

NOTES ON EARLY WASHINGTON COUNTY DEED BOOKS

All deed books are originals except for Deed Book A (Parts 1 and 2), Deed Book C, Deed Book H, and Deed Book I, which are copies. The early labeling of deed books was apparently by letter rather than number. As best as I can determine, there were Deed Books A-I before the office switched to labeling volumes numerically. The following are those alphabetically labeled deed books:

Deed Book A (Part 1); This is the book returned by the Tennessee State Library and Archives on June 1st, 2021. It has been referred to at times as the “Watauga Purchase book.” The land records (deeds and land grants) in this volume cover the period 1775-1782. The book is a copy made c. 1830s of the original book, which is lost to history. It covers the first 178 pages copied from the original. The volume contains 492 pages.

Deed Book A (Part 2) (Labeled “Deed Book 1”): This book is labeled as Deed Book 1 in the Register of Deeds’ office. The land information consists mostly of North Carolina land grants and some deeds and covers the period 1782-1788. The book is a copy made c. 1830s of the original book, which is lost to history. It begins with page 179 and continues to the end of the volume. Towards the end of the volume, the copyist stopped making a reference in the left-hand margin as to what page of the original is being copied. Page 308 is the last page of the original noted in the left-hand margin of a page. Several copy pages follow that do not indicate the corresponding pages of the original that were copied. An estimate is that the original book went to about 320 pages. Another copy of a portion of Deed Book A, Part 2 (pages 311-369) is recorded in Deed Book 3 (pages 1-155). The volume contains 452 pages.

Deed Book B (Labeled “Deed Book 4”): This is the original of Deed Book B. From pages 1-131, the entries are for the period when the county was still part of North Carolina. A note at the bottom of page 131 indicates that the remainder of the volume covers the period when the county had become part of the Southwest Territory. Deeds cover the time period 1784-1791. The volume contains 280 pages.

Deed Book C (Labeled “Deed Book 2”): The original of Deed Book C is lost to history. What survives is a copy. Pages 99-215 of the original book was copied into the first 219 pages of Deed Book 2. The deeds and North Carolina land grants included cover the time period of 1783-1786, meaning records here overlap some of the same time period as deeds in Deed Book A, Part 2 (Deed Book 1). The rest of Deed Book 2 (pages 220-354) contains a copy of Deed Book E. Another portion (pages 1-98 of the original) of Deed Book C is copied into the last part of Deed Book 3 (beginning on page 156). The volume contains 354 pages.

Deed Book D (Labeled “Deed Book 5”): This is the original volume of Deed Book D. It includes deeds and North Carolina land grants for the time period of 1783-1793. Most actual deeds cover the period 1791-1792. The volume contains 194 pages.

Deed Book E (Labeled “Deed Book E”): There is both an original of this deed book in the register’s office as well as a copy written in the second part of Deed Book 2 (See above.) The

volume consists of mostly North Carolina land grants and some deeds covering a broad period of time from 1783-1802. Most deeds cover the period 1791-1794. Another copy of a portion of Deed Book E is found in the last part of Deed Book 2 (pages 1-92). The book is copied yet again in its entirety in Deed Book E, H, & I (pages 1-179). The volume contains 253 pages.

Deed Book F (Labeled "Deed Book 6"): I believe this is the original Deed Book F. The deeds the volume contain seem to fit the time span that would follow Deed Book E (mid-1790s). Most deeds cover the period 1794-1798. The volume contains 626 pages.

Deed Book G (Labeled "Deed Book 7"): I believe this is the original Deed Book G. The deeds the volume contain seem to fit the time span that would follow Deed Book F and precede Deed Book H (mid-1790s). Most deeds cover the period 1794-1796. The volume contains 381 pages.

Deed Book H: This is a copy of the original Deed Book H and is recorded in the volume Deed Book E, H, & I. (pages 180-289). It contains deeds and North Carolina land grants for the time period 1795-1799.

Deed Book I: The original volume is lost to history. This is a copy and is recorded in the volume labeled Deed Book E, H, & I (pages 290-400). It contains deeds and North Carolina land grants for the time period 1782-1802, though deeds are primarily from 1798-1802.

Listing of Deed Books by Number with Contents:

Deed Book 1 (Deed Book A, Part 2): Consists of a c. 1830s copy of Deed Book A (Part 2), starting with page 179 of the original. Pages 1-178 of the original of Deed Book A, referred to as Deed Book A, Part 1, is found in the volume returned from the Tennessee State Library and Archives on June 1st, 2021 and also sometimes called the "Watauga Purchase book." The volume contains 452 pages.

Deed Book 2 (Deed Book C; Deed Book E): The first portion (pages 1-219) consists of a copy of pages 99-215 of Deed Book C. Pages 1-98 of Deed Book C is found in Deed Book 3. The second portion (pages 220-354) consists of a copy of pages 1-92 of Deed Book E. All of Deed Book E is found in its original volume, as well as a copy in the first portion (pages 1-179) of Deed Book E, H, & I. The volume contains 354 pages.

Deed Book 3 (Deed Book A, Part 2; Deed Book C): The first portion (pages 1-155) consists of a copy of pages 311-369 of Deed Book A (Part 2). This is also found in Deed Book 1. The second portion (beginning on page 156) consists of a copy of pages 1-98 of Deed Book C. The copy of the remaining pages 99-215 of Deed Book C is found in Deed Book 2. The volume contains 274 pages.

Deed Book 4 (Deed Book B): Consists of the original Deed Book B. The volume contains 280 pages.

Deed Book 5 (Deed Book D): Consists of the original Deed Book D. The volume contains 194 pages.

Deed Book 6 (Deed Book F): Consists of the original Deed Book F (though not identified as such). The volume contains 626 pages.

Deed Book 7 (Deed Book G): Consists of the original Deed Book G (though not identified

as such). The volume contains 381 pages.

Deed Book E (no numbered volume; labeled as "Deed Book E"): Contains the original Deed Book E. The volume contains 252 pages.

Deed Book E, H, & I (no numbered volume; labeled as "Deed Book E, H, & I"): Contains copies of Deed Books, E, H, and I. The volume contains 400 pages.

Compiled by Ned Irwin, County Archivist, June 2021