

A Guide to the Wise County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1855-1912 (bulk 1857-1912)

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia
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Author: G. Crawford

History

Processed by: Field Processors

Title Statement

A Guide to the Wise County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1855-1912 (bulk 1857-1912)

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Author: Greg Crawford

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MARC record, created by Greg Crawford, 07 December 2009

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

Wise County (Va.) Circuit Court

Physical Characteristics

85.5 cubic feet (190 boxes); Digital images.

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Wise County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1855-1925 digital images found on the [Chancery Records Index](#) available electronically at the website of the Library of Virginia. Please use digital images.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These records came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Wise County (Va.) Circuit Court in 2009 under the accession number 44297.

Digital images were generated by Crowley Micrographics through the Library of Virginia's Circuit Court Records Preservation Program in 2009.

Processing Information

Records were processed in locality prior to 2009.

Encoded by G. Crawford, 2009; Updated by E. Swain, 2024

Preferred Citation

Wise County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1855-1925 (bulk 1888-1912). (Cite style of suit and chancery index no.). Local Government Records Collection, Wise County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

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

See also: [Lee County \(Va.\) Chancery Causes.](#)

See also: [Scott County \(Va.\) Chancery Causes.](#)

See also: [Russell County \(Va.\) Chancery Causes.](#)

Location of Originals

Original Wise County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1913-1925, are retained in the locality. Contact the Clerk of the Circuit Court for access.

Historical Information

Context of 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: Wise County was named for Henry Alexander Wise, governor of Virginia from 1856 to 1860. It was formed in 1856 from Lee, Scott, and Russell Counties.

Scope and Content

Wise County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1855-1912 (bulk 1857-1912), 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.

