

# A Guide to the Commonwealth of Virginia versus Abolition Society of New York, 1835

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1835

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia 1150972

Library of Virginia

2012

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## History

**Processed by:** Greg Crawford

## Title Statement

A Guide to the Commonwealth of Virginia versus Abolition Society of New York, 1835

**Subtitle:** Commonwealth of Virginia versus Abolition Society of New York, 1835

**Collection:** 1150972

**Author:** Greg Crawford

## Publication Statement

**Date:** © 2012 By The Library of Virginia. All Rights Reserved.

**Publisher:** Library of Virginia

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** Machine-readable finding aid derived from MARC record, created by Greg Crawford, 01 November 2012

**Language Usage:** Description is in English

## Revision Description

**2013-11-21** Converted to schema conforming EAD by dtd2schema.vh.xsl.

## Descriptive Summary

**Barcode number:**

1150972

**Language**

English

**Collector**

Frederick County (Va.) Circuit Court.

**Physical Characteristics**

2 p.

**Location**

Library of Virginia

**Repository**

The Library of Virginia

## Administrative Information

**Access Restrictions**

There are no restrictions.

**Use Restrictions**

There are no restrictions.

**Acquisition Information**

This item came to the Library of Virginia in shipments of court records from Frederick County.

**Preferred Citation**

Commonwealth of Virginia versus Abolition Society of New York, 1835. Local government records collection, Frederick County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

## Historical Information

Arthur Tappan was a leading figure in the abolitionist movement during the mid-19th century. He helped found the Abolition Society of New York in 1831 which two years later evolved into the American Anti-Slavery Society.

Frederick County was named in honor of Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales and eldest son of King George II. It was formed from Orange County by a statute of 1738 that stipulated that when the population was large enough the new county government would begin to function. The county court first met on 11 November 1743. Part of Augusta County was added in 1754. The county seat is the city of Winchester.

## Scope and Content

Commonwealth of Virginia versus Abolition Society of New York, 1835, consists of a criminal presentment issued by a grand jury in Frederick County against the Abolition Society of New York. In a lengthy and strongly worded indictment, the grand jury referred to the antislavery organization as an "evil of great magnitude" and accused it of disturbing the peace of the Commonwealth and threatening the lives of its citizens by inciting slaves to rebel. It encourages local law enforcement agencies throughout Virginia to adopt "increasing vigilance ... in the detection of all fanatical emissaries, and in the suppression of their nefarious schemes and publications." Furthermore, the grand jury called on the General Assembly to enforce present laws and enact stricter legislation against written or printed material that encouraged slave insurrection. The presentment also names Arthur Tappan, whom the grand jury considered to be the "prime mover" in the society.

## Index Terms

**Corporate Names:**

Frederick County (Va.) Circuit Court.

**Subjects:**

Antislavery movements -- New York.

Antislavery movements -- Virginia -- Frederick County.

**Geographical Names:**

Frederick County (Va.) -- History -- 19th century.

**Genre and Form Terms:**

Criminal court records -- Virginia -- Frederick County.

Indictments -- Virginia -- Frederick County.

Local government records -- Virginia -- Frederick County.

## **Added Entry - Corporate Name:**

Frederick County (Va.) -- Circuit Superior Court of Law and Chancery.

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