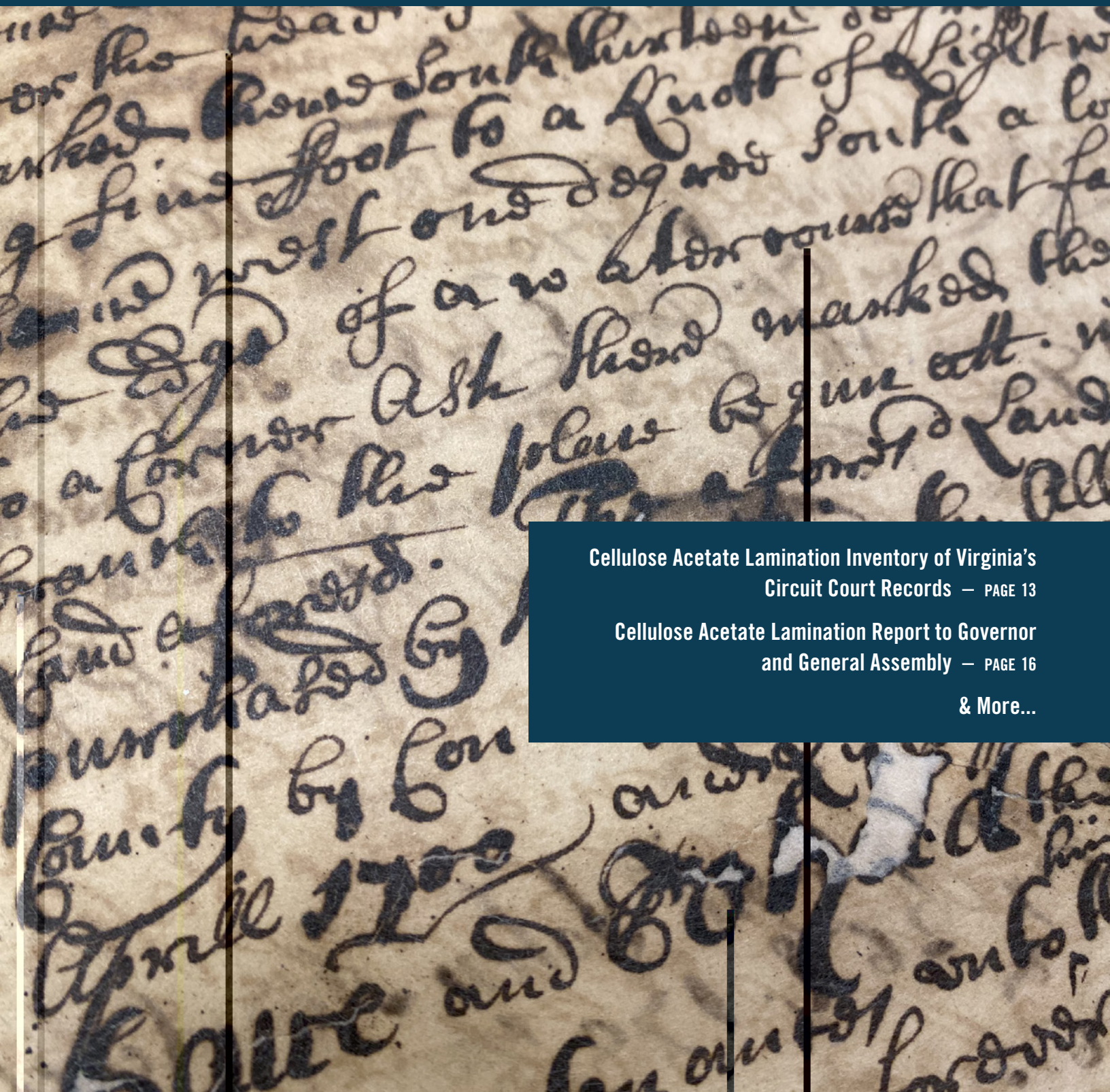


The Newsletter of Virginia's Circuit Court Records Preservation Program ■ No. 13 ■ Spring 2023

CCRP NEWS



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA



Cellulose Acetate Lamination Inventory of Virginia's
Circuit Court Records — PAGE 13

Cellulose Acetate Lamination Report to Governor
and General Assembly — PAGE 16

& More...

CCRP NEWS

No. 13 ■ Spring 2023

This newsletter is published twice a year to keep circuit court clerks informed about the court records preservation program for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Reader participation is invited.

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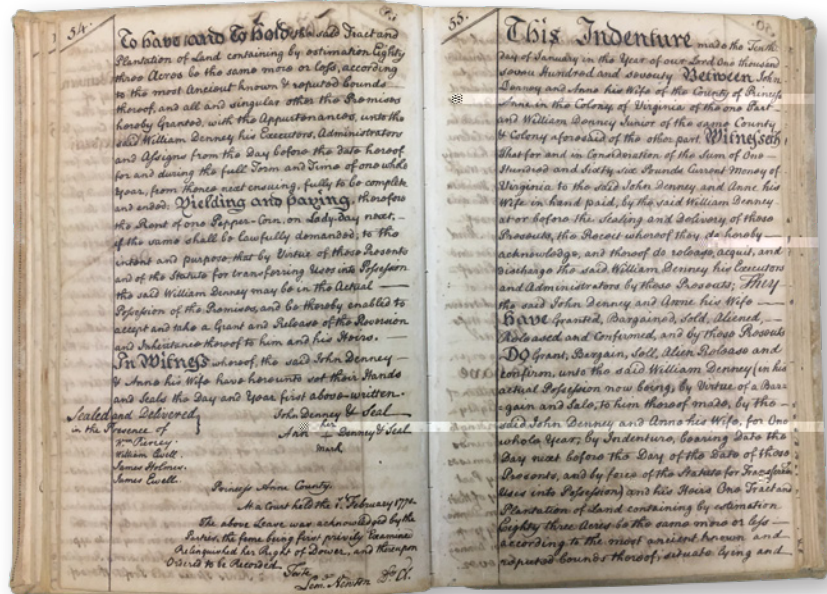
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Cover image: King George County Deeds, No. 1, Part 1, 1721-1729, was conserved using the cellulose acetate lamination process in 1936. The conservation was funded by the Virginia State Organization of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. With its browning paper, ink bleed through, iron gall ink loss, and dried, cracked appearance, the volume displays some of the typical characteristics of deteriorating cellulose acetate lamination.

Above: Princess Anne County Deed Book No. 11, 1769-1770, was cellulose acetate laminated in 1941 and displays the characteristic browning paper and ink bleed through, with a strong vinegar odor.

CONTENTS

2022 CCRP Travel Highlights	3
Greg Crawford Named Director of Government Records Services and State Archivist for the Library of Virginia	11
CCRP Archivists Visit Etherington Conservation Services	12
Library Conducts Cellulose Acetate Lamination Inventory of Virginia's Circuit Court Records	13
Report on the Historical Records Treated with Cellulose Acetate Lamination between the 1930s and the 1990s	16
Locality Receipt Files: Early Preservation of York County Court Records	18
Building the Local Government: Drawings from the Buildings and Grounds Collection	21
The Library Partners with Brunswick Country to Digitize "Free Negro Registers"	22

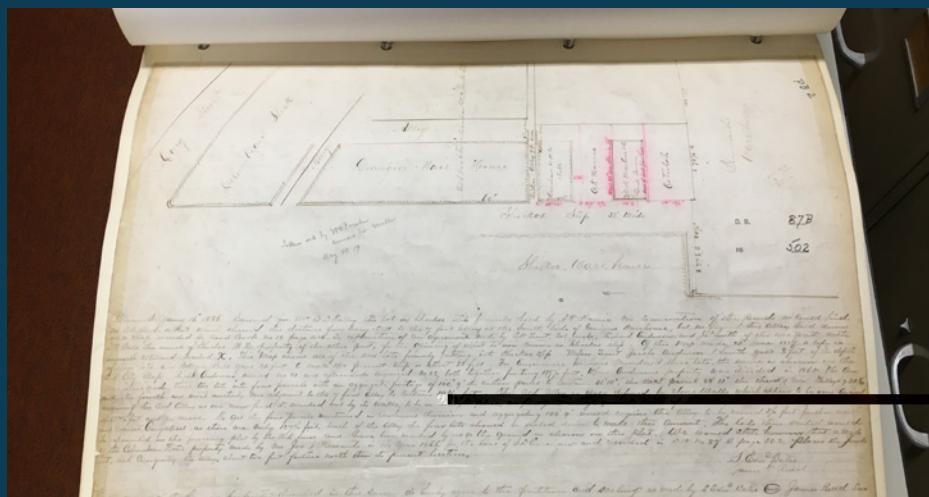
2022 CCRP Travel Highlights

Spring to fall of this year was another heavy travel season for the Library of Virginia's Circuit Court Records Preservation program consulting archivists. The schedule emphasized visits to circuit court clerks expected to apply for item conservation grants, with an aim to ensure that those localities had at least eight worthy

candidates, the maximum permitted in each grant application. The Library was also tasked with inventorying the number of cellulose acetate laminated items in circuit court clerks' offices across the commonwealth, which also influenced the travel schedule.

