

Wilson, Barbary, Deed of Emancipation for Harry

Barbary Wilson Deed of Emancipation for Harry

1822



Title Statement

Wilson, Barbary, Deed of Emancipation for Harry
Ms.2022.077

Author: Miranda Christy, Graduate Assistant, and LM Rozema, Archivist

Publication Statement

Publisher: Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Special Collections and University Archives, University Libraries (0434)
560 Drillfield Drive
Newman Library, Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
Business Number: 540-231-6308
specref@vt.edu
URL: <http://spec.lib.vt.edu>



2022 (CC0 1.0)

Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2023-09-27 07:00:15 -0400.

Language Usage: Description is written in: English, Latin script.

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.2022.077

Unit Date

1822

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

This collection contains a deed of emancipation signed by enslaver Barbary Wilson of Bath County, Virginia, freeing Harry, identified as a Black man, on January 5, 1822. Harry was one of 14 people that Wilson had enslaved and manumitted in 1822.

Creator

Wilson, Barbary, d. ca. 1822

Extent

0.1 Cubic Feet 1 folder

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

The copyright status of this collection is unknown. Copyright restrictions may apply. Contact Special Collections and University Archives for assistance in determining the use of these materials.

Reproduction or digitization of materials for personal or research use can be requested using our reproduction/digitization form: <http://bit.ly/scuareproduction>.

Reproduction or digitization of materials for publication or exhibit use can be requested using our publication/exhibition form: <http://bit.ly/scuapublication>. Please contact Special Collections and University Archives (specref@vt.edu or 540-231-6308) if you need assistance with forms or to submit a completed form.

Source of Acquisition

This collection was purchased by Special Collections and University Archives in 2018.

Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the Barbary Wilson Deed of Emancipation for Harry was completed in November 2022.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Barbary Wilson Deed of Emancipation for Harry, 1822, Ms2022-077, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

Enslaver Barbary (also Barbara) Wilson freed fourteen people, including "Henry" (this may be the "Harry" in the deed of emancipation), in Bath County, Virginia, in January 1822. The following month, Wilson's family filed a case claiming that she was mentally insane and of unsound mind when manumitting the people. The family initially failed, but seized Wilson's estate upon appeal. The enslaved people filed a suit, called "Henry and Others, Paupers, v. Ballar and Others", against the family members, claiming to be white and therefore not legally enslaved, while the family claimed they were of mixed race and legally enslaved. The family also stated that Wilson had been attacked by Native peoples while a child, which they claim led to her mental incapacity during her lifetime.

In the course of the case, Wilson died, leaving an 1819 will that also emancipated the enslaved people. (She was believed to be in her eighties at her death.) In 1836, the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia ruled that the people were entitled to their freedom, and that Wilson was of sound mind when she freed the people she enslaved. They also ruled the freed persons were entitled to profits made during their enslavement after their original emancipation.

In addition to Henry or Harry, the individuals freed in the will were Cathy and her children Peggy and Andrew; Lucy and her children Sally, Benjamine [sic], Strother, Patsy, and Nancy; and Sally and her children Jane, Betsy, and Washington. The will also deeded many of them land and goods Wilson owned.

External Sources:

U.S. Federal Census Records, 1810-1820

Benjamin Watkins Leigh, Report of Cases Argued and Determined in the Court of Appeals, and in the General Court, of Virginia, Vol. 5, 1903. Pages 552-553.

[https://www.google.com/books/edition/Virginia_Reports/aZ4UAAAAYAAJ?](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Virginia_Reports/aZ4UAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=henry+and+others,+paupers,+v.+bollar+and+others&pg=PA541&printsec=frontcover)

[hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=henry+and+others,+paupers,+v.+bollar+and+others&pg=PA541&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Virginia_Reports/aZ4UAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=henry+and+others,+paupers,+v.+bollar+and+others&pg=PA541&printsec=frontcover), accessed September 26, 2023.

Barbara Wilson in the Virginia, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1652-1900, Ancestry.com,

<https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/500268:62347>, accessed September 26, 2023.

Scope and Content

This collection contains a deed of emancipation signed by enslaver Barbary Wilson of Bath County, Virginia, freeing Harry, identified as a Black man, on January 5, 1822. Wilson is described as filing the deed "upon principle opposed to holding any person in slavery." Harry is listed as being about thirty-two years old. Please note, the signature says "Barbary Wilson," but the clerk wrote her name as "Barbara Wilson."

Keywords

African Americans -- History

Bath County (Va.)

Legal instruments (Legal documents)

Local/Regional History and Appalachian South

Slavery -- United States

Harry, freedman

Rights Statement for Archival Description

The guide to the Barbary Wilson Deed of Emancipation for Harry by Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, is licensed under a CC0 (<https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/public-domain/cc0/>).

Description of Subordinate Components

Barbary Wilson Deed of Emancipation for Harry

Unit Date 1822-01-05

folder 1