

# A Guide to the Page County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1831-1914 (bulk 1871-1901)

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Library of Virginia  
2008

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## History

**Processed by:** Field processors

## Title Statement

A Guide to the Page County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1831-1914 (bulk 1871-1901)

**Subtitle:** Page County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1831-1914 (bulk 1871-1901)

**Author:** Greg Crawford

## Publication Statement

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**Publisher:** Library of Virginia

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** Machine-readable finding aid derived from MARC record, created by Greg Crawford, 03 September 2008

**Language Usage:** Description is in English

## Revision Description

**2013-11-21** Converted to schema conforming EAD by dtd2schema.vh.xsl.

## Descriptive Summary

### Language

English

### Collector

Page County (Va.) Circuit Court

### Physical Characteristics

Digital images; 56.1 cubic feet (125 boxes).

### Location

Library of Virginia

### Repository

The Library of Virginia

## Administrative Information

## Access Restrictions

Page County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1831-1914, use digital images found on the [Chancery Records Index](#) available electronically at the website of the Library of Virginia.

## Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

## Acquisition Information

These materials came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Page County (Va.) in 2007 under accession number 43284.

## Processing Information

Chancery Causes were processed in the locality by field processors prior to 2007.

Digital images were generated by PTFS through the Library of Virginia's Circuit Court Records Preservation Program in 2008.

Encoded by G. Crawford: 2008; Updated by J. Taylor: September 2023.

## Preferred Citation

Page County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1831-1914 (bulk 1871-1901). (Cite style of suit and chancery index no.). Local government records collection, Page County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

# Adjunct Descriptive Data

## Related Material

Additional Page County Court Records can be found on microfilm at The Library of Virginia. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

## Historical Information

**Context for Record Type:** Chancery Causes are cases of equity. According to Black's Law Dictionary they are "administered according to fairness as contrasted with the strictly formulated rules of common law." A judge, not a jury, determines the outcome of the case; however, the judge is basing the decision on findings compiled and documented by Commissioners. Chancery causes are useful when researching local history, genealogical information, and land or estate divisions. They are a valuable source of local, state, social, and legal history and serve as a primary source for understanding a locality's history. Chancery causes document the lived experiences of free and enslaved individuals; women; children; people living with physical disabilities or mental health struggles; people living in poverty; defunct institutions and corporate entities; or those that may not have otherwise left traditional written histories.

**Locality History:** Page County was named according to most sources, for John Page, revolutionary patriot, congressman, and governor of Virginia from 1802 to 1805. It was formed from Rockingham and Shenandoah counties in 1831. The county seat is Luray.

## Scope and Content

Page County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1831-1914 (bulk 1871-1901), consists of cases concerning issues of equity brought largely by residents of the county and filed in the circuit court. These cases often involve the following actions: divisions of estates or land, disputes over wills, disputes regarding contracts, debt, divorce, and business disputes. Other less prevalent issues include freedom suits, permissions to sell property, and disputes concerning trespass. Predominant documents found in these chancery causes include bills (documents the plaintiff's complaint), answers (defendant's response to the plaintiff's complaint), decrees (court's decision), depositions, affidavits, correspondence, lists of heirs, deeds, plats, wills, records involving enslaved individuals, business records or vital statistics.

## Arrangement

Organized by case, of which each is assigned a unique index number comprised of the earliest year found in case and a sequentially increasing 3-digit number assigned by the processor as cases for that year are found. Arranged chronologically.

Arrangement of documents within each folder are as follows: Bill, Answer, and Final Decree (if found.)

## Selected Suite of Interest

## **Selected Suits of Interest**

*Causes of Interest are identified by local records archivists during processing and indexing. These causes are generally selected based upon guiding principles of having historical, genealogical or sensational significance; however, determining what is "of interest" is subjective, and the individual perspective and experience of the describing archivist will affect the material identified.*

### **1832-001: Isaac Overall v. Widow of George Hetick, etc.**

#### **Scope and Content**

Isaac Overall filed a Land Office Treasury Warrant for 4,790 acres prior to George Hetick. Hetick filed his Land Office Treasury Warrant for 25,517 acres and Overall's patent was contained within his lands. According to the county surveyor in a deposition, his home was burnt down and Overall's plat and survey were recorded in book that burnt in the fire.

