

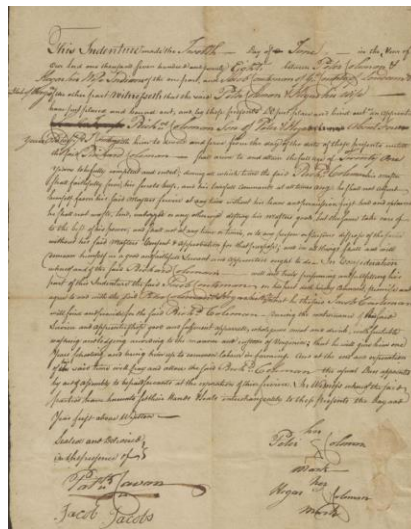
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Indentured & Bound Out Children

Indentured servitude or indentureship is defined as a form of labor in which an individual is contracted to work without pay for a certain number of years. During the term of the indentured contract, the contractor typically provided food and lodging. An indentured person would usually be trained in a skill or profession such as blacksmithing or tailoring and would also be provided a basic education—reading, writing, and basic arithmetic. Upon fulfillment of their contract, an indentured person was compensated with a sum of money, a set of clothes, tools of the trade, and sometimes a parcel of land. There are several reasons why an individual might be indentured including: payment for apprenticeship, repayment of a debt accrued, or as a form of judicial punishment. Often individuals would agree to an indentureship contract to pay for their passage from Europe to Virginia with the hopes of starting a new life in a new world.

Bounding out children was another form of indentureship and was almost identical to the indentured servitude described above except the person was a young child and sometimes an infant. A child was usually bound out if the parents, often a single mother, could not afford to raise their child/children, or if a child was left orphaned after the death of their parents. Indenturing these children was a way for the County to avoid sending the children to the Church Wardens or later the County Poorhouse—services which were provided and paid for by the County and taxpayers' money.

The Historic Records' Indentured and Bound Out Children Records span from 1752 through 1895. Important information in these records includes the name and age of the indentured individual or bound out child, and the name and profession of the individual they were indentured or bound to. Other information includes: the indentured person's parents/guardians, siblings, past and future indentureships, and legal disputes (i.e., mistreatment, runaways, etc....).



Indentured and Bound Out Children Records, 1752-1895, Richard Coleman, 1788.