

A Guide to the York County (Va.) Criminal Causes, 1778-1859

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Author: Sam Walters

History

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Descriptive Summary

Barcode numbers

1156325-1156326

Language

English

Collector

York County (Va.) Circuit Court

Physical Characteristics

0.90 cu. ft. (2 boxes)

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These items came to the Library of Virginia in shipments of court papers from York County.

Preferred Citation

York County (Va.) Criminal Causes, 1778-1859. Local government records collection, York County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional court records for York County can be found on microfilm at the Library of Virginia. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

Additional York County criminal records may be found at the York County Courthouse and the Library of Virginia.

Historical Information

York County was originally named Charles River County, for Charles I, and was one of the eight shires formed in 1634. The present name was given in 1643, probably in honor of James, duke of York, the second son of Charles I.

Scope and Content

York County (Va.) Criminal Causes, 1778-1859 are criminal court cases and consist primarily of warrants, summons, indictments, and verdicts handed down by grand juries and other legal authorities in order to prosecute individuals who violated the penal code. These offenses ranged in severity from murder, rape, assault and battery, and larceny to tax evasion and slander. Criminal offenders and victims who appear in cases prior to the abolition of slavery in Virginia in 1865 included both free and enslaved persons.

Warrants were issued by grand juries, judges, and justices of the peace directing law enforcement officials to either arrest and imprison a person suspected of having committed a crime or to cause an individual to appear in court to answer accusations made against them. Peace warrants directing an offender to "keep the peace of the Commonwealth" or to restrain from any violent acts are commonly found in assault and battery cases.

Summonses were used to call a suspected person to appear in court. A summons could also be issued to direct witnesses or victims to come before the court in order to provide evidence or information deemed pertinent to a case.

An indictment is the official, written description of the crime that an accused individual is suspected of committing, which is approved by a grand jury and presented to a court in order to begin legal proceedings. Due to this process, indictments are often referred to as "presentments."

Verdicts are the formal pronouncements made by juries on issues submitted to them by a judge or other law enforcement official. In the case of a guilty verdict, a judge will sentence the offender. Sentences may include a fine, corporal punishment, and/or imprisonment. Coroners also submitted verdicts such as "death by suicide," "death by natural causes," etc. when determining the cause of a suspicious or sudden death.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

Subjects:

African Americans -- History
Assault and battery -- Virginia -- York County
Crime -- Virginia -- York County
Criminals -- Virginia -- York County
Larceny -- Virginia -- York County
Libel and slander -- Virginia -- York County
Murder -- Virginia -- York County
Rape -- Virginia -- York County
Slaveholders -- Virginia -- York County
Slavery -- Virginia -- York County
Slaves -- Virginia -- York County
Tax evasion -- Virginia -- York County

Geographical Names:

York County (Va.) -- History

Genre and Form Terms:

Indictments -- Virginia -- York County
Summons -- Virginia -- York County
Verdicts -- Virginia -- York County
Warrants (Law) -- Virginia -- York County

Arrangement

Chronological