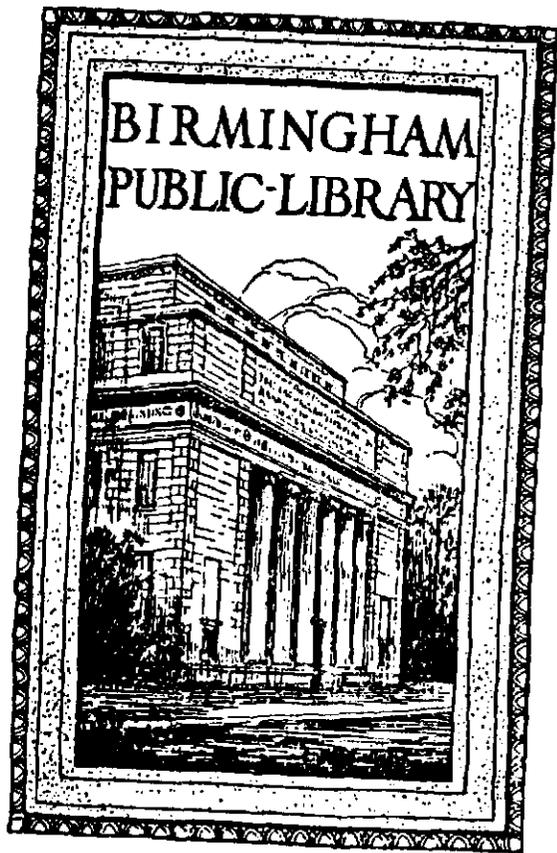


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Abstracts of the  
 ORPHANS COURT  
 PROCEEDINGS  
 1778-1800

HARFORD COUNTY,  
 MARYLAND

Henry C. Peden, Jr., M.A.  
 III

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FAMILY LINE PUBLICATIONS  
Rear 63 East Main Street  
Westminster, Maryland 21157

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Published in 1990

## INTRODUCTION

The information contained in this book was abstracted from the original book found in the Register of Wills Office in Bel Air, Harford County, Maryland, entitled "Orphans Court Docket, 1778-1797." The title is a bit misleading as it contains the actual records of the court proceedings from February, 1778 to January, 1800.

These old dockets and proceedings of the Orphans Court contain genealogical information that may not be found anywhere else in the courthouse. Many entries pertain to the apprenticeship of children (referred to as orphans even though one of their parents may be still alive) who were "bound out" to someone to learn a trade or craft for a designated period of time, or until reaching a certain age (21 for boys and 16 for girls). Oftimes, both their age and birth date are given, as well as a parent's name. Many are listed in the settling of the estate, oftimes naming their parents, siblings, and other relatives. In some cases respectable citizens were appointed by the court to act in settling matters in dispute, and in many instances the real property of the deceased (land, houses, improvements) is fully described in the record. Most disputes pertain to the complaints filed against family members and interested parties for not settling and distributing the estate in a timely manner.

Comparable information for the period prior to 1777 can be found records of the Prerogative Court of Maryland found at the Maryland State Archives in Annapolis. Following the Orphans Court Docket Book which ends circa 1800, are the General Entries Books held by the Register of Wills Office in Bel Air which contain similar information beginning in 1800.

Henry C. Peden, Jr.

*McComas*

*Whitaker*

SAMUEL GRAFTON to answer complaint about his guardianship of WILLIAM McGOVERN, orphan. Did not appear.

PHILIP COALE to answer complaint of JAMES GILES (no return).

THOMAS GILES to answer complaint of JAMES GILES (no return).

STEPHEN HILL and JAMES RIGDON to answer complaint of MARTHA SMITH. Appeared (nothing recorded).

JAMES RILEY to answer complaint of ROBERT FORSTER. Appeared.

Ordered by the Court to settle Estate of BARNEY RILEY.

SAMUEL WEBSTER, RICHARD WEBSTER & MICHAEL WEBSTER to answer complaint of JAMES RENSHAW. Appeared (nothing recorded)

WILLIAM HITCHCOCK to answer complaint about his guardianship of SAMSON EGAN, MARY EGAN, CLEMENTINE EGAN, and SARAH EGAN. Appeared and case dismissed due to his complying.