JANUARY

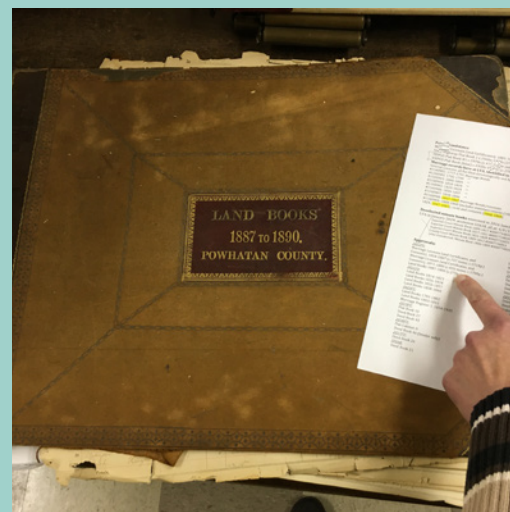
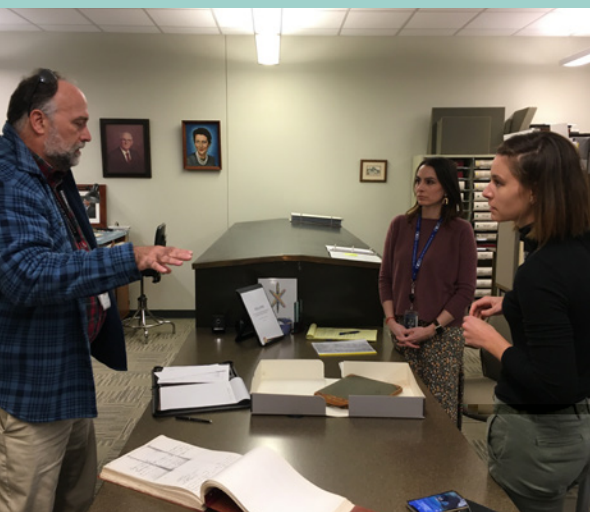
The first official visit of the year occurred on Jan. 26, 2022, when consulting archivist Tracy Harter walked down the street from the Library of Virginia to the office of City of Richmond Circuit Court clerk Ed Jewett to examine plat books as candidates for the upcoming grant cycle. The following month, consulting archivists traveled to Hanover, Powhatan, New Kent, Charlotte, Spotsylvania, Nottoway and King William Counties.



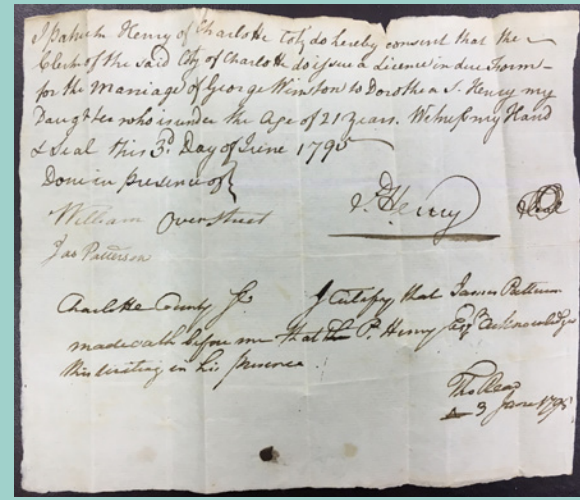
FEBRUARY

In early February, local records program manager (now State Archivist) Greg Crawford, "Virginia Untold" project manager Lydia Neuroth and CCRP consulting archivist Tracy Harter traveled to the City of Fredericksburg Circuit Court clerk's office to discuss and identify the various types of records used for documenting free and enslaved persons, and to examine items as potential

candidates for CCRP conservation grants. Later that month, senior local records archivist Vince Brooks and CCRP consulting archivist Eddie Woodward traveled to the Wythe County Courthouse to retrieve a batch of chancery records (1790s–1865) to be processed, digitized and made available on the Library of Virginia's Chancery Records Index.



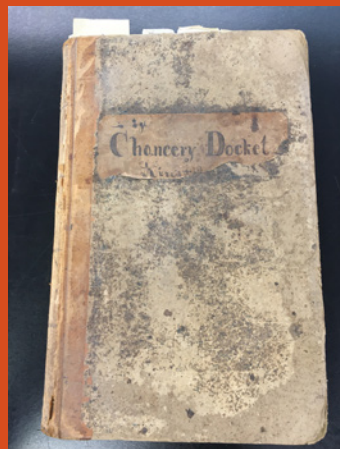
FEBRUARY (CONT.)



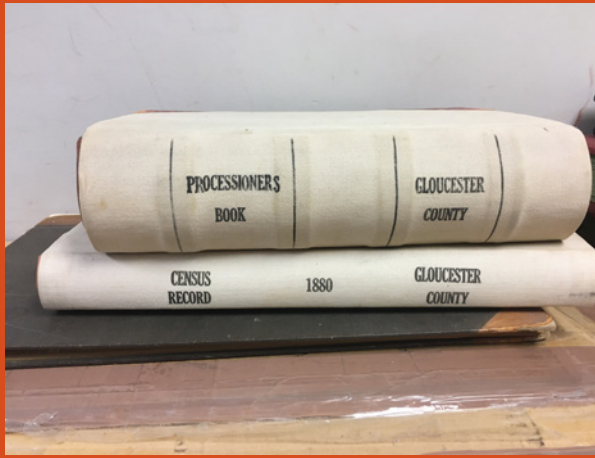
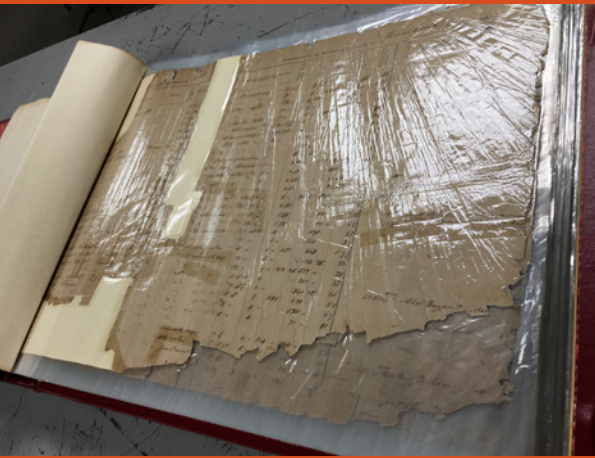
MARCH

In March, CCRP consulting archivists continued their travels, slowly spiraling away from their home base in Richmond. Beginning with the City of Hampton and King and Queen County on the first day of the month, they also visited Mathews, Prince George, Gloucester, Greene, Sussex and Dinwiddie Counties and City of Williamsburg-James City County before the end of March. While at the office of Dinwiddie County Circuit Court clerk Barrett Chappell, a Dinwiddie

County Register of Free Negroes, 1850–1864, was identified and, thanks to the clerk, was transferred to the Library of Virginia, where it was conserved and digitized so that it could be made available online as a part of the NHPRC grant-funded “Virginia Untold” project. After conservation, the original remained at the Library, with the clerk’s office to be supplied with a bound, color facsimile.



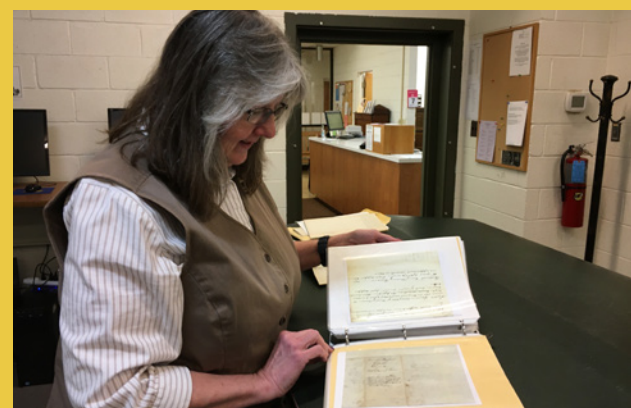
MARCH (CONT.)



APRIL

By April, the archivists really hit their stride, visiting clerks' offices in Stafford, Buckingham, Clarke, Shenandoah, Brunswick, Fluvanna, Madison, Greenville, Surry, Amherst and Cumberland Counties, as well as the Cities of Petersburg and Alexandria. At the Stafford County Circuit Court clerk's office, consulting archivist Tracy Harter made special note of Stafford County volume, Estate Accounts, 1785–1822, which had been returned to the Stafford County Courthouse after extensive worldwide travel in a custom-made woven suitcase with a man who never let it out of his possession. Later in the month, Greg Crawford and Eddie Woodward descended on the circuit court clerk's office of Gail Clayton in Surry County to examine items as potential candidates for conservation grants and to inventory the cellulose acetate laminated volumes in the collection. The clerk has

been an active participant in the CCRP grants program and has been working to reverse the laminated volumes. Currently, 28 laminated items remain, with the earliest treated in 1933 (in all likelihood with the Emery Silk Process) and the most recent treated in 1971. While conducting the inventory, Crawford identified a volume of Surry County Guardian Accounts, 1783-1804, that also contained a Register of Free Negroes, 1794-1803, which was not labeled on the spine. With the clerk's consent, the volume was transferred to the Library, where it underwent conservation and digitization so that it could be made available online as a part of the "Virginia Untold" project. In October, Library staff provided the clerk with a bound, color facsimile for use in the clerk's office.



