



**Guide to Fairfax County School Records and Ledgers,
1870-1905**



Created by: Emily Budd
Creation date: Spring 2017
Shelf Location: Unit 5, Side B

Repository: Fairfax Circuit Court Historic Records Center

Contents Summary:

Date Range: 1870 – 1905, non-inclusive

Geographical Location: Fairfax County

Materials and Media: Paper, ink, graphite, marbled book covers, leather

Formats: Ledger books, receipts, letters, guidebooks for teaching

Topics Covered: Attendance of students, funding, demographics of students and teachers, costs of school districts, payment to teachers, items bought for schools, clerk's travel for work

Biographical/Historical Note:

This collection contains two sets of books from different sources— the first appears to be records related to the work of the Fairfax County School Board. Until the early 1900s, the Fairfax County School Board held their meetings at the Courthouse, as they had no official offices for themselves. These record books might have been brought to meetings and left— this could also explain why a few books contain minutes from meetings. Other books in this part of the collection may have been donated, but if so, the donors were anonymous.

The second group of books in this collection relates to a court case involving John Chichester and the Commonwealth of Virginia (CFF# 1893-040: *Commonwealth of Virginia vs. Sarah E. Chichester, et al*). Chichester, who had served as county treasurer and School Board Clerk, was accused of not adequately carrying out his duties. The county sued for \$100,000, which was the total cost of the error they claimed he made in the books and the \$95,000 bond which he and six securities signed when he took the office of treasurer. Chichester passed away on June 27, 1889, so at the time of the trial, his wife and the six securities who signed the bond with him were responsible to defend him and pay the penalty if they lost the case. The court ruled in favor of the state, and in consequence, the defense had to pay the \$100,000 that was then owed to the County. This money was paid over the course of several years.

Processing Note:

This collection was initially comprised of three boxes titled Schools A, Schools B, and a box labeled School Census. I began by cataloging the contents of each book and I removed loose papers that were in the books. While some of these papers were completely irrelevant to this collection and were relocated to other collections, most were put in acid free folders and remain in the collection.

From the School Census Box, two sets of files were removed. One folder contained letters to orphans at the Fairfax County House (most likely the Fairfax County Alms House) and a court case pertaining to the custody of an orphan. The other set of files included pages from population censuses for nonconsecutive years, and they are not the complete censuses for those years. Those were donated to the Virginia Room, at the Fairfax County Public Library.

All books without a proper title were assigned numbers, and are referred to as such in the finding aid. Each untitled book contains a slip of paper in the front cover with its assigned number. Additionally, all books were wrapped to prevent further deterioration. The book number and series to which each book belongs is written on the outside of the wrapping, as well as the title of each book, if applicable.

Scope and Content Note

Series 1: *Demographic records, 1873-1903*. Eleven Ledgers. This series contains four School Censuses for 1890, and one for 1900; as well as three Teacher's Registers, two books containing the examinations of teachers, and one Virginia Public School Register. These documents contain teachers' and students' names, ages, education, and race. The censuses include the guardians of the students, the school they attended, what studies they pursued, and if the students could read and write. This series contains a wealth of information about the daily operations of the schools, such as attendance, textbooks used, and studies taught.

Series 2: *Financial records, 1870-1905*. Six Ledgers. Includes salaries paid to teachers; expenses for each school district and schoolhouse (expenses included fire wood, paper, books, repairs to schoolhouses, and similar items); and funds received and spent by the county. Some documents contain minutes from school board meetings and expenses of the school treasurer while on official business. In this series, there are also receipts paid to teachers for their work.

Series 3: *Evidence from the John Chichester court case (CFF# 1893-040: Commonwealth of Virginia vs. Sarah E. Chichester et al), 1886-1890*. Seven Ledgers. These books were used as evidence in the court case against John Chichester. They include reports of expenses for the schools (repairs, books, fire wood, teacher salaries, etc) and funds received and spent by the county. One book contains a record of official clerk business, as well as some meeting minutes.

Series 4: *Miscellaneous. 1880-1904, non-inclusive*. Seven Folders. This series contains records that did not include financial or demographic information, or were removed from books in the other series. These include letters written to and from the school board and teachers, scratch paper, and receipts for items for the schools. One book in this series contains school laws for 1892, and another is entitled *Nickerson's Manual of School Charts*.

Container List:**Series 1: Demographic Records**

Name	Location
Book 1: Teachers Register for Virginia Public Schools, Lee District: White School Number 9	Box 1
Book 2: Teachers Register for Virginia Public Schools, Lee District: Lorton Valley White School Number 6	Box 1
Book 3: Teachers Register for Virginia Public Schools, Centreville District: School 6, White School	Box 1
Book 4: Virginia Public School Record—Dranesville District, Colored School Number 73	Box 1
Book 6: Providence school district, 1890 Census	Box 1
Book 7: Mt. Vernon school district, 1890 Census	Box 1
Book 8: Falls church, 1890 Census	Box 1
Book 9: Lee school district, 1890 Census	Box 1
Book 10: Falls church, 1900 Census	Box 1

Series 2: Financial Records

Name	Location
Book 1: Untitled #4	Box 4
Book 2: Untitled #2	Box 2
Book 3: Memoranda Book 5, 1890-1891	Box 2
Book 4: Record of Teachers Examined and Contracted With	Box 4
Book 5: Record of Monthly Reports	Box 4
Book 6: Untitled #1	Box 2
Book 7: 1904-1905 Receipt Book	Box 2
Book 8: Memoranda Book 2, 1887-1888	Box 2
Book 9: Untitled #3	Box 4
Folder 7: State School Funds Apportionment 1885-1887	Box 5

Folder 8: Receipts for Teachers of Public Schools Dec. 1890	Box 5
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Series 3: Chichester Case Evidence

Name	Location
Book 1: Book A.W.A 1	Box 3
Book 2: Untitled #5	Box 4
Book 3: Treasurer's Office Providence School District (A.W.A. 8)	Box 3
Book 4: State and County School Fund Book 1879-1888	Box 3
Book 5: Providence School District	Box 4
Book 6: Treasurer's Office. Mount Vernon District (A.W.A. 6)	Box 3

Series 4: Miscellaneous

Name	Location
Book 1: Nickerson's Manual of School Charts	Box 2
Book 2: Virginia School Laws, 1892	Box 2
Folder 1: Miscellaneous from A.W.A 1	Box 5
Folder 2	Box 5
Folder 3: Miscellaneous from Receipts for Teachers of Public Schools, Dec 1890	Box 5
Folder 4: Miscellaneous from 1904-1905 Receipt Book	Box 5
Folder 5: Miscellaneous from Memoranda Book 2	Box 5
Folder 6: Miscellaneous from Untitled Book #1	Box 5