

A Guide to the Louisa County (Va.) Judgments (Freedom Suits), 1795-1825

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History

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Title Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Barcode number

0007532871

Language

English

Collector

Louisa County (Va.) Circuit Court

Physical Characteristics

.10 cu. ft.

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

These items came to the Library of Virginia in transfers of court papers from Louisa County.

Preferred Citation

Louisa County (Va.) Judgments (Freedom Suits), 1795-1825. Local government records collection, Louisa County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional Louisa County Court Records are found at the Library of Virginia.

Additional Louisa County Court Records can be found on microfilm at The Library of Virginia. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

Additional freedom suits may be found in the Louisa County Chancery Causes. Search the [the Chancery Records Index](#) found on the Library of Virginia web site. Enter the tilde symbol in the plaintiff surname field.

Historical Information

Slaves sued for emancipation in freedom suits based on the following: they were descendant(s) of a free female ancestor, typically a Native American (Hening Statutes, volume 2, p.170); failure of slaveowner(s) to abide by the 1778 slave nonimportation act (Henings Statutes, volume 9, pp. 471-472); or claimed to have been freed by slaveowner(s) by deed of emancipation or last will and testament (Henings Statutes volume 11, pp. 39-40)

Louisa County was named for Louisa, a daughter of King George II and wife of King Frederick V of Denmark. It was formed from Hanover County in 1742. The county seat is Louisa.

Scope and Content

Louisa County (Va.) Judgments (Freedom Suits), 1795-1825, consist of suits initiated by slaves seeking to gain their freedom on the law side of the court. Cases are identified by style of suit consisting of plaintiff and defendant names. Surnames of others involved in a suit, including secondary plaintiffs and defendants, witnesses, deponents and affiants, and family members with surnames different from the plaintiff or defendant are indexed. Also identified are names of slaves and slaveowners found in suit as well as whether slave(s) won their freedom. Predominant documents found in freedom suits include petitions, records of suits, depositions, affidavits, wills, among other items. Information found in documents include slave's argument for freedom, acquisition of slaves by slaveowners, slave ancestry, and relationship between slaves and slaveowners.

Judgments (Freedom Suits) are useful when researching local history and genealogical information, particularly for African Americans. They are a valuable source of local, state, social, and legal history and serve as a primary source for understanding a locality's history.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

Louisa County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Subjects:

African Americans -- Virginia.

Free African Americans -- Virginia -- Louisa County.

Slaveholders -- Virginia -- Louisa County.

Slavery -- Virginia -- Louisa County.

Geographical Names:

Louisa County (Va.) -- History.

Louisa County (Va.) -- Genealogy

Genre and Form Terms:

Civil actions -- Virginia -- Louisa County.

Freedom suits -- Virginia -- Louisa County.

Judicial records -- Virginia -- Louisa County.

Local government records -- Virginia -- Louisa County.

Petitions -- Virginia -- Louisa County.

Wills -- Virginia -- Louisa County.

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

List of Freedom Suits

1795 August: Petition of Abraham Kinney

1811 October: Petition of Salley~, etc.

1824 February: Petition of Charles~

1825: Petition of Minty~ alias Milly~