WILLIAM JOHNSON to answer complaint of FRANCES GORDON. Appeared (nothing recorded).

Court ordered JAMES RILEY, acting executor of BARNEY RILEY, to settle up fully & pass a final account by Oct. 23rd.

EDWARD CAIN, a maimed soldier of the 4th Maryland Regiment, of Colonel Hall, granted 11 pounds, 5 shillings.

VALLENTINE SMITH, a maimed soldier of Col. Nichola's Corps of Invalids, granted 15 pounds up to September 14th.

JOSIAS JOHNSON came into Court and chose DAVID CLARK as his guardian. Securities: THOMAS JOHNSON & BARNETT JOHNSON.

JAMES CREITON to answer complaint of ELIZABETH CREITON.

MARY VANCEAVE to answer complaint of MARTHA SMITH and show cause why JOHN VANCEAVE's estate had not been settled.

MARY FLANNAGAN to answer the complaint of DR. FRANCIS NEAL.

ALEXANDER RIGDON and ANN RIGDON, executrix of the goods and chattels of JOHN JOHNSON, deceased, to show cause why the estate of the deceased had not been fully settled. Both appeared. "Matters settled so far."

WILLIAM HOLLIS to show cause why the estate of WILLIAM HOLLIS, deceased, had not been fully settled, and to answer complaint of JESSE BUSSEY.

Court appointed WILLIAM BRADFORD & JOHN McCOMAS (of Daniel) to appraise the goods and chattels of..... WALTHOM paid into the hands of JOHN HUSTON, late of Harford County, dec'd., and now in the hands of ROBERT DUTTON, executor of the deceased's last will and testament.

FEBRUARY COURT, 1788

By rule of the Orphans Court in the April Term of 1787 in a case involving WILLIAM RICHARDSON, the administrator of SAMUEL CURRY, deceased (plaintiff) and BENNETT JARRETT (defendant), arbitrators JOHN TAYLOR and RICHARD BIDDLE considered the allegations and examined the witnesses and evidence, and have determined that BENNETT JARRETT shall pay unto WILLIAM RICHARDSON the sum of 5 pounds, 15 shillings, and the cost of this suit, and give up the co-partnership book of said CURRY & JARRETT to said Richardson and all accounts the said Jarrett may have in his possession relative to the partnership. Given under their hands this 7th day of February, 1788.

JAMES CREITON to answer the complaint of ELIZABETH CREITON.

SAMUEL WEBSTER (of Samuel), RICHARD WEBSTER, MICHAEL WEBSTER and JOHN BARNEY to testify on their knowledge of a matter pending between JAMES RENSHAW and the estate of SAMUEL WEBSTER, deceased. Appeared.

ELIZABETH CREIGH, JOHN LOVE, Esq., and ROBERT HARRIS, executors of ABRAHAM WHITAKER, deceased, to show cause why they had not fully settled the estate. Appeared.

WILLIAM HOLLIS, administrator of WILLIAM HOLLIS, deceased, to show cause why he had not fully settled the estate and also to answer the complaint of JESSE BUSSEY.

SAMUEL WEBB to answer the complaint of ROBERT HARRIS.

KENT MITCHELL to answer the complaint of MICAHAH MITCHELL.

SAMUEL SMITH (of Robert), MARY SMITH, and LILE SMITH to answer the complaint of WILLIAM SMITH (of Robert).

MARCH COURT, 1788

SAMUEL GRIFFITH to show cause why he had not fully settled the estate of GEORGE GARRETSON and to give an account of his guardianship to the orphans of said Garretson.

WILLIAM HOLLIS, administrator of WILLIAM HOLLIS, deceased, to show cause why he had not passed a final account on his administration and answer JESSE BUSSEY's complaint.

WILLIAM HOPKINS and ELIZABETH HUSBANDS to answer complaint of JOSHUA HUSBANDS.

JOSEPH DYER to answer complaint of HENRY RUFF. Summons issued for JAMES BENNETT to testify for the plaintiff.

SAMUEL SMITH, MARY SMITH (his wife) and LILE SMITH to answer complaint of WILLIAM SMITH (of Robert).

JAMES CREITON to answer the complaint of ELIZABETH CREITON.

