A GLOSSARY OF TERMS ENCOUNTERED:

WORD or PHRASE	
AFFIDAVITS	Voluntary statements made upon oath during the progress of a suit
ANSWER	The defendant's response to the plaintiff's bill of complaint; The defendant's response to all the points raised in a Bill of Complaint
BAIL	The security given for released prisoner's appearance for trial
BILL OF COMPLAINT	The document that describes the nature of the plaintiff's complaint; A written statement of (esp. plaintiff's case)
BILL OF EXCHANGE	Written order to pay a sum on a given date to the drawer or named payee
BILL OF NOTE or OBLIGATORY	for money lent at interest with proper documentation; A written statement acknowledging a debt and promising to pay it at a specified date
BOND	Mortgages, i.e. loans secured on a property; a written obligation to do something; Promissory note or deed under which money was lent, or administrators and executors were required to perform their legal functions. It included a penalty for failure to comply with its conditions; deed by which person binds himself to pay another
BOOK DEBT	Debts for sales or services recently rendered
BUSHELL	A dry measure of capacity used for corn etc., varying in quantity, according to the locality, but generally equal to four pecks or eight gallons; a vessel holding this amount; A measure of capacity (18 gallons, 32 quarts) for corn fruits, liquid etc
COMPLAINANT	The term used to refer to the plaintiff in the case by the other parties, i.e. defendants and deponents; plaintiff in certain lawsuits
CONFEDERATES	Ally, esp. (in a bad sense) accomplice
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS	A court, otherwise known as the Court of Common Bench, developed from the 12th Century as a subdivision of the King's Court. Its jurisdiction was confined to civil cases between subjects
COURT OF REQUESTS	Cases under £10 in value or 6 acres of land or 40s per annum. 1485-1642
COURT OF STAR CHAMBER	Criminal or violence cases. 1485-1642
DAMAGES	Sum of money claimed or adjudged in compensation for loss or injury
DECLARATION	Plaintiff's statement of claim, affirmation instead of an oath
DECREE	A judgement of the Court; Judgement in Court of Equity, Admiralty, Probate or Divorce; Instructions issued & decisions made by the Court in the course of a suit
DEFENDANT	A person etc. sued or accused in court law
DEPONENT	A witness; someone who makes a deposition before Court; the person making deposition under oath or giving written testimony for use in Court etc
DEPOSITION	An oral or written statement made by a witness in support of either of the parties in the case; Testament of a witness put down in writing; A statement of testimony made under oath in answer to interrogatories, and recorded in writing, so that it can be read in Court without the presence of the witness; Sworn testimonies given by witnesses in a case
EXCHEQUER COURT	Cases involving money owed to the King. Abolished 1840
GUILDER	Monetary unit of Netherlands
GUINEA	21 shillings or £1 1s
HALFPENNY (½ or ob.)	Short for obolus, a Roman coin
INTERROGATORY INTERROGATORIES	A formal question requiring a reply under oath; a question or set of questions, esp. (Law) one formally put to accused person etc.; A list of questions addressed to the witnesses on behalf of the parties in the case
JOINTURE	Provision for a widow, usually in her marriage contract, of an annual payment during her lifetime and giving her first claim if her husband died a debtor or bankrupt; Estate or income settled on a widow for the period in which she survives her husband or until her re-marriage; property granted to a wife for life,

	the grant taking effect on the death of her husband; estate settled on wife for the period during which she survives husband
JUDGEMENT	Sentence of Court of Justice, a decision made by the Judge
LAST	A commercial measure of weight, quantity or capacity; a commercial measure of weight, capacity or quantity varying with place and goods
MASTER EXHIBITS	Physical evidence, mostly documentation, brought before the Court. Can include accounts, inventories, deeds, wills, receipts, bonds etc
MASTER RECORDS	Records created by court officials carrying out the work of the Court in a case
MOIETY	A half; Usually a half portion of an estate; one of two or more parts; a portion; (loosely) one of two parts into which a thing is divided
NEXT FRIEND	(Law) a person acting on behalf of a minor or other person legally incompetent
OXGANG	A variable measure that depended on the quality of the soil locally. Originally based on how much land could be cultivated by one ox in one year. Usually considered an eighth of a Hide (60-180 acres). Also known as a bovate
ORATOR	The term used by the plaintiff to describe themselves within the statements they make; plaintiff in Chancery
ORDER	Command, injunction, authoritative direction or instruction; Instructions issued& decisions made by the Court in the course of a suit
PENCE (d)	Short for a denarius, a Roman coin
PLEA	(Law) a formal statement by or on behalf of the defendant, defence
PLEADINGS	Statements made by the parties in a case, collectively known as Chancery proceedings. They set out the claims of the plaintiff and the defence of the defendant
POUND (£, L or l)	£1 = 20 shillings or 240 pence. From Latin libra meaning a pound
QUARTER	A measure of the capacity of grain, eight bushels, but varying by locality; grain measure of eight bushels used in stating large quantities, prices etc
REJOINDER	The defendant's response to the replication
REPLICATION	The plaintiff's response to the defendant's answer
SHILLING (s or /-)	1 shilling = 12 pence. From solidus, a Roman coin.
STUIVER	Small coin of Netherlands
SUBPOENA	Writ commanding person's attendance in lawcourt
TICKING	Coarse striped materials for mattresses and bolsters
WRIT	A written and sealed command from a court ordering or forbidding a person to act in a certain way; A legal document of writing

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