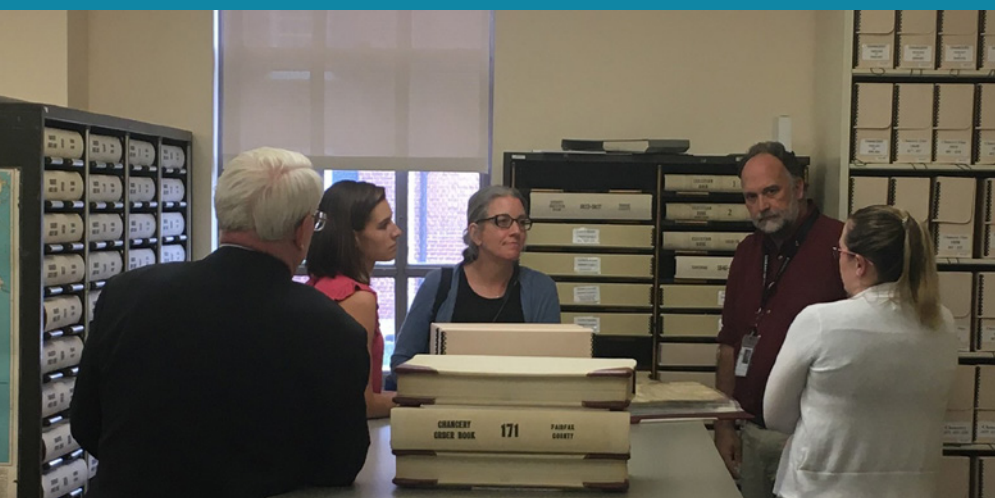
APRIL (CONT.)



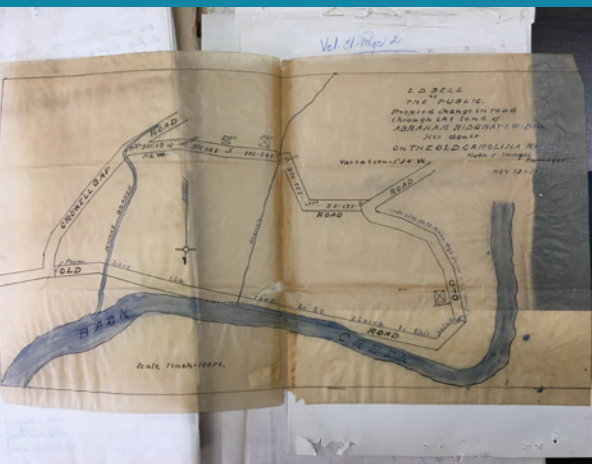
MAY

May brought more travel, much of it farther out and sometimes requiring overnight accommodations. These visits included Pulaski, Scott, Lee, Fairfax, Botetourt, Campbell, Bedford, Roanoke, Craig and Prince William Counties, and the Cities of Bristol and Lynchburg. A cadre of Library staff members accompanied Tracy Harter on her visit to the Fairfax County Circuit Court clerk's office. There, web presence manager Kathy Jordan, "Virginia Untold" project manager Lydia Neuroth and Greg Crawford brainstormed with circuit court clerk John Frey and Fairfax County Historic Records manager Heather Bollinger about the possibilities of integrating their Fairfax Court Slavery Index Project records into the Library of Virginia's "Virginia

Untold" database. A couple of weeks later, Crawford and Harter traveled to the office of Prince William County Circuit Court clerk Jaqueline Smith in Manassas, meeting with deputy clerk Michael Mallon to discuss the CCRP program. Prince William County had not participated in the grants program in quite some time, and while they were there, Crawford and Harter examined records as item conservation grant candidates and inventoried the cellulose acetate laminated items as well as some significantly damaged early records. Many Prince William County pre-Civil War records were lost, destroyed or stolen by Union troops in 1863, so existing pre-Civil War records are particularly significant.



MAY (CONT.)



JUNE

June's travel schedule put the CCRP archivists in the mountains of Virginia with visits to Bland, Carroll, Smyth, Tazewell, Bath and Alleghany Counties. For the past few years, Carroll County Circuit Court clerk Gerald Goad has been converting a lower-level space in the Carroll County Governmental Complex into a secure, climate-controlled archival storage area, and by the time of Eddie Woodward's visit in early June, the clerk had made much progress with his conversion. Aside from transferring the loose records from the Woodruff drawers to Hollinger boxes (and freeing up much-needed

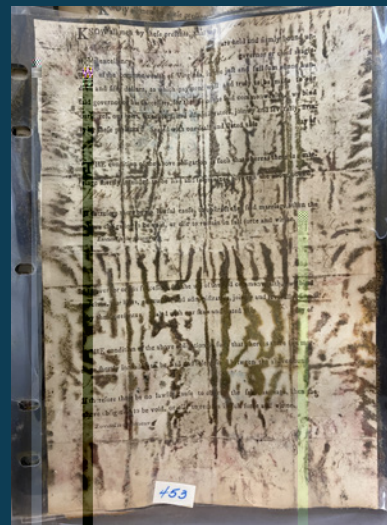
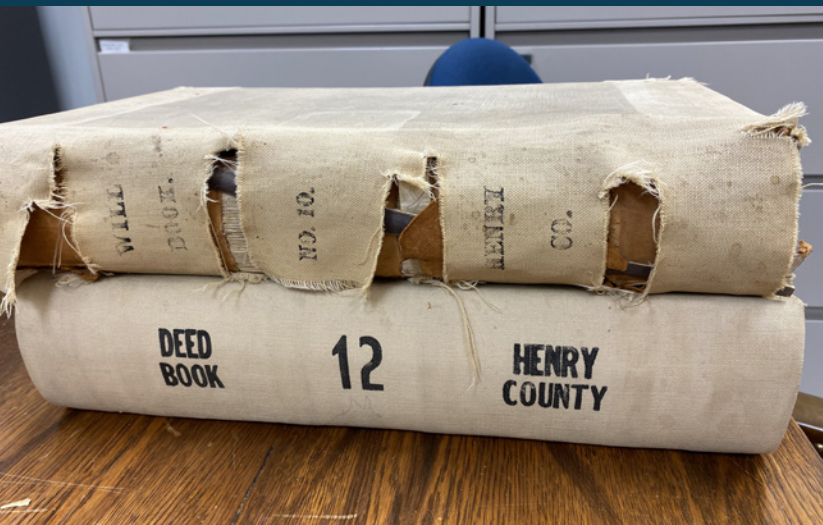
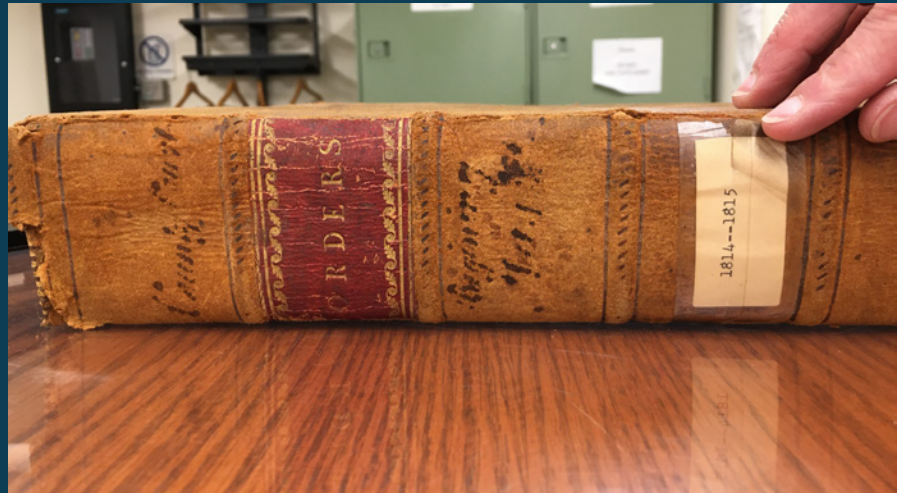
work space), the clerk and his dedicated volunteers had set up an imaging station to photograph records that one day will be made accessible online. A week later, Greg Crawford and Tracy Harter traveled to the office of Alleghany County Circuit Court clerk Debra Byer to examine potential item conservation grant candidates and to transfer 1822–1880 chancery causes for future processing and indexing in preparation for inclusion on the Chancery Records Index.



JULY

By July, the CCRP travel pace slowed, with stops in Chesterfield, Henry, Patrick and Nelson Counties and the City of Danville. August and September trips included Accomack, Northampton, Halifax, Isle of Wight, Northumberland and Albemarle Counties, the City of Williamsburg/James City County, and the Cities of Suffolk, Petersburg (again) and Chesapeake. The visit to the Patrick County Circuit Court clerk's office brought the discovery of a severe mold outbreak on a number of marriage licenses (from a water leak in the upstairs jail many years ago). Fortunately, an on-the-spot emergency solution was worked out between the clerk, the CCRP staff and Brian Spearman

from Kofile Technologies and the disaster was quickly remedied. These August and September visits also revealed localities with some of the largest numbers of cellulose acetate laminated items for the inventory, with Accomack County having 79, Northampton County 51, Halifax 58, Isle of Wight 29, Northumberland 62 and the City of Chesapeake with 80 cellulose acetate laminated volumes remaining. These numbers are astounding considering that most of these clerks have been using CCRP item conservation grants to conserve cellulose acetate volumes for quite some time, whittling the numbers down to the current amount.



