

General Assembly Session Records, 1777-1789: A Guide to the Records of Marginalized Communities

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STATE ARCHIVES
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Introduction

Scope of the Guide

This guide is focused on records of the General Assembly of North Carolina from 1777 to 1789 that contain the voices of enslaved and free people of color, religious minorities, women, and American Indians. The State Archives of North Carolina preserves original General Assembly records, and provides digital copies to the public through the North Carolina Digital Collections on the State Archives of North Carolina website. Though this guide may not include every record pertaining to women, enslaved and free people of color, American Indians, and religious minorities, it is intended to serve as a tool supporting further research about these groups of people in North Carolina's early history.

Content Warning

Archival records reflect the language and attitudes of the historical period in which they were created. The General Assembly Session Records from this period include content and language that may be harmful or upsetting to researchers. These records include actions that can be offensive, discriminatory, and depict acts of terrorism or violence.

Contextual Note

The records cited in this guide span from 1777 to 1789. Though this guide uses the terminology suggested by historians and archivists, the records it describes generally do not. Researchers should be prepared to encounter upsetting and offensive terminology describing enslaved persons, free persons of color, and American Indians.

A Brief History of the General Assembly in Early Statehood

North Carolina's first State Constitution, adopted in 1776, gave the General Assembly control over all areas of government to prevent conflicts between that body and the executive branch. It could even elect all executive and judicial officials, including the governor. Over time, the General Assembly's power diminished, leading to the current balance of powers between the three branches.

The 1776 State Constitution retained a pre-existing bicameral structure, though the houses that made up the General Assembly changed. The names of the new houses were the Senate and the House of Commons rather than the Upper House and the House of Burgesses. Today, the House of Commons is known as the House of Representatives. Each county received one representative in the Senate and two representatives in the House of Commons. Particularly large districts, such as Hillsborough or New Bern, also had their own representative in the House of Commons.

Until 1835, free men, regardless of race, could vote in General Assembly elections, though the voting requirements differed between the two bodies.

House of Commons: to vote	Senate: to vote	House of Commons: to serve	Senate: to serve
No religious requirement	No religious requirement	Protestant	Protestant
Paid public taxes	Owned at least 50 acres of land for at least six months prior to an election	Owned at least 100 acres of land for at least six months prior to an election	Owned at least 300 acres of land for at least one year prior to an election
Resident of North Carolina for at least a year	Resident for at least a year prior to election	Resident of district for at least a year prior to election	Resident of district for at least a year prior to election

Legal Definitions

Source of definitions: General Assembly Glossary ([Help - Glossary - North Carolina General Assembly](#))

- **Act:** Legislation enacted into law. A bill that has passed both houses of the legislature, been enrolled, ratified, signed by the governor or passed over the governor's office, and printed. It is a permanent measure, having the force of law until repealed.
- **Adoption:** Approval or acceptance; usually applied to amendments, committee reports, or resolutions.
- **Amendment:** Any alteration made (or proposed to be made) to a bill or clause thereof, by adding, deleting, substituting, or omitting.
- **Apportionment:** Establishment of the legislative districts from which members are elected.
- **Bill:** Draft of a proposed law presented to the legislature for consideration.
- **Code:** A compilation of laws and their revisions according to subject matter arranged by title, chapter, and section. The official code of North Carolina is the North Carolina General Statutes.
- **Committee:** A body of members appointed by the presiding officer (or another authority specified by the chamber) to consider and make recommendations concerning disposition of bills, resolutions, and other related matters.
- **Committee Report:** Official release of a bill or resolution from committee with (or without) a specific recommendation, such as "pass", "pass as amended", or "do not pass".
- **Concurrence (To Concur):** Action by which one house agrees to a proposal or action that the other chamber has approved.
- **Constituent:** A citizen residing within the district of a legislator.
- **District:** That division of the state represented by a legislator distinguished numerically or by geographical boundaries.
- **Hearing:** Public discussion and appearance on a proposal or bill; usually scheduled by a committee.
- **Joint Committee:** A committee composed of members from both chambers.
- **Joint Session:** A combined meeting of the Senate and House in one chamber.
- **Measure:** General term for bill, resolution, or memorial.
- **Non-Standing Committee or Commission:** A committee or commission authorized by legislation to study specific topics. The powers and duties of each committee are set forth in the authorizing legislation.
- **Petition:** Formal request submitted by an individual or group of individuals to the legislature.
- **Referral:** The assigning or referring of a bill to committee
- **Regular Session:** The annual (or biennial) meeting of the legislature required by constitution.
- **Resolution:** A document that expresses the sentiment or intent of the legislature or a chamber, that governs the business of the legislature, or a chamber, or that expresses recognition by the legislature or a chamber
- **Session:** (1) Period during which the legislature meets; (2) the daily meeting of the Senate or House.
- **Special Session:** A special meeting of the legislature that is called by the governor (or the legislature itself) and limited to specific matters. Also called a Extraordinary Session.
- **Standing Committee:** A committee appointed with continuing responsibility in a general issue area or field of legislative activity.
- **Statute:** A formal enactment of the legislature of a more permanent nature. The term "statute" is used to designate written law, as distinguished from unwritten law.
- **Supplemental Appropriation:** Adjustment of funds allocated by the original appropriation.
- **Title:** A concise statement of the subject and the contents of a bill.

Additional notes:

Today, a **memorial** is “the method by which the legislature addresses or petitions Congress and other governments or governmental agencies.” However, historically, a memorial was a written statement of facts that accompanied a petition.

Today, a **select committee** is “a committee established by the Speaker of the House, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, or by an adopted resolution of either Chamber for a particular issue. This committee may be established as a single chamber committee or as a joint committee. The powers and duties for the committee are set forth by the establishing authority and the membership is appointed by the Speaker of the House and/or the President Pro tempore of the Senate.” However, until 1868, the highest-ranking official in the Senate was known as the Speaker of the Senate.

How Were Petitions Submitted?

To submit a petition, the petitioner first had to write the document. They could do this by themselves or with the help of a friend, relative, or clerk. This is why many petitions have multiple names on them, even if the request only has to do with one person. Both during and after the American Revolution, it became increasingly common for men to submit group petitions, which were generally intended to indicate widespread support for a desired policy change. Women were more likely to submit individual petitions, usually seeking to solve the problem of an individual.

After the petitioner(s) wrote their petition, they presented it to their county court. If the justices of the county court certified the petition, it was then forwarded to the county’s legislative representative, who would present it to the General Assembly. After a petition was first read to the General Assembly, it would be remanded to a committee that would be responsible for considering it further. This committee would later report back to the General Assembly, and the General Assembly would either grant or reject the petition based on the committee’s recommendations.

How to Read the Guide

The documents from the General Assembly Session Records are described in tables. The records are broken into four larger categories:

- Women
- Enslaved and Free People of Color
- American Indians
- Religious Minority Groups

Each section has several subsets of topics of records. A document may have relevance to more than one topic. For example, in the “Women” section, the same petition may have the assigned topics of “Widows” and “Financial Requests.” Documents that fit into the larger theme but that do not fit into any specific topic are listed as “General.”

Documents do not repeat within a section but can appear in multiple larger sections if relevant to more than one general theme.

Each document appears in a row like the one below:

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Miscellaneous letters and Congressional resolves sent to Governor Caswell, April-November	Letter to Thomas Harvey about Joseph Newby	May 11, 1778	GASR Apr-May 1778, Box 1 66.8.12.12	Family Roles

- **“Folder”** and **“Specific Item”** columns refer to the physical arrangement of the General Assembly Session Records. Occasionally, multiple items in the same folder are included in the table. Where only one record appears in a folder, the “Specific Item” column will list “Entire folder.”
- The **“Date”** column lists the date provided on the document itself. The proposed bill or petition may have created further actions at later dates.
- The **local call number** is how a researcher can locate the document in the State Archives. The top line (i.e. GASR Apr-May 1778, Box 1) is the number of the **box** that researchers could request to examine in person. The bottom line (e.g. 66.8.12.12) is the unique identifier assigned to the **folder**. Researchers can enter this identifier into the search bar on the Digital Collections page (digital.dncr.nc.gov) to navigate to scans of that folder, in which they will find the highlighted record.
- The **Topic** column provides subjects to facilitate research.

Women in General Assembly Records

The General Assembly Session Records discussed in this section consist of a mix of bills, reports, resolutions, and more. Some of the most compelling documents take the form of petitions by and about women. According to English legal tradition, from which the practice of petitioning originally stemmed, all inhabitants, including women, had the right to petition the legislature. Submitting petitions was a way for women to participate politically. Most petitions and other records discussed in this section of the guide were written by and about white women. However, enslaved and free women of color are not absent from the records. The records for this section are assigned to the following topics:

Financial Requests

As the General Assembly Session Records are legal documents, the petitions and related documents authored by or concerning women are often financial in nature. Many are authored by widows, as widows were the only women able to own property and represent themselves legally. A large percentage of those petitions were financial requests. The four main types of petition requests were to receive payment owed to their deceased husbands for military service, to ask for compensation for goods or services provided during the Revolutionary War, to seek the return of confiscated property previously owned by Loyalists, and to plead for economic relief in the form of money or goods.

Widows

A large percentage of the petitions submitted to the General Assembly from women came from widows who sought compensation for their deceased husbands' service or for other services rendered during the Revolutionary War. Widows also sought economic relief during times of hardship. Widows had different and stronger legal standing than married or unmarried women, so records specifically relating to widows are lumped into their own category that is a subset of the financial requests category.

