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Guest Editor: Jean L. Cooper

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Genealogical Research at the Albemarle County Court House

By John C. E. Christensen

Updated by Sam Towler, Jean L. Cooper, and
Patricia Lukas¹

Introduction

We are fortunate that a potential gold mine of genealogical information has been preserved in the Albemarle County Court House. While working in the court house record room, I have had the pleasure of meeting fellow genealogists who have come from the far corners of the United States. In talking with them about the mechanics of their quests, I have discovered that many of them are overlooking court records that are full of information. I have compiled, in order to help others understand, this source-by-source

¹ John Christensen wrote the first version of this article, dated Jan. 5, 1991. It was first published in the *Central Virginia Heritage*, v. 9, no. 1 (Winter 1991), p.3-7. The 2016 updates and revisions were written by Sam Towler and Jean L. Cooper. The plans of the record rooms at the Albemarle County Court House were designed by Sam Towler, and drawn by Patricia Lukas.



Figure 1: Albemarle County Court House. Records Room is on the second floor. Photograph courtesy of Patricia Lukas, 2016.

guide to research in the Albemarle County Court House. It will also be useful in other Virginia counties; although the exact records maintained by each county vary, the basic types are usually the same. Familiarity with the records should come in handy for genealogical research in any jurisdiction.

All of the records listed in this discussion are to be found in the circuit court record room and historical record vault on the second floor of the Albemarle County Court House on Court House Square in Charlottesville. The only records not found in the court house are the suit papers, which are stored in the Library of Virginia, in Richmond.

The major sections herein correspond to various distinct collections of useful information. They are discussed according to reasonable order in which they might be consulted. A short introduction to each source type explains the time frame to which it pertains, the types of information that may be found in it, how it should be used, and any particular advantages or disadvantages associated with it.

1. Deed Books

- Deed Book #1 (1744 to present)
- Deed Book #1 (District Court) (1790-1806)

The first place to look, and generally the most productive in terms of the volume of available information, is the county Deed Books. The Deed Book series is complete, without any gaps, from 1744 up to the present. *The contents of those Deed Books for 1744 to 1981 are indexed in separate Index Books. All Deeds and Indexes are in the Record Room; none are in the Historical Record Vault. Names from the Deed Books are indexed alphabetically by family name, then*

first letter of the given name. As somewhat of an anomaly, there is also a District Court Deed Book—only one, covering the years 1790-1806. It has its own index in the back of the first regular index book. Don't forget to check this book if the time period is relevant to your research! The computers currently have deeds & index to deeds from 1957.

Remember to check for all possible alternate spellings. Also names may be misspelled and indexed under that spelling. For example, Smith could be alternately spelled Smythe, or misspelled in a number of ways. Alternatively, initials could be used instead of a full given name. When you find your family name, or a close approximation to it, in the index, look to the Deed Book and page number given to see if the names listed are relevant to your research. Do not ignore names because the given name is different. Look up all variations of surnames and/or given names for possible relevance.

An advantage of the deed books is that people were more likely to have owned their land in the 18th and 19th centuries than nowadays. Land ownership records, then, are a good source of information about many people. They are also easy to find. There are some pitfalls to using deed books, however. The main drawback is that not all land sales and transactions appear in the deed books. Sometimes, deeds were not properly recorded. Other times, the recorded instruments are impossible to read or understand because of bad handwriting and / or impenetrable language.

Included among, but not limited to, the types of legal instruments one may find in deed books, are deeds, deeds of trust/mortgage,

leases, contracts, bills of sale, commissioners' reports and easements. The type and range of information found varies widely from document-to-document, so read carefully for obscure clues. Some of the key pieces of information to which one should be alert when reviewing the deed books are discussed below.

Names of Wives: Wives, by law, have a dower interest, which is the one-third part life interest in any real estate that a woman would receive at the death of her husband, so they must release their rights to the property when it is sold by the husband. Check the beginning (vesting clause) and end (acknowledgment) of the Deed for the wife's name and signature. Be aware that sometimes the dower release is recorded elsewhere in the deed books, i.e., indexed under her name.

Names of Other Relations: A document may list the heirs of a deceased landowner, or give a family history to show how the grantor got the land, or it may list relatives that happened to be neighbors.

