

A Guide to the Amherst County (Va.) Exemption Requests, 1861-1862

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Author: Laura Travis

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Author: Laura Travis

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Descriptive Summary

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English

Collector

Amherst County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics

.45 cu. ft. (1 box)

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

These items came to the Library of Virginia in shipments of court records from Amherst County.

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Historical Information

Amherst County was named for Major General Jeffery Amherst, British commander in North America during the latter part of the French and Indian War and governor of Virginia from 1759 to 1768. It was formed from Albemarle County in 1761.

In accordance with an act passed by the General Assembly 1862 Feb. 18 and amended 1862 Oct. 1 providing a mode of exemption from military service, the county and corporation courts were directed to appoint a Board of Exemption. The board was charged with deciding all claims for military exemptions brought before it, "carefully and rigidly conforming to all the provisions of the Act of Assembly." On 1863 Feb. 13, the Governor issued an order directing that where no board had been appointed, the presiding justice of each county and corporation court, together with the two senior justices, constitute the board.

Scope and Content

Amherst County (Va.) Exemption Requests, 1861-1862, consist of individual requests of persons who applied to be exempted from military service. Names of the persons applying for exemption are given as well as the reason given for the exemption (mainly physical disability.) In addition, the status of the request (whether exempted or rejected) is also given, although in many of the requests the status is not present. Many of the requests also include supporting documentation, such as letters from doctors or family members which corroborate the petitioner's reason for exemption.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

Amherst County (Va.) Board of Exemption.

Amherst County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Subjects:

Recruitment and enlistment.

Geographical Names:

Amherst County (Va.) -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865.

Genre and Form Terms:

Local government records -- Virginia -- Amherst County.

Military records -- Virginia -- Amherst County.

Arrangement

Arrangement is alphabetical by last name of the person petitioning for exemption.

Selected Exemption Requests of Interest

Request of Z. Damrone, 1862 March 17:

Scope and Content

Requests exemption due to multiple health issues, but states, "when all of our strong men are called out and they are not enough to drive back Linkcon and his retches, I am willing to go and [fight] with them." His request for exemption is rejected.

Request of R.W. Duncan, 1862 March 17:

Scope and Content

His father writes on his behalf and states that his son is a "man of unsound mind" and therefore is not fit to serve in the war. He is exempted.

Request of Shelton Hudson, 1862 March 24:

Scope and Content

Writes that he is "overseer and manager of a widowed mother in a neighborhood where the male slave population largely exceeds the white population." His request is rejected.

Requests of R.T. Kesley, C.D. Markam, O.F. Phillips, and G.W. Stromps, 1862 March 7:

Scope and Content

Mr. Humphrey Dabney writes on behalf of the men and asks that they be exempted because they are "artisans employed in his foundry works". The request is rejected.

Requests of W. Kesly and W.I. Stanley, 1862 March 24:

Scope and Content

Request exemption because they are employed "in the manufacture of shot and shell for the Govt in the city of Lynchburg." The two men are exempted.

Request of George Mays, 1862 April 18:

Scope and Content

Mays asks for exemption because he is the miller and overseer for Mrs. Paulina Pettyjohn. He is exempted. Mrs. Pettyjohn then writes to Governor Letcher and asks that Mays' exemption be reconsidered because he wronged her and misrepresented himself. The back of her letter has a notation stating that "the Governor has no power in the premises" and she should appeal to the Board of Exemptions for help. There is no indication of whether Mays' exemption is revoked or upheld.

Request of William L. McColgan, 1862 March 24:

Scope and Content

Letter written by the President of the James River and Kanawha Company stating that McColgan is employed as a carpenter in the construction of the James River and Kanawha Canal and is "indispensable for conducting the operations thereof." He is exempted.

Request of R. Ridgway, 1862 March 17:

Scope and Content

Requests exemption due to extreme nearsightedness. He is granted exemption.

Request of Christopher T. Sandidge, 1862 March:

Scope and Content

Requests exemption to care for his widowed mother and her insane daughter. His request is rejected.

Request of P.H. Sandrum, 1862 March 29:

Scope and Content

Requests exemption on the grounds of physical disability. He states that his right leg is two inches shorter than his left due to a broken thigh and ankle that didn't heal correctly. His request is rejected.

Request of L.D. Williams, 1862 March 20:

Scope and Content

Requests exemption due to physical disability, as well as the fact that the other neighborhood doctor, Dr. Christian, has "habits of intoxication" although "no one doubts his capacity in other respects." He is exempted.

Request of Leroy Willmon, 1862 March 29:

Scope and Content

Willmon's father wrote requesting that his son be exempted because he was forty-seven years old. Capt. Hargrove exempts him but can no longer "put [his] hands on" the letter from Willmon's father attesting to his age. Willmon's exemption is subsequently revoked.

Request of Thomas H. Woodroof, 1862 February 24:

Scope and Content

Requests exemption due to the lasting physical effects of an attack of St. Vitus Dance (now known as Sydenham chorea). Includes his letter, as well as letters from two doctors that corroborate his condition. Exemption status not listed.