 records in the database related to bridges. These petitions originate from citizens, bridge companies, and turnpike companies concerning the construction & repair of bridges, increases in tolls, lotteries, and protests against the construction of bridges. Among the bridge companies are the Covington Bridge Company, Wheeling & Belmont Bridge Company, Morgantown Bridge Company, Norfolk Draw Bridge Company, and Potomac Bridge Company.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: William Edloe & Goodrich Durfey asking for permission to erect a bridge across the creek separating Jamestown Island from the mainland (James City Co. - 1832/01/24 & Williamsburg - 1833/01/12); Justices of the Peace, Mayor, Aldermen, & Commonalty of Richmond requesting a sum of money for erecting a stone bridge across Shockoe Creek (Henrico County - 1792/10/03); Abigail Mayo regarding tolls on Mayo's Bridge (Richmond City - 1830's); John Mayo asking for permission to build a bridge across the James River between Richmond & Manchester (Richmond City - 1784/11/25); citizens of Henrico & Richmond against the petitions of Edward W. Trent & others for leave to erect a toll bridge across the James River (Henrico Co. - 1813/12/07 & Richmond City - 1815/12/18 & 26); and W. J. Willey & others of Monongalia County asking for an increase in the capital stock of the Morgantown Bridge Company including a plan of the Morgantown Wire Suspension Bridge (1850/12/12).

Canals - There are 223 petitions related to canals. The petitions are from citizens, the Covington Convention, the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Convention, and various canal companies including the James River & Kanawha Canal Company, the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Company, the Dismal Swamp Canal Company, the Potomac Company, the Rappahannock Company, & the Alexandria Canal Company. These petitions relate to subscriptions to capital stock, amendments to charters, appropriations, incorporations, lotteries, tolls, and extensions.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Covington Convention asking for the extension of the James River Canal to Covington (various counties - 1847/01/05) and President & Directors of the Potomac Company asking that acts may pass by the Assemblies of Virginia & Maryland for a canal at each or either of the Great Falls (signed by George Washington) (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1785/12/09 & 1786/11/09).

Charters/Incorporations - There are 2,493 records in the database related to charters & incorporations. Included are petitions from organizations, academies & colleges, railroad companies, cities, churches, mining companies, manufactories, temperance societies, fraternal organizations, turnpike companies, library companies, fire companies, trade associations, merchants, banks, navigation companies, town officials, trustees, and others. These petitions relate to acts of incorporations, alterations & extensions to charters, and repeals of acts of incorporations.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Robert Briggs & others asking for the incorporation of the Medical College of Virginia (Richmond City - 1835/12/23 & 1836/12/31); petitions for & against the incorporations of the Protestant Episcopal Church (various localities - 1786); Citizens of Lynchburg asking for an act incorporating the town (1804/12/08); Citizens of Hampton asking for a law incorporating the town (Elizabeth City Co. - 1849/01/06); Citizens of Harpers Ferry and North & South Bolivar asking for the incorporation of the town of Harpers Ferry (Jefferson Co. - 1850/12/09); petitions from lodges of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows & divisions of the Sons of Temperance (various localities & dates); devisees of Gen. George Washington asking that the Dismal Swamp Company choose a president & managers and that they be incorporated (Miscellaneous (Alphabetical) - Box 303, Folder 52); Free & Accepted Masons lodges (various localities & dates); Hollywood Cemetery Company asking for an act of incorporation (Richmond City - 1849/12/27); Thomas Hudgins & others asking for the incorporation of Richmond College (Richmond City - 1840/01/02); Inhabitants of Alexandria asking for the incorporation of the town (1778/12/03); Inhabitants of Richmond asking for the incorporation of the town (Richmond City - 1782/05/28 (original missing) & 1793/11/04); Inhabitants of Lexington & Fayette Co., Kentucky, asking for the incorporation of the town of Lexington (Kentucky Counties - 1787/11/06); Inhabitants of Yorktown asking for an act incorporating the town (York Co. - 1780/05/10); and Trustees of the Deaf & Dumb Asylum asking for an act of incorporation (Augusta Co. - 1833/12/28).

Churches/Religious Issues - There are 736 records in the database relating to churches and various religious issues. Petitions can be found from Baptist Associations, churchwardens, vestry, clergy, dissenters, churches, overseers of the poor, Quakers, trustees, and other citizens. These petitions relate to the dissolution of vestries, glebe lands, the incorporation of the Protestant Episcopal Church, exemptions from militia duty, lotteries, provisions for teachers of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the disestablishment of the Church of England, parish divisions, the sale of goods & liquor close to religious assemblies & places of worship, and authority to hold bequests for religious, benevolent, & literary societies.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Peter Deforest asking for compensation for his service as minister of the gospel in the Penitentiary (Richmond City - 1850/03/18); Dissenters asking for the disestablishment of the Church of England (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1776/10/16); Dover Baptist Association asking for a law to protect their rights to worship freely (Northumberland Co. - 1820/12/08); Free persons of color in Richmond, as well as slaves, asking for authority to perform the ceremony of the burial of the dead (1834/12/17); Jacob A. Levy & Jacob Ezekiel asking for the remission of fines imposed on them as Jews for

violating the Sabbath (Richmond City - 1846/02/20 & 1848/03/08); Religious society of Friends asking for the interference of the Legislature for remedying abuses in the traffic of slaves from Virginia to other states (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1802/12/17); and Trustees of the Theological Seminary of Virginia asking to be incorporated (Prince Edward Co. - 1815/12/07).

Citizenship/Naturalizations - There are 37 records in the database concerning citizenship & naturalizations. These petitions relate to citizens' requests for citizenship, permissions for foreign-born inhabitants to hold real estate, and restoration of rights of citizenship. Some petitions include certificates of naturalization, oaths of allegiance, & certificates of declaration.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Freeholders of Hanover & Henrico protesting against the bill to exclude particular classes of British subjects from the rights of citizenship within the Commonwealth (Hanover Co. - 1783/06/06 & Henrico Co. - 1783/06/01) and Citizens of Loudoun County asking for an act to prohibit hawkers & peddlers in co-partnership from trading under the same license and to raise the license of those not naturalized or to prohibit them from trading at all (1842/01/03).

Commerce - There are 230 records in the database related to commerce. The petitions originate from citizens, merchants, traders, and others. The petitions relate to the revision of the revenue & license laws, license taxes, merchants' licenses, prohibitions against trading at meetings for religious worship, illegal dealings with slaves, vending of ardent spirits, restriction of foreign vessels to certain ports, and embargoes.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Citizens of Cumberland County asking for enactments in aid & defense of the trade, industry, & proprietary & political rights of the people of the Commonwealth involved in the institution of slavery in the states where the institution now exists (1860/01/05); Macon Convention regarding free trade, weights & measures, taxation, pilot laws, etc., within the Confederate States (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1861/10/14); D. H. London, President of the Southern Rights Association of Virginia, asking for excise laws discriminating in favor of articles grown, manufactured, or imported from Virginia (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1851/01/31); and Merchants, Traders, & other inhabitants of Fredericksburg asking for the removal of restrictions to trade between the United States & British West Indies (1784/11/04).

Constitutional Conventions - There are 212 records in the database regarding the elections for conventions to alter & amend the state constitution. In addition, there are protests against the Staunton Convention calling for a convention to expand suffrage and consider the present system of apportionment. Noteworthy are the following petitions: Inhabitants of the Kentucky River asking for the admission of John Gabriel Jones & George Rogers Clark as duly elected delegates to the May 1776 Convention (Fincastle Co. - 1776/10/08) and Staunton Convention asking for the election of a convention to alter & amend the defects of the constitution (Augusta Co. - 1816/11/18).

