

FOUND IN THE ARCHIVES, no. 85 – April 2023

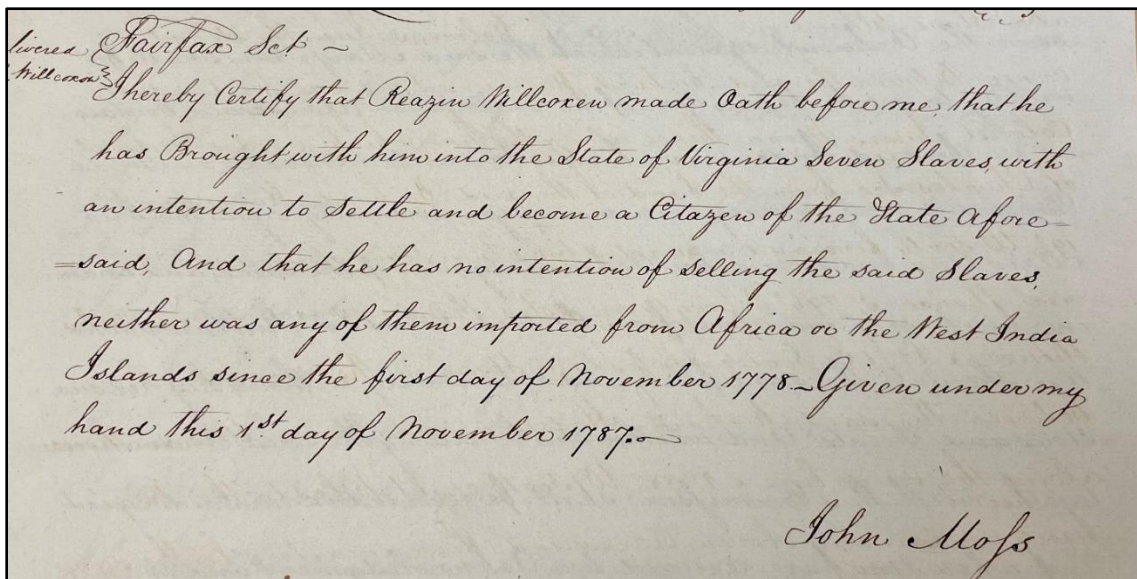
The Willcoxon Family

Fairfax Circuit Court Historic Records Center



Happy April, and welcome back to *Found in the Archives!* In this month's edition, we will look at records found at the Historic Records Center pertaining to the Willcoxons, a prominent Fairfax family who built some of the City of Fairfax's well-known landmarks, including Historic Blenheim and the Willcoxon Hotel.

Rezin Willcoxon (sometimes spelled "Willcoxen," as seen in the records) first appears in Fairfax County court records in 1797. In 1809, Rezin filed a Certificate of Importation with the court, declaring "that he has Brought with him into the State of Virginia Seven Slaves, with an intention to settle and become a Citizen of the State aforesaid."



Fairfax County Deed Book E-2 page 496, Rezin Willcoxon Certificate of Importation

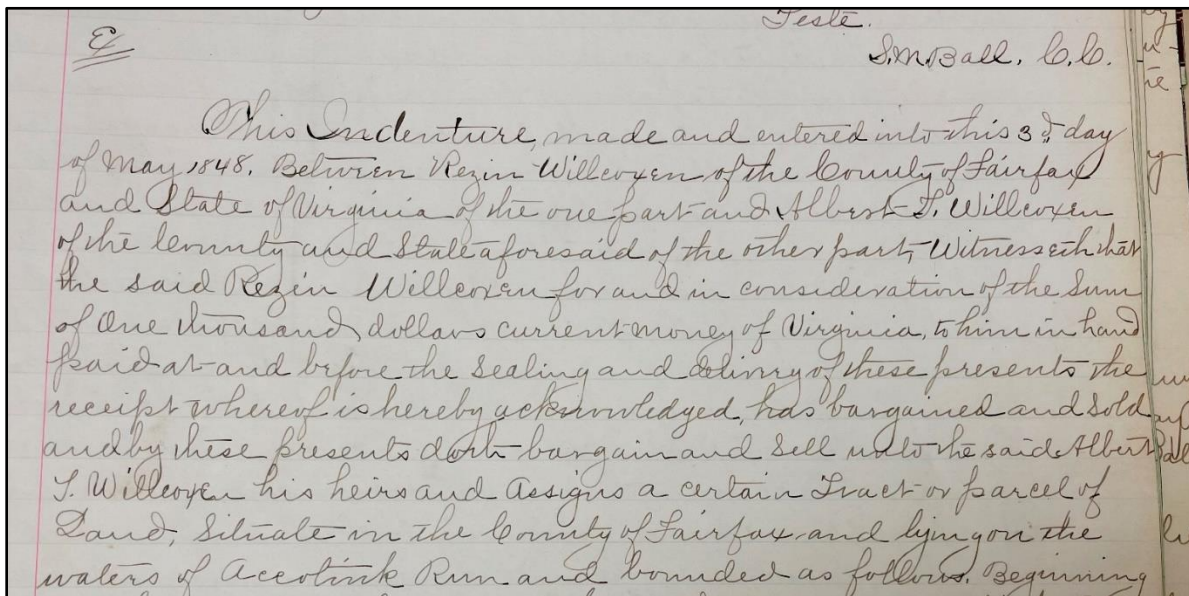
After settling in Fairfax, Rezin amassed an estate of over 1,000 acres through a series of land transactions. These properties included a significant amount of land in what is now present-day City of Fairfax. Rezin also built a large hotel in Fairfax directly across from the 1799 Historic Courthouse, called the Willcoxon Hotel.



