

A Guide to the Lunenburg County (Va.), Health and Medical Records, 1862-1905

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1862-1905

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History

Processed by: T. Harter

Title Statement

A Guide to the Lunenburg County (Va.), Health and Medical Records, 1862-1905

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Descriptive Summary

Collection Number

0007792116

Language

English

Creator

Lunenburg County (Va.) Circuit Court

Extent

.225 cf; legal-sized half-hollinger box

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 Lunenburg County Circuit Court.

Preferred Citation

Lunenburg County (Va.) Health and Medical Records, 1862-1905. Local government records collection, Lunenburg County Court Records, The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional Lunenburg 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

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.

In March 1882 a 300 acre tract of land was purchased by the City of Petersburg and given to the state for the purpose of constructing a permanent mental health facility for African Americans. Construction of the new facility near Petersburg was completed in early spring 1885. In 1894, Central Lunatic Asylum was officially renamed Central State Hospital. This piece of legislation also altered the names of the other mental health facilities in Virginia in an attempt to inspire a more positive image of the institutions, and of mental health treatment in general. It is important to note that another state institution located in Staunton, Virginia went by the name Central Lunatic Asylum between the years of 1861 and 1865. Its name later was changed to Western Lunatic Asylum, and is a separate facility with no connection to the Richmond/Petersburg hospital for African Americans.

Lunenburg County was named for George II, duke of Brunswick-Luneburg, a German possession of the Hanoverian kings of England. It was formed from Brunswick County in 1745.

Scope and Content

Lunenburg County (Va.) Health and Medical Records, 1862-1905, consist of three folders: Mental Health Records, 1888-1905, Military Field Hospital Visit Reports, 1863-1864, and Smallpox Epidemic Records, 1862-1863.

Mental Health Records may include warrants, orders, petitions, depositions, reports, etc. for or by justices of the peace and others regarding the mental condition of individuals who were released to the recognizance of a family member or who were recommended to be committed to a mental hospital, Eastern State Hospital in Williamsburg and Central State Hospital in Petersburg.

Military Field Hospital Visit Reports include two reports of committees formed to visit battlefields and hospitals to attend the wounded of Lunenburg County. One report of June 1863 refers to six wounded soldiers from 22nd Virginia Battalion and details about their injuries. An August 1864 report narrates the visits of three doctors traveling between May and June to battle sites and field hospitals in Petersburg, Richmond, and surrounding areas, listing over twenty soldiers' names and injuries.

Smallpox Epidemic Records, 1862-1863, consist of three documents relating to quarantines and hospitals for the containment and/or treatment of smallpox outbreaks in Lunenburg County. Confederate soldier James House was diagnosed in Nov 1862, and the residence of George W. Gee, where he was staying, was recommended as a quarantine hospital. Justices also determined an outbreak at the residence of James Inge, formerly of William B. Moore, in Dec. 1862.

Arrangement

The Mental Health Records are arranged chronologically by year, then alphabetically by last name of individual.