Family Roles

Both white children and children of color appear in the General Assembly records. They have been included in this section of the guide and categorized under Family Roles. Many women mention their children in their petitions or are discussed in the records alongside their children. When petitioning the General Assembly, some mothers cited their small, helpless children to arouse sympathy from the members of the General Assembly and to increase the likelihood of their petitions being granted.

Another aspect of family roles that sometimes appears in the early General Assembly Session Records is marriage (and divorce). One important factor to note is that only the General Assembly could grant a divorce until 1808, so couples wishing to dissolve their marriage had to petition the General Assembly.

Women at Work

It was generally not considered appropriate for women to be involved in politics, but they inevitably participated when they petitioned the General Assembly. Hints of women being involved in the public sphere also can be found in records when women leverage their political connections while petitioning or are described to have earned a certain degree of fame (or notoriety).

Women and Children of Color

Enslaved and free children of color often appear in documents defining the age of adulthood. Enslaved children also appear in documents assigning monetary value to them as property. Note that children were assigned an enslaved or free status based on the status of their mothers.

The distinction between enslaved and free people of color, including enslaved and free women of color, can sometimes be unclear in records. Several documents specify the emancipation of enslaved women of color.

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Session of April-May, 1777: Messages from Senate	Petition of John Ellis	May 2, 1777	GASR Apr-May 1777, Box 1 66.8.9.3	Family Roles, Women and Children of Color
House Joint Resolutions: November 20-December 22	Allowing orphans of John Fifer a certain sum	December 12, 1777	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 1 66.8.10.8	Family Roles
Senate Joint Resolutions: November 19-December 24	RE John Lewellin (with petition from his wife, Mary Lewellin)	November 19, 1777	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 1 66.8.10.9	Financial Requests
Miscellaneous letters and Congressional resolves sent to Governor Caswell, April-November	Letter to Thomas Harvey about Joseph Newby	May 11, 1778	GASR Apr-May 1778, Box 1 66.8.12.12	Family Roles
Joint Papers (August, 1778): Petitions	Petition of Martha Gilchrist	August 14, 1778	GASR Aug 1778, Box 1 66.8.14.6	Family Roles, Women at Work
	Petition of Margaret Cotton of Anson Co. (rejected)	August 15, 1778	GASR Aug 1778, Box 1 66.8.14.6	Financial Requests, Family Roles
House Bills (August 13): Bill for levying a tax by assessment and otherwise	Entire folder	August 13, 1778	GASR Aug 1778, Box 1 66.8.14.15	Family Roles, Women and Children of Color
Senate Bills (April 16): Bill to establish rules to be observed in celebrating of matrimony	Entire folder	April 16, 1778	GASR Apr-May 1778, Box 2 66.8.13.2	Family Roles
Joint Papers (Jan.-Feb., 1779): Petitions	Petition of Elisabeth Egerton, Wilmot Egerton, and Elisabeth Egerton, Jr. (rejected)	January 21, 1779	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.9	Financial Requests
Senate Joint Resolutions: Jan. 21-Feb. 13	Sarah Dupree of Brunswick County given allowance for executed slave (with messages)	January 27, 1779	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.10	Financial Requests

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Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
May, 1779: Joint Select Committees	Report re Continental officers (with messages)	May 15, 1779	GASR May 1779, Box 1 66.8.17.10	Widows, Financial Requests
House Joint Resolutions: May 3-15	In favor of Mrs. McDonald, wife of Alexander McDonald (messages only)	May 5, 1779	GASR May 1779, Box 1 66.8.17.13	Financial Requests
Joint Papers (April-May, 1780): Miscellaneous Petitions	Petition of Ann Glover, widow of Samuel Glover, late soldier in the Continental Service	January 10, 1780	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 1 66.8.20.7	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
Joint Papers (April-May, 1780): Joint Select Committee Reports and Papers	Petition of Hannah Reed	April 24, 1780	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 1 66.8.20.8	Widows, Financial Requests
	RE petitions of Edmund Corbin and Mary McTatter (messages only)	April 27, 1780	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 1 66.8.20.8	General
	RE ways and means to provide for dependents of those who fall in the defense of their country (messages only)	May 1, 1780	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 1 66.8.20.8	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
	On petitions of Mary Vance and Edward Burke (message only)	May 5, 1780	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 1 66.8.20.8	General
Senate Bills (April 24): Bill for levying a tax by general assessment (rejected)	Entire folder	April 24, 1780	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 2 66.8.21.10	Widows, Financial Requests, Women and Children of Color
Senate Bills (May 6): Bill for vesting in Hannah Reed, widow of Reverend James Reed, his estate [and for suspending law concerning land grants near Virginia]	Entire folder	May 6, 1780	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 2 66.8.21.19	Widows, Financial Requests

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
House Bills (February 3): Additional bill to an act concerning servants and slaves	Entire folder	February 3, 1781	GASR Jan-Feb 1781, Box 2 66.8.24.17	Widows, Family Roles, Women and Children of Color
Miscellaneous petitions: Apr.-May, 1782	Petition of John and Mary Campbell on behalf of the orphan children of Richard Edwards (no order taken by Senate)	May 7, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.5	Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Memorial of Jean Rutherford (rejected)	May 5, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.5	Widows, Financial Requests
Apr.-May, 1782: Propositions and Grievances - report and papers	Petition of Mary Mullen	April 16, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.7	Financial Requests, Family Roles
	In favor of Mrs. Russell, relict of George Russel, Rutherford Co.	May 15, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.7	General
Apr.-May, 1782 Jt. Select Comm., Reports and Papers (petitions, messages, etc.) April. 17-27	Report on petition of Mary Wright of Wilmington (petition and messages only)	April 23, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.7	Financial Requests, Family Roles
Apr.- May: Joint Select Committees Reports and Papers (petitions, messages, etc.): Apr. 29 - May 4	Report on petition of Martha Thompson (messages and petition only)	May 1, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.9	General
	Report on the petition of Joseph Benthall, Jr., of Hertford Co. suspending Joseph Wood from the office of justice of the peace (with petition, messages, and enclosures)	May 4, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.9	Family Roles, Women and Children of Color

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Select Committees: Reports and Papers, May 8 - May 18	Report on the petition of Sarah Beaucham (with petition and messages)	May 9, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.11	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report on letter of Lt. Col. Lytle and report on situations of David Anderson, Lewis Tucker, Elizabeth Forbus, John Speirs, and Dennis O'Bryan (with messages, petition, and related papers)	May 11, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.11	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
Senate Joint Resolutions, April 16 - May 4	That Daniel Lasley, James Mosley, and Jane Bledsoe of Franklin Co. be exempted from payment of taxes (with message and court recommendations)	May 2, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 2 66.8.28.5	Widows, Financial Requests
House Joint Resolutions, May 10 - May 17	Resolution regarding petitions of Joseph Dixon and Sarah McLean (messages only)	May 13, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 2 66.8.28.10	General
	Resolution in favor of Mrs. Davidson (message only)	May 14, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 2 66.8.28.10	General
Joint Select Committees: reports and papers, May 6-17	Report concerning memorial of Peter and Constantine Perkins of Guilford County seeking exemption from taxes	May 15, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 1 66.8.29.9	Financial Requests, Family Roles, Women at Work
	Report regarding memorial of John Jones, guardian of Joseph John Alston	May 17, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 1 66.8.29.9	Family Roles
Senate Joint Resolutions: Apr 20-May 17	Recommendation that John Benton be given an annuity	April 21, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 1 66.8.29.12	Financial Requests, Family Roles

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
	Resolution in favor of Miss Nancy Jones of Edenton	April 25, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 1 66.8.29.12	Financial Requests
	Resolution in favor of Elizabeth Rhodes of Onslow County	May 12, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 1 66.8.29.12	Financial Requests
House Joint Resolutions: Apr. 21-30	Resolution in favor of Mary Hudson of Orange County	April 23, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 1 66.8.29.13	Widows, Financial Requests
May 6: Senate bill to vest title of land to James and Thomas Cotton and their sister of Montgomery County	Entire folder	May 6, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 2 66.8.30.23	Financial Requests, Family Roles
Apr. 28: House bill to substitute the ownership of three slaves for dower rights to property (petition only)	Entire folder	April 28, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 2 66.8.30.59	Financial Requests, Women and Children of Color
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances Apr. 21-May 11, 1784	Report on memorial of Sarah Galloway (memorial only) (rejected)	April 30, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.8	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report on the petitions of Thomas Sewell, Hugh Stanly, General Lillington, William Courtney, Roland Harris, Alexander Morrison, Elizabeth Hinkle, and Doctor Blythe (petitions, messages, and enclosures only)	April 24, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.8	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report on the recommendations of the Court of Bladen County in the favor of J. Ray, Sarah White, and A. Averett	May 11, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.8	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Standing Committees: Committee on Propositions and Grievances May 13-26: reports and papers	Report on the petition of Mary Moody (rejected)	May 14, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.9	Financial Requests
	Report on the petition of Mary Galloway of Wayne County	May 14, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.9	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report on the petition of Elizabeth Torrence of Dobbs County (rejected)	May 25, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.9	Family Roles
Committee of Propositions and Grievances May 29-June 2: Reports and papers	Recommendation from the court of Granville County that Susanna Allin be given an allowance	May 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.9	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report on the petition of Margaret Wall of Orange County	June 2, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.10	Widows, Financial Requests
Senate Joint Resolutions: Apr.-June, 1784	Resolution in favor of Priscilla Gregorie of Gates County	April 22, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 2 66.8.32.4	Widows
Apr. 28: Senate bill to suppress vice and immorality	Entire folder	April 28, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 3 66.8.33.2	Family Roles, Women and Children of Color
May 19: House bill to regulate descent of real estate, do away with entail, make provision for widows, and prevent frauds	Entire folder	May 19, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 4 66.8.34.34	Widows, Financial Requests
May 24: House bill to enable Mary Dowd to sue for and recover all debts due her husband Conner Dowd (with petition)	Entire folder	May 24, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 4 66.8.34.43	Financial Requests, Family Roles

