

A Guide to the Lynchburg (Va.) Smallpox Vaccination Report, 1838 June 4

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History

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Title Statement

A Guide to the Lynchburg (Va.) Smallpox Vaccination Report, 1838 June 4

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Descriptive Summary

Collection Numbers

0007515507

Language

English

Collector

Lynchburg (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Description

2 leaves

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 a transfer of court records from Lynchburg Circuit Court.

Preferred Citation

Lynchburg (Va.) Smallpox Vaccination Report, 1838 June 4. Local government records collection, Lynchburg (City) Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional Lynchburg (City) Court Records can be found on microfilm at the Library of Virginia. Consult "[A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm](#)" found on the Library of Virginia's web site.

Historical Information

Lynchburg was named for John Lynch, the owner of the original town site. It was established in 1786. It was incorporated as a town in 1805 and became a city in 1852. Parts of Campbell and Bedford counties were annexed to the city in 1976.

The Hustings Court, known as the Corporation Court in jurisdictions incorporated as independent cities, was the town/city equivalent of the County Court. It was presided over by Justices under the Mayor of the town/city and heard civil and criminal matters. Civil actions on appeal and criminal matters resulting in conviction were sent to the next higher court, in this case Circuit Court, for further action.

Scope and Content

Lynchburg (Va.) Smallpox Vaccination Report dates from 1838 June 4. The report was sent to the Mayor and Aldermen of the city's Corporation Court by a physician appointed by the court to treat the city's smallpox victims. The report offers an excellent example of the "arm to arm" process used to treat the disease. Variolation was used into the twentieth century, especially in poorer communities, although in the nineteenth century many physicians switched to vaccinating with the related, but much less harmful, vaccinia virus. With both viruses, scabs were a useful tool: doctors carried them around in their cases and the scabs could even be mailed. Scabs are extremely useful tools. Studying the virus's evolution could reveal when its ancestor emerged from an animal, or whether poxviruses have evolutionary tricks for stepping up potency, which may be relevant when studying viruses such as monkeypox, which is of increasing concern in Africa.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

Lynchburg (Va.) Circuit Court.

Lynchburg (Va.) Corporation Court.

Subjects:

Immunizations--Virginia--Lynchburg.

Physicians--Virginia--Lynchburg.

Smallpox prevention--Virginia--Lynchburg.

Geographical Names:

Lynchburg (Va.)--History--19th century.

Genre and Form Terms:

Health and medica records--Virginia--Lynchburg.

Letters--Virginia--Lynchburg.

Local government records--Virginia--Lynchburg.