Courts/Judicial System - These are 1,776 records in the database related to courts and judicial system in Virginia. Included are petitions from citizens, attorneys, county & corporation courts, circuit courts, clerks, members of the bar, constables, judges, justices of the peace, and others. The petitions concern the removal or relocation of courthouses, changing the time for holding courts, appointment of judges, stay laws, juries, clerks' fees, formation or changes in judicial circuits, judges' salaries, authority to celebrate the rites of matrimony, and exemptions from jury service.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Joseph Allen, Clerk of the Court of Appeals, complains of the exposed & dangerous situation of the records & papers of the Court of Appeals (Richmond City - 1824/12/22); Clerks of the county courts asking for an increase in fees for their service (various counties - 1816); Inhabitants of Richmond asking for an amendment to the law so as to make the Mayor, Sergeant, Master of Police, & High Constable electable annually by the people, instead of by the Common Hall (1820/12/20); Judges of the Court of Admiralty asking for permission for the court to remain in its present location rather than move to Richmond when the capital is transferred from Williamsburg (Williamsburg City - 1779/10/16); Judgment of the Circuit Superior Court of Law & Chancery for Henrico & Richmond regarding the case of Charles Dimmock, Captain of the Public Guard, against the Commonwealth (Miscellaneous (Alphabetical) - Box 304, Folder 54); Chancery suit in the Superior Court of Chancery between John P. Shields & the Commonwealth for extra work done on Capitol Square (Miscellaneous (Alphabetical) - Box 304, Folder 58).

Division of County/New County - These are 1,974 records in the database from citizens of Virginia regarding the division of counties and the formation of new counties. These petitions also concern additions of parts of counties to other counties, changes to county boundaries, and protests against petitions asking for the division or formation of counties. The petitions often include maps and poll books. Noteworthy is a petition of the Committee of West Fincastle asking that they may be legally a part of the colony and for the creation of new counties (Fincastle Co. - 1776/10/08).

Divorce - There are 523 records in the database from citizens petitioning the General Assembly for a divorce from their husband or wife. These petitions often include court records, proceedings, depositions, and correspondence in support of the request.

Elections - These are 1,121 records in the database from citizens & voters regarding contested elections, separate election precincts, new election precincts, constitutional conventions, and the election of vestries.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Citizens of Fairfax County asking for a new election of delegates in the General Assembly because of a small pox outbreak at the polling place (1777/05/29); Freeholders & housekeepers of Winchester asking that the charter of the town be so amended as to secure an equal representation in the Common Council by dividing the town into four wards (1818/12/08), Trustees of Lexington asking for a law authorizing the qualified voters to elect annually an officer as mayor who shall be vested with all the power of a justice of the peace (Rockbridge Co. - 1850/01/25); and Tenants of the lands of William & Mary College asking for alterations or relief from their high rents & the right to vote (Williamsburg City - 1790/11/05).

Ferries/Packets - There are 624 records in the database from citizens, steamboat owners, steam packet companies, and bridge companies regarding the establishment of ferries or packets or the protest against such establishment. Additionally, there are petitions concerning the discontinuance of ferries, legislation, rates of ferriage, and compensation for financial injury as a result of the erection of bridges.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Central Southern Rights Association asking for the charter of a company with the right to construct two steamers for the purpose of carrying passengers & freight from a point on the James River to Norfolk and across the Atlantic Ocean to Liverpool or other foreign ports (Norfolk Borough - 1851/12/13); M. F. Maury asking for a charter incorporating a company to establish a line of steamers from New York to ports of Brazil to be called the Amazonia Steamship Company (Norfolk Borough - 1852/01/28); Rumseian Society asking for an act granting James Rumsey exclusive privilege of making & lending his inventions including his steamboat (Berkeley Co. - 1788/11/15); James Rumsey asking for an act granting him the sole right of constructing, navigating, & employing boats constructed upon a newly invented model (Berkeley Co. - 1784/11/08); and George Augustine Washington, agent on behalf of President George Washington, asking for the discontinuance of the ferry across the Potomac River (Fairfax Co. - 1790/10/21).

Fishing/Oyster Industry - There are 235 records in the database from citizens, merchants, & owners of fisheries regarding oyster laws, dredging, the use of seines, weirs, & gill nets, slave & free black labor at fisheries, the use of dams & other obstacles preventing the passage of fish, the erection of slopes on dams to allow the passage of fish, and the protection of fisheries. Noteworthy is a petition from William Cleary asking for an amendment to the law so as to permit him to employ slaves & free negroes from Maryland & the District of Columbia at his fishery in Prince William County (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1841/01/07 & Prince William Co. - 1839/03/11).

Flour Inspection/Industry - There are 106 records in the database from citizens, farmers, millers, flour manufacturers, and others regarding flour inspection laws, the establishment of flour inspections, and the rates for flour inspection. Noteworthy are the following petitions: Peter J. Chevallie asking for the incorporation of the Gallego Milling Company for the manufacture of flour (Richmond City - 1833/12/31); Virginia State Agricultural Society asking for the repeal of all laws relating to inspection of flour quality in the Commonwealth (Buckingham Co. - 1856/01/12); and Peter J. Chevallie asking that the President & Directors of the James River Company be authorized to relieve him from the water rent which he is chargeable since the burning of his mills (Richmond City - 1836/02/15).

Free Negroes - There are 660 records in the database respecting free negroes. The petitions originate from freedmen, colonization societies, citizens, executors & administrators, slaves, Quakers, and others. A large part of these petition relate to requests by former slaves to remain in the Commonwealth. In addition, these petitions also relate to appropriations or aid to colonization societies, charters for colonization societies, the removal of free negroes from the Commonwealth, the sale of liquor to free negroes, prohibitions against free negroes from owning dogs, and restrictions on free negroes & mulattoes in the sale of produce.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: American Colonization Society asking for assistance from the state of Virginia in finding an asylum on the coast of Africa (signed by Bushrod Washington, President of the Society) (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1826/12/22); Free Persons of Color asking for a law authorizing free persons of color, as well as slaves, to perform the ceremony of the burial of the dead (Richmond City - 1834/12/17); James (alias James Lafayette), former slave of William Armistead emancipated in 1786, asking for a law allowing a small sum for his service during the Revolutionary War (New Kent Co. - 1818/12/28); Religious Society of Friends asking that the law providing for the emancipation of slaves by will, and the law respecting the stealing & selling of free persons, may be revised & amended (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1802/12/17); Richmond Free Persons of Color asking for a law authorizing them to erect a place of public worship to be called the Baptist African Church (Richmond City - 1823/12/03); Society of Friends asking for the repeal of the law passed in 1806 requiring free negroes to leave the Commonwealth within one year of emancipation (Frederick Co. - 1827/12/11); and Society of Friends residing in Berkeley, Frederick, Jefferson, Fairfax, & Alexandria asking for the modification of the law prohibiting the education of free negroes (Alexandria - 1848/02/26).