Location of Family Grave Yards: Sometimes a grantor will reserve the family cemetery for use of the grantor and his family. With this information you may be able to locate the present location of a family graveyard which you may be able to visit at some future time.

Location of Family Homes: This information is rarely given. The most you may be told is, "where I now reside," referring to a tract of land, not a building. With this information, you may be able to pinpoint the present location of the family homestead.

Existence of Lawsuits: When you find that a family was involved in a lawsuit over land or

property, the full name of the suit and all parties should be copied for future reference. Suits involving individuals, such as personal bankruptcies, can also provide a wealth of information. In general, lawsuits can be sources of copious information. See the sections on chancery and suit papers for more information about lawsuits.

"Place Having Removed To": Sometimes persons will sell land after having moved elsewhere, or they may have been living elsewhere when they inherited property. The deed should give the place of residence of the grantors and grantees at the beginning of the deed. This information will be important in tracing the migration of a family out of Albemarle County.

Slaves (Sales, Manumissions): A bill of sale for a slave often gives the age of the person and may give relationships, such as his parents or children. A manumission may give a physical description as well.

Estate Sales: If the court ordered the estate of the deceased to be sold, then a record of the sale should have been recorded. Such a document will often list each item sold, for how much, and to whom. This represents a gold mine of information about a family. Be sure to check whether family members purchased items from the estate.

Plats: A plat is a map of a tract of land that has been surveyed for identification of ownership, acreage, and physical features. This is often the best record of the location of the family homestead. Look for graveyards, mills and dams, tract names, location of buildings, streams, mountains, and roads, as all these are more or less permanent, and may

help pinpoint a site on a modern map. In addition, plats often have the names of neighbors written on the property lines; these can provide clues to family relationships.

2. Land Books

- Land Books (1782-1852) (microfilm of originals)
- Land Books (1841-1951) (typed from originals)
- Land Books (ca.1900-present) (original books, some years might be missing)

A land book is where the county annually records the names of all landowners in the county, along with the current assessment of the value of their land and buildings, and the tax due on those assessments. The valuation lists individual buildings on the property, thus providing a year-by-year history of a family's land ownership and the improvements they made. There is one book per year, divided according to districts and town lots. Names are listed alphabetically by the first letter of the surname only. The typed version of the land books are easier to use since several years are bound together. But the typed version does not have all the information that is found in the originals. The typed version is a summary of the original, listing property owners, name/description of the property, acreage, and remarks. What is left out is the tax assessment information for the land and improvements.

Track land ownership: If you are interested in tracing the history of ownership of a parcel or tract of land, the land books sometimes notate land transfers in the "remarks" column. This information can be used to find documents in the deed books or will books that will identify a series of owners.

Ownership through intestate estates: The land books will often show the change of land ownership from the deceased to his or her heirs, which is useful in pinning down dates of death and finding heirs when no will exists.

3. "Index of Miscellaneous Papers" assembled by W. L. Maupin

- Coverage: 1744 to circa 1900-1910

Abbreviations found in citations therein:

- WB: will book number and page
- Ct Ct: Circuit Court; short style & number
- Fid: fiduciaries – administrators, estates & trustees
- Acct: Inventories & accounts; estates & taxes

"The Index of Miscellaneous Papers" is basically a master index to the papers of the court. The index is arranged alphabetically by family name, with individuals listed chronologically within the family name group. The heirs (or devisees) given in court records are listed for each person in this index, along with their relationship to the person. This is helpful in finding information about others of the same surname who may be related. This book will serve mainly to point you to other sources of information for your research.

4. Will Books

- Index (1744-1954)
- Index of Heirs (1912-1966)
- Will Book #1 (back of Deed Book #1)
- Circuit Court Will Book #1 & #2 (1798-1904)

These books are the Court's official record of all documents dealing with the estates of the deceased. In addition to Wills, the genealogist

will find inventories, appraisals, partitions, and sales recorded in these books. Most of these document types were later separated from the Wills and placed in separate books. Be aware that there are two books, labeled "Circuit Court Will Book 1" and "Circuit Court Will Book 2." The first of these books dates from 1798-1844, the second from 1844-1904. The master index for both books is in the front of Book 2. These two books are filed with the regular will book series, so be careful that you are looking at the correct book. Be aware that Will Book 1 of the regular will book series is not filed with the other books of that series. It has been bound into the back of Deed Book 1, which is stored in the historical record vault.

