

Guide to the Cordelia Jones free papers issued by the Loudoun County, Virginia court C0379

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March 12, 1829



Title Statement

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Subtitle: Cordelia Jones free papers issued by the Loudoun County, Virginia court

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Publication Statement

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

Fenwick Library, MS2FL

4400 University Dr.

Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Business Number: 703-993-2220

Fax Number: 703-993-8911

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



December 11, 2020

Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-06-17 07:01:28 -0400.

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

C0379

Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/527

Unit Date

March 12, 1829

box

1 (folder)

Language

English

Abstract

Free papers for Cordelia Jones, a free Black woman, from the Loudoun County Court.

Creator

Binns, Charles, 1763-1837

source

Virginia. Circuit Court (Loudoun County)

Extent

.01 Linear Feet 1 item

Physical Location

R 72, C 3, S 4

Repository

George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

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Acquisition Information

Purchased by Lynn Eaton from Jerry Showalter in August 2019.

Processing Information

Processed by Liz Beckman in December 2020. EAD markup by Liz Beckman in December 2020.

Preferred Citation

Cordelia Jones free papers issued by the Loudoun County, Virginia, court, C0379, Special Collections Research Center, George Mason University

Historical Information

Before the emancipation of enslaved people in the 1860s, Loudoun County, Virginia (like many parts of the United States, particularly states where slavery was legal) forced free Black residents to prove that they were not enslaved with documents provided by the county court. As noted by Bronwen Souders of the Loudoun County Heritage Commission, "Each individual was required to carry a 'freedom paper' as legal proof of his or her status at any time they were away from home" ("Enslavement, Freedom, and the Courthouse (1757-1861)," 19). Without these papers, white slavecatchers or government officials could have abducted Cordelia Jones and enslaved her (see Robert Hill, "Explore the Newly Discovered Papers"). In 1830, the year after the Loudoun County Court issued Cordelia Jones these free papers, there were 1079 free Black residents in Loudoun County, 5% of the population (Souders, 15).

Scope and Content

Free papers for Cordelia Jones, a free Black woman, in Loudoun County, Virginia. The paper declares that she is "free born" and the daughter of Mary Jones, register no. 548. The paper gives a detailed physical description of Cordelia, including her height and scars. The papers are signed and sealed by Charles Binns, the Clerk of the Court.

Related Materials

The Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court maintains indexes of records naming free Black people before 1865, as well as indexes of records [indexes of records](#) associated with enslaved people before 1865.

Keywords

African Americans -- Virginia
Free African Americans
Loudoun County (Va.)
Jones, Cordelia
Virginia. Circuit Court (Loudoun County)

Bibliography

Hill, Robert. "Explore the Newly Discovered Papers." In "The Freedom Papers," part of "Free at Last? Slavery in Pittsburgh in the 18th and 19th Centuries." University Library System, University of Pittsburgh, 2009. http://exhibit.library.pitt.edu/freetatlast/papers_listing.html

Souders, Bronwen, "Enslavement, Freedom, and the Courthouse(1757-1861)." In "The History of the Loudoun County Courthouse and Its Role in the Path to Freedom, Justice, and Racial Equality in Loudoun County," 14-21. Loudoun County Heritage Commission, March 1, 2019. <https://www.loudoun.gov/DocumentCenter/View/151802/Heritage-Commission-Report-Final?bidId=>

Arrangement

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