Indians - There are 88 records in the database regarding Indians and Indian affairs. Included are petitions from citizens, Nottoway Indians, Pamunkey Indians, and others in relation to compensation for service against the Indians on the frontier, land purchased from Indians, security from depredations & incursions on the western frontier, and the sale of Indian lands belonging to the Nottoway Indians.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: George Rogers Clark asking that land conveyed by deed to him from the Indians may be confirmed (Kentucky Counties - 1780/05/27); George Croghan asking for confirmation of his title to lands in the west purchased from Indians (Augusta Co. - 1779/06/09); Richard Epperson & Catlit Jones, employed as soldiers to protect the inhabitants of Kentucky against the Indians, asking for relief for their wounds (certified by Daniel Boone) (Kentucky Counties - 1777/11/06); Nathaniel Gist asking that the treaty with the Cherokee Indians be confirmed, and that an island in the Holstein River that was granted him by the Cherokee Indians in 1761 or 1762 also be confirmed (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1777/11/19); Inhabitants of Northampton County asking for an act to appoint trustees to lay off a convenient part of the land appropriated for the use of the Gingaskin Tribe and to lease out the remainder annually (1784/11/26); Inhabitants of Northampton County asking that the land appropriated for the Gingaskin Tribe may be sold and the money arising from the sale appropriated for the maintenance of the Indians (1787/10/10); George Jackson asking that the House adopt measures to assert the rights of the Commonwealth against the Indiana Company (includes copy of deed with the Six Nations in 1744) (Harrison Co. - 1804/12/04); John Gabriel Jones & George Rogers Clark asking for forces for their protection from the Indians west of the Ohio River (Kentucky Counties - 1776/10/19); Nottoway Indians asking for an act for the sale of some of their lands and the money arising from the sale out into the hands of trustees for the support of petitioners (Southampton Co. - 1792/10/09 & 1803/12/09); Pamunkey Indians asking for a law vesting in the trustees of the tribe the power to lease out their land (King William Co. - 1812/12/04); Proprietors of the land on the Ohio called Indiana asking that no act pass impeaching or prejudicing their titles to lands paid for by treaty with Indians and in recompense for depredations committed by them (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1777/06/03); and Trustees of the Gingaskin Tribe asking for the repeal of the law of 1792 to authorize commissioners to divide the land among the members of the tribe, and to lay off roads through the land (Northampton Co. - 1812/12/02).

Land/Real Estate - There are 2,306 records in the database related to land or real estate. Included are petitions from citizens, administrators, churchwardens, ministers, heirs, vestries, mayors, aldermen, overseers of the poor, fraternal organizations, trustees of academies, colleges, towns, churches, executors, soldiers, and officers. These petitions concern assessments, land titles, surveys, courthouses, extension of the corporate limits of towns, bounty lands for war service, glebe lands, escheats, administrations of estates, delinquent lands, improvements of lots, waste & unappropriated lands, county boundaries, property destroyed by the British during the Revolutionary War, and sequestered property.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Samuel G. Adams asking that the grant for a reservoir on the Public Square may be confirmed to him for the use of the surplus water in the two springs on the Square (Richmond City - 1808/12/22); American citizens in Paris asking for aliens to hold real property in the United States (Miscellaneous (chronological) - 1845/01/04); Samuel & James Barron, heirs of James Barron, Commodore of the State Navy, asking for compensation for the bounty lands & commutation of pay due to them as heirs (Elizabeth City Co. - 1795/11/25); Directors of Public Buildings asking for the appointment of a committee of the General Assembly to aide them in relocating the Capitol & other state buildings in Richmond (Richmond City - 1779/11/08); Daniel Boone asking for an act directing the Register to issue him a Land Office Treasury warrant for 628 acres of land purchased by him on 21 February 1783 (Kentucky Counties - 1794/11/24); Citizens of Richmond asking that land on Capitol Square may be loaned to James Warrell for the purpose of erecting a museum of natural & artificial curiosities (1815/12/18); George Rogers Clark asking that the land conveyed by deed to him from the Indians may be confirmed (Kentucky Counties - 1780/05/27); Jubal Early, guardian of the heirs of Abner Early, asking for a law to authorize the sale of three small pieces of mountain land (Montgomery Co. - 1841/12/30); Governor Joseph Johnston to the Speaker of the House of Delegates submitting a letter from Jefferson Davis, Secretary of War, requesting that the government be authorized to purchase the necessary land to construct the Washington Aqueduct (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1854/01/21); Richard Lorton, co-partner of James Warrell for the purpose of erecting a building on the Public Square for a museum, asking for an act relinquishing the right of the Commonwealth to the property & alterations to enable to lease the property (Richmond City - 1835/12/31); Mayor, Aldermen, & Commonalty of Richmond asking for an act declaring that all real property lying between the James River and the eastern & northern boundary of the city of Richmond be deemed a part of the city (1791/11/01); Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, & Common Council of Williamsburg asking for an appropriation for rebuilding the former Capitol, or granting the lot on which it stood in the city of Williamsburg (1832/12/10); Merchants, Masters of Vessels, & Mariners asking for an act ceding to the United States as many acres of land on Point Comfort necessary for the establishment of a lighthouse (Elizabeth City Co. - 1797/12/20); Edward Mitchell asking for permission to build a lighthouse (Norfolk City - 1785/12/10); Officers of the State of Pennsylvania asking that the Register may be directed to grant them land in Virginia as veterans of Braddock's War by virtue of a proclamation of the King of Great Britain in 1763 (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1790/11/27); Samuel Overton asking for additional compensation for his land condemned by a writ of ad quod damnum for the use of the public in the establishment of a Manufactory of Arms (Richmond City - 1798/12/05); Proprietors of the Armory Iron Works asking for an extension to their lease from the Commonwealth of the ground adjoining the Armory (Richmond City - 1864/01/07); Executors of John A. Washington asking for the appointment of commissioners for dividing their proportion of one-twelfth of the property (Westmoreland Co. - 1787/11/22); and Charles L. Wingfield asking for a law authorizing the Treasurer to pay him the value of a certain lot which

was condemned for the use of the Penitentiary in Richmond (Norfolk Borough - 1837/01/23).

Manufacturers/Manufacturing Companies -There are 215 records in the database concerning manufacturers & manufacturing companies. The petitions within this category originate from citizens, manufacturers, mill owners, manufacturing companies, mechanics, and others. The petitions mainly relate to the incorporation of manufacturing companies for the production of iron, cotton, wool, hemps, arms, flour, cloth, silk, salt, paper, flax, and other items. In addition, the petitions concern the construction of milldams and railroads.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Peter J. Chevallie asking for the incorporation of the Gallego Manufacturing Company (Richmond City - 1833/12/05 & 31); Inhabitants of Kentucky asking for the erection of salt works on property now owned by individuals (signed by Daniel Boone) (1777/11/25); Proprietors of the Armory Iron works asking for an extension of their lease from the Commonwealth of the grounds adjoining the Armory (Richmond City - 1864/01/07); R. Archer & Company asking for an extension of the lease of the Armory Building for ten years (Richmond City - 1852/11/27); George Wheeler asking for compensation for erecting works for the manufacture of arms (Culpeper Co. - 1804/12/19); and Harpers Ferry & Shenandoah Manufacturing Company's plan & report with a descriptive view of the Island of Virginus at Harpers Ferry connected with their application for a charter (Jefferson Co. - 1845/01/13).

Militia/Public Guard -There are 669 records in the database regarding the militia & Public Guard. Included are petitions from militia units, soldiers, officers, administrators, members of the Public guard, widows, citizens, religious groups, fire companies, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, and others. The petitions regard changes to militia units & organization, requests for arms, relief from fines for nonattendance at musters, compensation for services, pensions, militia laws, exemptions from militia duty, claims for provisions, regimental courts of inquiry, the restoration of brigade inspectors, changes to the locations of officer's training & musters, the formation of new regimental districts, and the incorporation of militia units.