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Select Committees: Reports and papers Oct. 27-Nov. 25	Report on the memorial of Major Thomas Harris	November 13, 1784	GASR Oct-Nov 1784, Box 1 66.8.35.9.6	Financial Requests, Family Roles
Nov. 8: House bill to alter the name of Jesse Hay to Jesse Speight (with petition) (laid over)	Entire folder	November 8, 1784	GASR Oct-Nov 1784, Box 2 66.8.36.33	Family Roles
Nov. 8: House bill to remove all disabilities from Simon Cleary and others (with petition, letter from governor, and committee report)	Entire folder	November 8, 1784	GASR Oct-Nov 1784, Box 2 66.8.36.47	Financial Requests, Family Roles
Nov. 8: House bill to secure the property of Elizabeth Bonner in Beaufort County in the hands of trustees	Entire folder	November 8, 1784	GASR Oct-Nov 1784, Box 2 66.8.36.61	Financial Requests, Family Roles
Committee of Propositions and Grievances: Reports and Papers	Report on the petition of Jane Spurgin (with petition) (rejected)	December 13, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 1 66.8.37.9	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
Grand Committee (on governor's messages and state papers): Reports and Papers, Nov. 21-Dec. 21	Report on the petition of Martha Dixon (petition only)	November 24, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 1 66.8.37.10	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report on the petition of John Burgwin (with governor's message, petition, and vote tally) (rejected)	December 21, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 1 66.8.37.10	Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report on the petition of Ann Howard (rejected) (with petition)	December 5, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 1 66.8.37.10	Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report on petition of Elizabeth Miller (with governor's message, petition, and account)	December 21, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 1 66.8.37.10	Financial Requests, Family Roles

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Select Committees: Reports and papers Nov. 22-Dec.14	Report on the petitions of George Alston and Mary Bedford (messages only)	December 14, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 2 66.8.38.2	Family Roles
Senate Joint Resolutions: Nov. 29-Dec. 29	Resolution to order the treasurer to delay the suit against the administratrix of the estate of John Gilliard	December 23, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 2 66.8.38.6	Widows, Financial Requests
Nov. 28: Senate bill to vest certain lands in Randolph County in Anne Fields (with petition) (rejected)	Entire folder	November 28, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 2 66.8.38.8	Financial Requests
Dec. 14: Senate bill for relief of Mary Bedford and to vest in the heirs of Jonas Bedford his landed estate	Entire folder	December 14, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 3 66.8.39.11	Financial Requests
Dec. 10: House bill for relief of widows and children of officers who have died in the service of the United States	Entire folder	December 10, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 4 66.8.40.9	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
Dec. 14: House bill directing that marriage settlements and contracts be registered for preventing injury to creditors	Entire folder	December 14, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 4 66.8.40.17	Family Roles
Dec. 24: House bill to prevent the sale of land of Ralph Macnair, deceased, and to empower Edward Hall to collect debts (with petition and committee report)	Entire folder	December 24, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 4 66.8.40.31	Financial Requests, Family Roles
Joint Papers: Miscellaneous Petitions	Petition of Margaret Munroe and Sarah McIver of Cumberland Co. (rejected)	December 26, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 1 66.8.41.4	Financial Requests

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Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Standing Committees: Grand Committee - Petitions and Papers, Nov. 20 - Dec. 20	Petition of John and Elizabeth Nelson of Craven County (rejected)	November 27, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 1 66.8.41.15	Family Roles
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Memorials and Petitions, Dec. 29 - Jan. 6	Report on memorial of Angelica Wilton (memorial only)	December 29, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 2 66.8.42.4	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report on petition of Clarea Sutter (with petition) (rejected)	December 29, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 2 66.8.42.4	Widows, Financial Requests
	Report allowing Mary Moore her husband's pay (petition only)	December 29, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 2 66.8.42.4	Financial Requests, Women at Work
	Report on petition of Mary Moore (with petition) (rejected)	January 3, 1787	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 2 66.8.42.4	Financial Requests, Women at Work
	Report on petition of Ann Meadows (with petition)	January 5, 1787	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 2 66.8.42.4	Widows, Financial Requests
Joint Select Committees, Nov. 25 - Dec. 20	Report on memorial of Sarah Rounsevall (with memorial)	December 15, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 2 66.8.42.7	Widows, Financial Requests
Senate Joint Resolutions: Dec. 14 - Dec. 31	Resolution for Secretary of State to issue to heirs of William Watts, deceased, a warrant for bounty land (petition and supporting papers only)	December 14, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.5	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles

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Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
	Resolution ordering sheriff of New Hanover County to restore slaves, etc., of John Rutherford and others (petition only)	December 31, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.5	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
Senate Joint Resolutions, Jan. 1 - Jan. 7	Resolution in favor of Mary White (with petition and committee report)	January 4, 1787	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.6	Widows, Financial Requests
House Joint Resolutions, Dec. 16 - Dec. 31	Resolution allowing sum to James Blount for slave executed by the court (committee report only)	December 29, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.8	Women and Children of Color
	Resolution acquitting sundry inhabitants of Fayetteville from payment of fines (petition and committee report only)	December 29, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.8	Women at Work
Dec. 1: House bill to release the estate of John Anderson of Guilford County from forfeiture	Entire folder	December 1, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 5 66.8.44.2	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
Dec. 12: House bill to emancipate Hannah, alias Hannah Bowers, of the estate of Alexander Gaston (with petition)	Entire folder	December 12, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 5 66.8.44.34	Widows, Woman and Children of Color
Dec. 16: House bill to vest title of certain Negroes in William Sanders Lancaster (with petition) (rejected)	Entire folder	December 16, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 5 66.8.44.45	Women and Children of Color
Dec. 18: Senate bill to vest in trustees certain powers for the benefit of Elizabeth Torrens and children (with petition)	Entire folder	December 18, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 4 66.8.45.37	Financial Requests, Family Roles

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Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Papers: Petitions rejected or tabled, Nov. 21 - Dec. 17	Petition of James Garret and wife	November 21, 1787	GASR Nov 1787-Dec 1787, Box 1 66.8.46.2	Family Roles
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances, Nov. 19 - Dec. 6	Report on petition of Ann Field (petition only)	November 23, 1787	GASR Nov 1787-Dec 1787, Box 1 66.8.46.14	Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report in favor of Fanny McNeill (petition only)	November 30, 1787	GASR Nov 1787-Dec 1787, Box 1 66.8.46.14	Widows, Financial Requests
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances, Dec. 10 - Dec. 21	Report on petition of Mary Richards of Perquimans Co. (with petition) (rejected)	December 16, 1787	GASR Nov 1787-Dec 1787, Box 1 66.8.46.15	Widows, Financial Requests
	Report on petition of Martha Mitchel (with petition) (rejected)	December 17, 1787	GASR Nov 1787-Dec 1787, Box 1 66.8.46.15	Widows, Financial Requests
Joint Standing Committees: Committee on Indian Affairs	Report on petition of Mary Bledsoe (petition only)	November 12, 1788	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 1 66.8.49.13	Widows, Financial Requests
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances, Nov. 10 - Nov. 24	Report on petition of Robert Lynn on behalf of orphans of Philip Rough	November 10, 1788	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.1	Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report on petition of Jean Spurgin (with petition)	November 20, 1788	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.1	Financial Requests, Family Roles
Joint Select Committees: Reports, referrals, etc., Nov. 18 - Dec. 6	Referral of petition of Elizabeth Fussell (with petition)	November 18, 1788	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.5.1	Widows, Financial Requests
	Report on petition of Jane Simpson (petition only)	November 18, 1788	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.5	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles

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Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Nov. 10: House bill for erecting a town on lands of Tabitha and John Marriner, Tyrrell Co. (with petition) (laid over)	Entire folder	November 10, 1788	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 3 66.8.51.34	Family Roles
Session of November-December 1789: Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Claims	Report on petition of Sarah Dupree (petition only).	November 24, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.17	Financial Requests
Session of November-December 1789: Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances, Nov. 30 -- Dec. 9	Report on petition of Judith Dowd (petition only).	December 1, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.19	Financial Requests
	Report on memorial of Morris Baum and Hannah Pugh (with Petition and Enclosures).	December 9, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.19	Widows, Financial Requests
Session of November-December 1789: Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances, December 16 - December 22	Report on Petition of Ann Meadows (with Petition) (Rejected).	December 19, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 2 66.8.53.2	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
Session of November-December 1789: Joint Select Committees: Reports and Papers, November 6 - December 2	Report on Petition of Unity Wilson (Petition only).	November 6, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 2 66.8.53.3	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
Session of November-December 1789: Joint Select Committees: Reports and Papers, December 3 - December 14	Report on Petition of Nancy Horah (Petition only).	December 14, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 2 66.8.53.4	Widows, Financial Requests, Family Roles
	Report on the Petition of Jane Simpson (Rejected).	December 14, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 2 66.8.53.4	Financial Requests, Family Roles
Joint Select Committees: Reports and Papers, December 15 - December 21	Report on Petition of Robert Lynn (Report withdrawn) (Petition only).	November 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 2 66.8.53.5	Financial Requests, Family Roles