MARY FLANNAGAN to answer the complaint of DR. FRANCIS NEAL.

GEORGE YOUNG to answer complaint of WILLIAM WILSON (of Wm.).

APRIL COURT, 1788

JACOB MAXWELL to answer the complaint of CORBIN COULTER.

JOSEPH DYER to answer complaint of HENRY RUFF. Summoned JAMES BENNETT to testify for the plaintiff.

ROBERT SCOTT and BENJAMIN FORD, Administrators De Bonis Non of the goods and chattels of JOHN DORNEY, deceased, to answer complaint of WILLIAM MORRIS, a representative.

SAMUEL CUMMINS and SARAH CUMMINS (COMMINS) to answer the complaint of REBECCA CALHOON, admx. of MARY HARE.

JUNE COURT, 1788

Justices: BENEDICT EDWARD HALL, JOHN LOVE, WILLIAM SMITHSON.

Court appointed JOHN McNABB and THOMAS JOHNSON, Esq., to audit and settle the estate of BENJAMIN WHEELER, late of Harford County. (Conditions placed by the Court on the audit indicated that BENJAMIN WHEELER left a widow)

Court appointed HENRY WILSON, DR. JOHN ARCHER and JOHN COX to audit the accounts of WILLIAM HUSBANDS and JOSEPH HUSBANDS who both were deceased. (Note entered into the record in 1791 indicated that the Court "reappointed JOHN LEE GIBSON and JOHN COX for the above purpose.")

SAMUEL LEE, administrator of GEDION VANCEAVE, to show cause why he had not fully settled the estate, and to answer the complaint of BARNARD PRESTON.

Court appointed THOMAS GIBSON, SAMUEL RAIN, and JAMES CLENDENNIN to audit the accounts of CAPT. ROBERT HARRIS and the Acting Executors of ABRAHAM WHITAKER, deceased, accounts against said Whitaker's estate.

GRIFFITH and GREENBERRY DORSEY to appraise said estate "as shall be the share or dividend of said orphan, the guardian to sell such part of the said estate as is perishable (negroes excepted) and the money put to use for the support of the orphan."

STATE agst. JARRARD HOPKINS. "Contempt, or will show cause why he married Ruth, a free woman, to a negro slave."  
HOLLIS HANSON, administrator of BENJAMIN HANSON agst. RACHEL GALLION, administratrix of JAMES GALLION. To show why she did not fully settle and make up Gallion's estate.  
JOHN BUCKLEY and wife, against THOMAS GILBERT. Said Gilbert to answer a certain complaint to be made known in Court respecting an apprenticed lad's learning.  
Citation issued for SEDGEWICK JAMES to answer the complaint of WILLIAM CANNON. (No return.)

#### NOVEMBER COURT, 1783

JOHN MASSEY chose ISAAC MASSEY as his guardian, with ISAAC WEBSTER and JOHN L. WEBSTER approved as securities.  
ELIZABETH AMOSS, administratrix of JOSHUA AMOSS, requested the Court to allow DANIEL TREDWAY as an assistant in settling the estate of JOSHUA AMOSS, deceased. Court allowed him and ROBERT HARRIS to act as assistants.  
Representatives of RICHARD JAMES against SEDGEWICK JAMES.  
CHARLES BAKER and wife, administrators of MAURICE BAKER, to show cause why they had not fully settled said estate.  
Securities: THOMAS SAUNDERS and JOSEPH SAUNDERS. Real estate yearly value to be estimated by JAMES McCONNOLL and WILLIAM BOND.

