

A Guide to the Richmond (Va.) Superior Court of Chancery, Smith, Calhoun and Company versus Executors of Georg Washington, 1806 circa

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History

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Author: Greg Crawford

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Descriptive Summary

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Language

English

Collector

Richmond (Va.) Circuit Court

Extent

14 p.

Location

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Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These items came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of records from Richmond (Va.) Circuit Court.

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Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional city of Richmond records can be found on microfilm at the Library of Virginia. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

City of Richmond records is one of Virginia's Lost Records Localities. Additional city of Richmond records may be found in the Virginia Lost Records Localities Collection at the Library of Virginia. Search the [Lost Records Localities Digital Collection](#) available at Virginia Memory.

For more information and a listing of lost records localities see [Lost Records research note](#).

Historical Information

The city of Richmond, located between Henrico and Chesterfield Counties, was named by William Byrd (1674-1744), who envisioned the development of a city at the falls of the James River and with the help of William Mayo laid out the town in 1737. The name probably came from the English borough of Richmond upon Thames, which Byrd visited on several occasions. Richmond was established in 1742 and in 1779 was designated the capital of Virginia effective 30 April 1780. It was incorporated as a town, although "stiled the city of Richmond," in 1782 and was incorporated as a city in 1842. It served as the capital of the Confederacy from mid-1861 to April 1865. Richmond was enlarged by the annexation of Manchester (or South Richmond) in 1910, and by the addition of Barton Heights, Fairmount, and Highland Park in 1914. Further annexations from Chesterfield County occurred in 1942 and 1970.

The Superior Courts of Chancery were created by an act of the General Assembly passed on 23 January 1802. In order to expedite the hearing of chancery suits, the High Court of Chancery was abolished and the state was divided into three chancery districts with a Superior Court of Chancery for each district. For this reason these courts were sometimes called "District Courts of Chancery." The initial district courts met at Staunton, Richmond (City), and Williamsburg. On 28 January 1812 three additional districts were authorized and met at Wythe County, Winchester, and Clarksburg. In 1814, the number of courts increased again, with the localities of Lynchburg, Fredericksburg, and Greenbrier County being added. Each court heard cases from the counties which constituted its chancery district, but the court met at only one place in the district and its records were kept in that one location. The Superior Courts of Chancery were abolished in 1831 and their jurisdiction was assumed by the newly created Circuit Superior Court of Law and Chancery for each county. The records of each Superior Court of Chancery were transferred to the nearest county Circuit Superior Court of Law and Chancery. The records for the Superior Courts of Chancery held at the following locations are missing or were destroyed: Richmond (City) and Williamsburg.

During the burning of Richmond on 3 April 1865 in the Civil War, Richmond Circuit Court Judge John A. Meredith led efforts to save the circuit court records found at the State Court House. They successfully removed all the papers that were necessary to pending suits and many of the order books, but all of the wills and deed books were lost. Records of the superior court and circuit superior court of law and chancery were also destroyed. Most of the pre-Civil War Hustings Court records exist.

Scope and Content

Richmond (Va.) Superior Court of Chancery, Smith, Calhoun and Company versus Executors of George Washington, etc., 1806 circa, concerned a debt owed to the plaintiffs by the defendants. Property in King George County owned by the estate of George Washington was involved in the case.

Index Terms

INDEX TERMS

Corporate Names:

Richmond (Va.) Circuit Court.

Subjects:

Debt.

Genre and Form Terms:

Judicial Records -- Virginia -- Richmond.

Local government records -- Virginia -- Richmond.

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