

A Guide to the Goochland County (Va.), Health and Medical Records, 1802-1964

Goochland County Health and Medical Records, 1802-1906
1802-1906

A Collection in the Library of Virginia
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2020

History

Processed by: T. Harter

Title Statement

A Guide to the Goochland County (Va.), Health and Medical Records, 1802-1964

Subtitle: Goochland County (Va.), Health and Medical Records, 1802-1964

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Publication Statement

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid created in EAD by Tracy S. Harter, 9 July 2020

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Creator

Goochland County (Va.) Circuit Court

Extent

.225 cu. ft. (1 box), 1 volume

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

This collection came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Goochland County Circuit Court under an undated accession.

Processing Information

Encoded by T. Harter: July 2020; edited by V. Brooks: July 2026

Preferred Citation

Goochland County (Va.) Health and Medical Records, 1802-1964. Local government records collection, Goochland County Court Records, The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional Goochland County court records can be found on microfilm and in the Chancery Records Index at the Library of Virginia. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm"](#) and [The Chancery Records Index](#).

Historical Information

Context for Record Type:

Mental Health Records may consist of a variety of documents that historically were referred to as lunacy papers in the courthouses of Virginia localities and municipalities.

During its session begun in November 1769, the House of Burgesses passed an act establishing a hospital in Williamsburg for the mentally ill. The Eastern Lunatic Asylum (now Eastern State Hospital) was the first institution in America constructed as a mental hospital. The first patients were admitted in October 1773. The Commonwealth went on to establish other state-operated facilities for individuals with mental illness in subsequent decades. Western Lunatic Asylum (now Western State Hospital) opened in Staunton in 1828, Central Lunatic Asylum (now Central State Hospital) opened in Petersburg in 1882, and Southwestern Lunatic Asylum (now Southwestern Virginia Mental Health Institute) opened in Marion in 1887.

In 1863, the Virginia General Assembly passed two pieces of legislation affecting persons committed to mental hospitals. In February, it passed legislation allowing for a committee to sell any stock and for any proceeds beyond that necessary for an individual's care to be invested in any stock, to include Confederate bonds. In March, the General Assembly widened the scope of this by passing legislation authorizing any fiduciaries such as the committee or trustee of the estate of any person to petition their circuit court to allow them to invest any part of estate funds in Confederate bonds or certificates.

A fiduciary is an individual who enters into a confidential and legal relationship which binds them to act on behalf of another. Guardians are legally invested to take care of another person, and of the property and rights of that person. Thus, some records referred to as insanity papers are housed with fiduciary records and not with mental health records.

Locality History:

Goochland County was named for Sir William Gooch, lieutenant governor of Virginia from 1727 to 1749. It was formed from Henrico County in 1728.

Scope and Content

Goochland County (Va.) Health and Medical Records 1802-1964, consists of one box containing Mental Health Records, 1802-1906 and Smallpox Epidemic Records, 1899-1900, as well as a 1912-1964 volume of 'Persons Judged Insane.'

Mental Health Records, 1802-1906, contains one folder which includes warrants, orders, petitions, depositions, reports, etc. for or by justices of the peace, local sheriffs, and others regarding the mental condition of individuals who were released to the recognizance of a family member or who were committed to a mental hospital. Fiduciary records such as estate inventories of a person judged insane and receipts for services transporting persons to hospitals may also be present. Various asylums/hospitals are referenced, including a 'Pinel Hospital' at Richmond. Several cases 1880-1899 pertain to African-Americans recommended or sent to Central Lunatic Asylum at Petersburg.

Smallpox Epidemic Records, 1899-1900, consist of papers relating to quarantines and hospitals for the containment and/or treatment of smallpox outbreaks in Goochland County.

The 'Persons Judged Insane,' 1912-1964, volume contains documentation of individuals determined by the local court to be suffering from mental illness and unable to manage their own affairs. Includes demographic information about the subject, the commission assigned to determine their condition, date of the proceedings, date of commitment, institution/person committed to, and the date.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into a single series:

- **Series I: Health and Medical Records, 1802-1964,**

Contents List

Series I: Health and Medical Records 1802-1964

Extent

.225 cubic feet (1 box), 1 volume.

Physical Location Library of Virginia

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically

Barcode number 0007777605: Mental Health Records, Smallpox Records, 1802-1906, 1899-1900

Barcode number 1095236: Persons Judged Insane, 1912-1964

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