

Entails ^[1]

Entails

by John V. Orth, 2006

Entails were legal arrangements by which ownership of land was confined within a single family, passing at death from generation to generation. Known in legal jargon as a "fee tail," an entailed estate was limited to a person and his biological heirs. Developed in medieval [England](#) ^[2], entails were well known in [colonial](#) ^[3] North Carolina. The state's first constitution directed the [General Assembly](#) ^[4] to legislate against entails, and a [law was passed in 1784](#) ^[5] that has remained in force.

Reference:

John V. Orth, "Does the Fee Tail Exist in North Carolina?" *Wake Forest Law Review* 23 (1988).

Additional Resources:

Acts of the North Carolina General Assembly, 1784, DocSouth, UNC Libraries:
<https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.html/document/csr24-001> ^[5]

Subjects:

[American Revolution \(1763-1789\)](#) ^[6]

[Law and legal history](#) ^[7]

Authors:

[Orth, John V.](#) ^[8]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[9]

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