Noteworthy are the following: Blair Bolling, Commandant of the Public Guard, asking for compensation for his services as Superintendent of Public Buildings (Richmond City - 1831/02/18); Citizens of Lynchburg asking for a general law for the immediate organization of all capable men within each magisterial district of the state between the ages of 50 & 60 years and all resident exempts from Confederate service between the ages of 17 & 50 into companies (1860/02/17); Citizens of Petersburg asking that a guard be stationed in the town to protect against insurrection (N.D. - ca. 1802); Citizens of Rockingham County asking for a modification in the establishment of the Public Guard in Richmond and at the Lexington Arsenal (1831/02/17); Charles Dimmock asking that the duties of the Captain of the Public Guard & Superintendent of the Armory be separated from the Superintendent of Public Buildings (Richmond City - 1856/01/12); Norfolk Light Infantry Blues asking for an appropriation to enlarge & improve their Gun House (Norfolk City - 1851/02/10); James Paxton asking for compensation for additional duties given him as Captain of the Public Guard at the Lexington Arsenal (Rockbridge Co. - 1826/12/07); Judgment of the Circuit Superior Court of Law & Chancery for Henrico & Richmond regarding the case of Charles Dimmock, Captain of the Public Guard, against the Commonwealth (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1846/12/30).

Mining/Mining Companies -There are 158 records in the database from citizens, colliers, landowners, coal companies, gold mining companies, miners, and others regarding the incorporation of mining companies, the construction of canals & railroads for the transportation of coal, reassessment of lands, and tolls. Noteworthy are the following petitions: Benjamin Coleman asking for the incorporation of the Richmond Mining Company (Stafford Co. - 1834/02/05) and James Parberry asking that the lands adjacent to the mines be reserved as fuel for mines (written by Patrick Henry) (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1782/05/25).

Miscellaneous -There are 815 records in the database of a more general nature from citizens, committees, overseers of the poor, and others. These petitions relate to a wide variety of topics including receipts & withdrawals of unidentified petitions, the anti-dueling law, appointments as doorkeeper to the House of Delegates, usury, the act of retrocession, days of thanksgiving, the removal of Richmond as the seat of government, the eastern Lunatic Asylum, the trapping of water fowl, the cutting of woods for fuel, lumber inspection, pay of delegates, the alien & sedition laws, debts, the District of Kentucky, the conduct of delegates, the treaty of peace with Great Britain, the solemnization of marriages, poor houses, milldams, lotteries, and printers.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Thomas Ash asking for authority to recover by Diving Bells, or otherwise, the guns and other property of an English Frigate which was sunk in the York River during the Revolutionary War (Gloucester Co. - 1852/02/10); George Catlin, artist of the Virginia Convention, offering his painting to the state of Virginia (Richmond City - 1831/03/25); Committee of the Historical Society of Virginia asking for the erection of a monument to George Washington in Richmond (Richmond City - 1849/02/05); Freeholders of Washington County asking for a review of the boundary line between Virginia & North Carolina which was extended by commissioners on 1779 & readjusted in 1802 (includes affidavit from Capt. Meriwether Lewis) (1810/12/20); articles of agreement between Gov. Wilson C. Nicholas and Richard Harris to erect the Public arsenal in Lexington (Richmond City - 1808/01/14); and Charles D. Yale asking that the Capitol be heated with Dr. James Bolton's improves warm air furnaces (Richmond City - 1854/01/28 & 1855/12/05).

Name Changes -There are 52 records in the database documenting citizens' requests for name changes. These petitions also relate to applications to change the names of towns or companies. Noteworthy are the following: citizens of Evansham asking for the incorporation of the town to be called Wytheville (Wythe Co. - 1839/01/14); the Mercantile Library Association asking for a change in their name to the Richmond Library Association (Richmond City - 1841/01/20); and Trustees of Washington Academy asking for a change in their name to Washington College (Rockbridge Co. - 1812/12/11).

Navigation/Navigation Companies -There are 1,134 records in the database concerning navigation & navigation companies. Included are petitions from citizens, canal companies, navigation companies, pilots, ship owners, merchants, mill owners, stockholders, trustees, and others. The petitions relate to the construction of wharves, the erection of milldams, declarations that waterways be declared public highways, steamboats, extensions of improvements of navigation, incorporations of canal, navigation, & steamboat companies, amendments & modifications to the charters of canal & navigations companies, pilots & rates of pilotage, capital stock of navigation companies, and the removal of obstructions to the navigation of waterways.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Citizens of Richmond, Manchester, & other parts of Virginia asking for a law incorporating a company in Richmond for the purpose of trading to ports & places eastward of the Cape of Good Hope & elsewhere under the title of the "Richmond East India Company" (Richmond City - 1817/12/30); Alexander Martin & Thomas Binbury, speaker of the General Assembly of North Carolina, asking for keeping open the navigation of Ocracoke Inlet by fitting out some armed vessels at the port of South Quay to cooperate with their ships (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1781/11/22); M. F. Maury asking for a charter incorporating a company to establish a line of steamers from New York to ports of Brazil to be called the Amazonia Steamship Company (Norfolk Borough - 1852/01/28); Merchants, Masters of Vessels, & Mariners asking for an act ceding to the United States as many acres of land on Point Comfort necessary for the establishment of a lighthouse (Elizabeth City Co. - 1797/12/20); President & Directors of the Potomac Company asking that the acts may pass by the Assemblies of Maryland & Virginia for a canal at each or either of the Great Falls (signed by George Washington) (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1785/12/09); President & Directors of the Potomac Company asking that the acts of the Assemblies of Maryland & Virginia may be passed whereby the company may be indulged with time until 17 November 1790 for making & improving the navigation between the Great Falls & Fort Cumberland (signed by George Washington) (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1786/11/09); Rumseian Society asking for an act granting James Rumsey exclusive privilege of making & lending his inventions including his steamboat (Berkeley Co. - 1788/11/15); James Rumsey asking for an act granting him the sole right of constructing, navigating, & employing boats constructed upon a newly invented model (Berkeley Co. - 1784/11/08); Inhabitants of Albemarle, Louisa, & Fluvanna asking for the incorporation of a company to open navigation on the Rivanna River and authority to receive tolls (signed by Thomas Jefferson) (Albemarle Co. - 1810/12/13).

Organizations -There are 398 records in the database from fraternal organizations, agricultural societies, insurance companies, colonization societies, fire companies, library associations & companies, temperance societies, literary societies, mechanic societies, medical societies, merchants, and other citizens. These petitions primarily concern requests for charters or acts of incorporation, but also lotteries, appropriations, and exemptions from militia or jury duty.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: American Colonization Society asking for assistance from the state of Virginia in finding an asylum on the coast of Africa (signed by Bushrod Washington, President of the Society) (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1826/12/22); Martin Becker & others asking for an act of incorporation of the Great Council of the Improved Order of Red Men of the State of Virginia (Ohio Co. - 1842/02/23); Central Southern Rights Association asking for the charter of a company with the right to construct two steamers for the purpose of carrying passengers & freight from a point on the James River to Norfolk and across the Atlantic Ocean to Liverpool or other foreign ports (Norfolk Borough - 1851/12/13); Colonization Society of Virginia asking for aid from the General Assembly (signed by John Marshall) (Richmond City - 1831/12/20); William Foushee & others asking for a law to incorporate the Medical Society of Virginia (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1823/12/08); Hollywood Cemetery Company asking for an act of incorporation (Richmond City - 1849/12/27); and the Jefferson & Washington Societies of the University of Virginia asking for an act of incorporation (Albemarle Co. - 1840/02/08).

