

# Virginia Court Records

## for the Districts of West Augusta and Yohogania, Virginia

What we know today as southwestern Pennsylvania was originally part of the colony of Virginia. The county seat for the District of West Augusta was Staunton, Virginia.

In this same pre-Revolutionary War period, the colony of Virginia maintained the Established Church, as did the other colonies. In Virginia the Established Church was the Church of England. A tithe (or tax) was imposed on all free white males, and slaves, to maintain the colonial government services, including the ministrations of the Church of England in Virginia. All citizens, regardless of their own religious preferences, were required to pay the tithe/tax. Other religious denominations were considered to be dissenters. In effect, the Church of England was a social service arm of the colony, and similarly, lay officers of the church were assigned civil duties in the colony. Note that the Court, at first, recognizes the authority of the King of England.

The court records of the Districts of West Augusta and Yohogania are extant for the years 1775-1780 (Boyd Crumrine, Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1974). A selected few excerpts related to the church, and highlighted names, are submitted for your interest.

### **Court at Fort Dunmore (Pitt) February 22, 1775**

**David Steel** took the Usual Oaths to his Majesties Person and Govern, Sub the Ab Oath and test, which is Ord to be Cert on his Commission of Ensign of Pittsburgh and its Dependances.

Ord that **David Steel**, John Wals, **Oliver Miller** and Nathan Couch, they being first sworn, View a Road from Devor's ferry to the road that leads from Fort Dunmore to Dunfeilds, to join Dunfeild's road on Shirtee's (Chartier's) Creek near Ben Renoes, and to make a report of the the Conven and Inconven to the next Court.

Ord that..... **John Neville**..... George Rogers Clark (etc.) are humbly recommended to his Excellency, the governor, as proper persons to be added to the Commission of the Peace for this County.

### **Court Con'd and held for Augusta County, May 18th, 1775**

Devorix Smith being bound over to this Court of the Complt of Susanna Styger, for assaulting, Beating and Wounding her, appeared, and on hearing the parties and the Witnesses the Court are of Opinion that the Complt be dismissed with Costs.

The persons app'd to View a Road from Shirtees Creek to Devor's ferry .... that the Road be Established, and that **David Steel** and Jed Ashcroft be Overseers, and that the tith's (tithables, the taxable males) within 3 miles of Each side work thereon.

**At Court Con'd and held for Augusta County, May 20, 1775**

Ord that Thomas Silk be by the Church wardens of Augusta Parish bound to Jacob Bousman accr. to Law. (*Thomas Silk, an infant, was found wrapped in a blanket, held fast to the ground by a tomahawk. His parents presumably were killed by Indians.*)

**At Court Con'd and held for Augusta County at Fort Dunmore, Sepr. 20th, 1775**

On the motion of Sam's Sample, It is Ordered that his Serv't Woman, Betty McHolister, serve him 12 Mo; it App by Wits that she had a bastard, It is Ord that she Serve.

**David Steel** took the Usual Oaths to his Majesties Person and Government, Sub the Ab Oath and test, and then took the Oath of a deputy Sheriff.

**At a Court held for the Examinaiton of Mr. Devereux Smith, at His House, by His Petition to the Justices, this 21st November 1775, for the Murder of Capn Geo Aston.** Devereux Smith was Examined, denied the fact wherewith he stands Charged the Court are of Opinion that after hearing Smith by his Atto, that is is guilty of the s'd fact he is remanded to the Goal of this County and thence to be removed. Be it remembered that **John Neville** (*etc*) came before our Justices and Acknowledged themselves Indebted to ours'd Lord the King in the Sum of 100 pounds Each, to be Levied of Each of their respective Goods and Chattels, Lands and Tenements

**Court met Monday the 28th of April 1777, according to adjournment to Court.** **William Lea** and Andrew Heath came into Court and took the Oath of Captain of Militia.

**Court met May the 27th, 1777, according to adjournment.**

Ordered, that **Oliver Miller** Gentleman be appointed to take in the List of tithables within the following Bounds, Vizt. Beginning at the mouth of Peter's Creek thence up the Monaungahela River to the Beginning.

**Court Continued and held for Yohogania County July 27th, 1778**

Ordered that **Francis Reno** be recommended to his Excellency the Governor as a Proper Person to serve as Captain in the Militia in the Room of William Lea now in the Continental Service. (*Francis Reno would become the first resident clergyman at St.Lukes in 1791*)

Recognizance of **Christian Lesnett and wife**, Christin Lesnett Jun. Frederick Lesnett, Francis Lesnett and Stoffel Lesnett was Return and no prosecutors appearing Order to be Continued.

Ordered that Thomas Tounsler Orphan lately an apprentice to Issac Walker be bound to **Wm. Lea** who is to teach him the Art and mystery of a blacksmith and also to teach or casue him to be taught to Read Write and Cypher the five common rules of Arithmetic.-

[\(back\)](#)