AUGUST



SEPTEMBER



OCTOBER

After the CCRP grants were announced and the deadline approached, visits exclusively to identify items for conservation tapered off, while trips to inventory cellulose acetate lamination continued. Inventories were the main thrust of the visits to Hanover, Fauquier, Mecklenburg and Culpeper Counties, and the York County/City of Poquoson Circuit Court clerks' offices. During an October visit to the Culpeper County Circuit Court clerk's office, Tracy Harter met with the clerk, Carson Beard, and former clerk Janice Corbin to examine miscellaneous records found in the bell tower, which included 19th-century treasurers' reports, clerks'

papers, Board of Supervisors records, law dockets and land records.

Throughout the year, Tracy Harter and Eddie Woodward made other visits to clerks' offices, usually involving records transfers, which included trips to Surry and York Counties and City of Williamsburg/James City County. All totaled, CCRP archivists made 88 site visits to circuit court clerks' offices, examining approximately 1,800 items and writing up 630 condition reports. Inventory information is provided in a different article in this issue.

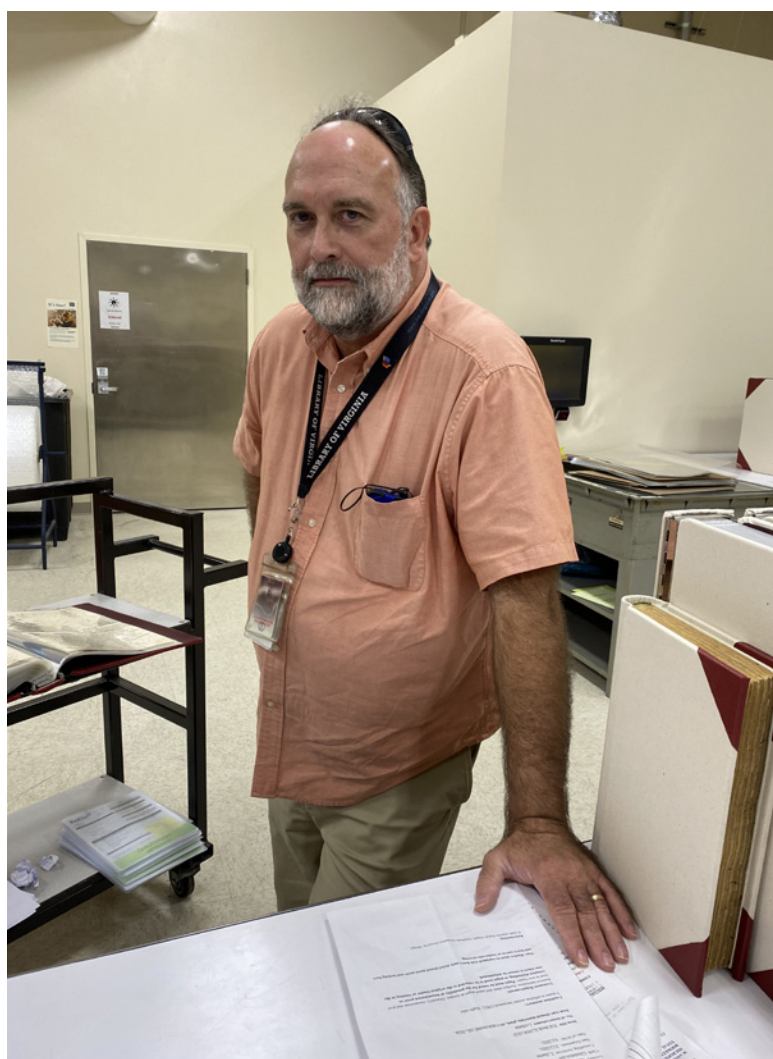




Greg Crawford Named Director of Government Records Services and State Archivist for the Library of Virginia

Effective November 25, 2022, Greg Crawford became the new director of Government Records Services and State Archivist for the Library of Virginia. Crawford has worked in the Local Records unit since joining the Library in 1999. Since 2008 he has served as Local Records program manager, responsible for overseeing the processing, conserving, cataloging and digitizing of hundreds of thousands of historically valuable circuit court records. In 2015, he took over the management of the Circuit Court Records Preservation Program, working closely with the Virginia Circuit Court Clerks Association to advise its members on the preservation of their records and also administering the CCRP grants funding program. Additionally, Crawford provides oversight to “Virginia Untold,” a signature project that makes documents and stories of free and enslaved people in Virginia’s past widely accessible online. He is knowledgeable and passionate about the Library’s archival collections and committed to advancing them and the agency’s mission and vision in the years ahead. ■

Right: Greg Crawford inspects items sent for conservation at the Kofile Technologies facility in Greensboro, North Carolina, on Nov. 9, 2022, the day that his promotion as the new director of Government Records Services and State Archivist for the Library of Virginia was announced.



CCRP Archivists Visit Etherington Conservation Services

Every couple of months CCRP archivists travel to the Kofile Technologies facility in Greensboro, North Carolina, to inspect items that were sent to their lab for conservation through CCRP item conservation grants. Prior to 2016, CCRP representatives had little or no input in the selection of items to be sent out for conservation, and the materials selected were not inspected before they were returned to the locality's circuit court clerks offices. As a result, today we occasionally find items that were improperly "conserved" through the CCRP grants program and then returned to the office. Unfortunately, we also fear that some items that did not warrant conservation were sent out for treatment.

On November 9, 2022, CCRP consulting archivist Eddie Woodward and local records program manager (now State Archivist) Greg Crawford traveled to the Kofile lab to inspect a batch of items before they were returned to their localities. The following morning, before returning to Richmond, they stopped at the new Etherington Conservation Services/HF Group facility, also in Greensboro. The Library of Virginia routinely sends items to ECS for conservation, and Woodward and Crawford used this opportunity to pick up conserved materials ready for return to the Library and to get a tour of their new lab. HF Group previously had a government records division, Record Save, and the organization is now in the process of developing a Government Records Preservation unit. On the visit, they were given a tour by ECS senior book conservator Matt Johnson and HF Group vice president Eric Fairfield. ■



The BC 100 high resolution scanner in operation.



Greg Crawford and Matt Johnson in front of the bench work stations in the ECS lab.



Above: Digital coordinator Holly Tillman displays a Government Records Preservation pilot project. Below: Matt Johnson and Greg Crawford examine a conserved 18th-century Prince William County volume with original vellum binding.



Library Conducts Cellulose Acetate Lamination Inventory of Virginia's Circuit Court Records

In January 2022, the Library of Virginia's CCRP archivists received notice that budget language was introduced in the Virginia General Assembly instructing the Library to "partner with the Offices of the Clerks of the Circuit Court to identify the challenges in restoring the many volumes of historical records treated with cellulose acetate lamination between the 1930s and the 1980s that are housed within the Circuit Court Clerks' offices across the Commonwealth." In fulfillment of this mandate, the Library's CCRP archivists conducted an inventory of the cellulose acetate laminated materials in clerks' offices and in early December provided a report to the governor and the General Assembly with an estimated cost for the conservation of those items.

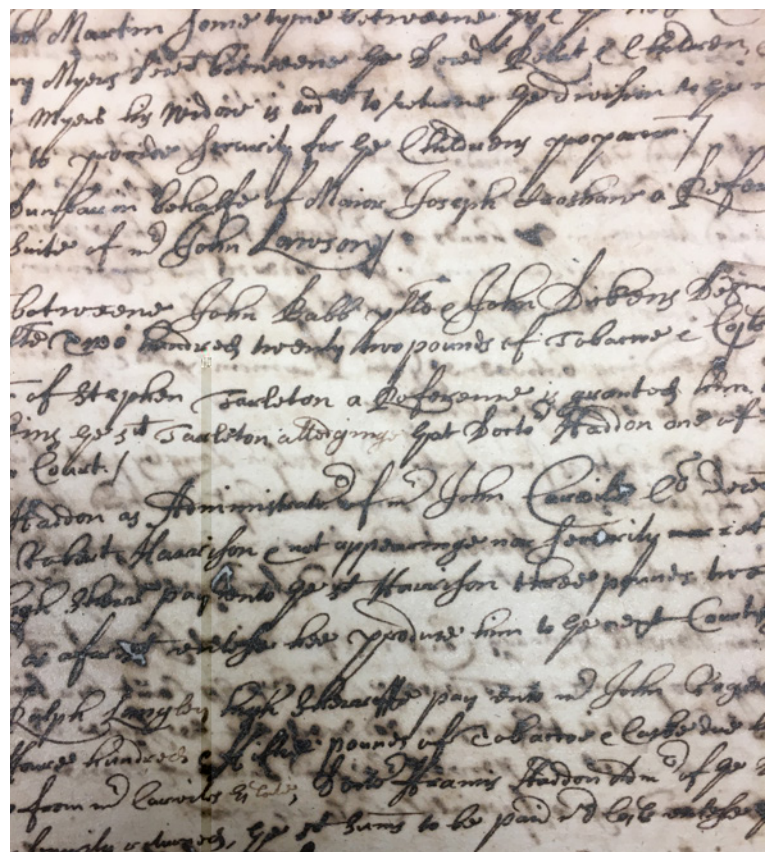
The CCRP archivists developed a strategy to meet the challenges of this task. Thanks to the CCRP item conservation grants provided to clerks' offices over the last 30 years, many laminated records had already been treated (or delaminated), which reduced the number of items, and therefore travel, significantly. Because of their familiarity with the clerks' offices, the archivists were generally aware of which circuit court clerks' offices contained laminated records and which did not. Additionally, inventories of some clerks' offices had been conducted in years past by the Library's CCRP and Local Records Services staff. As CCRP consulting archivists approached their travel season, the plan was to combine the new inventory work with routine visits where possible.