Paper Money -There are 109 records in the database from citizens, banks, merchants, and others respecting banks' requests to issue notes in denominations less than five dollars, relief from the depreciation of paper money during the Revolutionary War, tender laws, and taxes.

Pardons/Releases from Fines, Judgments, etc. - There are 995 records in the database documenting applications for pardons, commutations of sentences, and releases from fines, judgments, & recognizances. There are petitions from citizens, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, securities, executors, administrators, clerks, soldiers, and others. The petitions relate to fines for unlawful gambling, retailing goods or ardent spirits without a license, non-attendance of militia or jury duty, failure of sheriffs or deputy sheriffs to make tax payments on time, assault & battery, violation of the anti-dueling law, counterfeiting, commutation of punishments or remission of remaining sentences, receipt of stolen goods, forgery, arson, robbery, high treason, forfeited recognizances, horse stealing, murder, and nonpayment of taxes.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Citizens of Albemarle County who served as jurors in the case of John S. Mosby, a student in the University, convicted of unlawful shooting of George Turpin, asking that he be pardoned & have a fine remitted (1854/01/14); Jacob A. Levy & Jacob Ezekiel asking for the remission of a fine imposed on them as Jews for violating the Sabbath (Richmond City - 1846/01/28 & 1848/03/08); Mann Page, executor of John Tayloe, deceased, asking for a pardon for Tayloe's slave Billy who was sentenced to death for treason & reprieved by Governor Thomas Jefferson (Prince William Co. - 1781/06/07); and John Clarke protesting against charges against him as Superintendent of the Manufactory of Arms (Richmond City - 1809/02/13).

Private Relief/Compensation - There are 1,931 records in the database from citizens, administrators, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, commissioners of the revenue, securities, militia officers, tobacco inspectors, clerks, school commissioners, teachers, executors, jailors, justices of the peace, merchants, and others asking for private relief or compensation. The petitioners within this category seek compensation for services to the state, the education of indigent children, the loss of tobacco stored in inspection warehouses, overpayment of taxes, impressments of horses to convey prisoners & hospital inmates, land taken for the use of the Commonwealth, the loss of slaves who were tried & convicted of crimes, the loss of military certificates, the collection of revenue, labor on roads, expenses of jailors, the apprehension of escaped convicts, damages to lands from internal improvements, erroneous assessments, and merchants' licenses.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: various citizens of Southampton County asking for compensation for slaves lost during Nat Turner's Insurrection (1831); John H. Allstadt asking for compensation for two slaves lost during John Brown's Raid (Jefferson Co. - 1860/01/09); Adam Baird & Andrew Hosea asking for a law appropriating a sufficient sum for the discharge of their judgment & warrant for work done by them on the Capitol (Richmond City - 1806/12/05); Anderson Barrett asking for compensation for work done on the Capitol (Richmond City - 1842/01/27); Chang & Eng, Siamese twin brothers, asking for relief from the law imposing a tax on them in every county, city, borough, or corporation they perform (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1832/03/12); Citizens of Jefferson County asking for a bill for the relief of Walter Shirley who served as foreman of the jury that convicted the late insurgents of Harpers Ferry and whose barn was destroyed by a fire after the trial (1860/01/12); Alexander Dromgoole asking for a law authorizing the payment of a sum of money for his service with Andrew Moore to meet with the chiefs of the Cherokee Nation (Washington Co. - 1818/12/28 & 1825/12/08); Samuel Freeman asking for compensation for his services in making arrangements for the celebration of the victory at Yorktown and the visit of General Lafayette in 1824 (Richmond City - 1833/01/23 & 1847/02/01); Samuel Griffin asking for compensation for his lot which was taken by the Commonwealth for the purpose of erecting the Capitol (Richmond City - 1795/11/22); Thomas McClelland asking for compensation for plans submitted by petitioner for the proposed Washington monument in Richmond (Alexandria Town - 1850/02/13); Samuel Overton asking for additional compensation for his land condemned by ad quod damnum for the use of the public for the establishment of a Manufactory of Arms (Richmond City - 1789/12/05); James Paxton, Commandant of the Public Guard at the Lexington Arsenal, asking for compensation (Rockbridge Co. - 1819/12/17, 1825/12/08, 1826/12/07, & 1852/01/27); John Reveley asking for compensation for his services in erecting & managing a foundry at Westham (Henrico Co. - 1778/10/14 & 1780/12/11); George William Smith, prosecutor on the part of the Commonwealth in the County, asking for compensation for his services in fifty-nine called courts upon the trials of negroes or slaves charged with conspiracy & insurrection against the Commonwealth (Henrico Co. - 1800/12/06); Trustees of the Nottoway Indians asking for relief for a debt owed by them to the Commonwealth (Southampton Co. - 1822/12/14); Philip Turpin asking for restoration of his donation of two acres lying around the Council Chamber for the purpose of erecting public buildings to be erected for the residence of the governor (Richmond City - 1788/11/22, 1791/11/11, 1794/11/24, & 1811/12/06); Charles L. Wingfield asking for a law authorizing the Treasurer to pay him the value of a certain lot which was condemned for the use of the Penitentiary in Richmond and for the use of the property from 1819 to the present (Norfolk City - 1837/01/23 & 1838/01/08); and Alexander Wyly asking for compensation for services as Keeper of the Capitol and for transferring records from Williamsburg to Richmond (Williamsburg City - 1780/05/22).

Prohibition/Temperance - There are 301 records in the database from citizens, temperance societies & organizations, voters, and others regarding the prohibition of the manufacture & sale of liquor in Virginia. In addition, there are petitions concerning the distillation of grain, acts of incorporation of temperance societies such as the Sons of Temperance, the licensing of ordinaries, and the sale of liquor to slaves & free negroes.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: General Temperance Assembly asking for a law for taking the sense of the people at the polls as to the propriety of continuing the sale of intoxicating liquors (Richmond City - 1849/01/09); Inhabitants of Berkeley County asking that the Legislature do something about the dreadful effects of drunkenness in every department of society (1818/12/26); President & Professors of Washington College and Superintendent of Professors of the Virginia Military Institute asking for additional penalties upon venders of spirituous liquors to students of the colleges & academies of the Commonwealth (Rockbridge Co. - 1846/12/14); and the State Temperance Convention asking for a law to authorize the qualified voters in each county, city, & incorporated town to determine whether licenses to retail ardent spirits shall be issued in their respective localities (Richmond City - 1848/01/10).

Railroads/Railroad Companies - There are 913 records in the database from citizens, railroad companies, contractors, committees, stockholders, conventions, coal miners, and others regarding the capital stock of railroad companies, the construction of railroads, the extension of railway lines, the incorporation of railroad companies, grants of right of way, loans, and changes in the termination of railroads. Included are petitions from the following railroad companies: Baltimore & Ohio Railroad; City Point Railroad Company; Portsmouth & Roanoke Railroad Company; Louisa Railroad Company; Orange & Alexandria Railroad Company; Richmond & Petersburg Railroad Company; Richmond, Fredericksburg, & Petersburg Railroad Company; Winchester & Potomac Railroad Company; Richmond & Danville Railroad Company; and others.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company asking for aid from the state for the construction of part of the railroad which will pass through Virginia (Berkeley Co. - 1838/03/08); Citizens of Alexandria County protesting against any further legislation for the Washington & Alexandria Railroad (signed by Robert E. Lee) (1858/01/06); and Proceedings & resolutions of the Rail Road Convention held at Clarksburg regarding a memorial from citizens of the North-Western part of the state to authorize an extension of the Baltimore & Ohio railway through their territory (Harrison Co. - 1845/12/02).