Wills: A will follows no set formula beyond what is required for probate. A will can either have a lot of information or almost none, so read carefully. At the least, a will should list the deceased person's heir(s) and state how the estate is to be transferred.

Appraisals: After a person dies, his or her estate may be appraised as to its value. Such a document can give you information about a person's life, wealth, and status. This often acts as a "snap-shot" of a person, time, and way of life.

Estate sales: A list of all of a person's personal property, its value, and who bought it, should be found if there was a court-ordered estate sale.

Estate partitions: the Estate Partition contains information about the deceased, the heirs, and how the estate was divided. Generally, two types of property are partitioned: land and slaves. Sometimes partitions of land may

include a plat, which may pinpoint the family homestead.

Slaves: Generally, slaves appear for four reasons: partition among the heirs; and listing for appraisal, sale, or manumission. The amount of information depends on the type of document and the person who wrote it.

5. Inventory & Appraisal Books

- Volumes #1 through #11 (1859-1966)
- Index

Before 1859, inventories and appraisals were recorded in the will books. Inventories and appraisals were not common, however, being required in only some cases and at the decree of the court. Beginning in 1859, however, the court recorded all inventories and appraisals in a separate series of books, the inventory & appraisal books.

Estate inventories: This is a listing of all personal property owned by the deceased at the time of his death. The court used the inventory to establish what would be divided among the heirs of the deceased.

Estate appraisals: An estate appraisal is the same as an inventory to establish the value of the estate for the purpose of setting the amount of money each heir of the estate would receive from the proceeds of an estate sale or partition.

Sales: The listing of a sale follows the same format as an inventory, but with the sale prices and buyer added. Look for possible relatives buying items at the sale.

6. Fiduciary Books

- (1877 to present)
- Index

The term "fiduciary" refers to property held in trust by a court-appointed executor or administrator. It also refers to the person who is entrusted with the property by the court. The fiduciary books deal with any property placed in a trust, part of an estate, or belonging to a person who was ruled incompetent to oversee his or her own affairs. The court-appointed fiduciary was required to give the court a complete accounting of the property entrusted to him, which the court then recorded in the fiduciary books.

Appointment of Executors/Administrators: Sometimes a relation may be appointed executor/administrator, which may provide some information about the family. In some cases a family friend may be appointed, who is also the guardian to any minor children. Most importantly, an appointment may give you a death date of the deceased. Be aware that the appointment of an executor means that a will exists (testate estate) and that the appointment of an administrator means no will exists (intestate estate).

Accounts: when an administrator is appointed by the court to oversee an estate, he or she must give the court a full accounting of all assets, bills, accounts, and payments associated with the upkeep and transference of the estate. These accounting are highly detailed and sometimes give such information as the name of the attending doctor at the death and the mortician (if any), along with a wealth of other information.

Dispersement: After an estate was sold, the administrator divided the proceeds among the heirs of the deceased. The relationship of the heirs to the deceased was shown so the

court could determine the lawful interest that each heir was entitled to receive.

7. Order Books

- (1744-48) (Index: near back of book)
- (1785-87)
- (1791-1804)
- (1806-1830)

The order books are where much of the business of the court was recorded. As such, they are an important source of information that few people seem to know about. Unfortunately, most of the order books from the colonial period are missing. The volumes are individually indexed, so be sure to check the front, back, and end pockets. The indexes for a few volumes have been lost. When using the indexes, carefully look under all possible spellings and read the entire listing, because the indexing was done chronologically within each section. Also be aware that some of the later indexes have separate subject sections, such as roads, county orders, free negroes, and so on.

Proving of Wills, Deeds: Deeds and related documents are "proved" before the court, which means that a document is found to be legal and ordered recorded. On rare occasions, a deed may be proved but not recorded. Wills are presented to the court for "probate," which means the same as "proved" and, if accepted, the will is recorded.

Appointment of Executors/Administrators: This is the record of the official court order of appointment of executor for a testate estate (with will) or administrator for an intestate estate (without will).

Appointment of Guardians: This is the record of the official court order of appointment of

guardians for the benefit of minor children of the deceased. The guardian, in some cases, may be a surviving parent, relative, or family friend. Sometimes these orders show illegitimacy.

