

# Guide to Contract transferring temporary service of indentured servant Peyton Cook C0364

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January 14, 1860



## Title Statement

Guide to Contract transferring temporary service of indentured servant Peyton Cook C0364

**Subtitle:** Contract transferring temporary service of indentured servant Peyton Cook

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## Publication Statement

**Publisher:** George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

Fenwick Library, MS2FL

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Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Business Number: 703-993-2220

Fax Number: 703-993-8911

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URL: <https://scrc.gmu.edu>



June 27, 2019

## Profile Description

**Creation:** This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-06-05 03:01:58 -0400.

**Language Usage:** Description is in English

**Descriptive Rules:** Describing Archives: A Content Standard

## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

C0364

**Unit ID**

/repositories/2/resources/478

**Unit Date**

January 14, 1860

**box**

1 (folder)

**Language**

English

**Abstract**

Contract transferring temporary service of indentured servant Peyton Cook, written on January 14, 1860.

**Creator**

Brown, John W.

**Extent**

0.01 Linear Feet 1 folder

**Physical Location**

R 72, C 3, S 4

**Repository**

George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

## Administrative Information

**Access Restrictions**

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**Acquisition Information**

Purchased from Lorne Bair in February 2011.

**Processing Information**

Processing completed by Amanda Brent in June 2019. EAD markup completed by Amanda Brent in June 2019.

**Preferred Citation**

Contract transferring temporary service of indentured servant Peyton Cook, C0364, Special Collections Research Center, George Mason University Libraries.

## Historical Information

Indentured servitude was a common practice in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries in the United States. There were a number of reasons why individuals entered into an indenture, some being the prohibitive cost of passage to the Americas, or the lack of an economic headstart in life. Indentured servitude is generally defined as "a contract by which an apprentice was bound to serve a master, who undertook to teach him a trade, or by which someone bound himself to service in return for money or passage to the colonies. Indentured servitude in Virginia was a kind of temporary slavery. While still serving their time, servants were under the total authority of their masters and they could be bought and sold like slaves. They 'took up their indentures' when they became free" (Source). Adults generally served 4 - 7 years as an indentured servant, while children would serve longer. During most of the 17th century, indentured servants were the main source of agricultural labor in the U.S. Some indentured servants were treated well and fairly, leaving their indenture with property and a skilled trade, but many others were treated no better than enslaved individuals. Indentures could be extended for a variety of reasons, including breaking the law or the servant getting pregnant. Eventually, the popularity of indentured servitude waned as the the profitability of using the labor of enslaved peoples increased.

## Scope and Content

Contract transferring temporary service of indentured servant Peyton Cook, written on January 14, 1860. In the contract, Cook's master R.B. Sherrard agrees to lend Cook into the services of John W. Brown and W.D. Brown of Winchester, Virginia for a period of just under a year. The Browns agree to return Cook to Sherrard, who resides in Bloomery, Virginia (now West Virginia) on December 25, 1860 with a host of new clothes and items provided to him in the interim in order to keep him comfortable, as well as to pay Cook's taxes. This contract also states that the Browns must pay Sherrard \$100 on or before the return of Cook for the use of him during that year.

## Related Material

The Special Collections Research Center also holds the Indenture for a miller apprenticeship for Hugh Ogden in Loudoun County, Virginia.

## Keywords

Bloomery (W. Va.)  
Indentured servants  
Virginia -- History  
Cook, Peyton

## Alternative Form Available

This collection has been digitized and is available to view [here](#).

## Bibliography

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Rosenbloom, Joshua. "Indentured Servitude in the Colonial U.S." Economic History Association. <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/indentured-servitude-in-the-colonial-u-s/> (accessed June 27, 2019).

Wolfe, Brendan, and McCarthy, Martha. "Indentured Servitude in Colonial Virginia" Encyclopedia Virginia.. [https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/indentured\\_servants\\_in\\_colonial\\_virginia](https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/indentured_servants_in_colonial_virginia) (accessed June 27, 2019).

## Arrangement

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