

## COUNTY COURT PROCEEDINGS

### KENT COUNTY

Liber A of the Kent County court proceedings is now in an incomplete form. Liber A Originally the liber possessed 126 folios (leaves), and its contents began with the court session of January, 1647/48. Robert Vaughan seems to have been clerk in 1651, and Thomas Hinson was clerk in 1652 and 1653. Thomas Hill followed Hinson and was still clerk when the liber was closed in October, 1656.

Folios 1 to 95 of the record are now missing. Whether or not they still exist elsewhere is not known. Fortunately, excerpts from these lost record pages can be supplied from two sources and these sources have been drawn upon. Clerk James Smith in 1727 caused the various land papers scattered through the earlier county court records to be copied into a new record book, the present Liber A of Kent land records. Among the entries thus copied were more than a score taken from the folios now missing. A second source is the book "Old Kent," written by George A. Hanson. In 1875, when the old court book was still complete, this writer drew from it many excerpts, either in quoted or descriptive form, and some of these came from the now lost portion. All that has been preserved by Smith and Hanson is here reprinted. Presumably both retained the correct wording of the original, but neither one attempted literal reproduction of the style of the ancient text. Each one altered the spelling to that of his own time and extended abbreviations into full words. Hanson also corrected the punctuation.

Folios 96 to 126 are reprinted from the original text. To all appearances the record in this part is continuous and complete. It is wholly in the handwriting of Thomas Hill. Although Liber A of court records probably embraced several older booklets, this portion shows a uniform watermark and was probably a unit.

**Hanson, Old Kent, p. 16.**

"At a Court holden for this Island, at Mr. Philip Conier his house, [fol. 1] on ye 3rd of January, 1647,

"Present, Capt. Robert Vaughan, Commander, Mr. Thomas Bradnox, Mr. Philip Conier, Mr. Ed. Commins, Mr. Francis Brooke."

"John Metham complaineth against Francis Lumbard, in an action of debt to the value of four hundred pounds of tobacco and cask, and for this he bringeth his suit.

"The Court ordereth, that the plaintiff shall recover one hundred pounds of tobacco and cask, and the defendant to recover of Ed. Commins ninety pounds of tobacco and cask."

The next case is that of John Winchester, who complaineth against Edward Commins, gent., "in an action of slander," and claims "five thousand pounds of tobacco and cask." "Warrant granted."