

A Guide to the Dismal Swamp Canal Company Records, 1792-1834

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Descriptive Summary

Manuscript number

MS 76.3

Language

English

Creator

Dismal Swamp Canal Company.

Extent

10 items.

Repository

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

Administrative Information

Access

There are no restrictions.

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Alternative Form

Also available on microfilm M-1317.2.

Biographical/Historical Information

The Dismal Swamp Canal, which connects Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound, was proposed as early as 1763 when George Washington and five associates formed the "Adventurers for Draining the Great Dismal Swamp." This company abandoned the project as economically unfeasible. In 1784, the Dismal Swamp Canal Company was created. On December 1, 1787, the Virginia Assembly passed an "Act for cutting a navigable canal ..." Digging of the canal finally began in 1793. Most of the work was done by the slaves of nearby landowners. It took twelve years for the twenty two mile waterway to be dug.

Robert Andrews, Thomas Newton, Jr., John Cowper, Daniel Berdinger and Donald Campbell were directors of the company in 1794.

Scope and Content Information

The collection includes a map of the canal as well as indentures, warrants and inquisitions, land valuations, and surveys. Most of the collection pertains to the acquisition of land by the Canal Company or its subsequent leasing of the land to private individuals. Names mentioned in the collection include Robert Andrews, Daniel Berdinger, Donald Campbell, John Cowper, and Thomas Newton, Jr.

Index Terms

Persons:

Andrews, Robert, fl. 1794.

Berdinger, Daniel.

Campbell, Donald, fl. 1794.

Cowper, John, fl. 1794.

Fairless, Joseph A.

Newton, Thomas, 1742-1807.

Parks, Marshall.

Stallings, Fruzy.

Subjects:

Canals--Virginia.
Canals--North Carolina.
Land use--Virginia.
Conveyancing--Virginia.

Corporate Names:

Dismal Swamp Canal Company.

Genre and Form Terms:

Indentures--North Carolina.

Geographical Names:

Dismal Swamp (N.C. and Va.)
Dismal Swamp Canal (N.C. and Va.)

Arrangement

Chronologically arranged.

Contents List

Order to jury for Deep Creek land valuation, 24 July 1792.

Note of receipt of land warrant by Clerk of Court, 3 September 1794.

Cross-Canal land valuation order, 15 July 1812.

Inquisition of land valuation for Cross-Canal, 4 August 1812.

Cross-Canal Survey notes, 4 August 1812.

List of witnesses' signatures, 21 September 1812.

Indenture between Dismal Swamp Canal Company and Marshall Parks, 1834.

Notes about leases of land along canal route, 1823-1834, 1834.

Indenture between Joseph A. Fairless and Fruzy Stallings, Gates County, N.C., n.d.

Map of Dismal Swamp Canal, n.d.