

A Guide to the York County (Va.) Chancery Cause Mutual Assurance Society Against Fire on Buildings of the State of Virginia vs. Kate Nelson, etc. , 1887

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1887

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Author: Sarah Nerney

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York County (Va.) Circuit Court.

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Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional York County Court Records can be found on microfilm at the Library of Virginia. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

Historical Information

York County was originally named Charles River County, for Charles I, and was one of the eight shires formed in 1634. The present name was given in 1643, probably in honor of James, duke of York, the second son of Charles I.

The Nelson House was constructed around 1730 in Yorktown by the grandfather of Thomas Nelson, Jr., one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and governor of Virginia from June through October of 1781. It remained in the Nelson family until 1908 when it was bought by Captain and Mrs. George P. Blow. The National Park Service acquired the house in 1968 and exhibits it as part of the Colonial National Historical Park. The house is one of the finest examples of early Georgian architecture still standing in Virginia. A cannonball from a bombardment during the siege of Yorktown in 1781 is still lodged in its brick walls.

The Mutual Assurance Society against Fire on Buildings, of the State of Virginia, was incorporated by the General Assembly on 22 December 1794. Insurance offered by the society was against all losses and damages occasioned accidentally by fire. Rates of hazard were determined by the material composition of the buildings, by the users to which the buildings were put, and by what may be kept in them. Revaluations of insured property were required every seven years or whenever additions were made to a policy. The articles of incorporation were amended in 1982 to change the name from The Mutual Assurance Society Against Fire on Buildings of the State of Virginia, to its present name, Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia. In 1991 the offices in downtown Richmond were sold and the company relocated to the west end of Richmond. After 210 years the company continues to prosper in Virginia, remaining the oldest incorporated business in Virginia.

Scope and Content

York County (Va.) Chancery Cause Mutual Assurance Society Against Fire on Buildings of the State of Virginia vs. Kate Nelson, etc., 1887. This cause concerns a dispute between the Mutual Assurance Society and the heirs of William Nelson (the Elder) over unpaid insurance bills for the years 1862-1885 for the Nelson House in Yorktown.

Included in the suit as evidence are three revaluations of buildings formerly declared for assurance. Each printed form is numbered and is designated as a revaluation. Policies include the name of the insured, place

of residence, location of the insured property (with references to contiguous property), the name of the occupant of the property, a description and estimated value of each structure insured, and the date and the signature of the insured. An appraiser's statement regarding the value of the property is also included on each policy. At the bottom of each policy appears a sketch of the insured property. In most instances the sketches are rough outlines of the buildings as if viewed from above. The roofing material and distance from streets and from other structures are also noted. Revaluations of insured property were required every seven years (or whenever additions were made to a policy).

Index Terms

Family Names:

Nelson family.

Corporate Names:

York County (Va.). Circuit Court.
Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia.

Subjects:

Fire insurance claims. -- Virginia -- York County.
Historic buildings. -- Virginia -- York County.
Insurance companies -- Virginia.
Insurance, Fire. -- Virginia -- York County.

Geographical Names:

York County (Va.) -- History.

Genre and Form Terms:

Chancery causes -- Virginia -- York County.
Fire insurance maps -- Virginia -- York County.
Judicial records -- Virginia -- York County.