The majority of the commonwealth's laminated records can be found in the Tidewater and central Virginia areas, because that was the location of the most famous advocate of cellulose acetate lamination, William J. Barrow. During his career as a document conservator, Barrow had conservation labs at the State Library (now the Library of Virginia) in Richmond and at the Mariner's Museum in Newport News, so it was natural that the records most affected by this conservation technique would be in the closest proximity to his labs. Unfortunately, these eastern localities also house the oldest records and, therefore, the largest numbers of historical court records in the state.

Documents conserved using the cellulose acetate lamination process deteriorate at various rates depending on a number of factors. Cellulose acetate lamination was a popular form of document conservation from the mid-1930s until around 1990. One might imagine that the records laminated in the 1930s or 1940s would be in the worst condition and, therefore, should be the first in line for conservation, but that is not always the case. Older conserved records, stored in environmentally sound, climate-controlled conditions might not be in as poor shape as records conserved more recently, but stored improperly. However, because of the various techniques used along the way by conservators, the chances are good that the older



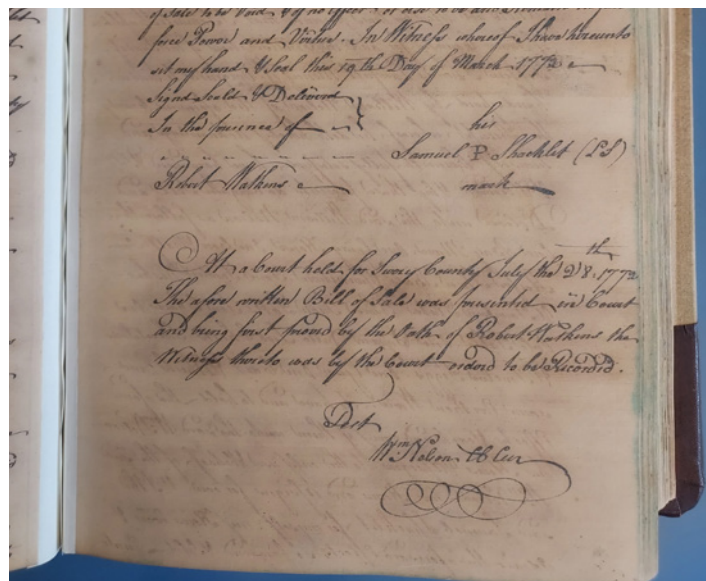
Shown is the Barrow Shop stamp on the last page of Mecklenburg County Deed Book No. 15, 1811-1815. Although the Barrow lab was cellulose acetate laminating records from the 1930s until around 1990, the Barrow Shop stamp only appears in the 1980s.



This page from York County Deeds Orders Wills Etc. No. 4, 1665-1672, was silked by the Barrow Shop in 1936 and shows evidence of lacing (where pieces of iron gall ink have fallen out) and burn through, where the ink is bleeding through to the other side of the page.

ones would be in the most distress. In anticipation of this undertaking, CCRP consulting archivists created a condition report specifically for inventorying the cellulose acetate laminated records and addressing the most prominent conditional issues associated with degradation caused by the process. The condition report provides a brief description of the record's condition, including the color of the paper (the darker, the more deteriorated), the condition of the laminated paper (bubbling, warping, curling, splitting, breaking), iron gall ink loss (leaving voids in the paper) and odor (vinegar odor signals deterioration). Factors such as heavy losses in the paper and old water damage were also noted, as they greatly affect the success rate for removing the lamination. The date of the lamination treatment and the page count were also noted. Because of the various techniques used, older usually indicates worse condition, especially if the lamination occurred sometime between the mid-1930s and the early 1940s before the conservators were deacidifying the paper prior to lamination. The year of the lamination treatment can usually be determined from a dedication at the front in older record books and from the Barrow Shop date stamp on the last page in newer volumes. If no date is available, it can be roughly deduced by the binding (sewn if older, post bound if newer) or the color of the end sheets (brown/beige in the 1950s/1960s and yellow in the 1970s/1980s). The page count is worth noting because it can help estimate the cost of conservation.

CCRP archivists visited 88 circuit court clerks' offices, in most cases to examine items as potential candidates for CCRP conservation grants. In some instances, these visits included examination of the cellulose acetate lamination inventories, and in a few selected localities, the sole purpose of the trip was for the inventory. In the end, 53 localities had a combined grand total of 1,517 laminated items, while 63 localities had none. True to Barrow's regional influence, the top five localities were on the Northern Neck, Eastern Shore and east coast of Virginia, with Richmond County having 142, Essex County 91, Virginia Beach (Princess Anne County) 81, City of Chesapeake (Norfolk County) 80, Accomack County 75 and Lancaster County 73. The totals, along with the following report, were submitted to the governor and General Assembly on December 1, 2022. ■



This page from Surry County Deed Book No. 10, 1769-1778, was cellulose acetate laminated in 1942 and shows the browning that typically occurs.



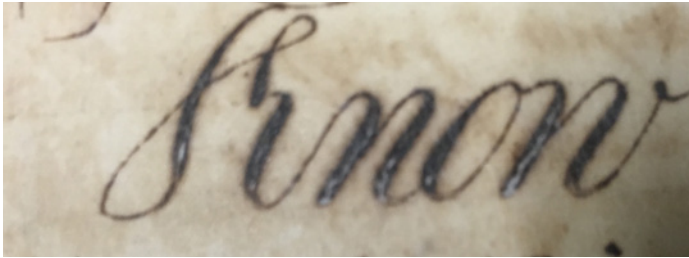
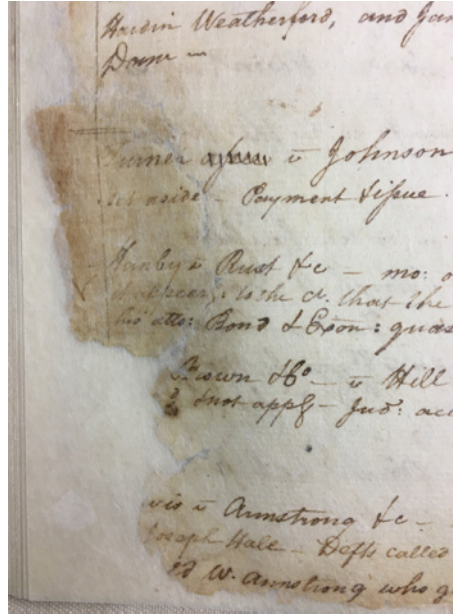
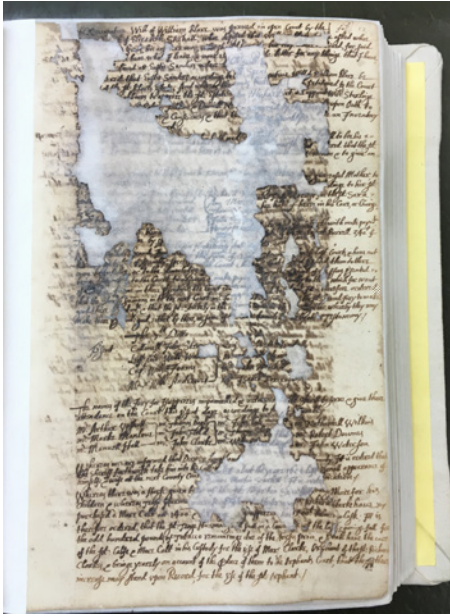
The cellulose acetate laminated pages in Halifax County Land Book, 1867-1872, have dried up and are beginning to break along the gutter.



The cellulose acetate laminated pages in Princess Anne County Minute Book No. 8, 1762-1769, have dried up and the paper has become stiff and crispy to the touch.



Sussex County Guardians Accounts, 1754-1789, was cellulose acetate laminated in 1939 and the pages are chipping and breaking, stiff, splitting and warping, with heavy burn through.



Above, left to right: Northampton County Order Book No. 10, 1664-1674, was cellulose acetate laminated in 1987 and has heavy losses that will make removing the lamination more challenging. Franklin County District Court Minute Book, 1801-1807, was cellulose acetate laminated in 1987 and has water-damaged pages that will make removing the lamination more challenging. The pages from York County's York County Records No. 4, Deeds, 1729-1740, are contracting and curling. Directly left: Princess Anne County Marriage Bonds, 1799-1802, shows evidence of lacing (where pieces of iron gall ink have fallen out).



Because it has so many critical cellulose acetate lamination related issues working against it, Virginia Beach's Princess Anne County Minute Book No. 8, 1762-1769, might be the poster child for everything that can go wrong with a laminated volume. Conserved in 1938, the book was bound with beautiful wood boards. Unfortunately, wood emits harmful gasses that can hasten the deterioration of the paper, and when used as boards for books, such as with this volume, it is especially dangerous because it concentrates the gases from the wood directly onto the paper. This, combined with the laminate itself, which hermetically seals in the naturally occurring acids in the paper, quickens the deterioration even more, so that by this point, the pages are browning, almost crispy to the touch, and have taken on an almost translucent affect with ink bleeding through to the other side of the pages. As the moisture in the laminate evaporates, the pages begin to contract and shrivel, causing them to stiffen, curl and become inflexible. Over time, the pages begin to break at the gutter, separating from the binding (and the book). The archival storage area (or vault) on the land records side of the City of Virginia Beach Circuit Court clerk's office in the Virginia Beach Municipal Center complex in Virginia Beach, Virginia, is the home of around 80 cellulose acetate laminated volumes.