Willcoxon Hotel 1925, image courtesy of Lee Hubbard, torn down 1929

This hotel and tavern was the physical and metaphorical center of town life, especially while court was in session, as it was where travelers stayed who came into the town for monthly court business.

Eventually, one of Rezin's sons, Albert Willcoxon, purchased a large piece of land from his father. Even more of the Willcoxon estate became Albert's after Rezin died in 1854, having left his estate to be divided among his children.



Fairfax County Deed Book M-2 page 265, Rezin conveys 50 acres of land in Fairfax County to his son Albert, 1848

Deposited Map 60

In the name of God Amen, I, Rezin Willcoxon of Fairfax County, being of sound mind and memory and regardless of the uncertainty of life do make and ordain this to be my last will and Testament, I give unto my wife Fanny Willcoxon during her natural life or widowhood the houses and lots occupied by myself and Mr. Isaac, together with the store-rooms attached thereto, also the lot used by me as a garden adjoining the house occupied by Anthony together with all my house hold and kitchen furniture in the house now occupied by me. Upon the death or marriage of my wife Fanny it is my will and desire that the above property given to her shall be divided amongst my children or their representatives in equal proportions. The part which may be allotted to my daughter Jane Sweeney, I leave to her

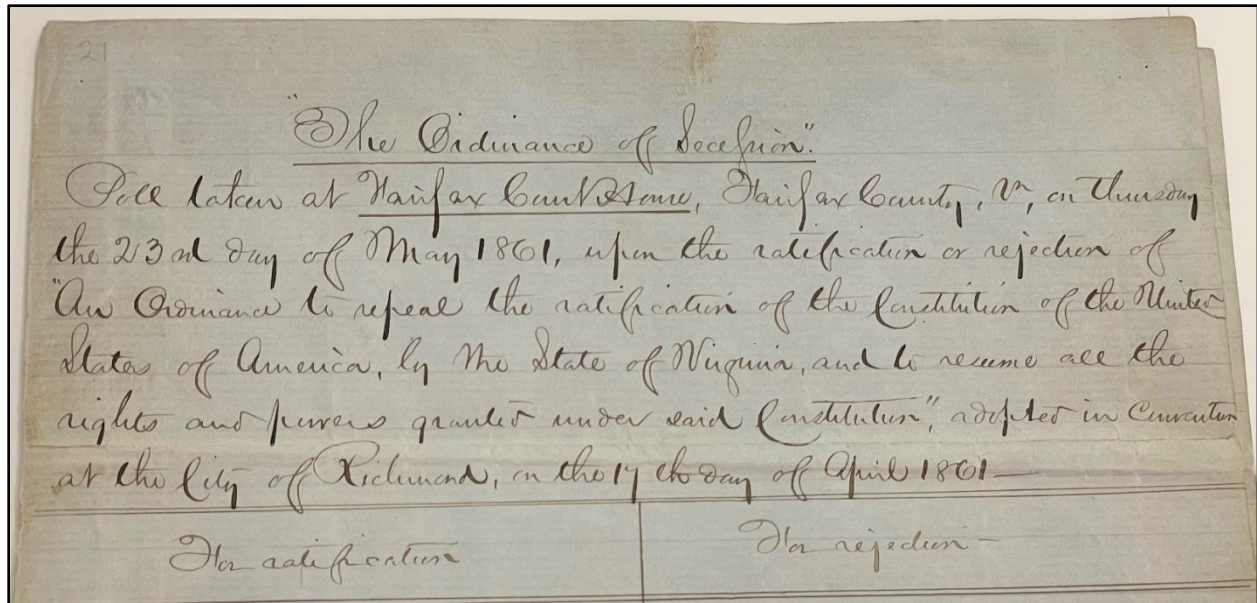
Fairfax County Will Book Y-1 page 65, Rezin Willcoxon's Will probated 1854