“Binding out”: This can mean the “binding” of a minor into either an apprenticeship or a foster home by the court. This applied mainly to orphans or other minors that the court considered its wards, often for being indigent. The order should give the age of the minor, for the purpose of determining the length of service in the apprenticeship or foster home. Length of service was until the child reached the age of majority, which was usually 21 for males and 18 for females.

Road Orders: All roads and bridges were under the jurisdiction of the county court until late in the 19th century, when the jurisdiction was slowly shifted over to the County Board of Supervisors. The court appointed overseers to various roads in the county, ordered adjacent landowners to provide labor for the upkeep of the roads, and ordered work to be done on specific projects, such as building bridges.

Law Suits, Court Cases: The trial history of all law suits and court cases heard by the court were recorded in the order book. This information is not easy to find, because suits and cases are not indexed under the names of all involved in the action. The name usually indexed is that of the primary plaintiff. A lawsuit can be a premier source of information, both direct and indirect, so make an effort to note all such cases for future reference.

Certificates: The court has issued certificates as verification of service for people who were applying for Revolutionary War soldier pensions or land grants. These certificates may give a fairly complete history of the man’s wartime service. Others were issued certificates as a receipt for supplies given to troops or prisoners of war during wartime. Widows came before the court to claim pensions earned by their deceased husbands through wartime service. These orders often give a summary of the husband’s service and, sometimes, a date of death. In a few cases, the children will have notified the court of the death date of the widow.

Recommendation for military rank: One occasionally finds the court’s recommendations to the governor for selection of officers in the local militia or other county offices.

Licenses: Preachers were required to present their credentials to the court before they would be licensed to perform marriages in the county. Taverns, ordinaries (inns), places of private entertainment, and retail establishments were all subject to strict regulation and yearly taxes. A license to do business was issued upon payment of the annual fee or tax. Inspectors of tobacco and the official weights and measures of the county were also licenses. These types of information are only of interest if the genealogist is focusing on a single person, since no genealogical information is given.

Registration of Free Blacks: Free blacks had to appear before the court and prove that they were, indeed, free. Then the court registered them as free persons. Such orders often

included entire families, with the age and a physical description recorded for each person.

Decrees, Orders, Memorials, and Correspondence: These types of information were the record of daily business and proceedings of the court. This information is mainly governmental, often holding little of genealogical interest. However, if one's focus is historical or on a prominent person, these proceedings may prove useful.

8. Minute Books

- (1807-1830)

These books are the "rough" minutes or notes of the court's proceedings. Sometimes one can find information in these books by looking for dated notes written on the flyleaves, then finding that date in the book and reading all the entries for that day until the entry of interest is found. These books are not as helpful as some, as the information is not indexed.

9. Minute Books

- (1830-1842)

These books are a continuation of the order books and minute books (1807-1830). The minute books contain the same types of information as the previously discussed order books and minute books. Each volume is individually indexed, alphabetically and sometimes by subject. Be aware that the beginning of the 1830 volume is at the unpagged end of the old minute book (1807-1830) series. the new minute book (1830-1842) series begins with numbered pages.

10. Minute & Order Books

- 1842 (v.11) through 1904(vol. 34)
- Index volume (1842-1876)

- Index volume (1876-1904)

This series continues the previous minute & order books, with the same types of material, but these books are not individually indexed. Instead, there are two master indexes in which the entries are listed chronologically under each alphabetical heading, with the year clearly marked. Unfortunately, the books covering 1855 to 1871 were not indexed at all. When using the first index, be aware that the numbers given for the earlier volumes in this series are not correct because, at some point, the volumes were renumbered. If the volume has the date printed on the spine, use that date to double-check the citations given for entries in the earlier volumes.

11. Law Order Books

- (1809-1902)

These books contain the orders, decrees, and business of the "law" court, which deals mainly with criminal, punitive, and damage suits. There are exceptions such as guardianship, declarations to become citizens, and Revolutionary War pension declarations in the law order books. The genealogist would not expect to find information about families in these books, unless the family somehow became involved in such a case. Some of the volumes, mostly the earlier and later books, are indexed.

