

FOUND IN THE ARCHIVES, no. 70 – January 2022

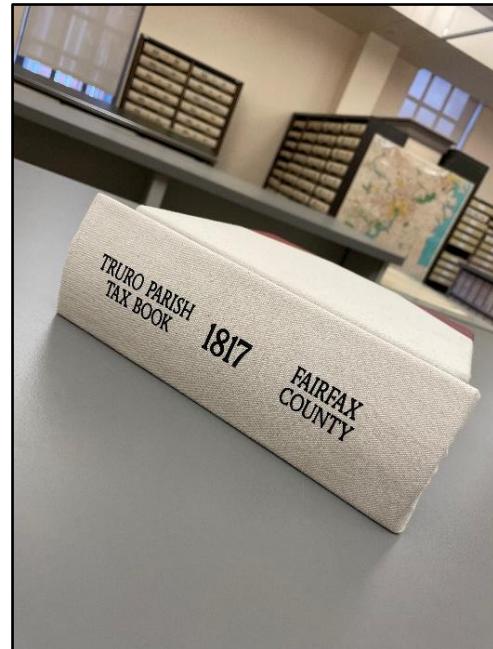
Conservation Update from Historic Records

Fairfax Circuit Court Historic Records Center



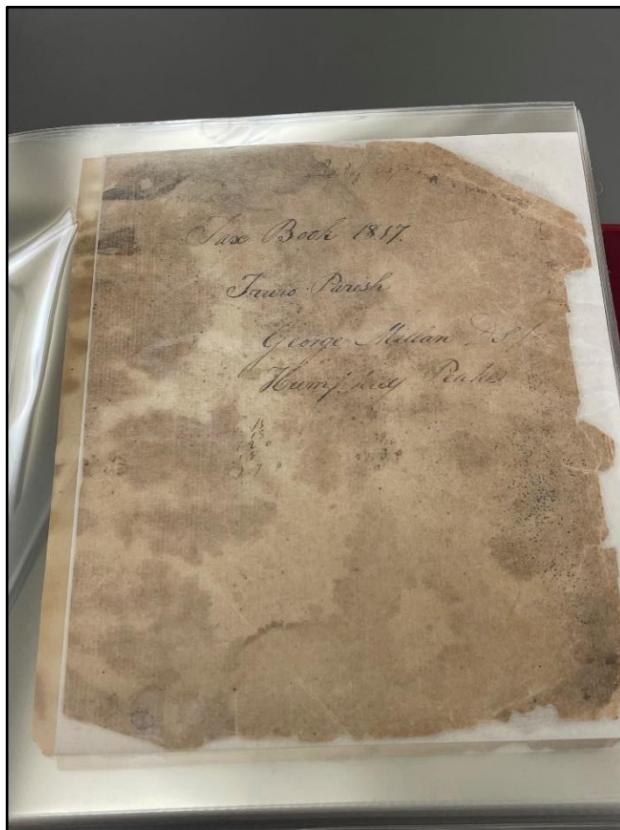
Happy New Year, and welcome back to *Found in the Archives!* Over the past few months, Fairfax Circuit Court Historic Records Center staff members have been quite busy. The Historic Records Center is now open for research appointments, and the Archivists have enjoyed getting back to working with patrons. Staff members are also excited by the return of historic court records that were sent out for conservation in March 2021. The Circuit Court recently received the fully conserved originals of two Fairfax Circuit Court plat books from 1933, an 1817 Truro Parish Tax Book, and Will Book I-1, which holds a copy of each Will recorded with the Clerk's Office from 1800 to 1806.

Perhaps the most interesting of these recently conserved items is the 1817 Truro Parish Tax Book. This tax book is significant because it is the county's oldest surviving tax book, and it provides researchers with valuable information on life in Fairfax County in the early nineteenth century. This book contains a record of all the taxes owed and paid by residents of the Truro Parish area in Fairfax County and is a record of property on which citizens were taxed, including enslaved persons, horses, and land. This book had some specific problem areas that needed to be addressed by the conservators, including repairing torn and brittle pages, chemically treating the acidic ink and paper that was used during the nineteenth century, encapsulating the pages in Mylar sleeves, and rebinding the pages so the book can be used by researchers and archivists without fear of creating further damage.



