

A Guide to the Staunton (Va.) Commonwealth Causes and Criminal Papers, 1807-1919

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Descriptive Summary

Barcode numbers

1184512-1184541

Language

English

Collector

Staunton (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics

10 cu. ft. (30 boxes)

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

For Commonwealth Causes, use microfilm, Staunton (Va.) Reels 16-46.

Acquisition Information

These items came to the Library of Virginia in transfers of court papers from Staunton under the accession number 43238. The microfilm was generated by Backstage Library Works through the Library of Virginia's Circuit Court Records Preservation Program.

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Staunton (Va.) Commonwealth Causes and Criminal Papers, 1807-1919. Local government records collection, Staunton (City) Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Historical Information

The city of Staunton is located in Augusta County. Established as a town in 1761, it was incorporated as a town in 1801 and as an city in 1871. It is one of Virginia's independent cities and therefore functions administratively separately from the county in which it is located.

Scope and Content

Staunton (Va.) Commonwealth Causes and Criminal Papers, 1807-1919, are criminal court cases and other criminal papers that consist primarily of warrants, summons, subpoenas, indictments, recognizances, and verdicts handed down by grand juries and other legal authorities in order to prosecute individuals who violated the penal code. These offenses ranged in severity from murder, rape, assault and battery, and larceny to tax evasion, slander, liquor law violations, prostitution, and contempt of court. Criminal offenders and victims who appear in cases prior to the abolition of slavery in Virginia in 1865 included both free and enslaved persons.

Warrants were issued by grand juries, judges, and justices of the peace directing law enforcement officials to either arrest and imprison a person suspected of having committed a crime or to cause an individual to appear in court to answer accusations made against them. Peace warrants directing an offender to keep the peace of the Commonwealth or to restrain from any violent acts are commonly found in assault and battery cases.

Summonses were used to call a suspected person to appear in court. A summons could also be issued to direct witnesses or victims to come before the court in order to provide evidence or information deemed pertinent to a case. Subpoenas were also used to order witnesses to court to give evidence.

An indictment is the official, written description of the crime that an accused individual is suspected of committing, which is approved by a grand jury and presented to a court in order to begin legal proceedings. Due to this process, indictments are often referred to as presentments.

Verdicts are the formal pronouncements made by juries on issues submitted to them by a judge or other law enforcement official. In the case of a guilty verdict, a judge will sentence the offender. Sentences may include a fine, corporal punishment, and/or imprisonment.

Recognizances were bonds or obligations made in court by which a person promised to do a certain thing such as keep the peace or to appear when called. They are common in assault and battery cases. Often they functioned as a bail bond that guaranteed an unjailed criminal defendant's return for a court date.

Overseers of the Poor causes consist of prosecutions for bastardy or summons to show cause why a child should not be bound out as an apprentice or why an apprenticeship bond should not be broken.

Certificates of justice were notices sent by the jailer that he had committed a certain person or persons to the jail to await trial or other court action.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

Staunton (Va.) Circuit Court.

Subjects:

African Americans -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Apprentices -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Assault and battery -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Contempt of court -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Crime -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Criminals -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Forgery -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Illegitimacy -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Larceny -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Libel and slander -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Liquor laws -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Murder -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Prostitution -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Rape -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Slaveholders -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Slaves -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Tax evasion. -- Virginia -- Staunton.

Geographical Names:

Staunton (Va.) -- History.

Genre and Form Terms:

Indictments -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Local government records -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Subpoenas -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Summons -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Verdicts -- Virginia -- Staunton.
Warrants -- Virginia -- Staunton.

Added Entry - Corporate Name:

Staunton (Va.) Corporation Court.
Staunton (Va.) Hustings Court.

Arrangement

Arranged by ended court date then alphabetically by defendant surname.

Commonwealth Causes of Interest

1808 September, Abraham:

Scope and Content

slave going at large and hiring himself out

1812 March, Isaac Collett:

Scope and Content

printing a false and scandalous libel

1812 March, John G. Flack:

Scope and Content

uttering opprobrious words to a justice of the peace

1814 March, David Phillips:

Scope and Content

fornication with a female slave

1817 November, Charles Bankhead:

Scope and Content

sending a challenge to fight a duel

1818 March, Washington Doake:

Scope and Content

refuse to help constable take a slave to the whipping post

1820 November, Sally Bush, free negro:

Scope and Content

being at an unlawful meeting with slaves

1823 August, Lavinia Hewlett and others:

Scope and Content

for not registering as free negroes

1828 May, William Carroll Sr.:

Scope and Content

habitual intoxication, abuse of his family and obscene language

1829 November, many free negroes:

Scope and Content

for not registering as free negroes

1833 July, John H. Ast:

Scope and Content

public nuisance: slaughterhouse

1837 April, Erasmus Stribling, clerk of court:

Scope and Content

permit his slaves to trade as free persons

1843 February, Harman J. Lushbaugh:

Scope and Content

obscene graffiti

1849 September, Eli Smith, free negro:

Scope and Content

use provoking language to a white man

1857 July, Thomas O'Connell and wife:

Scope and Content

permit unlawful assembly of slaves, trade with slaves, sell liquor to slaves

1860 February, Samuel Cooper:

Scope and Content

publicly exposing his private parts

1860 July, Michael Carmody:

Scope and Content

playing at bagatelle

1860 July, James Edwards:

Scope and Content

assemble with negroes in the night time

1860 July, Howard Grove and Margaret Sinclair:

Scope and Content

lewd and lascivious cohabitation

1863 June, Bridget McCarty alias Bolin:

Scope and Content

received goods stolen from Confederate States government

1863 December, George Pforr:

Scope and Content

attempted rape of his daughter

1868 February, Thomas Harris:

Scope and Content

rape of multiple children under 12 years of age

1882 March, Margaret alias Mag Lewis:

Scope and Content

keep house of ill fame

1882 May, Love Smith:

Scope and Content

buggery with a mare

1884 September, Crawford and Lalley:

Scope and Content

sell liquor on an election day

1884 December, David Kayser:

Scope and Content

public nuisance: backhouse and privy

1886 February, John Harris:

Scope and Content

seduction under promise of marriage

1887 July, Demetta alias Doctor alias Duretta Liverpool:

Scope and Content

seduction under promise of marriage

1889 March, Nettie Mays alias Fox:

Scope and Content

extortion and blackmail

1893 December, W. L. Oliver:

Scope and Content

exhibit semi-nude photograph in his window

1894 March, Preston Moon:

Scope and Content

seduction

1899 March, John T. Todd:

Scope and Content

abduction with the intent to deitem

1901 January, N. C. Watts, jailer:

Scope and Content

permitting the escape of a prisoner from the county jail

1901 September, Horace Miller:

Scope and Content

house burning

1906 February, Kemp Howdyshe:

Scope and Content

escape from jail

1906 May, David M. Kyle:

Scope and Content

murder

1908 September, Canary Morris:

Scope and Content

possession of cocaine with the intent to sell; selling cocaine

1908 October, Albert Spiers:

Scope and Content

attempted murder

1909 July, Walter D. Hoge:

Scope and Content

illegal voting

1916 December, Edward Bryant:

Scope and Content

buggery with a child

1917 September, John H. Johnson:

Scope and Content

bigamy