12. Chancery Order Books

- 1831 to present
- "Ended Causes, Old Series" to 1939

Chancery Court, also known as Equity, functions as a supplement to common law. Among the areas it governs are: administration of decedents' estates; supervision of fiduciaries; granting of

divorces; alimony; assignment of dower interests or lands; hearing of creditors' bills; and the interpretation of wills and deeds. Those suits involving families and disputes over estates are of the most interest to the genealogist. Such suits often give entire histories of families that could not be found in modern records. The major drawback is that the Chancery Orders tend to be very legalistic and dry, and the researcher has to read very carefully to extract relevant information. Also, the orders invariably refer to information contained in Commissioners' Reports and Bills without revealing what that information is.

Most of the volumes are indexed, usually by plaintiffs' names only. It helps to know the complete name and year of a case in order to find the book and page number. Be aware that sometimes the name of the suit changed as persons were added or dropped from the suit, adding to the difficulty in finding orders or files.

The volume entitled "Ended Causes, Old Series" is not an index to chancery suits. It is a listing of suits that were heard by the court up to 1939. This book lists for most chancery suits the year begun, year ended, and the end file number. By looking in this book, one may discover the existence of possibly relevant suits. The years given in the Ended Cause Book will tell you which Chancery Order Books to look in for the relevant suits. If a suit is listed but cannot be found in the Chancery Order books, look in the Order and Minute books.

13. Suit Papers

1912-1939

- Ended Cause Index, Old Series (to 1939)

- Index to Chancery Causes prior to 1939 (has just the open numbers)
- Index to Ended Causes to 1939 (has the open and closed numbers – use this index)

1939 to present

- Index to "new Causes" after 1939

Suit papers are comprised of the various papers produced in the course of a suit or cause. Among the items that should be found in the file for a cause are: bill of complaint, answers, court orders, commissioners' reports, exhibits, depositions, and other papers. If the suit deals with a family's ownership of land, these files can give a fairly complete picture of that family with relationships, marriages, places of residences, and so on. When looking in a file, the best place to look is in the Commissioner's Report, if there is one, since the commissioner usually presented his findings to the court in summary form. Then be sure to look at all the papers if possible. The depositions and exhibits are usually the best sources of information.

In order to find the suit papers, you must find the "ended cause number" for the relevant suit. The papers are filed by those numbers in drawers in the court house. Most of the suits which ended before 1912 were transferred to the Library of Virginia in the 1970s. Any that ended before 1912 (and are still at the Courthouse) are planned to be transferred in 2016. In 1939 cases stopped having a new closed number and were filed by drawer or box numbers. They started over with drawer 1 in 1939. It is worth the effort to research these files. There is no better source of genealogical and historical information among the Court House records.

To access the pre-1900 records, first search the online Chancery Records Index for the state of Virginia, at this website: <http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/chancery/>. [N.b. The online index includes cases after 1900 as well as pre-1900. —JLC] The creation of this index is supported by the Virginia Circuit Court Records Preservation Program (CCRP) and managed by the Library of Virginia. Records for some Virginia counties are scanned and available online through this index, some are available in microfilm copies, and some have not yet been scanned; the online index will show which records are in each group. For instance, chancery court records for the City of Charlottesville have been scanned and are available online, but court records for Albemarle County are only available at the Archives and Manuscripts Department of the Library of Virginia as of this writing (May 2016).

When you arrive at the Archives and Manuscripts Department, you will be asked to store your belongings in a locker in that room. You may use a computer to work with the documents, and you may bring a digital camera to photograph the documents, but without a flash. You will be asked to register, and fill out request forms including case numbers for each case you want to see. Follow the rules given to you for handling these rare materials.

For help in searching for records in the Archives, see *A Preliminary Guide to Pre-1904 County Records in the Archives Branch*, compiled by Ray, Hart, and Kolbe. This book lists all the court records held by the Library of Virginia. When using this book, pay

attention to the dates and names for the various courts and their records. For further information about the history of the court system in Virginia, its various names, and the location of court records, see the "Appendix" which begins on page 303 of the *Preliminary Guide*.

14. Marriages

- Marriage Bonds/Licenses (1780-present)
- Registers
- Ministers' Returns

Before a couple is married, they are required to apply to the county for a license. From 1780 to 1805, marriage bonds were the norm. These bonds hold little information beyond the names of the couple to be married and maybe the woman's father. The licenses continued in the form of the bonds at first, but over time, the licenses were expanded to include more information about the couple. During the second half of the 19th century, the licenses generally gave the ages, places of birth, names of parents, and the occupation of the groom.