Fairfax County Truro Parish Tax Book, 1817

Pages from Fairfax County Truro Parish Tax Book, 1817



5)	<u>Dr John W</u>	8 ⁿ 70
3 ⁿ 80	To 5 levys tax on 4 slaves & 3 horses	13.60
8 ⁿ 70	" Tax on 1333 acres land	5.30
	William Stapp per bill	55.30
	auto auto	1.4
	auto auto	\$80.94
	R Ratcliff, dello	1.05
		\$81.99
	<u>Dr Golden</u>	4.58
3 ⁿ 40	To 3 levys tax on 2 slaves & 1 horse	1.20
1 ⁿ 18	Tax on 1 lot in providence Chas? lots Smith	5.78
4 ⁿ 38	William Stapp per bill	5.58
	auto	1.77
	auto	4.26
	auto	7.79
	<u>Dr George W</u>	1
	To 1 levy.	
	<u>Dr Francis</u>	1
	To 1 levy.	

27)	<u>Dr Jeremiah</u>	
2 ⁿ 70	To 2 levys 1 Slave & 3 horses	3.24
3 ⁿ 24		
	<u>Dr George</u>	
4 ⁿ 50	To 4 levys 5 Slaves & 6 horses	8.58
4 ⁿ 02	Tax on 100 acres land	1.14
8 ⁿ 38	De on 200 \$0 for Charles Tyler	2.84
		\$121.36
	<u>Dr William H</u>	
1 ⁿ 20	To 15 levys at 10	15
1 ⁿ 26	Tax on 16 slaves & 7 horses	12.46
10 ⁿ 06	De on 1662 acres land	11.08
	Militia fines	18
	from per Bill	6.10
	auto	3.58
		\$66.20
	<u>Dr James</u>	
	To 1 levy & 2 horses	1.36

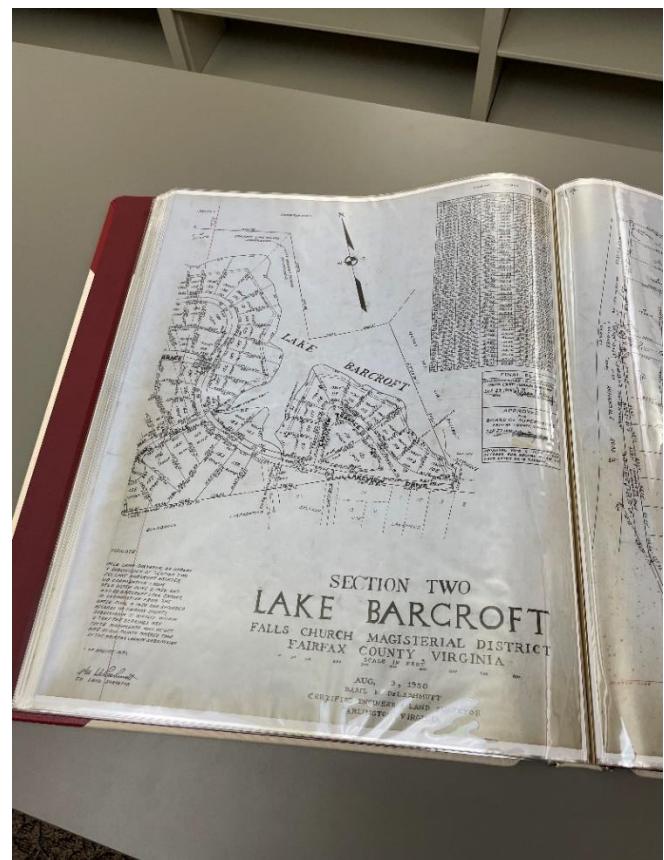
The Truro Parish Tax Book records the accounts due on heads of household, including women and free African Americans. The left and right side of each book is read as one page, with the "Debit" on the left and the "Credit" on the right. In this way, the tax book functions not only as a record for tax payments, also as an account book of debts owed between residents.