Report on the Historical Records Treated with Cellulose Acetate Lamination between the 1930s and the 1990s that are housed within the Circuit Court Clerks' Offices across the Commonwealth and at the Library of Virginia

Cellulose acetate lamination was a common treatment and considered a safe and advisable measure for document conservation between the 1930s and the 1990s. The earliest records of the commonwealth stored in Virginia's circuit court clerks' offices and at the Library of Virginia were identified to undergo this process. In time, however, archivists and conservators began to notice and acknowledge its destructive effects and finally put an end to the practice. By then, however, the damage was done.

The most prevalent forms of cellulose acetate lamination deterioration are present visually in the laminate film attached to the pages. These include tearing, bubbling, discoloration, clouding, and warping. A vinegar odor also often indicates that the laminate film is degrading. These perceptible effects over time often translate into damages to the records that are not as perceptible to the naked eye. These include permanent damage to the cellulose fiber of the paper, causing darkening and embrittlement, and possible permanent adhesion of the laminate to the paper, resulting in the laminate becoming impossible to remove.

The Library of Virginia is responsible for administering the Circuit Court Records Preservation (CCRP) program to assist circuit courts with preserving their historical records through consultation and annual grants. To carry out this mandate, Library of Virginia staff regularly visit circuit court clerks' offices to identify and examine historical court records in need of conservation. A primary component of the examination process has been to identify cellulose acetate volumes should they be found in a clerk's office. Also, the Library of Virginia staff identified cellulose acetate volumes housed at the Library of Virginia that circuit courts transferred for preservation.

Currently, Library of Virginia staff have examined records of 112 of the 120 Virginia circuit courts housed at the circuit court and the Library of Virginia. A total of 1502 cellulose acetate volumes were identified in 53 of the 113 localities examined. 57% of the total cellulose acetate volumes are housed in 11 localities. Nearly 10% of the total were identified in one locality - Richmond County. Cellulose acetate volumes are most prevalent in the circuit court offices located in the eastern part of the commonwealth. This is not surprising given the oldest records in Virginia are located in this part of the commonwealth. See **Appendix A** for a list of localities and number of cellulose acetate volumes identified.

The cost to repair and preserve a cellulose acetate volume is dependent upon the total number of pages and the extent of deterioration. Also, the conservation process required to remove the cellulose acetate has an impact on the cost. The removal of cellulose acetate is meticulous and time consuming, taking anywhere between three months to a year to remove cellulose acetate from one volume. The process inherently requires the services of experienced and highly skilled conservators. Conservation vendors have few staff members capable of performing such work. Taking all this into consideration, the estimated cost to conserve 1500 volumes is currently \$15,000,000-\$20,000,000 and would potentially take ten to fifteen years to complete.

The Library of Virginia and the circuit court clerks make the following recommendations:

1. Once a year, the Library of Virginia offers preservation grants through the CCRP program. The Library of Virginia will continue to encourage clerks to include cellulose acetate volumes in their grant submissions. During the most recent grant cycle (FY 2022), CCRP preservation grants funded conservation of 158 cellulose acetate volumes. Should the preservation grants be able to fund a similar amount of volumes each year, the cellulose acetate issue could be adequately addressed in ten to fifteen years. The ability to fund this amount of volumes will be dependent upon incoming revenue that funds the CCRP grants program and the capability of conservation vendors to conserve such a high volume of records.
2. Encourage circuit court clerks to pursue private funding to conserve cellulose acetate volumes. Organizations such as the Daughters of the American Revolution fund local conservation projects. Their members regularly contact circuit court clerks' offices offering to fund conservation of early Virginia records. Circuit court clerks can prioritize cellulose acetate volumes for such funding.

If not addressed now, records that managed to survive three centuries of wars, courthouse fires, and natural disasters, will not survive another three centuries. Through public and private funding, the conservation of cellulose acetate records can be accomplished in an

acceptable time frame. The Library of Virginia will inform the Governor and General Assembly on the progress of this project each year in our annual CCRP report to the Secretary of Education.

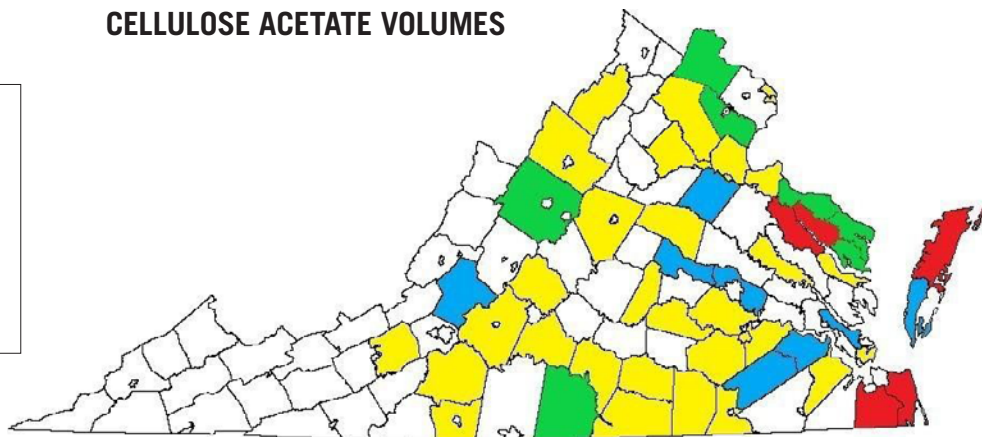
APPENDIX A

Name of locality	Total no. of cellulose acetate vols.
Accomack County	75
Albemarle County	4
Alexandria	6
Amelia County	15
Amherst County	3
Arlington County	6
Augusta County	71
Bedford County	3
Botetourt County	30
Brunswick County	18
Campbell County	2
Caroline County	9
Charlotte County	2
Chesapeake/Norfolk County	80
Chesterfield County	4
Culpeper County	13
Cumberland County	12
Dinwiddie County	4
Essex County	91
Fauquier County	14
Franklin County	5
Fredericksburg	4
Goochland County	40
Greensville County	9
Halifax County	58
Hampton/Elizabeth City County	17
Henrico County	31

Name of locality	Total no. of cellulose acetate vols.
Henry County	12
Isle of Wight County	16
King George County	11
King William County	11
Lancaster County	73
Loudoun County	51
Louisa County	19
Lunenburg County	16
Mecklenburg County	8
Middlesex County	18
Montgomery County	22
Northampton County	48
Northumberland County	62
Petersburg	1
Prince George County	4
Prince William County	66
Richmond County	142
Rockingham County	1
Shenandoah County	6
Spotsylvania County	36
Stafford County	6
Surry County	29
Sussex County	30
Virginia Beach/Princess Anne County	81
Westmoreland County	58
York County	49

CELLULOSE ACETATE VOLUMES

Red > 75 volumes
Green 50-74 volumes
Blue 25-49 volumes
Yellow <25 volumes




The York County Circuit Court clerk's office has some of the oldest "conserved" records in the Commonwealth of Virginia. During the recent CCRP inventory of cellulose acetate laminated records at the York County Courthouse, the 448-page York County Records No. 2, Wills and Deeds, 1645–1649, which was conserved using the Emery Silk Process in 1923, was identified as the earliest conserved volume remaining in the collection. It holds this distinction for unfortunate reasons. The addition of a thin, almost transparent layer of silk to both sides of the document was thought to strengthen and protect it. The process, essentially glued silk sheets covering the pages, will have to be removed. The application of silk, or "silking," became a standard form of document conservation from the 1890s until it was replaced by the less expensive cellulose acetate lamination in the mid-1930s.

There is evidence, however, that preservation strategies were in place prior to that. Correspondence from 1911 in the Library of Virginia's Locality Receipt Files indicates that all of pre-18th-century York County records had been copied (or transcribed) and deposited in the Virginia State Library. Having backup copies stored offsite at the State Library was one of the very earliest forms of preservation. Chapter 550 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 1892 appropriated funding for copying "all volumes of the county records of all counties in the state

dating prior to seventeen hundred." The work, at least for York County, had been performed under the supervision of "Dr. Lyon G. Tyler, of William and Mary College."

