

A Guide to the Essex County (Va.) Military and Pension Records, 1757-1899; undated

Essex County (Va.) Military and Pension Records, 1757-1899; undated

1757-1899; undated

A Collection in the Library of Virginia

Library of Virginia

2024

History

Processed by: Library of Virginia staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Essex County (Va.) Military and Pension Records, 1757-1899; undated

Subtitle: Essex County (Va.) Military and Pension Records

Author: McKenzie Long

Publication Statement

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

Publisher: Library of Virginia

Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from being created directly into EAD, created by McKenzie Long, 20 September 2024

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Essex County (Va.) Circuit Court

Extent

1.10 cu. ft. (2 boxes)

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Military and pension records included in the box labeled "Court Records; Clerks' Records; Road and Bridge Records; Land Records; Bonds/Comissions/Oaths; Marriage Records; Military and Pension Records; School Records; Tax and Fiscal Records; Wills, 1751-1924" are unprocessed. All records remain tri-folded or in original bundles and may be fragile. Contact Archives Research services for availability.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These records came to the Library of Virginia in a 1941 transfer of court papers from Essex County under the accession number 21817 and in an undated transfer of court papers from Essex County.

Processing Information

Military and pension records, 1757-1899, were separated from Essex County court records and processed by Library of Virginia staff.

The remaining military and pension records are still unprocessed.

Encoded by M. Long: September 2024.

Preferred Citation

Essex County (Va.) Military and Pension Records, 1757-1899; undated. Local government records collection, Essex County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional Essex County Court Records can be found on microfilm at The Library of Virginia. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

Historical Information

Context for Record Type: Keeping large bodies of militia in the field required an elaborate system of support based on the purchase of goods and services from civilians, in addition to the usual pay and allowances to officers and soldiers. The result was the creation of a large number of records concerning the state's disbursements to both soldiers and civilians. Many claims for payment went unsatisfied until 1821. Locality military and pension records consist largely of pay and muster rolls, accounts and vouchers concerning supplies, claims for reimbursement for services rendered, and military pension applications. Pension applications summarize the applicant's service record and may include medical evaluations; information about income and property; and, in the case of widows, the date and place of marriages.

During the Revolutionary War, commissioners were appointed in each county to impress supplies and non-military services (such as driving cattle or wagons) for the war effort. Officials provided certificates or receipts so that individual suppliers could be reimbursed by the state government. Beginning in 1782, claims for reimbursement could be submitted to county courts. These "public claims," known as court booklets and lists, exist for almost all Virginia counties. Between 1777 and 1785, the Virginia General Assembly passed several laws authorizing pensions for disabled soldiers and for widows of soldiers who died while on active duty.

Throughout the Civil War, the principal responsibility for Virginia's indigent soldiers' families lay with the locality. The Virginia State Convention in 1861 gave the responsibility entirely to counties and incorporated towns and authorized whatever actions had already been taken. Acts of Assembly in 1862 and 1863 expanded the localities' powers to provide for their needy, and in 1863 some minimal state assistance was added in. The Virginia General Assembly passed several Confederate pension acts beginning in 1888. The initial act provided pensions to Confederate soldiers, sailors, and marines disabled in action and to the widows of those killed in action. A 1900 act broadened the coverage to include veterans disabled by "infirmities of age" and widows whose husbands died after the war. African Americans who had served "faithfully" as servants, cooks, laborers, hostlers, or teamsters for the Confederate army were eligible for pensions beginning in 1924. District of Columbia residents became eligible in 1926; previously, all pension applicants were required to be residents of Virginia.

Locality History: Essex County was named probably for the English county or perhaps for Algernon Capell, second earl of Essex. It was formed from Old Rappahannock County in 1692. The county seat is Tappahannock.

Scope and Content

Essex County (Va.) Military and Pension Records, 1757-1899; undated, consist of military service records, accounts and vouchers, and claims for reimbursement by civilians and service members. These include: French and Indian War issues papers, 1757, includes records of recruitment proceedings related to raising

groups of volunteer and draftee soldiers to join British forces fighting in the French and Indian War, by order of a Virginia Act of Assembly. The records of drafted recruits in particular includes documentation of the "drafting of vagrants" and reasons given why some draftees were excused from fighting.

Pension papers, 1779-1899, consist of records related to veterans seeking reimbursement, service rewards, or other support promised by the government in recognition of their time in the military. Most papers include regiment, commanding officer names, and other details about wartime service. Records include certifications, affidavits, pension lists, and pension applications.

County militia papers, 1796-1805, includes militia accounts and officer commissions.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:

- **Series I: Processed Military and Pension Records, 1757-1899**, is arranged chronologically and housed in a box with other subject files of Essex County court records
- **Series II: Unprocessed Military and Pension Records, undated**, is housed in a box with other unprocessed court records for Essex County.

Contents List

Series I: Processed Military and Pension Records, 1757-1899

Extent

.10 cubic feet (1 box)

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically and housed in a box with other subject files of Essex County court records

Barcode number 1137632: Marriage Records and Vital Statistics; Military and Pension Records; Miscellaneous Records; Overseers of the Poor Records, 1686-1915

Series II: Unprocessed Military and Pension Records, undated

Extent

1.00 cubic feet (1 box)

Arrangement

Housed in box with other unprocessed court records for Essex County.

Barcode number 1017407: Court Records; Clerks' Records; Road and Bridge Records; Land Records; Bonds/Comissions/Oaths; Marriage Records; Military and Pension Records; School Records; Tax and Fiscal Records; Wills, 1751-1924