

A Guide to the Decrees, Qualifications, and Wills of the Second Auditor, 1850-1928

Decrees, Qualifications, and Wills of the Second Auditor, 1850-1928
1850-1928

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History

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Descriptive Summary

Accession Number

SAI 160-161

Language

English

Creator

Virginia. Office of the Second Auditor.

Extent

10.6 cu. ft. (24 boxes)

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Transfer information unavailable [SAI 160, 161].

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Biographical Information

The history of the second auditor's office began in 1823 when the office was created by the General Assembly as part of an act to improve the navigation of the James and Kanawha rivers. Under the act, the second auditor was given responsibility for the Fund for Internal Improvements and for acting as secretary to the Board of Public Works. He was also appointed clerk and accountant to the directors of the Literary Fund. An act passed in 1829 made him the superintendent of the fund, and he assumed the responsibilities formerly held by the president and directors. In 1835 an act authorized the commissioners of the newly created Sinking Fund to redeem the state's debt, and the second auditor was appointed a commissioner with the responsibility, together with the state treasurer, for keeping the accounts of this fund.

Prior to the Civil War, the duties of the second auditor were fairly simple and straightforward, as were the duties of the treasurer. After the war, however, the devastation of the state's economy resulted in the creation of more numerous and complicated records concerning the redemption of the state debt. The office of the second auditor suffered from inadequate procedures for maintaining accurate records on the state's finances. By 1874, neither office had a complete or accurate account of the public debt, and between 1874 and 1877 major scandals were disclosed involving both offices and that of the sergeant at arms of the House of Delegates. Although a complete revision of the accounting methods used by both financial offices, especially the second auditor's, was called for, only minor changes were made.

In 1906 a legislative committee made periodic inspections of the finance offices. Finding that the situation in the second auditor's office remained almost as chaotic as it had been in 1874, the committee recommended that the office be abolished and its duties taken over by the first auditor. Although the committee's recommendations were not followed, its members continued to call for reform. Action was taken only after the election of Governor Harry F. Byrd, Sr., in 1926. Byrd hired a group of consultants from New York to study the finance offices, and the resulting report brought about a complete reorganization of state government in 1928. The offices of first and second auditor were abolished and replaced by a newly created office of comptroller. The second auditor's office closed its books on February 29, 1928.

Scope and Content

Records, 1850-1928, containing legal notices of the qualification of administrators, executors, or guardians of estates of holders of Virginia state stock. The Virginia Office of the Second Auditor was required to keep a register of Virginia state stock and had to be informed on the sale or transfer of stocks by the administrators, executors or guardians of estates. The collection is housed in twenty-four boxes into two series. Included are decrees, indexes, letters, powers of attorney, qualifications, resolutions, and wills.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into two series:

- Series I: Indexes, 1850-1928 [SAI 160]
- Series II: Decrees, Qualifications, and Wills, 1850-1928 [SAI 161]

Contents List

Series I: Indexes [SAI 160], 1850-1928.

Boxes 1 (box)

Extent

Extent: .25 cu. ft. (1 box)

Scope and Content

This series includes indexes to the Decrees, Qualifications, and Wills, 1850-1928. The indexes simply list names but do not contain much more information.

Index, Decrees, 1850-1928

Box 1 [1 volume]

Index, Decrees, 1850-1928

Box 1 [1 volume]

Index, Qualifications, 1850-1928

Box 1 [1 volume]

Index, Wills and Deeds, 1850-1928

Box 1 [1 volume]

Series II: Decrees, Qualifications, and Wills, 1850-1928.

Boxes 2-24 (box)

Extent

Extent: 10.35 cu. ft. (23 boxes).

Scope and Content

This series, 1850-1928, is housed in twenty-three boxes and includes decrees, letters, powers of attorney, qualifications, resolutions, and wills relating to holders of Virginia state stock. The bulk of the records are county court records (Chancery, Circuit, Hustings), but also included are powers of attorney; copies of deeds; extracts of wills; extracts of minutes from Board of Directors; certificates; correspondence; and other materials sent to prove that a person or organization is qualified to sell or gain interest from Virginia stocks and bonds.

The collection is a great source of genealogical information as the documents include family history information, such as how an estate was settled or who was the beneficiary of a will. Included are records identifying guardians of minor children, orphans, or people with intellectual disabilities. Also included are records from companies and organizations that owned or sold Virginia stock such as the John Hopkins Institute, Peabody Institute, Smithsonian Institute, Society of Cincinnati, Valentine's Meat Juice Company, and the Virginia Historical Society, among others. Included are court records from other states such as Connecticut, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania; and other countries such as Great Britain, Greece, and France. The records also include resolutions to sell stock from various Fraternal Lodges, banks, life insurance companies, churches, and universities; and copies of wills.

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