

**JONES MEMORIAL LIBRARY
2311 MEMORIAL AVENUE
LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA 24501**

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DAVIS FAMILY PAPERS

The collection includes a statement (1779) by William DAVIS, of Louisa County, Virginia, about his refusal to bear arms and his resultant court-martial and whipping. Also included is a note signed by nine men releasing DAVIS from further punishment. The collection also includes a note from Micajah DAVIS to his cousin Henry [DAVIS], a statement by Henry DAVIS, son of William DAVIS, about his side in a court case, and several letters to and from various other members of the DAVIS and DUDLEY families, mostly in Lynchburg, Virginia.

- BOX 1**
- 1-1** Sufferings of William DAVIS (1779)
 - 1-2** Release of William DAVIS
 - 1-3** Letter - Micajah DAVIS to Henry (1799)
 - 1-4** Note - Elizabeth SHOPE to S.W. LACKLAND (1823)
 - Letter - Isaac DAVIS to Father (1811)
 - Letter - Richard DAVIS to Elizabeth DAVIS (1840)
 - Letter - E.A. REID to Nancy DUDLEY (1836)
 - Letter - Mary to Nancy DUDLEY (1836)
- [BOX] 2** Statement of Henry DAVIS, son of William DAIS, in case of DAVIS vs.
DUDLEY

Sufferings of Wm. Davis as related by himself

On the 26th [?] of the 6th Mo. 1779

I was warned to appear the 26th at a certain place in order to join a company of militia who were to march to the barracks at Charlotsville to guard a number of British prisoners which I refused believing it to be wrong for me to be active or any way assisting in Warr like measures upon which I was taken and carryed to the place afore appointed and had arms offered which I refused and then was put under guard a sergant and four men. After marching on foot about twenty miles the Captain offerd me his horse to ride which I ackceptd a [?] he offered me a gun which himsef had carryed to ease an elderly man of his company. I emediately felt an uneasyness and refused leting him know I acknowledged his kindness in offering his horse but had rather walk then meddle with arms, which displeased the officers much but was admited to ride without carrying the gun, this small trial was followed with peace of mind and afforded incouragement, the next request was to answer to my name when called on the list which I could not be free to do because it was answering the place of a soldier in which I could not act. I was then carryd before the colonal by the [?] guard who informed him I refused to obey orders, he asked my reasons I told him our Saviour was stiled the prince of pease and they that followed must follow him in pease, then I suppose you are a Quaker said he I said I was called so and after some other in snareing questions which I mae littl answer too he ordered me to be carryed to the guard house where was kept a few days and then had before a court-martial and the accusation of disobaying orders and asked if I was guilty or not; I said I had refused to bare arms I was then carryed out of the cort a small distance and kept about a quarter of an hower when the president of sd cort ordered the guard to carry me back to the guard house again, and after eight days close confinement I was carryed to a place where was [a] ring of soldiers and officers and I being carried to the middle then the service of the cortmartial was read (which was kept from me until then) which was thirty nine lashes to be well laid on my bare back, I was then ordered to strip my self which I did not doo but the officer who had the management of the business ordered me to be striped. was then tyd by my hands which was done by the men who laid on the stripes in a very rash manner, at which time I indeavoured to make the people senceable of the cause of my refuseing to obey shuch orders (as the sentence was for disobey[ing] orders) to which much attention was given by the people but the colonal who had the command shewed himself very raged [?] and ordered the sentance to be executed sayind there was no time for preaching now. I beleive he thought it would take with the people (many of the country people were preasant) and make the conduct of the officers appear less honorable [?] the execution was performed by three men who laid on by turns a few at a time one after another with what is called a cat of nine tales nine stripes for every lash, in the time of the execution I had to express these words viz Blessed are the mercyfull for they shall obtain mercy. I beleive the colonal was a little touched with these words and orderd the whipers to strike light. after being loosed from the place where I was bound which was a pasil [?] set up for that purpose...I was ordered to go to my duty meaning that of a soldiour. I answered publickly I was of the same principal now as I was before I had suffered and that God whom I professed to serve was the same yesterday to day and forever and then the men were marched off. the colonal and my self were left alone he discoursed with me untill dark and in some meashure

excused himself for their cruelty ading the law obliged him to do as he had done and the conciquence would be the like punnishment as had been if I refused to comply I signified I should not I then returned to the guard house where my lodging was expecting to be confined again but the officers of the guard ordered me out I had then to seak for new lodging and happened to fall in with some of my acquaintances who were kind where I staid untill I was discharged without much interruptions but my body was so tarterd [?] was not fit for much servis if I had been willing...was often threatened and endeavours used to get me to wait on the sick (which was offered at the first saying it was every good mans delight or duty to wait on the sick) I let them know I could not supply the place of a soldier even to wait on the sick.

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WILLIAM DAVIS, SR. (ca.1755-1829)

William DAVIS, Sr., son of John DAVIS and Susannah SMITHSON, was born ca. 1755, probably in Louisa County, Virginia. He married 12 September 1774 Mary GOSNEY, daughter of Henry GOSNEY and Mary SHELTON. On 10 May 1777, William and Mary requested membership in the Society of Friends (Quakers) through Camp Creek Meeting in Louisa County. In 1779, William DAVIS was ordered to take up arms for the militia, but refused and was punished. (On 16 December 1786, this case of "suffering for his faith at the Barracks near Charlottesville" was sent on to the Quarterly Meeting.)

On 12 May 1781, William DAVIS, with his family, requested a certificate for removal from Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting. The certificate was granted and they were received at South River Monthly Meeting in July 1781.

In 1806, William DAVIS applied for permission to establish a tobacco warehouse on his lots in the town of Lynchburg. The Friend's Warehouse, as it was known, continued in operation until ca. 1907.

William DAVIS, Sr., died 1 September 1829 at his residence in Lynchburg and was buried in the Quaker Burying Ground.

[William Wade Hinshaw, Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy, Vol. VI (Ann Arbor, MI: Edwards Bros., 1950), pp. 240, 306-307; Kathleen Booth Williams, comp., Marriages of Louisa County Virginia 1766-1815, 2nd printing (Harrisonburg: C. J. Carrier, 1977), p. 27; Rosa Faulkner Yancey, Lynchburg and Its Neighbors (Richmond: J. W. Fergusson, 1935), pp. 290-291; W. Asbury Christian, Lynchburg and Its People (Lynchburg: J. P. Bell, 1900), pp. 36-37; "Friends Warehouse," Tobacco Industry Collection, Mss., MS2031, Folder 1-4, Jones Memorial Library, Lynchburg, VA.]