

Bolling, Linaeus Diaries

Linaeus Bolling Diaries

1820-1834

Title Statement

Bolling, Linaeus DiariesGuide to the Linaeus Bolling Diaries SC 00274

Author: Finding Aid Authors: Special Collections staff.

Publication Statement

Publisher: Special Collections Research Center

William & Mary Special Collections Research Center

Earl Gregg Swem Library

400 Landrum Dr

Williamsburg, Virginia

Business Number: 757-221-3090

spcoll@wm.edu

URL: <https://libraries.wm.edu/libraries-spaces/special-collections>

2009-07-07

Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2025-05-15 12:26:26 -0400.

Language Usage: The collection description/finding aid is written in English

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SC 00274

Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/2066

Unit Date

1820-1834

Language

English

Creator

Bolling, Linaeus, 1773-1836

Extent

0.02 Linear feet

Repository

Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access:

Collection is open to all researchers. Manuscript collections and archival records may contain materials with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under federal or state right to privacy laws and regulations, such as the Virginia Public Records Act (Code of Virginia, § 42.1-76-91); and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Code of Virginia § 2.2-3705.5). Confidential material may include, but is not limited to, educational, medical, and personnel records. If sensitive material is found in this collection, please contact a staff member immediately. The disclosure of personally identifiable information pertaining to a living individual may have legal consequences for which the College of William and Mary assumes no responsibility.

Conditions Governing Use:

Before reproducing or quoting from any materials, in whole or in part, permission must be obtained from the Special Collections Research Center, and the holder of the copyright, if not Swem Library.

Preferred Citation:

Lenaeus Bolling Diaries, 1820-1834, Special Collections Research Center, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.

Biographical Information:

Lenaeus (also Linnaeus) Bolling was the great-great-great-great-grandson of Pocahontas and John Rolfe. Born in 1773, Lenaeus was the son of Col. Robert Bolling and his second wife Susannah Watson. Col. Robert (1738-1775) attended school in England and returned to Virginia to study law in Williamsburg before settling in Buckingham County, where he built Chellow in 1760. He was a poet and vintner who represented Buckingham in Virginia's House of Burgesses. He went to Richmond in July 1775 to attend the Virginia Convention, but he died there suddenly a few days after that body convened.

Lenaeus apparently inherited Chellow after his older brother Powhatan died without issue in 1803. At the time of these diaries, Lenaeus owned a second plantation, called Whispering, also in Buckingham County. It is not clear from the diaries where Lenaeus resided; it might have been at Whispering or at a third, unnamed property. He also owned several properties that he rented out.

Lenaeus evidently studied law, for he served as a judge or magistrate in Buckingham. He was elected to Virginia's House of Delegates intermittently between 1799 and 1822. In 1834 he was working with partners to form a gold mining company.

Lenaeus married Mary Markham in 1793, and they had five children who survived infancy. Mary died in 1825. Lenaeus died in 1836 and was buried in the family cemetery at Chellow. On the occasion of Lenaeus's death, his first cousin William Bolling wrote a short tribute in his diary entry for 12 January 1836: "Death of Linnaeus Bolling of Buckingham - my friend & relation took place 7th a man of considerable acquirements, of eccentric opinions on many subjects - a very sociable"; agreeable companion and of highly respectable character." Sources:

Brown, Stuart E., Lorraine F. Myers, and Eileen M. Chappel. Pocahontas' Descendants: A Revision, Enlargement, and Extension of the List as Set Out by Wyndham Robertson in His Book Pocahontas and Her Descendants (1887). Combined with two volumes of corrections and additions. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1994.

Lemay, J. A. Leo. "Bolling, Robert (17 August 1738-21 July 1775)". Dictionary of Virginia Biography, vol. 2, pp. 68-69. Richmond: Library of Virginia, 2001.

The General Assembly of Virginia, July 30, 1619-January 11, 1978: A Bicentennial Register of Members. Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1978.