Revenue/Taxation - There are 1,649 records in the database related to revenue & taxation. Included are petitions for citizens, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, administrators, securities, executors, commissioners of the revenue, merchants, clerks, tax collectors, escheators, agents, traders, coroners, pilots, and others. These petitions concern refunds of taxes paid, reduction of taxes or tolls, relief from judgments & fines for nonpayment of taxes, compensation for commissioners of revenue, sheriffs & deputy sheriff's collection of taxes, land assessments, license taxes, tax exemptions, taxes on dogs, pilotage, delinquent taxes, revenue laws, militia fines, and wharfage fees.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Samuel Allison, Consul of the United State for the city of Lyons, France, asking for ten years to pay the delinquent taxes owed by his for lands conveyed to him by the late Col. James Swan of Boston (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1832/01/09); Chang & Eng, Siamese twin brothers, asking for relief from the law imposing a tax on them in every county, city, borough, or corporation they perform (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1832/03/12); Citizens of Richmond asking for a system of discriminating taxation upon the manufacturers & imports of the Free-Soil states, a plan of building up commercial marine, & other purposes (1860/01/11); Citizens of Lexington asking that the trustees of the town may be authorized to impose a tax on real property for the purpose of bringing water into the town (Rockbridge Co. - 1832/12/05); Dissenters asking for the disestablishment of the Church of England and freedom from taxation for religious purposes (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1776/10/16); Inhabitants of the County & Borough of Norfolk asking for relief from the payment of taxes as a result of the depredations suffered during the late invasion (1781/12/08); Charles Carter Lee, Sidney S. Lee, & Robert E. Lee, heirs of Gen. Henry Lee, asking for relief in settling the delinquent taxes on a large tract of land purchased by their father in 1796 from John Nicholas (1831/12/19); D. H. London, President of the Southern Rights Association of Virginia, asking for excise laws discriminating in favor of articles grown, manufactured, or imported from Virginia (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1851/01/31); and Josiah Shanklin asking for permission to sell his invention the "Mechanics Companion" in the Commonwealth without a license and tax thereon (includes broadside) (Wood Co. - 1855/02/01).

Roads/Turnpike Companies - There are 2,507 records in the database from citizens, turnpike companies, road commissioners, contractors, stockholders, trustees, and others regarding roads and turnpike companies. These petitions relate to compensation for work on roads, construction of turnpike roads, amendments to charters, acts of incorporation, capital stock, tolls & toll gates, appropriations, lotteries, compensation for labor on roads, exemptions from working on roads, road repairs, extension of time to complete roads, changes to turnpike routes, extensions to roads, road laws, macadamizing of roads, bridges, compensation for damages caused to landowners by road construction, and the widening & straightening of streets within towns & cities. Includes are petitions from the following turnpike companies: Manchester & Petersburg Turnpike Company; Manchester Turnpike Company; Ashby's Gap Turnpike Company; Fauquier & Alexandria Turnpike Company; Leesburg Turnpike Company; Lexington & Covington Turnpike Company; Little River Turnpike Company, Lynchburg & Salem Turnpike Company, Pittsylvania & Lynchburg Turnpike Company; Blue Sulphur Springs Turnpike Company; Richmond Turnpike Company; Salem & Peppers Ferry Turnpike Company; Smithfield, Charlestown, & Harpers Ferry Turnpike Company; Swift Run Gap Turnpike Company; Valley Turnpike Company; Kanawha & Fayette Turnpike Company; Lynchburg & Salem Turnpike Company; Staunton & James River Turnpike Company; Wellsburg & Washington Turnpike Company; and others.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Thomas B. Bond, owner of a lot & tenement in Petersburg, asking for a law allowing a proposed street to be opened (includes map) (1843/01/16); Citizens of Lexington, sufferers from the fire of 1796, asking that the law passed to authorize a lottery for their relief may be modified so as to appropriate money towards opening a road over the North & South Mountains and building a public schoolhouse (Rockbridge Co. - 1801/12/16); Charles Dimmock, Captain & Superintendent of the Armory, regarding the petition of the Council asking for two street ways and a change in the location of a third across the Armory grounds (Richmond City - 1852/05/29); Inhabitants of Norfolk Borough asking for an appropriation of the Common Hall for any other part of the expense that what shall be requisite for graduating the streets,

preparing the ground for receiving the pavement, & for paving the intersections of the streets (1805/12/18 & 1806/12/03); Inhabitants of Norfolk Borough asking for an act to authorize the court to cause Washington Street to be opened & extended at its present width from its termination on the western side of Boush Street until it intersects with Duke Street (includes plat) (1817/12/03); Ministry & vestry of Fairfax Parish asking that their place of worship may remain secured to the Protestant Episcopal Church in Alexandria and that their dead be permitted to rest in their graves without danger of being disturbed by the proposed extension of the streets in Alexandria (Fairfax Co. - 1785/11/15); President & Common Council of Richmond City asking for a law establishing all the streets in that part of the city added to the town on the eastern boundary (1806/12/04); and the Select & Common Council of Norfolk City asking for such amendments to an act of 27 February 1833 as will give authority to erect a City Hall on the Public Square and to open a street on the southern boundary of the square (1846/12/14).

Schools/Universities -There are 889 records in the database from colleges, universities, academies, school commissioners, teachers, orphan asylums, citizens, committees, faculty, trustees, professors, students, visitors, and others. The petitions within this category deal with compensation for the education of poor children, acts of incorporation, appropriations & loans, lotteries, the Literary Fund, the education of free negroes, paying teachers of the Christian religion, sale of lands, appointment of trustees, public education, common school system, free schools, and the erection of school buildings.

Noteworthy are the following: Board of Visitors of the University of Virginia proceedings & resolution regarding the increase of disease at the University and the suspension of lectures (Albemarle Co. - 1858/03/22); Robert Briggs & others asking for the incorporation of the Medical College of Virginia (Richmond City - 1835/12/23 & 1836/12/31); Cadets of the Virginia Military Institute asking for an appropriation to reconstruct & enlarge their barracks (Rockbridge Co. - 1849/01/03); Citizens of Albemarle County asking for an appropriation to erect a marble statue in honor of Thomas Jefferson at the University of Virginia (1850/12/04); Citizens of Albemarle County who served as jurors in the case of John S. Mosby, a student in the University, convicted of unlawful shooting of George Turpin, asking that he be pardoned & have a fine remitted (1854/01/14); Citizens of Rockbridge County asking for the reorganization of the Lexington Arsenal into an institution of military instruction & education (1839/01/19, 1836/01/19, & 1836/01/13); Free persons of color in Fredericksburg asking for an act authorizing a school for the instruction of free people of color (Spotsylvania Co. - 1838/03/16); Thomas Hudgins & others asking for the incorporation of Richmond College (Richmond City - 1840/01/02); Jefferson & Washington Societies of the University of Virginia asking for an act of incorporation (Albemarle Co. - 1840/02/08); Richard Lorton asking for permission to use the Museum on the Public Square for an Athenaeum (Richmond City - 1833/02/14); Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, & Common Council of Williamsburg asking for permission & authority to raise by lottery a sum to be applied towards repairing the Capitol & building annexed to it, and establishing a fund for the support of the academy (1783/05/27); President & Professors of Washington College and Superintendent of Professors of the Virginia Military Institute asking for additional penalties upon venders of spirituous liquors to students of the colleges & academies of the Commonwealth (Rockbridge Co. (1846/12/14); Rector, Visitors, & Governors of the College of William & Mary asking that a fund may be established for the support of the college (Williamsburg City - 1777/05/28); Residents of Norfolk City asking for an act to incorporate a school called the "House of Jacob" for teaching the Hebrew & German languages (1852/12/14); Society of Friends asking for the modification of the laws prohibiting the education of free negroes (Alexandria - 1848/02/26); and Trustees of the Theological Seminary of Virginia asking to be incorporated for the education for poor & pious young men in the ministry of the gospel (Prince Edward Co. - 1815/12/07).

