

A Guide to the Newport News, City of/Warwick County (Va.) Business Records, 1881-1951

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia
Library of Virginia

History

Processed by: Bari Helms

Title Statement

A Guide to the Newport News, City of/Warwick County (Va.) Business Records, 1881-1951

Subtitle: Newport News, City of/Warwick County (Va.) Business Records, 1881-1951

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Publication Statement

Date: © 2024 By The Library of Virginia. All Rights Reserved.

Publisher: Library of Virginia

Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MARC record, created by ,

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Newport News (Va.) Circuit Court

Physical Characteristics

18 volumes.

Location

State Record Center-Archives Annex, Library of Virginia

Repository

Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These records came to the Library of Virginia in transfers of court papers from Newport News in an undated accession.

Processing Information

Prior to 2024, the various business records in this collection were originally described as individual records, but they have been consolidated into one large business record for the locality.

These records were processed by Bari Helms between 2008-2010.

The Warwick County business records were originally maintained as a separate, discrete group. Those records were consolidated with the Newport News business records into a singular guide due to overlapping geographical locations and dates.

Encoded by J. Taylor: June 2024.

Preferred Citation

Newport News, City of/Warwick County (Va.) Business Records, 1881-1951. [include volume title]. Local government records collection, Newport News, City of/Warwick County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

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

Warwick County County is one of Virginia's Lost Records Localities. Additional Warwick County County Court Records may be found in the Virginia Lost Records Localities Collection at the Library of Virginia. Search the [Lost Records Localities Digital Collection](#) found at the Library of Virginia web site.

Historical Information

Context for Record Type: Business Records, both volumes and loose records, are in some cases transferred to the Library of Virginia as components of court record transfers. These business records in some cases were simply stored in the local court building for safe keeping by business owners. In other cases, business records (particularly ledgers, account books, etc.) may have been filed in a court case as an exhibit. These business record exhibits appeared both in chancery causes and in judgments, these records serving as exhibits for business dissolution cases, debt suits, and contract disputes.

Locality History: City of Newport News was located in Warwick County, which is now extinct. The origin of the name is uncertain but the phrase "Newport News" appeared in documents as early as 1619 and probably commemorated Christopher Newport, who made five voyages to Virginia between 1607 and 1619. Newport News was a small settlement until late in the nineteenth century, when it became the eastern terminus of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway. The Old Dominion Land Company bought land there in 1880 and began laying out a new village in October. Newport News was incorporated as a city by act of the General Assembly in 1896 without ever having been incorporated as a town. On 1 July 1958 Newport News was enlarged by consolidation with the city of Warwick, which then became extinct.

Lost Locality Notes: Recognized as Warwick River County, one of the original shires, in 1634; the name was shortened to Warwick in 1643. County court records were destroyed at several times with most destruction occurring during the Civil War. The clerk's office was burned on 15 December 1864. County court minute books and loose records from 1787 to 1819 were destroyed by the fire. Additional records were burned in Richmond on 3 April 1865, where they had been moved for safekeeping during the Civil War.

Scope and Content

Newport News, City of/Warwick County (Va.) Business Records, 1881-1951, is comprised of various records created by individuals and companies in pursuit of documenting business activities in and around Newport News (Va.). Represented records largely consists of bound volumes such as ledgers, stock books, minute books, sales books, deed books, and contract books.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into four series:

- Series I: The Old Dominion Land Company Business Records, 1881-1949
- Series II: The Peninsula Automobile Association Business Records, 1919-1921
- Series III: The Savings Bank of Newport News Business Records, 1901-1904

- Series IV: The Warwick Machines Company Business Records, 1918-1951

Contents List

Series I: The Old Dominion Land Company Business Records 1881-1949

Extent

8 volumes

Physical Location State Records Center

Scope and Content

Historical Information: In 1869, financier Collis P. Huntington and a number of others formed a group to purchase controlling interest in the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company. During the reorganization meeting of the stockholders, Huntington was elected president. Agents of the company began to purchase land between Richmond and Newport News in 1870 and in 1872, a decision was made to locate the Atlantic terminus of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway in Newport News. The Old Dominion Land Company was chartered in 1880 to secure railway right-of-ways on the Peninsula. Railroad construction on the peninsula began in 1880 and two years later, the Old Dominion Land Company began work on the Hotel Warwick, which opened the same year. The Old Dominion Land Company contributed to the establishment of a number of community facilities, including Newport News' first bank, the Warwick County Courthouse, and a Union Chapel. They also donated the land which was used to build Riverside Hospital, the public library, and Huntington Park.

Collis P. Huntington died unexpectedly at the beginning of the new century, leaving his interests to Arabella Huntington, his widow, his adopted children, Princess Clara von Hatzvelt and Archer M. Huntington, and Henry E. Huntington, his nephew who later married Arabella. Upon the United States' entrance into World War I, the federal government entered into a number of leases and purchase agreements with the Old Dominion Land Company because of Newport News' importance as a place of embarkment. Thousands of soldiers were stationed at bases which were built on land owned by the Old Dominion Land Company.

By 1932, nearly all of the profitable property owned by the Old Dominion Land Company had been sold. Within the decade, the company was almost entirely liquidated, with the Hotel Warwick as the only valuable property still owned by the Old Dominion Land Company. Liquidation of the company was completed in 1948.

