

A Guide to the Petersburg (Va.) Military and Pension Records, 1807-1902; undated

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia
Library of Virginia
2024

History

Processed by: Library of Virginia staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Petersburg (Va.) Military and Pension Records, 1807-1902; undated

Subtitle: Petersburg (Va.) Military and Pension Records

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Publication Statement

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from being created directly into EAD, created by McKenzie Long, 1 October 2024

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Petersburg (Va.) Circuit Court

Extent

1.23 cu. ft. (2 boxes)

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Military and pension records included in the box labeled "Bonds/Commissions/Oaths, Fiduciary Records, Military and Pension Records, Court Records, 1800-1846 circa" are unprocessed. All records remain tri-folded or in original bundles and may be fragile. Contact Archives Research services for availability.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These records came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from the city of Petersburg.

Processing Information

Military and pension records, 1807-1902; undated, were separated from Petersburg city court records and processed by Library of Virginia staff.

Remaining military and pension records from 1808-1829 are still unprocessed.

Encoded by M. Long: October 2024.

Preferred Citation

Petersburg (Va.) Military and Pension Records, 1807-1902; undated. Local government records collection, Petersburg (City) Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

See also:

[Petersburg \(Va.\) Declarations for Revolutionary War Pensions, 1820-1835](#) at the Library of Virginia.

[Petersburg \(Va.\) Board of Exemption Minutes, 1862-1863](#) at the Library of Virginia.

[Petersburg \(Va.\) Writs of Habeas Corpus, 1842-1865](#) at the Library of Virginia.

Additional Petersburg 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

Context for Record Type: Keeping large bodies of militia in the field required an elaborate system of support based on the purchase of goods and services from civilians, in addition to the usual pay and allowances to officers and soldiers. The result was the creation of a large number of records concerning the state's disbursements to both soldiers and civilians. Many claims for payment went unsatisfied until 1821. Locality military and pension records consist largely of pay and muster rolls, accounts and vouchers concerning supplies, claims for reimbursement for services rendered, and military pension applications. Pension applications summarize the applicant's service record and may include medical evaluations; information about income and property; and, in the case of widows, the date and place of marriages.

During the Revolutionary War, commissioners were appointed in each county to impress supplies and non-military services (such as driving cattle or wagons) for the war effort. Officials provided certificates or receipts so that individual suppliers could be reimbursed by the state government. Beginning in 1782, claims for reimbursement could be submitted to county courts. These "publick claims," known as court booklets and lists, exist for almost all Virginia counties. Between 1777 and 1785, the Virginia General Assembly passed several laws authorizing pensions for disabled soldiers and for widows of soldiers who died while on active duty.

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. The Virginia General Assembly passed several Confederate pension acts beginning in 1888. The initial act provided pensions to Confederate soldiers, sailors, and marines disabled in action and to the widows of those killed in action. A 1900 act broadened the coverage to include veterans disabled by "infirmities of age" and widows whose husbands died after the war. African Americans who had served "faithfully" as servants, cooks, laborers, hostlers, or teamsters for the Confederate army were eligible for pensions beginning in 1924. District of Columbia residents became eligible in 1926; previously, all pension applicants were required to be residents of Virginia.

Locality History: Petersburg was formed from parts of Dinwiddie, Prince George, and Chesterfield Counties. A garrison and fur trading post called Fort Henry was established there in 1645 on the site of the Indian town Appamattuck. The present name, suggested in 1733 by William Byrd (1674-1744), honors Peter Jones, Byrd's companion on expeditions into the Virginia backcountry. Petersburg was established in 1748 and incorporated as a town in 1784. In the latter year the towns of Blandford, Pocahontas, and Ravenscroft were added to Petersburg.

Scope and Content

Petersburg (Va.) Military and Pension Records, 1807-1902; undated, consist of military service records, accounts and vouchers, and claims for reimbursement by civilians and service members. These include:

County militia papers, 1807-1831; undated, include officers' oaths and commissions, receipts, accounts of militia fines, and an undated roll of members in the Petersburg riflemen.

Pension papers, 1824-1902, consist of records related to veterans and their families seeking reimbursement, service rewards, or other support promised by the government in recognition of their time in the military. Most papers include regiment, commanding officer names, and other details about wartime service. Records include bounty land warrants, certificates, applications, affidavits, correspondence, reports on disabilities sustained in service, federal policy documents, pension commissioner reports, and pension board summons and minutes.

Commutation applications, 1882-1884, consist of applications for commutation money and artificial limbs for Confederate soldiers wounded during the Civil War.

Unprocessed military and pension records primarily consist of officers' commissions from 1808-1829.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:

- **Series I: Processed Military and Pension Records, 1807-1902; undated** is arranged chronologically and housed in a box with other subject files of city of Petersburg court records.
- **Series II: Unprocessed Military and Pension Records, 1808-1829**, is housed in a box with other unprocessed court records for the city of Petersburg.

Contents List

Series I: Processed Military and Pension Records, 1807-1902; undated

Extent

.23 cubic feet (1 box)

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically and housed in a box with other subject files of city of Petersburg court records.

Barcode number 1152191: Marriage Records, Military and Pension Records, Miscellaneous Records, City Administrative Records, Organization Records, Road and Bridge Records, School Records, 1805-1903, undated

Series II: Unprocessed Military and Pension Records, 1808-1829

Extent

1.00 cubic feet (1 box)

Arrangement

Housed in a box with other unprocessed court records for the city of Petersburg.

Barcode number 1047066: Bonds/Commissions/Oaths, Fiduciary Records, Military and Pension Records, Court Records, 1800-1846 circa