Slaves/Slavery -There are 1,139 records in the database related to slaves & slavery. Included are petitions from slaves, former slaves, citizens, heirs, administrators, slave owners, colonization societies, executors, jailors, overseers of the poor, Quakers, and others respecting permission of freed slaves to remain in the state, permissions by slave owners to bring slaves into the state, wills & administrations, compensation of slave owners for the loss of their slaves, manumissions, general emancipation, colonization of slaves in Africa, runaways, pardons, insurrections, and commerce with slaves.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: John H. Allstadt asking for compensation for two slaves lost during John Brown's Raid (Jefferson Co. - 1860/01/09); Board of Managers of the Virginia Colonization Society asking for a charter to obtain a tract of land on the coast of Africa for the establishment of a new plantation called New Virginia, to be settled by free people of color & emancipated slaves (Henrico Co. - 1837/01/19); Citizens of Culpeper asking for a law prohibiting any slave, free negro, or mulatto to learn a trade or art under severe & onerous penalties upon the owner (1831/12/09); Citizens of Cumberland County asking for enactments in aid & defense of the trade, industry, proprietary and political rights of the people of the Commonwealth involved in the institution of negro slavery in the states where that institution now exists (1860/01/05); proceedings of a public meeting of citizens of Greene County in favor of Virginia dissolving her connection with the Federal Government, taking public property in Washington, securing a Convention, ridding the state of free negroes, etc. (1861/01/19); Citizens of Hancock County & elsewhere asking for reforms in the laws concerning slaves & free persons of color to protect the parental relation, to recognize the marital relation, & to allow persons so disposed to teach persons of color to read (1856/02/27); Citizens of Hanover County & elsewhere asking for the total prohibition of emancipation, except upon removal from the state, and the

immediate classification of the free blacks, and requiring at stated periods their removal (1831/12/11 & 1831/12/14); Citizens of King & Queen County asking for the repeal of the law for freeing negroes, and that in the future, no negroes be freed except for meritorious services (1800/12/02); Citizens of Loudoun County asking for energetic & prudent measures for the ultimate extinction of involuntary servitude and the removal of a race irreconcilably antagonistic to petitioners (1831/12/23); Citizens of Richmond & Henrico asking for the incorporation of a Society for the Protection of Slave Property in Henrico & Richmond (Richmond City - 1842/03/08); Directors of the Eastern Lunatic Asylum asking for certain amendments to the existing laws regulating their institution including allowing slaves & lunatics from other states into the asylum (Williamsburg City - 1845/12/02); Peter Edwards asking for compensation for the loss of three slaves during the late insurrection (Southampton Co. - 1831/12/12); Females of Augusta County asking for the extinction of slavery for fear of rebellion (1832/01/19); Inhabitants of Botetourt County asking for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution which will give Congress power to raise & appropriate money to transport free negroes & slaves to the coast of Africa (1832/01/04); Inhabitants of Brunswick County asking that no act may pass for the general emancipation of slaves and that the act passed on 6 May 1782 entitled "an act to authorize the manumission of slaves" be repealed (1785/11/10); James, a slave belonging to William Armistead who entered the service of the Marquis de Lafayette, asking to be granted his freedom (New Kent Co. - 1786/11/30); documents relating to the claim of Edmunds Mason & Williamson Pair for guarding prisoners during the insurrection (includes list of prisoners) (Greensville Co. - 1833); Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, & Commonalty of Petersburg asking for an annual state lottery to diminish the number of slaves annually by purchase in the proportion of two females to one male, and disposing of them in other states or other countries as indentured servants (1805/12/11); Quakers asking that citizens be legally authorized manumit their slaves in such manner as will prevent injury to the community (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1780/11/29); Quakers protesting against slavery, and specifically the treatment of emancipated slaves (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1782/05/29); Religious Society of Friends asking for the interference of the Legislature for remedying abuses in the traffic of slaves from, or through, Virginia to other states (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1802/12/17); Pharoah Sheppard, former slave who informed his master of an impending insurrection, asking for an act emancipating his son Pharoah (Richmond City - 1810/12/14); George William Smith, prosecutor on the part of the Commonwealth in the County, asking for compensation for his services in fifty-nine called courts upon the trials of negroes or slaves charged with conspiracy & insurrection against the Commonwealth (Henrico Co. - 1800/12/06); and Francis Viggo, resident of Vicennes in the state of Indiana & native of Italy, asking for compensation for eighty-seven slaves who escaped to Lord Dunmore's fleet from his father's property at Willoughby Point (includes list of slaves) (Norfolk Co. - 1777/06/03).

Tobacco Inspection/Industry - There are 776 records in the database from tobacco inspectors, citizens, owners & proprietors of tobacco warehouses, cultivators of tobacco, tobacco manufacturers, merchants, traders, pickers of tobacco, and others. The petitions relate to the establishment of warehouses for the inspections of tobacco, additional salary for tobacco inspectors, compensation for tobacco destroyed or stolen from inspection warehouses, protests against the establishment of tobacco inspections, funds for the construction of tobacco warehouses, tobacco laws, increases in the rent or rates of storage, discontinuance & revivals of tobacco inspections, payment of taxes in tobacco, and tolls.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Freeholders of Sussex County asking to be relieved from a payment made to the College of William & Mary for tobacco lands leased from the college by permitting them to pay off their rents in tobacco or in current money (1777/11/22); Inhabitants of Orange County asking that the cultivation of tobacco may be restrained in order to raise & manufacture those articles that are necessary for the accommodation of the Army & the prosecution of the war (1777/12/05); Inspectors of Rockett's Inspection asking for an act to take the half-acre lot of land adjoining the warehouse for the purpose of building a house for the reception of tobacco (includes plat) (Henrico Co. - 1789/11/12); Thomas Leiper, tobaccoist from Philadelphia, asking for the repeal of the law which prohibits citizens from other states from vending snuff in Virginia (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1788/08/20); Manufacturers of tobacco asking for an act to prevent fraud in the branding of tobacco (Richmond City - 1835/02/11); Rocky Ridge Commissioner's report containing a list of tobacco burnt in the Rocky Ridge Warehouses in March 1873 (Chesterfield Co. - 1787/12/04); Edmund W. Rootes asking for the introduction of Benjamin Dearborn's patent balances into the tobacco warehouses of the Commonwealth (includes lithograph) (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1804/12/12); and the Virginia State Agricultural Society asking for the repeal of all the laws relating to the inspection of quality in the Commonwealth (Buckingham Co. - 1856/01/12).