Researchers can find records of tax levies paid on horses, carriages, enslaved persons, land, and town lots in Colchester and Centreville. Militia fines are also accounted for, which is useful to researchers because most of the court's militia records do not survive. Additionally, judgments issued and paid by citizens are accounted for.

The Historic Records Center also received Plat Book 5 and Plat Book 6 back from conservation. These plat books are comprised of original 1930s plats of subdivisions throughout Fairfax County and feature some neighborhoods that are still active today, including Hollin Hall Village in Alexandria, and Lake Barcroft in Falls Church.



Fairfax County Plat Book 5 page 11

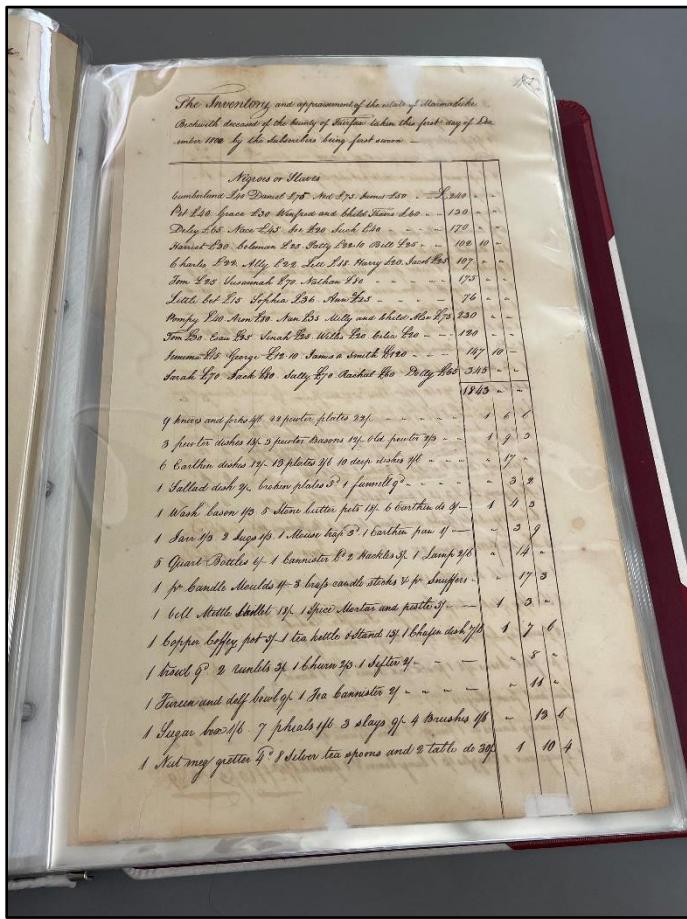


Fairfax County Plat Book 6 page 43

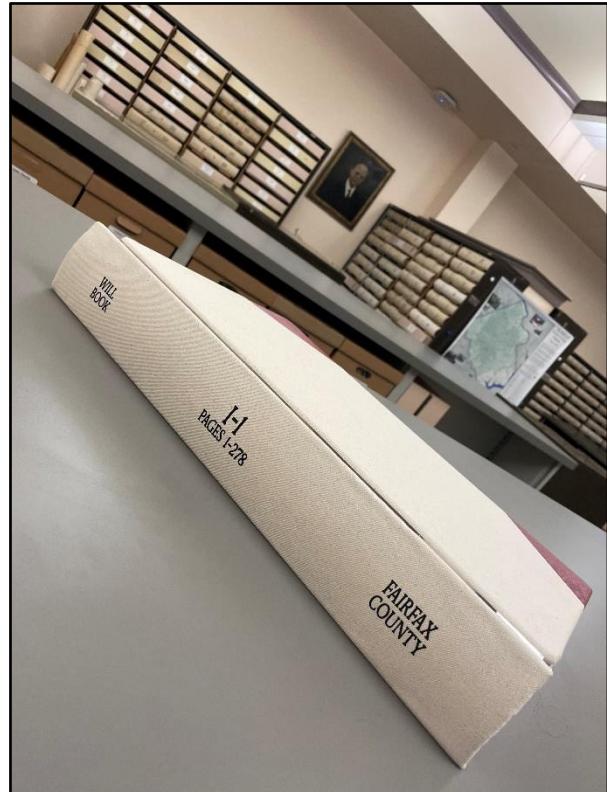
Plat books are commonly used by title researchers, homeowner's association groups, or homeowners who are interested in the history of their property. At a size of 18 x 24 inches, these plats are oversized items and require a conservation facility that is fully equipped to conserve and digitize large scale pages. The intricate details of these plats are also vital to their usefulness, and they must be digitized clearly and carefully so that researchers can decipher every number and word. These plat books received similar treatment to the 1817 Tax Book, including removal of any tape or glue used on pages, and encapsulation in Mylar sleeves and rebinding of pages.

With the conservation completed on Plat Books 5 and 6, we are pleased to confirm that all of the Historic Records Center's plat books have now been fully conserved and will last another hundred years, or longer!

