

A Guide to the Southampton County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth , 1818-1853

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia

Library of Virginia

2024

History

Processed by: LVA Staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Southampton County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth , 1818-1853

Subtitle: Southampton County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1818-1853

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Publication Statement

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MS Word, created by Mary Ann Mason, 26 June 2024

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Southampton County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics

7 items.

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Southampton County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1818-1853 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 transfer of court papers from Southampton County in 1983 under accession 31913.

Processing Information

The Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, were originally described as part of the Southampton County (Va.) Free and Enslaved Records, but was removed to the present Southampton County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, in June 2024

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

Encoded by M. Mason, June 2024.

Preferred Citation

Southampton County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1818-1853. Local government records collection, Southampton County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

See also: [Southampton County \(Va.\) Free and Enslaved Records, 1754-1860](#)

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

Additional Southampton County (Va.) court records can be found on microfilm at the Library of Virginia. 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: Southampton County was named, in the opinion of many authorities, for Henry Wriothesley, third earl of Southampton and treasurer of the London Company from 1620 to 1624. It is more likely, however, that the county was named for the borough of Southampton in England. Southampton County was formed in 1749 from Isle of Wight County, and part of Nansemond County was added later.

Scope and Content

Southampton County (Va.) Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1818-1853, consist of petitions, affidavits, and summons pertaining to Petitions to Remain in Virginia, 1818-1819 and 1850-185s.

These records include the petition, 1818, of James Cotton (includes an affidavit, notice, court order, and a copy of the will that emancipated him Cotton); notice and affidavit, 1819, pertaining to the petition of Dempsey Bryant; a notice and bond, 1819, pertaining to the petition of Pat and her children, William, Tom, Chloe, Matilda, Peter, Willis, Fick, and Eliza; and summonses, 1850, pertaining to the petitions of Ricks Neil and Nancy M. Neil.

Also includes various petitions resulting from individuals emancipated in the will of Henry Harrison. These include summons, 1852, concerning the petition of John Harris; summons, 1852, concerning the petition of Martha Harris (also Martha Turner) and her son Simon; and summons, 1853, concerning the petition of Tom, Susan, Lucy, July, and Harrison

Arrangement

This collection is arranged

- Series I: Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1818-1853 arranged chronologically

Contents List

Series I: Petitions to Remain in the Commonwealth, 1818-1853

Extent

7 items

Physical Location Library of Virginia

Arrangement

arranged chronologically

Barcode number 1119722: Free and enslaved records, 1759-1866

Library of Virginia