

A Typical Deed

Deeds, grants, and patents all follow a particular form. The exact details of the form will vary from locale to locale, but the overall structure remains the same. The start and finish of the deed tend to have the most boilerplate, or canned legal wording. The property description is found in the middle of the deed.

The following elements will be found:

- This Indenture of Sale** : The type of legal instrument.
- made and entered into this 7th of December 1833"**: The date of the sale (not the date it was recorded). It was common for people to sell land on a given date, to prove the sale in court on a later date, and have it recorded by the clerk later still.
- between Silas Teague and his wife Nancy...of the one part, and Jacob Nicholas of the county and state aforesaid** : The names of the parties involved (the *grantor* and *grantee*). If it's a Crown patent, the governor or other agent acting on behalf of the King will be named. The residences of the parties may be given. Names of spouses may be given.
- for and in consideration of the sum of fifty dollars** : The amount of money or other property involved.
- to them in hand paid, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged** : Seller acknowledges that he has been paid.
- a certain tract or parcel of land containing fifty acres be it the same more or less, lying in said County on Mud Creek** : Basic property description (acreage and location).
- situated as follows to wit: beginning on the north side of sd creek...** : Metes and bounds description of the property.
- to said Nicholas and his heirs and assigns** : The property is heritable and can be sold by the buyer's legal agents.
- do Warrant and defend the land aforesaid from the claims of themselves or any other person or persons claiming through or by them whatever:** The grantor guarantees that he holds a valid title on the land being sold, and that it's free from any obligation.
- by our hands and seals this 7th December 1833"**: The date, again.
- Signature(s) of the grantor(s).
- Signature(s) of witness(es).

The following is an example of the opening of lines of a Virginia patent. Note that even the clerks were tired of copying all of the wording, and used etc. to cover for a lot of pompous wording such as

George, defender of the faith, King of England, Ireland...

George etc. To all etc. Whereas etc. We have given, granted and confirmed, and by these presents for us our Heirs and Successors do give and Confirm unto...