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Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
	Report in Favor of Janet Burges (Petition only).	December 14, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 2 66.8.53.5	Widows, Financial Requests
Session of November-December 1789: Senate Joint Resolutions, November 3 - December 22	In Favor of Aliey Ross of Orange County.	December 18, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 2 66.8.53.12	Widows, Financial Requests
Bill to Enable Bastard Children of John Oggs, Pasquotank County, to Hold Estate (Petition Only).	Entire folder	November 14, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 4 66.8.55.8	Financial Requests, Family Roles
Bill to Confirm Marriage of James Richard, Brunswick County, with Nancy Richard, Otherwise Neale (Petition only) (Rejected).	Entire folder	November 14, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 4 66.8.55.10	Family Roles
Bill to Amend and Enlarge Act to Enable Mary Dowd to Sue For Debts Due Her Husband, Conner Dowd.	Entire folder	December 11, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 4 66.8.55.79	Widows, Financial Requests
Bill to Empower Alcey/Alice Ross and John Allison to Sell Real Estate of Andrew Ross, Deceased (Rejected).	Entire folder	December 11, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 4 66.8.55.80	Widows, Financial Requests
Bill to Alter Names of Nancy, John and Keziah Lytle, Children of Sarah Nichols of Hillsborough.	Entire folder	December 14, 1789	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 4 66.8.55.83	Family Roles

Additional Resources on Women's History, 1777-1789

Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

Jones, Sarah E., "A Comparison of the Status of Widows in Eighteenth-Century England and Colonial America," (Master's Thesis, University of North Texas, 2004).

Kierner, Cynthia. *Southern Women in Revolution, 1776 – 1800: Personal and Political Narratives*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998.

McBride, Janet, and Ransom McBride. *Divorces and Separations from Petitions to the North Carolina General Assembly from 1779*. Heritage Books, 2019.

Enslaved and Free People of Color in General Assembly Records

Enslaved persons could not directly participate in petitioning the General Assembly. They appear in the records listed here as the subjects of petitions submitted by other individuals, whether they were enslavers or those requesting emancipation and manumission. This guide also includes changes to the laws governing slavery. In contrast, free people of color retained the ability to petition the General Assembly. Their petitions cover a variety of matters, including financial settlements, legal disputes, and redress of grievances. The records for this section are assigned into the following topics:

Enslaved Persons Described in Terms of Property (Property Language)

The legal language of the late 18th century referred to enslaved persons in terms of property. This category marks those records where such language is prominent.

Laws Concerning Enslavement

In 1715, North Carolina enacted its first slave code. Over time, North Carolina's slave codes increased in complexity. The laws included in this category delineate changes to the slave code and other legal standards governing the practice of slavery of North Carolina.

Enslaved Labor

These records primarily focus on the practice of "hiring out," by which enslavers would provide enslaved persons to a third party and receive payment back for their labor. Petitions dealing with appropriate compensation for hiring out or resolving disputes between two enslavers are common. Some records also address specific jobs undertaken by enslaved persons.

Resistance to Slavery

Some records reflect forms of resistance such as violence against enslavers (including murder), theft, flight, and truancy. Laws dictated punishments including executions.

Emancipation and Manumission

The records in this category include laws modifying the terms of emancipation and manumission as well as specific petitions that sought manumission for individuals. A 1741 statute strengthened a clause in the 1715 slave code that limited manumission to enslaved persons who had performed "honest and Faithful service" by adding that enslaved persons could only be manumitted for meritorious services. County courts decided what counted as a meritorious service they issued licenses when they approved manumission.

Free People of Color

During the years 1777-1789, free people of color had the same legal standing as white residents. The records within this category are primarily petitions identifying the petitioner as a free person of color.

The definition of a "free person of color" was somewhat broad and used as a label to describe anyone who was free but not considered to be white. This could include free people of ancestry including African, American Indian, East Indian, and mixed ancestry.

Women of Color

For explanation, see "Women and Children of Color" in the Women in General Assembly Records Section, above.

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Session of April-May, 1777: Messages from Senate.	May 2: Petition of James Ellis	May 2, 1777	GASR Apr-May 1777, Box 1 66.8.9.3	Women of Color
House Joint Resolutions: Folder 1	May 5: in favor of Parker Quince, Thomas McLin, and Robert Gibbs for Negroes executed (resolve in favor of Quince, reports on claims of Gibbs and McLin, and message only)	May 5, 1777	GASR Apr-May 1777, Box 1 66.8.9.12	Laws, Resistance, Property Language
Session of November-December, 1777: Joint Papers (Nov.-Dec.): Miscellaneous Senate and House messages.	Entire folder	November-December, 1777	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 1 66.8.10.4	Enslaved Labor
Session of November-December, 1777: House Joint Resolutions: November 20-December 22	November 22: commissioners to settle accounts of the public with John Wilcox relative to iron works in Chatham Co.	November 22, 1777	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 1 66.8.10.8	Enslaved Labor
Session of November-December, 1777: Joint Papers-Petitions: November-December, 1777	December 9: Petition of Alexander Campbell	December 9, 1777	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 1 66.8.10.10	General
(no date): Bill for establishing Courts of Law and for regulating the proceedings therein	Entire folder	1777	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 2 66.8.11.1	Laws
Joint Papers (August, 1778): Petitions	August 14: Petition of Martha Gilchrist	August 14, 1778	GASR Aug 1778, Box 1 66.8.14.6	Property Language
House Bills (August 13): Bill for levying a tax by assessment and otherwise	Entire folder	August 13, 1778	GASR Aug 1778, Box 1 66.8.14.15	Laws, Women of Color

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
January-February, 1779: Joint Select Committees	January 27: report on the petition of the people of Pasquotank County relative to the slaves liberated by the Quakers (with messages)	January 27, 1779	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.8	Laws, Free People of Color
	Feb. 12: Report re insurrection in Tryon County (with amendment and messages)	February 12, 1779	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.8	Resistance
Senate Joint Resolutions: Jan. 21-Feb. 13	Jan.27: Sarah Dupree of Brunswick County given allowance for executed slave (with messages)	January 27, 1779	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.10	Emancipation and Manumission
House Joint Resolutions: Jan. 19-Feb. 4	Jan. 26: Benjamin Clark allowed compensation for executed slave (with messages)	January 26, 1779	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.11	Laws, Resistance, Property Language
Senate Bills (January 28): Bill to prevent stealing of slaves, etc.	Entire folder	January 28, 1779	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 2 66.8.16.8	Laws, Emancipation and Manumission, Free People of Color
Senate Bills (October 26): Bill to amend an Act entitled an Act concerning servants and slaves	Entire folder	October 26, 1779	GASR Oct-Nov 1779, Box 2 66.8.19.10	Laws, Property Language
House Bills (October 27): Bill to amend an Act entitled an additional act concerning servants and slaves passed at New Bern in the year 1753, etc.	Entire folder	October 27, 1779	GASR Oct-Nov 1779, Box 2 66.8.19.51	Laws, Resistance
Senate Bills (April 24): Bill for levying a tax by general assessment (rejected)	Entire folder	April 24, 1780	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 2 66.8.21.10	Laws, Women of Color

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
House Bills (April 29): Bill to amend act for ascertaining what property shall be taxable	Entire folder	April 29, 1780	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 2 66.8.21.32	Property Language
Joint Papers (August-September, 1780): Miscellaneous Petitions and Accounts	September 1: petition of sundry inhabitants of Edenton	September 1, 1780	GASR Aug-Sept 1780, Box 1 66.8.22.6	Laws, Property Language
Senate Bills (September 10): Bill for securing the quiet and inoffensive inhabitants of this state (with petition from Georgian refugees)	Entire folder	September 10, 1780	GASR Aug-Sept 1780, Box 1 66.8.22.19	Laws, Property Language
House Bills (February 3): Additional bill to an act concerning servants and slaves	Entire folder	February 3, 1781	GASR Jan-Feb 1781, Box 2 66.8.24.17	Laws, Resistance, Property Language, Women of Color
Senate Joint Resolutions: July 6-14	July 13: in favor of John Philip Clapp (with petition) (rejected)	July 13, 1782	GASR June-July 1781, Box 1 66.8.25.11	Property Language
Apr.-May, 1782 Jt. Select Comm., Reports and Papers (petitions, messages, etc.) April. 17-27	Apr. 25: Report on petition from the people called Quakers (with petition and messages)	April 25, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.8	Laws, Emancipation and Manumission, Free People of Color
Apr.- May: Joint Select Committees Reports and Papers (petitions, messages, etc.): Apr. 29 - May 4	May 1: Report on petition of Martha Thompson (messages and petition only)	May 1, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.9	Property Language
	May 4: Report on the petition of Joseph Benthall, Jr., of Hertford Co. suspending Joseph Wood from the office of justice of the peace (with petition, messages, and enclosures)	May 4, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.9	Property Language, Women of Color