Rebinding was also one of the earliest forms of conservation. In 1931, after York County Record Books No. 3, 1657–1665, and York County Record Books No. 4, 1665–1672, were sent to the State Library to be "photostatted," the State Librarian, Dr. H. R. McIlwaine, contacted the York County Circuit Court clerk to inform him that when the two volumes had been rebound at some point in the past, they had been oversewn, leaving no margin for the books to be opened for photoGo ths N.3 (8t)11.49 (r)-30 (va)2 (g)1

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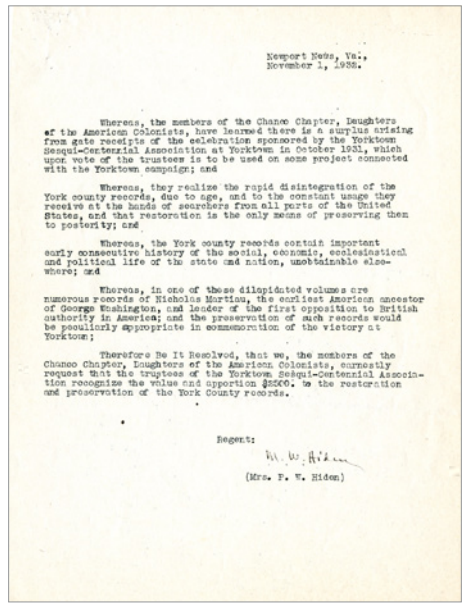
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Commercial Camera Company photostat advertisement in *Engineering News*, volume 69, number 25, June 19, 1913, page 6, from Wikipedia.

the State Library and one positive photostat for the locality from which obtained. The State Librarian was then "empowered, authorized, and directed" to certify that the copies were "true and correct copies of the contents of the books so photostatted from the originals." For some time after 1928, records in the Locality Receipt Files indicate that almost every volume transferred from the



November 1, 1932, Resolution from the Chanco Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution requesting that the Yorktown Sesquicentennial Association use \$2,500 of their surplus funds for the conservation of York County court records.

York County Courthouse to the State Librarian for conservation was also photostatted.

In the years before the Great Depression, however, York County court records were being conserved, primarily through the efforts of patriotic organizations such as the Daughters of the American Revolution. The 1923 dedication (in memory of George Preston Blow) for the aforementioned York County Records No. 2, Wills and Deeds, 1645–1649, indicates that the funding for the conservation work was provided by the Yorktown Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA). Records show that in 1926, that same organization was also responsible for conserving (silking) the 550-page York County Records No. 21, Wills and Inventories, 1760–1771, and the 352-page Deeds, Orders & Wills No. 9, 1691–1694. The dedication in the 635-page York County Records No. 4, Deeds, 1729–1740, acknowledges that it was conserved (silked) in 1924 by Major Henry Reed Hatfield, the first president of the Yorktown Historical Society. In 1928, the 546-page York County Records, Judgments and Orders No. 1, 1746–1752, was restored (silked) by the York County Board of Supervisors, and according to the dedication, the 356-page York County Records No. 1, Deeds and Bonds, 1694–1701, was "restored by donations in 1927."

In 1929, probably as a result of the Depression, conservation work slowed down. In 1930, only two volumes, the 554-page York County Records, Judgments and Orders No. 2, 1770–1772, and the 554-page York County Records, Judgments and Orders No. 3, 1772–1774, were conserved, one in memory of Mrs. George Preston Blow (by her daughter) and the other by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., "In token appreciation of help received from the records for the restoration work in Williamsburg."

In December 1932, the Yorktown Sesquicentennial Association donated \$2,500 of the "celebration surplus" funds for the restoration of York County court records. A letter from the State Librarian to the wife of the clerk, who happened to be the "Directress" of the Yorktown Branch of the APVA, celebrated the new conservation

Repair Work Will Be Done In Richmond

Local Contractor Given Job by Sesquicentennial Association Committee

9 Books Included

Historical Data of High Order to Be Preserved

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]
YORKTOWN, VA., Dec. 20.—W. J. Barrow of Richmond was found to be low bidder for eleven books when bids for their restoration were opened Monday at a meeting held at the clerk's office of the committee appointed by the Yorktown Sesquicentennial Association to attend to the restoration of the York County records.

The contract was awarded Mr. Barrow on the lump sum contract price of \$2,220.

"Deeds, Orders, Wills, Etc." Book No. 12 (1742-1749) was awarded the Emery Record Preserving Co. at a contract price of \$280.

Nine of the books of Mr. Barrow's contract will be done in the full silk process with best grade of Morocco acid-proof leather bindings, and two in the silk and tissue process with the same kind of bindings. The nine include: "Deeds, Orders and Wills," No. 3 (1657-1662); No. 4 (1663-1672); No. 5 (1672-1676); No. 7 (1684-1687); No. 8 (1687-1691).

"Orders and Wills," No. 14 (1709-1716).

"Judgements and Orders" (1752-1754).

"Judgements and Orders" (1758-1770).

"Deeds," Vol. 5 (1741-1754).

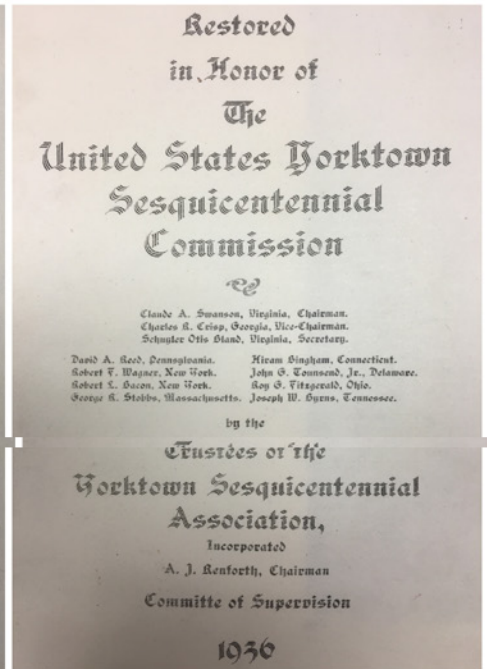
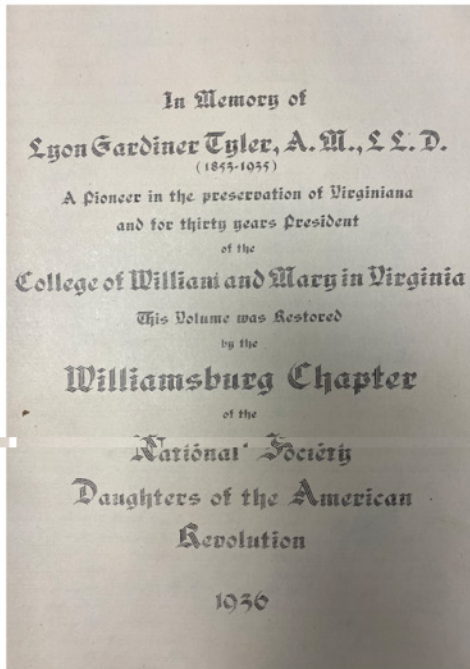
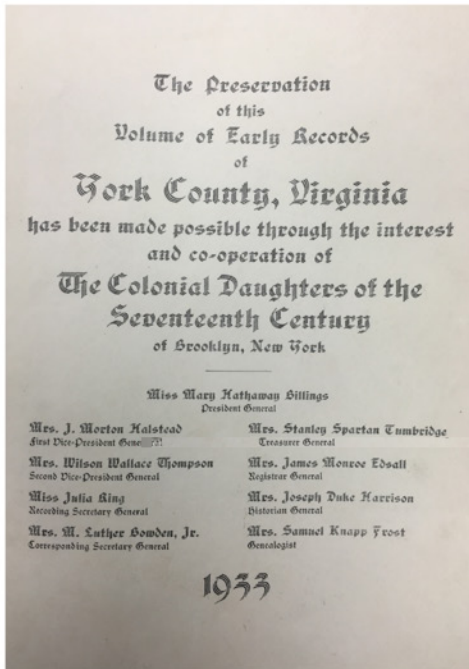
The two books for the silk and tissue process are: "Deeds and Bonds," Vol. 2 (1701-1713) and "Deeds, Orders, Wills," No. 10 (1694-1697).

Payments will be made on the basis of bid prices for each individual book, the committee reserving the right to require any book to be done over if it fails to meet contract specifications. It further reserved the right to cancel the incomplete part of the contract without claim for damages if the work is not meeting specifications.

Mrs. P. W. Hiden of Newport News was appointed a committee of one to confer with Dr. McIlwaine in regard to photostating the old records while in Richmond under repair by Mr. Barrow. Mrs. Hiden will transfer the books from the clerk's office to and from Richmond.

"Restored by the Yorktown Sesquicentennial Association" was the part of the inscription decided on at the meeting for the plate on the front cover of the books. The remainder of the inscription will be added later from suggestions offered by the committee.

December 21, 1932, article in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* announcing the award of the York County conservation contract to William J. Barrow.



funding source and inquired to ask who would be doing the conservation work. "I imagined that Mr. W. J. Barrow would certainly be employed to do this work since he can do it just as well as any one of this competitors and since he is a Virginian," McIlwaine wrote. "I have since learned, however, that the Committee of the Association appointed to manage this matter has had Mr. Hord of the Emery Record Preserving Company appear before it and make a bid." The State Librarian went on to tout the fact that Barrow's "charges are more moderate," that transportation would be shorter and safer (the Emery facility was in Massachusetts), and that the State Library could provide better-quality photostats if they were able to image the disbound pages.

McIlwaine must have been persuasive, because a Dec. 21, 1932, article in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* announced that Barrow had been awarded the contract to conserve nine volumes with the Emery Record Preserving Company conserving a single volume, the York County Records No. 12, Deeds, Orders, Wills, 1702-1706. (The fact that Barrow was the low bidder might have also helped.) By this time, the Emery Silk Process was falling out of favor with conservators and this is probably the last item in Virginia clerks' offices known to have been treated by that conservation lab. The Emery bindings were a distinctive brown (or beige) color, and the newspaper article states

that the terms of Barrow's contract were for the volumes to receive the "full silk process with the best grade of Morocco acid-proof leather bindings," probably to match the Emery volumes already in the courthouse.

