

patents for inventions, ejection of tenants and rent procedures, suspension of habeas corpus during the Civil War, and the provisions of the court to enforce voting rights laws during the Reconstruction Era. The minutes contain copies of some official correspondence, including the letters appointing justices, judges, and clerks, and the texts of some court orders. The writ of habeas corpus issued by Chief Justice Roger Taney on May 26, 1861, for the release of John Merryman, and related correspondence were entered in the minutes at the direction of the Chief Justice, who ruled that the President had Merryman imprisoned illegally. There are also eulogies made on the death of people related to the function of the court that were entered in the minutes on request. In some cases newspaper articles concerning the deceased are attached.

The consistency of the minutes over the years is probably due to the long careers of three circuit court clerks that span the years 1793-1907. The minutes appear complete except for the years 1804-5 and 1807-8, the November session of 1803, and the first part of the May 1806 session.

In 1891 Congress established the Circuit Courts of Appeals (26 Stat. 827), taking appellate jurisdiction from the circuit courts, and in 1911 Congress abolished the circuit courts altogether. The minutes were received in the National Archives and Records Service (NARS) from the District Court for the District of Maryland, which had acquired them under the terms of an act of March 3, 1911, that terminated the circuit courts effective January 1, 1912 (36 Stat. 1167).

The records reproduced in this microfilm publication are part of Records of District Courts of the United States, Record Group 21. They are part of the records identified as Records of the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland, which are in the custody of the General Archives Division, located in the Washington National Records Center. It is expected that other records of the Circuit Court of Maryland, including case files and dockets for the period 1790-1911, will be acquired by NARS in the future.

Additional information is available in the multivolume publication, *Federal Cases*, an annotated reprint of the decisions of the U.S. district and circuit courts from 1789 to 1880; Erwin C. Surrency, *Federal District Court Judges and the History of Their Courts* (History of Federal Courts Pamphlet #1, 1966, privately printed); "History of Federal Courts," 28 *Missouri Law Review*, 214 (1963); Charles Warren, *The Supreme Court in United States History* (Boston, 1935; 2 vols.); and John J. Parker, "The Federal Judicial System," 14 *Federal Rules Decisions*, 361 (1954).

This microfilm publication is part of a project to reproduce most existing U.S. district and circuit court records for the