

GUARDIANSHIP RECORDS NOW OPENED TO RESEARCHERS

A major new source of material for those doing research into Washington County family histories is now available, the Guardianship Records found in the Clerk and Master record group (Chancery Court). Processing of this extensive collection was recently completed. A total of **2,631** individual guardianship files will be found. The files cover a time span of nearly two centuries, from 1808-1993.

Guardianships were generally instituted by the county for either minor children when a parent or parents had died or for individuals deemed unable to manage their own affairs. A guardian was appointed to handle the finances and often other aspects of the person's life, such as securing their education, housing, medical care, etc. The records consist primarily of those records providing a financial accounting by the appointed guardian for the care and support given to individuals needing to be "guarded" or assisted with the management of their financial affairs. Researchers will find the records useful for determining relationships within families, as well as a detailed accounting of financial and other activities in which an ancestor may have been involved, either as a guardian or as an individual being guarded. Among the types of documents found in the files are accounts, settlement records, receipts, bills, invoices, correspondence, among other records.

Many thanks to the following volunteers and staff that completed this laborious processing project: Janette Guinn, Shirley Hinds, Betty Jane Hylton, Kim Livaditis, Terry Millhorn, and Archives Associate Britney Helton.

A guide to these records is found on the archives' website: [Guardian Settlement Records](#)

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