

# A Guide to the Commissioners to Examine Claims in Norfolk records of the Auditor of Public Accounts, 1777-1795, 1836.

Commissioners to Examine Claims in Norfolk records of the Auditor of Public Accounts,  
1777-1795, 1836.

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia APA 235

Library of Virginia

2024

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## History

**Processed by:** Paige Neal.

## Title Statement

A Guide to the Commissioners to Examine Claims in Norfolk records of the Auditor of Public Accounts, 1777-1795, 1836.

**Subtitle:** Virginia.APA 235

**Author:** Paige Neal

## Publication Statement

**Date:** © 2024 By The Library of Virginia. All Rights Reserved.

**Publisher:** Library of Virginia

## Profile Description

**Creation:** Machine-readable finding aid, 2024 July 17

**Language Usage:** Description is in English

## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

APA 235

**Unit Date**

1777-1795, 1836.

**Creator**

Virginia. Auditor of Public Accounts.

**Extent**

.45 cu. ft. (1 box)

**Repository**

The Library of Virginia

## Administrative Information

**Access Restrictions**

There are no access restrictions.

## Acquisition Information

APA 235 was acquired prior to 1905.

## Preferred Citation

Commissioners to Examine Claims in Norfolk records of the Auditor of Public Accounts, 1777-1836, Accession APA 235. State government records collection, The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

## Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically.

## Historical Information

In May 1777 the General Assembly appointed a commission to evaluate the losses of property that resulted from the burning of Norfolk in January 1776. The commission distinguished between property destroyed by the British and American troops and between property owners who were friendly or hostile to the American cause. The commission had the authority to summon witnesses and to take depositions. In October 1777 the General Assembly formed another commission to ascertain the damages to property burned by or used as barracks by American troops in Portsmouth, Suffolk, Great Bridge, and Norfolk County. In May 1778 the General Assembly appointed other commissioners to evaluate the damage to the burnt mills and houses in Norfolk County belonging to Robert Tucker. The records indicate that most of the property was destroyed by American troops. The schedule of valuation for the city of Norfolk lists the occupations of the claimants.

## Scope and Content

Commissioners to Examine Claims in Norfolk included Robert Andrews, Daniel Fisher, Richard Kello, and Joseph Prestis. Report and Journal of the Commissioners to Examine Claims in Norfolk, 1777, details procedures followed and also includes A Schedule of Claims Entered for Losses Sustained by the Late Inhabitants of the Borough of Norfolk, which details 216 claims. The schedule includes claim number, name and occupation of the claimant, number of houses, amount of real and personal property destroyed before 15 January 1775 and amount of real and personal property destroyed after 15 January 1775, how destroyed, proof of loss, and total amount of loss. The schedule distinguishes between losses caused by Lord Dunmore, troops of the state, and by order of the convention. The proof of loss includes names of deponents. Depositions (1-19) and (C-Q), substantiate the claims and include details of loss and often the occupation of the deponent. Rather than 19 depositions, there are actually 20, but two are numbered 10. Many of the depositions, C-Q, include wrappers only, so are not listed below. A Copy of the valuation of property destroyed in Norfolk by the orders of Col. Robert Howe when evacuated by VA and NC troops in 1776, undated, lists property owner, type of property and the value of the property. The valuation folder also includes depositions.

Depositions (1-19), 1777, offer detailed accounts of the activities in Norfolk between January 1-4, 1776, and provide evidence of destruction and plundering by State troops. The reverse of the deposition of William Ivey includes a list of George Abyvon's losses. Depositions (C-Q), 1777, provide evidence as to the loyalties of some of the inhabitants of the Norfolk. Many of these contain wrappers only.

Claim records, 1776-1786, consist of documentation related to various claims, the majority of which appear to be related loan certificates for the amount of the balance due from the Commonwealth. These records consist mainly of affidavits and depositions, but also include other supplementary documentation such as acts, certificates, correspondence, court record extracts, resolutions, valuations, and wills.

Commissioners to Examine Claims in Portsmouth, Suffolk, Great Bridge and Norfolk County included William Cowper, John Driver, Niles King, Henry Riddick, Willis Riddick, and Worlick Westwood. These claims include both destruction of property by fire and damage sustained to houses used as barracks by soldiers. Report of the Commissioners to Examine Claims in Portsmouth, Suffolk, Great Bridge and Norfolk County, 1778, details procedures followed and includes several schedules: A Schedule of Valuation of the Houses Burnt and Destroyed at Portsmouth by the Troops of this State; Schedule Ascertaining the Damage Sustained by Sundry Houses in the town of Portsmouth by Being Made Use of as Barracks by the Troops of the State; Schedule Ascertaining the Damage Sustained by Sundry Houses in the town of Suffolk by Being Made Use of as Barracks by the Troops of the State; Schedule of the Valuation of Sundry Homes in the town of Norfolk remaining Unvalued or Their Value Not Allowed by the Last Session of the Assembly; Schedule of the Valuation of the Housing Belonging to Robert Tucker on Wind Mill Point where the Fort is Erected; and Schedule Containing an Estimate of the Total Amount of the Different Valuations. These schedules list claimant name, property description, proof as to destruction (deponent), and valuation. Also includes depositions related to the property of Robert Tucker.

Includes extracts of resolutions related to mistakes in valuations and claims, undated, and a resolution of the House of Delegates requesting a copy of the 1777 journal and report created by the commissioners, 1836.

Distillery claims, 1790-1791, include affidavits, certificates, and correspondence related to the destruction of the local distillery by Virginia troops. The distillery was managed by the firm of Jamieson, Campbell, Calvert and Co. Alexander Love was the managing partner of the distillery, which included many citizen partners.

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**Resolutions, undated.**

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