"Buckingham County, VA - Cemeteries - Bolling-Hubard Cemetery". USGenWeb Archives. <http://files.usgwarchives.net/va/buckingham/cemeteries/bol-hub01.txt>

"The (1836-1839) Diary of Col. William Bolling (1777-1845) of 'Bolling Hall', Goochland County, Virginia", copied and annotated by James S. Patton. Goochland County Historical Society Magazine, vol. 9, no. 1 (Spring 1977), pp. 33-57.

Scope and Contents

Two small diaries kept by Lenaeus Bolling (1773-1836), a plantation-owner and lawyer in Buckingham County, Virginia. One diary covers January through March 1820, and the other late November through December 1834. The diaries contain notes on weather, crops, livestock, slaves, family, relatives and neighbors who visited and were visited, frequent errands in the nearby town Ça Ira (now defunct), purchases, medical ailments, lawyering and court duties, and efforts to establish a local gold mining company. There are monthly indexes, except for December 1834.

Keywords

Diaries

Buckingham County (Va.)--History--19th century

Slavery--Virginia--19th century

Virginia--Social life and customs

Custodial History:

The 1820 diary was previously cataloged as Mss. MsV D6 and the 1834-1835 diary was previously cataloged as Mss. MsV D9.

General

Other Information:

The 1820 diary was previously cataloged as Mss. MsV D6 and the 1834-1835 diary was previously cataloged as Mss. MsV D9.

Description of Subordinate Components

Diary

Unit ID id286232

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/181076

Unit Date 1820 January-March

Mixed Materials Small Collections Box 13 (Box)

Container 1 (folder)

Scope and Contents

The Bolling household in this period apparently consists of father Lenaeus, mother Mary, children Susan and Philip, and cousins Polly and Patsey. Son Robert is often around. Daughter Mary might also be there, but references to 'Mary' are ambiguous, because Lenaeus's wife, daughter, and mother-in-law are all Marys. Bolling lists 29 slaves older than 16. There are frequent problems with runaways. Bolling refers to crops -- mainly tobacco, cotton and wheat -- from two plantations, Chellow and Whispering. There is an overseer at each plantation. It is unclear if Lenaeus and his family live at Whispering or a third, unnamed property; a man who might be a third overseer is mentioned frequently. Bolling appears to be a judge or magistrate, for he mentions issuing warrants, giving judgments on warrants, and going through the docket at Buckingham Court. He deals with slaves stealing wheat and gives a slave a pass to be away for nine days. Account statements throughout the diary detail purchases of farm and household items, food, livestock, and various sundries. 78 unnumbered pages in a paperbound volume; 17 cm. One leaf at the end has been torn out. On cover: Jan. Feb. Mar. / 1820

Notes made during processing with diary.

Diary

Unit ID id286237

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/181077

Unit Date 1834 November-December

Mixed Materials Small Collections Box 13 (Box)

Container 2 (folder)

Scope and Contents

By this time Bolling's wife Mary has died and children Susan and Philip have married. Susan and her husband Robert Hubbard are living with Lenaeus while planning to build a house. Son Robert is no longer mentioned, unless he is the father of grandson Lenaeus, who lives at Chellow. Pleasant Oliver works most days for Bolling, doing odd jobs, including carpentry. Bolling consults frequently with partners in a gold mining company. He observes a solar eclipse. He travels by carriage to Lynchburg and stays in a hotel for several days, visiting relatives, ordering clothing from tailors, and dealing with tenants of rental properties. He mentions having borrowed a pistol and sword after hearing of "the Southampton Insurrection of the execrable Nat Turner". A neighbor offers to sell him the wife of one of Bolling's slaves, and her two

children. Another slave comes to ask Bolling to buy him, because his master is emigrating and the slave's wife is nearby. 36 unnumbered pages; 17 cm. The first and last leaves are unattached. Some leaves are damaged. The text on the first page begins in mid-entry, indicating that pages are missing.

Notes made during processing with diary.