

A Guide to the New Kent County (Va.) Reports of Indigent Soldiers' Families, 1861-1863

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1861-1863

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History

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Title Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Barcode number

1177677

Language

English

Collector

New Kent County (Va.) Circuit Court

Physical Characteristics

.1 cu ft (1 folder)

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

This item came to the Library of Virginia in shipments of court papers from New Kent County (Va.).

Preferred Citation

New Kent County (Va.) Reports of Indigent Soldiers' Families, 1861-1863. Local government records collection, New Kent County (Va.) Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

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

New Kent County is one of Virginia's Lost Records Localities. Additional New Kent County Records may be found in the Virginia Lost Records Localities Collection at the Library of Virginia. Search the [Lost Records Localities Digital Collection](#) available at Virginia Memory.

For more information and a listing of lost records localities see [Lost Records research note](#).

Historical Information

Throughout the Civil War, the principal responsibility for Virginia's indigent soldiers' families lay with the locality. The Virginia State Convention in 1861 gave the responsibility entirely to counties and incorporated towns and authorized whatever actions had already been taken. Acts of Assembly in 1862 and 1863 expanded the localities' powers to provide for their needy, and in 1863 some minimal state assistance was added in. At first relief was provided as money, but as the monetary system collapsed, relief was distributed in kind. Agents of the court maintained lists of eligible families, gathered goods for distribution and paid for them, and impressed supplies if necessary. Virginia was unique amongst the southern states in that it assigned the provisioning of needy families almost solely to the locality.

New Kent County may have been named either for the English county of Kent or for Kent Island, in the upper waters of the Chesapeake Bay. William Claiborne, a native of Kent who had been driven from Kent Island by Lord Baltimore, was a prominent resident of the New Kent area about 1654 when the county was formed from York County. Part of James City County was added in 1767. The county seat is New Kent.

Records were destroyed when John Posey set fire to the courthouse on 15 July 1787. Many records were lost when the courthouse was partially destroyed by fire during Civil War hostilities in 1862. Additional records were burned in Richmond on 3 April 1865, where they had been moved for safekeeping during the Civil War.

Scope and Content

The New Kent County (Va.) Reports of Indigent Soldiers' Families, 1861-1863 is made up of reports of indigent soldiers' families, including names of the soldiers and family members, number of children per family, the amount of money provided to each family and for what use. The reports record that funds were to be used for provisions, and list the kinds and amount of food that were purchased or donated to the families. Families were not only provided with money but also with sugar, coffee, corn and other items.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

New Kent County (Va.) Circuit Court

Subjects:

Families of military personnel--Virginia--New Kent County
Poor--Virginia--New Kent County
Public welfare -- Virginia -- New Kent County

Geographical Names:

New Kent County (Va.)--History--19th century
New Kent County (Va.)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865

Genre and Form Terms:

Accounts--Virginia--New Kent County
Local government records--Virginia--New Kent County
Reports--Virginia--New Kent County

Arrangement

Chronological.