The marriage registers contain information from each license in a book form. Each of the registers is indexed, and for some of the registers, there may be a master index covering two or three registers.

Albemarle Marriage bonds & records have been professionally restored and covered with clear Mylar preservation plastic. The Mylar pages are in books by year. Two books have permission slips and letters that were separated from marriage bonds or licenses.

15. C.S.A. Muster Book

This is a record of those who served in the Confederate military, compiled by the county court in the 1890s. The muster book gives a

brief history for each Albemarle County regiment, listing formation, numbers of soldier, battles fought, and when it was mustered out. For each regiment, the book gives a roll call by rank—listing officers first, with their service information, and then the enlisted men. For each man, it gives the date and place of enlistment, date of death in service, or date of death after the war, if known. The main drawback in using this book is that it is a regimental history and does not focus on individuals, making it a very limited source of information.

16. Supervisors' Minutes

- 6 volumes (1870-1920)

During the latter part of the 19th century, an elected board of supervisors gradually began to take over from the court the chores of governing the county. In time, duties and business that formerly appeared in the court order books were to be found in the *Supervisors' Minutes*. Among the jurisdictions overtaken by the supervisors from the court were the county road system, appointment of overseers of the poor, the poor house, and taxes. Among sources of indirect information found in the Supervisors' minutes for the genealogist are the "binding-out" (to foster homes or apprenticeships) of the poor and payments for coffins of the poor who died in the county poor house. The supervisors' minute books can be used in much the same way as the Court Order and Minute books. Unfortunately, the amount of personal information to be found in these books is very small, since the main focus of the supervisors was the government of the county; also, only some books are indexed, decreasing their usefulness.

17. Surveyors' Books

- Book 1, Part 1 (1744-55)
- Book 1, Part 2 (1756-90) (Index in front)
- Book 2 (1791-1853) (master index in back)

The official survey books of the County Court are where the surveys of the County Surveyor were recorded. These books served as the official recordation of the survey and plat that preceded the patent or grant of land given to a person by the Crown or by the Commonwealth. The other type of plats that are found in these books were those authorized by the Virginia General Assembly, such as town plats (Charlottesville and Scottsville) and county boundary surveys. Surveys and plats produced for private land transactions were never recorded in these books. Also, the person for whom the land was surveyed was not always the person to whom the land was patented or granted. These books are a good source of information on the early development of the county and the people who were active in land speculation. Remember that the early surveys in Book 1, Part 1, cover not just Albemarle, but also those counties that were once part of Albemarle: Louisa, Fluvanna, Buckingham, Nelson, and Amherst counties. The main drawback of these books is that, although they are very interesting to look at, they have very little genealogical information in them. A major plus is that these books may provide a plat of a family homestead if the owners were early settlers in the area.

18. Miller School Books

- Volumes #1-#8 (1874-1980)

These books are the official records of the Miller School of Albemarle County. The school was founded by the county, using

money and land given by Samuel Miller, to educate county children who would otherwise be unable to afford schooling. This school was only to be open to children who lived in Albemarle County and were appointed to the school by the county government. The majority of the school's official record deals with budgets, expenditures and daily business, which is for the most part of little interest to the genealogist. The school also, however, periodically made a complete accounting of all children appointed to the school within a certain period of time. These listings are very informative; they include the name, age and place of birth of the child, the name of each parent (if known), and whether they were still living. If there are suggestions that the person being researched was well-educated, yet orphaned or indigent, the Miller School Books could be the best place to look.

Closing

I hope that by carefully examining all the various records discussed above, researchers will discover some facets of genealogical research that will be intellectually satisfying and further their individual searches. Do not expect too much of the court records, however. Always keep in mind that the records detailed in this paper are not perfect. They were written by men and women and are thus imperfect. These records were not written to be genealogical sources, so they often lack the most basic information that the researcher is looking for. Always keep in mind why these records were written in the first place. Most of them were primarily land records, and hence deal mainly with land, not genealogy.

When reading the various types of information detailed in this paper, remember that the types and categories given are very general. Each document can vary extremely as to the information in it. Some documents may even have none of the information one would expect to find in them. Other documents may have all the information that would generally be expected of that type of record or have information that is completely unexpected for any type of court house record.

In the end, all leads and records should be carefully examined, for one never knows what relevant information may be found, or exactly where.

