

NATIONAL ARCHIVES MICROFILM PUBLICATIONS

cases arising under the Constitution, laws, or treaties of the United States; cases in which there was a dispute between citizens of different States; and suits between citizens of a State and a foreign state or its citizens. The original jurisdiction also included, irrespective of the amount in dispute, suits between citizens of the same State claiming lands under grants of different States, to cases in which the United States was plaintiff or petitioner, and to all proceedings arising out of crimes and offenses against the United States, except as otherwise provided by law. A number of special laws also conferred on the circuit courts jurisdiction over various matters, such as those relating to the infringement of patents and copyrights, transportation of passengers in merchant vessels, controversies between trustees in bankruptcy and adverse claimants to property held by the trustee, violations of civil rights and the elective franchise, importation of alien contract labor, registration of trademarks, and unlawful restraints of trade and monopolies.

The revisionary or appellate power of the circuit courts over final decrees and judgments of the district courts was also derived from the original Judiciary Act of 1789 and from an act of March 3, 1803 (2 Stat. 244). It was exercised either by appeal, a proceeding that subjected both the law and the facts to a review, or by writ of error, a process that subjected only the laws to reexamination. When the amount in controversy exceeded \$50, the appellate jurisdiction applied to all final decrees of the district courts in cases of admiralty and maritime jurisdiction (in which case the remedy was by appeal) and to all judgments in civil actions (in which case the remedy was by writ of error).

The minutes reproduced in this microfilm publication are a record of the activities of the circuit court, showing dates of sessions, names of presiding judges, and, usually, judgments and orders of the court arising out of the litigation of all cases before it, original and appellate, civil and criminal. The minutes also record some naturalization proceedings, the admission of attorneys to practice before the court, names of persons summoned to serve as grand and petit jurors, fines imposed upon defaulting jurors, findings and verdicts of juries, the settlement of cases by agreement, the approval of accounts submitted by various court officers, the adoption of procedural rules and administrative regulations, and the appointment of clerks, United States commissioners, and other court officials. The entries in the minutes are chronological by date of session. All pages with writing have been filmed; blank pages were omitted.

The minutes relate to cases concerned with such matters as the maintenance of U.S. neutrality during foreign wars, the "quasi-war" with France during the John Adams administration, the embargo during the Jefferson administration, evasion of customs duties and trespass laws, salvage, privateering and prize law, mutinies and revolts, bankruptcy, slavery and slave trade, protection of