Albert Willcoxon married Mary H. Eskridge of Leesburg in April 1858, and in 1859 they constructed the home that is now known as Historic Blenheim. According to Fairfax County Personal Property tax records, Albert owned six enslaved people in 1860, who likely worked the farm surrounding Blenheim. There is also record of Albert selling an enslaved woman named Maria in 1859.

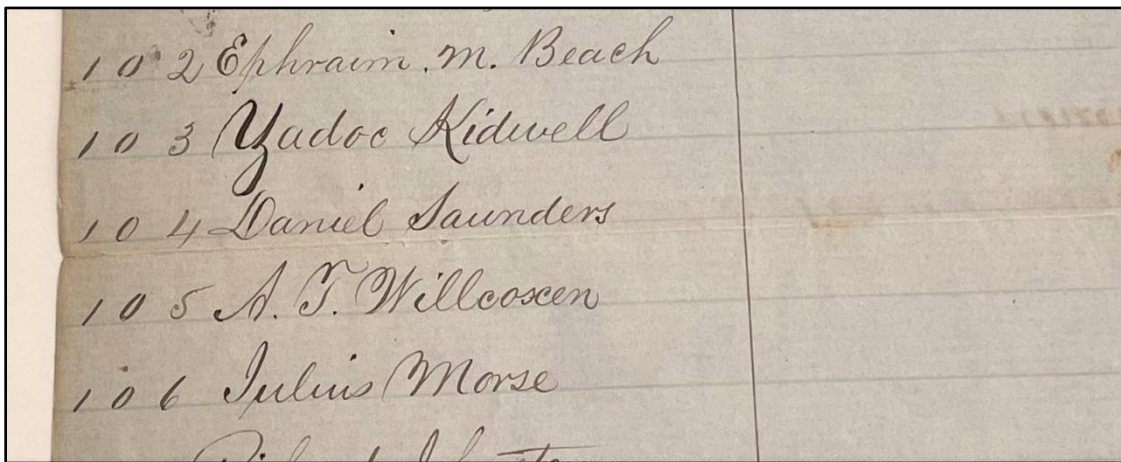


Historic Blenheim 2019, image from Historical Marker Database taken by Bradley Owen

In 1861, Albert Willcoxon was the 105th individual to vote in favor of secession from the Union during polling at Fairfax Courthouse. During the Civil War, the Willcoxons, like many Fairfax residents, ended up vacating their large home, which was then occupied by soldiers who drew graffiti on the walls and attic of the house.



Fairfax County Ordinance of Secession vote for Fairfax Court House polling location



Albert was a very active citizen of Fairfax throughout his life; the Historic Records Center has numerous records for Albert serving as a juror, a road surveyor, and being both plaintiff and defendant in civil cases heard at the Courthouse. Upon Albert's death in 1889, the Willcoxon estate was further divided among his two children, Henry and Bessie.

The City of Fairfax now owns Historic Blenheim, and the Willcoxon Hotel no longer exists, but the Historic Record Center has the corresponding court records to help tell the story of this Fairfax family and the legacy of their properties.



**FAIRFAX
Histree
DAY**

Saturday April 22
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Historic Blenheim (3610 Blenheim Blvd.)
Free admission

Celebrate Fairfax History Day and Earth Day together on one day!

Petting Zoo and Hay Playground
House Tours and Living History
Blenheim Site Tree and Stormwater Tours
Earth Day Crafts and Activities 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Food Trucks

Parking available at Fairfax High School and Daniel's Run Elementary School.
Free CUE shuttle bus to and from both parking sites.
Limited accessible parking on site.

FAIRFAX CITY FairfaxVA.gov/histreeday
703-591-0560

The City of Fairfax is committed to the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act. To request reasonable accommodation for any type of disability, contact 703-591-0560 or email 703-591-0560

For more information on these and other records held at the Fairfax Circuit Court Historic Records Center, please call 703-246-4168 or email CCRHistoricRecords@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The Historic Records Center is open to both walk-ins and appointments. You can make a research appointment by calling 703-246-4168.

Sign up for *Found in the Archives*, the monthly newsletter of the HRC:
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/circuit/historic-records-center>