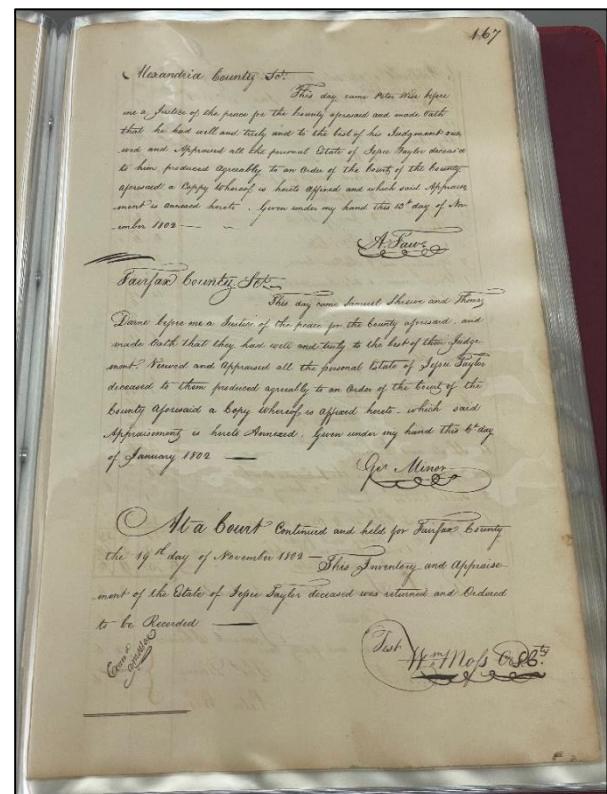
Will Book I-1 is one of the oldest Will Books at the Historic Records Center. This book contains probate documents recorded with the Clerk's Office from 1800 to 1806, including wills, inventories, and estate accounts. This 215-year-old Will Book had brittle and chipped pages that required careful repair, and the acidic ink was treated before each page was encapsulated and bound into a new canvas book that researchers can easily flip through without damaging the pages. Additionally, the conserved document was reimaged with clear, crisp images available for research.



Fairfax County Will Book I-1 page 41



Fairfax County Will Book I-1



Fairfax County Will Book I-1 page 167

Each of these books are rebound into durable canvas covers, and each page is digitized so the content is accessible without having to use the physical books. Digitization of these materials also makes them accessible to researchers who may be unable to visit the Historic Records Center in person. Funding from court recordation fees help make conservation projects like these possible. Every time you pay a small fee for a court document, you help fund the preservation of irreplaceable public records. Thank you for supporting conservation!

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.

At this time, the Historic Records Center is open to the public **by appointment only**. You can make a research appointment by calling 703-246-4168.

Tours of the 1799 Historic Fairfax Courthouse remain suspended.

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