#### DECEMBER COURT, 1783

HOLLIS HANSON complains the Estate of JAMES GALLION, JR. was not settled and prayed for a trustee to be appointed; one was (no name). JOHN RUFF and GEORGE PATTERSON were appraisers. "Perishable articles of estate to be sold."  
Court ordered DANIEL TREDWAY and CAPT. ROBERT HARRIS to sell such parts of the estate of JOSHUA AMOSS, deceased, as necessary to pay the debts due by the said deceased.  
JOHN TREMAIN, aged 16 on March 15, 1784, bound until age 21 to WILLIAM PRIGG to learn to read, write and cipher as far as the rule of three.  
JAMES SHIELDS, son of JOHN SHIELDS, aged 4 on Oct. 1, 1783, bound until age 21 to RALPH PILES, JR. to learn to read and write and cipher as far as the rule of three.  
JOHN SHIELDS, son of JOHN SHIELDS, aged 2 in November, 1783, now a charge to the county, bound to MARY RHODES until age 21, and to be taught to read and write.  
SAMUEL WILSON requested the Court that he be appointed the guardian of his infant son, WILLIAM WILSON, to superintend any matter that may be in dispute in respect to certain land devised to him the said WILLIAM WILSON by the last will and testament of AQUILA PACA, JR., dec."  
CORBIN LEE chose his father JAMES LEE as his guardian "to superintend his business respecting the land devised to him by AQUILA PACA, JR.'s last will and testament."

#### FEBRUARY COURT, 1784

THOMAS JEFFERY against HUGH JEFFERY. To show cause why he had not administered the Estate of MARTHA JEFFERY.  
Citation issued to HUGH KIRKPATRICK to show cause why he had not administered the Estate of THOMAS NESBIT (NEASBIT).  
HUGH JEFFERY agst. ELIZABETH JEFFERY. (Nature not stated)  
Court bound a negro boy named BENNETT, aged 11 on Sept. 15, 1783, to JOHN FORWOOD until age 21 to learn to read and do plantation business, with usual freedoms at age 21.  
JOSEPH PRESBURY, orphan of WILLIAM, chose JAMES WETHERALL, sadler, as his guardian, with JAMES McCOMAS and JOSEPH PRESBURY, of JOSEPH, as securities. Court ordered the estate of the said JOSEPH PRESBURY (of William), now in the hands of SAMUEL GRIFFITH, Acting Administrator, to be delivered and paid to JAMES WETHERALL the guardian.  
CORBIN LEE chose JACOB FORWOOD as his guardian, with GABRIEL CHRISTIE and JOHN PATTERSON approved as securities.  
Court ordered JAMES McCOMAS and JOHN DURHAM to appraise the goods and household furniture of JOSHUA BROWNE for his brother JOHN THOMAS BROWNE according to father's will.  
WILLIAM STANDFORD, aged 12 on December 10, 1783, bound to LANCELOT CARLILE until age 21 to learn the carpenter's trade and read, write and cipher to the rule of three.

#### MARCH COURT, 1784

Justices: JOHN LOVE, THOMAS JOHNSON, WILLIAM SMITHSON, WILLIAM BOND and ABRAHAM WHITAKER.  
THOMAS JAMES and wife offered CAPT. CHARLES BAKER and ASEEL HITCHCOCK as securities for the Estate of SAMSON AGAN.  
Citation issued against EDWARD PARKER at request of BENNETT BUSSEY. (No return.)  
Citation issued against THOMAS JAMES at the request of JAMES BARTON to give security. Gave security, and discharged.  
Citation issued agst. GABRIEL CHRISTIE to show cause why he claimed sold property in a vessel which was in part the property of AQUILA PACA, deceased. Also summoned were GEORGE PATTERSON, EDWARD CARVIL TOLLEY and JOSIAS HALL to testify for the plaintiff. Christie did not appear and there was no return on those summoned in this case.  
LUKE HANSON, aged 16, bound until age 21 to JAMES WALKER to learn the tanner and currier's trade.  
SAMSON AGAN chose WILLIAM HITCHCOCK as his guardian, with ASEEL HITCHCOCK and CAPT. CHARLES BAKER as securities.  
Court appointed WILLIAM HITCHCOCK as guardian to MARY AGAN, CLEMENTINE AGAN, and SARAH AGAN, with ASEEL HITCHCOCK and CAPT. CHARLES BAKER approved as securities.  
Court appointed WILLIAM BRADFORD and RICHARD RUFF to appraise the estate remaining for distribution to the children of JONATHAN MASSEY, deceased, now in the hands of JONATHAN WOODLAND.

#### APRIL COURT, 1784

Citation issued to SEDGWICK JAMES, executor of RICHARD JAMES deceased, to show cause why he had not administered the estate fully. (James was given more time to comply.)  
Citation issued to JOSEPH JACOB WALLACE and THOMAS WALLACE, executors of GRACE WALLACE, to show why the estate of the deceased had not been fully settled.