

Colored Confederate Pension Applications

On April 9, 1921 the Tennessee legislature passed an act providing pensions of \$10.00 per month for “those colored men who served as servants and cooks in the Confederate Army in the War Between the States” (1921 Public Acts, Ch. 129). As a requirement for eligibility, applicants had to prove that they had served until the end of the War. The Act did not provide any benefits for their widows.

This collection of pension applications represents a remarkable and unique source of genealogical information, much of it unavailable elsewhere. In completing the form the applicant was required to give the state, county, and year of his birth, and the date on which he entered service. The application also required his former owner’s name, regiment, and commanding officer. It is also not unusual to find letters of testimony written by the former owner or one of his family members as proof of the applicant’s service.

This index contains the following information: (1) applicant’s surname, (2) applicant’s first name, (3) county of residence at the time that he applied, (4) unit in which he served, and (5) pension application number.

Complete copies of the pension applications may be ordered from the Tennessee State Library and Archives. For ordering instructions, please see the webpage [Ordering Tennessee Confederate Pension Applications](#).