For a more detailed history of the Old Dominion Land Company, see ["A Finding Aid to the records of the Old Dominion Land Company"](#)

Scope and Content: Old Dominion Land Company Business Records, 1881-1949, consists of eight volumes that document the development of property in Newport News, Va. Occasionally information appears relating to the development of property in other Virginia counties such as Gloucester, Norfolk, New Kent, and Rockbridge.

Old Dominion Land Company Records of Contract and Deeds 1881-1901; 1894-1916; 1901-1919; 1919-1947; 1901-1927; 1927-1949

Scope and Content

The Record of Contract and Deed books list the contract and deed information of land in development. Information found in each entry include contract and deed numbers, date of contract and deed, name with whom contract made, grantee named in deed, lot and block numbers, consideration, cash payments, and the length of contract.

Barcode Number 1126777: Old Dominion Land Company Record of Contracts and Deeds No. 1, 1881-1901

Barcode Number 1126778: Old Dominion Land Company Record of Contracts and Deeds No. 2, 1894-1916

Barcode Number 1126779: Old Dominion Land Company Contracts No. 3, 1901-1919

Barcode Number 1126780: Old Dominion Land Company Contracts No. 4, 1919-1947

Barcode Number 1126781: Old Dominion Land Company Record of Deeds No. 3, 1901-1927

Barcode Number 1126782: Old Dominion Land Company Record of Deeds No. 4, 1927-1949

Old Dominion Land Company Sales Books 1883-1907; 1883-1906

Scope and Content

The Sales Books record lots purchased from the land company. Arranged by block number, information found in each transaction includes date of purchase, lot number, name of purchaser, town and state location of the property, price paid, and taxes owed.

Barcode Number 1126875: Old Dominion Land Company Sales Book No. 2, 1883-1907

Barcode Number 1126876: Old Dominion Land Company Sales Book No. 2a, 1883-1906

Series II: Peninsula Automobile Association, 1919-1921

Extent

2 volumes

Physical Location State Record Center

Scope and Content

Historical Information:The Peninsula Automobile Association was organized with 39 charter numbers in Newport News in 1909. It became a club member of the American Automobile Association in 1919. The American Automobile Association was founded in 1902, in Chicago, Illinois, when nine motor clubs banded together in response to the lack of roads and highways suitable for automobiles.

Scope and Content:The Peninsula Automobile Association consists of two volumes, a minute book and an account book. The minutes contain committee reports, records of election of officers, and a record of the proceedings of monthly meetings. Topics discussed include the state of roads, efforts to lobby the government to improve, expand, and maintain roads and streets, fundraising, and service projects, such as providing cars to assist the Red Cross in entertaining wounded soldiers. Accounts are a record of receipts and disbursements for the year 1921.

Barcode Number 1202663: Peninsula Automobile Association Minute and Account Books 1919-1921

Series III: The Savings Bank of Newport News Business Records, 1901-1904

Extent

2 volumes

Physical Location State Records Center

Scope and Content

Historical Information:Chartered in 1901, the Savings Bank of Newport News did not open its doors until 1 March 1902. The bank operated in Newport News, Va., during the early twentieth century. Early officers of the bank included L. F. Barnes, president, and Carter Perkins, cashier and secretary.

Scope and Content:The Savings Bank of Newport News business records consists of one stock book and one minute book.

Barcode Number 1128797: Savings Bank of Newport News Minute Book 1901-1904

Scope and Content

Savings Bank of Newport News Minute Book, 1901-1904, records the minutes for the meetings of the bank's board of directors and stockholders. In early meetings, the board of directors and stockholders discussed establishing the bank's charter, selecting board members, crafting a constitution, and

adopting bylaws. Details concerning the acquirement of stockholders and the collection capital stock from subscribers were included in later meetings

Barcode Number 1128798: Savings Bank of Newport News Stock Book 1903

Scope and Content

Savings Bank of Newport News Stock Book, 1903, includes duplicate stock certificates kept for the bank's records of capital stock shares sold. Each stock certificate includes a certificate number, date of purchase, name of buyer, and the number of shares purchased.

Series IV: Warwick Machine Company Business Records 1918-1951

Extent

6 volumes

Physical Location State Record Center

Scope and Content

Historical Information:The Warwick Machine Company was a marine engineering and machinery company operating in Newport News, Va. In 1950 the company sold its assets to the Hooper Valve and Engineering Corporation.

Scope and Content:The business records of the Warwick Machine Company consist of a ledger, receivership records, trial balance records, a letter book, and records of losses. Only the ledger book has been processed.

Barcode Number 1208736: Warwick Machine Company Ledger Book, 1943-1950

Scope and Content

Warwick Machine Company Ledger, 1943-1950, records the company's financial activities. Part of the ledger functions as a cashbook recording the cash on hand, cash available at various banks, and accounts receivable. The rest of the ledger documents the machine company's expenses such as salaries, taxes, purchase of materials and supplies, and machinery upkeep and repairs. Information found in each entry includes the date of transaction and amounts either debited or credited. Only occasionally was a note provided describing the details of the transaction. Scattered throughout the ledger are entries documenting the sale of the company in 1950 to the Hooper Valve and Engineering Corporation.

Barcode Number 1128806: Warwick Machine Company Record of Losses 1918-1936

Barcode Number 1128817: Warwick Machine Company Letter Book 1948-1950

Barcode Number 1128801: Warwick Machine Company Trial Balance 1928-1946

Barcode Number 1128807: Warwick Machine Company Receivership Records 1947-1949

Barcode Number 1128804: Warwick Machine Company Receivership Records 1945-1951