Towns - There are 2,822 records in the database from citizens, mayors & common councils, fraternal organizations, committees, churches, lot holders, aldermen, merchants, fire companies, inspectors of tobacco, trustees, and others. These petitions concern the establishment of towns, town charters & incorporations, additions & extensions of town limits, establishment of tobacco warehouses, appropriations, schools & academies, election precincts, streets & alleys, libraries, banks, further time to improve lots, taxes, lotteries, courthouses, the appointment of trustees, canals, manufacturing companies, corporate powers, flour inspections, market houses, jails, railroads, wharves, livestock, bridges, aqueducts, lodges, cemeteries, ferries, hotel companies, and others.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Board of Directors of the Western Lunatic Asylum protesting against

being included in the extension of the corporate limits of Staunton (Augusta Co. - 1860/02/15); Robert Briggs & others asking for the incorporation of the Medical College of Virginia (Richmond City - 1835/12/23 & 1836/12/31); Citizens of Lynchburg asking for an act incorporating the town (1804/12/08); Citizens of Petersburg asking that a guard be stationed in the town to protect against insurrection (N.D.); Citizens of Richmond protesting against the bill to incorporate Hollywood Cemetery (1848/01/11); Citizens of Blacksburg asking for the establishment of an agricultural school or college in the town (Montgomery Co. - 1858/01/06); Citizens of Hampton asking for a law incorporating the town (1849/01/06); Citizens of Lexington, sufferers from the fire of 1796, asking for an act authorizing a lottery for their benefit (Rockbridge Co. - 1790/11/10); Citizens of Wheeling asking for an act of incorporation (Ohio Co. - 1805/12/04); Common Council of Richmond asking for authority to prevent the erection of wooden buildings in Richmond except under such restrictions as they may deem expedient (1840/02/18); Inhabitants of Norfolk Borough asking for an act incorporating the Marine Society of Norfolk for the single purpose of providing a fund for the relief of the distressed widows & children of any persons who may have been members of the society (1816/12/14); Inhabitants of Richmond asking for the incorporation of the town of Richmond (original missing) (1782/05/28); Inhabitants of Richmond asking for aid in the establishment of a library & depository of the arts & sciences on Capitol Square (1817/12/20); Inhabitants of Yorktown asking for an act incorporating the town (York Co. - 1780/05/10); Richard Lorton asking for permission to use the Museum on the Public Square for an Athenaeum (Richmond City - 1833/02/14); John Lynch asking for an act establishing the lots he laid off at Lynch's Ferry into a town (Campbell Co. - 1784/11/05); Mayor, Aldermen, Common Council, & Other Freeholders of Norfolk Borough asking for relief from the distress occasioned by being driven from their homes & by the burning of the town by provincial troops (1776/11/16); Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, & Common Council of Williamsburg asking for permission & authority to raise by lottery a sum to be applied towards repairing the Capitol & building annexed to it, and establishing a fund for the support of the academy (1783/05/27); Recorder, Aldermen, & Common Council of Williamsburg asking for an appropriation for rebuilding the former Capitol, or granting the lot on which it stood to the city of Williamsburg (1832/12/10); and the Richmond Fire Association asking for permission to erect an engine house on the southeast corner of the Public Square (1841/01/06).

War Claims/Pensions -There are 1,741 records in the database regarding war claims & pensions for service during the French & Indian War, Revolutionary War, War of 1812, & Mexican War. Included are petitions from citizens, heirs, soldiers, officers, administrators, widows, executors, agents, attorneys, merchants, guardians, and others, regarding compensation for war service, compensation for supplies, ships, etc., furnished to troops during various wars, bounty lands, pensions, military certificates, depreciation of pay, George Rogers Clarke's Illinois Regiment, State Navy, Cherokee Expedition, commutation of pay, and compensation for damage in Norfolk by American troops ordered by a resolution of the Convention during the Revolution.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Samuel & James Barron, heirs & representatives of Commodore James Barron, asking that the Auditor of Public Accounts be directed to issue to them certificates for the commutation due their father for his services as commander of the state boat Liberty during the Revolution (Elizabeth City Co. - 1793/10/29 & 1795/11/25); George Rogers Clark, Brigadier General & Commandant throughout the western jurisdiction of the Commonwealth, asking for the settlement of his general account (Kentucky Counties - 1791/11/11); Inhabitants of Sussex County asking for relief from the loss of bridges across the Nottoway River which were destroyed by the Marquis de Lafayette in 1781 to stop the progress of the British Army (1783/06/18); Inhabitants of Princess Anne, Norfolk, Nansemond, & Isle of Wight asking that measures be taken for the relief for the loss of slaves taken by the British armies in their invasions during the Revolutionary War (Princess Anne Co. - 1791/10/28); James, alias James Lafayette, former slave of William Armistead emancipated in 1786, asking for a law allowing him a small sum for his service during the Revolutionary War (New Kent Co. - 1818/12/28); William H. Richardson asking for compensation for extraordinary services as adjutant general during the Mexican War (Richmond City - 1847/12/30); and Trustees of Portsmouth asking for compensation for the loss of the market house burnt by order of General Henry Lee in January 1776 (1789/11/16).

Wills/Administrations -There are 1,072 records in the database from citizens, administrators, securities, distributes, widows, heirs, representatives, executors, agents, guardians, trustees, devisees, attorneys, legatees, and others regarding the sale of land & lots, Revolutionary War claims & bounty lands, slaves, pensions, debts owed to estates, taxes, divisions of estates, emancipations, and administrations of the mentally ill.

Noteworthy are the following petitions: Cuthbert Bullitt, representative of his late brother Thomas, Adjutant General of the regular forces raised in the state in 1775 and Deputy Adjutant General of the Southern Department in 1776, asking for bounty land for his brother's service (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1784/06/12); Mary Byrd, widow & executrix of William Byrd, asking for permission to sell a tract of land in Henrico & Chesterfield counties so that proceeds may be applied to the debts of the deceased (Charles City Co. - 1787/11/23); Jubal Early & others, guardian of the heirs of Abner Early, deceased, asking for a law to authorize the sale of three small pieces of mountain land (Montgomery Co. - 1841/12/30); John Frazer, Jr., executor & son of William Frazer, deceased, who was employed by the Navy Board in 1776 with John Roane to furnish supplied to the builders of ships of war on the Mattaponi River, asking for the relief from debts

accrued by testator (King William Co. - 1787/11/22 & 1788/11/04); Bernard Gratz, & others, executors of George Croghan, asking for an act for securing them, and those who purchased land from them, their titles to the land which Croghan purchased from the chiefs of the Six Nations in 1749 (Miscellaneous (Chronological) - 1793/11/04); Janette Taylor & George L. Lowden, heirs of Commodore John Paul Jones, asking that provision may be made by the Legislature for the satisfaction of the land bounty granted to their ancestor by Virginia (Richmond City - 1840/12/07); and Bushrod & Corbin Washington, executors of John A. Washington, deceased, who was executor of Augustine Washington, asking for the appointment of commissioners for dividing their proportion of one-twelfth of the property and for settling & adjusting the accounts of William Carr (Westmoreland Co. - 1787/11/22).

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:

- Series I: Counties
- Series II: Cities
- Series III: Kentucky Counties
- Series IV: Miscellaneous (Chronological)
- Series V: Miscellaenous (Alphabetical)

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Kinney, William - Letter, 1845 Sept. 14 .

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