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
House Joint Resolutions, April 17 - May 2	May 1: Resolutions allowing sums to William Eaton and John Green for slaves executed in Halifax County (with certificates) (rejected)	May 1, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 2 66.8.28.8	Laws, Resistance, Property Language
	May 1: Resolution allowing sum to William Bryan for slave executed (with Craven Co. certificate) (rejected)	May 1, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 2 66.8.28.8	Laws, Resistance, Property Language
House Joint Resolutions, May 3 - May 9	May 6: Resolution regarding petition of William Borden (messages only, with petition and a letter from William Tisdale regarding Gov. Josiah Martin's papers)	May 6, 1782	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 2 66.8.28.9	Property Language
Senate Joint Resolutions: Apr 20-May 17	Apr. 25: Resolution in favor of Henry Oneal of Edenton	April 25, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 1 66.8.29.12	Property Language
	Apr. 25: Resolution in favor of Miss Nancy Jones of Edenton	April 25, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 1 66.8.29.12	Property Language
House Joint Resolutions: Apr. 21-30	Apr. 23: Resolution in favor of William Bryan of Craven County	April 23, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 1 66.8.29.13	Resistance, Property Language
Apr. 22: House bill to amend a 1741 act concerning servants and slaves	Entire folder	April 22, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 2 66.8.30.41	Laws, Resistance
Apr. 28: House bill to substitute the ownership of three slaves for dower rights to property (petition only)	Entire folder	April 28, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 2 66.8.30.59	Property Language, Women of Color

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
May 9: House bill to secure title to slaves and other property purchased from the government of Georgia for North Carolina citizens (rejected)	Entire folder	May 9, 1783	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 2 66.8.30.78	Property Language
Joint Standing Committees: Committee to examine governor's message and to bring public bills: reports and papers Apr 20-May 21	May 11: Report on the remonstrance of Patrick Saint-Lawrence (remonstrance only)	May 11, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.11	Property Language
	May 14: Report on a more equal and effectual mode of taxation. Includes a report on a memorial from the Quakers asking for an end to slavery (referred to the next Assembly)	May 14, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.11	Emancipation and Manumission, Free People of Color
Senate Joint Resolutions: Apr.- June, 1784	Apr. 24: Resolution awarding allowances to owners of executed slaves (court records only)	April 24, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 2 66.8.32.4	Resistance, Property Language
	Apr. 29: Resolutions awarding allowances to owners of executed slaves (court records only)	April 29, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 2 66.8.32.4	Resistance, Property Language
	Apr. 30: Resolution awarding allowance to Joseph Locke for an executed slave (petition and court records only)	April 30, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 2 66.8.32.4	Resistance, Property Language
House Joint Resolutions: April 21-June 3	May 5: Resolution in favor of Elijah Graves for executed slave	May 5, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 2 66.8.32.5	Resistance, Property Language

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
	May 5: Resolution ordering treasurers to withhold payment awarded as compensation for executed slaves until further directions from the Assembly (with message)	May 5, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 2 66.8.32.5	Resistance, Property Language
Apr. 28: Senate bill to suppress vice and immorality	Entire folder	April 28, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 3 66.8.33.2	Women of Color
May 3: Senate bill to encourage the destruction of vermin (rejected)	Entire folder	May 3, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 3 66.8.33.7	General
May 15: Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom (petition and messages only)	Entire folder	May 15, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 3 66.8.33.23	Emancipation and Manumission, Free People of Color
May 6: House bill to regulate some forms of hunting	Entire folder	May 6, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 3 66.8.33.59	Laws, Enslaved Labor
May 6: House bill to empower delegates in Congress to assent to repeal part of the Eighth Article of Confederation	Entire folder	May 6, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 3 66.8.33.61	Laws
May 18: House bill to repeal all acts that direct and provide for payment for any slave killed or executed (to lie over till next Assembly)	Entire folder	May 18, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 4 66.8.34.27	Laws, Resistance, Property Language
May 22: House bill to amend an act concerning servants and slaves (rejected)	Entire folder	May 22, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 4 66.8.34.37	Laws

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
May 24: House bill for the more speedy and effectual recovery of slaves and other property (rejected)	Entire folder	May 24, 1784	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 4 66.8.34.44	Laws, Resistance
House Joint Resolutions: Oct. 26-Nov. 25	Nov. 16: Resolution citing Robert Norris, Franklin County justice of the peace, to appear at the next Assembly and suspending him (remonstrance only)	November 16, 1784	GASR Oct-Nov 1784, Box 1 66.8.35.14	General
Nov. 8: Senate bill for opening to navigation the northwest of the New River in Onslow County (rejected)	Entire folder	November 8, 1784	GASR Oct-Nov 1784, Box 1 66.8.35.37	Laws, Enslaved Labor
Nov. 9: House bill to ascertain the number of white and black inhabitants of the state	Entire folder	November 9, 1784	GASR Oct-Nov 1784, Box 2 66.8.36.63	Laws, Free People of Color
Committee of Propositions and Grievances: Reports and Papers	Dec. 13: Report on the petition of Jane Spurgin (with petition) (rejected)	December 13, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 1 66.8.37.9	Property Language
Grand Committee to consider the message from the governor and resolves of Congress: Reports and Papers	Mar. 15: Resolution of Congress appointing commissioners to hold treaties with the Cherokee and others	March 15, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 1 66.8.37.11	General
Committee on the Treasurer's Accounts: Reports and Papers	Dec. 22: Resolution for the governor to secure slaves for their owners	December 22, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 2 66.8.38.7	Property Language
Dec. 5: House bill permitting emancipation of slaves under certain restrictions (petition only)	Entire folder	December 5, 1785	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 3 66.8.39.38	Laws, Emancipation and Manumission, Free People of Color

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Standing Committees: Grand Committee - Governor's message and enclosures not sent to other committees	March 12 - July 10: Governor's letters concerning slave ownership	March 12-July 10, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 1 66.8.41.16	Property Language
Joint Select Committees, Nov. 25 - Dec. 20	Nov. 30: Report on committee to ascertain the number of white and black inhabitants, etc. of the state (messages only)	November 30, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 2 66.8.42.7	General
	Dec. 7: Report on petition of people called Quakers relative to slaves (with petition and messages) (rejected)	December 6, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 2 66.8.42.7	Laws, Emancipation and Manumission, Free People of Color
Joint Resolutions: Committee of the Whole of two Houses in Conference, re bills to be prepared by the Grand Committee, Nov. 28	Entire folder	November 28, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.2	General
Senate Joint Resolutions, Nov. 22 - Dec. 13	Dec. 11: Resolution re horses and Negroes belonging to state prisoners (message and letter only)	December 11, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.4	General
Senate Joint Resolutions: Dec. 14 - Dec. 31	Dec. 31: Resolution ordering sheriff of New Hanover County to restore slaves, etc., of John Rutherford and others (petition only)	December 31, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.5	General
House Joint Resolutions, Nov. 24 - Dec. 15	Dec. 9: Resolution allowing sum to Reuben Grant for slave executed in Onslow County (committee report only)	December 9, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.7	Resistance, Property Language

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
House Joint Resolutions, Dec. 16 - Dec. 31	Dec. 29: Resolution allowing sum to James Blount for slave executed by the court (committee report only)	December 29, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.8	Resistance, Property Language, Women of Color
	Dec. 29: Resolution acquitting sundry inhabitants of Fayetteville from payment of fines (petition and committee report only)	December 29, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.8	Resistance
House Joint Resolutions, Jan. 2 - Jan. 6	Jan. 5: Resolution in favor of Christian McKenzie and Christian Young of New Hanover County (with petition)	January 5, 1787	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.9	Enslaved Labor
Dec. 12: Additional House bill to an act for regulation of the town of New Bern	Entire folder	December 12, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 5 66.8.44.33	Free People of Color
Dec. 12: House bill to emancipate Hannah, alias Hannah Bowers, of the estate of Alexander Gaston (with petition)	Entire folder	December 12, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.44.34	Emancipation and Manumission, Free People of Color, Women of Color
Dec. 14: House bill to impose a duty on all slaves brought into the state by land or water	Entire folder	December 14, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 5 66.8.44.38	General
Dec. 16: House bill to vest title of certain Negroes in William Sanders Lancaster (with petition) (rejected)	Entire folder	December 16, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 5 66.8.44.45	Emancipation and Manumission, Free People of Color, Women of Color
Dec. 11: Senate bill permitting emancipation of slaves under certain regulations (rejected)	Entire folder	December 11, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 4 66.8.45.21	Laws, Emancipation and Manumission, Free People of Color

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Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Dec. 25: Senate bill to emancipate Caesar, formerly servant of Samuel Yeargan (with certificate)	Entire folder	December 25, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 4 66.8.45.47	Emancipation and Manumission, Free People of Color
Dec. 28: Senate bill to repeal the several acts re allowances to owners for executed or outlawed slaves	Entire folder	December 28, 1786	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 4 66.8.45.51	Laws, Resistance, Property Language
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances, Nov. 25 - Dec. 3	Nov. 29: Report on petition of John Walker	November 29, 1788	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 2 66.9.50.2	General
Joint Select Committees: Reports, referrals, etc., Nov. 18 - Dec. 6	Nov. 21: Report on petition of Henry Hill and Thomas Fill (with petition)	November 21, 1788	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.5	Property Language
Nov. 7: Senate bill to confirm titles of several citizens in certain Negroes (petition and messages only)	Entire folder	November 7, 1788	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 3 66.8.51.3	Property Language
Nov. 15: House bill to establish a new mode of the trial of slaves for capital offenses (rejected)	Entire folder	November 15, 1788	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 3 66.8.51.44	Laws, Resistance
Joint papers: Petitions rejected or not acted on	Memorial of William Evans (rejected). November 4	November 4, 1789	GASR Nov-Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.11	Resistance, Property Language
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Claims	Report on petition of Sarah Dupree (petition only). November 24	November 24, 1789	GASR Nov-Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.17	Resistance, Property Language
	Report on petition of Benjamin Sheppard (petition only). December 14	December 14, 1789	GASR Nov-Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.17	General

