

A Guide to the Nottoway County (Va.) John Mitchell, Jr. Campaign Button, undated

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Author: Sarah Nerney

History

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Descriptive Summary

Barcode

1172999

Language

English

Collector

Nottoway County (Va.) Circuit Court

Physical Characteristics

1 item (1 button)

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

This item is shelved in the Vault.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

This item came to the Library of Virginia in shipments of court papers from Nottoway County.

Processing Information

This item was digitized by request under the Photolab number 07_0034_0206.tif.

Preferred Citation

Nottoway County (Va.) John Mitchell, Jr. Campaign Button, undated. Local government records collection, Nottoway County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

See also: T.P. Jones, Administrator and Administrator of Annie Jeaneatta Jackson, Etc. vs. Administrator of James F. Jackson, Etc.[Chancery Cause 1937-001] in [Nottoway County \(Va.\) Chancery Causes, 1818-1968 \(bulk 1900-1952\)](#).

Nottoway County is one of Virginia's Lost Records Localities. Additional Nottoway County Records may be found in the Virginia Lost Records Localities Collection at the Library of Virginia. Search the [Lost Records Localities Digital Collection](#) available on the library of virginia website.

Historical Information

Biographical Information: John Mitchell, Jr. was born July 11, 1863 in Henrico County, Virginia to slave parents. He graduated from Richmond High and Normal School in 1881 and pursued a career as a teacher for several years. In 1884, he became the second editor of the newspaper the Richmond Planet, a black weekly paper founded by former slaves in the city of Richmond in 1883. He remained its editor for forty five years during which time he used his position and his paper to protest all forms of racial discrimination, prejudice, and hypocrisy, especially lynching, earning for himself the title of "the fighting editor." By 1887, the paper was one of the largest circulating black newspapers in the South. Mitchell was prominent in the Virginia Republican party and served as Jackson Ward's delegate to Richmond City Council from 1888 to 1896. He ran for governor of Virginia on an all-black ticket in 1921. He founded the Mechanics Savings Bank in 1902 and was head of the Virginia chapter of the Knights of Pythias, a benevolent association. His bank failed in 1922 after accusations of mismanagement and he died a short time afterwards on December 3, 1929. He is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Richmond, Virginia.

Historical Information:The Knight of Pythias was a fraternal benevolent association founded in 1864. In 1870, a white chapter refused to admit African American members although after years of petitioning, some light-skinned African Americans were accepted. One of these men, Dr. Thomas W. Stringer of Mississippi, later formed what is often referred to as the Colored Knights of Pythias although their official name was The Knights of Pythias of North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia. The Colored Knights had many chapters throughout the United States. The organization provided community services such as insurance, burial services, and other welfare functions. The Colored Knights suffered a decline in membership after the Depression and does not survive much today. In Richmond, Virginia, the Pythian Hall was for many years located in the same building as the Mechanics Savings Bank founded by John Mitchell, Jr.

Lost Locality Note: Many records were destroyed or heavily mutilated in 1865 by Union troops during the Civil War. A few volumes that record deeds, court orders, and wills exist.

Scope and Content

John Mitchell, Jr. Campaign Button, undated, is a one-inch diameter button featuring a photographic portrait of John Mitchell, Jr. and the phrase "For Supreme Chancellor, John Mitchell Jr." This button was probably used as publicity for Mitchell's campaign to become head of the Virginia chapter of the Knights of Pythias, an African American benevolent association. The reverse of the button states that it was made by the Whitehead and Hoag Company of Newark, NJ.

The button was used as a fastener for some papers in the Nottoway County (Va.) chancery cause T.P. Jones, Administrator and Administrator of Annie Jeaneatta Jackson and others versus Administrator of James F. Jackson and others (1937-001) to which it is entirely unrelated.

Index Terms

Persons:

Mitchell, John. 1863-1929.

Nottoway County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Knights of Pythias (Richmond, Va.)

Subjects:

African American fraternal organizations--Virginia--Nottoway County.

Campaign insignia.

Geographical Names:

Nottoway County (Va.)--History.

Genre and Form Terms:

Buttons (informational artifacts)--Virginia--Nottoway County.

Local government records--Virginia--Nottoway County.