

A Guide to the Gloucester County (Va.) Charity School Records, 1826-1922 (bulk 1826-1884)

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia 1096346 and 1096348-1096351/Gloucester County (Va.) Reel 80

Library of Virginia

2009

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History

Processed by: Library of Virginia staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Gloucester County (Va.) Charity School Records, 1826-1922 (bulk 1826-1884)

Subtitle: Gloucester County (Va.) Charity School Records, 1826-1922 (bulk 1826-1884) 1096346 and 1096348-1096351/Gloucester County (Va.) Reel 80

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Publication Statement

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Publisher: Library of Virginia

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MARC record, created by Callie Lou Freed, 15 January 2009

Language Usage: Description is in English

Revision Description

2013-11-21 Converted to schema conforming EAD by dtd2schema.vh.xsl.

Descriptive Summary

Collection numbers

1096346 and 1096348-1096351/Gloucester County (Va.) Reel 80

Language

English

Collector

Gloucester County (Va.) Charity School.

Physical Characteristics

5 v.; 1 microfilm reel

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

Use microfilm copy, Gloucester County (Va.) Reel 80.

Acquisition Information

These volumes came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of records from Gloucester County.

Microfilm Reel 80 was generated by Backstage Library Works through the Library of Virginia's Circuit Court Records Preservation Program.

Preferred Citation

Gloucester County (Va.) Charity School Records, 1826-1922 (bulk 1826-1884.) Gloucester County (Va.) Reel 80, Local government records collection, Gloucester County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

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

Related Material

In researching this subject, there is a volume in the Library of Virginia's collection entitled "With Reverence for the Past", published in 2001, by Martha W. McCartney.

Related Material

Additional information on the subject may be found in "Acts Passed at a General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, 1814", Chapter 56, pages 117-119.

Related Material

Additional information on the subject may be found on the Internet in an article by James V. Morgan entitled, "The History of Peasley Middle School."

See the [Lost Records Localities Digital Collection](#) available at Virginia Memory.

For more information and a listing of lost records localities see [Lost Records research note](#).

Historical Information

Gloucester County was formed from York County in 1651. The county was named probably for the English county, although it may also have been intended to honor Henry, duke of Gloucester, the third son of King Charles I.

On January 25th, 1814, the General Assembly of Virginia enacted special legislation that established the Gloucester Charity School. According to this legislation, the school's thirteen trustees were mandated to build a schoolhouse to be used for the benefit and education of the poor children of Gloucester County. From the sale of the glebes (church-owned land) of Abingdon, Ware and Petsworth parishes and money from the sale of slaves, the proceeds would provide for the construction of a poorhouse and a work house for paupers--to provide for the county's poor. A steward would be hired by the trustees to oversee the facilities and keep the

buildings in good repair. Trustees were also empowered to bind out poor children. As this Act of the Assembly states: "When the trustees shall certify to the court that the buildings are ready, the laws concerning the overseers of the poor shall stand repealed with respect to the county." All matters regarding the poor would now be handled by the Gloucester Charity School.

By 1849, the Charity School was comprised on 30 acres of land called "the Poorhouse." The school was located five miles northwest of the courthouse. The rest of the land, approximately 574 additional acres, was taken care of by short-term lease tenants. The excess funds generated were then used by the school trustees to care for the poor or were loaned out to local citizens who had to post unencumbered real estate as collateral. In August 1867, F. J. Massey, the military commissioner who had oversight of Gloucester County informed the county's court justices of their need to provide for "the indigent people" previously entrusted to the care of the Freedmen's Bureau--essentially providing food and clothing to former slaves. Massey's letter was forwarded by the county justices to the trustees of the Gloucester County Charity School, who were instructed to take action.

In March 1886, the General Assembly authorized the trustees for the Gloucester County Charity School to sell the Free School Land. The land was sold at a public auction in October 1886. A new deed of conveyance was written in 1910 conferring the sale of the land. The Gloucester County Charity School, according to the records in possession of the Library of Virginia, operated until 1922. According to information found on a website entitled "The History of Peasley Middle School" by James V. Morgan, the legislature turned over all the remaining funds to a newly organized Peasley School Board. The Board called in all outstanding bonds and the money received was transferred to the remaining balance on the Botetourt School Building, now known as the Kenney Building.

All records were destroyed by an 1820 fire, and most of the records created after 1820 were destroyed by fire in Richmond on 3 April 1865, where they had been moved for safekeeping during the Civil War.

Scope and Content

Gloucester County (Va.) Charity School Records, 1826-1922 (bulk 1826-1884) are a series of volumes dealing with the care and education of the poor in Gloucester County, Virginia. The volumes contain information on local individuals and businesses that provided services or food to the poor, who the trustees and officers of the school were and the names of local residents that were permitted to take out loans. A few of the volumes contain loose papers as well. These volumes provide an excellent overview of how the economic, social and educational life of the county was impacted in the period before public education, the establishment of a banking system in the county and at a time when Virginians, by and large, were very poor during the post-Civil War reconstruction period. Due to their historical content, these records are rare in nature.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

Gloucester County (Va.) Charity School.

Subjects:

African Americans--History--1863-1877.

African Americans--History--1877-1964.

African Americans--History--To 1863.

African Americans--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Almhouses--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Apprentices--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Church lands--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Education--Finance.

Education--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Free African Americans--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Freedmen--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Land use--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Orphans--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Poor--Employment--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Poor--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Poor children--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Public welfare--Virginia--Gloucester County.
Schools--Virginia--Gloucester County.
Slaves--Virginia--Gloucester County.
Tax collection--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Geographical Names:

Gloucester County (Va.)--History.

Genre and Form Terms:

Account books--Virginia--Gloucester County.
Disbursements--Virginia--Gloucester County.
Financial records--Virginia--Gloucester County.
Indentures--Virginia--Gloucester County.
Local government records--Virginia--Gloucester County.
Minute books--Virginia--Gloucester County.
School records--Virginia--Gloucester County.

Arrangement

Organized in the following series: I. Charity School Record of Debts Due the Trustees & Disbursements, 1826-1856; II. Charity School Minute Books, 1840-1866, 1910-1922; III. Charity School Account Books, 1847-1884.

Contents List

Barcode number 1096346: Minute Book, 1910-1922 (228 p.)

Barcode number 1096348: Account Book, 1876-1884 (82 p.)

Barcode number 1096349: School Accounts with Edward B. S. Cary, Treasurer, 1847-1876

Barcode number 1096350: Minute Book, 1840-1866

Scope and Content

Book is property of Edward B. S. Cary, Treasurer

Barcode number 1096351: Records of Debts Due the Trustees and Disbursements, 1826-1856