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Local Call Number	Topic
Bill to Repeal Part of Act to Impose Duty On All Slaves Brought Into State by Land or Water (Rejected). November 10	Entire folder	November 10, 1789	GASR Nov-Dec 1789, Box 3 66.8.54.60	Laws
Bill to Emancipate Certain Negroes Therein Mentioned (with Petitions). November 12	Entire folder	November 12, 1789	GASR Nov-Dec 1789, Box 3 66.8.54.67	Laws, Emancipation and Manumission, Free People of Color
Bill for Empowering County Courts to Appoint Patrols and Directing Their Duty in Office (Laid Over). November 14	Entire folder	November 14, 1789	GASR Nov-Dec 1789, Box 4 66.8.55.16	Laws
Bill to Amend Act to Explain Act to Regulate Descent of Real Estate, and for Directing How Gifts and Sales of Slaves Shall be Executed. December 9	Entire folder	December 9, 1789	GASR Nov-Dec 1789, Box 4 66.8.55.75	Property Language

Additional Resources Concerning African American History, 1777-1789

Byrd, William L., III. *Against the Peace and Dignity of the State: North Carolina Laws Regarding Slaves, Free Persons of Color, and Indians*. Westminster: Heritage Books, Inc., 2007.

Kay, Marvin L. Michael, and Lorin Lee Cary. *Slavery in North Carolina, 1749 – 1775*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1995.

Milteer, Warren E., Jr. *North Carolina's Free People of Color, 1715-1885*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2020).

American Indians in General Assembly Records

The General Assembly Session Records between 1777 and 1789 include American Indians' interaction with the European-descended residents and government of the North Carolina. Those interactions were occasionally peaceful, as in treaties, but violence and disregard of established land boundaries appear often in these records.

The three nations named in these records are the Cherokee, the Tuscarora, and the Chickamauga. The nation is included in the below table when identified within the record. The records for this section are assigned into the following topics:

Treaties

This category includes treaties forged between the North Carolina government and the leaders of American Indian nations.

Land

This category includes discussions of the lands possessed by American Indian communities, including records related to governmental efforts to relocate them.

Conflict and Violence

Records in this category document instances of violence between American Indian communities and residents of European descent. Some of the records refer to official deployments of the North Carolina militia to wage war against members of American Indian nations while other records relate more to localized incidents.

General Assembly Guide for Marginalized Communities, 1777-1789 |

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
Senate Bills (May 9): Act for the encouragement of the militia and volunteers employed in prosecuting the present Indian War	Entire folder	May 9, 1777	Cherokee	GASR Apr-May 1777, Box 1 66.8.9.16	Conflict and violence
House Joint Resolutions: November 20-December 22	December 22: appointing commissioners to superintend affairs of the Tuscarora Indians in Bertie Co. (message only)	December 22, 1777	Tuscarora	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 1 66.8.10.8	General
Senate Joint Resolutions: November 19-December 24	December 2: ordering James Miller of Tryon Co. to keep an Indian boy in his possession	December 2, 1777	Cherokee	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 1 66.8.10.9	General
	December 24: treaty with the Indians	December 24, 1777	None specified	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 1 66.8.10.9	Treaties
(no date): Bill for establishing Courts of Law and for regulating the proceedings therein	Entire folder	1777	None specified	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 2 66.8.11.1	General
House Bills (April 22): Bill for quieting and securing the Tuscarora Indians and others claiming under the Tuscaroras, in the possession of their lands	Entire folder	April 22, 1778	Tuscarora	GASR Apr-May 1778, Box 2 66.8.13.23	Land

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
August, 1778: Joint Select Committee Reports	August 13: Report on Indian Affairs (message only)	August 13, 1778	Cherokee	GASR Aug 1778, Box 1 66.8.14.7	General
House Bills (August 18): Bill to prevent trading with the Cherokee Indians without license	Entire folder	August 18, 1778	Tuscarora	GASR Aug 1778, Box 1 66.8.14.18	General
January-February, 1779: Joint Select Committees	January 20: report on letter from governor of Virginia re expedition against Chickamauga (with messages)	January 20, 1779	Chickamauga	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.8	Conflict and violence
Senate Joint Resolutions: Jan. 21-Feb. 13	Jan. 21: Resolutions (2) re Indian expedition (Chickamauga) (with messages)	January 21, 1779	Chickamauga	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.10	Conflict and violence
	Jan. 29: re James Robertson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs (messages only)	January 29, 1779	None specified	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.10	General
	Jan. 29: appointing Ellis Harling Superintendent of Indian Affairs (with message)	January 29, 1779	None specified	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.10	General
House Joint Resolutions: Jan. 19-Feb. 4	Jan. 25: appointing Jesse Walton contractor for Indian expedition (with messages)	January 25, 1779	None specified	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.11	General
	Feb. 1: in favor of Jesse Walton (message only)	February 1, 1779	None specified	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.11	General

General Assembly Guide for Marginalized Communities, 1777-1789 |

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Papers (April-May, 1780): Miscellaneous Petitions	April-May: petition of the Tuscarora Indians in Bertie County	1780	Tuscarora	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 1 66.8.20.7	General
Senate Joint Resolutions: May 5-10	May 5: concerning letters about Indian affairs (messages and committee report only)	May 5, 1780	None specified	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 1 66.8.20.8	Conflict and violence
House Joint Resolutions: May 2-10	May 2: requesting governor to require persons settled in Indian lands to move off (messages only)	May 2, 1780	None specified	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 1 66.8.20.17	Land
House Bills (April 28): Bill to amend act for quieting and securing the Tuscarora Indians	Entire folder	April 28, 1780	Tuscarora	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 2 66.8.21.30	Land
Materials sent for perusal (governor's messages, resolves of Congress, letters, petitions, resignments, etc.): Apr.-May, 1782	Entire folder	1782	Cherokee	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.4	Treaties
Joint Select Committees: Reports and Papers, May 8 - May 18	May 13: Report on memorial of James Hogg, William Johnston, and others (messages and petition only)	May 13, 1782	Cherokee	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.11	Land
House Joint Resolutions: May 1-17, 1783	May 8: Resolution in favor of Richard Henderson and company (rejected)	May 8, 1783	Cherokee	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 1 66.8.29.14	Land

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Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
	May 17: Resolution in favor of John Archibald of Rowan County	May 17, 1783	Cherokee	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 1 66.8.29.14	General
May 8: Senate bill to vest the title of lands purchased from the Cherokee Indians in Richard Henderson and others	Entire folder	May 8, 1783	Cherokee	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 2 66.8.30.25	Land
May 13: House bill to appoint an agent to negotiate a treaty with the Cherokee Indians	Entire folder	May 13, 1783	Cherokee, Chickamauga	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 2 66.8.30.82	Treaties, Conflict and violence
May 13: House bill to open land office for the redemption of specie and other certificates (protest only)	Entire folder	May 13, 1783	None specified	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 2 66.8.30.83	Land
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances Apr. 21-May 11, 1784	Apr. 28: Report on petition of the inhabitants settled beyond the western boundaries along the French Broad River (petition and message only)	April 28, 1784	None specified	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.8	Land
	May 11: Report on the petitions of inhabitants of Greene County regarding the boundary line between North Carolina and Cherokee lands (rejected)	May 11, 1784	Cherokee	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.8	Land

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Select Committees: Reports and papers, May 20-June 3	June 2: Report on holding a treaty with the Cherokee Indians	June 2, 1784	Cherokee	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 2 66.8.32.2	Treaties
May 3: Senate bill to encourage the destruction of vermin (rejected)	Entire folder	May 3, 1784	None specified	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 3 66.8.33.7	General
May 10: Senate bill to appoint commissioners to lay out a road from the long island of the Holston River to Green Lick (tabled)	Entire folder	May 10, 1784	Cherokee	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 3 66.8.33.13	Land
May 14: Senate bill for relief of sundry inhabitants of Davidson County (petition and committee report only)	Entire folder	May 14, 1784	None specified	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 3 66.8.33.18	Land
May 6: House bill to empower delegates in Congress to assent to repeal part of the Eighth Article of Confederation	Entire folder	May 6, 1784	None specified	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 3 66.8.33.61	General
May 19: House bill to extend the dividing line between Burke and Rutherford Counties (rejected)	Entire folder	May 19, 1784	None specified	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 4 66.8.34.33	Land

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Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
Grand Committee to consider the message from the governor and resolves of Congress: Reports and Papers	Mar. 15: Resolution of Congress appointing commissioners to hold treaties with the Cherokee and others	March 15, 1785	Cherokee	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 1 66.8.37.11	Treaties
Joint Standing Committees: Grand Committee - Governor's message and enclosures not sent to other committees	Nov. 20: Message regarding enclosures sent for perusal (typed copy)	November 20, 1786	Cherokee, Chickasaw	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 1 66.8.41.16	Treaties
Joint Standing Committees: Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, Nov. 20 - Jan. 6	Entire folder	November 20, 1786-January 6, 1787	Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 1 66.8.41.17	General
Senate Joint Resolutions: Dec. 14 - Dec. 31	Dec. 18: Resolution appointing committee to form resolve re Hopewell treaties (rejected)	December 18, 1786	None specified	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.5	Treaties
Senate Joint Resolutions, Jan. 1 - Jan. 7	Jan. 7: Resolution regarding Indian treaty	January 7, 1787	Cherokee, Chickasaw	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.6	Treaties
House Joint Resolutions, Nov. 24 - Dec. 15	Dec. 15: Resolution allowing land to George Lewis and heirs of Thomas Price (petition, evidence, and committee report only)	December 15, 1786	Cherokee	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 3 66.8.43.7	Land
Dec. 1: House bill for raising troops for protection of Davidson County (with petition)	Entire folder	December 1, 1786	None specified	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 5 66.8.44.6	Conflict and violence