### **1832-008: George Kite and wife v. Nancy Painter, etc.**

#### **Scope and Content**

In dispute in the cause are deeds made in 1823 and 1831 between Henry Long and Nancy Painter, his step daughter, Adam Painter, her son, Adam Painter. Henry Long was said to be old, infirm and a drinker but others surmise that he had fallen under the influence of his step daughter. Defendant lived in Shenandoah and Rockingham counties. SEE ALSO: 1837-002, 1833-007, and 1839-008.

### **1833-008: Exr of Raphael Conn v. Mary J. Conn, etc.**

#### **Scope and Content**

In his will, filed in Page County in 1831, Raphael Conn emancipated all seventeen of the people he enslaved. The court ruled that the enslaved people may be hired out or sold to pay for his estate's debts while the legacy of his niece, Mary J. Conn, is protected-thus increasing his debts. All of this is not lost on those he enslaved as they were named defendants along with his niece to the suit. In their answer, they fight back stating that "their liberty should be placed on a higher footing than the legacy of his niece which is so far a special legacy." They ask the court to release them from their servitude. Instead, they were hired out and his estate earned \$185.00. However, the estate remained \$600.00 in debt. SEE ALSO: 1834-007.

### **1843-004: Dr. Beverly R. Welford, creditor, etc v. Nicholas W. Yager, trustee, etc.**

#### **Scope and Content**

Benjamin Blackford and his son ran a manufacturing and casting iron business responsible for the operation of the Isabella Furnace and Speedwell Forge in Page County as well as the Caroline Furnace in Shenandoah County. Through deeds of trust, Nicholas Yager and Abraham Kendrick were given full power and authority to supervise and control the operations of said furnaces and forge, however, they were also responsible for the company's debts. The suit also involved the city of Richmond hiring out enslaved workers to the business of Benjamin Blackford and Son. SEE ALSO: 1843-005.

### **1850-006: Heirs of Isaac Bundy, etc. (free people of color) v. Mary Richardson, etc.**

#### **Scope and Content**

Isaac Bundy was a free man of color, who died childless and his estate was to be divided amongst his brothers and sisters. His heirs argued Frances Bundy, Isaac Bundy's common-law wife, was not legally his wife and therefore had no right to a dower tract of land from Isaac's estate. However, the court recognized Frances as Isaac's wife for legal purposes. Frances, in turn, disputed whether the heirs coming forward were in fact legitimate heirs to Isaac's estate.

### **1852-004: Thomas M. Almond v. Ambrose Booton, trst, etc.**

#### **Scope and Content**

The suit is concerned with church property in the town of Lurary; the property also contained a meeting house and schoolhouse. Thomas M. Almond was a member of Mount Caramel Baptist Church while Ambrose Booton was a trustee of the Hawksbill Baptist Church. The Hawksbill Baptist Church became the

Mount Caramel Baptist Church-known as the Old School Baptists. Almond bought the church property and proceeds were shared by the Old School Baptist Church-one half, the New School Baptist Church-3/10 and the Methodist Episcopal-1/5.

## **1854-009: Emanuel Grove v. Peter B. Borst and David McKay**

### **Scope and Content**

Emanuel Grove claimed there was a verbal agreement to go to Greene County and bid together with the Peter B. Borst and David McKay for the first 14 miles of the Rockingham Turnpike Road from Stanardsville to Harrisonburg. Grove said that Borst and McKay refused to consider Grove as one of the said firm and denied him the profits of said contracts. Borst and McKay countered that there was no agreement and no partnership. Enslaved workers were hired to build the road.

## **1856-010: D and H Forrer] v. Richards Bros and Co], etc.**

### **Scope and Content**

Daniel and Henry Forrer were owners of the Shenandoah Iron Works. The iron works was comprised of 30-40,000 acres in Page and Rockingham counties and contained immense beds of valuable ore. The property of the iron works consisted of a furnance, forge, merchant and chopping mills and two saw mills. Before the end of 1854, the Forrers had sold half of property, real and personal, to Thomas S. Richard and James Moore of Pennsylvania. By August 1855, Richards and Moore had purchased the entire establishment. However, a contract was never signed by either party. A later contract between Forrer and Richards was lost or left behind in Baltimore. One of the defendants, James B. Eastham enslaved people who were hired to work the iron works. The names of the enslaved workers are provided in the suit. SEE ALSO: 1867-017.