

A Guide to the Isle of Wight County (Va.) Apprenticeship Indentures, 1777-1893

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia
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2026

History

Processed by: LVA staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Isle of Wight County (Va.) Apprenticeship Indentures, 1777-1893

Subtitle: Isle of Wight County (Va.) Apprenticeship Indentures, 1777-1893

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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, 09 June 2026

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Isle of Wight County (Va.) Circuit Court

Extent

Digital images.

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Isle of Wight County (Va.) Apprenticeship Indentures, involving Black and Multiracial children 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

Digital images of Isle of Wight Apprenticeship Indentures, 1777-1893 created by Library of Virginia Staff and are part of accession 54744.

Processing Information

After Local Records Staff completed the processing, indexing and digitization for Isle of Wight County records included in Virginia Untold, the records were returned to the locality by request of the clerk. At that time, the box barcodes and catalog records were deleted, while the digital images remained in Virginia Untold. In 2025, the Virginia Untold Project Manager and Local Records Staff decided to recreate these catalog records and assign digital barcodes to the images to help with internal tracking and to provide researchers with extended context for these records. Encoded by M. Mason, May 2026

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Preferred Citation

Isle of Wight County (Va.) Apprenticeship Indentures, 1777-1893. Local government records collection, Isle of Wight County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia

Custodial History

These items came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Isle of Wight County (Va.) Circuit Court in 2013. Original documents returned at request of Circuit Court Clerk of Isle of Wight County in 2015.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

See also: [Isle of Wight County \(Va.\) Free and Enslaved Records](#)

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

Additional Isle of Wight 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."](#)

Location of Originals

Original registrations are housed at the Isle of Wight Circuit Court. Contact the clerk of the Circuit Court for access.

Historical Information

Context for Record Type : In 1765, the General Assembly established that illegitimate children of "woman servants, Negroes, white women by Negroes were to be bound out" until the age of 21 for males and 18 for females. In the late eighteenth century, the General Assembly established the Overseers of the Poor, an appointed body that provided food, clothing, shelter, and medical treatment for people who were too poor to support themselves or too ill to provide for their basic needs. They also bound out children whose parents could not support them and those who were orphaned through apprenticeship contracts. These agreements arranged for white children to be taught a trade or domestic skills as well as educated in reading, writing, and arithmetic. In 1805, the General Assembly amended the previous act to no longer require the master of "black or mulatto orphans" to teach reading, writing, or arithmetic, with the intent that this would prevent Black children from learning these skills.

Locality History: Isle of Wight County was named probably for the Isle of Wight off the south coast of England. It was first known as Warrosquyoake for an Indian tribe living in the area whose name means "swamp in a depression of land," and was one of the original shires, or counties, first enumerated in 1634. The present name was given in 1637. Parts of Nansemond County were added in 1769 and 1772. The county seat is Isle of Wight.

Scope and Content

Isle of Wight County (Va.) Apprenticeship Indentures, 1777-1893 consists of over two hundred contracts or

agreements binding out white, Black, or multiracial children, sometimes those who were orphaned, to learn a particular trade or craft. These indentures may be written agreements between the family of the apprentice and those responsible for the indentured. In many cases this includes the direct involvement of the Overseers of the Poor. They typically contain the name of the person or institution binding out, the person to whom bound, the name of the person being indentured, the length of the apprenticeship, and the responsibilities of the person taking on the indenture.

Currently, identified material only included indentures of Black and multiracial children, additional apprenticeship indentures concerning white children may remain in the locality.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged

- Series I: Certificates of Importation, 1777-1893

Contents List

Series I: Certificates of Importation, 1777-1893

Extent

Extent: Digital images

Physical Location Library of Virginia

Barcode number 1006292: Apprenticeship Indentures, 1777-1893 11777-1893

Library of Virginia