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Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Papers: Petitions - no date of introduction	N.D.: Representation of the representatives of Davidson and Sumner counties concerning the Indian threat in the Western country (with letters)	1787	Chickasaw, Creek	GASR Nov 1787- Dec 1787, Box 1 66.8.46.3	Land, Conflict and violence
Joint Papers: Correspondence, etc., sent for perusal (no action taken), Dec. 7 - Dec. 20	Entire folder	December 7, 1787-December 20, 1787	None specified	GASR Nov 1787- Dec 1787, Box 1 66.8.46.4	Treaties
Joint Standing Committees: Committee on Public Bills (merged Dec. 4 with Committee of Finance), Nov. 19 - Nov. 23	Nov.: Part of correspondence between Gen. Shelby and Governor Caswell re people of Washington, Sullivan, Green, and Hawkins counties (sent with governor's message of Nov. 21)	November 1787	None specified	GASR Nov 1787- Dec 1787, Box 1 66.8.46.11	General
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Finance (merged with Committee on Public Bills, Dec. 4), Nov. 19 - Dec. 20	Dec. 20: Report on papers concerning Indian treaties	December 20, 1787	None specified	GASR Nov 1787- Dec 1787, Box 1 66.8.46.13	Treaties
Joint Standing Committees: Committee on Revenue	N.D.: Report of subcommittee re accounts of William Blount, late commissioner of Indian treaties (rejected)	1788	None specified	GASR Nov 1888- Dec 1788, Box 1 66.8.49.12	Treaties

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Standing Committees: Committee on Indian Affairs	Nov. 5 - 11: Messages re committee	November 5, 1788-November 11, 1788	None specified	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 1 66.8.49.13	General
	Deposition apparently enclosed with letter from Alex. Drumgoole to Governor Johnston, April 4, 1789 (enclosure only)	November 5, 1788	Cherokee	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 1 66.8.49.13	Conflict and violence
	Nov. 5: Report on governor's proclamation of July 29, 1788, enclosed with his message of Nov. 5 and referred with other papers to Committee on Indian Affairs	November 5, 1788	None specified	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 1 66.8.49.13	General
	Nov. 14: Report on petition of sundry inhabitants of French Broad River (petition only)	November 14, 1788	None specified	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 1 66.8.49.13	Land, Conflict and violence
	Nov. 20: Report on petitions of inhabitants of Greene Co. and south of French Broad River (petition only)	November 20, 1788	None specified	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 1 66.8.49.13	General
	Nov. 26: Report on petition of Mary Bledsoe (petition only)	November 26, 1788	Creek	GASR Nov 1788-Dec 1788, Box 1 66.8.49.13	General

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances, Nov. 25 - Dec. 3	Nov. 25: Report on petition of persons settled on lands of the Cherokee Indians (with petition)	November 25, 1788	Cherokee	GASR Nov 1788- Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.2	Land
Joint Select Committees: Reports, referrals, etc., Nov. 18 - Dec. 6	Nov. 21: Report of committee appointed to confer with Alexander Drumgoole, re Indian affairs	November 21, 1788	None specified	GASR Nov 1788- Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.5	General
	Dec. 4: Report of committee for preparing instructions to be observed by commissioners for treating with the Indians (message only)	December 4, 1788	None specified	GASR Nov 1788- Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.5	Treaties
	Dec. 6: Report on payrolls and commissary accounts from District of Washington (with claim of Joseph Ervin/Erwin)	December 6, 1788	None specified	GASR Nov 1788- Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.5	General
Senate Joint Resolutions, Nov. 18 - Nov. 29	Nov. 18: Resolution appointing committee to confer with Alexander Drumgoole about sending Talk to Indians (for draft, see Senate Bill, Nov. 11, 1788, to carry into effect the ordinance, etc., back of yeas and nays)	November 18, 1788	Cherokee, Creek	GASR Nov 1788- Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.9	Treaties

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
	Nov. 26: Resolution directing governor to issue a proclamation requiring persons to remove off Indian hunting grounds (rejected)	November 26, 1788	None specified	GASR Nov 1788- Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.9	Land
	Nov. 28: Resolution appointing committee to confer with governor about sending messenger with a Talk to the Indians	November 28, 1788	None specified	GASR Nov 1788- Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.9	General
Senate Joint Resolutions, Nov. 30 - Dec. 6	Dec. 1: Resolution re wages for Alexander Drumgoole for delivering Talks to Indians and bringing back responses (messages only)	December 1, 1788	None specified	GASR Nov 1788- Dec 1788, Box 2 66.8.50.10	Treaties
Joint papers: Petitions rejected or not acted on	Petition from inhabitants of the Indian Territory (addressed to governor and council)	1789	None specified	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.11	Land
Joint Standing Committees: Committee on Indian Affairs	Deposition Apparently enclosed with letter from Alex. Drumgoole to Governor Johnston, April 4, 1789 (enclosure only). November 5	November 5, 1789	Cherokee	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.15	Land

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
	Memorial of John Sevier (memorial only). November 20	November 20, 1789	None specified	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.11	Treaties
	Messages concerning letter from Alexander McGillivray, chief of the Creek Nation (messages only). November 2	November 2, 1789	Creek	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.11	General
	State of North Carolina on account with John Steele, agent for Indian treaty (letter and account only). November 25	November 25, 1789	None specified	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.11	Treaties
	Message from Governor Johnston communicating a letter from Bennett Bellew. December 4	December 4, 1789	None specified	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.11	General
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances, November 3-26	Petition from inhabitants of the Western Country about land title below Brown's Line. November 4	November 4, 1789	None specified	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 1 66.8.52.18	Land
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances, December 16 - December 22	Report in favor of Elisha Hadden (Petition Only). December 17	December 17, 1789	Cherokee	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 2 66.8.53.2	Conflict and violence

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Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Select Committees: Reports and Papers, December 15 - December 21	Report of Committee on Conduct of General Joseph Martin, Indian Agent (Depositions, Letters, and Messages only). December 15	December 15, 1789	Cherokee, Chickasaw, Creek	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 2 66.8.53.5	General
Draft Bill (Not Introduced): To Confirm Treaty of 1785 Between John Sevier and the Cherokee Indians.	Entire folder	1789	Cherokee	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 3 66.8.54.5	Treaties, Land
Bill to Repeal Part of Act for Appointing Agent and Holding Treaty with Cherokee Indians. December 8	Entire folder	December 8, 1789	Cherokee	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 3 66.8.54.40	Treaties
Bill to Extend Civil and Military Authority of North Carolina to Inhabitants South of French Broad River (Referred to Committee). November 10	Entire folder	November 10, 1789	None specified	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 3 66.8.54.58	Land
Bill for Defraying Expenses of Expedition Carried on Against the Cherokee (Rejected). November 12	Entire folder	November 12, 1789	Cherokee	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 3 66.8.54.64	Conflict and violence
Bill for Relief of Persons Wounded by Indians in the District of Mero, Etc. November 30	Entire folder	November 30, 1789	None specified	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 4 66.8.55.46	Conflict and violence

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Nation	Local Call Number	Topic
Bill to Prescribe Mode of Paying Militia for Services in Expedition Against Chiccamoga Indians in 1788 (with Petition and Report). December 4	Entire folder	December 4, 1789	Chickamauga	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 4 66.8.55.58	Conflict and violence
Bill for the Relief of Inhabitants on the South Side of the French Broad River (with Petitions) (Rejected). December 12	Entire folder	December 12, 1789	None specified	GASR Nov 1789- Dec 1789, Box 4 66.8.55.81	General

Additional Resources Concerning American Indian History, 1777-1789

Blackmon, Richard, *Dark and Bloody Ground: The American Revolution Along the Southern Frontier*. Yardley: Westholme, 2013.

Buncombe County Register of Deeds, "As Long as The Grass Shall Grow: A history of Cherokee land cessions and the formation of Buncombe County," *ARCGIS Story Maps*, 2021.

Krauthamer, Barbara, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery, Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013.

Religious Minority Groups in General Assembly Records

The most prominent community in these records are the Quakers (the Society of Friends). Their pacifism, aversion to oaths of allegiance, and efforts to manumit enslaved persons inspired several laws and petitions in these records. Other religious minority groups that appear include Moravians, German Baptists (also known as Dunkers or Dunkards), and Mennonites. The records for this section are assigned into the following topics:

Religious Exemptions

The records in this category include petitions seeking exemptions from military service or from swearing the Oath of Allegiance on religious grounds. Quakers and other communities could “affirm,” rather than “swear,” an Oath of Allegiance.

Taxation

The state did not force the Moravians, Quakers, Mennonites, and German Baptists to fight in the American Revolution. However, in return for their exemptions from militia service, the General Assembly imposed higher taxes upon members of these groups. At times, the tax was even three times greater than the standard tax imposed on other North Carolinians. The records in this category include both related laws and petitions seeking redress.