Correspondence from 1942 between the York County clerk's office, the head archivist at the Virginia State Library, William Van Schreeven, and the superintendent of the Colonial National Historical Park, Elbert Cox, indicates that a sustained effort to microfilm the York County records began that year. The Locality Receipt Files also contain a detailed six-page inventory of "York County Court Records, 1633-1800," which includes information on the condition of each of the items. Many of the records from the 1940s are concerned with this form of records preservation.

Into the 1950s, the records were being microfilmed while they were also being conserved in Barrow's shop. The DAR, the Yorktown Branch of the APVA, the "Old Records Committee of York County" and similar organizations continued to fund the work. In 1953, Colonial Williamsburg's research director, Arthur Pierce Middleton, notified the State Archivist that the Executive Committee of the Board of Colonial Williamsburg had approved the cost of conserving five York County volumes in order to render them "capable of being legibly microfilmed." Because the pages

Above: The dedication pages for Deeds, Orders & Wills No. 1, 1633-1657, 1691-1694 (1933, Barrow), York County Records No. 4, Deeds, 1729-1740 (1936, Emery), and Deeds, Orders, Wills, Etc. No. 4, 1665-1672 (1936, Barrow).

Below: Evidence of lacing in York County Deed Book No. 7, 1790-1809.



were heavily covered in silk from previous conservation, the volumes needed to be "re-restored," removing the silk ("desilking") and then cellulose acetate laminating them before they could be microfilmed.

It would not be the last time Barrow applied his conservation handiwork to York County's historical court records. The most recent cellulose acetate lamination (and silking) inventory counted 50 volumes. Barrow's work was far from finished. ■

Building the Local Government: Drawings from the Buildings and Grounds Collection

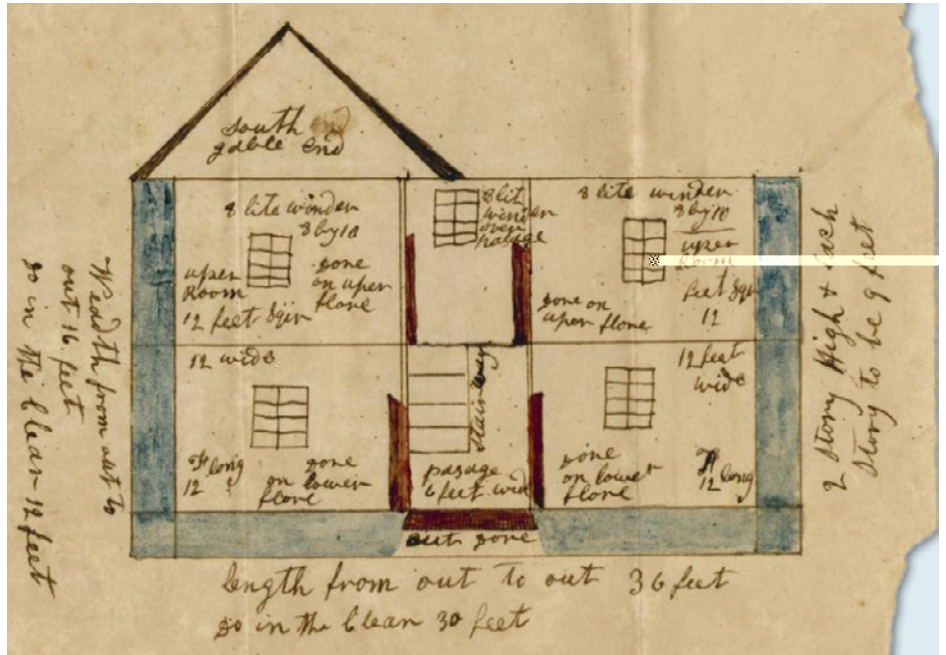
The Library of Virginia's Buildings and Grounds Collection consists of selected images from the Public Buildings and Grounds series of the Local Government Records Collection. These items

include reports and financial, contractual and architectural documents related to the design, construction, condition and alteration of government buildings such as courthouses, jails, clerks' offices and other

public structures. Shown are examples of drawings of two proposed structures from the 19th century.

PROPOSED WESTMORELAND COUNTY JAIL

This drawing of the proposed Westmoreland County Jail, 1825–1826, is part of a larger series of public building materials. The sketch describes a two-story structure with a central staircase and gabled roof. The hand-colored drawing shows thick walls, presumably masonry, and describes the dimensions of each room and the overall structure. Westmoreland County (Va.) Public Buildings and Grounds, 1855–1866 and undated. Proposed jail, 1825. Barcode number 1176632 Local Government Records Collection, Library of Virginia.

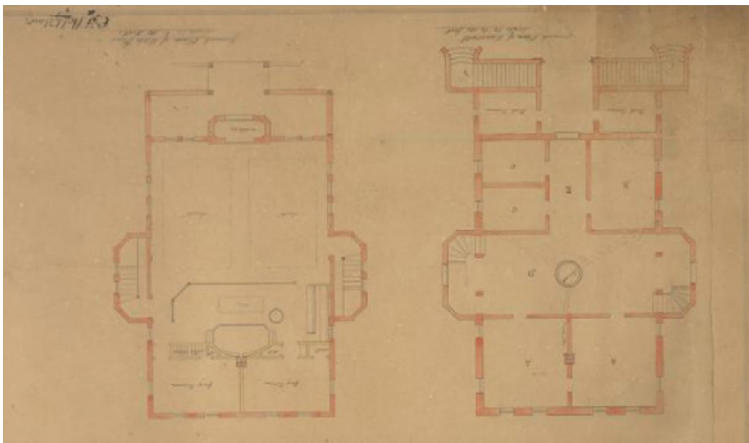


PROPOSED ACCOMACK COUNTY COURTHOUSE

These drawings, dated 1884, for a proposed Accomack County Courthouse depict front and side elevations and two floor plans for a Second Empire–style courthouse building designed by Charles Taylor Holtzclaw.

The colored drawings are on heavy paper. Accomack County (Va.) Public Buildings and Grounds, Proposed Courthouse, 1884. Barcode number 1160748. Local Government Records Collection, Library of Virginia.

This documentary evidence offers insight into what was literally the structure of government for most Virginians in the 18th and 19th centuries: the local court.



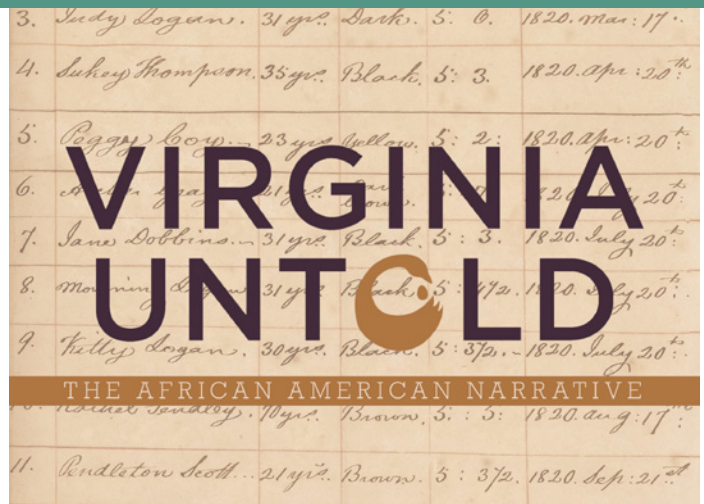
The Library Partners with Brunswick County to Digitize “Free Negro Registers”

The digitization of Brunswick County’s “Free Negro Registers” is the latest effort made possible by a National Historical Publications and Records Commission grant to support the Library’s Virginia Untold project. This past spring the Library learned about a joint effort by the Smith Center at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and the James Solomon Russell-St. Paul’s College Museum and Archives in Brunswick County to photograph and digitally preserve two registers of free Black people in Brunswick County documenting the years 1803–1820 and 1820–1850. The Library worked with Brunswick County Circuit Court clerk Jacqueline S. Morgan to collect the images scanned by NMAAHC. We also located a third and “missing” register hiding within the front pages of Order Book 39. We now have a complete set of free registers from Brunswick County! The Library created facsimiles of each register volume to share with Morgan for use in the circuit court records room. These images are currently available for indexing on our crowd-sourced transcription platform, From the Page (<https://fromthepage.com/.../virginia.../brunswick-1803-1820>). Please join our efforts to get these volumes fully indexed and more widely accessible to those researching this important history. ■



Above: Virginia Untold project manager Lydia Neuroth hands off the completed facsimile of “Free Negro Register,” 1803–1820, volume one, to Circuit Court clerk Jacqueline S. Morgan for use in her records room. This will limit the amount of wear and tear on the original registers.

Right: Library staff found a third and “missing” register hiding within the front pages of Order Book 39. We digitized this register as well to complete the three-volume set. After completing registrations through 1850, the clerk started a third book to continue recording registrations of free Black men and women. Just 15 years later, the end of the Civil War marked the end of many of these de jure mandates such as recording free Black individuals. The clerk used the remaining pages of the book to record court notes, which someone subsequently labeled “Order Book 39.” The first 35 pages of entries documenting free Black individuals were overlooked and not included in the title of the record.



Virginia Untold is a digital project that provides access to the Library’s records related to enslaved and free Black and multiracial people in pre-1867 Virginia.