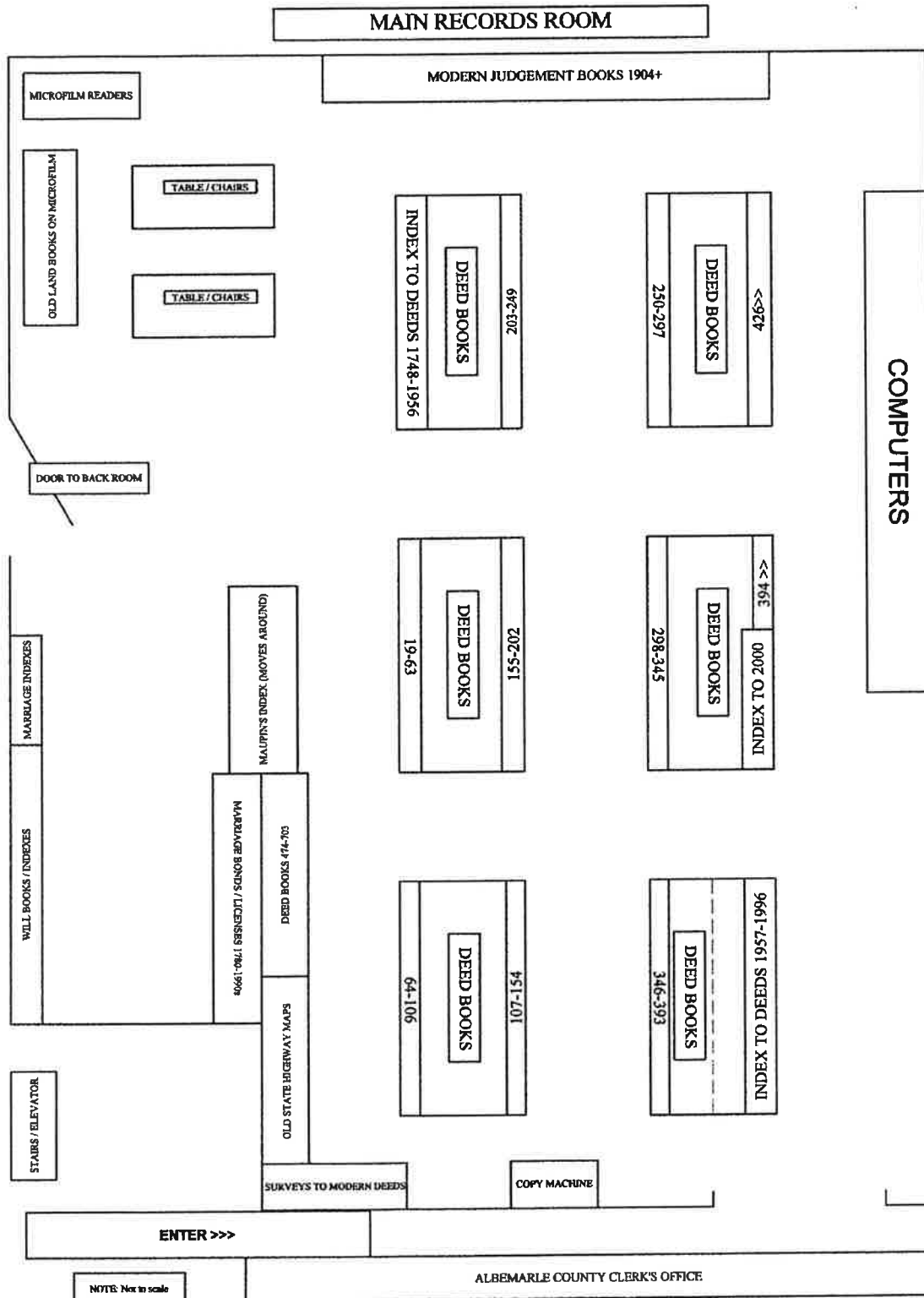
A couple of "nevers"—never pass up any possibly useful record or document, and never rush yourself or allow yourself to be sloppy, or you will end up missing clues or losing what you have already found.

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Figure 2: Albemarle County Court House. Ramp entrance. Records Room is on the second floor on the left in the photo. Photograph courtesy of Patricia Lukas, 2016.

Plans of the Albemarle County Court House Clerk's Office & Records Room (not drawn to scale)



BACK ROOM (Historical Records Room)