Opposition to Enslavement

The Quaker community in North Carolina actively opposed the slave trade and worked to manumit enslaved persons. The most common strategy Quakers used for emancipation was to purchase enslaved persons for the sole person of manumitting them. However, the General Assembly enacted statutes to make manumission more difficult. For example, the Quaker communities in Pasquotank County and Perquimans County fought a prolonged legal battle to prevent the re-sale of enslaved persons whom they had previously attempted to manumit. The records in this category document the efforts of Quakers and members of other faiths to oppose slavery and attempt acts of manumission.

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Denomination	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Papers-Petitions: November-December, 1777	Petition of the people called Quakers (no date)	1777	Quakers	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 1 66.8.10.10	General
(no date): Bill for establishing Courts of Law and for regulating the proceedings therein	Entire folder	1777	Quakers	GASR Nov-Dec 1777, Box 2 66.8.11.1	Exemptions
Miscellaneous letters and Congressional resolves sent to Governor Caswell, April-November	November 11: letter to Thomas Harvey about marriage	November 11, 1778	Quakers	GASR Apr-May 1778, Box 1 66.8.12.12	Exemptions
	November 11: letter to Thomas Harvey listing Quakers who had been drafted	November 11, 1778	Quakers	GASR Apr-May 1778, Box 1 66.8.12.12	Exemptions
	November 13: letter about Quakers petitioning for discharge	November 13, 1778	Quakers	GASR Apr-May 1778, Box 1 66.8.12.12	Exemptions
Joint Papers (August, 1778): Petitions	August 4: Petition of the Nicholites praying permission to affirm as the Quakers do	August 4, 1778	Nicholites, Quakers	GASR Aug 1778, Box 1 66.8.14.6	Exemptions
August, 1778: Joint Select Committee Reports	August 15: Report on Moravian petition (with messages and petition)	August 15, 1778	Moravians	GASR Aug 1778, Box 1 66.8.14.7	Exemptions

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Denomination	Local Call Number	Topic
January-February, 1779: Joint Select Committees	January 23: report re petitions of the people called Moravians and Quakers (with petition and messages)	January 23, 1779	Moravians, Quakers	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.8	Exemptions
	January 27: report on the petition of the people of Pasquotank County relative to the slaves liberated by the Quakers (with messages)	January 27, 1779	Quakers	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.8	Opposition to Enslavement
Joint Papers (Jan.-Feb., 1779): Petitions	(no date): Petition of Thomas Saint	1779	Quakers	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 1 66.8.15.9	Exemptions
Senate Bills (January 30): Bill to prescribe the affirmation of allegiance and fidelity to this state to be taken by the people called Moravians, Quakers, Mennonites, and Dunkers, and granting them certain indulgences therein mentioned, etc.	Entire folder	January 30, 1779	Moravians, Quakers, Mennonites, German Baptists	GASR Jan-Feb 1779, Box 2 66.8.15.16	Exemptions
Joint Papers (April-May, 1780): Joint Select Committee	April 21: petition of yearly meeting of Quakers	April 21, 1780	Quakers	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 1 66.8.20.8	General

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Denomination	Local Call Number	Topic
Reports and Papers	April 1780: Quaker petition	April 1780	Quakers	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 1 66.8.20.8	Exemptions
Senate Bills (April 24): Bill for levying a tax by general assessment (rejected)	Entire folder	April 24, 1780	Moravians, Quakers, Mennonites, German Baptists	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 2 66.8.21.10	Taxation
House Bills (April 28): Bill for relief of Moravians, Quakers, Menonists, and Dunkards	Entire folder	April 28, 1780	Moravians, Mennonites, Quakers, German Baptists	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 2 66.8.21.28	Exemptions
House Bills (April 29): Bill for levying a public tax for the year 1780	Entire folder	April 29, 1780	Quakers, Moravians, German Baptists	GASR Apr-May 1780, Box 2 66.8.21.33	Taxation
Senate Bills (August 31): Bill for levying a further tax (failed)	Entire folder	August 31, 1780	Quakers, Moravians, Mennonites	GASR Aug-Sept 1780, Box 1 66.8.22.12	Taxation
Senate Bills (September 6): Bill for levying a specific provision tax	Entire folder	September 6, 1780	Quakers, Moravians, Mennonites	GASR Aug-Sept 1780, Box 1 66.8.22.16	Taxation
House Bills (June 28): Bill for levying a money and specific provision tax for 1781	Entire folder	June 28, 1781	Mennonites, Quakers, German Baptists	GASR June-July 1781, Box 2 66.8.26.15	Exemptions, Taxation
Apr.-May, 1782 Jt. Select Comm., Reports and Papers (petitions, messages, etc.) April. 17-27	Apr. 25: Report on petition from the people called Quakers (with petition and messages)	April 25, 1782	Quakers	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.8	Opposition to Enslavement

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Denomination	Local Call Number	Topic
	Apr. 26: Report on petition from Quakers in the western quarter (messages only)	April 26, 1782	Quakers	GASR Apr-May 1782, Box 1 66.8.27.8	General
May 6: Senate bill to amend the assessment law passed at Hillsborough	Entire folder	May 6, 1783	Moravians, Quakers	GASR Apr-May 1783, Box 2 66.8.30.21	Taxation
Joint Standing Committees: Committee to examine governor's message and to bring public bills: reports and papers Apr 20-May 21	May 14: Report on a more equal and effectual mode of taxation. Includes a report on a memorial from the Quakers asking for an end to slavery (referred to the next Assembly)	May 14, 1784	Quakers	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 1 66.8.31.11	Opposition to Enslavement
May 1: House bill to prescribe the oath of allegiance to be taken by Quakers and to allow them indulgences	Entire folder	May 1, 1784	Quakers, Moravians, Mennonites, German Baptists	GASR Apr-June 1784, Box 3 66.8.33.47	Exemptions
Nov. 8: House bill to alter the oath of allegiance and the oath of affirmation of fidelity	Entire folder	November 8, 1784	Quakers, Mennonites, Moravians, German Baptists	GASR Oct-Nov 1784, Box 2 66.8.36.53	Exemptions
Dec. 3: Senate bill to prevent persons from blocking ways leading to houses of religious worship	Entire folder	December 3, 1785	None specified	GASR Nov-Dec 1785, Box 2 66.8.38.18	General

Folder	Specific Item	Date	Denomination	Local Call Number	Topic
Joint Select Committees, Nov. 25 - Dec. 20	Dec. 7: Report on petition of people called Quakers relative to slaves (with petition and messages) (rejected)	December 7, 1786	Quakers	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 2 66.8.42.7	Opposition to Enslavement
Dec. 16: House bill to vest title of certain Negroes in William Sanders Lancaster (with petition) (rejected)	Entire folder	December 16, 1786	Quakers	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 5 66.8.44.45	Opposition to Enslavement
Joint Standing Committees: Committee of Propositions and Grievances, Dec. 10 - Dec. 21	Dec. 16: Report on petition of Mary Richards of Perquimans Co. (with petition) (rejected)	December 16, 1786	Quakers	GASR Nov 1786-Jan 1787, Box 1 66.8.45.16	General
Bill to Vest Certain Lands in the Monthly Meeting of Quakers at New Garden, Guilford County (Petition only). November 14	Entire folder	November 14, 1789	Quakers	GASR Nov 1789-Dec 1789, Box 4 66.8.55.11	General

Additional Resources Concerning Religious Minorities History, 1777-1789

Carroll, Kenneth L. *Joseph Nichols and the Nicholites: A Look at the "New Quakers" of Maryland, Delaware, North and South Carolina*. Easton, MD: Easton Publishing Company, 1962.

Crawford, Michael J. *The Having of Negroes is Become a Burden: The Quaker Struggle to Free Slaves in Revolutionary North Carolina*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2010.

Jonas, W. Glenn Jr. (ed), *Religious Traditions of North Carolina: Histories, Tenets, and Leaders* (North Carolinian Society). Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2018.

Additional Resources

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Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

Jones, Sarah E., "A Comparison of the Status of Widows in Eighteenth-Century England and Colonial America," (Master's Thesis, University of North Texas, 2004).

Kierner, Cynthia. *Southern Women in Revolution, 1776 – 1800: Personal and Political Narratives*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998.

McBride, Janet, and Ransom McBride. *Divorces and Separations from Petitions to the North Carolina General Assembly from 1779*. Heritage Books, 2019.

African American History

Byrd, William L., III. *Against the Peace and Dignity of the State: North Carolina Laws Regarding Slaves, Free Persons of Color, and Indians*. Westminster: Heritage Books, Inc., 2007.

Kay, Marvin L. Michael, and Lorin Lee Cary. *Slavery in North Carolina, 1749 – 1775*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1995.

Milteer, Warren E., Jr. *North Carolina's Free People of Color, 1715-1885*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2020).

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Blackmon, Richard, *Dark and Bloody Ground: The American Revolution Along the Southern Frontier*. Yardley: Westholme, 2013.

Buncombe County Register of Deeds, "As Long as The Grass Shall Grow: A history of Cherokee land cessions and the formation of Buncombe County," *ARCGIS Story Maps*, 2021.

Krauthamer, Barbara, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery, Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013.

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Carroll, Kenneth L. *Joseph Nichols and the Nicholites: A Look at the "New Quakers" of Maryland, Delaware, North and South Carolina*. Easton, MD: Easton Publishing Company, 1962.

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