

A Guide to the Cumberland County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1852

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1852

A Collection in the Library of Virginia

Library of Virginia

2026

History

Processed by: S. Nerney

Title Statement

A Guide to the Cumberland County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1852

Subtitle: Cumberland County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth

Author: Caroline Collins

Publication Statement

Date: © 2026 By The Library of Virginia. All Rights Reserved.

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MS Word by Caroline Collins, 26 February 2026

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Cumberland County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Extent

2 items

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Cumberland County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1852, are digitized and available through [Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative Digital Collection](#) on the Library of Virginia website. Please use digital images.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These records came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Cumberland County (Va.) as part of an undated accession.

Processing Information

Cumberland County Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth were originally described as part of the Cumberland County (Va.) Free and Enslaved Records, 1759-1865, but were removed to the present Cumberland County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1852, record to enhance discoverability in February 2026.

These records have been processed, scanned, and indexed by S. Nerney, L. Neuroth, and LVA staff for the purposes of digitizing them for the digital project Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative.

Encoded by C. Collins: February 2026.

Preferred Citation

Cumberland County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1852. Local government records collection, Cumberland County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

See also: [Cumberland County \(Va.\) Free and Enslaved Records, 1759-1865](#)

Records related to free and enslaved people of Cumberland County (Va.) and other localities are available through the [Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative Digital Collection](#) on the Library of Virginia website.

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

Historical Information

Context for Record Type: Sometimes referred to as "Applications to Remain," these records are applications that formerly enslaved individuals submitted to state and local courts for permission to remain in Virginia with their free status. The Virginia General Assembly passed a law stating that all formerly enslaved people freed after 1 May 1806 who remained in Virginia more than twelve months could be put on trial by the state. Individuals who wished to remain in the commonwealth were to petition the state legislature. In 1816, a new Act of Assembly gave the local courts power to grant permission to remain. The documents in these cases will include: the name(s) of the petitioner(s), the circumstances of free status, and a request to remain in the county. Individuals needed to prove that they had in fact been emancipated. Therefore, application packets might also include supporting documents such as the formerly enslaved person's register, a copy of a will or deed of emancipation, or witness statements known as affidavits.

Locality History: Cumberland County was named for William Augustus, duke of Cumberland, third son of King George II. It was formed from Goochland County in 1749. The county seat is Cumberland.

Scope and Content

Cumberland County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1852, consist of records related to the petition of two individuals. Petitions to remain are applications that formerly enslaved individuals submitted to state and local courts for permission to remain in Virginia with their free status. The petitions often include the formerly enslaved individual's name, their method of emancipation, name of their former enslaver, and whether the application/petition was successful or not. Petitions may also include affidavits signed mainly by white residents or witness statements again provided by white residents. Additional names of enslaved or free Black and Multiracial individuals can be found in these records.

These records are comprised of two orders, 1852, summoning Justices of Cumberland County to hear the petition of Sam and John Jones, who sought permission to remain in the Commonwealth. There is no indication as to whether or not their petition was granted.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged

- Series I: Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1852, arranged chronologically.

Contents List

Series I: Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1852

Extent

Extent: 2 items

Physical Location Library of Virginia

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically

Barcode number 1156166: Free and Enslaved Records, 1759-1865

Library of Virginia